



AGENDA REPORT

Library and Community Services
Public Works

DATE:	October 3, 2023
TO:	Mayor Martinez and Members of the City Council
FROM:	LaShonda White, Deputy City Manager – Community Services Daniel Chavarria, Director of Public Works
Subject:	Opportunities for Soccer Fields and Other Amenities at Various City Parks
FINANCIAL IMPACT:	<p>Based on the information presented from consultants, it is estimated that up to \$7 million could support the short-term development of two to three upgrades to City park and soccer spaces. The ultimate financial impact to the City will depend on City Council direction, final park designs, and more refined cost estimates.</p> <p>The City Council will receive an update on costs and information regarding potential funding sources for these projects during a budget update in October 2023.</p>
PREVIOUS COUNCIL ACTION:	July 11, 2023
STATEMENT OF THE ISSUE:	City Council directed City staff to evaluate which city parks could include soccer fields as well as establish both a budget and funding plan to implement these fields. City Council will receive a status update on short-term and long-term plans regarding opportunities to increase the quality and quantity of soccer fields in Richmond.

RECOMMENDED ACTION:	RECEIVE an update on the City’s efforts to increase the quality and quantity of soccer fields within the City of Richmond – Public Works Department/Community Services Department (Daniel Chavarria 510-620-5478/LaShonda White 510-620-6512).
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DISCUSSION:

City Council Direction – July 11, 2023

On July 11, 2023, the City Council discussed and provided direction to City staff regarding additional soccer fields and the maintenance of current fields. After receiving a presentation and hearing from residents and stakeholders on the topic, City Council ultimately provided the following direction to City staff:

“A motion was made to direct staff to bring the Park Plan to the city council in September with a clear plan for which city parks could have soccer fields of different sizes with a budget and funding plan, and to work with the school district to create a memorandum of understanding to enable the use of district facilities for Richmond soccer leagues. Councilmember Robinson made a friendly amendment to direct staff to work with the neighborhood councils to obtain community input regarding the proposed soccer fields and to allocate a significant portion of anticipated surplus funds for soccer fields. Councilmember Zepeda made another friendly amendment to include funding for bathrooms at MLK Park that are open and cleaned while in use for soccer.”

Per this direction, City staff retained Marcia Vallier with CSW|ST2 to review existing parks to determine locations suitable for new soccer fields, assess the condition of each park, identify required field/site, parking and spectator park improvements, associated costs, and prioritize locations based on identified criteria. Ms. Vallier was previously retained to evaluate conditions from within the inner-city portion of Richmond prior to the City’s redirection to focus on the soccer field analysis.

Recreation and Parks Commission

Ms. Vallier presented the initial findings of soccer field opportunities to the Recreation and Parks Commission Meeting on September 6, 2023. Commissioners noted the following:

1. The use of artificial fields will increase storm water runoff. The project should integrate trees at the perimeter to mitigate this effect.
2. Since soccer fields will occupy area of softball, baseball, lacrosse, and similar field sports, the City will need to develop a reservation system.

Background

The City of Richmond has 50 City-owned parks totaling an area of about 248 acres. In addition, there are seven joint use sites, which are West Contra Costa Unified School District (WCCUSD) facilities that have an area of about 31 acres. According to the City of Richmond 2010 Parks Master Plan, which sets level or service standards for parks and fields there is to be one soccer field per 3,000 residents. Thus, the City should have 23 fields based upon the City's current population. Note that the soccer fields are typically multipurpose use and include baseball and softball uses as well. Based upon City staff's review of the City's current facilities, 20 of the parks could accommodate soccer fields of varying sizes. Four additional sites could also accommodate soccer fields through a joint use agreement with WCCUSD.

Richmond has a robust group of soccer clubs with between 38 to 40 teams including Richmond SOL, Richmond Rayados, and Richmond United Soccer Club. These teams currently play year-round, with a short break of about three weeks in December, locally at Martin Luther King, Jr. Park in Richmond, Tom Bates Sports Complex in Berkeley, and the Rumrill Sports Park in San Pablo. Practice occurs at various locations in Richmond including Shields Reid, Booker T Anderson, Country Club, Nichol, and Wendell Parks.

