



## STAFF REPORT

DATE: 10/11/22

### **DISCUSSION**

**TO:** City Council Workshop  
**FROM:** Ben Hetzel, City Planner  
**REVIEWED BY:** Marty Powers, Director of Public Works  
Adam Swanepoel, Assistant Director of Public Works  
Kristina Handt, City Administrator  
**AGENDA ITEM:** Townball Field

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### **BACKGROUND:**

Two council members have asked City staff to research what it would take to bring a townball field to the City and report back at the October 11, 2022 Workshop. There has been a very recent public interest expressed for the City to explore the possibility of a townball field.

Staff has gathered information related to similar examples of town ballfields. In addition, staff has provided recommendations regarding construction cost estimates, land area, and other recommended components to provide City Council.

### **RIVER FALLS, WI – FIRST NATIONAL BANK OF RIVER FALLS FIELD:**

First National Bank of River Falls Field was completed in 2014. Initial ground breaking began in the fall of 2012. The ballfield is home to the Fighting Fish men's amateur baseball team, American Legion baseball team, high school varsity team, tournament championship games for 14 and 15 year olds, and other local events such as concerts or civic ceremonies. The ballfield hosts approximately 70-80 baseball games per summer and has 304 permanent seats.

**Total Area:** 7.7 acres

**Dimensions:** Center Field 412 feet, Right Field 335 feet, Left Field 345 feet. All dimensions measure from backstop.

**Amenities:** Dugouts, batting cage, grandstand, concession stand, electronic scoreboard, two bullpens, bleachers, overhead lighting, press box, proposed 108 space parking lot, artificial turf ballfield.

**Maintenance:** The River Falls Baseball Council (RFBC) has a long term lease agreement with the City which dedicates maintenance within the fenced in ballfield area to the RFBC. The City handles the maintenance outside the ballfield. The sod field was replaced with an artificial turf field, which has lowered the need for maintenance within the ballfield.

**Approximate Field Cost:** \$1,800,000

### **WACONIA, MN – LIONS FIELD:**

Lion's Field was originally constructed in 1997. The ballfield is home to the Waconia Islanders, Waconia Lakers, Waconia Senior Legion, Waconia Junior Legion, and Waconia Wildcats. Other amenities such as

dugouts and lights have been added over time. A grandstand was constructed in 2017 that includes space for 450 spectators, a concession stand, restrooms, and a new press box.

**Total Area:** 7.4 acres

**Dimensions:** Center Field 415 feet, Right Field 358 feet, Left Field 354 feet

**Amenities:** Dugouts, two bullpens, grandstand, electric scoreboard, concession stand, 70 space parking lot, press box, overhead lighting, neighborhood trail connection, restrooms.

**Maintenance:** The field is completely maintained by the volunteers of the Waconia Baseball Association. Hundreds of volunteer hours are spent each year on improving and maintaining Lion's Field.

**Approximate Grandstand Cost:** \$1,410,000. The complete ballfield cost is unknown, as the field itself was originally constructed in 1997.

**PROPOSAL/DETAILS ANALYSIS:**

If City Council decides to pursue a town ballfield, staff recommends the components below. The recommendations below considers the space and components for a townball field only. However, Council may consider a situation accommodating a townball field and multiple smaller fields for youth baseball. Of the ballfields explored, staff have verified that townball fields and youth baseball fields are typically located on separate parcels.

**Minimum Land Area:** 8 acres (Town Ballfield only)

**Location:** A location near other City parks or the Public Works building is preferred to reduce the time required for City staff maintenance.

**Access:** City code requires a minimum of 2 access points for an outdoor recreation facility use. Additionally, the ballfield should have access to a collector or higher street classification.

**Dimensions:** 412 feet, right field 335 feet, left field 345 feet

**Amenities:** Dugouts, bullpens, overhead lighting, parking lot, electronic scoreboard, grandstand/seating, concession stand/press box, restrooms, artificial turf, and batting cages.

**Seating:** 300 grandstand seats. A majority of the seating is generally located within the grandstand area. It is also appropriate to have additional bleacher seating outside the grandstand.

**Parking:** 200 stall parking lot. Parking spaces were calculated using the requirements for an outdoor recreation facility with additional spaces included. Parking lots in City Parks are exempt from the surfacing and drainage requirements.

**Possible Tenants:** Stillwater Loggers, Hill Murray School, Legion Ball, open field rentals. Hill Murray School has indicated that they are interested in a partnership with the City if a townball field moves forward.

**Recommended Maintenance Arrangement:** The City should require lease agreements that delegate maintenance activities within the ballfield to the tenants. Public Works would be responsible for the maintenance outside of the ballfield. Public Works estimates approximately 10-12 hours per week for one staff member to perform regular season maintenance (approximately 25 weeks)

**Other Considerations:**

1. A town ballfield could offer an opportunity to implement stormwater reuse for irrigation.
2. Possibility to acquire land through park land dedication. Acquiring 8 or more acres of land would mean losing out on park dedication funds.
3. Will alcohol be served? Alcohol sales are not allowed in current City Parks. May need a Sherriff's Deputy, Fire Department, and ambulance onsite during events with alcohol sales.
4. What are the effects on surrounding properties?
5. Turf would eliminate the need for an irrigation system and lower the burden on groundwater usage.
6. A grandstand, restroom, press box, concession stand combination design is recommended by staff to reduce the overall footprint and total impervious surfaces.
7. Staff recommends that home and visitor bullpens be located within the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> base foul ball areas. This scenario would reduce construction costs.

