



City of Lake Geneva, 626 Geneva St, Lake Geneva, WI 53147- 262.248.3673- [www.cityoflakegeneva.gov](http://www.cityoflakegeneva.gov)

**HILLMOOR COMMISSION  
THURSDAY, JUNE 12, 2025 - 6:00 PM  
LAKE GENEVA CITY HALL; COUNCIL CHAMBERS (MAIN LEVEL)**

**Members:**

Mayor Todd Krause, Alderperson Cindy Yager, Consultant Michael Krajovic; Members - Mark Davids, Kenneth Etten, Dan Getzen, Larry Happ, Paula Porubcan, Peggy Schneider and Lowell Thompson.

**AGENDA**

1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Comments from the public as allowed by Wis. Stats. §19.84(2), limited to items on this agenda, except for public hearing items. Comments will be limited to 5 minutes
4. Approval of the minutes from May 8, 2025
5. Presentation regarding Ecological Restoration by Skip Harless from The Grand Geneva and Clay Frazer from Native Range Ecological
6. Presentation/Discussion regarding Ecological Restoration for the Hillmoor property – Paula Porubcan and Michael Krajovic
7. Status report regarding SEWRPC's (Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission) botanical inventory, rare species survey, and invasive species estimates for the Hillmoor property – Paula Porubcan
8. Status Report regarding Rt. 50 Frontage Improvements and Discussion regarding adding new mowed paths on Hillmoor – Mayor Krause
9. Presentation/Discussion regarding the Project Evaluation process – Michael Krajovic
10. Future Agenda Items
11. Next meeting date & time: July 10, 2025 at 6:00 pm
12. Adjournment

*A quorum of the Council may be present; however, no official Council action will be taken.  
Requests from persons with disabilities who need assistance to participate in this meeting should be made to the City Clerk's office in advance so that the appropriate accommodations can be made.*

**HILLMOOR COMMISSION MINUTES**  
**THURSDAY, May 8, 2025 - 6:00 PM**

**LAKE GENEVA CITY HALL; COUNCIL CHAMBERS (MAIN LEVEL)**

**Members:** Mark Davids, Kenneth Etten, Dan Getzen, Larry Happ, Paula Porubcan, Peggy Schneider, Lowell Thompson, Mayor Todd Krause, Alderperson Cindy Yager and Consultant Michael Krajovic

**Call to Order** by Mayor Krause at 6:00 pm.

**Roll Call**

Present: Mayor Krause, Consultant Michael Krajovic, Kenneth Etten, Dan Getzen, Larry Happ, Paula Porubcan, Peggy Schneider, Lowell Thompson. Mark Davids arrived at 6:17 pm.

Excused/Absent: Alderperson Cindy Yager

**Comments from the public as allowed by Wis. Stats. §19.84(2), limited to items on this agenda, except for public hearing items. Comments will be limited to 5 minutes.** Gary Mollet, Peg Esposito, Betty Volquardsen, John Nelson, Cathy Stoodley, Joe Zimmer, Mary Jo Fesenmaier, and Ross Magnusen spoke during the public comment period.

**Approve the Minutes of April 10, 2025.** On a motion by Larry Happ and second by Dan Getzen the minutes from the meeting of April 10, 2025 were unanimously approved.

**Comments on April 26<sup>th</sup> site visit (on Hillmoor property) and discussion/recommendation regarding Rt. 50 Frontage Improvements.** Larry Happ stated that the broken, old wooden cart path bridge over the drainage ditch near Rt. 50 is a hazard and recommended that it be removed and replaced. The Mayor stated the need to fix up the front section of Hillmoor bordering Rt. 50 to improve the appearance of the property for people entering into the City. John Foster, the City's arborist, described the work plan of the Public Works Department to clear out invasive species, mow down weeds, and save desirable tree species. While no formal motion was needed, the Commission agreed making the improvements.

**Discussion/Recommendation regarding Hillmoor newsletter.** Lowell Thompson explained the format for the Hillmoor newsletter and how it would be hosted on the City's website with help from the City Clerk's office. The Commission members agreed the newsletter would be a good way to seek additional public comment and keep the residents informed on the progress of the Hillmoor project and activities of the Commission. They thanked Lowell for his efforts and for taking on the lead responsibility for producing the newsletter. Members were asked to submit any ideas for future articles to Michael Krajovic. The newsletter will go out on an as needed basis approximately every four to eight weeks.

