

**PARKS AND RECREATION BOARD
TUESDAY, MARCH 15, 2022
6:30PM AT
GORTON COMMUNITY CENTER
400 E ILLINOIS RD.
LAKE FOREST, ILLINOIS**

AGENDA

I. CALL TO ORDER & ROLL CALL

_____Paul Best, Chairman
_____Kevin Carden
_____Nancy Duffy

_____Patrick Marshall
_____Marc Silver
_____Kaci Spirito

II. *APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- i. Approval of minutes of the February 15, 2022, Parks and Recreation Board Meeting

III. OPPORTUNITY FOR CITIZENS TO ADDRESS THE PARKS AND RECREATION BOARD ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

IV. *APPROVAL OF RECREATION CENTER MULTI YEAR BUSSING SERVICES- Presented by Anthony Anaszewicz, Program Manager, Athletics

V. * APPROVAL OF RECOMMENDATION TO PROCEED WITH REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS FOR DESIGN OF ATHLETIC FIELDS AT DEERPATH PARK- Presented by Sally Swarthout, Director of Parks and Recreation

VI. COMMENTS BY DIRECTOR

VII. COMMENTS BY BOARD MEMBERS

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

***ACTION ITEMS**

The City of Lake Forest
Parks and Recreation Board
Meeting Minutes
February 15, 2022
Zoom Remote Meeting

I. Call to Order

The Parks and Recreation Board Meeting was called to order by Chairman Paul Best at 6:30p.m. The following were present via Zoom meeting:

Board Members: Mr. Paul Best
Mr. Kevin Carden
Ms. Nancy Duffy
Mr. Patrick Marshall
Mr. Marc Silver
Ms. Kaci Spirito

Staff: Ms. Sally Swarthout, Director of Parks and Recreation
Mr. Joe Mobile, Superintendent of Recreation
Mr. Chuck Myers, Superintendent of Parks, Forestry & Special Facilities
Ms. Dani Spann, Administrative Assistant

Public Attendees: Mr. Tom Ford
Mr. Richard Chun
Ms. Kate Rother
Mr. Brian Dacy
Mr. Alton Shader

II. Approval of Minutes

Meeting minutes of the January 11, 2022 Parks & Recreation Board Meeting were presented and approved.

Board member Silver motioned for approval of the minutes and Board member Marshall seconded. The Board meeting minutes of January 11, 2022 were then unanimously approved by roll call with 6 yeas and 0 nays.

III. Opportunities for the Public to Address the Board on Items not listed on the Agenda

Mr. Ford called in to show support of synthetic fields at Deerpath Park. Mr. Dacy expressed his support of synthetic fields at Deerpath Park. Ms. Rother thanked the Board and Staff for their hard work and expressed her support to move forward with synthetic fields at Deerpath Park. Mr. Chun mentioned currently there is little alternative for fields year-round as they are unplayable a lot of the time and residents have to go outside of the community to play sports and stated his support for synthetic fields at Deerpath Park.

IV. Approval of Townline Park Splash Pad

Superintendent Chuck Myers is seeking approval for a Splash Pad at Townline Park. Mr. Myers gave an overview of the project, and funding. Fiscal Year 2023 Advanced funds from Parks & Public Land Fund and Special Recreation Fund will be used as the funding source for the project. NuToys and Landscape Structures will be the vendor for the Splash Pad. Superintendent Myers talked about the cost and purchase process. The project will cost a total of \$300,000 (\$273,967 + \$26,033 contingency). SourceWell will purchase through the RFP process at no cost to the city. Mr. Myers went over the proposed timeline.

The proposed timeline is as follows:

1. Present to City Council for approval on February 22, 2022
2. Place order by March 11th
3. Start April/May
4. Open weekend of June 17th

Superintendent Myers went over some details and features of the Splash Pad.

- 3 play zones available for suitable age groups
- 1500 sq. feet
- Includes stream jets, hydro helix, tot shower dome, flora swirl, splash pack frog and other water areas of play
- 2 options of systems for water flow
 - o Recirculation throughout pad while being treated
 - o Flow thru sanitary system to drain in basin or bioswale
- Design will remain consistent with current playground color scheme
- Total flow rate is about 50 gallons per minute

Lengthy discussion followed on the location, maximum capacity and security of the splash pad. Director Swarthout stated Townline Park is a popular park with lots of people using the playground along with the walking path. Liability insurance for the splash pad will be covered under IRMA at no additional cost. Staff will discuss a solution for the monitoring of the location for safety. The geese at the park should not be an issue with the splash pad. Future revenue opportunities and ideas were mentioned. Board member Duffy mentioned it will be nice to have a water feature and it will be well received.

Requested Action: *City Staff requests approval for an advancement of Fiscal Year 2023 Capital Funding for the purchase and installation of a splashpad at Townline Park, to Landscape Structures, Inc., in the amount of \$300,000.*

A motion was made by Board member Duffy to approve an advancement of Fiscal Year 2023 Capital Funding for the purchase and installation of a splashpad at Townline Park, to Landscape Structures, Inc., in the amount of \$300,000. The motion was seconded by Board member Spirito. The motion passed with a roll call of 6 yeas and 0 nays.

V. Comments by Director

Director Swarthout reminded the Board to submit their comments and responses from the Athletic Fields Community Workshop by February 24th. The link will be available on the City's website. There will be 4 schematics and options presented. Ms. Swarthout encouraged residents to vote and give input. Discussion on the Board member's involvement followed. Director Swarthout stated a presentation will be shown at the next Park Board meeting on March 15th with a Board

recommendation to move forward to City Council in April with synthetic, natural, or hybrid turf. City Staff will then move forward in May with the decision approved by City Council. Director Swarthout mentioned Joe Mobile, Superintendent of Recreation, will be the point of contact for any questions.

Ms. Swarthout also informed the Board of the upcoming programs and local events.

- Lake Forest Fitness Membership Special- 20 days for \$22
- Flannels & Flapjacks!- March 5th from 9am – 10:30am
- Passion to Dance- March 12th at 7pm
- Summer Internship at Wildlife Discovery Center

VI. Board Member Comments

Board member Silver complimented Staff on the hard work and success of the ice rink.

VII. Adjournment

Board member Duffy motioned for adjournment and Board member Carden seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 7:43p.m.

Respectfully Submitted
Dani Spann
Administrative Assistant

SUBJECT: Approval to Award Multi-Year Contract for Recreation Department Program Bussing Services.

PRESENTED BY: Recreation Program Manager, Anthony Anaszewicz (847) 810-3945

PURPOSE AND ACTION REQUESTED: Staff requests approval to award First Student a 3-year contract for Recreation Bussing Services from 2022 - 2025.

BACKGROUND/DISCUSSION: The City of Lake Forest currently has two departments, Parks & Recreation and CROYA that utilize various bussing services for programming needs. Under the City's financial policies and to lower operational costs for these various city departments the bus transportation needs were put through the formal bid process. Public notice to solicit bids was provided on February 8th and the bid opening held at The Lake Forest Recreation Center on Friday, February 18th at 10:00 AM.

The City of Lake Forest's bussing needs include the usage of school busses throughout the year by the Parks & Recreation Department for summer camps and various other programs and events. All Stars & Beyond Day Camp, McCormick Day Camp, and TWIGS Day Camp feature daily and/or weekly shuttles to and from Forest Park Beach and Lake Forest High School for swimming as well as weekly field trips to various locations around the north shore. CROYA uses school busses for monthly field trips and retreats throughout the year for middle school and high school students as part of their program curriculum.

BUDGET/FISCAL IMPACT: Funding for camp bussing is a Parks & Recreation Department program expense, is budgeted in the programs annual operating budgets and is covered by program fees. Funding for CROYA also comes out of their annual operating budgets. Staff received two (2) bids for the annual program bus service.

Bus Bid Data Overview:

Recreation Programs	2022 – 2023	*2023 – 2024	*2024 - 2025
Positive Connections	\$ 59,925	\$ 157,950	\$ 165,746
First Student	\$ 24,977	\$ 82,208	\$ 87,777

*2023 – 2025 includes route bussing for McCormick and All Stars & Beyond Day Camps.

*CROYA	2022 – 2023	2023 – 2024	2024 - 2025
Positive Connections	\$ 9,987.50	\$ 10,500	\$ 11,025
First Student	\$ 5,890	\$ 6,080	\$ 6,270

*CROYA services not approved by Park and Rec Board.

BOARD ACTION: Approval to award First Student a 3-year contract for Recreation Bussing Services from 2022 - 2025.

SUBJECT: Approval to Proceed With Requests for Proposals for the Design of Athletic Fields at Deerpath Park.

PRESENTED BY: *Sally Swarthout, Director- Parks, Recreation, and Forestry (847-810-3942)*

PURPOSE AND ACTION REQUESTED: Staff requests the approval to proceed with requests for proposals for the design of synthetic turf athletic fields at Deerpath Park.

BACKGROUND/DISCUSSION: In 2019 Staff partnered with the Friends of Lake Forest Parks and Recreation Foundation to develop the Comprehensive Parks Master Plan utilizing surveys, stakeholder meetings, and interviews. This effort clearly defined park and recreation priorities in our community. Subsequently, the Comprehensive Parks Master Plan was approved by the Parks and Recreation Board and the City Council. The approved Comprehensive Parks Master Plan identified numerous initiatives that were important to the community, including an athletic field complex and synthetic turf field. As a follow up, in 2020 an Athletic Field Feasibility Study was completed to assess the current usage and conditions of our athletic fields. Additionally, the record rainfall over the past several years and frequent concerns about field conditions raised by community stakeholders have elevated athletic fields to the forefront of the priorities identified in the Comprehensive Parks Master Plan.

