

To: Goodhue County Board of Commissioners
From: Megan Smith, Land Use Management Director
Date: County Board Meeting of November 4, 2025
Re: Assembly License, Wheat Trail Festival, Belle Creek Township

Agenda Item Summary:

The County has received the attached application for an assembly license from Will Erickson, on behalf of the Wheat Trail Festival Committee.

Attachment(s):

1. Application submitted on October 14, 2025
2. Staff prepared maps of the site and location

Staff Review:

Goodhue County staff have revived an application from William Erickson for an assembly license. The application is for a rural, outdoor music festival to be held July 23rd to the 25th, 2026, to promote mental health and provide resources to the farming and rural community, in partnership with the Livin Foundation Minnesota. The festival will be located at 16764 342nd St Way, Goodhue MN, on tax parcel 25.002.0204, a 200 acre site owned by Daniel Ryan.

According to the County's Assembly Controls Ordinance, this license is required for one-time events where the event planners are expecting more than 500 people. This process allows the County to consider health, sanitation, fire, police, transportation, and utility services. The ordinance excludes a few event types, but staff has determined that a music festival on private property is not an eligible exclusion.

Please see attached application; it has an event narrative and a site map. The County has also received an emergency management plan that is available to the Board upon request, but contains information about plans and procedures for security, hazards, medical events, and weather emergencies, and the event organizers may not want this information readily available to the public.

The application was routed for review to several Departments of the County for feedback, and any comments received have been incorporated into the staff recommended conditions.

A unique element of the event to make note of is that the application includes a request for overnight camping. This extra request does require review and a public hearing by the

Planning Advisory Commission, which will occur on November 17, 2025, and would be forwarded to the County Board for final approval at their December 2nd Board meeting. The Minnesota Department of Health also regulates overnight camping, and the event organizers have been advised to contact the MDH to work through state permitting.

The location is a midpoint between the Cannon Falls, Red Wing and Goodhue, and is located approximately 9.5 miles northwest of the City of Goodhue, and 11 miles southeast of Red Wing. Wheat Trail is a township road in the Township of Belle Creek. The primary means of egress to and from the site are County 1 Blvd, and then to 165th Ave, where it meets with Wheat Trail. If traveling from the west, the likely route would be via County 7 Blvd to 347th street or 352nd Street, and then to Wheat trail. Although the site is rural, it is well connected to the County's roadway network.

The application is requesting approval for up to 3,000 people. To determine context on what the County might expect when permitting an event drawing 3000 people, the following comparisons were compiled:

- In 2022, the Luke Bryan Farm Tour event drew close to 20,000 people, and was held on a rural farm near Eyota, MN. The 2023 event was canceled due to weather.
- The Treasure Island Amphitheater (outdoor) has a capacity of 16,000
- The Goodhue Co Fair anticipated 25,000 visitors in 2025, over a 5-day fair period.
- The community of Goodhue holds the annual Volksfest Event downtown Goodhue, which is known to feature larger music headliners, although staff was unable to determine the size of the crowd.

Staff Recommendation:

The recommendation of the Land Use Department to the County Board is to **APPROVE** the assembly license with the following conditions:

1. County staff shall be included and invited to the event planning committee meetings, specifically the office of Emergency Management.
2. Event signage will not be allowed in the public right-of-way.
3. Traffic should not be restricted unless there is an approved traffic control/management plan.
4. No alterations of the right-of-way are allowed as part of the event.
5. Festival parking may not be allowed on public roadways unless specifically allowed with approval from the township, public works, and the Sherrif's office to allow for the ease of access of emergency response vehicles if needed.

6. The event shall secure a special event permit from the Minnesota Department of Health for special event camping permit.
7. The event shall secure a food license from the Minnesota Department of Health if required.
8. A liquor license from the State and the County shall be obtained in advance of the event.
9. A separate conditional use permit is required for the overnight camping portion of the event.
10. At least 30 days prior to the event, the event organizers shall file Certificate of Insurance with the County in the amount of at least \$1,000,000 that complies with Section 10, subdivision 9 of the assembly controls ordinance.
11. Payment of the \$1000 license fee shall be received within 30 days of issuance of the license by Goodhue County.
12. And further; Goodhue County waives any requirement for cash, bond or letter of credit for the event due to the location not being on public land, nor adjacent to a County road or other substantial public infrastructure.

