

Memorandum

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR
AND CITY COUNCIL

FROM: Jon Cicirelli
Jim Shannon

SUBJECT: SEE BELOW

DATE: September 26, 2019

Approved

D. DSYL

Date

9/26/19

COUNCIL DISTRICT: 3

**SUBJECT: ADOPTION OF APPROPRIATION ORDINANCE ADJUSTMENTS
RELATED TO THE REDESIGN OF COLUMBUS PARK**

RECOMMENDATION

- (a) Approve the use of Parks, Recreation, and Neighborhood Services (PRNS) funding to design the reconstruction of Columbus Park to accommodate soccer and other uses.
- (b) Adopt the following 2019-2020 Appropriation Ordinance amendments in the Parks and Recreation Bond Projects Fund:
 - (1) Establish the Columbus Park Soccer Facility Design appropriation to the Parks, Recreation, and Neighborhood Services Department in the amount of \$3,000,000; and
 - (2) Decrease the Soccer Facility Reserve by \$3,000,000.

OUTCOME

Approval of this item will provide funding for the design of a much-needed reconstruction of Columbus Park with the addition of artificial turf soccer fields. The design work will use a portion of the remaining Measure P Bond Funding.

BACKGROUND

In November 2000, voters approved the Measure P Bond initiative, which provided \$228 million to expand the City of San José's parks infrastructure. A soccer facility was one of the 90 projects planned to be delivered with the bond funds. To date, 88 of 90 original projects planned under Measure P have been completed. The construction of Arcadia Ballpark is expected to be completed soon. The soccer facility is therefore the only remaining project from Measure P not yet built.

History of the Soccer Facility

The soccer facility has proven difficult to build. PRNS evaluated and considered many locations for a soccer facility over the 19 years since the passage of Measure P, but none have moved forward.

The closest the City came to successfully constructing the soccer facility was the four-field “Airport West” property on Coleman Avenue. This project was put on hold in 2016 by the City Council to evaluate building a larger seven-field soccer facility in partnership with the San Jose Earthquakes on vacant City land in the Guadalupe Gardens. The Guadalupe Gardens soccer facility was subsequently terminated in 2017 due to State and local restrictions on the development of active recreational facilities within the airport “Inner Safety Zone.” At that time, PRNS re-considered building the soccer facility on the Airport West site as originally planned, but the location was deemed less than ideal, given its geographic location and its proximity to extensive proposed commercial development. The funds for the soccer facility were subsequently placed in reserve, where they have remained since.

After the failure to locate a soccer facility at the Airport West or Guadalupe Gardens sites, PRNS began evaluating existing locations under its ownership to determine those that might be suitable for adding soccer fields to fulfill Measure P goals. The future Agnews Park was considered, but was deemed unsuitable due to the lack of a Master Plan and community concern over proceeding with a soccer facility when no Master Plan exists, as well as an absence of funding to build park improvements beyond just the soccer facility. On March 26, 2019¹, the City Council approved the Administration’s recommendation that the remaining Measure P funds be used to construct a smaller soccer facility. PRNS recently identified Columbus Park as a potential location for a soccer facility. None of the other locations evaluated had adequate space to add additional fields without acquiring property or taking away existing park amenities.

Columbus Park

Columbus Park is located within Guadalupe Gardens along West Taylor Street, and is bisected by Spring Street. The park area is 9.4 acres. Columbus Park was built between 1957 and 1961. It was originally a neighborhood park for the surrounding “Coleman Loop” neighborhood that was subsequently acquired and cleared in the 1970s-1990s to provide a safe and compatible approach zone for the Mineta San José International Airport. A portion of the former neighborhood is now Guadalupe Gardens. Current amenities include two multi-use softball fields, two basketball courts, two sand volleyball courts, three picnic areas, and 21 horseshoe pitches, which are home to the San Jose chapter of the Northern California Horseshoe Pitchers Association. Usage of the park amenities is generally low, except for the horseshoe pitches, which are well used. Ground squirrel activity has rendered the sports fields essentially unplayable. The park has social challenges. Various illicit activities heavily impact the restrooms, and they are in poor condition. Some park users also report feeling unsafe when visiting.