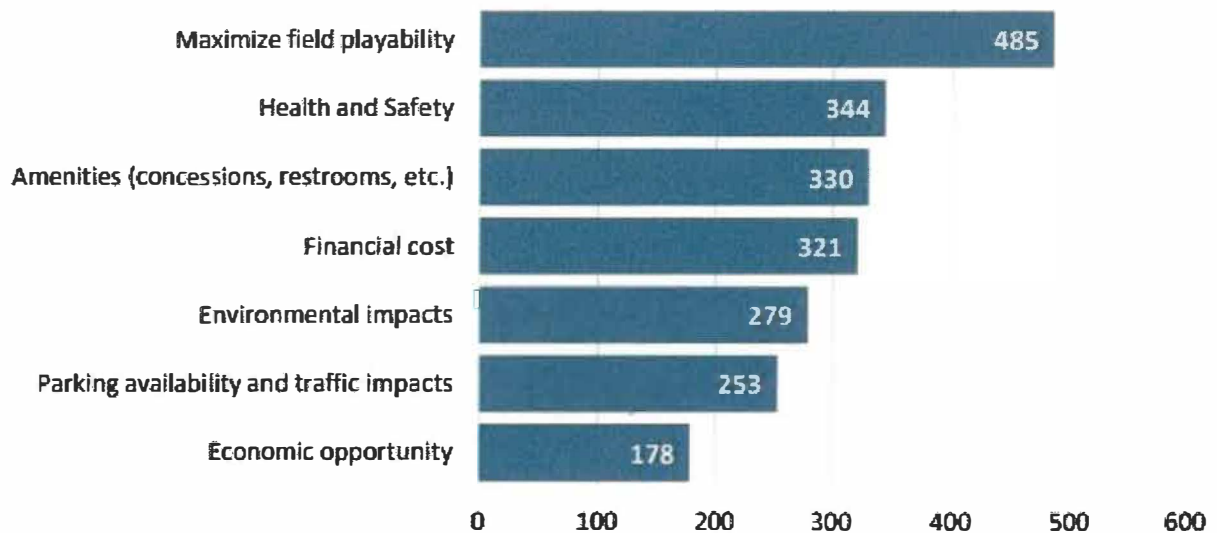
In July 2021, City Council held a workshop where they received information about what improvements would be necessary to enhance the quality of the playing experience at Deerpath Park. Following that workshop, staff identified the following four options for further consideration:

- 1) Continue with existing maintenance and turf conditions.
- 2) Design and improve the quality of natural grass fields.
- 3) Design and build a synthetic turf playing surface.
- 4) A hybrid of options two and three, consisting of both natural and synthetic playing fields.

Following the July Council workshop, Staff undertook a robust community engagement process to better understand resident/user group priorities related to the Deerpath Park athletic fields. As staff evaluated options for Park Board consideration, it was critical to understand what was most important to the community and to acknowledge that the various options have trade-offs. As a first step in this community engagement process, a survey was sent to the community asking them to rank seven criteria for evaluating field improvement options. Responses are included in the following table.

What are your top three criteria for evaluating options for athletic field improvements at Deerpath Community Park?

730 out of 730 answered



The survey was completed by 730 residents and the responses clearly identified maximizing playability as the highest community priority, followed by health and safety, and amenities. The full survey results are attached as Exhibit A on page 13.

To learn more about the community's priorities and preferences for different design options, community engagement sessions were then held on December 15, 2021 and Thursday, February 17, 2022. These meetings further gauged the community priorities, ensured public input in evaluating the identified criteria, and helped refine the options being considered.

The first community workshop was held in-person on December 15, 2021. Attendees were asked to review and rank 10 priorities through a scorecard exercise. Following the scorecard exercise, attendees discussed their priority preferences in small groups. The summary of the scorecard responses identifies the following top priorities: maximizing playability, maximizing field usage and conditions, and player safety. A summary of the scorecard exercise is included below and the full workshop summary is included as Exhibit B on page 15.

PRIORITY RANKING

Community members were asked to review and rank ten (10) improvement priorities through a scorecard exercise. The table below displays the topics in order of priority:

PRIORITY LEVEL	IMPROVEMENT KEY TOPIC	COMMUNITY RANKING
1	PLAYER SAFETY	4.5
1	MAXIMIZE PLAYABILITY	4.5
1	MAXIMIZE FIELD USAGE & CONDITIONS	4.5
2	PLAYER/USER GROUP EXPECTATIONS	3.8
3	OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCIES	3.7
4	ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY	3.6
5	PARKING AVAILABILITY & TRAFFIC	3.5
5	ENHANCED/IMPROVED ON-SITE AMENITIES	3.5
6	FINANCIAL/OPERATIONAL COST	3.3
7	ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY	3.1

Additionally, several questions were raised during this first workshop regarding the environmental impact of both synthetic and natural grass playing surfaces. While environmental sustainability was not identified as the highest priority in the scorecard responses, given the particular focus on this issue by an engaged group of residents, staff felt it was important to assess the issue at the second community workshop.

The second community workshop, which was held remotely on February 17, 2022, addressed questions raised at the first workshop and provided a preliminary review of the four options under consideration. Given the large interest in this project, the workshop presentation was posted online and residents who were unable to attend were invited to view the presentation and complete an online comment form through February 24 to provide feedback on the design options. A summary of the workshop and comment form responses is attached as Exhibit C on page 21 of this packet. As indicated in the summary, a number of residents continued to question the environmental impact and safety of synthetic turf fields. Additionally, many residents were interested in information regarding playability, safety, maintenance, and operations from our neighboring communities that have synthetic turf fields.

It should be noted that the main user groups at Deerpath Park are Lake Forest Parks and Recreation program participants, Deer Path Middle School students, and local athletic organizations. Many of those user groups participated in the community engagement process and several user groups also submitted letters that are included

as Exhibit D on page 30 of this packet. Overall, the user groups indicated a preference for synthetic turf. The Park Board and City Council also received correspondence from non-user interest groups, including several outside the community, many indicating opposition to synthetic turf. Correspondence from local non-user interest groups is included as Exhibit E on page 36 of this packet.

Throughout the community engagement process, residents agreed that The City of Lake Forest needs updated athletic fields. The top priorities heard throughout engagement efforts were to maximize playability, maximize field usage and conditions, and player health and safety. Although environmental sustainability has not scored as a top priority throughout the community engagement process, a segment of the community has expressed strong concerns about those issues. Consequently, Staff will consider best sustainable practices during the design phase, balanced with other priorities identified by the public.

Information gathered during the community engagement process prompted Staff to conduct additional research into local experience from neighboring communities (attached as Exhibit F on page 40 of this packet lists neighboring communities with synthetic turf fields). Because of the prevalence of turf fields in the area, Staff solicited feedback from neighboring communities to better understand their experience within the context of the identified community priorities. Staff connected with 13 municipalities, parks districts and schools, including Lake Forest High School, Lake Forest Academy, and Lake Forest College to understand their experiences related to the Lake Forest community-identified priorities. This outreach included discussions with the Village of Oak Park and the City of Evanston, which are known for their sustainability commitments, to understand their experience with recently installed synthetic turf fields in the context of their environmental sustainability efforts.

Staff gathered this additional information through surveys, individual interviews, and site visits to other community's fields. Consistent with topics prioritized during the community engagement process, questions focused on playability, player safety, maintenance obligations, and overall user satisfaction. Each group expressed support for synthetic turf. Local experience is clear – the entities consulted that have installed synthetic turf have been happy with the performance. Based on local responses, installation of synthetic turf extends playing seasons, significantly reduces weather related cancellations, increases demand from local user groups, while requiring less maintenance. Survey respondents indicated that there was not a noted increase in injuries due to the use of the synthetic turf compared with their previous use of natural grass surfaces. A summary of these responses is attached as Exhibit G on page 41 of this packet.

At the February 17, 2022, workshop four options for the rehabilitation to Deerpath Park Athletic Fields were presented:

1. Improve in place,
2. Natural grass fields with improved drainage,
3. Synthetic turf fields,
4. A hybrid of synthetic turf and natural grass.

Staff evaluated the four options based on community feedback, user group preferences, and neighboring community input. A brief overview of these options is outlined below. In sum, Staff do not recommend Option 1- Improve in Place, as it is not expected to adequately address community needs and priorities. The remaining three options are discussed below in the context of community needs and priorities.

Based on preliminary design estimates provided by Gewalt Hamilton Associates, a professional civil engineering firm with experience developing athletic sports complexes, the long-term cost difference between options 2, 3, and 4 is negligible. While City Council will consider funding issues, 10–20-year costs are substantially similar such that finances should not be a determining factor in considering one option over another.

Option 1: Improve in Place (Not Recommended) – Improve in place would not provide the needed conditions for competitive play for recreation program participants or for our stakeholder organizations.

Option 2: Natural Grass Fields with Improved Drainage – Natural grass with improved drainage is a good option and would provide significant improvements over today's conditions. However, this option would not meet the top-rated criteria identified during the community engagement process. Adding improved drainage would reduce the time of field closures after rain events as the grass would dry out quicker. With proper/additional maintenance resources the fields could be kept in top playing conditions. However, the fields would still be closed for maintenance and protection after rain or heavy use to avoid tearing up the soft ground. Natural grass would also require additional maintenance including man hours, synthetic fertilizer and other applications, and use of gas emitting machinery to ensure a high quality and safe playing surface for our participants. Based on conversations with local experts, organic treatment options can be effective for fields with passive play but are not as effective for fields like those at Deerpath Park that receive heavy use.

Option 3: Synthetic Turf Fields – The addition of synthetic turf fields would be the best option, as it best addresses the top priorities identified by the community. Synthetic turf would maximize playability, field usage and conditions. Based on

feedback from neighboring communities, increased injuries have not been reported on synthetic turf and therefore this option would also prioritize player safety. Converting Deerpath Park to synthetic fields would extend the playing season, allowing for play and practice at least nine months of the year on a well-drained, readily available playing surface. This option would also allow staff to maximize field usage and extends the playing season annually.

Recognizing that there may be community members that prefer to utilize a natural grass surface, it is important to note that even if the fields at Deerpath Park become synthetic turf, there would still be 14 natural grass fields in other City parks. On the other hand, if Deerpath Park remains natural grass, it denies residents the choice to play on a synthetic turf playing surface. From an operational perspective, the installation of synthetic turf at Deerpath Park would allow for more targeted upkeep and maintenance for all athletic fields in The City's field inventory. Neighboring communities with synthetic turf fields have begun hosting practices for the upcoming spring season. Deerpath Park likely cannot do so until mid-April.

Similar to natural grass, the synthetic turf option would require significant upfront costs. However, over the estimated life of the turf field these costs even out with the natural grass option. There are also annual maintenance costs that would be part of annual operating budgets moving forward.

It should be noted that while some have expressed a concern with synthetic turf and heat exposure, play is minimal during the months of July and August and summer camps already move indoors on particularly hot days. Project design can also mitigate some of the concerns regarding heat.

