SCHOOL PARKS Findings and Recommendations

An Assessment of Clark County School District Field and Court Facilities and Public Park Needs



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Introduction

This report assesses partnering opportunities with the Clark County School District (CCSD) to increase usable park space for youth sports leagues and the general public. This report shows how a partnership between the School District and Clark County can move the County closer to meeting its urban park Level of Service (LOS) standard and maximize the use of the amenities already provided by the School District.

In the past Clark County established joint use agreements with specific schools pursuant to the terms and conditions of the 1994 Open Schools/Open Doors Community Access Agreement. The joint use agreements allowed the public to use school facilities after school hours and allowed Clark County Parks and Recreation (CCPR) to program sports activities at these sites.

This <u>School Park Assessment</u> identifies specific CCSD sites that contain useable park space or "school park" facilities. The term "school park" is used to denote schools with fields, courts, and other park amenities which are owned by CCSD and programmed by the CCPR. The school parks identified in this report were assessed to determine their potential for increasing accessible park space for youth sports leagues and the general public.

Over the past 10 years new park construction accounted for virtually all new available acres, with less than 1% of park space provided by partnering, joint use, or co-location strategies. The low cost alternative to constructing new parks is to partner with other jurisdictions, such as the Clark County School District. Unlocking the gates at select schools could help narrow the gap between existing park acreage and the acres needed to meet the County's LOS standard, of 2.5 acres of park space per 1,000 residents.

School parks recommended for addition to the County's park inventory are shown on Map D and listed in Table 3, these would become part of the sports field resources that could be programmed for public use. A list of school parks that are recommended to be removed from Clark County's park inventory and abandon past joint use agreements is found in Table 4.

Background

Clark County's urban park LOS standard is 2.5 park acres for every 1000 residents. In 1999 the Parks and Recreation Master Plan 2000-2020 reported an LOS of 1.8 acres per 1000 residents. Since that time the population of urban unincorporated Clark County has grown from 474,000 to 832,000, a 76% increase. During the same timeframe, park acres increased from 811 acres to 1,678 acres, a 106% increase. This increase in park development has advanced the LOS to 2.0 acres of park space for every 1000 residents within unincorporated Las Vegas Valley.

The remarkable increase in park acreage over the past 10 years is attributed to several factors. The 2009 Parks, Trail, and Open Space (PTOS) Comprehensive Plan Element

reported that the 106% increase or 867 acres of additional park acreage was due to State and Federal grants (46%), developer built parks (19%), Regional Construction Tax (16%), Clark County Park Bond (15%), with the remaining 4% of park construction funding coming from a mix of property tax and operating capital.

At 2009 population levels, an additional 382 park acres are needed to meet the County's level of service standard. To address this shortfall, 38 acres of new parks are scheduled to be completed in 2010 and another 122 acres will begin construction in 2011. Partnering with CCSD could provide an additional 83 acres, increasing public park acres by up to 5%. The 2009 PTOS Element provides the County the opportunity to partner with other agencies, such as the CCSD. Specifically the County should "partner with other jurisdictions and agencies for joint use and co-location of public facilities where practical."

The school parks identified in this report are located within the urban valley of unincorporated Clark County and include only those sites where joint use agreements should be pursued. These school parks were evaluated using several significant factors, including: 1) Park Service Coverage, 2) Quadrant Level of Service, 3) Adjacency to Existing or Future Park Sites, 4) Available Amenities, 5) Lighting Availability, 6) Population within a .75 Mile Radius, and 7) Actively Programmed School Parks. These categories were used to score the 29 identified schools within the inventory, resulting in a recommended list made up primarily of middle schools.

As previously stated Clark County enables public access of school parks by establishing joint use agreements with specific schools pursuant to the terms and conditions of the 1994 Open Schools/Open Doors Community Access Agreement. In return for after school public access, Clark County has accepted a variety of responsibilities, such as turf maintenance, maintenance of irrigation equipment, and in some case paying for water and lights.