¹ <https://sanjose.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=3886018&GUID=34DC3C55-34C1-4AC6-81BF-37A2559DE486&Options=&Search=>

ANALYSIS

Based on preliminary analysis by Public Works Department and PRNS, Columbus Park is large enough to allow construction of two to three soccer fields while still accommodating the existing park amenities (see site plans in Attachment A). Columbus Park is located within the same Airport Land Use Commission (ALUC) "Inner Safety Zone" as the other site in Guadalupe Gardens that the City previously considered and rejected. Unlike the other site, however, Columbus Park was constructed prior to the creation of the ALUC and is therefore considered a pre-existing compatible land use. As part of the preparation of this memorandum, staff coordinated with the Airport Department and jointly made a preliminary determination that the conversion to soccer fields does not change the use of Columbus Park as a sports facility; moreover, the current Inner Safety Zone population density restriction of a maximum of 120 people per acre would be maintained. During the design and planning phase, staff will coordinate with the Airport and Planning, Building and Code Enforcement Departments to confirm the preliminary findings noted above. The only other Airport-related issue identified at this point in time is the height and placement of additional light poles, which will be addressed during project design.

The park and sports fields are in poor condition and need renovation. No funding source is readily available for these improvements outside of Measure P. The possibility of renovating the park in conjunction with building the soccer facility while preserving a softball field overlay is an efficient use of funds and led PRNS to consider Columbus Park as an optimal location for the soccer facility.

The current challenges and low use of Columbus Park are partially a result of the park's remote setting relative to surrounding residential areas. The park lacks local caretakers and consistent "eyes on the park" that help encourage regular daily use. This condition is unlikely to change in the future due to restrictions on residential development near the airport. Therefore, increasing park usage requires creating a regional attraction to bring in people from the surrounding areas. A regional soccer facility would increase use and provide improved facilities that will allow for a more diverse user group.

Public Works developed preliminary concepts for the soccer facility at Columbus Park to ensure that multiple soccer fields can fit on the site, and to coordinate with the FAA and San José Airport, and to determine whether the Measure P funding available could cover the cost of improvements. The initial concepts suggest that there is adequate space for two to three soccer fields as well as the existing basketball courts, horseshoe pitches, and an overlay of the softball fields (see Attachment A). The concepts shown in Attachment A represent PRNS' preference for closing Spring Street between Asbury Street and West Taylor Street and connecting the two halves of Columbus Park. This approach will require further evaluation during the design and planning phases to confirm compatibility with underground utility routing, parking needs, and the Guadalupe Gardens Master Plan (which has always included closing Spring Street). Should the closure of Spring Street prove infeasible however, it is still possible to accommodate two soccer fields and the existing uses.

EVALUATION AND FOLLOW-UP

Approval of the current action will allow the project to proceed with public outreach and design of improvements. Design is expected to be completed in the first quarter of 2021, with construction beginning in the second quarter of 2021 and finishing in the fourth quarter of 2022.

Future council actions will seek authorization to award the construction contract for the work, which would build two to three much-needed soccer fields for the San José community and use the remaining Measure P funds.

PUBLIC OUTREACH

This memorandum will be posted on the City's Council Agenda website for the October 8, 2019 Council Meeting.

Two community meetings are planned to gather public input on the design of the complex. These will be scheduled once the project begins and will be advertised on PRNS social media and other city outlets. A third opportunity for the public to weigh in on the design will be at the Parks and Recreation Commission meeting.

COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION/INPUT

PRNS staff will provide an informational report to the Parks and Recreation Commission during its October 2019 meeting. An additional presentation will be given to the Parks and Recreation Commission during design.

COORDINATION

The proposed project and memorandum has been coordinated with the Public Works Department, Airport Department, Planning, Building, and Code Enforcement, and the City Attorney's Office.

COST SUMMARY/IMPLICATIONS

Initial cost estimates suggest that this scope can be completed within the limits of the Measure P funding. The 2020-2024 Capital Improvement Program contains reserve funding of \$21.0 million within the Parks and Recreation Bond Fund (\$16.7 million) and the Parks City-Wide Construction and Conveyance Tax Fund (\$4.3 million) for construction of a soccer facility, including \$2.0 million that was re-allocated from this reserve to the All-Inclusive Playground at Emma Prusch Park in the 2018-2019 Adopted Capital Budget to pay for grant matched costs and is expected to be reimbursed by 2022 (as necessary, staff will recommend actions to accelerate the reimbursement to align with the project's schedule). The reconstruction of Columbus Park is expected to use the full amount of the reserve funds. Once the project scope is finalized, staff

will determine estimated operations and maintenance costs for inclusion in future General Fund forecasts.

BUDGET REFERENCE

The table below identifies the fund and appropriations proposed to fund the Columbus Park Soccer Facility Design Costs.