**GOODHUE COUNTY
ASSEMBLY APPLICATION PERMIT #**

PROPERTY OWNER INFORMATION					
Name: Dan Ryan					
Mailing Address: 16764 342 St Way				Phone 651-764 1540	
City: Goodhue	State: MN	Zip: 55027	Sec 2	Twp 130th 111 Creek	Range 16 West
Applicant William J. Erickson			Phone 507-273-7159		
Mailing Address 34225 Wheat Trail Goodhue, MN 55027					
PROJECT INFORMATION					
Site Address: 16764 342 nd St Way Goodhue, MN 55027					
Zoning District:		Dates of Event: July 23-25			
Event Title: Wheat Trail Festival			Proposed Hours: 6:00 am - 12:00 am		
Expected number of People: 3000?		Expected Number of Tickets: 3000?			
Overnight/Camping ? Yes					
Additional Info: No Power or sewer hook ups					
DISCLAIMER AND PROPERTY OWNER SIGNATURE					
I hereby apply for an assembly license and I acknowledge that the information above is complete and accurate, that the event will be in conformance with the ordinances and codes of Goodhue County.					
Signature Date		Dan Ryan 10/11/25			
COUNTY APPROVALS COUNTY FEE \$ 1000 RECEIPT # _____ DATE PAID _____					
Notes: Rec via email on 10/14/25 m.s.					

Application is Hereby GRANTED DENIED to

_____ in accordance with the application, site plan, addendum forms, specifications and all other supporting data, unless specified hereinafter in the general provisions or comments

New Address Assigned?:

GENERAL PROVISIONS

1. No changes in plans or specifications can be made to the work authorized herein unless such change is first approved in writing by the permitting authority.
2. Permittee shall grant access to the site at all reasonable times that the permitting authority or his/her agents may conduct inspections to ascertain compliance with the terms and conditions of this permit.
3. The granting of this permit does not exempt the permittee from having to secure other permits from other State, Federal or Local units of government which may have jurisdiction over portions of the authorized project.

NOTES

1.

Wheat Trail Festival

- **Location:** Wheat Trail, Goodhue, MN
- **Dates:** July 24-25, 2026 2-day Music festival
- **Primary goal for festival:** Promote mental health awareness and provide resources to the farming and rural communities.
- **Main activities:** Music performances, professional speaker on mental health, Bean Bag tournament, BBQ, and social gathering.
- **Intended outcome:** Reduce social isolation, increase mental health literacy, and connect community members with resources and support. Connect with friends and family.

Program and activities

- **Professional speaker:** Plan is to have a professional speaker talk about mental health before the Saturday music.
- **Bean Bag tournament:** 100% payback, consider the social and competitive aspect to encourage interaction.
- **BBQ Competition:** Plan for the BBQ, including sourcing food, cooking arrangements, serving stations, and health code compliance.
- **Music:** Looking at 2 nights of Country music with regional up to national headliners
- **Camping:** Plan for designated camping areas, including site layout, and noise control. Campfires are only allowed if contained in a fire-ring and there are no burning restrictions. Quiet time will be 2:00am-8:00 am.
- **Alcohol service:** A liquor license will be required for serving alcohol. Looking to team up with a local club or fire dept. Everyone serving has proper training.
- **Food Trucks/vendors:** There will be food trucks and vendors onsite, the food vendors will have proper food safety certificates/license.
- **Community resource booths:** We are partnering with the Livin foundation and going Invite mental health resource providers, like the Minnesota Farm & Rural Helpline or local services, to have booths and distribute information.

Event logistics and safety

- **Security:** A professional security staff for the duration of the event, including monitoring entrances, alcohol service areas, and camping grounds. We will also develop a security plan in case of emergencies.
- **Sanitation:** Regular service of portable toilets and garbage dumpsters will be onsite
- **Parking and traffic:** A parking plan for attendees, vendors, and staff. Coordinate with local law enforcement if traffic control is needed. Note: route and Map in Attachment. Also will have ADA parking available.
- **Medical services:** Will have a first-aid station and talk to emergency medical services are available to be on-site if needed, including access for emergency vehicles.