Several agreements with CCSD have proven to be beneficial to both parties. CCPR has been able to provide additional sport facilities to the public without the cost of construction. Shared maintenance of these facilities provides a lower cost alternative to a park owned and operated strictly by CCPR. Additional agreements would add park acreage to the County's inventory, thus reducing the need for new parks and increasing the LOS.

When compiling the 2007 Sports Field Assessment, agreements proven to be undesirable for Clark County sports programming were also identified. For example, a school park may serve an area that already has several parks nearby. There are also situations were the availability of school park amenities are restricted from public use. One such situation occurs with high schools due to their need to program after-school sports. These high school activities are important to the community, but leave little time for other sport leagues. Another situation is with elementary schools. These schools often lack sports facilities and, for good reason, public access is often prevented. In order to address these circumstances, this report also includes recommendations to abandon interest in certain school parks.

Methodology

Public middle schools, within unincorporated Clark County, along with a few elementary and high schools, are the focus of this report. The reason for this focus is that middle schools have the field and court facilities most desired by youth sports leagues and open park space for the general public. Additionally, middle school fields and courts are not typically used by the School District for after-school activities. In contrast, high schools were not considered because of limited availability for public access to fields and courts. Elementary schools were not considered because of a lack of adequate field and court space. Additionally, elementary schools generally require a higher level of security.

In total, 29 schools were assessed based on *seven* factors: 1) Park Service Coverage, 2) Quadrant Level of Service, 3) Adjacency to Existing or Future Park Sites, 4) Available Amenities, 5) Lighting Availability, 6) Population within a .75 Mile Radius, and 7) Actively Programmed School Parks.

Following are details associated with each factor. The maximum score possible for an individual school site was 55. See Table 1 on page 6 for details on individual school scores.

1. <u>Park Service Coverage</u> (see Map A) School parks with the lowest LOS within a .75 mile radius or rather, those not within the service area of an existing park received a higher score. For instance, if the area surrounding a school park is outside the service area of an existing park, or overlaps only slightly, the school received 10 points. This higher score indicates a higher need for additional park acreage in the area surrounding the school.

0-25% coverage by an existing park:	10 points
26-50% coverage by an existing park:	7 points
51-75% coverage by an existing park:	4 points
76-100% coverage by an existing park:	1 point





2. <u>Quadrant Level of Service</u>

The LOS was calculated for each quadrant within the Las Vegas Valley of Clark County. A particular quadrant exceeding the LOS standard would indicate a surplus, while a gap would indicate a quadrant needs more acreage to meet the standard. Thus, a school park would receive higher points if it was located in a quadrant with a low LOS or high acreage gap.

Northeast Quadrant:	LOS is 1,	LOS <u>gap</u> of 1.5:	10 points
Southwest Quadrant:	LOS is 1.1,	LOS gap of 1.4:	9 points
Southeast Quadrant:	LOS is 2,	LOS gap of .5:	5 points
Northwest Quadrant:	LOS is 3.5,	LOS surplus of 1:	3 points

3. <u>Adjacency to Existing or Future Park Sites</u> (see Map B)

This category recognizes cost savings and increased efficiency of school parks adjacent to existing or future park sites. A school park adjacent to an existing or future park received 5 points. This scoring recognizes that a partnership under this circumstance can decrease operation and maintenance costs and can decrease future construction costs if school park facilities are open to the public. A good example of this partnership is West Flamingo Park and Guinn Middle School.

Adjacent to an existing or vacant park site:	5 points
Not adjacent to an existing or vacant park site:	0 points





4. <u>Available Amenities</u> (see Appendix 1)

This category assessed school park facilities such as fields and courts and whether these amenities were accessible to the public. In this category, a majority of the high schools scored zero because after school programming impeded public use. The exception is SNVTC High School which is currently accessible and regularly used by the public. Wengert Elementary School scored zero because it has been fenced off and is inaccessible to the public.

Excellent: 10 points.

