



Prioritization of Sport and Recreation Fields and Facilities in Sunset Neighbourhood of South-East Vancouver

Excerpted from Minutes May 29, 2023

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MOVED by Commissioner Viridi
SECONDED by Commissioner Howard

Amendment (strike & replace) MOVED by Commissioner Bastyovanszky

Final motion as amended:

WHEREAS:

1. The Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation offers a wide variety of sport, fitness, arts, education, and social activities for all ages and skill levels;
2. The city has 153 playing fields ranging from regulation-size grass fields and synthetic turf to gravel fields, available by permit or for casual use on a first-come, first-serve basis;
3. Synthetic turf sports fields provide safe and accessible recreational facilities for youth, with the added benefit of being low-maintenance, durable, usable in a wide range of weather conditions, and are eco-friendly;
4. Lighting added to the new synthetic turf sports field will permit longer periods of use to users and ease the high utilization rates of sports fields across the City of Vancouver;
5. South-East Vancouver which comprises of Sunset, Victoria-Fraserview and Killarney and hosts a total of 53 sports fields and diamonds. Sunset is known to be an underserved, neglected community that faces significant challenges related to the lack of accessible and safe recreational facilities such as high-quality sports fields and pools. This has contributed to an issue of youth disengagement which has been exploited by organized gangs which prey on vulnerable school-age children and seek to involve them in criminal activity;
6. Fields located in the Sunset neighbourhood classified as class A are in the process of being reclassified and will result in a lower class rating. The Sports Field Strategy indicates a deficiency of baseball diamonds city wide, however some of the Sunset ball diamonds are showing little use. Searching for diamond availability on the Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation Facility Use Request site shows availability to wide open availability of the diamonds. See also Appendix B;
7. The Sports Field Strategy must take into account the dire lack of field hockey facilities in Vancouver, with only one water-based turf field at Eric Hamber Secondary on Oak Street. This will be obsolete for competition by 2024. Park Board recently received 80 emails requesting a synthetic turf field at Moberly or Ross Park. A short pile, unfilled turf would be suitable for both sports. This type of turf uses no water and is now being used in Europe. This turf is carbon zero, 80% bio-based material (sugarcane), made with green energy and has a new backing for better CO2



balance. The turf technology has been approved for use at the Paris 2024 Summer Olympics. Further reference: <https://www.poligras.com/news/paris2024-played-on-hockeys-first-carbon-zero-turf>;

8. The Park Board is committed to improving access and inclusion to recreation opportunities, and addressing geographic inequities in facility distribution, for all residents of Vancouver, notably by applying a community development lens that allows the Board to respond to complex issues as they arise and/or to prevent complex issues from arising in the first place;
9. Locating a synthetic turf at Moberly or Ross, as directed by the Park Board in the 2023 Capital Budget, would provide a much-needed recreation space for the community's youth to engage in positive activities, including organized sports, physical activity, and community events. Its central location is also perfect to serve as a city-wide amenity, as it will be easily accessible. Previously on December 5, 2023, staff were directed to initiate planning in Q1 2023 for a new artificial turf sports field in southeast Vancouver. Further reference: https://parkboardmeetings.vancouver.ca/2022/20221205/MINUTES_PB-20221205.pdf;
10. 1Prioritizing the revitalization will invariably have a positive impact on the health and well-being of the community and serve to address the youth disengagement evident in the community; and
11. A tremendous amount of support has been received from the community including letters from Hon. Harjit Sajjan (MP for Vancouver South), Field Hockey Canada, Field Hockey BC, Vancouver Women's Field Hockey League, Vancouver Police Department, Khalsa Diwan Society, Punjabi Market Collective. See also Appendix A.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT staff undertake a community engagement process of the Sunset neighbourhood to seek feedback from residents and organizations, including the Vancouver Field Sport Federation, field hockey associations in BC and Canada and community leaders that identifies the desired outdoor amenities for the community by Q3 2023. The engagement shall include data already collected by local community leaders and be included in the findings in a Report Back in Q4 of 2023.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

(Commissioner Howard abstained)