



City of Boston, Massachusetts
Office of the Mayor
MICHELLE WU

February 12th, 2024

TO THE CITY COUNCIL

Dear Councilors:

This is the response to the 17F: Order requesting certain information under section 17F RE: White Stadium and Madison Park Technical Vocational High School. (**Docket #0343**).

Sincerely,

Michelle Wu
Mayor of Boston



ORDERED: That under the provisions of section 17F of Chapter 452 of the Acts of 1948, as amended, and any other applicable provision of law, the Mayor, be, and hereby is, requested to obtain and deliver to the City Council, within one week of the receipt hereof, the following information relative to White Stadium and Madison Park Technical Vocational High School.

1. How much is currently spent on maintenance for all BPS facilities? Please include yearly cost for each site.

The annual cost to maintain the district is approximately \$120 million. This includes expenses for staff, repairs, supplies, and general maintenance required to fulfill all necessary duties. Maintenance levels vary by building, depending on need and the extent of any damage and are often supplemented by the capital budget.

The commitment from Boston Unity Soccer Partners to maintain and operate the Stadium is projected to save the City an estimated \$2 million annually in operating expenses, which includes the cost of repairs as well as basic maintenance, cleaning, security, landscaping, public access, and operations for the Stadium. These savings can be redirected to support other BPS maintenance needs and capital improvement projects.

2. Please provide a list of BPS facilities where students have 100% ownership or access.

Many athletic facilities used regularly by BPS Athletics are owned and operated by the Boston Parks & Recreation Department. BPS Athletics receives priority in obtaining permits from Parks and routinely reserves athletic facilities from 2:00 PM to 6:00 PM, Monday through Friday, for practices and games. Additional locations like East Boston Memorial Stadium have restrictions on when BPS can program activities that do not provide the same level of access. White Stadium, once renovated, will be a dedicated athletic facility with indoor and outdoor amenities for BPS students citywide, expanding the current hours of operation from 8 am - 4 pm on weekdays to 15 hours per day, seven days per week.

3. Are there any potential or perceived conflicts of interest regarding the development of White Stadium?

The White Stadium renovation is a public-private partnership, comprising a BPS project (the East Grandstand), which is a public construction project, managed by the Public Facilities Department, and a private redevelopment (the West Grandstand), paid for by Boston Unity Soccer Partners. There is no public money being paid to renovate the West Grandstand.

In addition to its own renovation project, BUSP will also make upgrades to the lighting,

scoreboard, technology, and other systems, serving the entire Stadium. The City will bid all parts of the public construction project under the processes outlined in state law. The City is not aware of any potential or perceived conflicts regarding the project.

4. Can you provide a detailed explanation of why the project costs increased by \$41 million?

With every City capital project, the City follows a process of starting with an initial estimate before going through the full community process to develop a full program and design. After design is finalized, specific schematics and construction plans are drawn up, which are then used to calculate a more accurate budget estimate. The final budget number comes after construction contracts, based on the final design, go through a required public bidding process.

The initial \$50M estimate for the East Grandstand renovation, published 22 months ago in April of 2023, was based on a rough estimate for a large, single structure that could hold the BPS program inside and underneath.

Through an extensive community process of more than 60 community meetings and more than 900 comment letters received, the design changed substantially. To fit with the historic park's design and not block important sightlines from the Playstead and Overlook, where the Elma Lewis Playhouse project will take place, and to protect many important trees on the east side of the Stadium, the single Grandstand structure was redesigned as multiple structures with slimmer, lower profiles. Construction costs also continue to rise, and we included more categories of work in the updated budget, such as outside landscaping, and other investments that were not included in the original estimate. The final budget will be set later in the spring through the public bidding process.

The City is only funding the BPS portion of the project. BUSP will cover half the costs of the construction project, significant annual rent and mitigation payments, and all the costs to and maintain and operate the Stadium, collectively worth millions per year.

[See Cost Analysis and Breakdown Here.](#)

5. What will be the impact of increased noise and lighting, including extended hours into the night, on surrounding residents and Zoo animals? What specific language in the lease agreement addresses this?