**Status Report and Discussion/Approval of Lan Use Zones.** Michael Krajovic gave a brief presentation of current and planned activities of the Commission for 2025 that included beginning implementation on the Knowles-Nelson Grant, developing building and site standards, developing an ecological restoration strategy for the property, beginning the project evaluation process, developing a public engagement strategy, completing small, high impact projects in 2025 such as making Rt. 50 frontage improvements, preparing 2026 budget recommendations, engaging in site visits/field trips and hearing presentations by outside experts when helpful.

He reviewed the five land use zones that subdivide the Hillmoor property and suggested that the border between Zones 4 and 5 be slightly modified to more accurately reflect the actual topographical viewshed of the property. He said that Zone 5 the potential building zone would be approximately 20 acres and Zone 4 would be approximately 38 acres. The Commission members agreed using the zones to help with the planning process of the property.

**Presentation/Discussion of project evaluation process and criteria.** Michael Krajovic gave a presentation on a suggested project evaluation process with criteria to use to evaluate the different project ideas from public input. He stated that the Commission needs to determine what projects should be included in the conceptual planning stages of a master plan for the property. The first step in the process is to assign various projects to the appropriate land use zones for further consideration. More specifically in the near future, the Commission will need to decide which projects should be included in the conceptual planning of Zone 1 as part of the Knowles-Nelson grant project.

**Future Agenda Items.** Michael Krajovic stated that there will be guest speakers talking about ecological restoration at the upcoming Hillmoor meeting. The Hillmoor Commission will also plan to conduct a field trip on either Saturday, May 31 or Saturday, June 7 from approximately 9 am to 12 pm to tour the new city park in Antioch and also Hastings Lake Forest Preserve park in Lake Villa, IL.

**Future Meetings.** The next Hillmoor Commission meeting is scheduled for 6:00 pm, Thursday, June 12 at City Hall.

**Adjournment** - Motion by Mark Davids to adjourn, second by Lowell Thompson. Voice vote, approved, motion carried. Adjourned at 7:27 pm.

**Hillmoor Commission**

**June 12, 2025**

**Ecological Restoration of the Hillmoor Property**

**Why is ecological restoration important?**

Healthy green landscapes in urban areas are beautiful, inviting places that improve the health of residents, community cohesiveness, and the local economy. They provide safe places for outdoor activities and create places where community residents naturally meet and connect while doing such things as walking their dogs or watching their kids play together. Cities with quality green spaces attract and retain talented workers, affluent retirees, and repeat visitors.

Recognizing this, in 2022 the City purchased a large part of the Hillmoor property to preserve precious green space within the City's limits. Since that time, residents have continued to express their desire that most of the property remain as green space. They want it to be accessible for outdoor activities, beautifully designed, and supportive of diverse plant and animal life.

Unmanaged green spaces, however, can often become overrun with invasive plant species. Unfortunately, this is what has happened to the Hillmoor property where invasive species such as buckthorn have crowded out other more beneficial plants. Invasive species harm the natural environment by destroying the biodiversity that is needed to support a wide range of plants and animals. Restoring the natural ecology of the property is part of the City's natural preservation objective and essential if we are to turn the property into a beautiful park for our community. It is an important part of Hillmoor's Master Plan.

## **Key Points and Recommendations**

### **for Developing an Ecological Restoration Plan for Hillmoor:**

1. Ecological Restoration is an essential part of a Master Plan for the Hillmoor property.
2. It is recommended that the City/Hillmoor Commission enlist the services of a qualified professional to develop an overall plan to remove invasive species on the property and restore its ecological health and natural beauty.
3. It is recommended that Hillmoor's Ecological Restoration Plan be completed by the first quarter of 2026. (see Recommended Goals)
4. The plan should have specific strategies for each of the five, major land use zones of the Hillmoor property. As part of the plan, favorable plant species within each zone need to be identified and preserved.
5. The plan should also include recommendations of the latest technology and best practices for removing the various invasive species currently found on the property, for reseeded and planting with the appropriate native vegetation where needed, based on soil type and hydrology, and for long term maintenance.
6. The plan should include multiple phases based to allow for implementation over a period of 5 to 10+ years.
7. The restoration project is very large. The more resources devoted to it, the faster the property can be restored.
8. The plans should include organizational and operational recommendations for the coordination and oversight of City staff, local nonprofit volunteers, and any contractors involved in the restoration efforts.

