

March 4, 2022

TO: Patty Buholm, Director of Planning and Grants, City of Dillingham
CC: Dillingham, Alaska Planning Commission
FROM: Elizabeth Clark, Education and Training Manager, Bristol Bay Native Association
SUBJECT: Downtown Dillingham Playground Renovation Project Overview

Dear Mrs. Buholm and Commissioners,

The purpose of this memo is to provide important information and updates regarding the Downtown Playground Renovation Project to the Planning Commission and new Director of Planning and Grants. It is the hope of BBNA and the Working Group to continue effective collaboration with the City and ensure a successful project completion. The information will be organized into five sections: 1) Timeline, 2) public process to date, 3) project updates from December 2021 to March 1, 2022, 4) upcoming plans, and 5) collaboration needs between the City and BBNA

Section I: Timeline-To-Date

April 2021: BBNA reached out to the former City Planner with the project proposal. The City Planner brought the proposal to the Mayor and Interim City Manager at the time, who gave the City Planner casual approval to proceed.

May 2021

- BBNA conducted a community survey that measured the project's perceived importance to the community. Using the results of the survey, the team began preliminary design and budgeting concepts. BBNA reached out to the school district and the Superintendent gave his informal support of the project. Additionally, BBNA reached out to Curyung Tribal Council who also gave their informal support of the project.
- The project was discussed during commissioner comments at the May Planning Commission meeting. At this time, the former Planning Director (herein referred to as "PD") explained to the Planning Commission that since the project did not involve issues with changing of land use, there existed no public process for approving the project. At this time, the PD clarified that both the Mayor and the (then) City Manager had both been informed of the project and had given permission to proceed.
- The team met regularly throughout the summer. We were ready to place an order for the playground equipment in July, when we were informed by the manufacturer that the playground could not be completed in time for the last barge due to COVID-related supply chain disruptions. The manufacturer stated at the time that we needed to have an order in by March 2022 in order to guarantee shipment of the equipment in July 2022. At the same time, BBNA was informed that the Planning Director would no longer be working on the project, and the new city contact would be the (then)

Interim City Manager (ICM). When we reached out to the ICM, he indicated that the PD would still be the contact. At this point, the team briefly stopped meeting until we could figure out the communication issues.

October 2021

- BBNA was contacted by the playground manufacturer, who informed us that in order to guarantee manufacture and shipment of the equipment, BBNA's timeline for placing a final order was moved from March 2022 to the end of the year, 2021. At this point, BBNA and the PD began to meet again.
- The Planning Commission met for a Comprehensive Plan Workshop in late October, where the project was brought up during discussion. The Planning Commission requested that the issue be discussed and formally approved by the commission at the next meeting.

November 2021

- The Planning Commission met on 11/3 during a regular meeting and voted to approve Resolution 2021-09. Public Notice was given. During this meeting, BBNA presented the project proposal to the commission. The resolution passed unanimously. During the meeting, Mayor Ruby requested that BBNA reach out to the School District to gain their formal support.
- BBNA met with the Dillingham City School Board during November's Work Session and presented the project proposal. During the School Board's November Regular Meeting, they voted unanimously to support the project formally, and designated a School Representative to participate in the working group meetings. The playground approval was an agenda item, and there was public notice and opportunity for public comment at this meeting.

December 2021

- The City Council met on 12/12 and passed a resolution supporting the acceptance of the playground equipment as an in-kind donation. Public notice was given, as well as an opportunity for public comment prior to the council vote. BBNA was present at the meeting and informed the council that they were present to answer any questions about the project. The council had no questions.

Section II: Public Process Components To-Date

It is important to note that our City municipal code lacks a formal process for collaborative projects such as this. It may be beneficial to bring this issue to the Code Review Committee or the City Council to draft official code, ordinance, or other guidance for future collaborative projects. Given that there doesn't appear to be an existing framework to which the team could defer, BBNA and the (then) Planning Director employed a good-faith effort to account for public input. Below is a list of ways the public have had the unofficial and official opportunities for participation in the project:

1. Community survey made available on widely-used social media platforms. 61 participants total. Results from the survey were shared with the City Planner.
2. 11/3/21 Planning Commission Meeting- Public Notice and opportunity for Public Hearing provided.
3. November DCSD School Board Work Session- Public Notice and opportunity for Public Comment provided.
4. November DCSD School Board Regular Meeting- Public Notice and opportunity for Public Comment provided.
5. December City Council Regular Meeting- Public Notice and opportunity for Public Comment Provided.