Option 4: Hybrid Option - The hybrid solution would involve the use of natural grass and synthetic turf fields and would be better option than natural grass alone. While this option would improve playability (as compared to natural grass alone) by adding a durable, well-drained turf section, it would not maximize overall playability. The hybrid option would limit the flexibility of field placement and available programming space. These limits would cause scheduling challenges with other fields in our other parks, as programming would need to be moved from Deerpath Park to accommodate field needs. While there would be the options of natural grass and synthetic fields in the same place, a buffer would be required between the two surfaces that would ultimately reduce the field usage space. Moreover, additional staff would still be necessary to maintain the grass fields to meet community expectations.

Based on community feedback, research, interviews, and surveys of neighboring communities, Staff believe that installing synthetic turf athletic fields is the best option for improving field conditions at Deerpath Park. There are still some questions that won't be answered until we proceed with comprehensive engineering design. Nevertheless, given the community's stated priorities and available information, the best solution for the Lake Forest community today and into the future is to proceed with design engineering for synthetic turf fields. This option would maximize playability, field usage and conditions without compromising player safety, and would allow for the consideration of sustainability objectives during the design process. As noted above, importantly this option allows user groups the opportunity for choice: Those that prefer natural grass fields will still have access to them, while those that prefer synthetic turf will have that option, as well.

Finally, while this has been a long process it is critical to note that community engagement is a hallmark of Lake Forest and allows all residents the opportunity to be heard. Soliciting feedback from a wide range of stakeholders with differing opinions leads to a better, balanced final product. Staff are truly thankful for all those who contributed to our resident engagement efforts.

BUDGET/FISCAL IMPACT: There is no budget impact at this time. Staff will return with the results from a competitive pricing process.

BOARD ACTION: Approval to proceed with requests for proposals for the design of synthetic turf athletic fields at Deerpath Park.

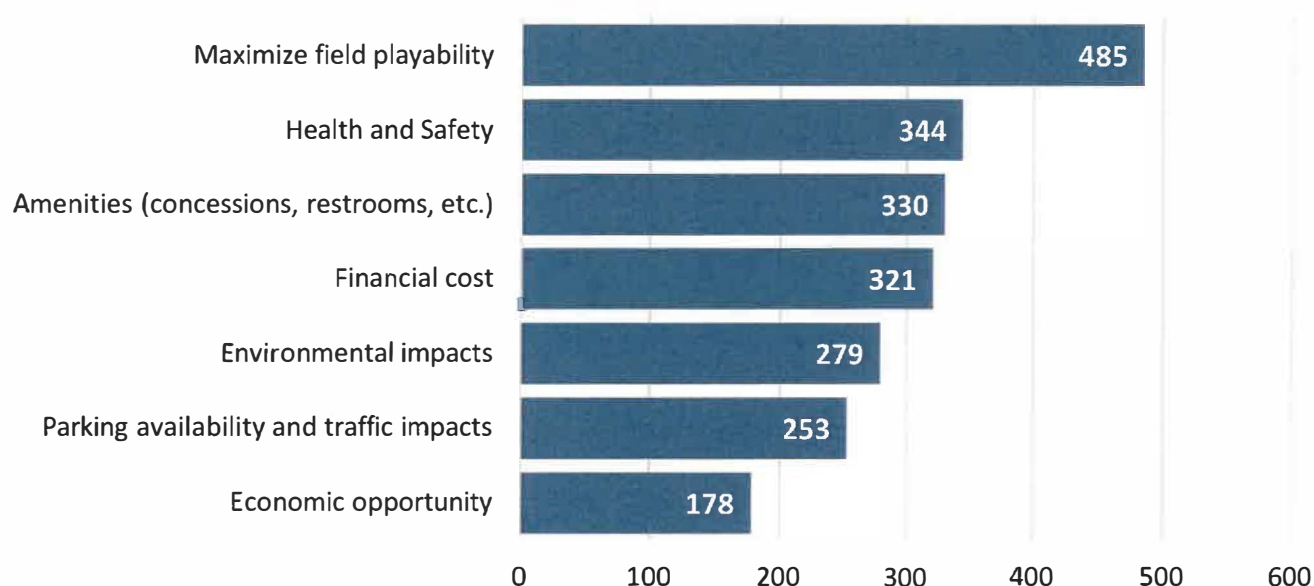
Athletic Field Improvements at Deerpath Community Park Survey Results



The following report analyzes resident feedback collected in a CityAsks survey on athletic field improvements at Deerpath Community Park. The survey was designed by Zencity and shared by the City of Lake Forest. It was conducted from October 15-23, 2021 and received 761 unique responses, 730 from self-identified Lake Forest residents. Responses from the 31 self-identified non-residents are not included in this summary.

What are your top three criteria for evaluating options for athletic field improvements at Deerpath Community Park?

730 out of 730 answered



What is most important to you when considering improving athletic fields at Deerpath Community Park?

688 out of 730 answered

In-depth analysis of responses to the open-ended question reveals the following themes:*

- **Synthetic turf (191 responses):** Most respondents within this group requested synthetic turf fields and claimed it will allow using the fields even in rainy or wet conditions; some also mentioned that other communities have them. Fewer respondents stated that they prefer natural grass.
- **Availability and playability (156 responses):** Most respondents requested to adapt the fields to be available and playable year-round. Some also asked for multi-use fields that will serve different parts of the community.
- **Environmental impacts (97 responses):** Respondents discussed the negative ecological impact of the possible project, and some specifically mentioned the detrimental effects of artificial turf in this context.
- **Health and safety (82 responses):** Some respondents requested to prioritize players' health and ensure the fields are safe.

- **Financial cost (57 responses):** A few respondents raised concerns about the project's cost and requested that money be spent carefully so the project would not entail a tax increase.
- **Drainage issues (32 responses):** Some respondents specifically mentioned drainage problems at the fields and requested improvement.
- **Amenities (20 responses):** A few respondents mentioned the need for good amenities, focusing on restrooms and adequate parking.

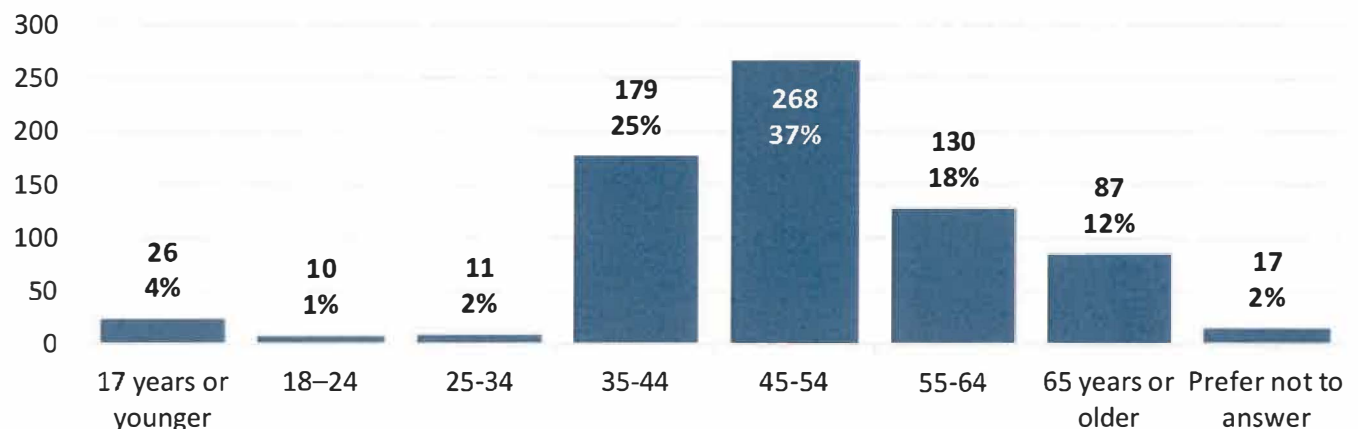
Additionally, a few responses maintained that the fields should be competitive with neighboring communities.

**Note that respondents may have specified more than one issue in their response. Each issue named in a single response is accounted for in Zencity's analysis of the open-ended question.*

Demographic Information

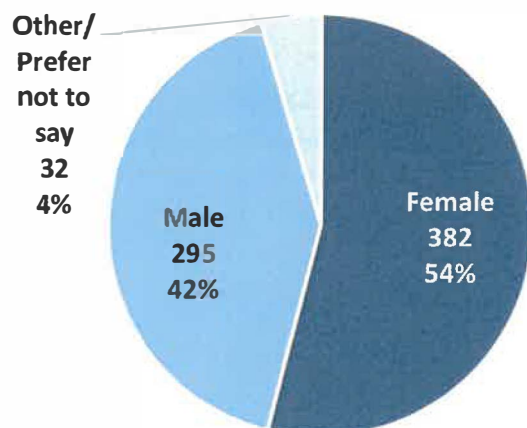
To what age group do you belong?

728 out of 730 answered



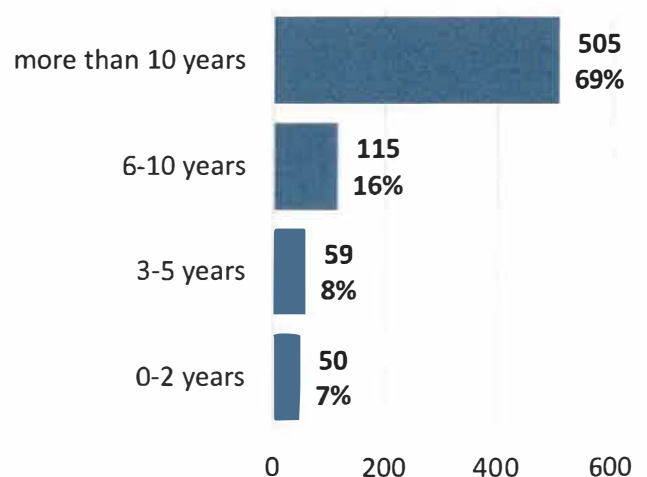
What is your gender?

709 out of 730 answered



How long have you lived in Lake Forest?

729 out of 730 answered



WORKSHOP RESULTS

The City of Lake Forest Parks & Recreation Board hosted a community workshop on December 15th, 2021 from 7 to 8:30 pm to discuss key topics related to potential athletic field improvements at Deerpath Community Park. Approximately 60 community members were in attendance, the majority of which engaged in round table discussions.

This workshop is the first of two on this topic and aims to better define the community's priorities moving forward. The workshop included exhibits and a scorecard exercise, round table discussions, as well as a "report out" session for sharing table comments.

