

COMMON GROUND

FAIR

PLAY

A campaign to foster greatness in public spaces.



## ENVISIONING FAIR PLAY

A common dream for Milwaukee parks and recreational facilities

SEPTEMBER 16, 2014

[WWW.FAIRPLAYWI.ORG](http://WWW.FAIRPLAYWI.ORG)





## WHERE DO MILWAUKEE COUNTY KIDS PLAY?

There are 290 public schools in 38 separate school districts in Milwaukee County. Common Ground volunteers inspected and evaluated the athletic/recreational spaces at each of the 268 sites that serve these schools. Of the 268 sites, 175, or 65% of them were rated overall as Terrible, Inadequate or Fair by Common Ground leaders. The 65% does not take into account the 16 sites that do not have any outdoor athletic facilities at all.

The current state of Milwaukee County's public school athletic facilities is unacceptable. They are, in many cases, unsafe and unusable, and in some cases even non-existent.



## THE OVERALL EVALUATION YIELDED THESE RESULTS:

| OVERALL CONDITION | # OF SCHOOL SITES | % OF TOTAL |
|-------------------|-------------------|------------|
| Terrible          | 35                | 13         |
| Poor              | 59                | 22         |
| Inadequate        | 81                | 30.2       |
| Good              | 60                | 22.3       |
| Excellent         | 33                | 12.3       |

## WHY FAIR PLAY?

While powerful billionaires/multi-millionaires (Wesley Edens, Marc Lasry and Ted Kellner) are trying to find a way to use our public tax money to build a new Bucks arena, where millionaires will play and an elite group of people can afford to watch them play, our kids and community members are using unsafe, terrible, and broken athletic fields and parks.

This is the message Southeastern Wisconsin Common Ground has been driving home with our Fair Play campaign. We want sports to thrive in Milwaukee County—not just for those who can afford a ticket to watch, but for all, and most importantly, our kids—many of whom struggle to find a safe place to learn and practice sports every day.

## THEY PLAY, WE PLAY

If public funds are used to build a new Bucks arena, then at least \$150-\$250 million of these funds must be used to improve Milwaukee County public athletic facilities and recreational spaces.

## WHAT WE'VE DONE SO FAR

Since our initial survey, over 3000 parents, teachers, coaches and students have joined our initiative, by participating in neighborhood walks, attending house meetings and coming together to work towards this plan.

On April 8, 2014, 800 members of Common Ground voted that if public dollars are used to build a new Bucks arena, that at least \$150 million dollars need to be set aside for improvements on public sports and athletic facilities as well (aka Fair Play). If Fair Play is not part of the plan, then Common Ground would actively oppose the new Bucks arena.

## OUR SHARED VISION

Some believe that building a new Bucks arena will revitalize downtown. We believe improving the quality of life for our children and citizens is **the way** to revitalize the entire county.

After studying the current conditions at length teachers, coaches, parents and Fair Play team members developed a solution. Working with Quorum Architects and Ellis Engineering & Construction Management Services, the vision was brought to life—one Milwaukee County can be proud of for generations. On the following pages are Quorum's renderings envisioning improvements for six of the eleven Milwaukee County play fields that are most in need of improvement.

Research shows that kids who participate in sports gain benefits in health, academics and life lessons in general. Making this vision a reality would be a win-win for everybody.

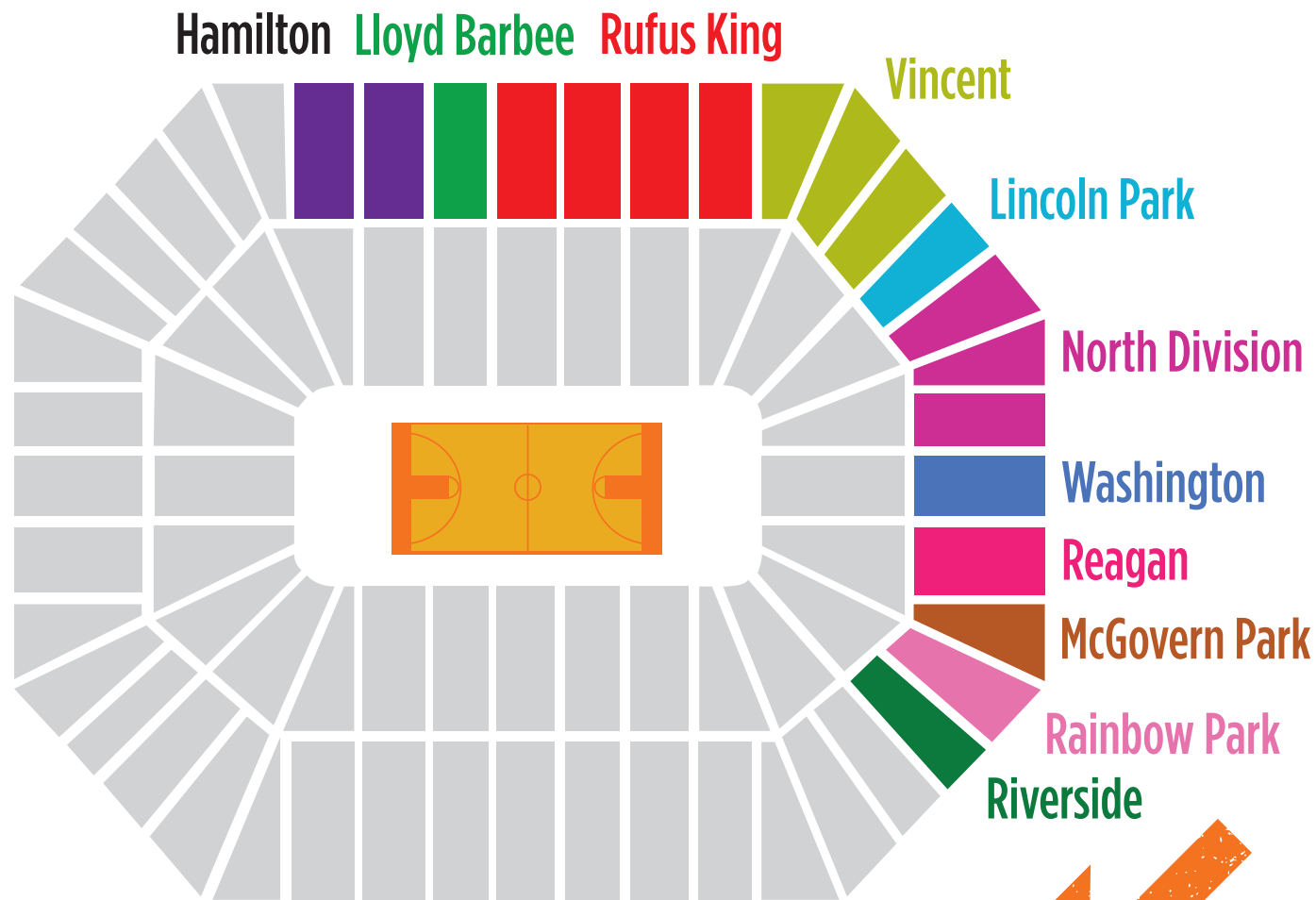
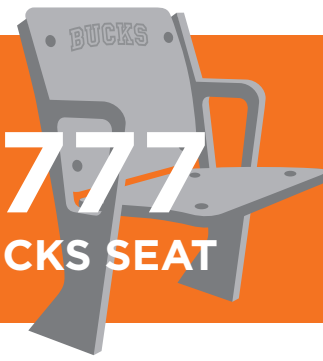


