



City of Richmond

Report to Committee

To: Parks Recreation & Cultural Services Committee

Date: February 8, 2008

From: Dave Semple
Director of Parks and Public Works Operations

File: 06-2345-20-MINO1/Vol 01

Re: 2008 Artificial Turf Field Site Recommendation

Staff Recommendation

That the Minoru Park Oval field be approved as the location for construction of an artificial turf sports field in 2008.

Dave Semple
Director of Parks and Public Works Operations
(3350)

Att. 1

FOR ORIGINATING DEPARTMENT USE ONLY			
ROUTED TO:	CONCURRENCE	CONCURRENCE OF GENERAL MANAGER	
Budgets.....	Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>	<i>K. Sparrow</i>	
REVIEWED BY TAG	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>	REVIEWED BY CAO	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>

Staff Report

Origin

At the July 9th, 2007 Council meeting, in response to the report: *2008 Artificial Turf Site Selection and Community Consultation Process*, the following resolutions were approved:

- “(1) That an artificial turf field at King George Park be approved for consideration in the 2008 Capital Budget;*
- (2) That a Park Visioning and Master Plan process be initiated for South Arm Community Park and that the most appropriate configuration for an artificial turf at that site be determined as part of the Master Planning process;*
- (3) That the South Arm Park Master Planning Process with a recommended final plan, including a potential location/configuration for a potential turf field at South Arm Community Park be completed and presented to Council by March 2008;*
- (4) That the findings of a study on the condition of the infield of Minoru Park be reported back to Committee; and*
- (5) That a public consultation process be carried out regarding replacement of the infield of the Minoru Oval with artificial turf to make it a competitive facility.”*

At the December 10, 2007 Regular Council Meeting the following recommendation was also approved:

“That the 2008 Capital budget include provisions for artificial turf field construction at King George Park, and one other location to be determined in March 2008, for a maximum commitment of \$3,500,000 and an additional operating budget impact of up to \$30,000 or a .03% tax impact.”

Council has approved funding for the installation of two artificial turf fields in 2008. King George Park has been approved as one location, and as per the above resolutions staff were to undertake further analysis and seek community feedback on the preferred location for a second 2008 installation.

The purpose of this report is to present the outcome of public consultation completed in January 2008, and to recommend the location for a second turf field installation to be completed in 2008.

Analysis

2008 Community Consultation Process and Site Selection Analysis – Minoru and South Arm

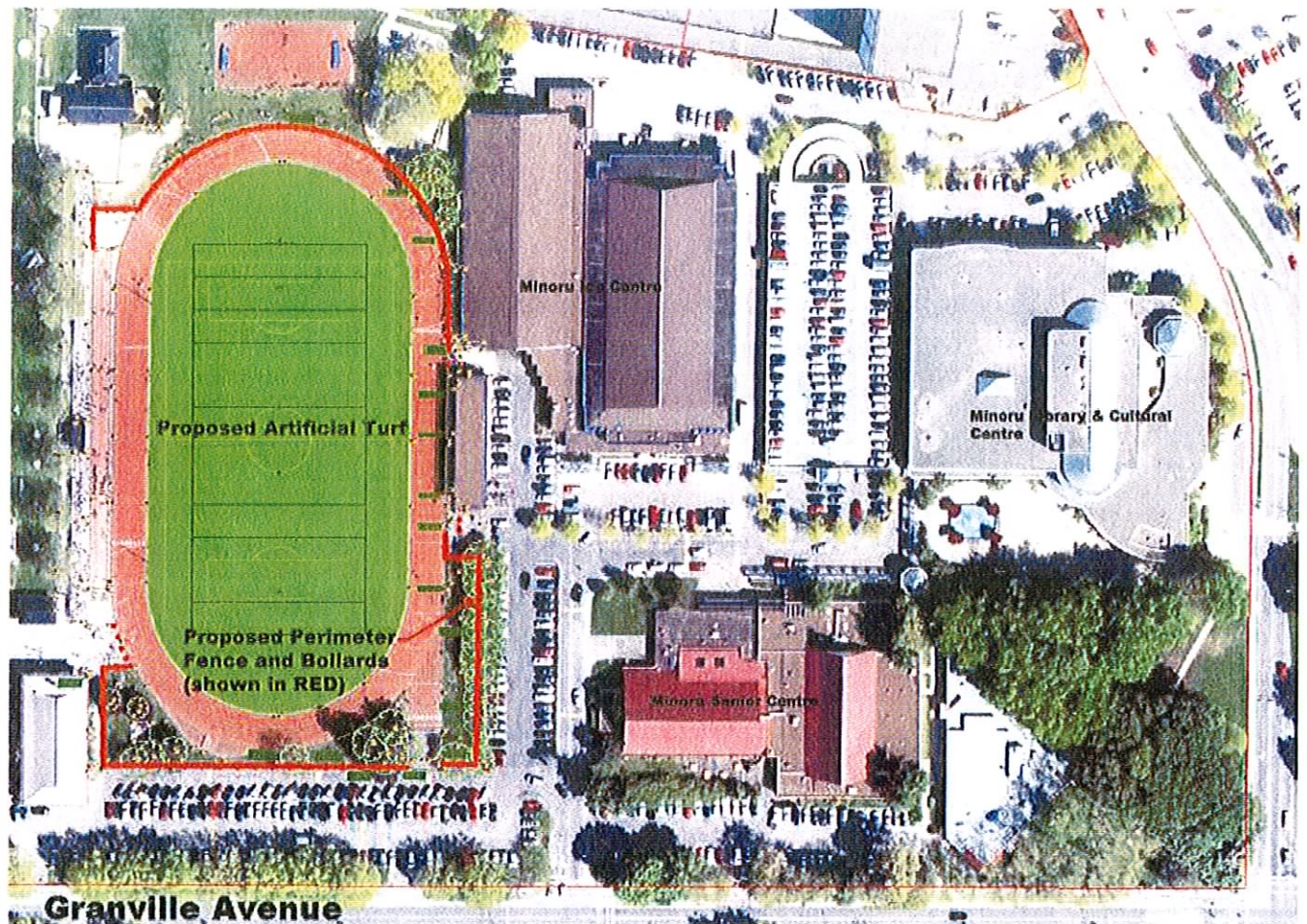
Two Open Houses were held, one for South Arm Park on January 17th, 2008 and the other for Minoru Park on January 23rd, 2008. The Open Houses were advertised in the local papers for 4 weeks and additional mail-outs were sent to residential properties directly adjacent to the proposed fields.

