



Big Top Events & City of Madison Breese Stevens Field Contract Extension FAQ

Introduction From Big Top Events

We are proud of the quality entertainment we've brought to Madison over the years including the Mallards, Festival Foods Shake the Lake & the management of Breese Stevens Field. The mission statement of our company is "Driven to exceed expectations." We strive to incorporate that statement into everything we do from how we interact with the neighborhoods that we operate in, to delivering unique entertainment options that hopefully make the community a little bit more interesting place to live. At Breese Stevens Field we feel strongly that the most interesting & best use of the facility lies ahead of both us, & the neighborhood, & we relish the opportunity to continue to work with the neighborhood to deliver the right balance for the future use of the facility. We love Breese Stevens Field & look forward to continuing to make the experience there reflective of the community we operate in & something all Madisonians can be proud of.

Based on extensive conversations with neighbors to date, we have assembled the following FAQ to help answer some of the biggest questions we've heard about our proposed new agreement for management of the facility.

1. I think the neighborhood should have preferential treatment regarding access to tickets to events & I'm concerned ticket prices are skyrocketing for events at Breese. What can be done about that?

Big Top intends to ensure access to the neighborhood for concerts & all events that occur at Breese. In order to outline how that process will work, however, it is important to explain how the overall ticket sales process flows. First of all, the nature of each artist will dictate the type of tickets made available. For instance, the Steely Dan/Doobie Bros show is the first time we've offered reserved seats. It is important to note to fans with a GA ticket that want to sit in a bleacher area that the covered grandstand near Paterson St. is not reserved & would be available on a first come, first served basis to fans with GA tickets the night of the show. Some artists retain a portion of the best seats in advance to use them in Meet & Greet packages & we have no control on those prices. The Platinum dynamically priced tickets currently available for Steely Dan/Doobie Bros is Ticketmaster's way to combat scalping by charging market rate for certain premium locations. The revenue from the sales of these tickets does flow through us, but ultimately 100% of that revenue goes to the artist.



Moving forward we will offer a pre-sale opportunity to the TLNA & we will guarantee that a portion of seats at each price level are available to that group. There are other pre-sales that happen on a varying basis from artist to artist, but we feel that this offering is a pretty unique opportunity for the TLNA & will guarantee them access in advance of the general public.

Additionally, an exclusive, discounted, ticket package for pro soccer at Breese will be offered to the TLNA & all neighbors in the district.

2. *I hear a lot about the history of Breese Stevens Field, are there any plans to tell those stories at the facility through any public art displays?*

Big Top is currently working with Dane Arts Mural Arts to identify spaces inside the facility that could be used for murals telling the rich history of Breese Stevens Field. Given ongoing historic preservation work at Breese, it has been challenging to identify the ideal locations, but our goal is to have the murals approved & installed by 2019.

3. *Why is the proposed term currently 15 years with a 5-year extension for Big Top?*

The proposed term is the outcome of discussions between the City of Madison Parks Division & Big Top. There are several reasons for the proposed term, including:

- Big Top hopes to make a long-term commitment to both the neighborhood & the facility.
- Big Top will continue to be required to provide a Neighborhood Impact Plan & a Fan Access Plan on an annual basis for review by the Madison Board of Parks Commissioners. These plans will be presented to the TLNA annually in advance of the Parks Commission Meeting. If Big Top fails to get Parks Commission approval of either of these plans, the City would have several potential remedies to pursue, including termination of the entire agreement or reduction in capacity at the facility.
- There has been a unique 2-year period for the neighborhood to learn about the quality of management that Big Top brings to the facility & the neighborhood has had the ability to learn about concerns that need to be addressed. Our hope is to use the lessons learned over the last 2 years & reflect them in the new agreement & provide long term predictability for everyone involved.



- The longer term will make it easier for Big Top to invest in additional improvements to the facility that would become the property of the City of Madison. A good reference is the current 13-year agreement that the Madison Mallards have at Warner Park. The length of that term has allowed the Mallards to invest over \$4 million in improvements to the facility over the first 7 years of the agreement that are now property of the City of Madison. Each potential future improvement would go through a lengthy public approval process & the agreement doesn't give rights to Big Top for specific improvements.
- The longer term also results in more guaranteed revenue to the City, which hopefully creates an overall better & more certain business deal for the City.
- Big Top remains open for further discussion on this topic & would consider alternate options as negotiations proceed.
- The franchise agreement for the soccer team requires a 10-year commitment, thus a minimum of 10 years of guaranteed access to the facility is required for pro soccer to come.

4. *I'm curious about the number of events currently scheduled & what is envisioned for the future, can you share your plans?*

Last year 190 events were hosted at Breese. 27 dates hosted multiple events, meaning the actual number of dates the facility was used in 2017 was 163. 147 of the events were athletic events. We have developed a calendar to share with the neighborhood that outlines what a typical year would look like with a pro soccer schedule along with 7 additional concerts to show an outline of what future use could look like.