Imagine if your tax dollars were spent on a **country club**—one that you could not afford to enter. Sure, it might make that particular neighborhood look nicer. It might bring more revenue into the city. It might even inspire more people to try golf. But if the general population has no safe place to actually play the game, who is it for?



**A NEW BUCKS ARENA WILL COST ABOUT \$500 MILLION WITH APPROXIMATELY 18,000 SEATS =**

**\$27,777 PER BUCKS SEAT**



The same dollars that could build **one section** of Bucks seats could put **a whole school** in the game, literally, for years to come.

An investment in our public schools will send this message to our children and our community and our state:

**“Milwaukee County children are as important if not MORE important than the Milwaukee Bucks.”**

The use of public money to fix athletic fields and play spaces will benefit everyone, not just those who can afford to go see the Bucks play.

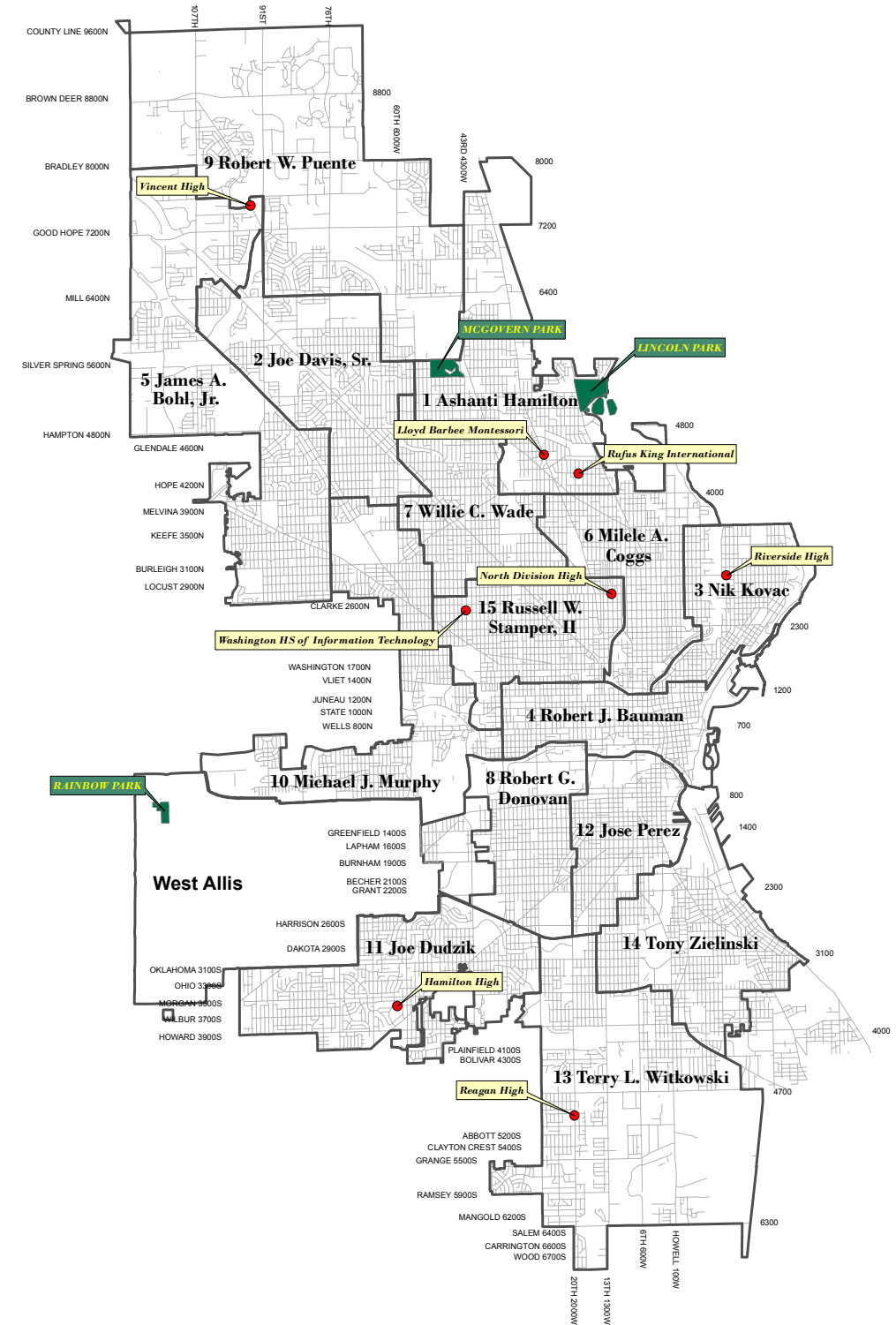
**THE FIRST 11 FAIR PLAY FIELDS**

The facilities we have identified as most in need of improvement are listed below, followed by an estimated cost of repair.

