

Responsible Investment in the Stadium Complex: Meeting ADA and Safety Requirements While Expanding Community Use

Waterford Union High School District — Board of Education Packet

October 23, 2026 · Prepared by Luke Francois, Ed.D., Superintendent

Recommendation: Complete the athletic master plan in all three phases: stadium, baseball, parking and softball, an estimated \$11.4M. The mill rate stays at 4.15 whether the board builds or not. The only question is whether the levy room goes to paying down existing debt early or to fixing facilities the community uses every week. The plan uses \$2M the district already holds and a note repaid by the community service (Fund 80) levy. The note is paid off by March 2032 with no referendum.

Agenda

1. Why this work is needed now
2. The choice: same 4.15 rate, pay down debt or finish the plan
3. Three options
4. Recommended funding strategy
5. Compliance and timeline
6. What remains: a right-sized gymnasium
7. Board discussion and action

Why this work is needed now

The home bleachers fail the bleacher safety code, and the track, lights, parking and accessible routes are at or past the end of their service life.

Asset	Condition on record
Home bleachers (1,466 seats)	Fail ICC 300-2012: guardrail gaps over 4", guardrails below 42", wheelchair spaces used for garbage cans (J&D inspection, Aug. 22, 2025)
Track	Last resurfaced in 2014; one surface layer left and due for a recoat
Stadium lights	Installed about 1968; replacement parts no longer made; repairs in 2022 and 2026 costing tens of thousands each repair.
Parking, entrances and walks	Pavement failing; north entrance must be regraded for ADA; culverts need replacing; no accessible sidewalk to ADA stalls
Playing field	One grass field carries football, soccer, band and community use; worn to soil by late October

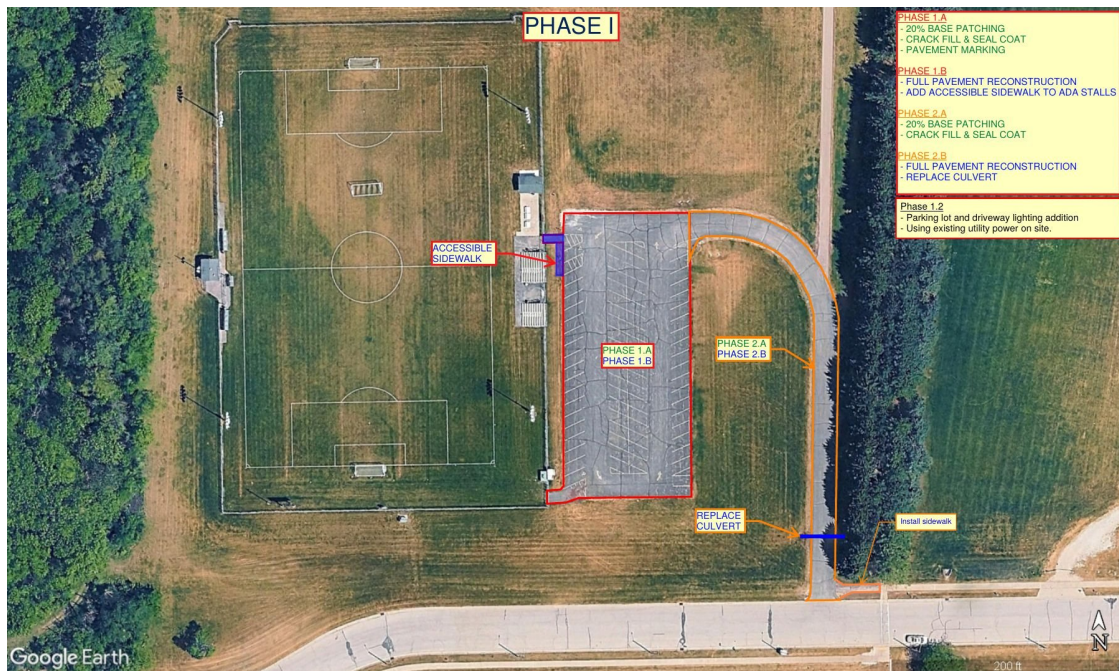


Figure 1. Soccer field parking lot and entrance drive: failed pavement, no accessible route to the ADA stalls and a culvert to replace. Source: Nexus Solutions pavement exhibit, Oct. 16, 2026.

