



Date: March 26, 2004

TO: Board Members - Parks and Recreation
FROM: General Manager - Parks and Recreation
**SUBJECT: SYNTHETIC TURF FIELD DEVELOPMENT:
SHORTLIST OF CANDIDATE SITES**

RECOMMENDATIONS

- A. THAT the Board approve, subject to concurrence by the Vancouver School Board, the shortlist of Prince of Wales Secondary School, Point Grey Secondary School/Kerrisdale Park, Vancouver Technical Secondary School, Killarney Park, and Churchill Secondary School as candidate sites for possible synthetic turf field development.*
- B. THAT the Board authorize staff, in cooperation with the School Board, to conduct public open houses at these five locations along with detailed technical evaluation with respect to project feasibility.*
- C. THAT staff be directed to negotiate terms of an agreement with the Vancouver School Board for construction and operation of any field on School Board property, in whole or in part, prior to reporting back with final sites recommendation.*

POLICY

In July 2002, the Park Board and the Vancouver School Board (VSB) approved the Playing Field Renewal Plan as a reference for the ongoing development and care of the playing fields in the combined inventory of the two Boards. The Renewal Plan recommends “that an additional six artificial turf fields be constructed to meet the increasing demand for outdoor field sports”.

The 2003-2005 Park Board Capital Plan allocates \$2.9 million in City-Wide Development Cost Levy (DCL) funds to the construction of two synthetic turf fields.

In September 2003, the Board and the VSB approved a public consultation process for determining appropriate locations for the installation of synthetic turf playing fields.

BACKGROUND

The public consultation process approved by the Park Board and the VSB to determine appropriate locations for the installation of two synthetic turf fields involved both public education and advisory input components. The process was designed to move from a city-wide examination of options to a local area focus once selection criteria were agreed upon and applied.

Public input on the field siting issue was received (1) from letters and e-mails in response to media publicity on the issue, (2) from a “Feedback” survey on the Park Board public website, and (3) at a public workshop. Much of the feedback before the workshop proposed additional sites for consideration, and these were added to the master list. Other input from letters and e-mail is summarized in Appendix A. The public workshop on the synthetic turf fields was held on November 22nd, 2003 at Sir Charles Tupper Secondary School, and attended by approximately 100 people. The specific objectives of the workshop were to:

1. identify candidate sites for possible location of a synthetic turf field; and
2. agree on a set of criteria for assessing the sites.

Proceedings of the workshop were recorded and posted on the Park Board public web site.

Thirty-seven possible sites for synthetic turf fields were identified by staff for workshop review, and twenty-one sites were added for consideration through public input, bringing the list to a total of fifty-eight potential sites (see Appendix B, listing the originally identified sites and others added in the course of public process).

The workshop reviewed draft criteria to be used to guide the selection process, and made a number of changes and additions to them. These criteria are of two types: The first, called "must-have" criteria, identify what a site must have in order to be considered further. The second, called "evaluation" criteria, define attributes for comparing candidate sites (i.e., those which meet the "must have" criteria) in order to determine a order of priority. Appendix C lists both sets of criteria as they were developed at the workshop, and includes staff comments on their application.

Subsequent to the workshop, the identified field sites were assessed in relation to the “must have” criteria as developed at the workshop. Sites which clearly failed to meet these criteria were eliminated from further consideration, leaving the following twenty sites to be assessed with reference to the evaluation criteria:

Adanac Park	New Brighton Park
Beaconsfield Park	Oak Park
Churchill Secondary School	Point Grey Secondary School/ Kerrisdale Park Oval
Clinton Park	Prince of Wales Park

Eric Hamber Secondary School Oval	Prince of Wales Secondary School
Gladstone Secondary School	Quilchena Park
Hastings Park	Sexsmith Elementary School
Hillcrest Park	Trillium Park site
Jericho Beach Park	Vancouver Technical Secondary School
Killarney Park & Secondary School	Windermere Secondary School

The candidate sites above were scored in relation to the assessment criteria (Appendix C), and the five sites proposed for the next phase of local area public process and technical feasibility review are those with the highest level ratings. All five sites are on or near secondary school grounds, which means that they can serve both school and public use. The proposed sites at Vancouver Technical, Churchill and Prince of Wales are on VSB property. The Point Grey/ Kerrisdale site is half on park and half on school property. The Killarney site is a park. For several of these sites, letters and/or e-mails have been received expressing local support for field installation.