1. Hamilton High School - \$7.4 million
2. Lloyd Barbee Montessori - \$6 million
3. North Division High School - \$9.4 million
4. Reagan High School - \$3.8 million
5. Riverside High School - \$1.8 million
6. Rufus King High School - \$9.2 million
7. Washington High School - \$4.4 million
8. Vincent High School - \$8.9 million
9. Lincoln Park - \$7.2 million
10. McGovern Park - \$2.5 million
11. Rainbow Park - \$2.5 million

**TOTAL: \$63-70 million**

This list is not exclusive but it is an indication of the widespread need of improvement throughout all the Milwaukee County public school districts and parks.



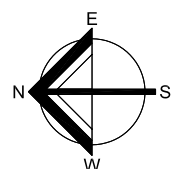
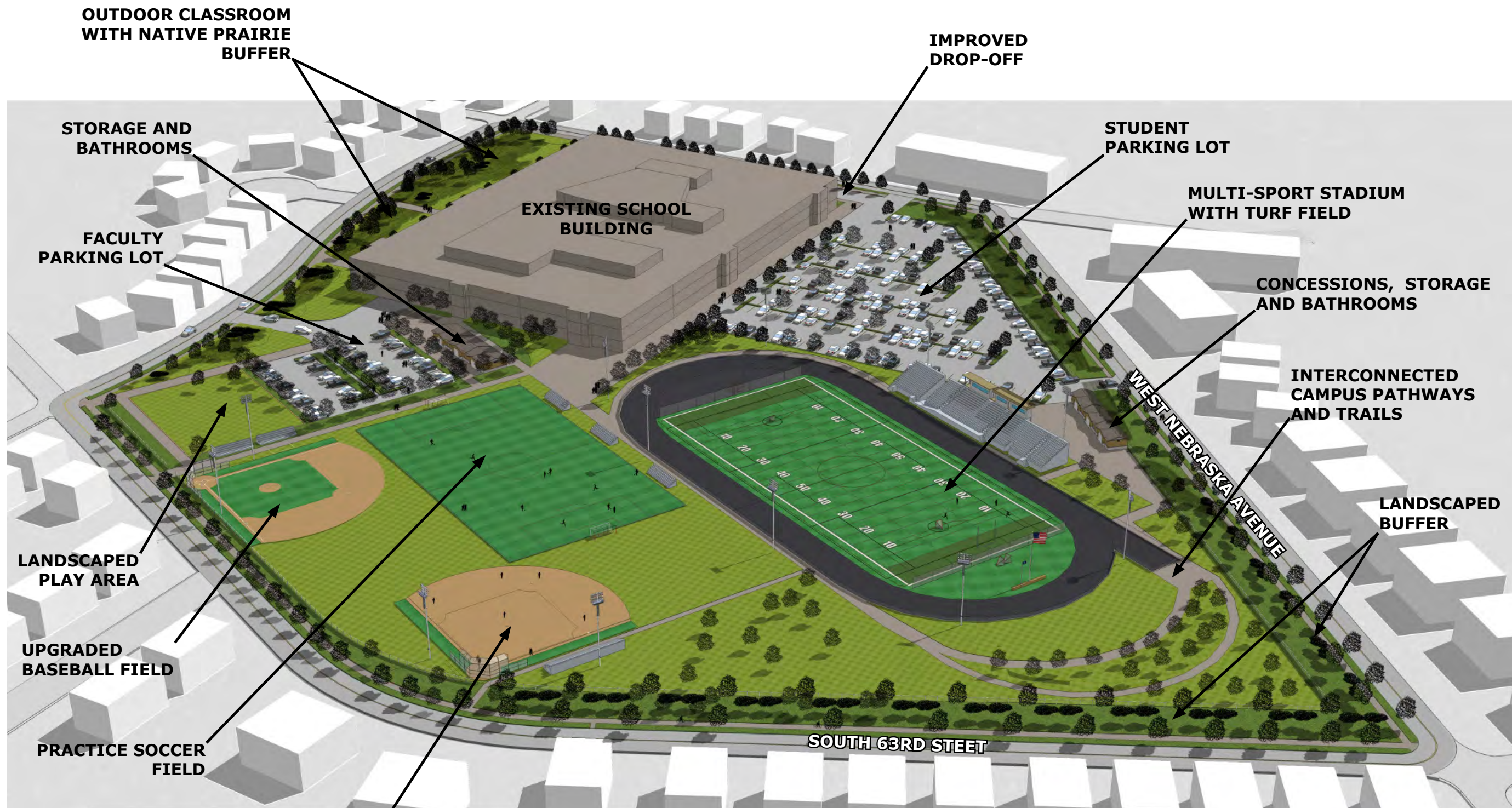
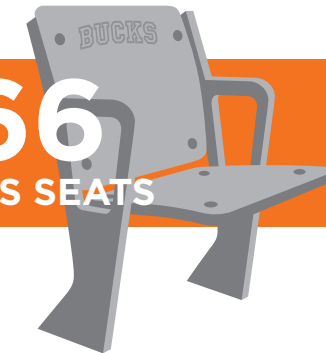
**Imagine if Milwaukee did something to truly inspire sports and fitness in ALL communities.** What if the simple privilege of to playing in a safe, functional facility— was provided to everyone— and not just to professional athletes? What message would that send future generations?