From discussions with stakeholders, the basic requirements for a field to support soccer club and league play were developed. This includes varied field sizes per age group, but also identifies the need for adequate parking; an accessible path of travel to the field; restrooms, drinking fountain and bottle fillers; spectator area; play areas for children not participating in a match; and fencing to contain balls especially along the goal lines. Lighting is desired for practice and competition fields to extend play hours in the winter.

Soccer field sizes are based upon the age of the players. Soccer age groups have a "Ux" naming convention, with "U" meaning under and "x" being the age. Thus, a U10 field is for players under 10 years old. In addition, fields are defined by the number of players, 7v7 means seven players on each team. This typically occurs at ages of 9 and above. Based upon discussion with Richmond's Soccer groups, the U10 fields are adequate for practice and under 10-year-old players while U13 would be for older players and tournament play. The field at Martin Luther King Park, Jr. is an example of a tournament field. The following tables illustrate the sizes of various field types ranging from small children to collegiate players.

U8/4v4 – Player 6 to 8 years old – Potential for integration into small areas

Feature	Size
Length (touchline)	25-35 yards
Width (goal line)	15-25 yards
Goal Size	6 feet wide x 4 ft. high

U10/7v7 – Player 9 to 10 years old – Typical practice field

Feature	Size
Length (touchline)	55-65 yards (50-59.4 meters)
Width (goal line)	35-45 yards (32-41 meters)
Goal Size	18 feet wide x 6 ft. high

U13/11v11 – Players 13 to 18 – Typical for league play

Feature	Size
Length (touchline)	100-130 yards (90-120 meters)
Width (goal line)	50-100 yards (45-90 meters)
Goal Size	24 feet wide x 8 ft. high

College level (NCAA) – Provided for reference.

Feature	Size
Length (touchline)	115-120 yards
Width (goal line)	70-75 yards
Goal Size	8 yds wide x 8 ft. high

CSW|ST2 staff have visited all the parks in Richmond and has confirmed that fields of various sizes as previously noted can be integrated. In general, CSW|ST2 staff recommends developing six to ten adult competition U13/11v11 fields with the remaining fields being U10/7v7 as practice fields. The following table illustrates the field size and quantity per election district.

DISTRICT 1 – (3) U10 and (2) U13 Fields
Belding Garcia Park – (1) U10 Lucas Park – (1) U10 and (1) U13 Nevin Park – (1) U10 Wendell Park – (1) U13
DISTRICT 2 – (2) U10 and (3) U13 Fields
Country Club Vista Park – (1) U10 and (1) U13 Judge Carroll Park – (1) U10 North Richmond Ball Field – (1) U13 Shields-Reid Park – (1) U13 <i>an existing plan exists to upgrade the field</i>
DISTRICT 3 – (4) U10 and (5) U13 Fields plus (1) U13 Joint Use Field
Boorman Park – (1) U10 Boyd Park – (1) U13 Martin Luther King, Jr. Park – (2) U13

Lavonya De Jean Middle School Field – (1) U13, Need Joint Use Agreement Nichol Park – (2) U10, (2) U13 Unity Park Phase II – (1) U10 – future if grant awarded
DISTRICT 4 – (3) U10 and (3) U13 Joint Use Fields
Fairmede Park at Highland Elementary School – (1) U13, Joint Use Site Hilltop Park – (1) U10 – Joint Use Site LaMoine Park at Valley View School Field – (1) U13, (2) U10, Joint Use Site Olinda School Field – (1) U13, Joint Use Site
DISTRICT 5 – (1) U10, (4) U13 and (2) Recreational Fields, and (2) U13 Joint Use Fields
Booker T. Anderson Park – (2) U13 John F. Kennedy Park – (1) U13, (1)U10 Lucretia Edwards Park – (1) Recreational, non-league/club play Marina Park – (1) U13 Shimada Park – (1) Recreational, non-league/club play Vincent Park – (1) Recreational, non-league/club play State Court Park at Kennedy High School – (2) U13, Need Joint Use Agreement
DISTRICT 6 – (1) U10 and 1 Recreational Field
Burg Park – (1) U10 Tiller Park – (1) Recreational, non-league/club play

A typical test fit of a soccer field layout at County Club Vista that fits full-size U13 and a U10 field is shown in the following figure. Additional test fits are shown in the presentation attached to this staff report (Attachment 1).