PRIORITY RANKING

Community members were asked to review and rank ten (10) improvement priorities through a scorecard exercise. The table below displays the topics in order of priority:

PRIORITY LEVEL	IMPROVEMENT KEY TOPIC	COMMUNITY RANKING
1	PLAYER SAFETY	4.5
1	MAXIMIZE PLAYABILITY	4.5
1	MAXIMIZE FIELD USAGE & CONDITIONS	4.5
2	PLAYER/USER GROUP EXPECTATIONS	3.8
3	OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCIES	3.7
4	ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY	3.6
5	PARKING AVAILABILITY & TRAFFIC	3.5
5	ENHANCED/IMPROVED ON-SITE AMENITIES	3.5
6	FINANCIAL/OPERATIONAL COST	3.3
7	ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY	3.1

The community engagement process for Deerpath Athletic Field Improvements is prepared and conducted by The Lakota Group, a landscape architecture and community engagement firm based in Chicago.

**THE
LAKOTA
GROUP.**

ROUND TABLE DISCUSSIONS

Overall, community members agreed that the main priority is providing what is best for the younger generations, and highly stressed player safety. The Lake Forest community also focused on the need to develop a plan for Deerpath Community Park that would make residents proud and ahead of the curve. Below is a summary of key topics based on a ranking exercise completed by participants and subsequent conversations held during the workshop.

Comments provided below within each key topic area are listed in order of priority, based on how much they were emphasized by community members.

PLAYER SAFETY

- The majority of community members were concerned about Deerpath Community Park's current field conditions for player safety. Participants expressed concerns about divots and uneven surfaces, existing sprinkler heads on the fields causing trip hazards for players, flooding and ponding problems, and a lack of sufficient field maintenance as issues that lead to player injuries.
- Player safety, to many respondents, was one of the highest priorities. Enhancing site drainage, improving playing surfaces, providing better lighting/visibility, and addressing field maintenance are critical to many.
- Participants wished to have more information about the best field conditions—synthetic turf or natural grass—as it relates to player safety. Providing high quality field improvements for the kids and the community was unanimously agreed upon by community members.



QUESTIONS FOR FOLLOW UP:

1. WHAT IS THE LEVEL OF PLAYER SAFETY ON NATURAL GRASS VERSUS SYNTHETIC TURF?

MAXIMIZE PLAYABILITY

- Year-round access to athletic fields was a very strong desire shared by more than half of the community members in attendance. This can provide local athletes the opportunity to compete at an elevated level. A few community members mentioned that local leagues are going to neighboring communities, including Libertyville, to access high quality athletic fields, and argue that Lake Forest has an opportunity to host locally as we move into the future.



- High cancellation rates due to field conditions, among other reasons, was a major concern to community members, specifically members with younger kids or those who have a direct affiliation with sports. Maximizing playability, including during the winter and fall seasons, was deemed highly important to residents.
- Some participants noted that synthetic turf, while increasing playability exponentially, does not guarantee year-round access to fields, especially in the Midwest climate.
- A few community members mentioned that the Parks and Recreation Department needs specific athletic field types to better accommodate current demands. This includes baseball fields, among others.

MAXIMIZE FIELD USAGE & CONDITIONS

- The majority of community members were very concerned about the current quality of athletic fields at Deerpath Community Park. Respondents believe that field conditions go hand in hand with the safety of users.
- Field maintenance was a common theme in community conversations. Optimizing playability and properly maintaining heavily utilized fields to ensure player safety and overall best practices was deemed necessary. This includes uneven surfaces, loose dirt in the infields, and divots and holes, among other issues.
- Developing a field resting schedule was also suggested to reduce wear and tear.



QUESTIONS FOR FOLLOW UP:

1. WHAT IS THE COST COMPARISON FOR NATURAL GRASS VERSUS SYNTHETIC TURF AS IT RELATES TO INSTALLATION AND MAINTENANCE?

PLAYER/USER GROUP EXPECTATIONS

- Community members mentioned the need to engage local leagues and affiliates to better understand their current usage needs (practice time, play time, etc.)
- While the community acknowledges the demand for field usage, they are looking for more factual data to support this argument.

Questions on the next page.



QUESTIONS FOR FOLLOW UP:

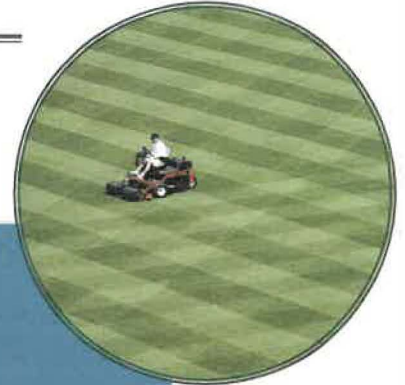
- 1. IS THERE A POTENTIAL PARK SITE THAT CAN SHARE THE HEAVY USAGE OF THE ATHLETIC FIELDS AT DEERPATH COMMUNITY PARK? SOME PARTICIPANTS MENTIONED TOWNLINE COMMUNITY PARK AS AN ALTERNATIVE OPTION.**
- 2. WHO ARE THESE FIELD IMPROVEMENTS FOR: THE MIDDLE SCHOOL AND GYM CLASS/RECESS, SPORTS LEAGUES, SURROUNDING NEIGHBORHOODS, REGIONAL TOURNAMENTS? WHO WILL HAVE ACCESS TO THE PLAYING FIELDS?**

OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCIES

- Community members expressed interest in seeing a cost comparison to operate natural grass versus synthetic turf.

QUESTIONS FOR FOLLOW UP:

- 1. WHAT IS THE COST COMPARISON FOR NATURAL GRASS VERSUS SYNTHETIC TURF AS IT RELATES TO OPERATIONS?**
- 2. IS THERE A DESIGN ALTERNATIVE THAT INCORPORATES BOTH SYNTHETIC AND NATURAL FIELDS?**



ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

- Deerpath Community Park is partially located in a floodplain area and drainage has impeded field usability in recent years. A large number of community members suggest the use of synthetic turf to mitigate drainage issues.
- A significant number of community members raised concerns towards the use of synthetic turf for sustainability reasons, including:
 - Synthetic turf may not be recyclable
 - Synthetic turf may release micro-plastic elements
- However, others argued that synthetic turf has more “hidden sustainability,” including:
 - Synthetic turf may have low carbon emissions with the absence of traditional maintenance equipment, such as mowers.
 - Synthetic turf may be less toxic due to the absence of weedkillers, pesticides, fertilizers, etc.
 - Synthetic turf may help manage stormwater
- Some recommended that the City’s Strategic Plan and Sustainability Plan should act as a guide for any future improvements to the athletic fields at Deerpath Community Park.



Questions on the next page.

QUESTIONS FOR FOLLOW UP:

1. WHAT ARE THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS OF DRAINAGE BACK TO THE CREEK WITH NATURAL GRASS AND PESTICIDES VERSUS SYNTHETIC TURF AND POTENTIAL MICRO-PLASTICS/RUBBER PELLETS?
2. WHAT IS THE LIFESPAN OF SYNTHETIC TURF, BASED ON THE PROJECTED LEVEL OF USE?
3. WHAT IS THE LEVEL OF RECYCLABILITY FOR SYNTHETIC TURF? ARE THERE MICRO-PLASTICS IN SYNTHETIC TURF?

ENHANCED/IMPROVED SITE AMENITIES

- While enhanced amenities were deemed beneficial by some residents, the majority of community members ranked this lower on their list of priorities for improvements. Bathrooms close to the fields were deemed as an important amenity to improve current conditions.
- Fencing was one of the amenities heavily discussed during the community workshop - a number of community members were not in favor of fencing.



QUESTIONS FOR FOLLOW UP:

1. DO TURF FIELDS OR NATURAL GRASS FIELDS REQUIRE THE PROPERTY TO BE FENCED IN ORDER TO PROPERLY MAINTAIN AND MONITOR USAGE?

PARKING AVAILABILITY & TRAFFIC

- Some residents mentioned that improving Deerpath Community Park provides an opportunity to enhance the overall site, including widening roadways to better accommodate traffic flow, including better access to the fire department.
- A few community members suggested channeling heavy usage, including larger community events and tournaments, to more adequate park sites, including Townline Community Park, due to its central location within Lake Forest, and its proximity to a major street.
- A few participants mentioned that transportation infrastructure must be sufficient to support the use of the fields. If there is an increase in usage, traffic should be studied to accommodate this projection.

QUESTIONS FOR FOLLOW UP:

1. HOW WILL INCREASING PLAYABILITY AFFECT TRAFFIC?

FINANCIAL/OPERATIONAL COST

- Cost was one of the main topics of conversation for community members, arguing that synthetic turf, while more resilient than regular grass, will require a higher installation cost. Others mentioned that maintaining synthetic turf, on the long run, will reduce maintenance and operational costs.
- A large number of community members expressed an interest in seeing a cost comparison of natural grass to synthetic turf, including both short-term and long-term costs.
- A hybrid system of providing some natural grass fields and some synthetic turf fields was brought up, by one community member, as one of the alternatives that could address cost concerns.

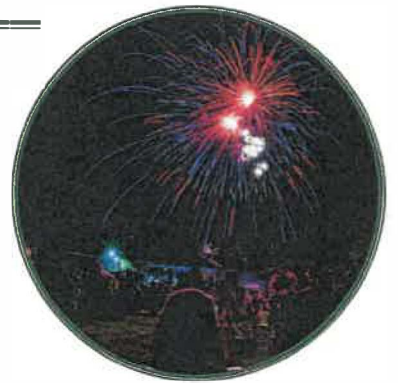


QUESTIONS FOR FOLLOW UP:

1. WHAT ARE THE COSTS (OPERATIONAL, MAINTENANCE, INITIAL INSTALLATION) OF NATURAL GRASS VERSUS SYNTHETIC TURF?

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY

- Overall, community members see great value in improving Deerpath Community Park's athletic fields and see this as a prototype for other park enhancements in Lake Forest.
- On more than one occasion, participants noted that multi-purpose fields can host local events and drive economic development for Downtown Lake Forest.
- Some community members see improvements to Deerpath Community Park's athletic fields as an opportunity to compete with other North Shore sports fields and leagues, draw more users and potential new residents, and support existing and new businesses.
- One community member was concerned about synthetic turf and its impacts on local events, such as the July 4th event.