# A VISION FOR ALEXANDER HAMILTON HIGH SCHOOL

ESTIMATED COST: \$7.4 MILLION =

**266**  
BUCKS SEATS



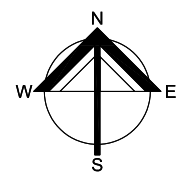
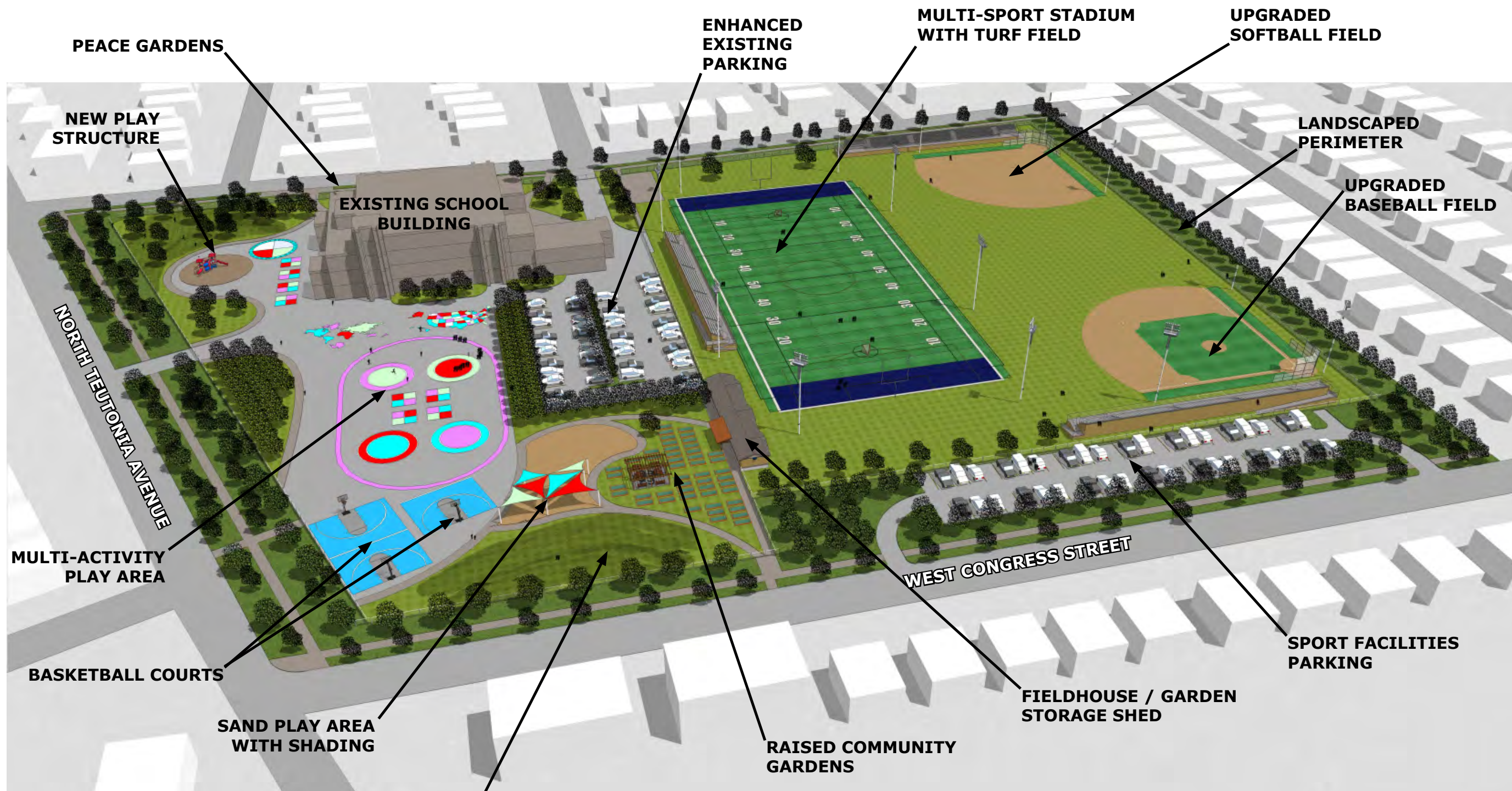
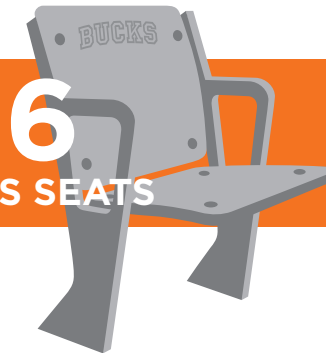
## ALEXANDER HAMILTON HIGH SCHOOL