A school park has 4 or more of the following amenities, as well as additional features, such as playground structures:

- baseball/softball fields (at least two fields)
- basketball courts
- tennis courts
- volleyball courts

Good: 7 points

A school park has 4 of the following amenities, and no additional features, such as playground structures:

- baseball/softball fields
- basketball courts
- tennis courts
- volleyball courts

Fair: 5 points

A school park has 3 of the following amenities, and no additional features, such as playground structures:

- baseball/softball fields
- basketball courts
- tennis courts
- volleyball courts

Poor: 0 points

A school park is inaccessible to the public, or has less than 3 of the following amenities, and no additional features, such as playground structures:

- baseball/softball fields
- basketball courts
- tennis courts
- volleyball courts

5. <u>Lighting Availability</u> (see Appendix 1)

School parks with existing lighting on fields and courts received 5 points; those with no lights received no points. This point system recognizes the value to the public of lit park facilities.

All major facilities are lit (fields and courts):	5 points
Some/partial facilities arelit (only field or only court):	3 points
No facilities are lit (neither field nor court):	0 points

6. <u>Population within a .75 Mile Radius</u> (see Map C for an Example)

Total population was obtained within a .75 mile radius around each school park site. Table 1 provides total population for the area around each school park. Those sites with the greatest population received the highest points, thus indicating the greatest need for park acres.

25,001-46,500 population:	10 points
18,751-25,000 population:	7 points
12,501-18,750 population:	5 points
6,251-12,500 population:	3 points
0-6,250 population:	1 point

7. <u>Actively Programmed School Parks</u> (see Table 3)

School parks currently used for programmed sports activities received 10 points, while those not programmed received no points. This recognizes those sites which have proven to be valuable for programming sports events.

Currently used for programmed sport activities:	10 points
Not currently used for programming sport activities:	0 points



Table 1: Population within .75 miles of School Site

School	Population	Score	School	Population	Score
Cashman MS	46,475	10	Lawrence MS	14,950	5
Wengert ES	25,434	10	Fertitta MS	14,009	5
Silvestri MS	24,087	7	Sawyer MS	13,654	5
Orr MS	23,553	7	Faiss MS	12,453	3
Guinn MS	23,413	7	Durango HS	12,418	3
Von Tobel MS	22,882	7	Mountain View ES	12,394	3
Woodbury MS	22,882	7	Schofield MS	10,929	3
Mack MS	22,427	7	O'Callaghan MS	9,990	3
Spring Valley HS	19,074	7	SNVTC HS	9,953	3
Eldorado HS	17,954	5	Leavitt MS	7,928	3
Canarelli MS	17,787	5	Cannon MS	6,779	3
Monaco MS	16,306	5	Tarkanian MS	4,541	1
Bailey MS	16,819	5	Harney/Hollywood MS	4,533	1
Cortney MS	15,805	5	Saville MS	4,482	1
Keller MS	15,663	5			

Results

Table 2 lists the *seven* variables and final rankings of all 29 assessed school parks. The assessment provided a wide range of points, from Cashman Middle School's 51 points to only 16 points for the facilities located at Schofield Middle School. Cashman Middle School's southwest quadrant has a low LOS, surrounding the park, and the school park is currently programmed for after school youth sports. Unlike Cashman Middle School Schofield Middle School has a high LOS, low population, no lighting, and is not currently programmed for after school use. Each school park has its own set of factors that impact its total score. This data is the basis for the partnership recommendations in Table 3.