**WE LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING YOU AT THE SECOND
COMMUNITY WORKSHOP ON JANUARY 19TH!**

VISIT CityofLakeForest.com/AthleticFieldImprovements FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

WORKSHOP 2 RESULTS

The City of Lake Forest Parks & Recreation Board virtually hosted a second community workshop on February 17, 2022 from 7 to 8:30 pm. The purpose was to address questions from the first workshop held in December 2021 and provide the community an opportunity to evaluate four different design approaches for Deerpath Community Park. Approximately 120 community members were in attendance, the majority of whom engaged through live commenting. To ensure that other community members, who were not in attendance, had the opportunity to engage, an online comment form was available through February 24. Eighty-eight Lake Forest residents shared their thoughts through the online form.

The second workshop was divided into two segments. The first segment focused on answering questions that were brought up during the first workshop, and the second segment featured four potential design options for Deerpath Community Park. Participants had opportunities throughout the presentation to share their thoughts and feedback. The City of Lake Forest greatly values the community's continued interest in this planning process.

Below is a summary of key topics and subsequent themes mentioned during the second workshop and submitted on the online comment forms.



The community engagement process for Deerpath Athletic Field Improvements is prepared and conducted by The Lakota Group, a landscape architecture and community engagement firm based in Chicago.

THEME DISCUSSIONS

PLAYER SAFETY

- Community members unanimously agreed that high quality improvements and high standard maintenance practices, for either natural grass or synthetic turf are of utmost importance to player safety.
- Some community members expressed concern of PFAS harmful effect on youth players, increased injuries, and heat-generation issues as reasons to keep natural grass fields.
- Other community members found turf fields to be safe for players from personal experience and proven effective across the nation.
- Some community members stated concern for game cancellations on player happiness and suggested that improvements to the athletic fields would support players' mental health.

“

AS A FORMER ATHLETE WHO PLAYED ON TURF AND WITH KIDS WHO PLAY ON TURF, I DO NOT HAVE MAJOR CONCERNS WITH PLAYER SAFETY. THERE IS A MINOR INCREASE IN RISK FOR INJURIES BUT PLAYING ON GRASS IN POOR CONDITIONS - OR NOT PLAYING AT ALL WITH CANCELLATIONS - ALSO INCREASES PROBLEMS FOR ATHLETES.”

—COMMUNITY MEMBER



MAXIMIZE PLAYABILITY

- Participants wish to see the fields improved to ensure playability not only for youth sports but also for residents to enjoy the fields.
- Multiple community members voiced their support for investment in synthetic turf fields as the most promising improvement for ensuring playability.
- Other community members expressed that high quality improvements to the natural grass fields would minimize cancellations and ensure playability.



“

I VIEW THIS AS AN IMPORTANT PUBLIC GOOD, MY KIDS DO NOT PLAY ORGANIZED SPORTS, BUT WE USE THESE FIELDS FOR FUN, AND WE WOULD LOVE TO USE THEM MORE. THERE HAVE BEEN COUNTLESS TIMES THAT I WANT TO GO OUT WITH MY KIDS, AND WE COULD NOT FIND A FIELD IN THE COMMUNITY IN GOOD CONDITION, EVEN THOUGH IT WAS ONE OR MORE DAYS AFTER A RAIN.”

—COMMUNITY MEMBER

MAXIMIZE FIELD USAGE & CONDITIONS

- Regardless of field surface options, participants agreed that grading and drainage issues at Deerpath Community Park need to be addressed to maximize field usage and condition, avoid game cancellations, and provide the best conditions for players and user groups.
- Many community members expressed interest in synthetic turf field improvements to increase the quality of the fields and create a reliable and durable surface.
- Other community members felt the investment in natural grass athletic fields and continued maintenance would be the best investment by the community to ensure field usage and condition.



“I WOULD LIKE TO SEE OUR COMMUNITY MAXIMIZING THE USABILITY OF OUR FIELDS AND UNFORTUNATELY, WE DO NOT LIVE IN A CLIMATE THAT ALLOWS US TO DO SO WITH NATURAL GRASS AND POOR DRAINAGE ISSUES.”

COMMUNITY MEMBER

PLAYER/USER GROUP EXPECTATIONS

- Some community members voiced the need to consider the value playfield improvements will have for families that do not play organized sports but use the athletic fields as a gathering space.
- Participants wished to have more input from Lake Forest youth on their preference for natural grass versus synthetic turf fields, as they will be using the athletic fields.

“A LARGE PRICE IS POTENTIALLY BEING SPENT ON A VERY VISUAL PROJECT AND MANY LOCAL SPORTS ORGANIZATIONS ARE GOING TO WANT TO ENSURE THAT THEY TOO HAVE A FAIR OPPORTUNITY TO PRACTICE AND PLAY ON THE NEW FIELDS.”

COMMUNITY MEMBER



OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCIES



- In regard to operational efficiencies, community members encourage the City to bring sustainable maintenance practices into improvements regardless of chosen surface. Community members encourage Lake Forest to look to comparable communities for the best practices of sustainable maintenance for both natural grass and synthetic turf fields.
- Multiple community members mentioned the importance of ensuring that the athletic fields are well maintained to avoid long-term repairs and reinstallations whether that be through policies or fencing.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

- Some community members raised concerns about synthetic turf not being recyclable.
- They were also concerned about harmful microplastics and potential chemical maintenance treatments leaching into the surrounding environment.
- Other community members raised concerns regarding standard practices for maintaining natural grass. Some suggested organic natural grass management as an alternative worth investigating.
- Community members encourage Lake Forest to investigate the most environmentally friendly synthetic turf that will benefit the community and have the least harmful impact on the environment.

“

I TRUST LAKE FOREST WILL PROPERLY BUDGET FOR MAINTAINING THE FIELDS TO MINIMIZE THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS.”

COMMUNITY MEMBER



PARKING AVAILABILITY & TRAFFIC

- Parking availability and traffic were low concerns for community members, but participants were interested in a traffic study for any proposed improvements moving forward.

ENHANCED/IMPROVED SITE AMENITIES

- Numerous community members expressed interest in preserving the walking path with any improvements made to the athletic fields.
- Some community members believe fencing and controlling access will benefit the improved fields long-term to avoid repairs and replacement.
- Community members wanted more information about the policies that the City will have to put into place to protect the improvements including fencing, rules about field usage, and fireworks on-site, to maintain the improvements long-term.
- Fourth of July events were a high priority for Lake Forest members and interest in continuing this tradition was expressed.



FINANCIAL COSTS

- Community members are interested in learning more about the estimated costs presented for the various improvements to Deerpath Community Park.
- On more than one occasion participants showed concern for synthetic turf's high investment cost and its short lifespan of only ten years.
- Other community members felt this level of investment for the community would be good for the City and home property values.



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY

- On more than one occasion community members noted that improvements to the athletic fields will make Lake Forest a competitive option for new families looking to move to the suburbs.
- Numerous participants expressed that any improvements should prioritize Lake Forest residents' use and local teams as well as the lifespan of the fields over revenue generation from non-Lake Forest sports leagues.

DESIGN OPTIONS

DESIGN OPTION 1 - BUSINESS AS USUAL

NATURAL GRASS MAINTAINED AS A PARK

OPTION BENEFITS:

- Low cost option

OPTION CHALLENGES:

- Requires on-going yearly effort
- Low playability and usability
- Natural grass maintenance practices



From the workshop presentation.

- Community members unanimously expressed that option 1 is not the right approach and that Lake Forest can do better than leaving the fields as they are. It was noted that this option fails to address usability, field condition, playability, game cancellations, and player safety to name a few issues.

“

LAKE FOREST NEEDS MODERN FACILITIES TO KEEP OUR CITY AND CHILDREN ON EQUAL FOOTING AS OUR NEIGHBORING TOWNS. THIS OPTION DOES NOTHING TO MOVE US FORWARD.”

COMMUNITY MEMBER

“

THERE IS NO QUESTION THAT THE CURRENT SPORTS FIELDS ARE NOT SUFFICIENT AS THEY HAVE BEEN POORLY DESIGNED AND NOT BEEN APPROPRIATELY CARED FOR.”

COMMUNITY MEMBER

DESIGN OPTION 2 - NATURAL GRASS IMPROVEMENTS

REGRADE, REPOSITION FIELD, IMPROVE DRAINAGE, AND NATURAL LAWN

OPTION BENEFITS:

- Implement best management sustainable standards
- Regrade, reposition and improve drainage conditions

OPTION CHALLENGES:

- Subject to weather-related cancellations
- High cost with less revenue stream potential
- Requires a higher level of maintenance
- Natural grass maintenance practices



From the workshop presentation.

- Community members expressed interest in this design option for several reasons including financial cost, player safety, and environmental impact.
- Other community members believe this option still does not address maximizing usability and playability to reduce game cancellations, and still has a high financial cost to the community.
- Lake Forest investing in environmentally sustainable maintenance practices came up by multiple respondents for any improvements to the fields.
- Multiple community members brought up the recent drainage improvements to Townline Park athletic fields and note they are still experiencing unfavorable field conditions, game cancellations, and poor usability.

“I LOVE THIS SOLUTION! GOOD DRAINAGE TECHNOLOGIES WILL PROVIDE LESS CANCELLATIONS, PLUS IT IS THE MOST SUSTAINABLE, THE SAFEST FOR THE ATHLETES, THE SAFEST FOR OUR ENVIRONMENT AND WITH GOOD MAINTENANCE WE SHOULD BE ABLE TO PLAY ON THIS FIELD A LOT, EVEN WHEN THERE IS SOME RAIN.”

— COMMUNITY MEMBER

“OUR COMMUNITY WANTS RELIABILITY AND DURABILITY IN THEIR FIELDS. GRASS FIELDS CANNOT SUPPORT THE DEMANDS WE HAVE IN THAT AREA, PLUS THE AMOUNT OF PLAY WE GET.”

— COMMUNITY MEMBER

DESIGN OPTION 3 - SYNTHETIC TURF IMPROVEMENTS

NEW ROBUST ARTIFICIAL TURF FIELD SPORTS COMPLEX

OPTION BENEFITS:

- Minimize weather-related cancellations
- Implement best management sustainable standards
- Low maintenance and operations
- High revenue stream potential
- High playability and usability

OPTION CHALLENGES:

- High initial investment costs
- Removal costs at 10-12 years
- More heat generated



From the workshop presentation.

- Community members who favored this option were in support of maximizing field use and condition, relative level of low maintenance, revenue generation, competitive advantage to surrounding communities, and maximizing playability.
- Community members who were against this option brought up the financial costs, environmental impact, heat generation, player safety, and having to replace the product in 10 years.
- Lake Forest community members expressed an interest in gaining children's opinion on turf fields; some expressed having children that do not enjoy playing on turf fields.

