



# MEMORANDUM

**Date:** June 2, 2014

**To:** Parks & Community Services Board

**From:** Glenn Kost, Planning & Development Manager  
425-452-5258

**Subject:** Proposal to install synthetic turf on the Bannerwood Park baseball infield

**Action Requested:** None - feedback requested

**BACKGROUND:**

Seattle University (SU) has used the Bannerwood Park Stadium to host their home baseball games beginning in 2009, and would like to consider Bannerwood as their long-term home baseball field. SU has made substantial upgrades to the facility, including improvements to the dugouts, bullpens, grandstand and a new scoreboard. However, weather and field conditions during the college baseball season limit their use to games-only. SU would like to expand their use to include practices during their baseball season, which runs generally from mid-February through the end of May, and to add fall practice times. To achieve this, they would like to convert the playing field to a synthetic surface. The City staff supports this concept, but lacks funding to participate substantially. Our main interest is to create a lighted, year-round multi-sport facility. Additional benefits include decreased field maintenance costs and more reliable field availability.

The property is owned by the Bellevue School District (BSD). The facility was constructed by the City with both City and King County funds in accordance with the current (40-year) 1978 Agreement. The City is responsible for scheduling, and BSD retains priority use of the facility. Bannerwood was formerly the varsity baseball field shared by all BSD high schools. However, after recent upgrades to all high school varsity baseball fields, BSD is much less dependent on this facility, and BSD staff would not object to this arrangement.

**PROJECT SCOPE & COST**

Converting the entire field to synthetic surface would provide a year-round, multi-sport facility. Estimated cost of full turf is \$2.6 million and neither party had funds to achieve this outcome. SU has proposed installing synthetic turf on the infield only, at an estimated total project cost of \$660,000. This solution would reduce maintenance costs to the City and provide a more reliable facility for the users, though it would not provide a year-round multi-sport venue. The major benefactor of the infield-only solution would be SU, so we have proposed that SU fund the full construction cost of the infield turf (~\$540,000) with the City funding project soft costs (~\$120,000). In return for their investment, SU has requested priority use of the facility during specific times for 10 years.

## **FACILITY SCHEDULING & USE**

Most community use at Bannerwood occurs mid-March thru early September, with the heaviest use between late May and early September. It is currently scheduled for high school baseball March thru late-May, youth baseball (ages 13-18) late-May thru August, and adult baseball June thru early September. Bannerwood hosts approximately 240 games per season. Because only a portion of SU's season overlaps with community use, no impacts have been experienced to the use of this facility for the community. SU rents the facility using the same fee schedule that applies to all other organizations. They have requested the priority use of 70 days between mid-February and the end of May and 20 days between early September and late October for 10 years. With careful advanced planning and coordination, no impacts are expected to the community's use of Bannerwood with SU's proposal.

## **THE PROPOSAL**

The basic business points of an agreement would be as follows:

- 1) The City would fund the design and other project soft costs, estimated at \$120,000, and would manage the construction as a standard public works project;
- 2) SU would fund all construction costs, estimated at \$540,000;
- 3) The City would continue to schedule and maintain the field, coordinating field use with SU other community organizations. The City would retain the final decision on field playability and closure;
- 4) SU would have the priority use of the field for 70 days between mid-February and the end of May, and for 20 days between early September and mid-October;
- 5) SU would continue to pay for (rent) the use of the facility in accordance with the fee schedule for those times they use the field;
- 6) Any agreement is subject to the approval of the Bellevue School District and City Council, and would include neighborhood outreach as necessary to introduce the project to the neighbors;

The goal is to complete the project by the spring of 2015. This timeline is aggressive and subject to many variables, so an agreement is not subject to this timeline.

I welcome your feedback.