# A VISION FOR LLOYD BARBEE MONTESSORI SCHOOL

ESTIMATED COST: \$6 MILLION =

**216**  
BUCKS SEATS



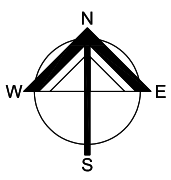
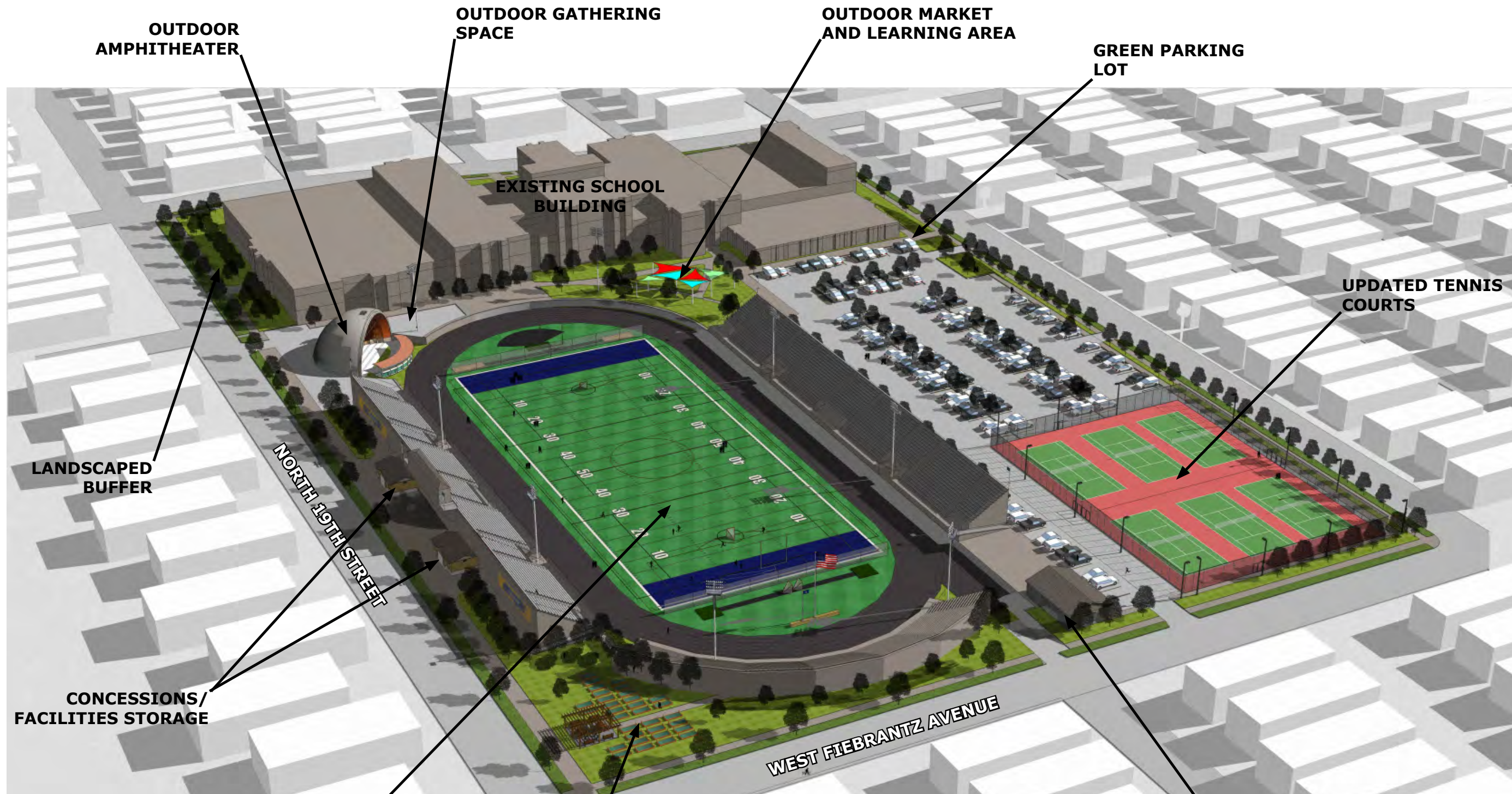
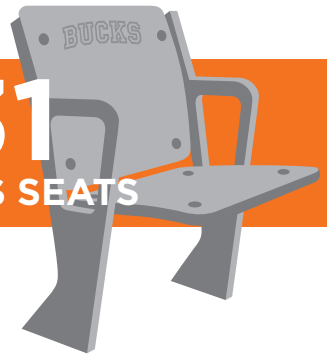
# LLOYD BARBEE MONTESSORI SCHOOL



# A VISION FOR RUFUS KING INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

ESTIMATED COST: \$9.2 MILLION =

**331**  
BUCKS SEATS



# RUFUS KING INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

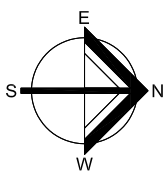
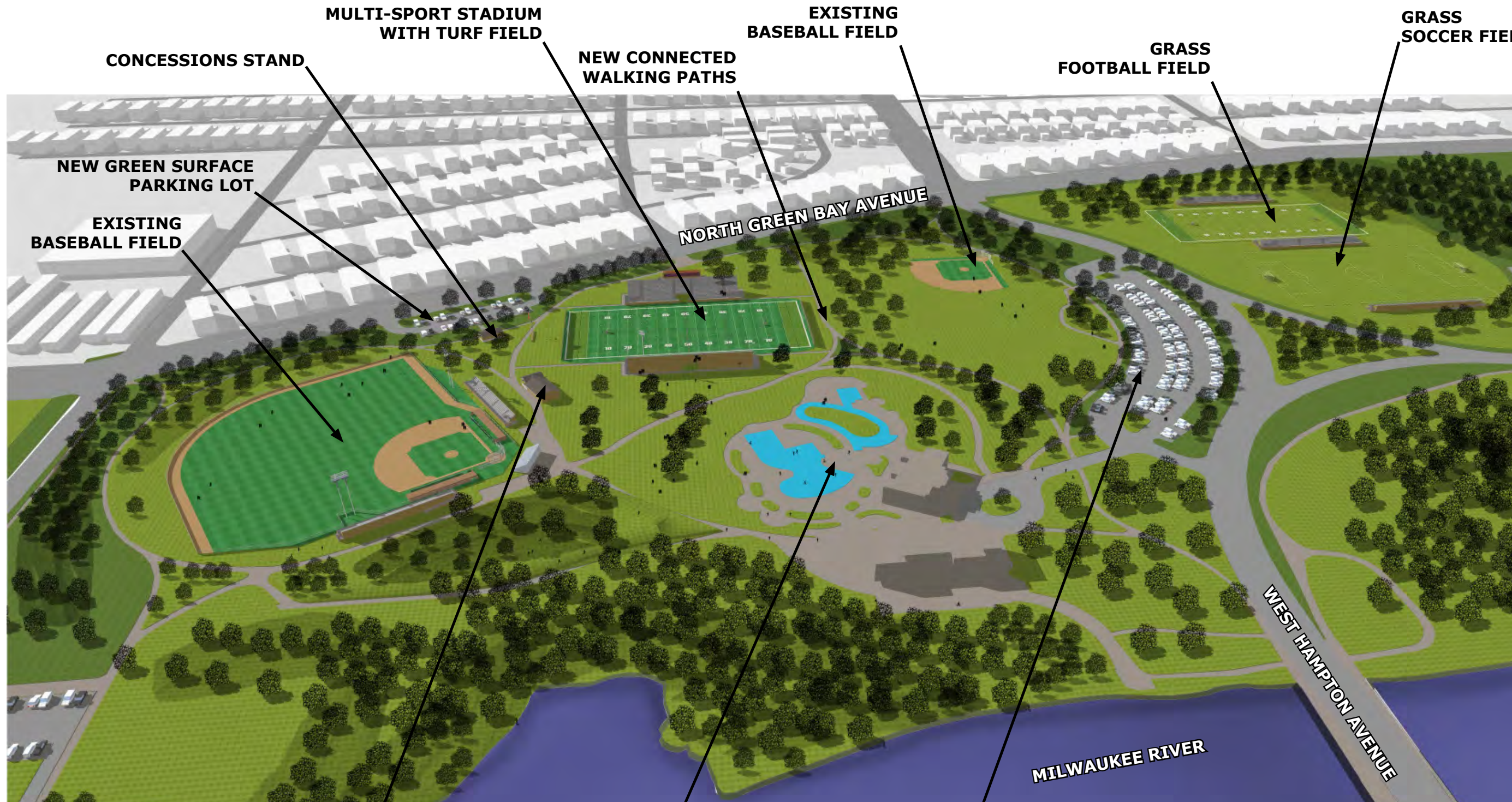
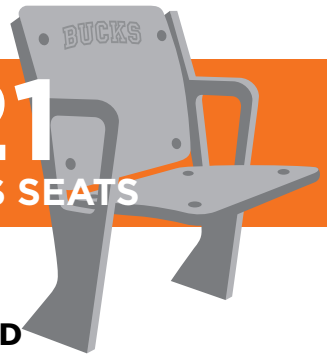