Our long-term plan would be to host approximately 200 field uses in the time frame from March 1 – December 1. We have discussed some possible winter uses, such as a Family Holiday Celebration, but don't have firm plans on those concepts yet. As you can see on the calendar, there would be some conflicts on use, but we are committed to not impact the access of East High Athletics, the Madison Radicals, Edgewood College & other existing users.

5. *Parking is my number one concern, is anything different happening to minimize impact to on-street parking?*

The biggest development on the parking front is the continued addition of off-street parking in parking structures in new developments in the area. 145 spots were added in the Lyric building for paid public use just last August. An additional 650



spots are slated to open in the fall of 2018 in the new parking structure on the 800 block of E Main St, just 2 blocks from Breese.

Big Top is also committing to actively promote a *Bike to Breese* campaign & will make that a consistent element in all marketing for events at the facility. The intent of the campaign is to make Breese the most attractive event destination for bikers in the community & encourage more people to bike to events. An additional 30 permanent bike parking locations will be added near the Paterson St entrances & all events with over 5,000 attendees will feature indoor bike valet parking for the first time.

The above developments, combined with Big Top's existing efforts to direct event attendees towards E Main St, should result in less people attempting to park in the neighborhood. Big Top will also continue to develop additional parking options in the area & share them in the form of a map with event attendees in advance of each event. The map will indicate that there is no parking on residential streets surrounding Breese & provide another element that will push traffic towards E Main St. New permanent directional signage is being pursued by Alder Zellers to continue to direct event traffic towards E Main St, as well.

Additionally, Big Top is supportive of potential neighborhood efforts to create permitted vehicle parking for residents only on streets in the area surrounding Breese. Big Top acknowledges that this is a potential city-wide issue & that a TLNA ad-hoc committee has met with Traffic & Engineering to discuss challenges on this topic.

There are currently no changes in the proposed contract related to how parking would be managed, but we would remain open to possible modifications as discussions continue.

6. *I'm concerned about the finances of this deal. How does the overall deal work & why is it a good deal for taxpayers?*

The City of Madison Parks Division recently commissioned a Facility Plan that evaluated the needs & best uses for Breese over the next 15 years. The total investment to complete the recommended improvements is about \$3.5 million. The plan outlines everything from historic preservation & bathrooms needed, to concession needs & the building of amenities similar to other modern stadiums. The proposed agreement outlines expediting investment in some of the improvements outlined in that report, valued at a total cost of approximately \$1.6 million, to get the facility up to the standards required to attract & operate a professional soccer team.



The improvements include additional seating, a new PA system to better keep athletic event sound in the facility, required player amenity upgrades, additional restrooms to allow for higher capacity & hospitality areas. The agreement currently has Big Top investing approximately \$100,000 annually in rent to the city of Madison while also paying utility expenses for all users that totals around \$30,000 per year.

Final financial terms cannot be negotiated until details on the final agreement on other portions of the contract are understood. Big Top is open to some adjustments to the overall structure, pending potential modifications to other areas of the contract.

7. *What is going on with the new potential concessions stand at Breese Stevens Field?*

There is not currently a permanently licensable kitchen inside Breese. Big Top has been operating with temporary food permits to date. The City has been planning on adding a new concessions space at Breese for over 10 years & the need for this space was identified in the 15-year facility plan. The plans for the stand also include additional permanent restroom space & would be located at field level in front of the covered grandstand. This location maximizes use for all event types that are hosted at Breese. Plans go to Urban Design Commission on February 21 & anticipated groundbreaking is October, 2018 with an opening by the spring of 2019. The new space will allow Big Top to upgrade their food offerings & focus more on locally sourced ingredients. The new concessions & restrooms will be accessible for all attendees.

8. *What has & what can Big Top's management of Breese do for the neighborhood?*

Big Top is proud of the positive impact their operations have had over the last two years. Here is a list of charitable & other impacts:

- Financially supported every TLNA event it has been asked to support over the past 2 years.
- Lapham School hosts fundraisers during each concert at Breese, raising money for teachers to add flexible seating options to their classroom, gym/recess equipment, carpet squares, headphones, sensory materials & fidgets, & larger areas of carpet, among other things.
- Fifty cents of every concert ticket sold is donated to the Madison Parks Foundation, a total of approximately \$15,000 in 2017 alone. This will continue in future years.



- For the last 2 years Big Top has provided complimentary use of Breese for a Boys & Girls Club football clinic. The donated field time is valued at approximately \$2,500/year.
- Big Top has hired over 150 people to work at Breese on a part time basis annually each of the last 2 years, with a focus on providing young people in the neighborhood their first job experience.
- The pro soccer team will host a free annual clinic at Breese, possibly working with Cap East Soccer.
- Big Top currently employs 2 full time staff members & the addition of the soccer team would add 12 new full time positions.
- Big Top plans to host 8 complimentary community uses in each coming year of operation to provide free access to the neighborhood to the facility for open use, or possible fundraising or other community events. These events will be dictated or approved by the TLNA & not determined solely by Big Top.
- A special ticket package will be developed for the neighborhood for the pro soccer team that is only available at the discounted rate to people in TLNA.
- Each concert has up to 4 charitable organizations pouring beer as a fundraiser for their group & these groups have raised approximately \$27,000 to date.
- Big Top will provide a minimum of 12 additional free facility uses to East High in coming years.
- Big Top has invested over \$110,000 into facility improvements that are now owned by the City.