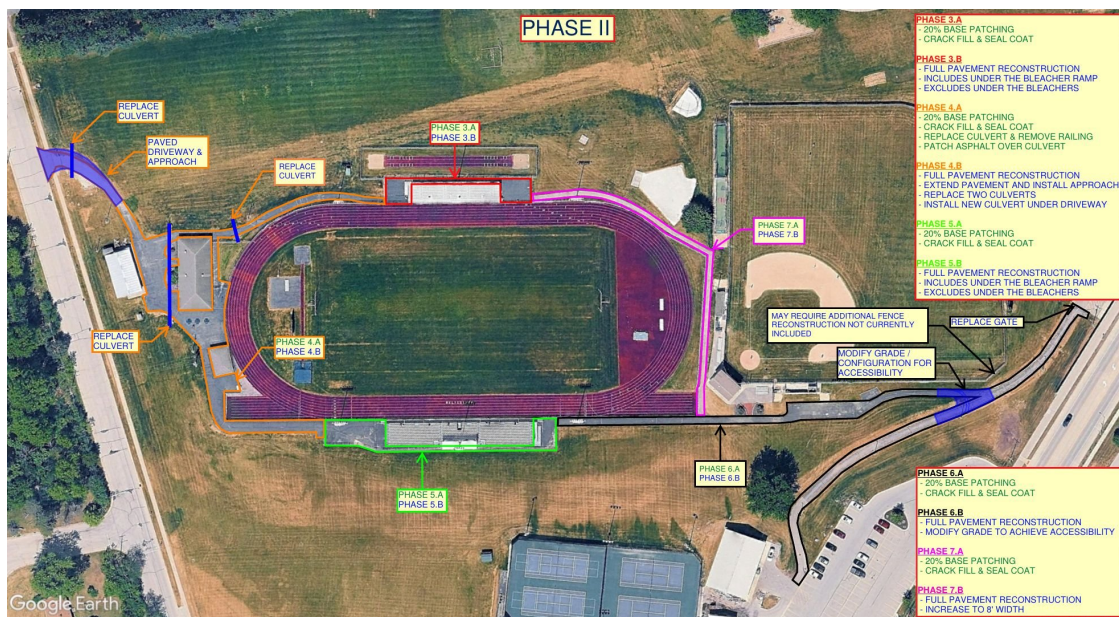


Figure 2. Stadium entrances, bleacher pavement and walks marked for reconstruction, including the north entrance that must be regraded for ADA access. Source: Nexus Solutions pavement exhibit, Oct. 16, 2026.

The choice: same 4.15 rate, pay down debt or finish the plan

Referendum debt payments drop by about \$2.38M a year starting with the fall 2027 levy. The district will hold the mill rate at 4.15 either way. If nothing is built, that room goes to paying off existing referendum debt early. If the board proceeds, the same room pays for the athletic complex.

- **Do nothing:** About \$2.38M a year retires referendum debt ahead of schedule. Taxpayers see the same 4.15 rate, and the bleachers, lights, track and parking stay as they are.
- **Finish the plan:** The same rate, for the same years, delivers a safe, accessible complex the community can use year-round. The athletic note is gone by March 2032.

Three options

Point of Beginning (POB) delivered final estimates and plans for three options on Oct. 23, 2026.

Option	Scope	Estimated cost	Note needed	Paid off
1. Mill and overlay	Mill and overlay the track asphalt with a new rubber surface; resurface jump runways; aerate, topdress and overseed the grass field; overlay plaza walks and the existing parking lot	\$964,924	None; paid from existing capital, and levy room goes to debt payoff	—
2. Stadium improvements	Turf field, 8-lane track, field events, 2,000-seat bleacher with veterans deck, press box, LED lights, scoreboard, new entries with ADA ramp, practice field, expanded west lot and new stadium lot	\$9,136,230	\$7,136,230	March 2031
3. Full master plan (recommended)	Option 2 plus baseball and softball	\$11,412,193	\$9,412,193	March 2032

Option 1 spends nearly \$1M and still leaves the home bleachers failing code, lights that cannot be repaired, entrances that are not accessible, and parking that is too small for stadium events. Option 2 fixes the stadium and parking. Option 3 finishes the athletic master plan in one program, at the same tax rate as doing nothing.

