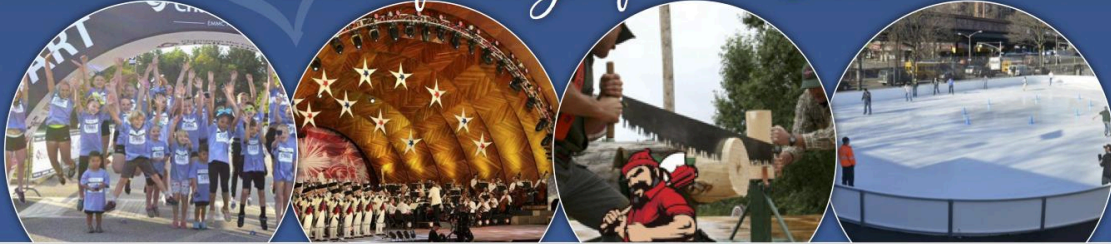


The Fruit Street Innovative Neighborhoods Group Present...

# Mansfield Stadium

*The Heart of Bangor for All Seasons*



## SPRING

Performing Arts  
Kenduskeag  
Canoe Race  
Festivities  
Family Field Day

## SUMMER

Concerts  
Movies Under  
the Stars  
Boy/Girl Scout  
Jamboree

## FALL

Fall Festival  
Lumberjack  
Triathlon  
Thanksgiving  
Turkey Trot

## WINTER

Skating Arena  
Warming Areas  
Snowshoeing  
Winter Carnival



## SEAN T. MANSFIELD STADIUM, THE HEART OF BANGOR FOR ALL SEASONS City Wide Proposal submitted by: The Fruit Street Innovative Neighborhoods Team

The Fruit Street Innovative Neighborhoods Group proposes that [Mansfield Stadium](#) become a four-season facility offering residents and visitors a variety of dynamic family recreation, culture, arts, and athletic activities throughout the year in addition to its regular schedule of baseball games and tournaments.

Mindful that Mansfield Stadium was donated to the City of Bangor as a baseball facility, we involved Mansfield board members and Bangor Parks and Recreation personnel in our discussions. We are pleased to report that all were supportive of exploring how we can make the stadium the heart of family fun for our city.

Mansfield Stadium is one of the most beautiful ballfields in the country. For years, visitors to the Senior Little League World Series were amazed to find this world-class facility tucked away in the center of Maine. Baseball coaches, players, and fans know what a gem we have at Mansfield. But, summer in Maine is short, the Senior Little League World Series has moved to another location, and the beautiful, 1,500 seat Stadium is empty most of the year. Just as it has benefitted the baseball community since it was built, Mansfield is now primed to benefit the entire community, all year round.

Imagine a more intimate outdoor venue for audiences to enjoy live music, dance or theater performances, and movies under the stars during the spring and summer months. Consider all the wonderful benefit runs, walks, and events Bangor hosts. What a wonderful opportunity it would be to have Mansfield serve as home to the start, finish, and award ceremonies for these events. There is already a superior audio and video system, clean and plentiful bathrooms, food vending facilities, plenty of seating and ample parking. Mansfield Stadium could introduce the next generation to the Bangor Symphony Orchestra as host to an annual Boston Pops-style concert on July 3rd, complete with a fireworks display. The field could come alive in the fall with a Harvest Fest featuring a Lumberjack Triathlon honoring Maine's lumbering history with local farmers bringing fresh veggies, pumpkins, and apples. Police and fire departments could host chili, chowder, and apple cook offs. During the winter months, an outdoor skating rink could provide much-needed ice time for casual, recreational skating as well as host high school hockey games in the spirit of Frozen Fenway. Recreation, the arts, culture, and family fun...with a first-class home like Mansfield Stadium, the possibilities are endless!

In keeping with the spirit of what our locals enjoy, our citywide idea capitalizes on many strategies already proven to work well in our city, with an innovative twist. By extending the reach of this field of dreams from baseball lovers to include our entire community, we hope to make living, working, and raising a family in Bangor an even more enriching experience.

From the stadium itself to the immaculate grounds and the way events are run, the stadium managers take pride in attending to every detail. Our goal is to expand the stadium's events while maintaining its reputation as a first-class facility. With that in mind we have approached Dave Mansfield and Ron St. Pierre, who serve on the board for the stadium. They listened to our proposal, gave us honest feedback, and have been working enthusiastically with us to find ways to help turn these ideas into reality including some vital information about a specially designed field blanket that can protect a field yet allow it to "breathe" while it is being used for other events.