“

IDEAL SOLUTION TO PROVIDE OUR CHILDREN WITH MODERN FACILITIES WHILE PROVIDING REVENUE GENERATING OPPORTUNITIES. THIS IS SOMETHING OUR TOWN CAN BE PROUD OF AND WILL ALLOW US TO BECOME A PREMIER DESTINATION FOR SPORTS ACTIVITIES AND TOURNAMENTS. THIS OPTION ALSO POSITIONS WELL TO BETTER MANAGE BAD WEATHER EVENTS, WHICH FEEL MORE COMMON TODAY.”

- COMMUNITY MEMBER

“

SYNTHETIC FIELDS ARE NOT THE BEST OPTION REGARDLESS OF THEIR INCREASED PLAYABILITY BECAUSE OF THE UNINTENDED CONSEQUENCES THAT MAY RESULT FROM IMPACTS TO OUR ENVIRONMENT AS WELL AS TO USER SAFETY. ALTHOUGH THEY HAVE BEEN AROUND FOR A NUMBER OF YEARS, THERE STILL REMAINS A NUMBER OF QUESTIONS REGARDING THEIR LONG-TERM IMPACT ON HEALTH AND THE ENVIRONMENT.”

- COMMUNITY MEMBER

DESIGN OPTION 4 - HYBRID NATURAL/SYNTHETIC IMPROVEMENTS



From the workshop presentation.

- Some Lake Forest community members felt that this approach would not fix all the problems of the current field and would like to see maximum improvements to the facilities – maximum drainage improvements or full synthetic turf fields.
- Some participants expressed interest in exploring this hybrid option and looking at 2/3 natural fields and 1/3 synthetic turf and having the natural fields closer to the Recreation Center.

“IT IS NOT CLEAR WHY WE WOULD GO WITH THIS OPTION. IF WE ARE ADDING SYNTHETIC TURF, IT SEEMS BEST TO MAKE THE FACILITY ALL SYNTHETIC TURF AND TEAMS CAN USE THE OTHER GRASS FIELDS THROUGHOUT LAKE FOREST IF THEY WANT THAT TYPE OF SURFACE.”

— COMMUNITY MEMBER

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE DEERPETH ATHLETIC FIELD IMPROVEMENTS, VISIT THE WEBSITE BELOW.

CityofLakeForest.com/AthleticFieldImprovements

EXHIBIT D
MEMORANDUM

Date: March 11, 2022

To: Parks and Recreation Board

From: Sally Swarthout, Director- Parks, Recreation, Forestry

Re: Letters of support- synthetic turf

Please find attached letters of support for synthetic turf athletic fields at Deerpath Park from several of the direct user groups.

The sports organizations total 800 families, and the Middle School serves most 5th -8th grade students in our community.

Dear Honorable Mayor and Honorable City Council,

On behalf of the Deer Path Middle(DPM) School Wellness Department, this respectfully recommends your consideration of installing a synthetic turf surface that would replace the existing natural grass fields at Deerpath Community Park.

As DPM Wellness Department Leaders, we believe the synthetic surface would increase daily use for our students, plus the entire Lake Forest community since it would lessen the impact our climate has on the existing grass and dirt fields. As teachers responsible for 800+ students, we try to get all of them outdoors every day, weather permitting, but we're often compromised, even on good weather days due to damp, drenched grounds that haven't recovered from rain, snow, sleet, cold temperatures and other elements associated with our climate. A synthetic surface could permit more immediate, regular access for our students. In addition, a synthetic turf will provide a safe, level outdoor classroom for Wellness that is easily accessible for all students.

In addition to weather challenges, our fields are further compromised by migrating Canadian Geese and their waste. Installation of synthetic turf will not appeal to these geese, and could relieve us of the attendant mess, bacteria, and clean-up we currently undergo.

Finally, please note that we have 15 years' experience at Lake Forest High School West Campus where a synthetic turf surface was installed in 2007. That Field has successfully served our community for football, soccer, field hockey and other community events across a variety of age groups without compromise due to weather conditions. Adding another all-purpose surface at Deerpath Community Park could benefit the entire Lake Forest community for future decades, and inspire the community to take advantage of a resource regardless of our climate challenges.

Respectfully,
DPM Wellness Department



September 22, 2021

Lake Forest City Council
City Hall
220 E. Deerpath Road
Lake Forest, IL 60045

Re: Athletic Complex and Turf Fields

Lake Forest City Council Members:

I am writing today on behalf of the Lake Forest Lacrosse Association board members and over 250 Lake Forest families whose children are actively involved in our program. We fully support the City of Lake Forest Parks and Recreation Department, in partnership with the Friends of Lake Forest Parks and Recreation Foundation, master plan to develop a Sports Complex with **Turf Fields** at Deerpath Community Park.

All of our board members live in Lake Forest and have children who are actively involved in lacrosse and other sports in our community. Some of our board members, myself included, grew up in Lake Forest and have seen very little change to playing fields over the past 30 years. The field conditions in Lake Forest are often unplayable when we encounter moderate rainfall, resulting in lost playing time, dangerous playing surfaces, and frustrated children and parents.

Most of our neighboring communities have beautiful turf fields and it is well past the time that Lake Forest invests in a sports complex with turf fields for our community and for our children. We kindly ask that you discuss and vote to move forward with this initiative during your 11/08/21 Capital Budget Workshop meeting.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "B. Dacy".

Brian Dacy
President
(847) 219-8776

Cc:

LFLA Board of Directors:

Brian Dacy
Jon Egan
Dante Federighi
Kevin Ittner
Sara LaCasse
Carrie Steinbach
Andrew Woods

Lake Forest City Council

George Pandaleon
Jennifer Karras
James Morris
Melanie Rummel
Edward Notz, Jr
Jim Preschlack
Raymod Buschmann
Eileen Weber

Lake Forest City of Lake Forest Parks and Recreation Department
Friends of Lake Forest Parks and Recreation Foundation

March 4th, 2022

Michael Mangiaracina
549 N. Mayflower Rd
Lake Forest, IL 60045

Mayor George Pandaleon
City Manager Wicha
Alderman Jennifer Karras
Alderman James Morris
Alderman Melanie Rummel
Alderman Edward Notz
Alderman Jim Preschlack
Alderman Ara Goshgarian
Alderman Raymond Buschmann
Alderman Eileen Weber

Thank you for your dedication and all the hard work you do for our wonderful community. I am proud to call myself a Lake Forest resident and am blessed to be raising a family in such a great town. I understand and appreciate your commitment and know it contributes to the success of our community.

My name is Michael Mangiaracina and I am the current Commissioner of the Lake Forest Baseball Association. Our growing organization currently consists of 110 Lake Forest families (ages 7-12) and represents the City when we play against other communities. I personally played baseball from the age of 5 into my 30's and then switched roles from player to coach when my son Philip was old enough to start playing. I've coached the last 8 years and most recently took on the role as Commissioner.

I've coached many practices and games at the Deerpath fields and am extremely familiar with them. I have also grown very familiar with the surrounding communities' fields. As a coach, father of a player, and tax paying citizen of Lake Forest, it frustrates me when I compare the Deerpath fields to most other communities' fields. The Deerpath Fields pale in comparison and frankly are an embarrassing representation of Lake Forest. I will highlight why I feel this way.

Baseball starts in April which we know is a wet time of year around here. The beginning of the baseball season is an extremely important time when our young athletes learn how to play and practice the game. A major hurdle we face at Deerpath is the constant rainouts. The fields barely drain, with spots on the infield that actually retain water (home plate, pitchers mount, by every base). When we experience a moderately rainy day, it can turn into MULTIPLE canceled days of practices and games due to field conditions.

When the rain subsides, and the warm air moves in, the infields dry out. Part of prepping a field for a game is to have a tractor drag a rake over the infield. When this is performed at Deerpath the very fine sand of the infield turns it into a giant sandbox. The sand is so deep that sometimes when a ball is hit it can't even roll (think of hitting a ball on a sandy beach). This RUINS the game. It also creates an environment where any gust of wind creates a sandstorm, blowing sand into the eyes of both young

athletes, and spectators watching. It is uncomfortable, dangerous, and embarrassing for Lake Forest. (I can share pictures if you'd like)

Move to the outfield and you will not find a flat, even area. The spotty grass has many ruts and holes from various other sports and activities. There are also ruts where sprinkler heads have eroded the dirt around them. I personally have twisted my ankle during a practice on one of these recessed sprinkler heads. This also creates a dangerous situation where a hard-hit ground ball can hit one of these holes, bounce up and hit a player in the face causing injuries to the face.

This same outfield also becomes harder as we get into the very warm and dry months. If a player makes a diving catch or falls, the hard ground increases the chance of injury.

I compare this to my experiences of playing and coaching on synthetic fields both here and in Mississippi. The fields are flat, soft, and play true. The game can always be played, even shortly after rain. Playing on these fields is a much better playing experience. Players don't have to worry about their next steps and can trust the ground is flat and true. Not to mention they look and feel great!

Converting to synthetic fields also eliminates the need to water grass, cut grass, and drag infields which are performed by air polluting tractors. The need to chalk lines after every single game is also eliminated. And most importantly it eliminates the need to spray pesticides on the grass our children play on. I can only assume these same pesticides end up in the nearby river.

I would like you all to know the updating and conversion of our Deerpath field to synthetic turf is **fully supported by the Lake Forest Baseball Association Board of Directors and families** and I urge you to see this project through.

Thank you for your time and I look forward to synthetic fields our children and families deserve.

Regards,

Michael Mangiaracina

From: Meredith Gauthier

Date: October 28, 2021 at 9:54:47 PM EDT

To: "Morris, James" <MorrisJ@cityoflakeforest.com>, "Karras, Jennifer" <karrasj@cityoflakeforest.com>, "Pandaleon, George" <pandaleong@cityoflakeforest.com>, "Rummel, Melanie" <RummelM@cityoflakeforest.com>, "Notz, Edward" <NotzE@cityoflakeforest.com>, "Preschlack, Jim" <Preschlack@cityoflakeforest.com>, "Goshgarian, Ara" <GoshgarianA@cityoflakeforest.com>, "Buschmann, Raymond" <BuschmannR@cityoflakeforest.com>, ebere@cityoflakeforest.com

Subject: LFSA supports the turf field complex

CAUTION: This email originated from outside the organization. Verify the legitimacy of the email with the sender before clicking links or opening attachments from unexpected sources.