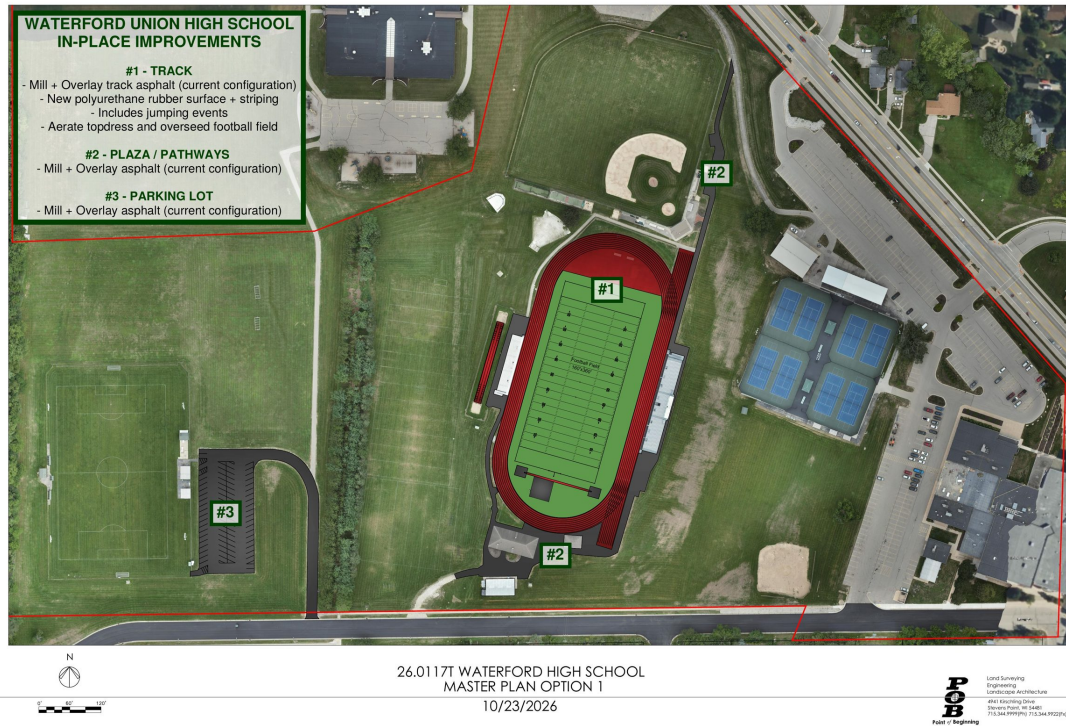


Figure 3. Option 1: mill and overlay in the current configuration. Source: POB, Master Plan Option 1, Oct. 23, 2026.

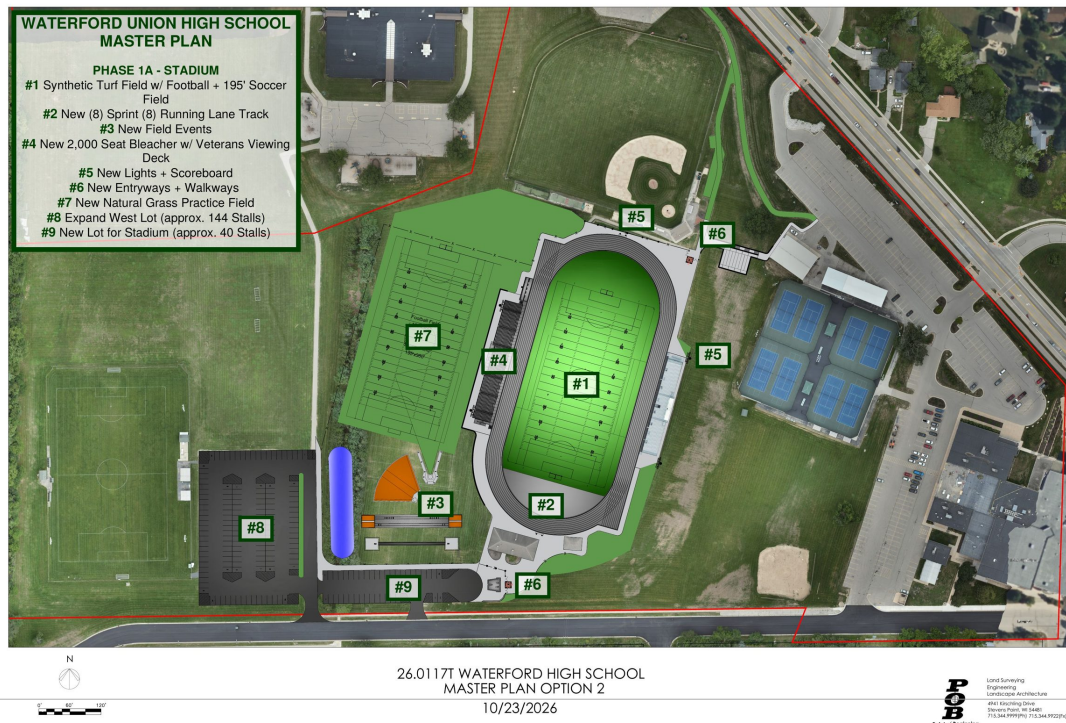


Figure 4. Option 2: stadium improvements with expanded parking. Source: POB, Master Plan Option 2, Oct. 23, 2026.

