



May 26, 2023

MEMO TO : Park Board Commissioners

FROM : Tiina Mack – Director, Planning and Park Development

SUBJECT : **Sport Field Motions and Track & Field Project Update – Board Briefing Memo**

Dear Commissioners,

The purpose of this memo is to provide an update on sports field motions approved by the Board in [December 2022 as part of the 2023 Service Plan, Operating and Capitals Budgets report](#) for which work is well underway. This memo also provides an update on ongoing Track and Field projects. A particular focus has been placed on the impacts of the sports field motions where synthetic turf sport field access needs to be maximized during construction and where there are limited funds and staff resources available to deliver multiple projects concurrently.

Lighting at Kitsilano Secondary School and Hillcrest Mini Field

Staff started discussions with the VSB in early 2023 about a shared use agreement to enable the Park Board to book the field at Kitsilano Secondary School in advance of the lighting installation. Under a temporary use agreement, the field would be permitted for community use on weekday evenings and on weekends starting in the fall of 2023. Adding the synthetic turf at Kitsilano Secondary School into the Park Board inventory helps offset the loss of field time at Kerrisdale Point Grey during the closure of the synthetic turf field during the track renewal construction in the fall of 2023 through the summer of 2024.

Staff have developed a scope of work for the lighting systems design at Kitsilano Secondary School and Hillcrest Park, and a consulting team for this project will be competitively procured in Q3 2023.

Funding sources have been identified in the 2019-22 and 2023-26 Capital Plan for the design and delivery of the lights at the two sites. Once the consultant team has initiated design for the project a more detailed timeline and cost estimate will be presented to the Board.

John Hendry Park Sports Field Improvements

The 2023-26 Capital Plan allocates \$3.6M towards the Renewal and Upgrades of Diamonds and Playfields and expenditure from this account is paused until the John Hendry Park sport field renewal approach is confirmed with the Board. Advancing major works at John Hendry Park will have significant implications for the city-wide Sports Field Enhancement Program budget and the deferral of other capital projects to provide an alternate funding source may need to be considered. Worth mention is that the John Hendry Park Renewal Plan identifies 31 broad park improvements and staff are working on the short-term Plan actions which include: investigating these sport field upgrades, the dog off-leash/north beach area improvements, a cultural focus area, water quality and stormwater management, and biodiversity and naturalization.



The condition of the sports fields in the eastern portion of John Hendry Park are related to the underlying peat soil conditions which cause soil heaving, as a result staff retained the services of an independent geotechnical engineer to examine the conditions in February 2023. The results of the geotechnical analysis and feasibility study (to be complete in June 2023) will provide a better understanding of the capital investment required to deliver these upgrades. Upon the geotechnical assessment's conclusion, staff will provide a more detailed timeline and cost estimate for Board consideration in Q3 2023.

Vantech Synturf Replacement

Staff stagger the replacement of synthetic turf field surfaces to avoid field users losing access to two synthetic turf fields concurrently and this need influences the timing for the replacement of the synthetic turf surface at Vancouver Technical Secondary School. Staff initiated conversations with VSB related to the replacement of the existing turf surface in March 2023. Design for the field upgrades are being advanced through a consultant and staff will time this work with the track renewal at Kerrisdale Park (Point Grey Secondary School) to avoid field users losing access to two synthetic turf fields concurrently. It is anticipated that the track renewal will be completed by Q3 2024 and that the renewal of the VanTech field will proceed immediately after.

A different funding source has been identified in the 2019-22 Capital Plan for the design and delivery of this project so that funding for the Renewal and Upgrades of Diamonds and Playfields city-wide is not impacted. Once the consultant team has initiated the design and provided cost estimates a project update will be provided to the Board.

New Synthetic Turf Field in Southeast Vancouver

Staff have completed a preliminary analysis of Moberly School and Ross Park as candidate sites for a new synthetic turf field as well as two other potential candidate sites in southeast Vancouver, namely Moberly Park (which is located west of Moberly Elementary School) and Killarney Park.