Site Selection Evaluation Criteria

The following site selection criteria were used to assess the suitability of the site options considered.

Adequate Size	Meets the same standard (or bigger) for field dimensions, safety buffers and walkways as were used for fields at Minoru and Richmond Secondary.
Groups/Activities Displaced:	Includes other sport facilities such as fields, diamonds or existing facility formal agreements.
Accessibility	Conditions such as soil conditions, drainage, sun orientation and close proximity to the majority of participants should be considered.
Park Compatibility	The park has been identified in the original site/park Master Plan as an approved site for athletic field sport features.
Neighbourhood Compatibility	The potential impact to residents of an heavily used active sport facility being placed adjacent to their homes. Factors such as light spillage, noise, traffic congestion, parking should be considered.
Field Light Pollution	Meets the parks desired guideline of light illumination being 50 metres or more away from residential houses.
Tree Protection	The number of mature trees that will have to be removed and/or relocated.
Timing	The earliest construction start date - the Council endorsed proposal is for commencement in 2008 with completion in 2008.
Land Ownership	The ownership of the property. Properties that are not owned by the City of Richmond will require additional approval.
Existing Amenities	What amenities are already present at the site, i.e. adequate power, lights, washrooms, parking, storage, other fields etc.
Tournament Opportunities	Is the site compatible for hosting tournaments i.e. adequate parking, washrooms, change rooms, spectator seating, concessions etc.
Park Impact	What existing uses of the site have to be considered, can they be relocated elsewhere on existing facilities, or will they need new facilities built to replace them? What other school and community sport field user demands can be accommodated on the new facilities?
Added Capacity	The number of additional sand field equivalents that will be added to the City's current supply of field sport facilities.
Displacement Cost	The cost of replacing any park features such as fields, ball diamonds, pathways or trees that need to be replaced and/or relocated.
Total Cost	The total cost of constructing the new lit artificial turf fields plus all costs of relocation or replacement of existing park features such as fields, diamonds and trees.
Guiding Principles	Does the option support the guiding principles endorsed by the field sport community for future field upgrades?

Option 1- Minoru Oval Map - Recommended Option - Turf Area: 10,000 sq. metres (107,000 sq. ft)



Site Opportunities:

The opportunity to convert the centre of the Minoru Oval to artificial turf presents the community with a field surface area that can accommodate soccer, football, community events, and other field sports. The improvements could take advantage of existing lighting, the grandstand stadium with 400 person covered seating, and an additional 500 person outdoor seating in the bleachers. The total area inside the oval allows for a larger field configuration than a typical field with the inclusion of the two end zones. Also the buffer of the running track would prevent the introduction of organic elements to the turf.