# A VISION FOR LINCOLN PARK

ESTIMATED COST: \$7.2 MILLION = **221** BUCKS SEATS



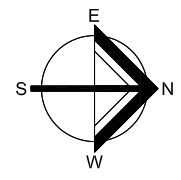
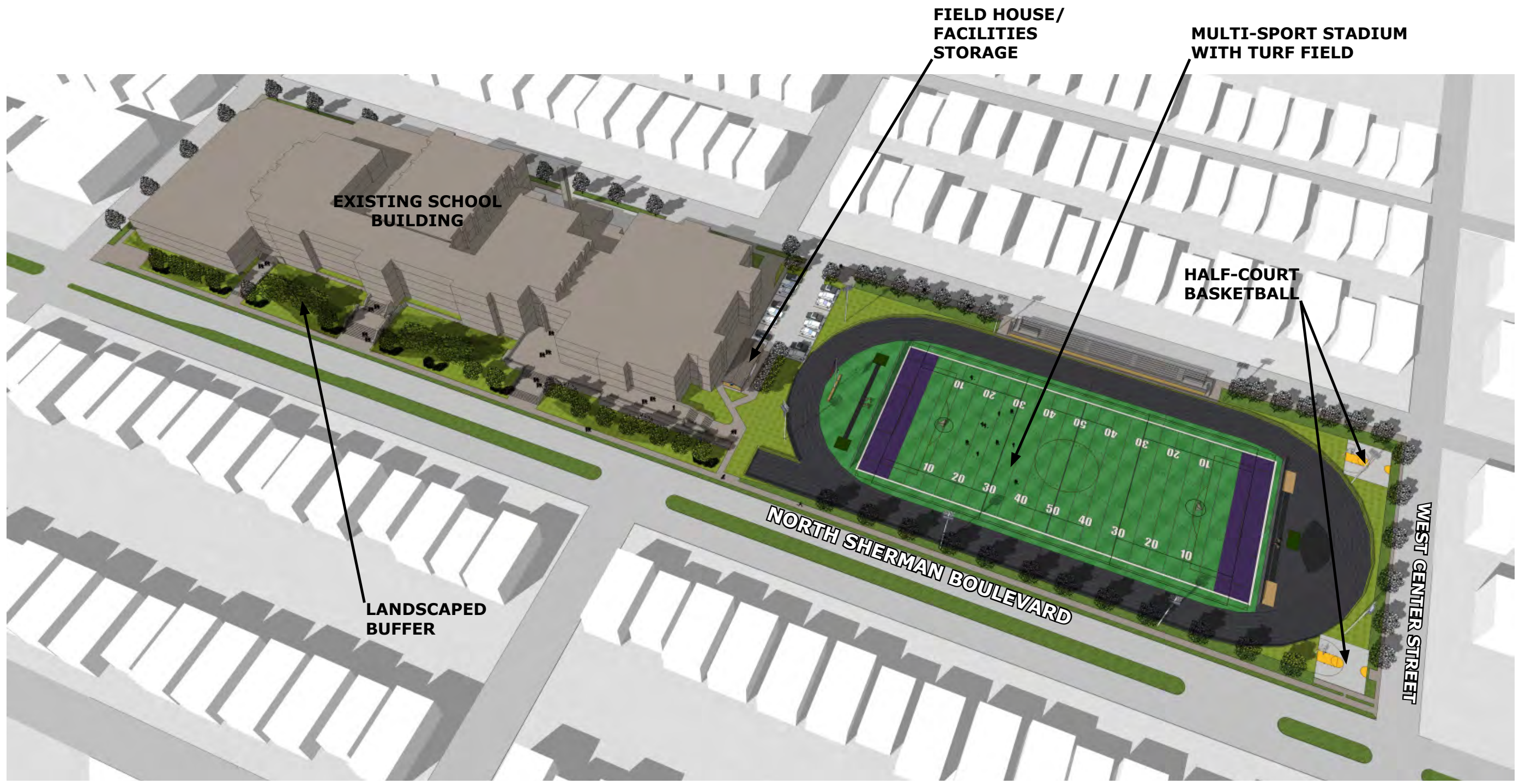
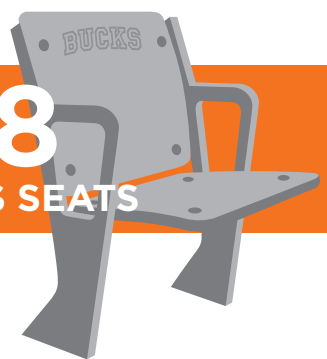
## LINCOLN PARK

Did you know? Over 21 Milwaukee county schools use Lincoln Park's athletic fields.



