

CITY OF WARRENVILLE

MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor, City Council, and City Administrator White
 FROM: Liam Walker, Economic Development Specialist 
 SUBJECT: CONSIDERATION OF SPONSORSHIP REQUEST AND
 INFORMATION UPDATE ON POP-UP MARKETPLACE
 DATE: JULY 10, 2025

PROJECT OVERVIEW

The Warrenville Pop-Up Marketplace is being developed as a phased, pilot initiative aimed at launching a seasonal, small-scale vendor village. This program will create low-barrier, flexible retail opportunities for entrepreneurs to test business concepts, build visibility, and grow toward permanent locations. It also represents a strategic placemaking tool to activate Old Town and Leonne Schmidt Park.

While the vision is ambitious, the reality is clear: City staff resources to operate and manage this initiative are limited. This effort must be a true community partnership—co-designed, co-managed, and community-supported—to succeed.

The concept has already generated strong interest. Conversations have begun with key partners, including the Warren Tavern Preservationists and Warrenville Historical Society. While on the Community Development FY26 Work Plan as a Tier 3 item, the recent confirmation that the \$25,000 grant awarded to this project must be spent by **November 2025** has accelerated outreach and site design.

STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT

The Pop-Up Marketplace directly advances Strategic Plan Goal #1: An Energetic and Healthy Economy, particularly by:

- Supporting grassroots entrepreneurship and equitable business opportunities
- Enhancing the Warrenville By Design Overlay with people-oriented public spaces
- Encouraging underrepresented and emerging entrepreneurs to access affordable market entry

Future Pavilion

A central pavilion is being considered for future phases, envisioned as a multi-use gathering

space that can host:

- Themed pop-up markets
- Workshops, live music, and civic gatherings
- Weather-protected programming

This pavilion would serve as a community anchor, complementing the modular shed units and other market infrastructure as the site evolves.

Impact Goals

The Pop-Up Marketplace aims to:

- Incubate and mentor new businesses toward long-term success
- Catalyze redevelopment interest and foot traffic in Old Town, supporting TIF District success
- Meet resident demand for placemaking and social spaces
- Elevate Leone Schmidt Park into a multi-functional destination

PARTNERSHIP-DRIVEN DESIGN

This initiative offers a unique opportunity to develop organically with the help of several stakeholders and public-private collaborations. This approach supports a true community-driven effort reflecting Warrentville's established legacy of volunteerism and collaboration. Growing slowly as the community supports the evolution of the market will help to build upon successes and learn from challenges that arise. Prospective partners include:

- **Warrentville in Bloom** – for landscaping and visual cohesion
- **Warrentville Historical Society & Warren Tavern Preservationists** – for storytelling and landmark recognition
- **Warrentville Park District** – for event sponsorship and site activation associated with special events and programming
- **Local Artists and Artisans** – for murals, displays, and creative installations
- **Local Engineering Consultant**– for early design concepts and layout planning
- **Local Financial Institutions** – to support capital improvements and mentor vendors as they seek to transition to permanent locations in Warrentville

- **Regional Economic Partners** – to support individual vendor skill development, training, and mentorship. Potential partners in this category include: the Western DuPage Chamber, Discover DuPage, Choose DuPage, Service Corps of Retired Executives (SCORE), Innovation DuPage, and COD Business Development Center for vendor training and mentorship

SITE AND SCALE

After visiting several markets in the region and studying their location, layout, and function staff considered several sites in the community for the pop-up market. Leone Schmid Park has been identified as the best site to locate the market. The addition of a market to the park will support TIF #3 by bringing additional visitors and activity to the area. The site enjoys great visibility and benefits including river and trail access, as well as, proximity to community destinations like the Warren Tavern and Historical Society. Leone Schmid Park has space available to accommodate the market and supporting features (e.g. dining pavilion, activity pavilion) to draw visitors to the park.

The location allows the project to begin at a manageable scale and grow incrementally over time. This idea of starting small and building the market over several seasons as interest and capital become available is also supported by the Warren Tavern Preservationists and Historical Society as they see opportunity to engage more with the Leone Schmid Park as the market draws attention to the area and added amenities, such as a pavilion, can accommodate programming.