Fund #	Appn #	Appn Name	Current Total Appn	Requested Budget Action	2019-2020 Proposed Capital Budget Page*	Last Budget Action (Date, Ord. No.)
471	8492	Soccer Facility Reserve	\$16,707,365	(\$3,000,000)	V-486	06/18/2019, 30286
471	NEW	Columbus Park Soccer Facility Design	N/A	\$3,000,000	N/A	N/A

* The 2019-2020 Proposed Capital Budget was adopted by City Council on June 18, 2019.

CEQA

Not a Project, File No. PP17-002, Consultant services for design, study, inspection, or other professional services with no commitment to future action.

Moving forward, the project will seek CEQA clearance for construction during the design phase, and this memorandum authorizes funding for Planning, Building and Code Enforcement Department to provide a CEQA determination as part of the design work.

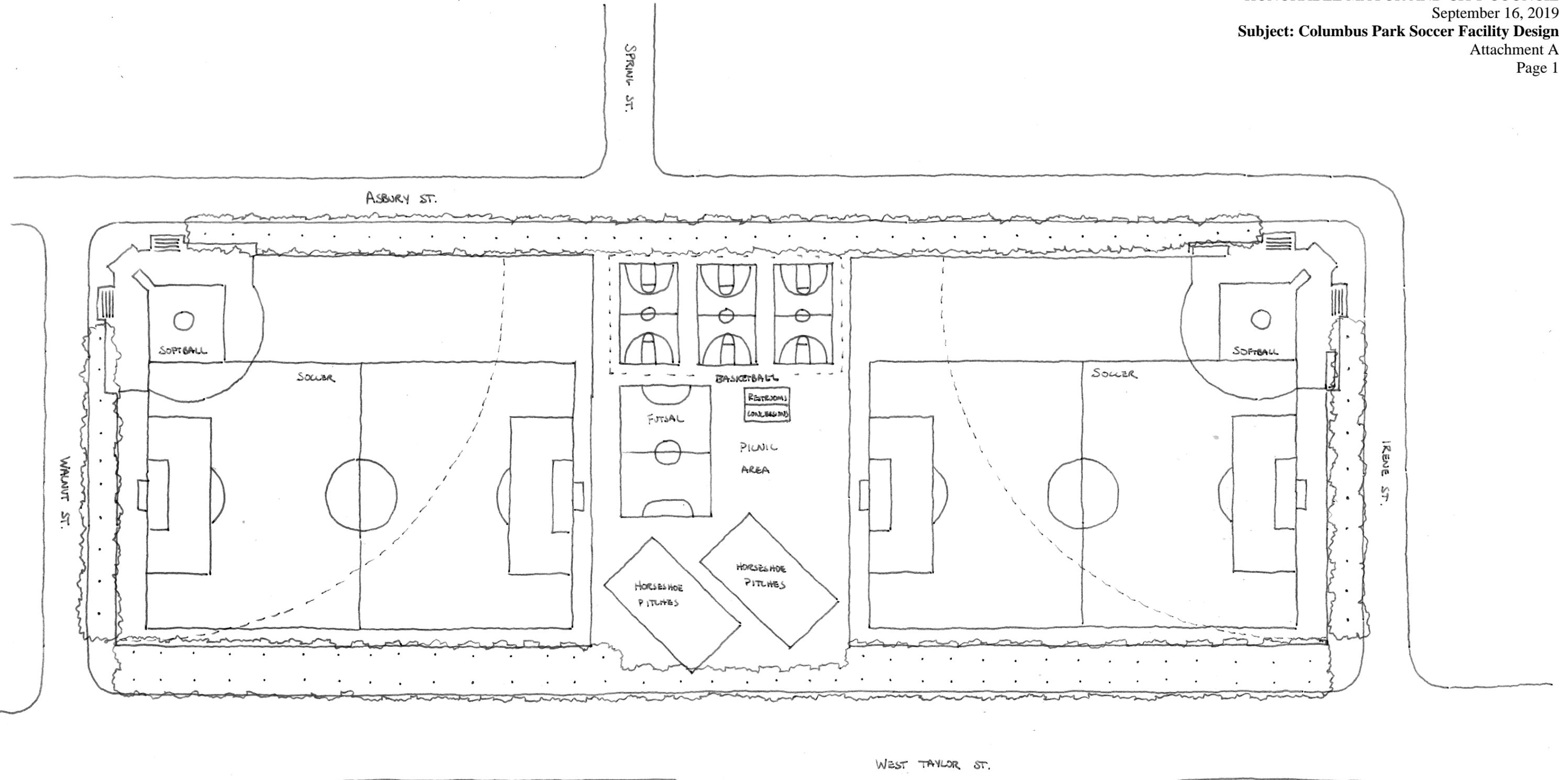
/s/
Jon Cicirelli
Director of Parks,
Recreation and Neighborhood Services