While they currently drain the pipes and shut the stadium down during the winter months, they were willing to entertain the idea of adding heating to the bathrooms and concession area so that we could proceed with our winter plans. In fact, because the cost of closing and reopening the stadium totals \$3,100 per year, adding heat would

possibly be a break-even proposal. They contacted Stephen King, who encouraged us to explore the viability of these ideas. We entered these conversations tentative but hopeful and left them feeling buoyed and excited by their enthusiasm and support.

Utilizing formal and informal online and in-person polls, our group spent the summer months gathering feedback from a wide variety of Bangor residents. We heard a consistent message: Bangor has made some huge improvements in the past few years and has become a more desirable place to live. Residents and visitors enjoy Darling's Waterfront concerts, Cross Center events, the American Folk Festival, improved hiking and biking trails, new and improved eateries and shops downtown, the Chapin Park Neighborhood Block Party, Cool Sounds Summer Concert Series, the Senior League World Series, the Kenduskeag Stream Canoe Race and many other family-friendly activities.

When asked about improvements they would like to see, residents also echoed a consistent theme: there still is 'not enough to "do" in Bangor', especially during the fall and winter months. Residents and visitors alike seem to be continually looking for affordable family fun.

Inspired by Frozen Fenway, we propose that Mansfield Stadium be transformed into a public, outdoor ice-skating rink during the winter. While the focus would be on family skating, offering ice time for exhibition games, figure skating demos and lessons are all possible. We envision fire pit areas or heat lamps where non-skaters could relax with a cup of hot cocoa and the snack shack open or even the possibility of welcoming some food trucks serving hot soups and other yummy treats. To make the rink as welcoming as possible, we propose offering skate rentals as well. We envision taking advantage of the Zamboni next door at Sawyer Arena.

In Falmouth, Maine, residents have enjoyed a beautiful outdoor arena near their indoor skating facility for many years. The company that built their ice-refrigeration mat also built the mat for Frozen Fenway. They also are involved with an organization called Opportunity Skate who assists low-income families, senior citizens and persons with disabilities to enjoy ice time. We expect to learn from their successful experience and hope to model this rink after theirs.

We are also encouraged by the fact that this stadium already houses many of the amenities a proposal like ours would need to succeed including new comfortable seating, a large snack shack, clean bathrooms, a security system with monitors and a beautiful \$90,000 video board.

We propose a schedule of events that could include the following:

## JANUARY

Outdoor Ice Open  
Skate with the Black Bears  
1st Annual Outdoor Ice Hockey Tourney

## FEBRUARY

1st Annual Paul Bunyan Winter Carnival  
(Family snowshoe races, cross country ski races, snow and ice sculpture contests, Food Trucks, Ice Bar in the evening with outdoor concerts, toboggan races and more!)

## MARCH

Lucky Leprechaun's Gold  
(All things Irish music, food, local breweries)

## APRIL

Welcome Spring Celebration  
(In conjunction with the Kenduskeag Stream Canoe Race post-race awards, bands, dancing, food, activities)

## MAY

Movie night under the stars  
Family Field Day

## JUNE

Summer Music Series  
Dog Show  
(Complete with groomers, photographers, breeders, vets, and vendors)  
Summer Music Series  
Little Tikes Baseball  
(an opportunity for our youngest t-ball stars to step out under the lights and play a game)

## JULY

A Boston Pops Style Symphony Event with Fireworks  
Summer Music Series  
Summer Theater Night featuring Shakespeare by 10 Bucks Theater  
Boy Scout/Girl Scout Campout Jamboree

## AUGUST

1st Annual Dog Days of Summer Water Carnival

(Anything that is wet and cool, we have it...water slides, a snow pile in August, water gun fights, cool summer treats!)

## SEPTEMBER

Culturefest, Bangor

(Celebrating the many cultures that bring so much richness to our local area through history, food, music, arts, activities song and dance with the support of the students and staff of Husson University and the University of Maine)

## OCTOBER

1st Annual Paul Bunyan Lumberjack Triathlon and Fall Fest

Stephen King's Halloween Surprise

(Come if you dare, a Stephen King movie under the stars!)