The Stadium Usage Agreement states the following to mitigate noise and lighting impacts on surrounding residents and zoo animals:

- For all Team Events, the Team shall:
 - cause all use of the Shared Stadium Areas' audio/visual systems and any other amplified sound to comply with all Legal Requirements, including, without limitation, the Noise Control Act of 1972, 42 U.S.C. § 4901 et seq., the Noise Control Regulation, 310 Mass. Reg. 7.10, issued by the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection under the authority of M.G.L. c. 111, §§ 142B and 142D, and all regulations for the control of noise issued by the City of Boston or any department thereof (all as may be impacted (e.g., increased) by sound limitations set forth in the granted special events permit for such Team Event).
 - limit amplified sound from the Stadium to not more than 80 decibels A ("dbA") in surrounding neighborhoods, and less in homes.
 - take all reasonable measures to limit noise generated by Team Events, including, without limitation, utilizing directional speakers and sound buffering structures, and installing and operating noise and vibration monitoring systems to monitor noise and vibration emanating from the Shared Stadium Areas at the Property line and undertaking appropriate measures to respond to elevated levels of the same.
 - implement appropriate sound monitoring measures and provide the monitoring results to the City. The Team shall engage a qualified sound expert to advise on measures to reduce the amplified sound emitting from the Stadium and will implement all such reasonable suggestions.

Design and Operational Practices to Minimize Impacts:

- The sound system will use multiple small speakers operating at lower volumes with directional cardioid technology and sound-reducing structures, reducing noise levels by up to 10 dB compared to standard systems.
- Both the speaker system and scoreboard will be directed inward, minimizing noise and light spillage toward the zoo and residential areas.
- For community events, the Grove's integrated electrical connection points and speakers will eliminate the need for generators or external sound systems, reducing noise and air pollution.

Scheduling Restrictions:

White Stadium will be programmed daily for use by BPS student athletes, coaches, and members of the public, and the scheduling of White Stadium shall remain under the control of BPS. BPS plans to make a greatly expanded use of the Stadium and expects to have approximately 4x the usage of the current site, leveraging the greatly expanded hours of operation (15 hours/day) and the greatly enhanced indoor and outdoor facilities, including the grass turf, the 8-lane track, the

strength training, sports medicine, team and community rooms, coaching spaces, and locker rooms, as well as the fields and cross-country course of the adjacent Playstead. To minimize any impacts on BPS and community use of Franklin Park, the lease agreement includes significant restrictions on the already-strictly limited use by BUSP. This includes:

- A limit of up-to 20 soccer games per year;
- The allowed practice on the week of each game shall be a non-public event, scheduled during the week prior, during the school day, so as to avoid any interference with BPS usage;
- Games can be scheduled no more than 2 out of every 4 weekends in any month of the season;
- No more than 4 games per season may be scheduled to start prior to 5:00pm, and none may start later than 8:30pm;
- Sound and AV systems will be turned off no later than 11:30 PM or 90 minutes after a game ends, whichever comes first;
- Game-day events will begin no earlier than three hours before the game and conclude within one hour after it ends.

6. Please share plans, studies, or impact reports related to White Stadium's construction, particularly regarding its effects on Rafael Hernández Dual Language School and Greater Egleston High School?

There will be **no changes made to the bus pick up and drop off** for the Rafael Hernandez Dual Language School or the Greater Egleston High School. BPS buses and BPS families will continue to use School Street for student pick-up and drop-off. We are in contact with the heads of schools to ensure their operations are running smoothly.

Construction hours will be from 7:00 AM - 3:00 PM, Monday through Friday, with occasional weekend work approved by BTM. When there are over 40 construction vehicles expected in a day, the following local restrictions will be implemented:

- Walnut Ave. will be limited to local access only, permitting BPS school buses, families, local residents, and construction vehicles.
- Local access-only restrictions will be implemented on Glen Rd., Sigourney St., Robeson St., and Peter Parley to prevent cut-through traffic using Walnut Ave.
- Two locations along Walnut Ave. (14 total spaces) will be temporarily restricted to create wider lanes for construction vehicle access.

Please refer to the [White Stadium Construction Updates](#) webpage for future updates.