The site has parking, and washroom amenities near by, as well is located close to the existing Minoru turf field, and the Richmond High field, presenting excellent tournament hosting opportunities. Additionally, by converting the field to a soccer/football field configuration, there is a potential to use this project to find a long needed home for rugby by freeing up field space at McNair Park currently used by football.

The condition of the existing infield at Minoru Oval is similar to other sand based grass fields in Richmond today. The field is essentially weeds and grass on a sand base and the high traffic areas, particularly at the centre, and goal mouths, become worn down to the sand layer each year. As a result, the field is fenced off and closed for rehabilitation annually from May to September.

Construction cost efficiencies would be found in the utilization of the existing park drainage system, and components of the lighting system as well. The proposal to upgrade the Minoru oval field has strong support from the field sport community; at the June 12, 2007 Richmond Sports Council meeting, the following resolution was approved:

“Given Richmond’s need for a usable, enclosable community stadium, and the current poor quality of Minoru Oval for multiple sports, Richmond Sports Council recommends that Minoru Oval be regarded as a prime candidate for location of one of the two AT fields to be built in 2008.”

Summary of January 28, 2008 Public Open House for Minoru

The Minoru Park Open House resulted with 96% in favour and 4% opposed to the development of an artificial turf sports field at Minoru Oval. With attendance of over 400 people at the open house, a total of 210 attendees completed written surveys.

Completed surveys in favour of the Minoru field, expressed support for additional play and practise space in the City Centre, health and fitness benefits for children and adults alike, and general support for having a premier stadium-like facility to host special events and tournaments with existing facilities and amenities available.

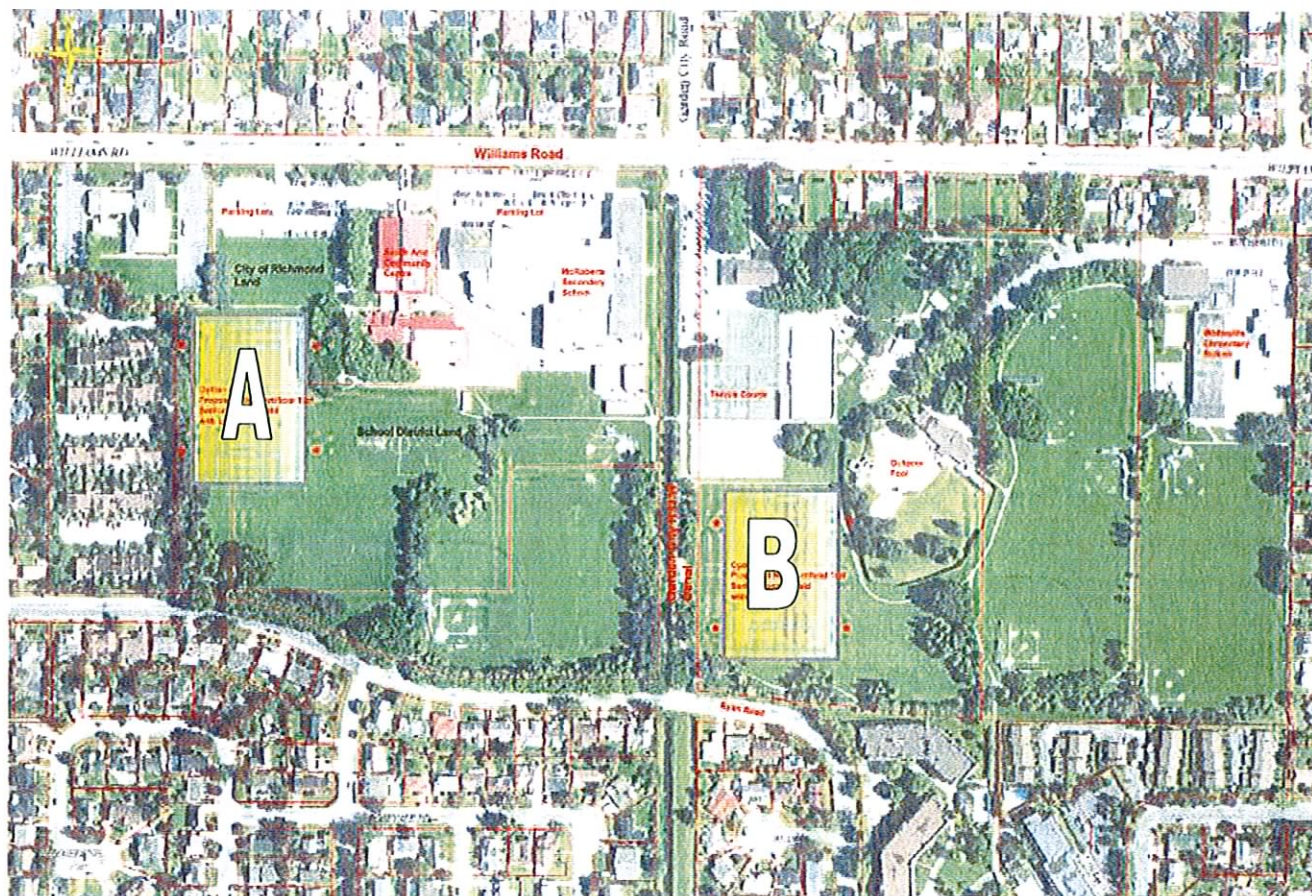
In general, the majority favoured the concept proposal for an integrated soccer/football size artificial turf field complete with an existing grandstand. The greater size of the overall football field would allow more flexibility than a regular size soccer field, and would accommodate the game and practise needs of several field sport activities.