A concept rendering for the Leone Schmid Park site was originally prepared by Hitchcock Design Group as part of a broader vision for the park. That rendering has since been updated to highlight the proposed layout of the new pop-up market, including the placement of modular shed units (indicated with red boxes) and areas where flexible-use pavilions are envisioned to replace temporary tents. This updated rendering is attached for reference.

The City aims to enhance the market space over time by integrating additional public amenities such as bike racks, a permanent dining pavilion, benches, and other placemaking features that support community use. ERA is currently developing a more detailed engineering plan that incorporates the market into the original site vision. This plan is intended to guide phased implementation of infrastructure and design improvements, with the understanding that full buildout will take place over several years. Additionally, this updated plan will serve as a foundation for any necessary zoning approvals anticipated later this summer.

MARKET OPERATIONS & ACTIVATION

The Market is envisioned to operate seasonally and complement existing City events:

- **Summer:** Concerts, yoga, lunch hours, Food Truck Nights, and Tavern programming
- **Winter:** A Holiday Market using insulated, heated vendor units taking advantage of the enhanced lighting that already adorn the park each year.

Staff is still working on a proposed market program structure (e.g., days/hours of operation, vendor application process, selection criteria, vendor rules and requirements, sponsorship opportunities, rent rates, vendor-sponsored event hosting expectations, etc.). This work will be completed over the winter months with input from stakeholders to be presented to Council for review and approval in advance of a 2026 market launch.

In accordance with the DuPage County Grant spending requirements, the City will install two units and a concrete patio/walkway. The concrete area will represent the buildout limits of the market to provide an interim space for pop-up events (e.g., activities hosted by the Tavern, Historical Society, Park District, and Vendors), as well as, temporary vendor participation from tents and tables until the market is built out fully.

The City will also host a preview event in October or November (perhaps spanning a few weekends). This soft launch will allow for the introduction of the spaces to vendors and the community. Additional finishing of the interior spaces will be completed over the winter (drywall, flooring, basic lighting) in advance of the 2026 season. As funds become available, new units will be added until the market is completed with 8 units.

This approach helps to ensure a built-in audience while creating a new rhythm of activity within the Old Town district.

UNITS AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Staff are evaluating vendor unit options that prioritize:

- Local construction using durable, season-ready materials
- ADA compliance, basic HVAC functionality, Wi-Fi, and secure access
- A cohesive branding and signage system to reinforce the identity of the marketplace

Sample images of similar units used in Berwyn and Batavia are included as a reference attachment.

These examples illustrate the type of modular, weather-ready structures being considered for Warrenville's marketplace.

From an infrastructure standpoint, the current concept—consistent with other comparable markets—does not include on-site water or sanitary connections. Public Works is actively evaluating options for providing electrical access to support vendor operations and seasonal lighting. These infrastructure elements will be phased in coordination with pavilion development and overall site enhancements.

FUNDING & SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITY

To achieve full buildout of the market, and supporting site amenities, there is opportunity to seek private **sponsorships and capital contributions**. This approach is used by communities for many types of projects and can be an effective means to more quickly achieve community goals without overly burdening taxpayers. With this project especially, many amenities are being provided that will no doubt be well-loved assets. As noted previously, the \$25,000 grant award will support installation of two units and supporting infrastructure. More is needed to realize the full vision of Leone Schmidt Park. Naming rights, legacy plaques, and visible branding opportunities could be available for features such as

- Shed units (estimated \$12,000 each)
- Site enhancements (art, signage, accessibility improvements, bike racks, and benches)
- Pavilion infrastructure (as anchor funders or in-kind supporters)

Sponsors could also help to pay for events, make materials available to support vendor customization of spaces, and even sponsor vendor season lease costs.