### **Key Points for Implementing the Ecological Restoration Plan for the Hillmoor Property**

9. It is recommended that a financial budget that includes an annual appropriation beginning in 2026 be established for implementing the plan for the ecological restoration of the Hillmoor property.
10. The City should continue to support the restoration work of the Friends of Hillmoor and other nonprofit groups, but due to the project's size, the project cannot be completed by volunteers alone
11. The City's Public Works Department has capabilities that could meaningfully, and cost effectively contribute to the project which should be explored.
12. Depending upon what City Public Works can accomplish with the help of volunteers, outside contractors may be needed to help complete the work in specific areas.
13. It is important that all parties (nonprofit volunteers, City staff, contractors) involved in the restoration work have received the appropriate training and resources needed to successfully implement and complete the restoration plan.
14. Potential grant sources should be identified and pursued to support the City's funding of restoration efforts.
15. The appropriate organizational structure between the City and nonprofit organizations needs to be established to apply for and manage grant and donor funding.

## **Summary of Ecological Restoration Strategies:**

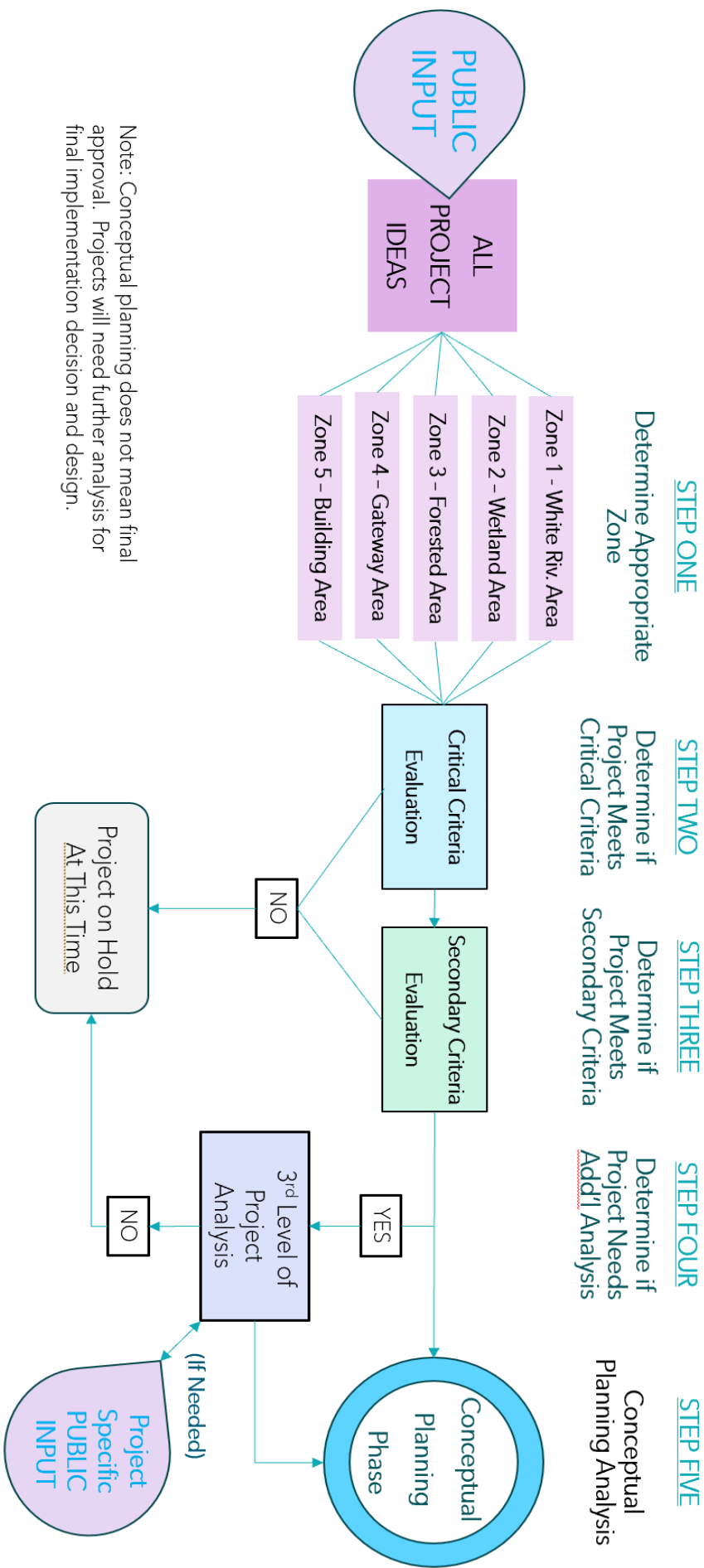
1. Develop a restoration plan to remove invasive plant species on the Hillmoor property.
  - a. Develop a specific strategy for each of the five land use zones
  - b. Determine priorities as part of a multi-phased plan
    - i. Base on the property's overall needs for public use
    - ii. Base on logical sequencing, urgency, and cost efficiencies
    - iii. Base on funding availability
2. Increase biodiversity and restore the natural beauty of the property. (via incorporate into conceptual/landscape planning for the property).
  - a. Based on soils and hydrology, replant native plant species where appropriate to support a wide variety of animal life (from insects to birds, amphibians, reptiles, mammals, fish), and
  - b. Based on soils and hydrology, strategically select and locate specific plant species, including non-native species if desired to further enhance the beauty of the property, and
  - c. Create a healthy, climate resistant habitat which is also a diversified ecosystem which will support a wide variety of wildlife. (consider flowering trees, bushes, grasses, perennial flowers, trees that provide nuts, berries, fruits, seasonal colors, smells, etc.)