The City has multiple parks that can accommodate the U10 and U13 soccer fields that will meet the current demand. Space was identified for 14-U10 and 17-U13 fields within City parks. There is the potential for 3-U1- and 6-U13 using four to six of the WCCUSD joint use sites. This exceeds the required 23 fields needed to meet the 1 soccer field per 3,000 people level of service.

CSW|ST2 staff learned that WCCUSD is open to restoring joint use agreements allowing the use of school facilities. Additionally, there is a '7-11' committee looking at surplus school sites and a few that are not good candidates for sale or teacher housing due to access or other issues may be great locations for soccer fields. Related to that, Supervisor John Gioia is looking into surplus County sites for a soccer complex to address concerns he has heard from the soccer community, county-wide like the Gilman Fields complex.

A key constraint to developing soccer fields is the high use. Stakeholders expect to use the field year-round except for December. A natural grass field must rest so that it is not damaged. For this high level of use, the U13 competition and some of the U10 practice fields will likely need to be constructed from artificial turf. Artificial turf costs more, but its life cycle cost is less than grass and it provides space for year-round play. The following compares the cost and restrictions between various field types.

Item	Natural Turf	Artificial Turf
Cost	\$15/ SF	\$30/SF
Maintenance	Raked and seeded every year	Replace turf every 10 to 15 years
Irrigation required	Yes, to water the turf	Yes, to cool the turf.
Use limitations	Must heal after use	No requirements

To immediately improve soccer field opportunities, there are two sites within the City that may be considered:

- Wendell Park – Wendell Park can provide one U13 field. All that would be required is repair of the irrigation, smoothing of the surface, and re-sodding. This work can be accomplished for a modest investment of less than \$250,000. Additional work may include restoration of the softball infield, new fencing and backstop, and new play equipment and surfacing totaling an additional \$500,000.
- Shields Reid Park – Shields Reid Park was designed to have a combined soccer and softball field. It is currently in the planning stage to improve the playground and add an amphitheater. A soccer field could be incorporated into the park. The costs to upgrade the field and repair the basketball courts range from about \$1 million to \$4.7 million. The higher range includes artificial turf, field lights, and fencing.

Moving forward, CSW|ST2 and City Staff estimates the cost to implement the soccer fields listed above could require up to approximately \$7 million in funding (could include additional amenity upgrades, upgrades to other soccer spaces that could be done in a

shorter-term timeframe, escalating costs, etc.). This would create an increase in operations cost; however, an analysis of those annual costs are currently unknown. The ultimate financial impact to the City will depend on City Council direction, final park designs, and more refined cost estimates. The City Council will receive an update on costs and information regarding potential funding sources for these projects during a budget update in October 2023.

Environmental Review

At this time, the project has not been reviewed in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act. Once a project description is developed, City staff will evaluate it in accordance with the requirements of the California Public Resources Code.

Next Steps

City staff looks forward to additional discussion and direction regarding improved and increased soccer fields in Richmond. Moving forward, City staff will:

- Work to implement the short-term projects within Fiscal Year 2023-24
- Implement existing grant-funded projects
- Continue to look for grants to develop more soccer fields and upgrade other park amenities
- Review all park needs to ensure equitable allocation of resources
- Allocate City resources to support the development of soccer fields and upgrade park amenities
- Continue work with WCCUSD – Draft JUA to City Council before end of December 2023
- Engage community members, park users and neighborhood councils

DOCUMENTS ATTACHED:

Attachment 1 – Soccer Field Presentation