Section III: Project Updates from December 2021-Present

1. **Working Group:** The Working Group has expanded to now include representatives from BBNA, the City, DCSD, and two community members. The group has been meeting bi-weekly, with the intention of returning to weekly meetings as spring approaches.
2. **Playground Design:** The Working Group met 12/29/2021 and selected the final playground design. The equipment was selected out of 3 final choices due to cultural relevance (fishing boat hull play area) and accessibility for children with disabilities. The project will include two separate play structures to accommodate children of all ages (2-12). Additionally, disruptive play features like a merry-go-round and specialized rail climber were included in the final design. All structures fit within the target use space and budget. Rubberized Pour-in-Place safety surfacing is also included.
3. **Playground Purchase:** BBNA placed the final order for the playground on January 6, 2022. The project totals \$365,000, which includes installation. After purchase, delivery and installation dates were set. Please see next section for details regarding delivery and installation schedules.
4. **Utilities Locates:** Nushagak Cooperative completed a utilities locate on February 8, 2022 for internet, electric, phone, and cable in the area. It was confirmed that there are no utilities in the area. The Public Works Director with the City also completed a utilities locate and confirmed there are no water or sewer utilities in the project area.

Section IV: Upcoming Plans

1. **Construction Schedule:** One of our Community Member representatives is a construction manager with BBAHC. He graciously offered to work with the playground contracting company to develop a comprehensive construction schedule, which will include a timeline as well as equipment, labor, and miscellaneous needs to make for a smooth installation.
2. **Public Process:** It is the hope that the playground renovation will be on the schedule for each Planning Commission meeting until installation to afford the opportunity for

additional public comment. The final piece of the final process that is needed is to determine the exact location/placement of the playground.

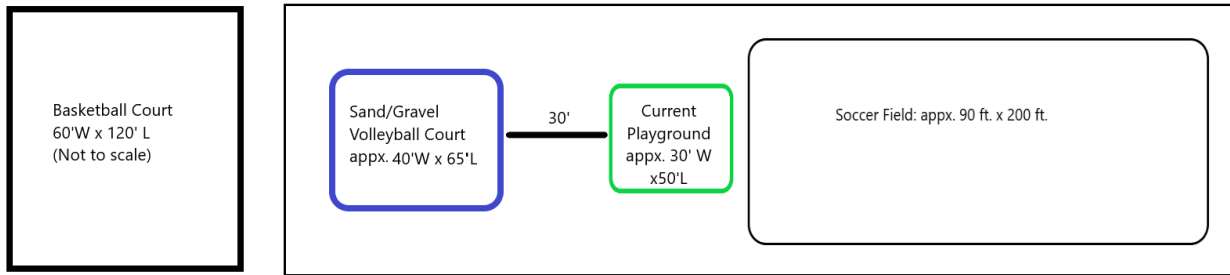
3. **Shipping and Installation:** Shipping and installation dates have been scheduled by the playground contractor. The equipment is scheduled to leave the Seattle docks on the May 27th barge. Installation of the equipment is scheduled to begin July 11, and installation of the safety surfacing is scheduled to begin July 21, 2022.

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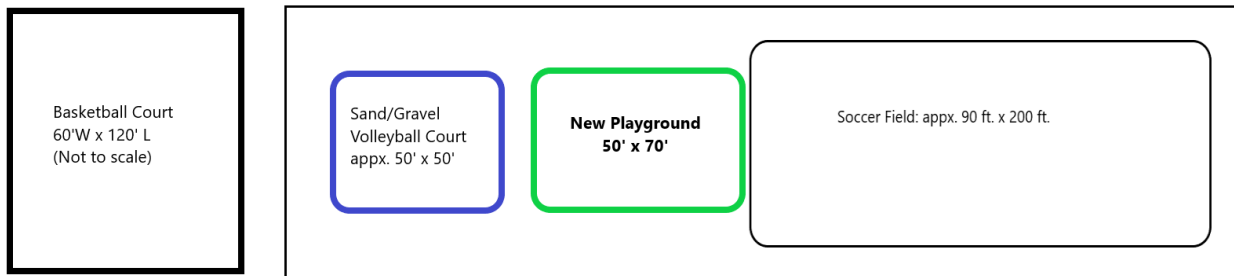
Section V: Collaboration Needs between the City and BBNA