Factors that staff consider for the location of a synthetic turf field include:

- Geographic distribution across the City;
- Potential concerns from park neighbours and light impacts on residences;
- Van Play directions (e.g. equity initiative zones);
- Availability of supporting amenities (e.g. vehicle parking and washrooms);
- Existing features (e.g. grass sports fields and paved courts, mature trees, soil conditions);
- Proximity and condition of site utility services (water, sewer and stormwater);
- Priority for converting existing gravel fields with lights to synthetic surfaces to avoid converting grade A grass fields (preferred playing surface); and
- Priority for large secondary school sites for new synthetic turf fields for shared use benefits.

Staff have initiated a feasibility study to better capture costs, potential implications on the funding available for other projects, and timelines associated with five sites (Moberly Park, Moberly School, Ross Park, Killarney Park, and Churchill Secondary School). A high-level summary of the potential opportunities and challenges for these sites is attached as Appendix 1 to this memo. This high-level analysis is subject to further review from a costing and feasibility perspective and relates to draft site selection criteria being identified through the ongoing Sports Field Strategy.



Funding has not been identified for this new synthetic turf field project. The 2023-26 Capital Plan allocates \$3.3M towards New Ball Diamonds and Playfields. Order of magnitude costing for the sites noted above have been developed and delivery of a lit synthetic turf field at Moberly or Ross Park exceeds the available funding by \$1M to \$2M depending on specific site conditions.

There are alternative opportunities that the Board might want to consider for improving Ross and Moberly Parks to benefit the neighbourhood that can be delivered within existing capital program funding sources. These could potentially include renewed playgrounds, new walking loops, new seating and picnic areas, renovated grass sport fields and a water play feature to replace the aged Ross Park wading pool. Community preferences for these upgrades could be determined by engaging with residents and stakeholders like the local Gurdwara and South Vancouver Neighbourhood House.

Delivery of a new synthetic turf field at Killarney Park is possible as an alternate location to Moberly School or Ross Park as a sizable portion of the scope (lighting, field grading, and utilities) is already funded by the track and field capital program which could reduce the funding requirement for this new field by 60-70%. Alternately the Board could consider deferring other park capital projects until the costs are known and a funding source for this priority Board motion is finalized. Details of this feasibility study including funding ideas will be presented to the Board in Q3 of 2023.

Information about the related Track and Field Projects is attached as Appendix 2 to this Memo.

Conclusion

Providing new sports field facilities and making changes to existing sport facilities is complex, and there is interdependency for the timing of the projects to ensure no loss of use for sport user groups. Staff also recommend gathering user groups and residents' input before final decisions are made and working closely with the Vancouver Field Sport Federation. The pending Sports Field Strategy is being developed with substantial engagement opportunities for both user groups and residents and when completed it will provide a 10-year plan with priorities for investment that includes related Board Motions. Staff are advancing work on the sport field projects concurrently with the Strategy's development and expect to report back to the Board in Q3 2023.

Regards,

Tiina Mack, Director, Planning and Park Development

AMB/TM/KA/EM/SJ/AJ

Copy to: PB Leadership Team
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PB Communications



Appendix 1

Synthetic Turf Field Opportunities at Moberly Elementary School, Moberly, Ross and Killarney Parks and Churchill Secondary School

Moberly Elementary School	
Opportunities	Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Moberly Park has washrooms which are critical to supporting large numbers of sports groups using a synthetic turf field - Would address a geographic gap in synthetic turf fields in southeast Vancouver 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A full-size field does not fit entirely within the school property and would require it to straddle VSB and park property requiring a Joint Use Agreement and potentially a lease agreement approved by Council. Staff will initiate discussions with VSB if this site is confirmed by the Board. - Placement of the field straddling the VSB and park property would result in the loss of one diamond, four tennis courts, and impact playability of a grass field. - There is a significant grade change across the site which will increase costs for earthworks and will require large retaining structures

Ross Park	
Opportunities	Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ross Park includes washrooms which are critical to supporting large numbers of sports groups using a synthetic turf field. - Would address a geographic gap in synthetic turf fields in southeast Vancouver 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Placement of the field in the northern portion of the site would result in the displacement of two diamonds. These are community use fields, whereas a synthetic turf field is typically booked year-round during peak hours limiting its availability for informal community use. - A full-sized field would likely require the removal and relocation of assets in the southern portion of the site including the covered picnic area, the playground and wading pool. Relocation and/or replacement of these assets would further add costs to the project and impact existing community use of the park. - There is a significant grade change across the site which will increase costs for earthworks and require large retaining structures at the field's south end.