Trunk or Treat

(Local businesses provide goodies for area children.)

## NOVEMBER

Thanksgiving Turkey Trot

(Fun 5K before the big feast with a holiday twist!)

## DECEMBER

Outdoor Arena opens

Skate with Santa

New Year's Eve Under the Lights Skate

(say good-bye to 2017 with a special late-afternoon skate, music prizes, food and fireworks)

We see this not as an all-or-nothing single year project. We recognize that we must develop a multi-year plan with both short- and long-term goals in order to roll out events in a way that maintains the facility's commitment to quality.

Some of the smaller events could likely be developed during the first year giving Bangor residents a taste of what is to come. Clearly, we propose setting up social media accounts including a Facebook page, an Instagram account and developing an app that links Mansfield events with other Bangor events, restaurants and shopping.

Our goal is for people to start asking, "What's going on at Mansfield this week?"

We are mindful that the Parks and Recreation Department staff, along with the Mansfield staff, are currently stretched thin. We recognize that to make this project successful and sustainable would require additional staff and to be done right, a director of events. We fully believe that some of the main events proposed would help cover

additional staffing costs and in brainstorming some of our event ideas we see many local and even national sponsorship possibilities.

Depending on the amount of time the current board members of Mansfield Stadium are able to invest in expanding its offerings, the first step will likely be to expand this board. Bringing in additional community members with expertise onto the board would expand the facility's reach into the business and fundraising community. We propose investing in paid staff early on, with an initial budget of \$100,000-\$200,000 to ensure dedication to launch the first phase at the highest level of professionalism. Board members and volunteers will be tasked with raising start-up costs from high profile individuals, service organizations, foundations, businesses, and the City of Bangor. Staff will be tasked with raising funds for phase one of the event schedule, which will be events which can pay for themselves with entrance fees and sponsorships. During phase one, we propose hiring a campaign consultant to plan for phase two: building the ice rink, the most expensive piece of this plan. It's critical to line up experts in the industry, draft the case for support, enlist the volunteers who will ask for funding, and talk to potential donors in advance to make sure the community will support the idea through the build phase and the maintenance phase. The hard part of this fundraising equation is already complete: the facility already exists. It already has the support of the community, donors, and businesses. With some investment in start-up, new and old board members and staff will be in the enviable position to build on something which has already achieved a great deal of success.

Our group has been keeping track of some of the efforts already happening in terms of festivals, outdoor movies and theater, winter carnival efforts, mid-size outdoor music venues and other activities. We are also hoping Mansfield could serve as a consistent home base for some of our fundraising events that have been so successful in the Bangor Area. We do not want to duplicate efforts or reinvent the wheel. Instead we hope to partner with some of these other groups and give these events a consistent home complete with facilities that welcome and invite our residents and visitors. Utilizing a beautiful facility like Mansfield for many events would allow clear and easy marketing and promotions all year long.

Finally, we have connected with our local trade school, United Technologies Center. They and others have expressed interest in partnering with us to involve their students and faculty in any necessary construction. Beyond that, we have many local businesses who may see the long-term value in taking this facility to the next level that may be willing to get on board by donating time, talent, and materials. Not only would partnerships like these reduce some of our up front out-of-pocket costs, but it would also be something for the schools, businesses and the Bangor area to take great pride in knowing that much of the efforts were accomplished locally.

Bangor is experiencing a good deal of economic growth, fueled by a re-energized downtown, Hollywood Slots, Darling's Waterfront Concerts, and micro breweries.

Mansfield can build on this momentum and provide an economic benefit of its own by attracting tourists from near and far to stay in our hotels, eat in our restaurants, and shop in our retail stores. Bangor's residents take pride in our city: we see a need, generate solutions, and then come together to turn ideas into reality. This is evidenced by the success of efforts like Bangor Downtown Adopt-A-Garden, Bangor Walk-n-Roll, and Friends of the Lower Kenduskeag Stream. Our collective commitment to our community is enviable, and many other Maine communities are watching our successes. We count ourselves among those who care about making Bangor an even more desirable city for our families, tourists, and for those interested in making a move to our state.

We are very fortunate to have such an amazing facility in our city, and therefore, the Innovative Neighborhoods Fruit Street Group proposes that Mansfield Stadium should become the heart of Bangor for all seasons.