Open House attendees not in favour of the proposal at Minoru Oval had concerns with lighting, and general environmental opposition to artificial turf as a synthetic product. Out of the 4% of respondents opposing the proposal, the majority suggested that the field should be located at South Arm Park or elsewhere.

Staff have contacted the Kajacks Track and Field Club, and they have indicated their support for a turf field at Minoru, however would like to see the City enforce and control the walkers and joggers who use the track during their practises. The Kajacks have indicated that additional signage around the park is necessary to prevent track and field activities from being in conflict with public use of the track. Staff are in the process of installing a new signage program for Minoru Oval for track use etiquette. In addition, support was received for a perimeter fence located on the outside of the existing track area that would be of benefit for site safety during track meets.

With approval of the Minoru field option, the installation of a perimeter fence and removable bollards (area shown in this report in the Minoru Oval Map) will delineate the track and field area for pedestrian traffic entering active track and field competitions held at the site, as well as prevent vehicles from entering and damaging the turf surface. The fencing and bollards are proposed to be transparent, and located at the outer edges of the park site, not inside the field track. A similar fencing installation around a track with turf infield has been installed at Coquitlam Town Centre (Attachment 1).

Option 2 - South Arm Park - Potential Field Configurations Presented at Open Houses: Field Option A or B – Turf Area 7,500 sq. metres (80,731 sq. ft)



A total of 32 area residents of the South Arm Community provided feedback. The outcome of the Open House at South Arm Park resulted with a 44% in favour and 56% opposed to the development of an artificial turf field at the park. Primary concerns from the residents, and nearby strata, included additional noise factors, installation of field lighting where none exists today, vehicular traffic, security, lack of parking, removal of mature trees, environmental and health safety issues, the loss of green space and the 'decline of wildlife.'

Other concerns included late operational hours, garbage and litter associated with the extended and increased usage of the site, and the overall aesthetics of the park, 14 residents of the community responded in favour and 19 residents voted strongly opposed with multiple concerns.

Staff were informed by the South Arm area residents that there are existing pressures on the neighbourhood, particularly along Ryan Road located at the south side of South Arm Park with vehicle traffic and parking for sports and park uses along Ryan Road and the field proposal would only increase the problems significantly.

South Arm Park possibly has the greatest number of site constraints today of any community park field site, these include:

- ❑ **Site Master Plan:** The South Arm Park master plan is due for revision. This process typically involves the recruitment of consultants and engagement of all of the park and community stakeholders, as well as the neighbourhood to provide feedback on the park site and to identify any community needs that may be addressed. The South Arm Community Association initiated neighbourhood needs analysis in 2005 which can be used as background information for this process.
- ❑ **Lighting:** the site has no field lighting today, the introduction of lighting at this field site would have to be carefully engineered and a public consultation process would be necessary. Given the close proximity to residential homes along Ryan Road, and the apartments and single family residential properties on the east and west sides of the park, glare and light spillage would be very difficult to contain. The Option A field, for example, is only 11 meters from the three storey strata residential property.
- ❑ **Property Ownership:** the site at South Arm is a mix of property ownership and consultation and agreement with the Richmond School District would be necessary for many field configurations on the site. The field configuration option A at South Arm is approximately 50% on School District land and would require their consent and approval. Field option B is 100% on City Owned land.
- ❑ **Displacement:** South Arm is a park built to capacity today. The removal of any one element or introduction of a new facility or programmed use may require the relocation of other amenities. For example, many of the rectangular soccer facilities on the park today, also double as baseball diamonds and outfields, all heavily used year round. The installation of a turf field needs to respect the needs of baseball on the site as well.
- ❑ **Trees-** South Arm is a site with significant trees, many of which are mapped and dedicated by the community years ago to the community. Staff arborists estimate the relocation of trees at the site would cost \$10,000 per tree, for example the concept diagram Option B above would have a financial implication of \$170,000 to relocate established large trees. Option A would have a similar impact.
- ❑ **Parking:** South Arm park already has challenges from the existing school, community facility, baseball, swimming pool, tennis facilities, playground, community hall and soccer parking demands. Staff annually receive complaints from residents on Ryan Road from public parking in the residential areas. A parking study to determine appropriate parking would be a part of the master plan.
- ❑ **Surveillance and Security:** The field sport playing areas at South arm are not in close proximity to the existing park caretakers. Site security is a major concern at this site. Examples of recent vandalism include the arson events at the South Arm Pool hedge. Available park space at field configuration B would have limited surveillance, and the field asset would not have the preferred level of security.
- ❑ **Whiteside School:** Staff have been informed that in the future Whiteside elementary in South Arm park may be rebuilt. The potential configurations of this school would need to be considered within a park master plan process.