# A VISION FOR WASHINGTON HIGH SCHOOL

ESTIMATED COST: \$4.4 MILLION = **158**  
BUCKS SEATS



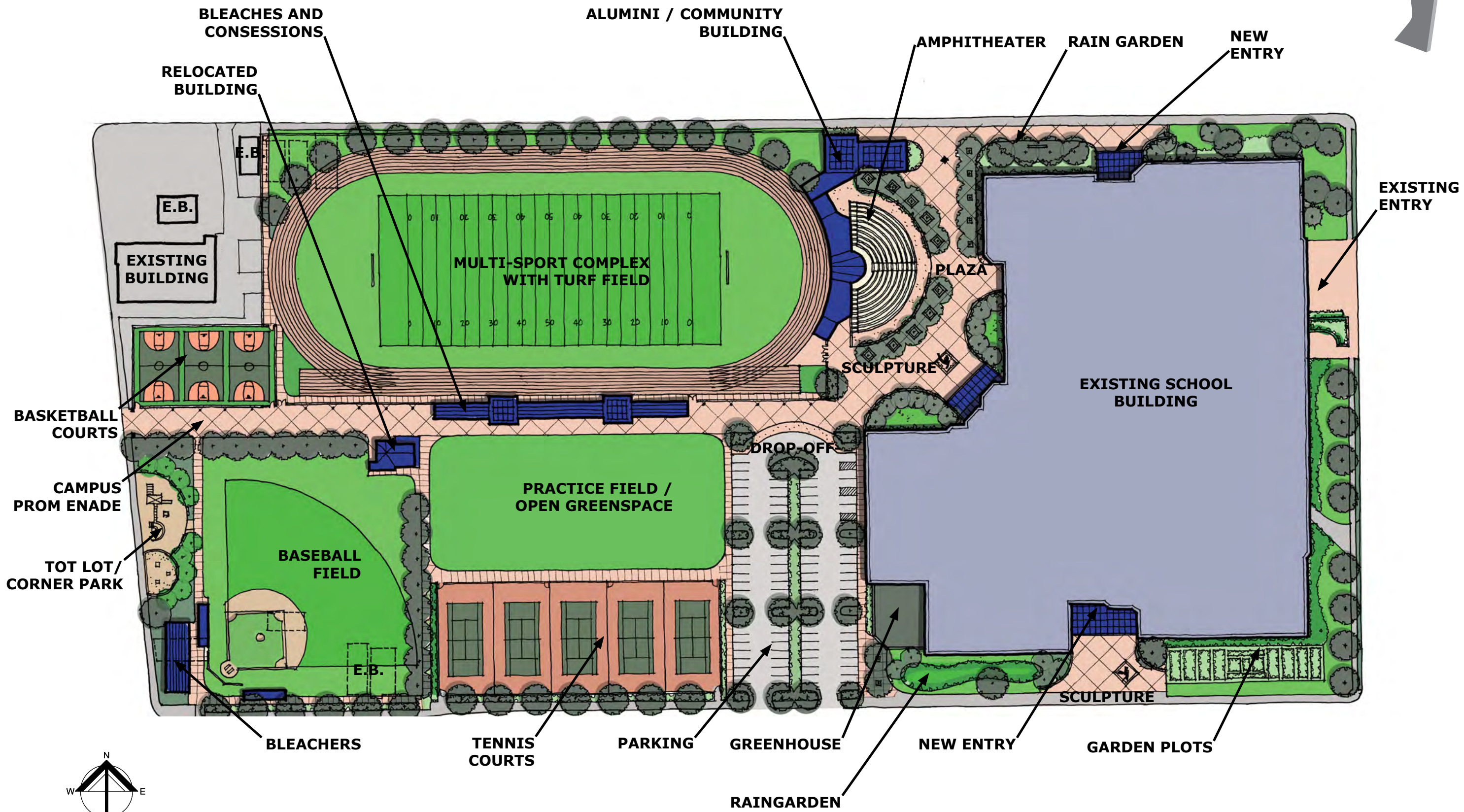
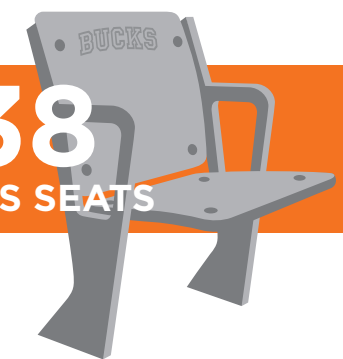
## WASHINGTON HIGH SCHOOL



# A VISION FOR NORTH DIVISION HIGH SCHOOL

ESTIMATED COST: \$9.4 MILLION =

**338**  
BUCKS SEATS



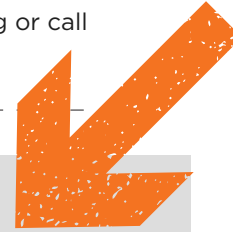
## NORTH DIVISION HIGH SCHOOL



## NOW WHAT? NEXT STEPS

- Join us at our public assemblies
- Come to our Common Ground Fair Play meetings.
- Organize or sign up for a Fair Play walk in your neighborhood.
- Meet with your alderman to support this vision.
- Visit [www.CommonGroundWI.org](http://www.CommonGroundWI.org) and sign up for our newsletter.
- Donate to Common Ground to help further this campaign.
- Become a Common Ground member. Contact us and we'll tell you how. Email: [info@commongroundwi.org](mailto:info@commongroundwi.org) or call 414.751.0755

STAY UP TO DATE AT [WWW.FAIRPLAYWI.ORG](http://WWW.FAIRPLAYWI.ORG)



## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Field renderings and cost estimates would not have been possible without the hard work of these fine people.

- Allyson Nemec, AIA - Principal Designer, Quorum Architects
- James Steiner, RLA - Landscape Architect, Quorum Architects
- Kate Edwards, AIA - Architect, Quorum Architects
- Natalie Strohm - Associate, Quorum Architects
- Alex Barthel - Intern Architect, Quorum Architects
- Adam Person - UW-Milwaukee Student Intern
- Katie Edwards - Mount Mary Student Intern
- Devon Ellis - Ellis Engineering & Construction Management Services



Imagine the message this would send to our kids and our community. They matter as much, if not more, than the Bucks. Isn't this something worth fighting for?

## WHO IS COMMON GROUND?

40,000 members strong, Common Ground is a non-partisan group of active citizens that has been identifying pressing social issues and bringing about creative solutions in Milwaukee, Ozaukee, Waukesha and Washington Counties since 2008.

