

## MEMORANDUM

**TO: BRIAN MICHAELSON**  
**CC: VICKIE SANDERS; TOM CUMPSTON**  
**FROM: WAYNE LOWERY**  
**DATE: AUGUST 11, 2022**  
**SUBJ: DIAMOND SPRINGS SPORTS PARK PLANS**

Brian, I just had a chance to go over the Diamond Springs Sports Park concept plans and presentation on the county website. Since I understand this is on our Commission agenda next week, I thought I should provide some thoughts to share with staff (and consultants?). I don't have a good frame of reference about the park facility needs for the West Slope outside of the El Dorado Hills area so my thoughts may be wacko and not reflective of the real recreation needs for in the Diamond Springs region.

Primary on my mind is the comment "Meets most programmatic needs in County Master Plan." This is further underscored in the concept plans where A "meets most needs," B "meets many needs," and C "meets fewest needs." My concern is we have already agreed that the 2012 Parks Master Plan is out of date, and we are collecting new, current information about community needs. So, how do we know the proposed plans meet current community needs if it is based on the 2012 out-of-date master plan?

### Listening Workshop Needs:

1. Concept A: Too close to residents to allow for an adequate buffer especially if the fields are lighted.
2. Concept B: Also lacks an adequate buffer.
3. Concept C: Meets the "fewest needs" but has the best buffer zones but fewer soccer fields. Also, what's the building in the middle of the trail area about?
4. Sports fields: The plans vary but there appears to be ample sports fields. However,
  - a. Adult softball has trended down over the last 20 years
  - b. Girls' softball likely doesn't need 3- 4 fields
  - c. Were youth baseball needs addressed; there are no baseball fields in plan
  - d. Plans to light a limited number of fields is a good idea.
  - e. A high need for soccer fields was expressed so I lean towards a plan with more soccer and less softball.
  - f. Couldn't we plan at least one multi-use fields. I.e., baseball/softball fields with a soccer overlay?
5. Did consultant consider that the adjacent schools have sports fields? Is there a possibility for joint use where the school uses the park during the day and the county uses the school facilities nights and weekends?
6. Pickleball is a growing trend and tennis is in decline. However, I suggest the courts be designed so if tennis grows again and pickleball declines, the size of the courts allow for an easy conversion. The cost would be minimal.

7. I like having a group picnic area, but it needs to be near activity areas that the group would likely use. That may be the sports fields but it's highly likely that they will need to be near the playground, trails, and Open Turf Area.
8. The concession building should also be designed for other purposes such as equipment storage. It's very possible that there won't be enough activity at any one given time to make managing a concession stand worthwhile but adequate storage is always a problem.
9. Can any of the buildings accommodate storage for sports groups?
10. Is there a place for maintenance storage or even a work yard to hold onsite equipment?
11. Will baseball/softball fields need portable fences? Where will they be stored?
12. If a multiuse field is created, soccer goals may need to be stored as well.
13. There appears to be several smaller buildings in the plan. I assume some are restrooms but probably not all.
14. What's the size of the gym? I assume it's for indoor activities such as basketball, volleyball, and may be an after-school program. The size of the gym at this time is moot but the footprint to accommodate it is important.
15. Size and purpose of the Open Turf area?
16. Bocce ball courts are high demand in many areas.
17. I assume the size of the parking lot is adequate and/or overflow parking will be accommodated at the schools. Will the park's parking lot become overflow parking for the schools?

Concerns raised by workshop participants:

18. Does the consultant address how the concept plan addresses security and visibility?
19. Does the consultant address how the concept plan addresses meeting the needs of everyone? All ages and abilities?
20. Does the consultant address how the concept plan addresses connections with the El Dorado Trail? I'm not sure it's possible but the question was raised.
21. There is a reference to "gardening beds." It would be easy enough to set aside an area and design water access in the plan which would leave it to efforts of the residents to develop a community garden program.
22. Would the Native Plant Society and El Dorado Irrigation District be interested in developing a Xeriscape Demonstration Garden?
23. How might the park provide outdoor education opportunities? With the schools so close and considering the wetland and oak woodland areas, there seems to be ample opportunity for this to be a component. There could likely be community groups (scouts, Audubon clubs) interested in developing interpretive programs.

I've also heard at least one of the county supervisors express interest in attracting user groups from outside the county to sports tournaments. I'm not sure this plan would meet the criteria to be a regional tournament facility, but it may need to be addressed at this stage if that is a consideration. However, my underlying concern continues to be does this plan really meet current community needs?

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