7. How many Madison Park students were involved in the design plan process?

While BPS does not track attendance at every community or stakeholder meeting, we estimate that several hundred Madison Park students have been involved in the planning process through multiple meetings and working sessions. Specific engagement efforts included visits to Madison Park classrooms, such as the Marketing and Communications class, where students provided valuable input on improving community notification flyers for distribution.

Moving forward, Madison Park students will remain actively involved throughout the design and construction phases. Their participation will extend beyond planning discussions to hands-on learning experiences that align with their Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs, ensuring they gain real-world skills directly related to the project.

8. How many Madison Park parents were involved in the design plan process?

While BPS does not track attendance at every community or stakeholder meeting, we estimate that several hundred Madison Park parents and family members participated in the planning process. This estimate is based on multiple engagement sessions specifically focused on Madison Park families, where parents had opportunities to provide input and feedback.

9. How were students and families engaged?

We are committed to keeping the students and families actively involved at every stage of this project. We host periodic community meetings to share broad updates, and regular stakeholder meetings with the Madison Park School Site Council, Madison Park School Parent Council, Madison Park staff, Madison Park student government, the Madison Park Alumni Association, the Friends of Madison Park, and other groups.

The Programming & Feasibility Study involved extensive opportunities for community participation, including:

- June 24, 2022: Focus group with Madison Park leadership
- August 5, 2022: Educational leadership team kickoff meeting
- August 2022: Visioning sessions with Madison Park leadership
- September 27, 2022: Community meeting (virtual)
- October 17, 2022: Community meeting (virtual)
- October 2022: Focus groups with Madison Park students
- November 3, 2022: Focus group with Madison Park students
- November 15, 2022: Community visioning session
- November 17, 2022: Focus group with Madison Park students
- November 29, 2022: Community visioning session
- November 29, 2022: Focus group with Madison Park educators

- December 13, 2022: Focus group with Madison Park educators
- February 9, 2023: Community meeting (virtual)
- February 2023: Student forum
- June 21, 2023: Community meeting (virtual)
- March 2023: Family forum
- November 16, 2023: Community meeting (in-person)

The engagement with Madison Park community members has meaningfully shaped the direction of facilities design planning, including maintaining a wide array of Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs, closely integrating academic and vocational instruction, and opening up access to the CTE programs to the public.

Since the Programming and Feasibility study ended, the BPS and Mayor's Office team has continued engaging the Madison Park community as we brought on an Owner's Project Manager and developed design concepts and cost estimates. A partial list of these engagement opportunities is below:

- February 6, 2024: Focus group with Madison Park educators
- March 19, 2024: Meeting with Madison Park alumni
- April 3, 2024: Focus groups with Madison Park students
- April 10, 2024: Focus group with Madison Park students
- May 21, 2024: Focus group with Madison Park alumni
- June 10, 2024: Community meeting
- August 21, 2024: Madison Park Freshman Orientation session
- October 8, 2024: Madison Park School Parent Council meeting
- October 15, 2024: Madison Park open house
- October 16, 2024: Madison Park School Site Council meeting
- December 17, 2024: Madison Park School Parent Council meeting
- January 15, 2025: Madison Park School Site Council meeting
- January 28, 2025: Madison Park community meeting

10. What is causing the ongoing delay in construction?

There is no delay in construction; any previous projected dates for groundbreaking were only estimates based on the timing of the Programming & Feasibility Study. A typical design process for a school of this size is approximately 18 months long. The design process began in Fall 2024, after the public procurement process for an Owner's Project Manager and architect. The design team developed project cost estimates based on various design concepts, ranging from \$631-750 million, including both renovation and new build scenarios for grades 9-12. These design concepts and cost estimates were shared with Madison Park stakeholders throughout the fall and winter. In order to deliver the full vision of Madison Park outlined in the Programming and Feasibility Study without scaling back the project, the Mayor and Superintendent began exploring the opportunity to submit a statement of interest to the Massachusetts School Building

Authority. If invited into the MSBA program, the MSBA would reimburse the City for a portion of the total project cost, and the City would be prepared to fulfill its portion of the cost. This is the fastest and best way to deliver the full redesign of Madison Park that community members have been calling for.

11. For how many BPS students are we paying to go to school outside of the city due to the disruptions caused by these renovations?

None. We are primarily interested in design concepts that do not require swing space in order to minimize disruption to students.