Two other candidate sites in southeast Vancouver were analyzed as part the Board Motion:

Moberly Park	
Opportunities	Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Moberly Park has washrooms which are critical to supporting large numbers of sports groups using a synthetic turf field - Would address a geographic gap in synthetic turf fields in southeast Vancouver. There are two class A grass fields at Moberly Park that are appropriately sized for conversion to a synthetic turf field. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Placement of a synthetic turf field on the northern portion of the site would result in a conversion of the existing grass field and the two diamonds. - Placement of the synthetic turf field on the southern portion of the site would result in the removal of one grade A grass field and two diamonds.

Killarney Park - Southeast	
Opportunities	Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Killarney Track and Field project is at a concept design phase and is currently evaluating the addition of a synthetic turf field project within the track. Delivering the synturf field as part of the track would lower administrative and construction costs of the project. - Killarney Community Centre has washrooms which are critical to supporting large numbers of sports groups using a synthetic turf field - The field could support Killarney Secondary School sports field needs. VSB access to be explored through rental or shared maintenance and management costs and shared use agreement - Would address a geographic gap in synthetic turf fields in southeast Vancouver. There is an existing Class A grass field within the track oval that is appropriately sized for conversion to a synthetic turf field. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Although it is becoming common for tracks to include synthetic turf surfaces inside the track, the preference within the track community is for natural grass to support certain throwing events. These events could be located outside of the oval area within the larger park.



Churchill Secondary School

A standing Board Motion from 2019 directs staff to construct a synthetic turf field at Churchill Secondary School. The project was awaiting finalization of the Sports Field Strategy prior to starting and will be considered in the Strategy's implementation plan. Area specific funding (Oakridge Langara Development Cost Levy program) may be available to fund a portion of a new synthetic turf field project at the Churchill site or at another Oakridge/Langara park location. There have been discussions with user groups in the past about providing a second field hockey field in this neighbourhood to complement the existing Oak Meadows (Hamber Secondary) field hockey field. This will also be considered through the Sports Field Strategy.



Appendix 2 – Track and Field Projects

Kerrisdale Park/Point Grey Secondary School Track and Field Upgrades

The Kerrisdale Park – Point Grey track and field facility is being upgraded following recommendations outlined in the approved [Vancouver Track and Field Strategy](#). The upgrades include replacement and resurfacing of the track, upgrading and expanding jump and throw amenities, new space for spectator seating, improved on-site storage, new lighting infrastructure and improvements to overall site accessibility, circulation and integration. Park Board staff are in the process of finalizing detailed design drawings in preparation for tendering the project in mid-2023. Staff will be bringing the construction contract award to the Board for decision in fall of 2023. Construction is anticipated to begin in the winter of 2023 and is expected to be complete before the end of 2024. The synthetic turf field will be closed to the public for the duration of the construction project and advancing access to the Kitsilano Secondary School synthetic turf field will support the loss of use of the Kerrisdale Park synthetic turf field during the construction duration. The estimated capital cost for this project is the range of \$4.3M.

Killarney Park Track and Field Facility

The running track at Killarney Park will be upgraded and expanded to a competitive track and field training facility following recommendations outlined in the [Vancouver Track and Field Strategy](#). The upgrades include a new standardized, lit running track with rubberized surfacing and expansion of the facility to include jumps and throws amenities, spectator seating opportunities and on-site storage. The project is currently in the concept design and stakeholder engagement phase. Staff anticipate bringing the final concept design to the Board in the fall of 2023 for approval. The estimated cost for this project is approximately \$12M.