## **Recommended Goals to Achieve:**

1. As part of Hillmoor's Master Plan, develop an overall ecological restoration plan for the property that includes specific strategies for each land use zone by early 2026.
2. Determine the size of the role the City's Public Works Department will play in implementing the restoration plan. 2025 to 2026
3. Identify potential grant sources to help fund removal of invasive species. 2025-2026.
4. Create a Hillmoor Ecological Restoration line item in the City's annual budget for 2026 and beyond for a \$ tbd amount. (Some funds could be included in the City's Public Works Department's budget.)
5. Secure outside grant funding in 2026 to leverage City funds earmarked for removing invasive plant species and planting preferred species.
6. Launch expanded efforts to remove invasives and begin by summer of 2026.

# PROJECT EVALUATION PROCESS

## Hillmoor Park Project



Note: Conceptual planning does not mean final approval. Projects will need further analysis for final implementation decision and design.

# Hillmoor Commission

CITY OF LAKE GENEVA, WI

## Hillmoor Project Evaluation Process and Criteria

## **The Hillmoor Commission – Importance of Public Input**

The Hillmoor Commission understands that there are many possible uses for the Hillmoor property and encourages residents to share their ideas about what they feel should be done with it. As normally expected, different residents have different ideas and preferences as to what projects should be part of Hillmoor. There are also different opinions as to what features and qualities will enhance or detract from the natural beauty of the property. This variety of ideas is a valued resource that helps make our community uniquely special. Thoughtful consideration and analysis of the collective and diverse input from our residents is part of a healthy planning process. It helps guide the Commission's efforts to develop the best plan for the property and our community.

## **The Hillmoor Commission's Mission**

The mission of the Hillmoor Commission is to create a master development "conceptual" plan for turning the 230 acre Hillmoor property into a beautiful park that is worthy of the City's national reputation.

To fulfill its mission, the Hillmoor Commission will prioritize projects that:

- fulfill unmet or underserved needs of residents,
- that do not compete with existing services,
- that help people connect with nature,
- that encourage outdoor recreation,
- that restore natural habitat and biodiversity,
- that can be used by everyone,
- that are a prudent use of both natural and financial resources,
- that enhance the beauty of the property,
- that contribute to our quality of life.

## **Draft - PROJECT CATEGORIES**

### **Outdoor Recreation**

Paved walking paths, hiking trails, road biking paths, mountain biking, bridges, skiing, sledding, fishing, dog park, playground.

### **Green Space Related**

Arboretum, botanical garden, community garden, ecological restoration, natural landscape enhancements.

### **Water Features**

Outdoor pool, splash pad, White River.