Dear Mayor & Aldermen,

I'm writing as not only a life-long Lake Forest resident but also as a community organization leader. I am the board president of the Lake Forest Soccer Association. I've got 3 daughters that all play soccer so as you can imagine, I've spent a great deal of time at sports facilities near & far. I've also spent a great deal of time discussing field conditions, maintenance & resources with the Parks & Rec group. You must know that our sports fields are not what they should be & not even close to what our community & our children deserve.

A turf field complex at Deerpath park is one big step in the right direction & you have the unwavering support of the LFSA organization & all of its families. If there is anything I can do to help move this project along, I will volunteer to do it. My kids, all of our kids, have spent too many years with rained out games & canceled practices.

Please put the funds towards this project and know that you have our support.

Best,

Meredith Gauthier

--

Meredith Gauthier

EXHIBIT E
MEMORANDUM

Date: March 11, 2022

To: Parks and Recreation Board

From: Sally Swarthout, Director- Parks, Recreation, Forestry

Re: Non-User Group Letters

Please find attached letters from some of our non-direct user groups.



Lake Forest Parks and Rec Board
400 Hastings Road
Lake Forest, IL
60045

March 10, 2022

Dear Members of the Lake Forest Parks and Rec Board,

I write to you today in regards to the turf field options at Deerpath Park. I realize that you have an important vote on whether or not your board supports turf fields in the park.

I am the Presiden to the Friends of Lake Forest Parks and Rec Board. We were given the task a few years ago to work on the Master Plan for the City of Lake Forest. One of the main concerns was the lack of playable fields in our town. As a board, we are deeply committed to witnessing improved conditions on those fields. We have children who play on those fields. More importantly, we have had numerous canceled practices and games due to the swamps that develop on the fields. We sign our children up for athletic programs in the hopes that they will actually play. I say all of this because I don't know if everyone realizes how many years these field condition concerns have been researched, analyzed and debated privately.

We have signed petitions, voiced our opinions at the town hall meetings and have written letters of support. Ultimately, I trust people to do their jobs. Members of the Rec Center have done the research in regards to the type of fields that will work within our limitations. Those members understand our budget constraints and have also determined the benefits for the children and adults in our community. I personally support the decision for the turf fields at Deerpath Park. I think it is important to remember the main use of the fields at Deerpath Park are for athletics. The children will have the greatest playability on turf fields out of all the viable options.

Thank you for taking the time to read my letter,

Jackie Greca
President of the Friends of Lake Forest Parks and Rec



August 11th 2021

Dear Mayor, City Council and Parks & Board District Members,

It has come to our attention that the Parks & Recreation Board is investigating replacing the grass with artificial turf on the athletic fields behind Deerpath Middle School/The Rec Center.

As you deliberate the financial and environmental pros and cons, Green Minds Lake Forest Lake Bluff (Green Minds LFLB) ask that you consider the attached questions (pages 2-4) and sources (pages 5-6). These questions reflect our serious concerns about the environmental, health, and player injury problems artificial turf poses.

While we understand this is part of the Parks & Rec's Masterplan none of our 200+ members have been made aware of the community at large being asked for input. We struggle to understand how a \$10 million dollar project with such negative environmental and health impact can be justified. Our community has many other urgent needs, including homeowners increasingly struggling with flooding issues arising from more frequent and severe storms. Several of our members with children playing soccer complain that the artificial turf fields are unnecessarily harsh on their bodies; the goalies especially suffer. Last season, when the turf was redone both LFHS varsity goalies had severe and painful turf burns on legs, arms and torsos. This could have been avoided had they been able to play on properly drained grass fields.

Kind Regards
Green Minds LFLB Board Members

David Bedrin
Marion Carthwright
Eva Heilman
Marcus Norman
Yuh M M Schabacker-Koppel

February 17, 2022

Parks & Recreation Board, City of Lake Forest
Paul Best, Chair
Nancy Duffy, Kevin Carden, Patrick Marshall, Mark Silver, Kaci Spirito
Sally Swarthout, Director of Parks & Recreation

RE: Deerpath Community Park athletic field improvements

To the Board of the Parks & Recreation Department:

We understand that the Parks and Recreation Board will recommend a project design funding request for athletic field improvements at Deerpath Community Park on March 15 to the City Council. Our organizations appreciate the importance that the Parks and Recreation Board places on achieving high quality recreational activities by addressing field conditions across all our parks.

We urge the Parks & Recreation Board to choose natural grass as a playing surface in its recommendation for a preliminary design of Deerpath Community Park. We do not support the option of synthetic turf, with or without natural infill options, as a playing surface.

We believe that well-used and enjoyable parks can uphold sustainability principles and co-exist with natural ecosystems. The Deerpath Community Park site can serve as a showcase of community vitality, floodplain management, and preservation of biodiversity of the Skokie River.

One of the hallmarks of Lake Forest is its reverence for adherence to community developed long term planning goals and objectives. These plans, developed over many years, serve as a repository of community values. They represent a through line that encompasses finances, aesthetics, and the unique natural environment that attracts new residents and returning residents to our town.

The 2018-2022 Strategic Plan states that “we must strive for a balanced approach to policies, activities and operations that are environmentally-responsible, sustainable, efficient and fiscally-minded for future generations.” Improving the natural grass playing fields demonstrates our conservation ethic to our children and models long-term best community practices in accordance with the values articulated over the course of many years.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment.

Sincerely,



EXHIBIT F

MEMORANDUM

Date: March 11, 2022

To: Parks and Recreation Board

From: Sally Swarthout, Director- Parks, Recreation, Forestry

Re: Neighboring communities with synthetic turf fields

- Park Districts and Municipalities
 - Waukegan
 - Wilmette
 - Winnetka
 - Vernon Hills
 - Northbrook
 - Evanston
 - Schaumburg
 - Wheeling
 - Crystal Lake
 - Oak Park
 - Skokie
- Others
 - Lake Forest High School
 - Lake Forest Academy
 - Lake Forest College
 - Deerfield High School
 - Stevenson High School
 - Highland Park High School
 - New Trier High School
 - Vernon Hills High School

EXHIBIT G

Synthetic Turf Field Operations Survey Results

3/10/2022

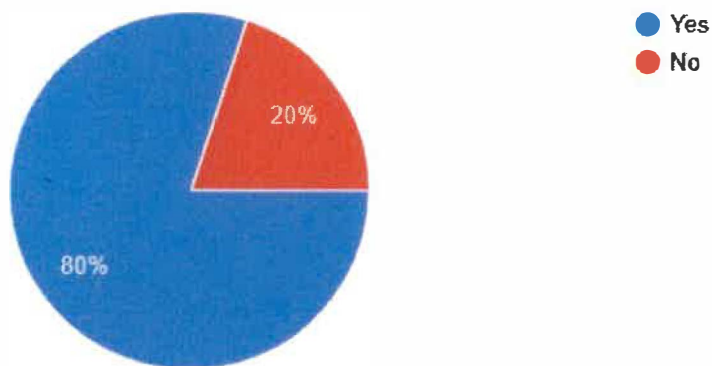
The following are the responses to a survey shared with representatives from neighboring municipalities, park districts, and schools.

Organization

- Northbrook Park District
- Skokie Park District
- Park District of Oak Park
- Lake Forest HS
- Deerfield High School
- Lake Forest College
- City of Evanston Robert Crown Community Center
- Kenilworth Park District
- Glencoe Park District
- Winnetka Park District

Does your organization maintain a synthetic turf field?

10 responses



Have there been any unanticipated maintenance issues with synthetic turf? Please explain.

- Have had a few issues with the sewn in lines coming loose.
- There have been some seams that have popped, but past than nothing too unexpected.
- No, we follow the manufacturers guidelines and ensure we meet them.
- Nothing notable
- Very little issues, we have the field inspected annually and occasionally have to fill in low some spots with more fill and occasionally some stitching needs to be done, but for the most part it's maintenance free.
- None.
- Our turf fields are only two years old so we have not seen any damage as of yet
- NA
- No.

Have you noticed an increase in injuries on synthetic turf compared to natural grass fields?

- No
- Not that I'm aware of.
- No
- No
- No
- No
- There has been no injuries reported to the facility due to the use of turf fields
- NA
- No.

When it comes to weather-related cancellations, have you noticed a difference between natural grass and synthetic turf fields? Please explain.

- Yes, we rarely have to cancel on the turf compared to the grass.
- Yes-there has been more playability post-storm events.
- Of course. The turf fields are heavily used and sometimes the only place that is open. It is a massive benefit of synthetic.
- Turf has reduced/almost eliminated cancellations for all the sports we play on that surface (Field Hockey, Soccer, Football, and Lacrosse).
- Yes, very rarely have to cancel on synthetic turf, if we do it's lightning related and not a field issue.
- Yes, natural grass gets destroyed when used during rain or shortly after. Turf can be used without issue during rain and after.
- No
- NA
- Yes. Fewer weather-related cancellations with the synthetic turf fields. We even have third party organizations renting the fields in January and February.

Has there been a greater rental demand to play on natural grass or synthetic turf fields? Please explain.

- We have a lot of demand for use of the turf field.
- Yes-we're able to begin leagues sooner and run them later and as a result have had more requests.
- The synthetic turf fields are the most sought after fields we have.
- We do not offer our turf as a rentable space. Grass is rentable and on occasion we make the decision to shift a grass rental to turf at our discretion when weather makes the grass unusable.
- We only allow our feeder groups to use our fields. They prefer the synthetic field over our grass fields.
- We rent on both surfaces. Both are in high demand during normal rental periods.
- There is a huge demand to play on turf fields and its hard to balance paid vs public use. Currently in the winter people from the public are shoveling the fields in order to utilize prior to the spring and summer when they are mostly permitted out during the prime hours
- Synthetic turf will increase demand. In the Northshore near Kenilworth, rental prices for synthetic turf are at a premium.
- NA
- Synthetic turf fields. Cleaner, always consistent field of play.

Our residents have asked about public access to the fields. Are your synthetic turf fields open to the public or fenced off / reservations only?

- Open to the public
- The synthetic infield we have is open to the public. I've noticed parents out there with kids hitting balls and practicing which has been nice.
- Both, we permit them and also allow the public to use the space when not in use.
- Fenced off.
- Our campus is open to the community when not in use for a school related event such as practices/games.
- We have fences around our property. They are not open to the public, but, the High School kids do come out and use them as their fields are locked. I recommend having them fenced to keep certain things off, but, would promote "open turf" opportunities.
- Our fields are open to the public whenever they are not permitted.
- We are looking to build one in the near future. We have discussed specific hours for community use.
- NA
- Open to the public.