Agreement will have to be negotiated with the VSB to define the terms of shared access to the fields. The nature of this agreement will vary depending on whether the site is park, school or (as in the case of Kerrisdale/Point Grey) includes both park and school properties. The objective in all cases will be to ensure that requirements for funding, construction, maintenance and permitting are resolved to the satisfaction of both parties, and reflected in appropriate legal documentation. The model already in place with respect to the synthetic turf field at Eric Hamber Secondary will be a useful reference. It is proposed that Staff explore options for such an agreement as the public process and detailed technical assessments proceed to the next phase.

The next steps are to develop preliminary concepts showing the field installations at their proposed locations and other reference material for a series of open house presentations in the local neighbourhoods near the short-listed locations. Detailed technical evaluation of these sites would also be conducted with respect to ground condition, parking, site services, light placement, fencing and access, desired mitigation measures and other elements upon which preliminary cost estimation can be made. Neighbourhood concerns would be recorded and factored into the evaluation and subsequent revisions to concept design. The cost for this phase of the project will not exceed \$25,000 and expenditure will be charged to the project capital account.

Final site selection will be informed by responses to the proposal at the various localities, by the outcome of the detailed site assessments and by the relative costs and benefits associated with each site. Also of importance is to achieve an optimum distribution of service in relation to areas of existing or potential demand across the city. This information will be summarized in a report back to both the Vancouver Park Board and the Vancouver School Board by June 2004 recommending two sites for synthetic turf installation.

SUMMARY

The Board is asked, subject to concurrence by the VSB, to approve five sites for the next phase of public consultation and technical review with the objective of determining the appropriate locations for two synthetic turf installations. The sites short-listed for this purpose are at Vancouver Technical Secondary, Churchill Secondary, Prince of Wales Secondary, Point Grey Secondary/Kerrisdale Park and Killarney Park. The site selection process will continue to be conducted in cooperation with the Vancouver School Board to achieve an outcome of benefit to both Boards.

Prepared by:

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Summary of written input on Synthetic Turf Field Location

Appendix A

- (1) Letters and E-mail: Almost all the communications received focused on the Trillium site: Out of twenty letters and e-mail received, nineteen opposed development on this site and one was in favour. One letter also supported the idea of building one field on the west side, and one downtown near the stadiums.
- (2) On-line survey. The survey was placed on the Park Board public web site (with a link from the VSB web site) along with information on the synthetic turf field initiative. Those who logged in were invited to suggest changes or additions to a list of proposed sites and draft site selection criteria, or to comment on the issue generally. Fifty-one responses were received, of which the following content represents input made by two or more individuals:
 - A. Location:
 - C Build at a central location (6 responses)
 - C Decentralized the locations (2 responses)
 - C Build where the majority of current users are (8 responses)
 - C Build near downtown (2 responses)
 - C Do not build at Trillium site (4 responses)
 - C Build at Trillium (2 responses)
 - B. Siting Criteria and other considerations:
 - C Accessibility and proximity to users is important (15 responses)
 - C Build two or more fields at one location for tournament use (6 responses)
 - C Build adjacent to schools (2 responses)
 - C Safety of users a concern (3 responses)
 - C Too many criteria, just build the facility (3 responses).