- **Waste management:** The festival grounds are cleaned daily and after the event. Hopes of having a local FFA or 4-h club to help.
- **Insurance:** Will obtain event insurance to cover potential liabilities, including public liability.
- **Risk assessment:** Create a risk management plan to address potential issues such as severe weather, health emergencies, or security incidents.

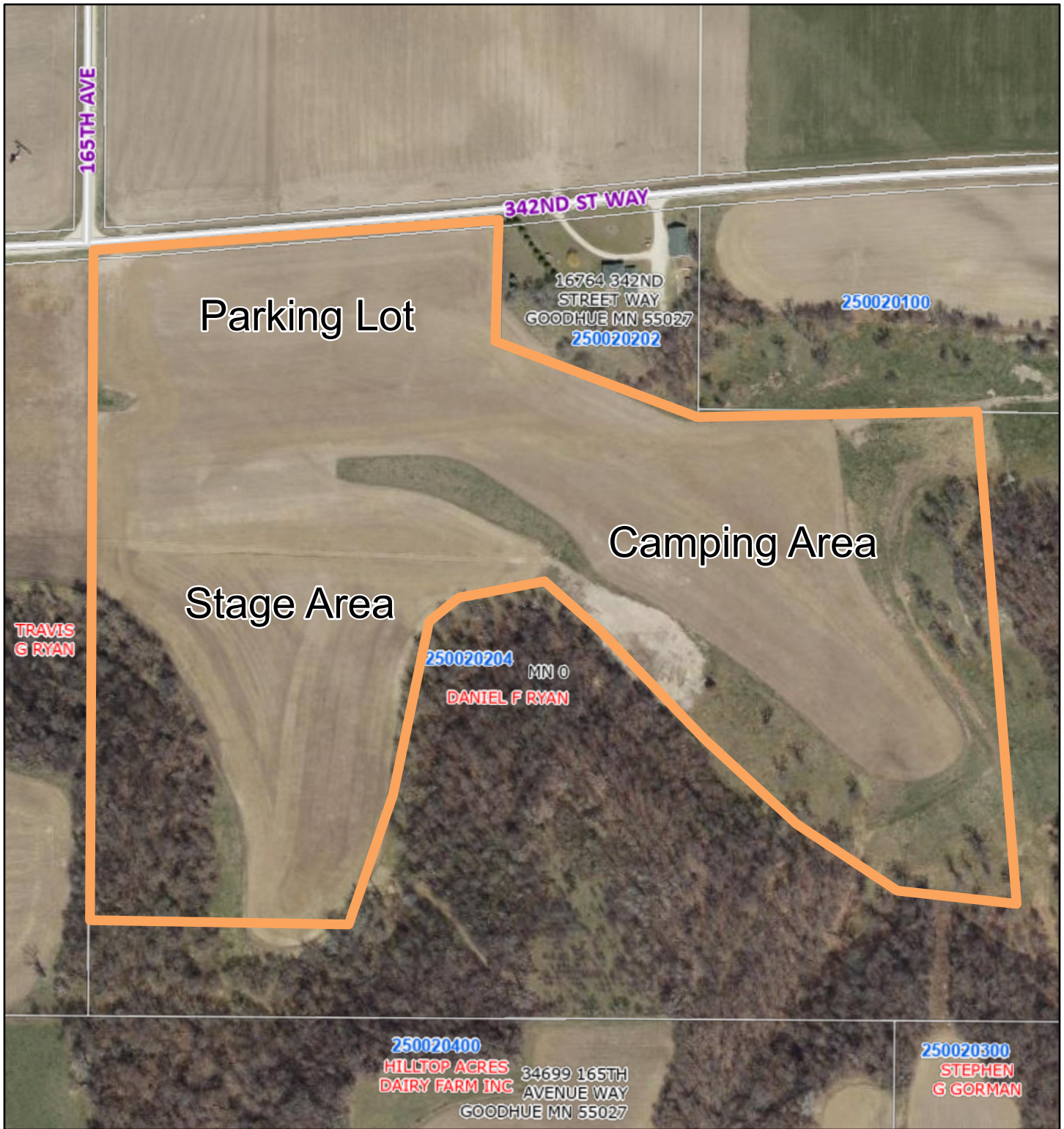


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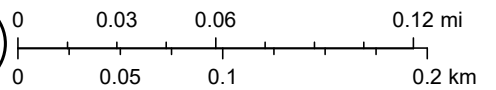
Wheat Trail Festival Site Map