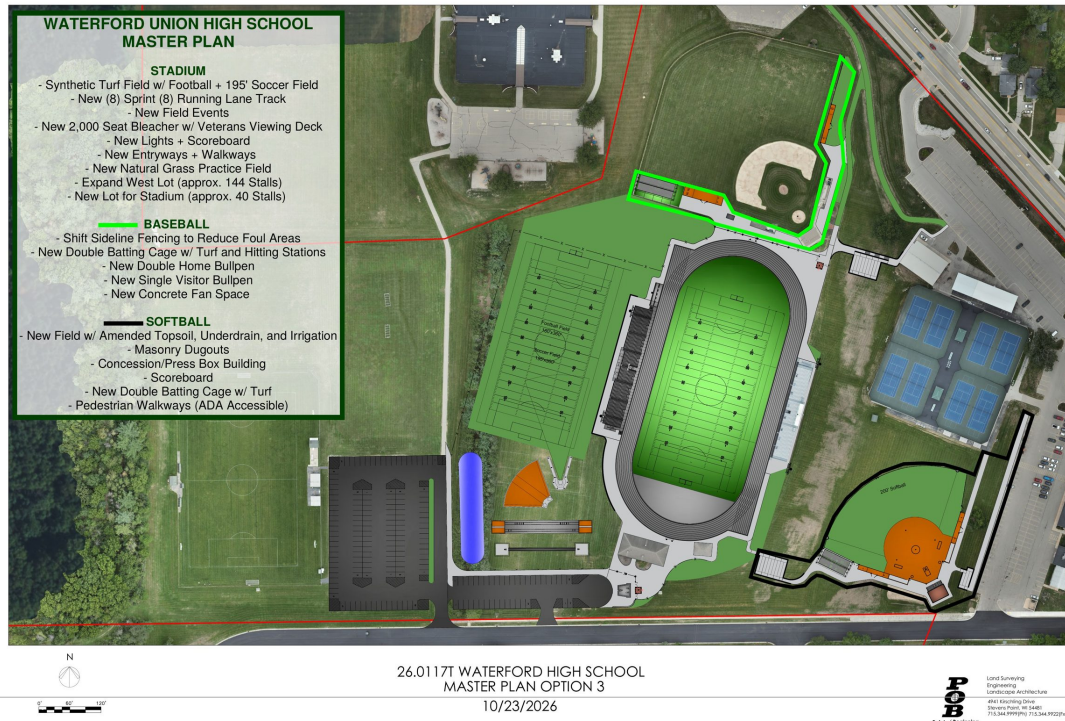


Figure 5. Option 3: full master plan with baseball and softball. Source: POB, Master Plan Option 3, Oct. 23, 2026.

Option 3 by component (POB, Oct. 23, 2026)	Cost
Stadium improvements and parking (Option 2)	\$9,136,230
Baseball: fencing, bullpens, double batting cage, fan space	\$457,375
Softball: new field, dugouts, concession/press box, scoreboard, ADA walkways	\$1,818,588
Total	\$11,412,193

The north entrance now includes an ADA ramp and stair and a retaining wall. All figures include 25% for contingency, design, general conditions, bonds and construction administration. Turf and lighting for baseball and softball are optional add-ons and are not included.

Recommended funding strategy

Build everything at the 4.15 rate, borrow only after bids are in, and let sponsors shrink the note.

Source	Amount
Fund 46 capital improvement trust	\$1,000,000
Unspent bond proceeds and construction contingency	\$1,000,000
G.O. promissory note (Fund 38), repaid by the Fund 80 levy	\$9,412,193 maximum
Total	\$11,412,193

Levy year (fall)	Existing referendum debt	Athletic note (est.)	Combined debt levy
2027	\$2,226,500	\$2,385,018	\$4,611,518

Levy year (fall)	Existing referendum debt	Athletic note (est.)	Combined debt levy
2028	\$2,223,875	\$2,385,656	\$4,609,531
2029	\$2,227,750	\$2,382,681	\$4,610,431
2030	\$2,227,875	\$2,386,093	\$4,613,968
2031	\$2,229,125	\$992,662	\$3,221,787

Estimates assume 4.25% interest from a March 1, 2027 issue date, about \$1.12M of total interest, consistent with PMA's Oct. 9 scenarios. PMA will confirm the final schedule.