**Estimated Fiscal Impact:**

Land (approximately \$28,500 per acre for non-sewered area or \$100,000 per acre in MUSA area)	\$230,000 (nonsewered area) \$800,000 (MUSA area)
Grading	\$275,000
Seeding (outside field)	\$10,000
Dirt Work	\$15,000
Fencing, Netting, Foul Poles, bases	\$190,000
Plumbing and Electrical	\$50,000
Grandstand, Concession Stand, Restrooms	\$1,700,000
Dugouts (concrete)	\$225,000
Batting Cage	\$26,000
Scoreboard	\$45,000
Lights	\$600,000
Irrigation (ballfield only)	\$75,000
Extension of Water and Sewer (MUSA)	\$30,000
WAC and SAC fees (MUSA)	\$58,000
Misc. Equipment	\$20,000
Septic System	\$100,000
Construction Management Services	\$130,000
Sod	\$105,000
Turf	\$1,500,000
Parking Lot	\$300,000
Public Works Annual Maintenance	\$10,000
<b>Total Estimated Cost with Sod</b>	<b>\$4,106,000 (nonsewered area)</b> <b>\$4,764,000 (MUSA)</b>
<b>Total Estimated Cost with Turf</b>	<b>\$5,501,000 (nonsewered area)</b> <b>\$6,159,000 (MUSA)</b>

**Possible Funding:**

- Stillwater Loggers Contributions
- Hill Murray School Contributions
- Grants
- Donations
- Park Dedication Funds (\$2,237,454.33 balance after 2022 expenditures)

**SCHILTGEN EAST PROPERTY:**

The City received a request to look into the Schiltgen East development site as a possible town ballfield location. The Schiltgen East property is located directly adjacent to the Old Village Area where there is potential for persistent and regular flooding. The Old Village area was urbanized long ago on flat terrain that has a lack of adequate stormwater management of conveyance systems in place to store or infiltrate stormwater according the 2040 Lake Elmo Comprehensive Plan.

Regardless of the type of development, development of the Schiltgen East property requires conveyance of the 100-year storm event runoff from the existing Old Village area and conveying that runoff to a new stormwater management basin, likely along the railroad right of way. The stormwater management then also has to accommodate runoff from the development. The 100 year downtown conveyance system will need to be constructed along the west property line, starting at the northern side of VFW ballpark and run southward.

If a town ballfield is located on the north side of the property near CSAH 14, then there is not specific concerns between the ballfield and stormwater management. The ballfield would not be located near the stormwater management conveyance and infiltration basins. A town ballfield located on the northern portion of Schiltgen East could allow for a dual stormwater reuse system to irrigate a town ballfield and the existing VFW ballfield.

**BALLFIELD SURVEY**

During the development of the 2022 Parks Commission Work Plan, City Council directed staff to add the item “Determine the appropriate need for baseball fields” to the work plan. Staff conducted a 30 day Ballfield Survey as part of the analysis for this item which included a question on whether residents would like to see a town ballfield in Lake Elmo. Out of 313 participants, 86% said they would like to see a town ballfield in Lake Elmo.

**OPTIONS/RECOMMENDATION:**

If a majority of the council would like staff to continue looking into the town ballfield idea, we recommend you refer this item to the Parks Commission for further study along with any specific direction on the proposed components noted above.

**ATTACHMENT:**

1. First National Bank of River Falls Field Aerial
2. Lions Ballpark Aerial
3. City Engineer Email







**From:** [Jack Griffin](#)  
**To:** [Ben Hetzel](#)  
**Cc:** [Chad Isakson](#)  
**Subject:** Re: Townball Field Schiltgen East  
**Date:** Tuesday, October 4, 2022 9:14:52 AM

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**Caution:** This email originated outside our organization; please use caution.

Ben,

Developing the proposed Schiltgen East property has considerable stormwater management concerns and implications, regardless of what type of development it is. Developing this property requires conveyance of the 100-year storm event runoff from the existing Downtown area and conveying that runoff to a new stormwater management basin, most likely located along the railroad right-of-way. The storm water management then also has to accommodate the runoff from the proposed developing property. The 100-year event Downtown conveyance system will need to be constructed along the west property line starting at the north side of the existing VFW ballpark and running southward.

If the Town Ballpark is located as shown in the Inland Partners letter (on the north side along CSAH 14) there are no real specific concerns regarding the BallPark and stormwater management. The Ballpark will be located away from the storm water management conveyance and basins.

Other notable comments are as follows:

1. Cost for stormwater management will be much higher than average properties overall. So to the extent the Ballpark shares in infrastructure costs with the developer the storm water management component will exceed average costs.
2. The Ballpark offers an opportunity to implement stormwater reuse irrigation, using the new stormwater pond to irrigate the Town Ballpark and the existing VFW Ballpark.

Thanks ~Jack

John (Jack) W. Griffin, P.E.  
Principal / Sr. Municipal Engineer

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On Mon, Oct 3, 2022 at 8:32 AM Ben Hetzel <[BHetzel@lakeelmo.org](mailto:BHetzel@lakeelmo.org)> wrote:

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