### **Sport Activities**

Tennis, pickle ball, disc golf, golf, swimming pool, bocci ball court, sand volleyball, croquet, mini-golf, pickle ball, skating, hockey.

### **Entertainment**

Band shell and/or amphitheater.

### **Above Ground Building Structures**

Community center, restroom facilities, picnic pavilions, YMCA, nature center, visitor center, day care center, band shell/amphitheater, ice rink, curling, outdoor pool, senior center.

### **Miscellaneous**

Parking, access.

**DRAFT - Possible Project/Activity Suitable for each Land Use Zone**

White River Corridor	Wetland Area	Forested Area	Gateway Area	Buildable Area
Zone 1	Zone 2	Zone 3	Zone 4	Zone 5
Possible Projects	Poss. Project	Poss. Projects	Poss. Projects	Possible Projects
Beautify	Keep Wild	Keep Wild	Beautify	Beautifully Develop.
Natural Green Space	Nat. Gr. Space	Nat. Gr. Space	Nat. Gr. Space	Gr. where possible
Ecological Restoration	Ecological Restoration	Ecological Restoration	Ecological Restoration	Ecological Restoration
Natural Landscaping Enhancements	Native Plants?	N. Landscaping Enhancements	N. Landscaping Enhancements	Nat. Landscaping Enhancements
Joint Walking & Biking Paved Paths	Hiking Trails	Hiking Trails	Joint Walking & Biking P. Paths	Joint Walking & Biking Paved Paths?
Hiking Trails	Bridges	Mtn. Biking	Hiking Trails	Hiking Trails
Amphitheater/ Bandshell	Board Walk	Amphitheater/ Bandshell	Arboretum	Amphitheater/ Bandshell
Bocci Ball Court	Park Benches	Park Benches	X-C Ski	Bocci Ball Court
Community Garden		X-C Ski	Botanical Gard.	Arboretum
Croquet Courts			Golf	Botanical Garden
Cross Country Ski			Park Benches	Building Structures
Dog Park			Solar/Wind Farm	Community Garden
Fishing				Croquet Courts
Mini-golf course				X-C Ski
Parking				Community Center
Park Benches				Curling
Pickel Ball Courts				Day Care Center
Picnic Pavilions				Dog Park
Picnic Tables				Golf
Sand Volleyball Ct.				GLAS
Sledding Hill				Hobby Shop
Splash Pad				Ice Rink
				Mini-golf course
				Nature Center/Mus.
				Parking
				Park Benches
				Playground
				Pickel Ball Courts
				Picnic Pavilion
				Picnic Tables
				Pool - Outdoor
				Restrooms
				Sand Volleyball Ct.
				Senior Center
				Splash Pad
				Tennis Courts
				Visitor Center
				YMCA

## Draft – Step One - Project Evaluation Using Critical Criteria 1-6

Name of Project: \_\_\_\_\_

Project's Proposed Land Use Zone Location. Check all that apply:    ZONE    1    2    3    4    5

**City's Vision for Hillmoor:** We envision Hillmoor as a cherished place where we enrich our lives by connecting with Nature, ourselves, and others.

**City's Major Objectives for Hillmoor:** 1) Natural Preservation, 2) Outdoor Recreation, 3) Sense of Community, 4) Connectivity to the City, and 5) High Quality Structures.

### Project First Level of Review and Analysis – Critical Criteria 1 to 6:

- 1) VISION – Is the project in alignment with the City's Vision and Major Objectives for the property?  
 No (0 pts)     It supports one Objective (3 pts)     It supports two or more Objectives (5 pts)

Notes: \_\_\_\_\_

- 2) DUPLICATIVE – Does the project/amenity already exist or is the activity already provided by the City in other parts of the City?

YES (0 pts)     Partially, not adequate to meet current need (3 pts)     NO (5 pts)

Notes: \_\_\_\_\_

- 3) COMPETE – Does the project/amenity or activity to be provided compete with similar projects or activities already provided by other organizations or businesses?

YES significantly (0 pts)     Medium extent (1 pt)     Minimally (3 pts)     NO (5 pts)

Notes: \_\_\_\_\_

- 4) NEED – Is there an unmet need for the project/amenity or activity in the City?

