

Flood County Park Landscape Plan December 6, 2016, EIR Scoping Meeting Summary

The County of San Mateo held an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) scoping meeting for the proposed Flood County Park Landscape Plan on December 6, 2016, at 7 PM. The meeting was held at the Arrillaga Family Recreation Center. Approximately 50 individuals attended the meeting.

Assistant Parks Director Sarah Birkeland started the 7 PM meeting with brief introductory remarks. The County's EIR consultant then provided an approximately 15-minute overview of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the proposed project, issues to be analyzed in the EIR, and future opportunities for public input on the project and EIR. Attendees were then invited to gather at three stations to ask questions and offer comments on the EIR work scope. The comments received are summarized below, organized by topic.

Landscape Plan Features

- Definitions:
 - Project name "Landscape Plan" is misleading because the project would involve more than landscaping
 - Clarify definition of "gathering meadow," relative to previously proposed amphitheater, and its uses
- Clarify uses of proposed open-air market (e.g., farmers market?)
- Phasing:
 - Move proposed play area from Phase II to Phase I to replace the Phase I loss of existing playground that serves ages 1-5
 - Move pump track to Phase I
- Timing of uses:
 - Set group picnic times at different time of day than athletic events to reduce concentrated noise and traffic impacts
 - Schedule timing to preserve some of current qualities of park
- Balance active recreational uses and peaceful uses
- Age of users:
 - Balance kids' and adults' sports
 - Mix ages together (e.g., tots with teens)
- Athletic fields
 - Clarify who coordinates the times of athletic use at Flood Park
 - Fields should be available for informal use, not just programmed uses
 - Equitable sharing of fields

- Consider need to erect barrier (e.g., netting) between residences and soccer/lacrosse field to keep balls from entering backyards
 - Barriers would be problematic too
 - Need enough space between fence and soccer field (chairs for viewing)
 - What are required lacrosse field dimensions?
- Ensure sufficient restrooms
- Park access:
 - Bike permits for pedestrian access
 - Need bus stop
 - Admission of people driving athletic participants: will they be admitted through gatehouse for free? (Scott says in past these drivers would be admitted for free as long as they left in 15 minutes)
- Picnic areas:
 - Group and drop-in picnic areas should not be reduced
 - Family use of these areas should not diminish
- Retrofit drainage with green infrastructure
- More than two volleyball courts needed (proposed two is less than existing four)
- Consider that 1983 Master Plan features natural areas
- Cyclists/BMXers
 - Paths should accommodate all users, inc. bicyclists
 - Designate bikeway to pump track
 - Raise funds to cover cost of pump track if reason for delay
- Use permitting critical as more uses implemented
- Who will protect improvements from damage caused by high use? And how?
- More staff needed?

Alternatives

- Multi-use field as alternative to proposed baseball field
- Swap locations of soccer/lacrosse field and baseball field and consider their orientations
- Buy/lease school site for parking, site access, and park needs
- Prioritize soccer use
- Use baseball field for soccer as first priority
- Develop alternatives to help care for park and ensure protection of resources (i.e., friends groups)
- Fees to limit or affect the number of people who can use the park
- Natural grass turf preferred (synthetic causes burns, gets hot, not easy to clean?)
- Reposition soccer field to slightly overlap baseball field and move pump track to upper corner - would allow construction in Phase I and address neighbors' concerns
- Add parking along Bay Road

Aesthetics

- Place conditions on lighting

Biological Resources

- Consider health impacts on trees from overuse, as mentioned in existing Master Plan
- Consider impacts from tree removal (esp. from construction of soccer/lacrosse field)
- Consider replacement of trees (even smaller ones)

Noise

- Consider noise impacts from soccer and lacrosse
 - Including use of compressed air at lacrosse games, as happens at Menlo School, and horns
- Consider noise from amphitheater
- Examine how project-related traffic noise would exacerbate impacts from existing noise from U.S. 101 and aircraft overflights
- Consider that noise currently travels south
- Consider placing conditions on hours of use and noise amplification and the necessary level of staff enforcement
- Consider that amplification already happens during park events, although against the rules
- Consider peaceful, quiet character of park that athletic events would alter
- Consider noise impacts on particularly noise-sensitive neighbors and those with non-standard sleeping hours
- Consider west-to-east wind pattern that drives park noise toward neighbors along Del Norte
- Consider noise from leaf blowers on proposed walking path between soccer/lax field and Del Norte residences
- Consider sound wall/berming as mitigation

Transportation/Traffic

- Traffic safety:
 - Consider traffic safety and congestion impacts from people picking and dropping off athletic participants outside the gatehouse for convenience (at Iris Lane gate and gap in Bay Road fence)
 - Especially if fee required for entrance to parking lot
 - Examine traffic safety impacts from kids wandering when pickups are late
 - Consider design of parking turnarounds for ingress/egress
 - Consider restricting BMX access to pump track area only to prevent traffic safety impacts on paths (e.g., fencing)
 - Consider turnaround extension farther northeast to access ballfield's north edge
 - Consider speed controls

- Traffic study methodology:
 - Consider validity of using November traffic counts as representative of traffic to/from park
 - Examine increased traffic from athletic participants
- Traffic congestion:
 - Consider traffic congestion on Bay Road and Ringwood
 - Existing traffic on Bay Road backs up around 5 PM on weeknights
 - Consider traffic impacts during PM peak hour and school traffic in AM
- Parking at Flood Park:
 - Consider availability of on-site parking to picnic users given additional athletic participants
 - Will on-site parking suffice? Additional parking provided?
- On-street parking:
 - Consider impacts to on-street parking
 - Consider that City will not enforce on-street parking violations
 - Parking permits apply to about 10 nearby blocks April through October, 8 am to 8 pm (but not to Tehama)
 - Consider extending parking permits year-round to ensure parking availability

Other

- Consider how to evaluate long-term impacts of Landscape Plan
- Consider that people living next to park should expect some impacts and future change to the park
- Consider nuisance littering on pedestrian walkways