NEXT STEPS

Staff has submitted a spending plan, in accordance with DuPage County Grant requirements for final approval. Staff is now finalizing the market layout, planning for electrical service, and identifying any zoning entitlements needed to commence processing in August. Bids from vendor unit suppliers have been solicited for selection and approval later this summer. At this time, staff is seeking City Council approval to create a tiered sponsorship structure, in accordance with city procurement policy, to present to area financial institutions and other prospective donors to help support market development efforts.

ATTACHMENTS:

- Slide Deck including:
 - Updated Site Concept Renderings
 - Sample Images from Berwyn and Batavia Shops

Warrenville's Pop-Up Market

A Community-Driven Destination

City of Warrenville Community Development Department



What's a Pop-Up?

- Business Incubator for Retail Entrepreneurs
- Offers
 - Storefront Experience
 - Product Testing/Brand Development
 - Peer Collaboration
 - Financial Literacy

Successful Pop-Up Market Examples

Pop-up markets have been proven to **boost local economies** and foster community engagement across diverse regions.



Batavia, IL



Muskegon, MI



Berwyn, IL

Aligning with Strategic Plan Goals

01

FOSTER

entrepreneurship
and small business
incubation

02

REINFORCE

**Warrenville by
Design** principles

03

CELEBRATE

historical character
and activate public
spaces

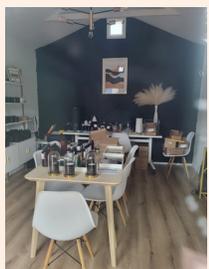


Pop-Up Unit Concept & Features

Key Considerations

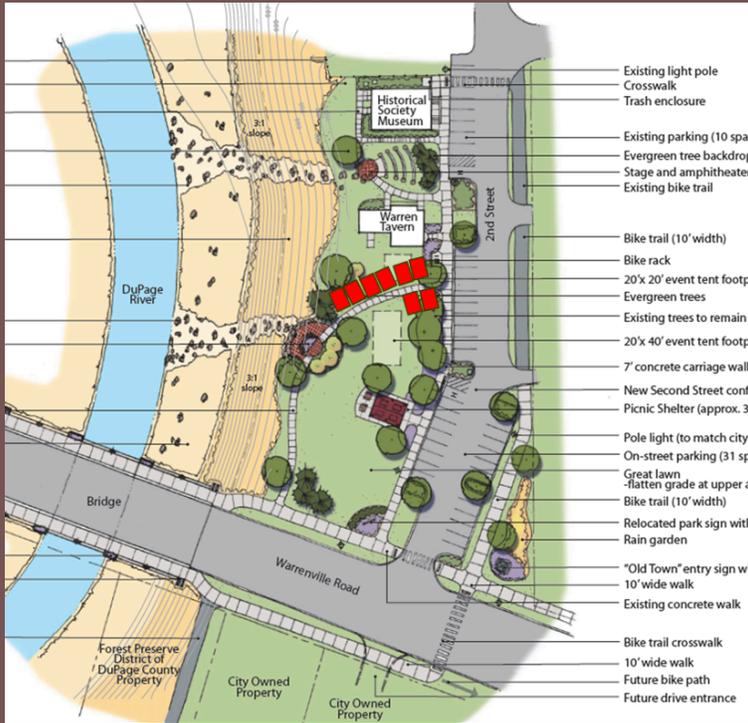
Size - 15'x12'	Wi-Fi access	Signage & Branding (Individual + overall market)
ADA access	Electrical needs	Mix of interior layouts
Digital locks & French doors	HVAC	Restroom Facility Access

Berwyn Shops



Site Vision - Leonne Schmidt Park

• Vision #1



• Vision #2



Community Engagement

Fostering collaboration for local growth and involvement



Warrenville in Bloom

Plants, Beautification



Historical Society & Tavern Preservationists

Heritage Integration



Local Artisans

Murals, Public Art



ERA

Site Engineering



Community Banks

Capital, Financial Literacy



Retailers

Units, Paint, Hardware

Key Milestones in Activation Strategy



Launch

Phase 1: Site Prep & Installation (Preview); Small market through November (1-3 Units)

Engagement

Community involvement through various events. Volunteers; Community partners.

Growth

Phase 2: Development of permanent program; Site modifications; 6-8 Units