Affiliated with the IAF, Common Ground members have been hard at work addressing and making real and tangible change on issues including youth jobs, transportation, foreclosures, family issues, affordable healthcare, and education.

If you are interested in learning more about Common Ground or becoming a member, visit [www.commongroundwi.org](http://www.commongroundwi.org), like us on **Facebook** or send us an email at [info@commongroundwi.org](mailto:info@commongroundwi.org).







Terrible



Inadequate



Good



Excellent



Terrible



Inadequate



Good



Excellent



# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

## WHAT IS FAIR PLAY?

Fair Play is Common Ground's campaign to insert itself in the discussion about the use of public funds to build a new arena for the Bucks. It is our position that if public money is used to create a new arena for the Bucks, then at least \$150-\$250 million must be invested to upgrade and build public athletic facilities and playgrounds for children in Milwaukee County. If the Bucks get a great place to play, then our kids get great places to play.

## WHO IS COMMON GROUND?

CG is a community organization that works toward igniting positive change within the Greater Milwaukee area. With the power of the collective voice, we have a strong history of facilitating significant and meaningful improvements within our community.

By working together, we develop leaders who identify issues that need fixing, develop solutions for them and take action to create change.

## AREN'T ACADEMICS MORE IMPORTANT THAN ATHLETICS?

Academics are important, and so are play and athletic competition. Kids need both. Physical activity promotes healthy development and academic achievement. Research shows that kids who get more physical activity are better able to focus and learn. Sports build character and teach teamwork, discipline, and persistence. High schools with strong athletic programs have lower dropout rates and higher test scores.

## WHY SHOULD PEOPLE CARE IF THEY DON'T HAVE KIDS IN SCHOOL?

1. Fair Play isn't just for kids. Outdoor recreation facilities are used by children and adults. Imagine a beautiful stadium with an artificial turf field, a smooth rubber track, bleachers, lights, and a scoreboard. Now imagine who might use it:
  - High school athletes — girls and boys — practice soccer, football, rugby, lacrosse, and track Monday-Friday after school.
  - Many student athletes return to practice on the weekends and in the off-season.
  - Parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles and cousins, students, teachers and community members gather for meets and games.
  - Teams come from near and far for tournaments.
  - Retired folks from a nearby church come most days to walk the track, talk and support one another.
  - Physical education classes are held outside.
  - Young adults meet weekly to play soccer.
  - Runners and walkers use the track and the bleachers to workout.
  - Local peewee football league and the rec department soccer program keep the place buzzing with activity on the weekends and with camps in the summer.
2. Quality facilities will give our communities places to exercise and compete, places to gather and connect, and places that inspire neighborhood pride.
3. We are calling for a parallel investment: if we use public money to build a play space for the Bucks, we must also invest in great play spaces for our kids.

## IS FAIR PLAY JUST FOR MPS SCHOOLS?

No. Fair Play includes public athletic facilities and playgrounds throughout Milwaukee County — urban and suburban. Fair Play includes playgrounds and outdoor athletic facilities at public schools as well as athletic fields in Milwaukee County parks. Facilities in our parks and schools are used by students from public, choice and charter schools, independent sports leagues, and community members of all ages.

## ISN'T FAIR PLAY OUTSIDE THE SCOPE OF THE CULTURAL AND ENTERTAINMENT CAPITAL NEEDS TASK FORCE? WHAT DOES FAIR PLAY HAVE TO DO WITH THE CECNTF?

The Cultural and Entertainment Capital Needs Task Force (CECNTF) was organized by the Metropolitan Milwaukee Association of Commerce at the request of Senator Kohl, owner of the Milwaukee Bucks, and the Bradley Center Sports and Entertainment Corporation board. The effort to create a state-of-the-art facility for the Bucks is driving the task force. There was no public input on the scope of the Task Force or on which community institutions were invited to be a part of it.

As we consider the possibility of using public money to build a new arena for the Bucks, it is only fair that we also consider upgrading public recreation spaces for our kids. Our research last summer showed that 65% of the outdoor recreational spaces at public schools across Milwaukee County need to be upgraded. Many facilities are unsafe and unusable, and in some locations non-existent. Similar problems exist in our county parks. The current state of recreational facilities for kids in Milwaukee County is unacceptable.

## WHY DOESN'T FAIR PLAY THINK THE BUCKS SHOULD USE PUBLIC MONEY TO BUILD A NEW ARENA?

1. The Bucks (valued at over half a billion dollars) generated an \$18 million profit last year.
2. If the business community feels private money is insufficient and public money needs to be raised, we say that the public should have a say in how its money is spent. Everyone pays taxes; everyone should benefit. Public money should go toward the greater good; it should not just benefit the few who play or spectate in a professional sports arena.
3. Charity is not enough. We need to send a message to all of our kids that they are as important, if not more important, than the Bucks. We reveal our priorities in our spending.

## WHERE WILL THE MONEY GO? (HOW WILL THE MONEY BE DISTRIBUTED?)

This is yet to be determined. Common Ground believes that an independent entity (like the one associated with Miller Park) to administer and distribute the funds is the best approach. The money will not go to Common Ground.

## HOW IS IT DETERMINED WHICH FACILITIES WILL GET FUNDING?

The priority sites picked to date have been based on need and interest that has emerged during our conversations with parents, coaches, students and teachers.

## WHAT MAKES COMMON GROUND THINK FAIR PLAY IS POSSIBLE?

We have a track record of success around foreclosure, healthcare, and education reform. Our members are committed to seeing this issue all the way through. Our sister organizations have waged similar campaigns and won. We have done our research and found there is a tremendous need to upgrade and build quality play spaces across Milwaukee County, and there is popular support to use public dollars to do it especially if public money is used to build a new arena for the Bucks.

## WHAT I CAN DO TO SUPPORT FAIR PLAY?

- Join us at our public assemblies
- Come to our Common Ground Fair Play meetings.
- Organize or sign up for a Fair Play walk in your neighborhood.
- Meet with your alderman to support this vision.
- Visit [www.CommonGroundWI.org](http://www.CommonGroundWI.org) and sign up for our newsletter.
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