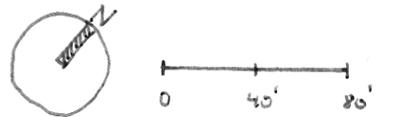
Jim Shannon
Budget Director

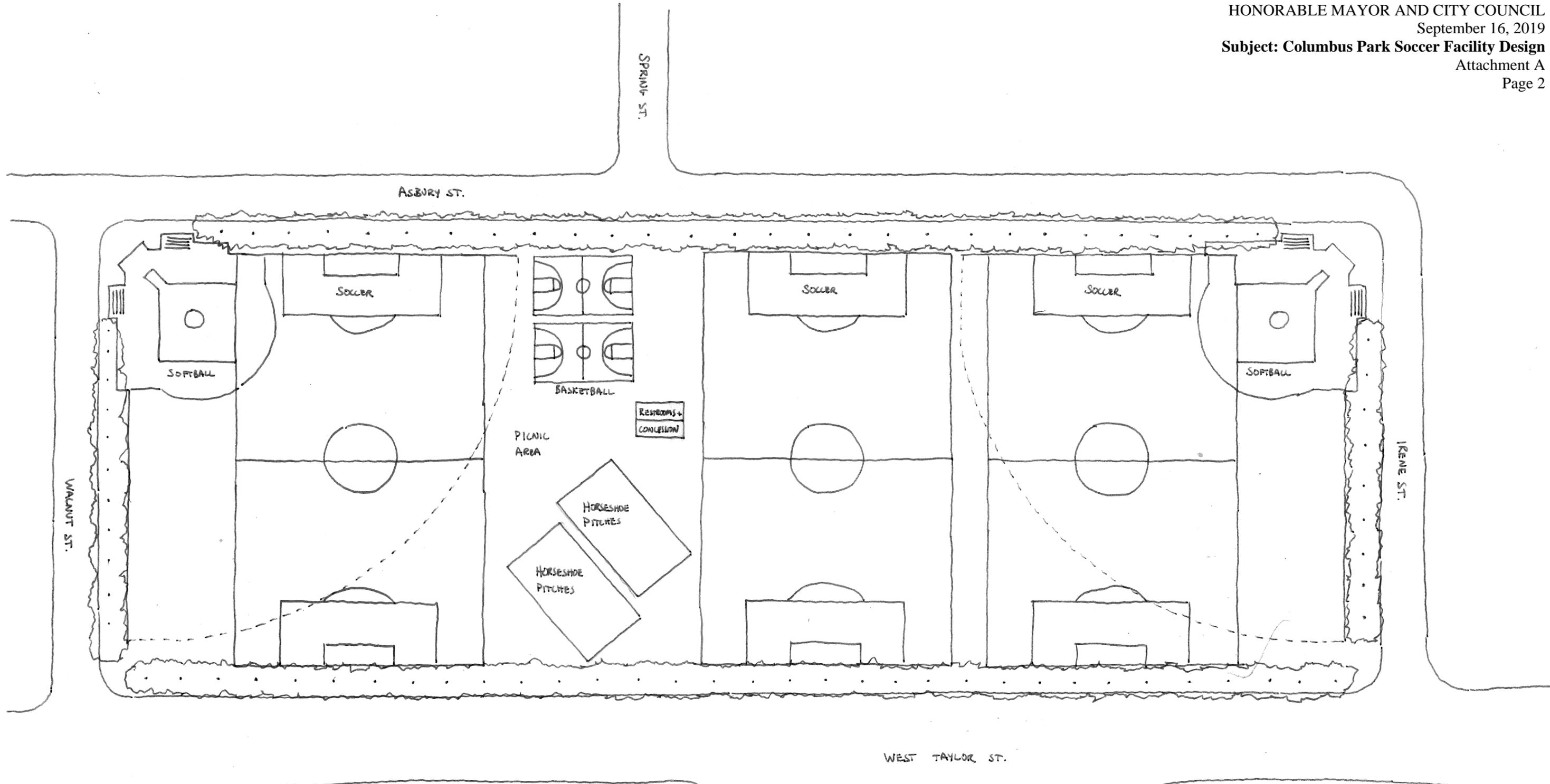
For questions, please contact Nicolle Burnham, Deputy Director, Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services Department at (408) 793-5514.

Attachment A: Conceptual Site Plans of Columbus Park with soccer fields



COLUMBUS PARK SOCCER FIELDS - OPTION 1





COLUMBUS PARK SOCCER FIELDS - OPTION 2