NO need (0 pts)     Minimal need (1 pt)     Medium need (3 pts)     Significant need (5pts)

Notes: \_\_\_\_\_

- 5) LEVEL OF INTEREST – What has been the community's sustained level of interest or support in the project/amenity or activity?

Little to None (0 pts)     Average compared to other projects (3 pts)     Above Average (5 pts)

Notes: \_\_\_\_\_

- 6) WHY HILLMOOR – What is the need for this project to be located on the Hillmoor property?

None, could go elsewhere (0 pts)     It's not the only location, but the preferred location (3 pts)

It is not only the best location, but the only one that works (5 pts)

Notes: \_\_\_\_\_

**CONCLUSION:**

**(If the project scores low in the first 6 criteria such as 0 pts in 2 or more criteria, the project does not qualify at this time for additional planning consideration.)**

**Draft - Project Second Level of Review and Analysis - Criteria 7 to 12**

7) USAGE – Is the project/amenity or activity to be provided inclusive so that it can be used by everyone?

Only by a few-less than 10% (1 Pt)  Between 10 and 25% (3 pts)  By anyone (5 pts)

Notes: \_\_\_\_\_

8) FAMILY USAGE – Can families with children use the project/amenity or activity?

NO (0 pts)  Yes for ages 6 and above (3 pts)  YES all ages of children (5 pts)

Notes: \_\_\_\_\_

9) LAND USAGE – Does the project/amenity or activity require a lot of land that uses green space?

Yes significant >10 acres(1 pt)  Large 6 to 9 acres(2 pts)  Medium 1 to 5 acres(3 pts)  
 No minimal < 1 acre or less (5 pts)

Notes: \_\_\_\_\_

10) ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT – Does the project/amenity negatively affect the environment?

Yes significant impact (0 pts)  Medium (1 pt)  Minimal (3 pts)  No Impact (5 pts)  
(such as through water usage, chemicals, noise level, lighting, traffic, etc.)

Notes: \_\_\_\_\_

11) COMPATABILITY – Does the project interfere with or limit other uses of the property?

Yes, significantly (0 pts)  Average compared with projects (3 pts)  Little to none (5 pts)

Notes: \_\_\_\_\_

12) Aesthetics – Does the project align or enhance the aesthetic beauty of the property?

NO (0 pts)  Neutral, no noticeable enhancement (2 pts)  Yes, somewhat (4 pts)  
 YES, significantly (5 pts)

Notes: \_\_\_\_\_

**After considering criteria 7 -12, decide if project should be included in conceptual planning phase, or if it needs additional analysis or public input.**

**Draft – More Detailed Project Evaluation if needed for deciding whether to advance a project to conceptual planning phase - Criteria 13 - 16, and/or if needed to more accurately define the size and scope of the project in the conceptual plan for final implementation decision.**

13) CAPITAL COST – How much would the project/amenity or activity cost the City?

- Significant over \$1 million (1 pt)  large \$100K-\$1 million (2 pts)  
 medium \$26K-\$99K(4 pts)  minimal < \$25K(5 pts)

Notes: \_\_\_\_\_

14) DONATIONS – How much of the project’s capital cost could be provide by private donors?

- None (0 pts)  Minimal less than 25% (1 pt)  Medium over 50% (3 pts)  
 Significant over 75% (4pts)  All 100% (5 pts)

Notes: \_\_\_\_\_

15) Financial Feasibility – How much money has been raised or already budgeted to fund the project?

- None (0 pts)  Minimal less than 25% (1 pt)  Medium over 50% (3 pts)  
 Significant over 75% (4pts)  All 100% (5 pts)

Notes: \_\_\_\_\_

16) OPERATING COST – How much would the project/amenity or activity cost the City each year to operate and maintain?

- Significant over \$100K (1 pt)  Large \$50 to \$100K (2 pts)  Medium \$10 to \$49K(3 pts)  
 Minimal < \$10K(4 pts)  Nothing (5 pts)

Notes: \_\_\_\_\_

17) EXAMPLES OF SIMILAR PROJECTS – Are there examples of similar projects successfully operating in other communities?

- NO  YES

Is there a specific project that would be a good example to follow? Please describe below:

Notes: \_\_\_\_\_

**After considering criteria 13-17, decide if project should be included in conceptual planning phase, or if it needs additional analysis or public input.**