



# City of Culver City

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## Staff Report

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**PRCSC - Discussion of the Use of Field Space for Adult Sports Based on the Findings of the *Turf Consultant's Report on Park Fields in Culver City*.**

**Meeting Date:** November 10, 2020

**Contact Person/Dept:** Patrick Reynolds/PRCS

**Phone Number:** (310) 253-6471

**Fiscal Impact:** Yes ☐ No ☐

**General Fund:** Yes ☐ No ☐

**Public Hearing:** ☐

**Action Item:** ☒

**Attachments:** ☒

**Public Notification:** (Email) Meetings and Agendas - Parks, Recreation and Community Services Commission (11/06/2020); (Email) Parks, Recreation & Community Service Department Updates (11/06/2020)

**Department Approval:** Armando Abrego, Interim PRCS Director (11/06/2020)

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### **RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends the Parks, Recreation and Community Services (PRCS) Commission discuss the use of field space for adult sports based on the findings of the *Turf Consultant's Report on Park Fields in Culver City*.

### **BACKGROUND**

The use of field space for adult sports in Culver City Parks, park prohibitions and the related signage have been PRCS Commission meeting topics in recent years. Based on the information presented by the PRCS Director and the Parks Manager on February 6, 2018, Commission Members expressed support on March 21, 2018, for funding a Turf Consultant's report in order to provide recommendations and estimated costs to improve and maintain turf to accommodate all community needs. In 2019, the City of Culver City entered into an agreement with PRZ Sports Turf Consulting to conduct an assessment of park fields in Culver City and publish the findings in a report.

On November 5, 2019, Mr. Larry Musser, President of PRZ Sports Turf Consulting, presented the *Turf Consultant's Report on Park Fields in Culver City* (Attachment 1) to the PRCS Commission. At that meeting, Mr. Musser presented his findings, discussed the Report and answered Commission Members' questions. On September 1, 2020, there was consensus to agendize a discussion regarding a staff recommendation of park fields that could potentially be used for organized Adult Sports based on the findings of the Turf Report.

### **DISCUSSION**

Currently, the organized sports played in our parks are youth soccer and adult softball (men's and coed). They are the three fields that currently have league play on them, Culver City Park Lower Field (lighted field) and

the sports fields at Syd Kronenthal Park and Veterans Memorial Park. The PRCS Commission asked staff to evaluate the park fields for their potential use for adult soccer, rugby, lacrosse, flag football and ultimate Frisbee. Attachment 2 provides the Commission with schematics of seven of our park fields which illustrate both the current uses and some potential uses of the fields. To add these additional proposed sports to these parks' fields, the criteria for that to successfully occur would hinge on:

- Shutting down the fields for a minimum of eight, optimally 12 weeks, each year to refurbish the turf.
- Dedicate one park to the Adult sports that have the Highest Impact on the fields (Adult Soccer, La Crosse, Rugby, Flag Football)
- The park field size can accommodate these sports.

#### Evaluation of Three Key Culver City Sports Fields

Staff's evaluation is as follows, based on the current programming, limited resources in staffing, funding, and new equipment that would be required, per the PRZ Turf Report:

#### **Lower Sports Field at Culver City (CC) Park (aka the Babe Ruth Field; Lighted)**

The current programmed sports at the CC Park Lower Field are:

- October to December: American Youth Soccer Organization (AYSO) Soccer
- February to June: Culver City Little League (CCLL)
- March through June: West LA College Women's Softball

As required for field maintenance at both Syd Kronenthal (SK) and Veterans Memorial Park (Vets), adult softball leagues are temporarily relocated to the CC Park Lower Field. For example, this has been done in August after Fiesta La Ballona when the Vets field was shut down for eight weeks.

#### **EVALUATION:**

The addition of any Adult Sports in the High Impact Category that would physically fit on this field is not compatible with the current schedule on this field, even though the size of the field accommodates the regulation size field dimensions for these sports. That there would be no significant 'down time' to refurbish the field. There is barely significant time now with the current programming, especially in light of the June/July window that is recommended in the Turf Report for turf refurbishment. The addition of sports like Ultimate Frisbee do not pose the same impact on the field and could be accommodated.

#### **Veterans Memorial (Vets) Park**

The current programmed sports at Vets Park are:

- Year-Round: Adult and Co-Ed Softball
- Year-Round: Senior Adult Softball
- Fall: AYSO Soccer
- Winter / Spring: Culver City High School girls Softball Team

#### **EVALUATION:**

The addition of any Adult Sports in the High Impact Category that would physically fit on these fields is not compatible with the current schedule on these fields or the activities in this park, even though the size of the field accommodates the regulation size field dimensions for these sports. The smallest dimensions for an

Adult Soccer field would barely fit the footprint here. There would be no 25-foot clear zones as recommended in league guidelines for field layouts. And again, there would be no significant 'down time' to refurbish the fields, as there is barely significant time at present with the current programming and events that are typically held at this park throughout the year (the Car Show, Fiesta La Ballona, etc.). Especially, again, due to the narrow June/July window that is recommended in the Turf Report for turf refurbishment.

### **Syd Kronenthal (SK) Park**

The current programmed sports at SK Park are:

- Year-Round: Adult and Co-Ed Softball
- Fall: AYSO Youth Soccer

### **EVALUATION:**

Two possibilities exist at SK Park for consideration:

- 1) The optimal option, if sufficient funding could be identified, is installing a synthetic turf field over the entire turf area, per the recommendation in the Turf Report. The field would be playable year round, and field maintenance costs would go down significantly. Of course, those would eventually be offset with the replacement cost of the field in eight to ten years. The installation of a synthetic turf field would also present new challenges to the City as to how much to charge to offset some of the replacement costs of the field when that time comes.
- 2) Perhaps more feasible, due to current budget constraints, and limited resources of both staff and equipment, would be to establish an Adult Soccer field at this park. To accomplish this goal, the Diamond #1 practice field could be sodded over to create a 100% turf Adult soccer field footprint, preserving Diamond #2 for continued softball play. This would require shutting down this field for the recommended 12 weeks to completely rejuvenate the turf from the heavy play that would occur. And possibly moving the adult softball leagues part of the time to share space with the users at CC Park Lower Field. The other High Impact sports again would tax these fields into being unsafe to play on as the departments current limited resources would not be able to maintain them as turf fields. They could be played on as half dirt and half turf at best, per the findings in the Turf Report.

All other city parks were surveyed for this report and none have the capacity to support these High Impact sports due to the fields being undersized or incompatible with the current programming at each site. Carlson and Coombs Parks, both being passive parks, were not considered in this survey.

### **CONCLUSION**

In conclusion, any change in the current field uses will require mandatory shut down periods of these fields to refurbish them and a rotation of some of the programmed activity to other sites in the interim. This will most certainly create huge challenges for the Department and City without an increase to Department's budget (as itemized in the Turf Report) to properly maintain the fields to keep them safe and playable, per the lowest level recommendations in the Turf Report. Shutting down the fields with no additional resources to follow the recommendations would pose an insurmountable maintenance task for the Parks Division and the PRCS Department as a whole.

### **FISCAL ANALYSIS**

There is no fiscal impact associated with this discussion.

**ATTACHMENTS**

1. 2020-11-10 - ATT 1 *Turf Consultant's Report on Park Fields in Culver City*
2. 2020-11-10 - ATT 2 Park Field Usage Schematics

**MOTION**

None required for a discussion item.