

# PLAN GENERATES STRONG SUPPORT FROM SCHOOL AND CITY OFFICIALS

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BELOIT - City and school officials along with Beloit 2020 representatives express excitement about how the high school campus plan can benefit Beloit.

The proposed concept would improve the entire BMHS campus and the surrounding area, and give the district the ability to partner with the community to move the district ahead, said Board of Education President Laurie Endres.

Endres said the district will consider each phase of the project individually. The first phase up for consideration would be the proposed welcome and resource center on the north side of the campus, at the corner of Fourth Street and Maple Avenue. Under Beloit 2020's plan, administrative functions currently operating out of Kolak Education Center would relocate to the to-be-built center.

The board also will be considering the expense of staying at Kolak versus building Beloit 2020's proposed welcome center. Endres said administration has recommended taking out a loan to build the center from funds within the school budget. Endres said she would like to reassure taxpayers the board will work collaboratively with the city, Beloit 2020 and the neighborhood surrounding Kolak to find a suitable buyer if Kolak is sold.

"We are sensitive to being good stewards to the neighborhood," Endres said.

During the Tuesday presentation to the School District of Beloit Board of Education Joe Stadelman, president elect of Angus-Young, said renovating Kolak for long-term use would cost \$4.2 million. There's a large cost to re-occupying Kolak, and it's not in an ideal location for staff and family recruitment, he said.

Stadelman estimated the cost to build the new welcome center at \$6.3 million.

Superintendent Tom Johnson said the district is fortunate to be able to work collaboratively with the City of Beloit, Beloit 2020, and the Beloit City Center Committee to envision the future the high school campus area.

"The potential for the first phase to include a welcome center with office space to greet those into our central city is very exciting. I look at the amazing transformation of our riverfront and downtown area over the years in awe. It is absolutely stunning and welcoming," Johnson said. "To be a part of that same type of visioning near the high school campus area over the coming years is a good place to be for our school district, community and families."

City of Beloit Economic Development Director Andrew Janke said the master plan is a unique collaborative effort between the school district, city and the broader community to create a vision for Beloit's most important public education institution.

Just as it has taken a collaborative effort to create the vision, he said, it will also take collaboration moving forward to implement the plan.

"Our goal in developing the plan was to create an exceptional place that residents, educators, and students could be proud of. As the plan is implemented we hope to do this by taking advantage of the many attributes that already exist in BMHS's uniquely located setting along the Rock River and create new amenities that, when fully integrated and coupled with a strong academic program, will tell a compelling story about the School District of Beloit and the City of Beloit and be recognized as a major component of the continued revitalization of Beloit's City Center," Janke said.

City Manager Lori Luther said the planning effort has the potential to transform the BMHS campus into one of the safest, most accessible, open and nurturing educational and athletic environments in the entire region.