

DEVELOPMENT PRINCIPLES

FOR THE AMERICAN LEGION PROPERTY

COMMUNITY BUILDING PRINCIPLES

1. A Community Gathering Space for Everyone

The American Legion site supports a variety of activities, appealing to many different interests and to people of all ages. The site is accommodating and inviting for visitors of all abilities. The site serves a variety of income levels with free and low-cost activities included. Anybody in Chapel Hill feels welcome and engaged here.

2. A Network of Walkable Paths

Trails, sidewalks, and greenways throughout the site provide access to all facilities, promote physical activity, allow for enjoyment of nature, connect to the surrounding neighborhoods and to the elementary school, and integrate with Chapel Hill's greenway system.

3. Support for Healthy Lifestyles

All uses of the American Legion site support healthy lifestyles through athletic and physical activity and/or interaction with nature. This applies not only to portions of the site devoted to recreation, but also to any commercial or institutional uses. The healthy lifestyle focus can be used as a branding element that generates tourism and economic development for the town.

4. Existing Water Features

Additional investigation related to the existing pond, including scenario cost, wetland status, and water source, is needed before further decisions about the pond are made. Contingent on those findings, the pond may be removed or reduced in size in order to enhance safety and provide more flexibility for site planning.

RELATIONSHIPS TO ADJOINING PROPERTIES

5. Mitigation of Impacts on Neighbors

Amenities on the site enhance the value of surrounding neighborhoods and preserve their character. Appropriate buffers allow privacy of adjacent lots and reduce noise and light spillover. The design limits motor vehicle entry and exit points from neighborhood streets to maintenance and emergency access.

6. Partnership with Ephesus Elementary School

The Town and the School District work together to identify complementary programs that could be carried out in partnership along with opportunities to share facilities. The network of paths allows students and families access to and through the site, supporting neighborhood walk-to-school programs.

DESIGN AND USE PRINCIPLES

7. Legion Road Frontage and Access

Legion Road remains the main public motor vehicle entry point for the entire property. If feasible, the site entry is aligned with Europa Drive. The community space is clearly and highly visible from the entrance, with significant frontage reserved for prominent gateway features.

8. Comprehensive Parking Strategy

Parking near the main facilities accommodates early demand and can be expanded for future demand. Enough parking is provided to prevent spillover onto neighborhood streets. Opportunities are pursued for shared parking with the Europa Center, Ephesus Elementary School, and others, with a goal of minimizing new surface parking. Public transit, along with bicycle and pedestrian connections, provide alternatives to accessing the site by car.

9. Green Building Standards for All Construction

All facilities on the American Legion site (indoor and outdoor) pursue ambitious standards for using water and energy efficiently, minimizing waste, and avoiding the use of harmful materials. The site design minimizes environmental impact and preserves the tree canopy.

SHARING THE SITE – PARTNERSHIP EVALUATION

10. Clear Guidelines for Public/Private Partnerships

Before any private organizations are chosen as partners, Town Council should define key criteria for evaluating partnerships, related to design, construction, and programming. All partnerships, must benefit the overall Chapel Hill community. Recommended criteria for public/private partnerships include:

- Partner programs should have free or low-cost options
- Any private development along Legion Rd should be compatible in design with the public entrance to the property