- 1. Location/Placement of Playground:** According to Resolution 2021-09 that passed on November 3, 2021, the Planning Commission recommended to the Council the approval of the playground to be, “located at the old airstrip location (USS 2732, Block 5, Lot Remains).” In Resolution 2021-37 adopted by City Council on 12/16/2021, there appears to be no requirement for the Council or the Planning commission to formally approve the placement or location of the playground. The project partners in collaboration with the Planning Commission should work together to determine exact “placement” of the playground before installation. Please see the diagrams and placement considerations below:

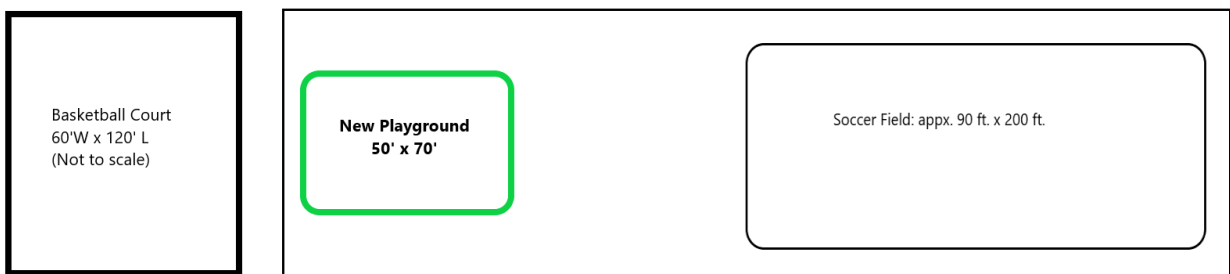
Existing Layout



Playground Option 1: "Replace-in-Place"



Playground Option 2: Remove Volleyball Court



Considerations Regarding Playground Placement: Playground Option 1 allows us to keep the existing volleyball court, which has not been utilized in recent history and was not indicated on the community survey as a priority. Playground Option 2 allows for development of future phases, pending support and available funding. One example of a future development includes installing a covered picnic pavilion, which can serve in this space as a multipurpose facility for community events, family gatherings, and even musical performances. This was an identified area of need on the community survey. The Working Group has discussed the different placement options, and agree that Option 2 provides for more opportunities for future development of the space. **Both options leave the soccer field untouched and preserve its current size.** Option 2 would actually extend the soccer field by approximately 50 feet.

2. **Permits (if applicable):** In order to complete the project, the Working Group and Planning Department need to determine if any permits are needed, such as land use, ROW, etc. Through previous discussions with the former City Manager and City Planner, it appears there are no permits required. We need to verify this is correct and follow any public hearing requirements necessary to obtain the permits if needed.
3. **Initial grade work, removal of existing equipment, and simple equipment for installation:** The project contractor (Alaska Education and Recreational Products, LLC) will be responsible for all installation of equipment and safety surfacing, which includes detailed grading work. We will need to determine how to remove the existing equipment and conduct initial simple leveling of the space. Previous conversations with the former Planning Director indicated that the city would likely be able to assist with the leveling if needed, which will be minimal. We are working with the contractor on specifics, and more information will become available as we move closer to installation. The project contractor will have a detailed list of simple equipment needed. The working group will work with community partners to obtain as much of the equipment use and work needed as in-kind donations.
4. **Memorandum of Agreement:** We have discussed the potential need for an MOA that would cover some important details. Through our work with the City, we were able to confirm that the City's liability insurance does cover the playground. We worked with the insurance company to ensure the equipment we selected would be covered. Some details that require further attention include routine maintenance of the space in the future. We worked with the former Planning Director to select highly durable equipment and safety surfacing that requires minimal, very infrequent maintenance to reduce any potential costs or complications in the future.