9. *I think bike access is part of the answer for minimizing impact on the neighborhood, what are the plans to improve that?*

Big Top is committing to actively promote a *Bike to Breese* campaign & will make that a consistent element in all marketing for events at the facility. The intent of the campaign & affiliated improvements will be to make Breese the most attractive event destination for bikers in the community & encourage more people to bike to events. An additional 30 permanent bike parking locations will be added near Paterson St entrances & all events with over 5,000 attendees will feature indoor bike valet parking for the first time.

The nature of each event at Breese dictates that a simplistic “one size fits all” approach is not practical. Some concerts will have upwards of 10% of attendees arrive on bike, but some events will attract less than 1% on bike. Breese will evaluate each event & put together a plan that fits the anticipated attendees. Research indicates that the demographic of attendees for pro soccer at Breese will be heavily focused within 3 miles of the facility. The make up of this fan base,



combined with Big Top's efforts to promote their *Bike to Breese* campaign, will maximize the number of fans attending soccer events on bike at Breese which will have a positive impact on parking & traffic in the neighborhood.

10. What can be done about early morning speaker noise coming out of Breese?

Big Top will commit to reducing dBa limits for all events prior to noon to be under 75 dBa at the perimeter of the facility.

11. I don't think it is fair or good practice to allow a for profit business to make money in a publicly owned facility. How much money is Big Top making on this?

It is important to note that in 2 plus years of operations that all net revenue from the business has been re-invested into improvements at Breese that are now owned by the City of Madison. The owners of the business have not taken any dollars out of the business for personal gain &, to date, over \$110,000 has been invested into qualifying improvements at the facility. Big Top intends to continue to invest in the facility in coming years in a similar manner. Big Top is obviously a for-profit business, but we believe strongly that the best way to operate in this venue is with a focus on the long-term viability of the facility from both a capital improvement & neighborhood perspective. However, Big Top Events is a privately held LLC & is not obligated to share financial information with the City.

12. Can you please explain what exactly Big Top's intent is regarding alcohol service?

Currently, all non-high school events at Breese offer beer & wine for purchase for attendees. Liquor is only available for private parties. Big Top proposes to have the ability to create private spaces within public events that would offer liquor. Tickets for these areas would need to be purchased in advance. For instance we propose that suites would qualify to have liquor available. Big Top is amending its initial request to include a limit of no more than 5% of total event capacity at any event that could have access to liquor. There will be no venues or offerings at any event that include unlimited beer, wine or liquor.

Big Top is proud of their long history of managing alcohol consumption in their venues across the state. Specifically the Great Dane Duck Blind, which offers bottomless beers with the purchase of a ticket to the area at Madison Mallards games, has become a model for how to effectively control a potentially challenging crowd. Madison Police have worked with Big Top to develop a Responsible Alcohol



Consumption Action Plan (RACAP), which has been in place since 2008. Through this program Big Top has gained the support of MPD & MPD frequently references this program to other license holders in the community as an effective policy. One amazing result is that since the Mallards started in 2001, there has not been a single DUI connected to fans attending games at the ballpark.

The RACAP has been modified & adopted for use at Breese since operations started in 2015 & is reviewed annually by the ALRC. The 5% restriction would be a part of future RACAPs & up for debate annually through the ALRC review. MPD supports Big Top's plan for alcohol sales & availability at Breese as outlined above.

13. How is East Athletics being accommodated/prioritized?

Big Top is working to finalize an agreement with East High to guarantee them access to Breese for the duration of any new contract Big Top & the city may enter into. Big Top is offering an additional 12 complimentary field uses annually that East could use however they desire. East will also continue to have their typical 32 field uses per year & will receive first priority scheduling.

14. You know that the noise from concerts has been one of the most troubling things about events at Breese. Given that, why are you proposing to double the number of concerts allowed?

We think it is important to note that there is substantial support for the concerts, as well as concerns. Our hope is to find a balance between those two perspectives. We are open to negotiation regarding the final number of concerts allowed in the contract.

15. Noise from concerts bothers me and I live blocks away, would you be willing to lower the db level? Also, how are you assuring that the current db level is even being followed? Concerts are so loud.

We are currently at a dBa level that is barely acceptable to artists that we are working to attract to the facility. Any substantial adjustment to dBa levels for concerts would eliminate the potential for Breese to host national concerts at the venue in the future.

We constantly measure dBa levels during every event we host at the facility to ensure we are below our limits. Additionally, Park Rangers do checks at every concert & periodically at other events.

16. What about B-Cycle?



Big Top is committed to working with DMI, area businesses & B-Cycle to get conveniently located B-Cycle stations throughout the Cap East District. Big Top is aware of efforts to finalize a plan along with funding sources & plans to participate to finalize those plans.