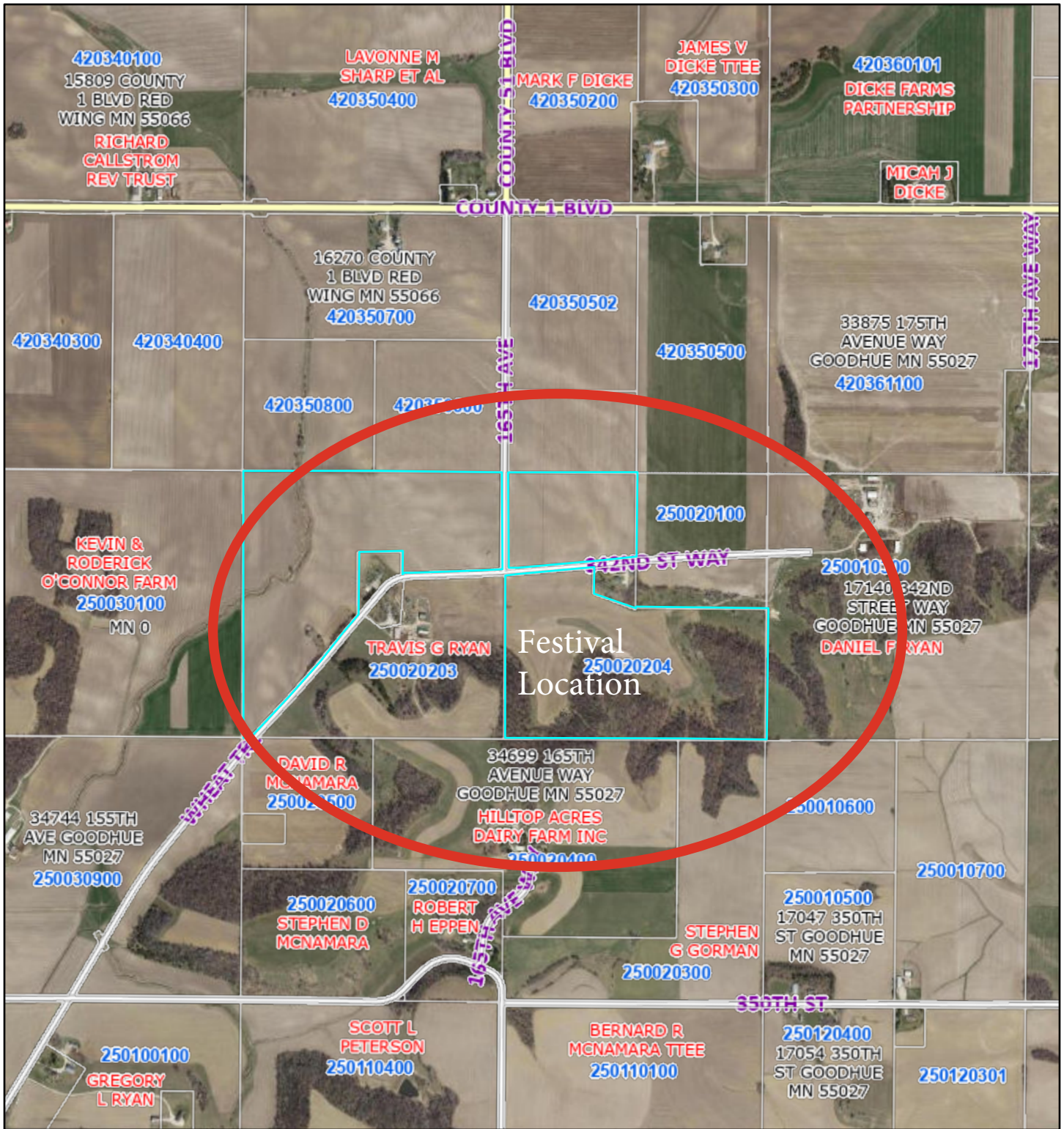
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Wheat Trail Festival Location Map



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