The potential turf field configurations presented at South Arm Park raise several challenges, and at this time, based on the site constraints, as well as the negative community feedback received, staff do not recommend consideration of a lit artificial turf field at this site.

Recommended Next steps for South Arm Park:

Based on the community feedback and comments received for South Arm Park, an overall master plan, as approved by Council in December 2007, should be completed prior to consideration of a turf field facility with lights. Resolution of the many site current constraints, and taking advantage of future opportunities through a comprehensive park master plan is recommended prior to limiting future opportunities on the lands with the placement of a turf field at this time.

Staff have already held preliminary conversations with the South Arm Community Association, and a more comprehensive public consultation process is now being planned to develop a long term vision for the park. Work during the spring and summer of this year will focus on obtaining stakeholder input and developing conceptual options for an updated park program. A preferred park plan will then be presented to the community for comment in September. A final plan is anticipated to be completed by the end of 2008.

Public Consultation Summary

The South Arm Park open house for the proposed development of an artificial turf sports field resulted in a greater number of residents opposing the proposal. Feedback detailed concerns relating to the proximity of the fields adjacent to single family and adjacent strata properties. Primary concerns included spill-over lighting, the potential removal of mature and donated trees, existing vehicle traffic on the perimeter neighbourhood streets, a lack of parking, noise, environmental impacts, and the potential extended hours of park activity as late as 11 pm daily.

The Minoru Park open house resulted with strong support from residents in attendance, and many of the field sport groups including soccer, field lacrosse, field hockey, football, track & field and baseball. With 96% of respondents in favour of the proposal, the results show the significant approval for an artificial turf field at the Minoru Oval. Public feedback and comments suggest the existing Minoru field should be better utilized to the maximum of its capacity for training, tournaments and community events.

If approved, the following tendering and construction schedule is proposed for the 2008 artificial turf installations:

Proposed Project Schedule:

Date (2008)	Activity
February	Design and prepare working drawings
March	Tender Process for turf installation, lighting, fencing, and field equipment Tree relocation at King George Park
April	Select proponents for contracting works and order supply of materials Survey layout and geotechnical investigation
May - July	Sub-base construction and field preparation at King George Park
July - September	Installation of artificial turf at King George Park
July - August	Sub-base construction and field preparation at Minoru Park
August - October	Installation of artificial turf at Minoru Park
August - October	Installation of bleachers, players benches and goals
August - October	Construction of perimeter walkway and landscaping
October	Field Testing
October 14 th -17 th	Tentative Field openings

Financial Impact

As part of the 2008 Capital Program, Council has approved \$3,500,000 for the installation of two artificial turf fields to be installed in 2008.

Conclusion

With completion of the comprehensive site analysis, and community consultation process for South Arm Park and Minoru Park, this report recommends construction of an artificial turf field at Minoru park in 2008, and the continuation of the current park master planning process at South Arm Community Park.

King George Park was approved by Council in 2007 as one of the locations for a new artificial turf sports field in 2008. An Open House session was held at King George on December 19th, 2007 and resulted in positive support from attendees, as well as support from the East Richmond Community Association who are excited about the amenity being located in the Cambie/East Richmond area.

The proposed 2008 addition of two new artificial turf fields in Richmond fulfills the City's commitment to add capacity to Richmond's popular field sport facilities. If approved, construction detailing and tender preparation will begin immediately.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "M. Redpath", with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Mike Redpath
Manager, Parks - Programs, Planning & Design
(1275)

ATTACHMENT 1

**Coquitlam Artificial Turf Field & Running Track
(example shown with perimeter removable fence panels)**

