

Albemarle Site Ranked as Top City-Owned Location for NewCAL Project

The NewCAL Working Group has analyzed the City-owned parcels in Newton and has recommended the Albemarle-Gath Pool as the top ranked site. This recommended site presents the opportunity to both deliver the NewCAL project and a badly-needed new swimming facility without the loss of valuable green space.

In the coming weeks and months, the City will be working with the Parks & Recreation Commission, Council on Aging, City Council and the greater community through a series of public meetings to detail the site ranking process, present site layout scenarios at Albemarle, solicit community feedback and refine the project. While the Albemarle site will be discussed in greater detail with these groups, the City will continue to evaluate non-city-owned sites until a final proposal is sent to the City Council.

The other five final sites examined all would have required significant loss of green space, which is highly valued in the City of Newton.

At Albemarle Playground, the site in question is about two acres of hardscape, consisting of two buildings, pool facilities, two tennis courts and a basketball court as seen in the photo to the left. None of the athletic fields or current programs will be negatively impacted by NewCAL and there are no directly adjacent residential neighbors.



We deeply appreciate all of the wonderful activities and programs like the 4th of July festivities, and none of these will be negatively impacted, but rather complimented by this wonderful facility. This location can accommodate the full NewCAL program, while also resulting in no loss of green space while also addressing existing capital needs at

the playground. The location is a 4-minute drive from the current Senior Center and is in a portion of the City with high senior density. The park itself provides active and passive recreational opportunities for seniors and

people of all ages, and the site is close to equidistant between Newtonville, Nonantum and West Newton Square which all have amenities that support seniors. The existing ample parking in the adjacent and surrounding area will help address parking needs for the facility. Unfortunately, it is not in a village center nor near public transit.

The 54-year old Gath Pool is heavily used in the summer by both the public and camps. It is badly in need of an overhaul and requires continual investment and temporary repairs to sustain operations. The NewCAL project will create a multi-use new indoor/outdoor pool that works for the public, competitive swimming, camps, and allows the City to create a new robust senior aquatics program.

The combination of NewCAL with the Parks & Recreation Department programming currently at the site will create capital project efficiencies, operational cost savings, and new opportunities for cross-departmental collaboration. The Department of Senior Services will take the lead in managing the core NewCAL facility with Parks & Recreation running the swim program and off-hour time periods in the gymnasium. Other departments such as Health & Human Services, Newton Community Education, Veterans Services, Newton Historic, the Newton Free Library, and cultural/arts programs may also be involved in NewCAL programming.