Why this sells

- **No tax rate increase and no referendum.** The rate is 4.15 with or without the project.
- **Nothing is borrowed until bids are in.** The note is sized to actual bids, not estimates.
- **Every sponsor dollar shortens the note.** Naming rights, Musco lighting grant, the Packers press box grant and DNR funds reduce borrowing directly.
- **Paid off in five years.** The athletic note is retired by March 2032, before a gym question would commence if approved by voters.
- **Required work first.** The safety, code and ADA problems are fixed in the first construction season.

One guardrail. Fund 80 can carry only the community share of the cost, and Baker Tilly confirms that share each year. Using the two-thirds community-use split presented to DPI, Fund 80 supports about \$7.61M of the \$11.41M. The remaining \$1.80M comes first from Fund 46, bond proceeds, sponsorships, and grants.

Compliance and timeline

DPI confirmed the accounting is acceptable: debt in Fund 38, levy in Fund 80, transfers to pay the note. DPI did not rule on whether specific costs qualify; the auditor attests to that each year based on the district's documentation. Bond counsel saw no legal barrier. After the board adopts the note resolution, residents have 30 days from the public notice to petition for a referendum.

Each step below commits only what that meeting needs to. Nothing is borrowed until bids are in.

1. **Oct. 23:** POB delivered final estimates and plans for Options 1, 2 and 3.
2. **October board meeting:** Certify the 2026-27 levy at 4.15, including about \$1.53M to pay down referendum debt early. Take the first planning steps (see October motions).
3. **November board meeting:** Adopt the note resolution, community-use policy and project approval. Publish notice within 10 days.
4. **Nov. 10:** Levy certified to municipalities. Nothing is levied this fall for the athletic project.
5. **Mid-December:** 30-day petition period closes.
6. **January–February 2027:** Bids, Baker Tilly review, note sale and contract awards.
7. **March 1, 2027:** Note issued.
8. **May–August 2027:** Stadium, parking and baseball construction; softball as bids and sponsorships allow.
9. **Fall 2027:** First Fund 80 levy for the note, within the 4.15 rate.
10. **March 2032:** Final note payment.

What remains: a right-sized gymnasium

With the athletic complex done, one item is left in the 10-year facilities plan: a right-sized gymnasium. The 2025 referendum project completes the classrooms and building systems, and this plan completes the athletic fields and parking. The athletic note is paid off by 2032, and existing referendum payments fall to about \$0.8M a year after the fall 2035 levy. A gym would come to voters as the final piece, with everything else finished and funding secured for.

Recommended motions

Bond counsel and legal counsel will draft final wording.

October meeting: certify the levy and start the work

These steps keep the project on schedule without borrowing or spending.

1. **Levy.** Certify the 2026-27 tax levy at a 4.15 mill rate, and apply the Fund 39 levy above scheduled payments (about \$1.53M) to early payoff of referendum debt.
2. **Athletic master plan.** Accept the POB Athletic Master Plan (Option 3, Oct. 23, 2026) as the district's long-range plan for athletic facilities, and take these steps:
 - Authorize POB and/or Nexus to continue design and prepare bid documents, which its proposal provides at no charge unless the project proceeds.
 - Set aside at least \$1,000,000 of Fund 46 and \$1,000,000 of unspent bond proceeds and contingency for the project.
 - Authorize sponsorship and naming-rights solicitation and grant applications.
 - Direct the Superintendent to bring the note resolution and the final financing plan to the November meeting.

The community-use policy also has its first reading in October; no vote is needed.

November special meeting: adopt the borrowing and approve the project

1. Adopt an initial resolution under Wis. Stat. § 67.12(12) for a G.O. promissory note of up to \$9,412,193, repaid through a Fund 80 levy transferred to Fund 38. Direct the clerk to publish a Class 1 notice within 10 days.
2. Approve the full athletic master plan (stadium, parking, baseball and softball) at an estimated \$11,412,193. Authorize POB and/or Nexus to bid the work in January.

February 2027 meeting: award and sell

1. Award construction contracts based on bids.
2. Adopt the resolution awarding the sale of the note, sized to bids, less sponsorships and grants received, and within the amount Baker Tilly supports.