School Name	Park Service Coverage	Quadrant Priority LOS	Adjacent to Park Site	Available Amenities	Lighting Availability	Pop. w/in .75 miles	Program. School Park	Ranking Totals
Cashman MS	7	9	One	10	5	10	10	51
Guinn MS	4	9	5	10	5	7	10	50
Von Tobel MS	7	10		10	5	7	10	49
Silvestri MS	10	5		7	3	7	10	42
Mountain View ES	4	10		10	5	3	10	42
Orr MS	4	5		10	5	7	10	41
Harney MS	1	10	5	10	3		10	40
O'Callaghan MS	10	10	5	10		3		38
SNVTC HS	7	5		10		3	10	35
Lawrence MS	10	9	5	5		5		34
Canarelli MS	7	9	5	7		5		33
Keller MS	10	10		7		5		32
Cannon MS	4	5		7	3	3	10	32
Tarkanian MS	10	9	5	7		1		32
Cortney MS	1	5		7	3	5	10	31
Faiss MS	7	9	5	7		3		31
Sawyer MS	10	9		7		5		31
Fertitta MS	10	9		7		5		31
Monaco MS	7	10		7		5		29
Bailey MS	4	10		7	3	5		29
Spring Valley HS	1	9	5		5	7		27
Wengert ES	1	10	5			10		26
Leavitt MS	7	3		7	3	3		23
Durango HS	10	9				3		22
El Dorado HS	7	10				5		22
Saville MS	10	3		7		1		21
Woodbury MS	1	5		5	3	7		21
Mack MS	1	5		5		7		18
Schofield MS	1	5		7		3		16

Table 2: Clark County School Parks Assessment

The 18 school parks shown in Table 3 below are the best candidates to help meet the need for programmable park space in urban unincorporated Clark County. These school parks provide the biggest "bang for the buck," potentially adding 83 park acres at a fraction of the construction cost and at a reduced operations and maintenance cost.

	School Name	Score Total	Joint Use Agreement
1	Cashman MS	51	 Agreement expired March 1977 2,398 hours programmed in 2006 1,847 hours programmed in 2009 CCPR maintains fields and pays for field and court lighting
2	Guinn MS	50	Agreement Expired 4514 hours programmed in 2006 4604 hours programmed in 2009
3	Von Tobel MS	49	 Agreement expired October 1999 1,498 hours programmed in 2006 1,767 hours programmed in 2009 CCPR maintains fields, pool, and multi-use turf and pays for field and court lighting and water
4	Silvestri MS	42	 Agreement expired 1,907 hours programmed in 2006 5,602 hours programmed in 2009 CCPR maintains fields and lights
5	Mountain View ES	42	 Agreement expired April 1995 147 hours programmed in 2006 36 hours programmed in 2009 CCPR maintains ball field and multi-use turf area
6	Orr MS	41	 Agreement expired 873 hours programmed in 2006 1,319 hours programmed in 2009 CCPR maintains 1 ball field and playground
7	Harney MS	40	Agreement active, signed April 2, 2002
8	O' Callaghan MS	38	No agreement
9	SNVTC HS	35	 Agreement expired 5,998 hours programmed in 2009 CCPR maintains 2 soccer and 2 baseball fields
10	Lawrence MS	34	No agreement
11	Canarelli MS	33	No agreement.
12	Keller MS	32	No agreement
13	Cannon MS	32	 Agreement expired June 2002 617 hours programmed in 2006 3,758 hours programmed in 2009 CCPR maintains all multiuse turf areas
14	Tarkanian MS	32	No agreement
15	Cortney MS	31	Agreement active, signed in August 2004
16	Faiss MS	31	No agreement
17	Sawyer MS	31	No agreement
18	Fertitta MS	31	No agreement

Table 3: School Park Sites Recommended forJoint Use Agreements

The 18 school parks were selected based on their total scores and their current availability for programming youth sports. Map D shows all school park sites recommended for joint use agreements; Appendix 1 identifies existing amenities and joint-use agreement information, as well as potential enhancements; while Appendix 2 provides aerial photos of each site. Of the 18 recommended school parks 10 were recently programmed by CCPR and open to youth sports leagues. Eight of these ten schools have expired or non-existent agreements, the exceptions are Harney and Cortney Middle Schools.



School parks which once operated under joint use agreements and not identified on the recommended list are shown in Table 4. These school fields are not preferred park sites since they are not available for youth sports leagues or the general public. School parks currently on Clark County's park inventory but inaccessible for after school sports programming include; Spring Valley High School, Wengert Elementary School, Durango High School, and Eldorado High School. Continuing to pay for lighting and provide maintenance at these sites has no benefit for CCPR, youth sports leagues or the general public.