Sites Considered for Synthetic Turf Field Development

Appendix B

Sites Presented at the Workshop (37)	29. Killarney Park and Secondary School
1. University Hill Elementary School	30. John Oliver Secondary School
2. University Hill Secondary School	31. Adanac Park
3. Camosun Park at Queen Elizabeth Elementary School	32. John Hendry Park
4. Jericho Beach Park	33. Slocan Park
5. Carnarvon Park	34. Memorial South Park
6. Trafalgar Park	35 Trillium Parksite
7. Balacava Park	36. Strathcona Park
8. Prince of Wales Park	37. Vanier Park
9. Eric Hamber Secondary School	Additional Sites Identified at the Workshop (21)
10. Churchill Secondary School	1. Chaldecott Park
11. Oak Park	2. Granville Park
12. Oak and 37 th Avenue Parksite	3. Kerrisdale Elementary School
13. Point Grey Secondary and Kerrisdale Park	4. Douglas Park
14. Sexsmith Elementary School	5. Memorial West Park
15. Musqueam Park	6. Quilchena Park
16. Prince of Wales Elementary School	7. Bayview Elementary School
17. Montgomery Park	8. Jericho Beach Park East
18. Tisdall Park	9. Queen Elizabeth Park
19. Beaconsfield Park	10. Lord Byng High School & Quesnel Jules School
20. Britannia Secondary School	11. Queen Mary Elementary School
21. Gladstone Secondary School	12. Spanish Banks Park West
22. Clinton Park	13. UBC: 16 th Ave & Blanca Street
23. Gordon Park	14. UBC: East of University Hill H. School (2 Fields)
24. Kensington Park	15. Hillcrest Park
25. Winderemere Secondary School	16. Marpole Park
26. Tupper Secondary School	17. Nootka Elementary School & Renfrew Park
27. Vancouver Technical Secondary School	18. New Brighton Park (2 Fields)
28. Kingcrest Park	19. Hastings Park (Empire Bowl)

“MUST-HAVE” CRITERIA

1. *Be public open space, either owned by municipal authority or leased over a long -term, with no covenants on title or other legal restrictions prohibiting the intended use.* Almost all the sites on the full list are either park or school properties, and therefore meet this criterion.
2. *Be big enough for one full-sized field (minimum 100 x 65m) with additional room for run-off, spectators, washroom/change facility.* Many of the proposed sites are too small or have the wrong dimensions to accommodate a full-sized field.
3. *Be reasonably level and on stable ground, so that a field can be built within budget, with a minimum of excavation, in-fill or other site preparation required.* Most the proposed sites are reasonably level, but soil stability issues have ruled out some possibilities.
4. *Not be used for other valued activities or contain facilities which cannot reasonably be relocated elsewhere.* This criterion requires a judgement call with respect to what constitutes a “valued use.” However, sites have been for the most part eliminated from consideration where amenities (e.g., ball diamonds, courts, etc.) cannot be moved, or the cost of doing so is prohibitive.
5. *Not convert potential undeveloped passive green space to a synthetic field in communities underserved by passive greenspace.* Identified sites in park deficient neighbourhoods were excluded from further consideration.
6. *Be accepted by the local neighbourhood.* This criterion is difficult to test in advance and (since every viable site has both proponents and opponents) to measure accurately even after a project is initiated at a specific location. However, it is clear from the public process conducted to date that some sites (notably Trillium park site) are highly controversial with respect to the proposed development.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

1. *Minimal residential Impact from traffic, noise, and light generated by field operation.* The consideration here is the extent to which a given site is buffered, or is able to be buffered, from negative impacts on local residences. Factors to consider include:
 - a. distance between field and neighbouring residences;
 - b. number of residential units with direct line-of-sight exposure;
 - c. adequate (and preferably off-street) parking, with traffic circulation not impeding residential traffic/parking;
 - d. potential to mitigate any of the above where negative factors exist.

These conditions are most likely to be realized upon large park parcels, secondary school grounds, and fringe industrial lands.

2. *Access to site:* The location should be well connected to cycle routes, access streets and/or public transit.
3. *Amenities on site:* Construction costs would be lower where wash up and change facilities, parking, or other necessary components are already in place.
4. *Proximity to under-served users:* Sites score higher that are close to where users and potential users live.
5. *Increase in sports field capacity:* It makes more economic sense to build a synthetic turf field on a non-field or marginal quality field than to convert a quality grass or all-weather (gravel) field. (Note that fields of the latter type are heavily used for practices and, when grass fields have to be closed because of adverse weather conditions, for league games.
6. *Minimal adverse environmental Impacts:* Preferred sites can be developed without tree removal, loss of passive green space or habitat disruption.
7. *On or near Secondary School Grounds.* Such sites can be used for PE classes and School inter-murals on weekdays, and for general public use evenings and on weekends.
8. *Service Distribution:* It is preferable to disperse sites throughout the City rather than develop them all in any one area.