If you had to do it over again, would you choose synthetic turf? Why or why not?

- Yes. We are open 11 months a year
- I would in the right scenario. My suggestion is to have a large enough area so that you're able to move things around on it if possible to avoid repetitive wear and tear. I don't believe the expense is saved vs. labor due to the average life of synthetic turf but it certainly does increase playability and extend the timeframe of usage on the field.
- Yes, we are land locked and absolutely need turf to give us some relief on the natural fields.
- Yes - usability factor is a game changer.
- Yes, low maintenance and can use field daily without damage to the playing surface.
- Yes. Durability, maintenance, flexibility of use, longer rental season, and programmatic expansion have all been a benefit.
- I would choose synthetic turf anytime because it is less maintenance and you get more out of it in terms of revenue, usage and durability
- Yes, we are considering adding it to the infield of our baseball fields for more playability.
- Yes. Huge win. Maintenance is easy. Fields always are available.

Anything else to add?

- Field turf is great. Provides a lot of options for soccer, field hockey, lacrosse and football.
- Good luck with whatever direction you decide!
- We would love to get more turf fields if/when the opportunity arises.
- We are happy with our synthetic turf field.
- I would turf as much possible space as possible. The amount of useable space it creates is incredible. Have a plan to clear the turf of snow and leaf debris. Have a plan for turf replacement. If you are going to use turf at night, understand the lifespan of the surface will decrease. Yearly maintenance should be built in to your contract.
- Turf Fields are a huge asset for any community
- While we do not have a field, we are looking to add one in the near future. Ours will be smaller in size, but will allow enough space for organization practices (no games). There is a large demand for turf fields

in the north-shore. There is also a lack of playable space. We have seen an increase in squatters (organizations using our fields without payment or permission) who are profiting off of the use of our facilities. We have ramped up security and will continue to monitor.

- We use synthetic turf a lot in our playgrounds and love it. No problems and no complaints

Synthetic Turf Fields Maintenance Survey

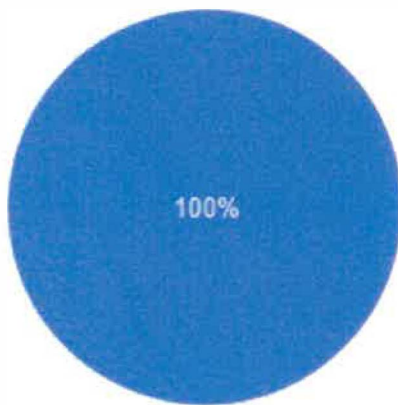
3/10/2022

The following are the responses to a survey shared with representatives from neighboring municipalities, park districts, and schools.

Organization

- Lake Forest H.S.
- Waukegan Park District
- Wilmette Park District
- Lake Forest College/FacMan
- Lake Forest Academy
- Village of Vernon Hills
- Adlai E. Stevenson High School

Does your organization maintain a synthetic turf field?



● Yes
● No

How long have you had the turf field?

- 13 years on 1st field and 3 years on 2nd field
- 12 years
- 6 years
- 20 years or so
- 2019
- 2 years
- Stadium Turf was 12 year 2020

What's the size of the turf area?

- aprox 380X260
- 100,000 SF (2.3 acres)
- 3.3 acres
- Competitive soccer w/ a lovely football inlay
- 3.65A
- 3 full size soccer fields

- Stadium is approximate 90.000 sq ft mult purpose is 167.000 sq ft

Are the synthetic turf fields...

- They get painted for sports that are not sewn in.
- The lines? Both...sewn (football/soccer); paint...youth soccer/Lax
- Sewn in
- They sew in most of the lines, different colors for soccer and football
- Sewn in
- Sewn in
- Sewn in

Are the synthetic turf fields fenced in?

- and Locked
- Yes
- No
- Yes
- Yes
- Yes
- stadium is, multi purpose is not

How many months is it in use? Please provide number and range (i.e., 9 months, February-October)

- March-Nov
- 9 months; March - November
- April 4-November 20 is the main season but we get calls once the snow melts in March and will go late November/December until 1st snowfall.
- You should ask the Athletic folks, but it's as much as they are able...
- It's available for LFA sports usage and many outside rentals and summer camps February - December (depending on weather). We are exploring options for snow removal for more rental opportunities as well.
- March to November
- 8 to nine months depends on weather

How many days a week is the field used?

- 7
- 7
- 7 days a week. Both main organizations that rent turf, travel soccer & baseball, take Friday's off leaving space available on Friday's for others
- I defer to my colleagues
- Minimum 5 days/week. 7 days/week June - August with summer camps.
- 7
- 6 days

What are your yearly, weekly, and monthly maintenance practices? Provide hours, if possible.

- 300 man hours a year. 2-3 weekly, changes per month
- Monthly grooming/sweeping; Once a year - deep clean w/ contractor; Total hours Maint = 36 hrs/year (does not include basic maint (garbage/painting/etc))

- 8 hours a month when in use. grooming. picking up trash
- same as above, I'm Facilities Management, I built it. Athletics maintains it. I can direct you to those people.
- I use a FieldTurf Groomright for most cultural practices. It is a tow-behind implement that has the ability to brush, aerate, and rake (BAR) the surface. I can operate each practice individually also. I run the brush, aerate, and rake together 2x/year (right before spring sports and fall sports). I run the brush/rake attachment 1x before summer camps, and then sweep the surface as needed throughout the warmer months (more during the summer with camps running constantly for debris and fall with small debris).
- Minimal. Installer provides an annual cleaning. PW redistributes rubber pellets 4-6 weeks. Empty trash daily.
- With the fields being new they are walked daily and brushed every six weeks as needed

What equipment do you use for maintenance?

- Fieldturf Groomall, Sports Champ
- Greens Groomer/Turf Chief
- groomer and a sweeper that picks up trash. Airless spray painter.
- I will refer you to Brian Bruha, (847) 735-5293 for the remaining answers
- I used the FieldTurf Groomright, Fieldturf lightweight drag sweeper, and Kifco water cannon during the stretches over 90 degrees.
- Field sweep/groomer attachment
- Fieldturf Sweepright pro and a fieldturf Greensgroomer we also have a pull behind sweeper

How often is the field painted?

- 2/year for painted fields; rest sewn in; or once for each special event (lax, frisbee, etc)
- once a month when in heavy use
- We have two fields (Bears and Warner). The bears side is already lined (sewn and glued in) for softball in one corner and girls LAX across the entire field. The Warner side is lined for boys LAX. I only paint if we need to put a soccer team on one of the fields due to a rain event making our one or two of our natural fields unplayable. The soccer field on this surface is not regulation so it's not something we try to host but at least gets a game in.
- Sew-in
- we paint the stadium turf for mens and womens lacrosse and paint about 500 hundred 2 inch dot for the band 2 times a year and on one of the muilt purpose fields we paint football in the fall

What procedure do you use to remove paint?

- 4 times yearly
- n/a
- spray it with a stripper and then we have brush that agitates the paint and we low pressure wash it off
- I use Pioneer chalk paint that is designed to be used on synthetic turf. It fades away with rain events over a short period of time.
- NA
- None

Do you spray for MRSA?

- Yes
- No
- No

- No
- No
- No

Do you have a GMAX testing preference?

- Clegg
- Clegg; Less than 135
- No
- Because it is a new field, and covid limited its use in 2020, we have been told that we do not need to test for 4-5 years.
- nothing yet

What infill do you use? How often do you need to add it?

- Crumb Rubber from Fieldturf. 4000#'s yearly
- crumb rubber; Twice annually in high traffic areas only
- Mondo Ecofill Rebound. mondoturf.com filling it in for the 1st time in 6yrs. Our turf is in good shape.
- Black crumb rubber. I check high use areas such goal areas, softball pitching mound, batter's box, and all bases each week during their season. I have not needed to add material across the entire field yet with our BAR grooming piece.
- annual
- Crumb Rubber

What are your biggest maintenance concerns?

- Adding rubber, taking off temporary lines, grooming, leaf maintenance
- Seams coming up; Worn fiber in high traffic areas; Replacement costs
- taking all the organic matter of the turf. gum, food, leaves, debris, vandalism
- Being too aggressive with the rake attachment on the BAR system. The brush can move material too much at times also. Aeration tines are pretty solid when using 2x/year. Less is more with this piece.
- leaves and rubbish collection
- Marching Band in the Stadium and on Muilt purpose is Baseball and Softball

Have there been any unanticipated maintenance issues with synthetic turf? Please explain.

- We have been lucky so far.
- No; Pretty simple as its primarily used for soccer and some youth football; All play is scheduled use only...no off the street/pickup play. All heavy machinery/equipment is kept off; No snow removal; Gets a little hot peak summer...but primarily heat is located below knee level.
- We have a pitching mound that can be flipped over for soccer. Cool idea at the time but baseball organization doesn't like the mound drop off in back of mound. Unnatural. It is not a natural drop off for pitchers at that level. (7th-8th grade). Also takes 2-4 guys to flip mound. very heavy. So to fix that we make sure our soccer field end line stops short of the mound so we don't have to flip mound. I would make sure your baseball people are all in agreement with the manufacturer's mound that you will use.
- We have had some glued pieces lift up. We are still within a warranty period but we can buy glue for a caulk gun after for repairs.
- No. Very satisfied.
- none as of yet

Anything else to add?

- I love having a synthetic turf. It gets used starting in March-November. No Rain Outs. No tearing up the Natural Grass Fields.
- Ours is an AstroTurf (GameDay) System installed in 2010. Good luck - please reach out if i can help
- no lights on our fields. Lights in Wilmette are always a point of contention in Wilmette. We only have lights at Howard Park for softball & football.
- Good luck! Remember, they can melt if you fire a model rocket off one! And Boise State did one in blue and had a problem with ducks trying to land on the "water"...not funny because they were breaking their legs! The guys that installed it told me!
- The synthetic turf field gets much hotter at the surface than natural grass. When we get into the the mid 90s+, the crumb rubber can technically emit a carcinogen. Because of this, we have a Kifco water cannon with add on booster pump that was purchased with the field to quickly cool the surface. It can be a big liability without using the piece. In 2018 or 2019 it was well over \$20k. We purchased from Conserv.
- Our VHAC users were constantly impacted by rain-outs and worn areas by the goals. SportsTurf fields have all but eliminated these issues.