



**TOWN OF LOS GATOS
COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT**

MEETING DATE: 09/07/2021

ITEM NO: 8

DATE: September 2, 2021
TO: Mayor and Town Council
FROM: Laurel Prevetti, Town Manager
SUBJECT: Creekside Sports Park - Approve Ongoing Seasonal Field Lighting and Provide Feedback on Capital Maintenance Funding Needs

RECOMMENDATION:

Creekside Sports Park - Approve ongoing seasonal field lighting and provide feedback on capital maintenance funding needs.

BACKGROUND:

Creekside Sports Park is the Town's premier sports facility completed and opened in 2012. Since the opening of the Park, utilization has been very high especially during after school hours and weekends when Los Gatos United Soccer League and West Valley Red Hawks Lacrosse Club have exclusive use of the field. Even during school hours, the field is used by the community for practice exercises and pick-up games daily. The field turf is a synthetic artificial turf and asphalt base infill, with a design life of approximately 10 years.

DISCUSSION:

Park utilization has continued to increase as popularity of the Park and related activities grows in the community. With this increased popularity comes a growing demand for programmed access to the field by the youth leagues in an already saturated schedule. Earlier this year due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Parks and Public Works staff made an administrative decision to allow the use of portable solar LED lighting on the field to extend the field access to 8:30 p.m. in an effort to spread the practices and training camps apart. This pilot effort was extremely successful with no effect to the surrounding neighborhood as the 8:30 time limit is customary during summer season's natural lighting. In addition, the Soccer League was diligent in adhering to the agreed upon time limits.

PREPARED BY: Jim Harbin
Superintendent

Reviewed by: Town Manager, Assistant Town Manager, Town Attorney, Parks and Public Works Director, and Finance Director

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DISCUSSION (continued):

With Soccer League usage increasing by 20 percent this year, Los Gatos United Soccer League is again seeking support from the Town in continuing the use of temporary solar LED lighting to extend field use time this year. Los Gatos United will fully fund the temporary lighting. If this practice continues to be requested and accepted by the community, Parks and Public Works staff will consider bringing a more permanent lighting solution for Council consideration in the future.

With the current popularity of the field and the expected future increases in utilization, the synthetic turf is quickly reaching the end of its useful life. Parks and Public Works staff manage contracted routine maintenance of the turf for cleaning, combing of the infill, and striping, maintenance activities that ensure maximum life of the asset. However, the field is uneven in high use areas and there are issues with ponding due to compacted areas of the sub-base material. In addition, rubber asphalt-based infill is no longer desirable as it is very hot in the summer and produces a strong asphalt odor. This type of infill also tracks and splashes around the players and becomes difficult to contain in the synthetic turf. New materials would provide a much improved environment for play.

Perimeter netting at the field is in place to contain the soccer and lacrosse balls within the field of play, protecting spectators and the parking lot from injury and damage outside of the field area. The netting has been patched many times, but the existing netting is old and frayed and can no longer support the patches.

The cost of replacing the field is expected to range from \$500,000 to \$900,000, with the higher end representing the existing high-quality field. Staff has discussed cost sharing options for funding replacement work with the league partners Los Gatos United Soccer League and West Valley Red Hawks Lacrosse Club. Both are amenable to capital contributions. Where appropriate, staff will use the budget process to administer replacement work.

CONCLUSION:

Lighting of sports fields can become a controversial subject in some neighborhoods. Los Gatos United Soccer has administered their program responsibly and staff recommends ongoing continuation.

Capital maintenance needs will be significant over the next several years. The Town Council may want to provide guidance to the partners on funding of expected costs to allow time for fund raising.

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FISCAL IMPACT:

None associated with this agenda item.

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT:

This is not a project as defined under CEQA, and no further action is required.