School Name	Score Total	Joint Use Agreement Status
Spring Valley HS	32	Agreement signed July, 2004.
Wengert ES	31	No agreement.
Durango HS	22	Agreement expired. CCPR provides for and maintains lighting, donates grass seed/fertilizer and infield dirt, and takes out trash on weekends.
El Dorado HS	22	Agreement expired. CCPR provides for and maintains lighting, donates grass seed/fertilizer and infield dirt.

Table 4: School Parks Recommended for Joint use Agreement	
Termination	

Recommendations

1) Discontinue joint use operations with four schools.

Discontinue joint use at Durango High School, Eldorado High School, Spring Valley High School, and Wengert Elementary School, as shown in Table 4. This recommendation includes discontinuing maintenance activities and utility payments.

High school fields and courts are extensively programmed by the School District and not available for additional programming. In recent years CCPR has not provided youth sports programming at Durango, Eldorado, or Spring Valley High Schools. Public access to Wengert Elementary School is restricted by a locked fence separating the school park from the adjacent Clark County park.

2) Update ten joint use agreements.

Eight expired and two current joint use agreements are recommended to continue serving the needs of youth sports leagues and the general public. Agreements with the ten schools could be updated and standardized to meet the administrative needs of Clark County and the School District, but more importantly, meet the needs of the County's youth. The 10 schools, which contain 79 acres of existing park space, are as follows:

- 1) Cashman Middle School
- 2) Guinn Middle School
- 3) Von Tobel Middle School
- 4) Silvestri Middle School
- 5) Mountain View Elementary School
- 6) Orr Middle School
- 7) Harney Middle School
- 8) SNVTC High School
- 9) Cannon Middle School
- 10) Cortney Middle School

3) Enter into eight new joint use agreements.

Eight new schools are recommended for new joint use agreements. These school parks scored high in the seven factors and would be valuable additions to the County's park inventory, accounting for 83 additional acres. While these school parks would become part of the County's park inventory, the financial and maintenance impact would be determined individually in joint use agreements. However, it is anticipated that only additional costs, such as after school lighting, would be covered by the County. The recommended new agreements are as follows:

- 1) O'Callaghan Middle School
- 2) Lawrence Middle School
- 3) Canarelli Middle School
- 4) Keller Middle School
- 5) Tarkanian Middle School
- 6) Faiss Middle School
- 7) Sawyer Middle School
- 8) Fertitta Middle School

Summary

The above recommendations are designed to be phased in over time, with the first priority to discontinue joint use operations at the three high schools and one elementary school. The second priority is to update and standardize joint use agreements for existing school parks, which are valuable for youth sports and the general public. The third and final phase for implementing this <u>School Park Assessment</u> is to enter into joint use agreements with the eight additional middle schools identified above. Once an individual use agreement is final, a field could be programmed by CCPR for youth sports league practices and events. While improvements to these eight middle school fields are not necessary, a list of potential enhancements is provided in Appendix 1.

Appendix 1:School Parks Recommended for Joint Use:
Existing Amenities, Acreage, and Possible
Improvements

School Parks Recommended for Joint Use:

Existing Amenities, Acreage, and Possible Improvements

			A	creage	
Park Name and Parcel #	Facilities	Lighting Availability	Fields & turf	Courts & asphalt	Possible Improvements
Cashman MS	•1 baseball •1 softball	Courts and fields	9	1	•Temporary outfield fencing
16207402001	•4 tennis •4 basketball			inaccessible	 Shade bleachers
Guinn MS 16323501001	•4 softball (2 fully improved and 2 youth) •5 basketball	Courts and fields	8	2	•Outfield fencing •Shade bleachers and dugouts on smaller ballfields
Von Tobel MS 14018401001	•4 tennis •3 tennis •4 volleyball •3 basketball •2 softball (inc. shade feature) •1 swimming pool •Tot lot •Turf area	Courts and fields	8	1	 Restroom Temporary outfield fencing Shade bleachers
Silvestri MS 17727501002	•2 softball (1 adult, 1 youth)+ multi-use turf •4 tennis •2 volleyball	Fields have lighting	8	3	•Restroom •Two temporary outfield fencing •Shade bleachers
Mountain View ES 14021310001	•1 multi-use circular dirt field		3	1	•Shade bleachers and dugouts
Orr MS 16214302001	 1 softball 1 circular dirt field 4 basketball 3 tennis Multi-use turf areas Tot lot 	Court and field (one field is partially lit)	9	2	 Restroom by field & tot lot Temporary outfield fencing Shade bleachers and dugouts Parking on power corridor
Harney MS 16102201002	 2 softball (fully improved) Multi-use turf (tot lot adj. to site) 4 tennis 4 basketball 4 volleyball 2 baseball (fully improved) 	Some ballfields have lighting	6	2	 Lighting on youth softball field Restroom Permanent fencing on 2 fields Shade bleachers and dugouts on youth softball field

			r		1
O' Callaghan MS 14026203001	2 unimproved softball4 basketball4 tennis4 volleyball	No lighting	4	2 inaccessible	•Lighting on ballfields •Shade bleachers
	(Green areas, 2 shade structures, trails, multi-use turf)				
	•Tot lot				
SNVTC HS 16132501002	 1 baseball 1 softball field 6 tennis 	Fields have lighting	8	2	•Restroom •Shade bleachers
10102001002	•5 basketball				and dugouts
Lawrence MS 16320602001	•1 softball •4 tennis	No lighting	5	3	•Lighting on ballfields and mult-use turf area •Temporary
	•4 basketball •6 volleyball				outfield fencing •Shade bleachers
Canarelli MS	•1 multi-use turf area •2 softball	No lighting			and dugoutsLighting on
12511401005	•4 tennis	No lighting	6	3	ballfield and turf
12011101000	•4 volleyball		Ũ	inaccessible	•Shade bleachers
	•4 basketball				and dugouts
Keller MS					•Lighing on
14034302001	•2 softball	No lighting			ballfields •Temporary
	•4 volleyball		6	3	outfield fence
	•4 basketball •4 tennis				 Shade bleachers and dugouts
Cannon MS 16236102001	•2 softball (1 adult, 1 youth, and multi-use turf area)	1 adult softball field has lighting and the edge	8	2	•Restroom
	•4 basketball	of the youth softball outfield is lit			•Temporary outfield fencing
	•4 volleyball •4 tennis				Shade bleachers and dugouts Parking
					•Lighting on
Tarkanian MS 17625201016	•2 softball (and multi- use turf area)	No lighting	4	2	ballfields and multi-use turf area
	•4 tennis				•Permanent fencing on softball field
	•4 volleyball				 Shade bleachers and dugouts
	•4 basketball (shade feature)				

Cortney MS 16128301003	•2 softball fields •4 tennis •4 basketball •4 volleyball	No lighting	4	3	•Lighting on ballfields
Faiss MS 17606617002	•2 softball (1 includes multi-use turf area) •4 tennis	No lighting	5	3	•Lighting on ballfield and multi- use turf area •Permanent outfield fence
	•4 basketball 4 volleyball				•Shade bleachers and dugouts
Sawyer MS 12511401005	•2 softball (includes multi-use turf area) •4 basketball	No lighting	6	3	•Lighting on ballfields and multi-use turf •Restroom
	•4 tennis				•Temporary outfield fencing •Shade bleachers
	•4 volleyball				and dugouts
Fertitta MS 16330301010	•2 softball (includes multi-use turf area)	No lighting	5	3	•Lighting to ballfields and multi-use turf area
	•4 tennis •4 volleyball				•Shade bleachers and dugouts
	•4 basketball				

Total Acreage:

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Appendix 2: Aerials of Recommended School Park Sites



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