

MACKENZIE.

July 30, 2021

To: Palisades Neighborhood Association

Re: **Rassekh Park**
Response to Neighborhood Concerns
Project Number 2200507.00

Dear Palisades Neighborhood Association:

Thank you for your interest and valuable feedback on the development of Rassekh Park. As the design consultant, we are in frequent communication with Jenny Anderson, the city's representative for the project. She has diligently conveyed the concerns and interests of the Palisades Neighborhood Association to the design team. While the park is intended to serve the larger community of Lake Oswego, we recognize that this park has significance to your neighborhood in particular. Please know that your community's input is being heard and the design is currently evolving to incorporate as many preferences and priorities as possible.

To bridge the gap of time between the last published plans and the upcoming neighborhood meeting, please see our comments below relating to the concerns of your neighborhood:

1. *50% of the park space should be dedicated to a family neighborhood park setting as planned in 2013.*

Response: We are looking at ways to reduce programming, so the park amenities have a smaller footprint on the site and the neighborhood feel is improved. Currently, the site breaks down into the following percentages:

The athletic fields: 24%

Parking and driveways: 6%

Pecan Creek corridor: 21%

Remaining site area: 49%. This area includes picnic tables, playground features, pathways, and open space

The 2013 plan is a guiding document that, in loose terms, helps to identify general priorities at that time. One of the benefits of the surveys so far, and the upcoming neighborhood meeting, is to validate the current needs and preferences of the community.

2. *Preserve the wildlife corridor for animals that currently use the park.*

Response: The intent of the plan will be to reinforce a natural setting as much as possible. We look forward to hearing more about site-specific wildlife patterns in our upcoming meeting.

3. *Degradation of Pecan Creek. Consider returning the wetlands to the Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde.*

Response: We recognize the value of Pecan Creek. The development of the park will stay outside of this corridor which is designated as "sensitive lands." During construction, erosion control measures will be put in place to ensure the protection of this area. Any park development near the sensitive lands boundary will ensure the long-term protection of this natural resource. Elements of the park that are located adjacent to the sensitive lands are influenced by cost considerations and proximity to other site features.



Over the last six (6) years, the Park's maintenance staff have made significant progress on removal of invasives as well as planting over 6,000 native plants within the Pecan Creek corridor. Restoration efforts are a part of the city's Invasive Removal Program and the Habitat Enhancement Program. The City welcomes volunteers to support habitat enhancement and watershed protection in this area.

City staff are pursuing a cultural assessment as a part of this project. The consultant has completed the initial site analysis and is currently writing the report. We anticipate being able to share the report at the end of August.

4. *Access off of Atherton is a problem for the neighborhood. Parking should be away from the sensitive lands.*

Response: We recognize that access off of Atherton is not the preference of the neighborhood. We are required to use this access point per City Code 50.06.003.1iii, which states:

Direct permanent access from a development to an arterial street is prohibited where an alternate access is either available or is expected to be available. Temporary access may be allowed only where approved by the City engineer under LOC Chapter 42.

Prior to understanding this constraint, the design team initially looked at several access (and park) layouts that came off of Stafford - some of them very similar to the plan developed by the HACHT. Ultimately, the team had to adapt to the requirements of the code to provide access off of Atherton Drive.

While there is currently a gravel access road onto the site off of Stafford Road, it is not possible to pave it and convert it to a street with a lower classification because it is not public right of way. It is neither developable nor allowable to convert it to a paved public street according to city staff. Currently, this access point is only used by Park's maintenance staff and authorized users. As such, it is used infrequently with little to no impact on Stafford's traffic pattern. If this location was made to be a permanent access point for public use, theoretically, there would be an impact on Stafford's traffic pattern and queuing, which would rise to the level of a safety concern. It is safer for traffic to enter and exit the site off of Atherton, than off of Stafford.

Along with a traffic impact analysis, parking analysis and neighborhood comments, the plans will be submitted for Land Use Review following the requirements of the code for access. City officials will review these items together.

With access off of the south, locating parking on the north end would be costly and commits a large portion of the park to pavement. Locating parking to the east along Stafford would shift the athletic field, lighting and spectating next to the sensitive lands buffer, resulting in no net gain for additional buffering to the neighborhood or the creek area. It also presents grading and cost challenges. Locating parking to the south also poses grading and layout challenges and precludes the opportunity for amenities to the north (and away from the neighborhood) that the community showed broad support for.

Due to the need to limit the overall environmental impact of paving, cost implications, the necessity to provide access off of Atherton Drive., and other public feedback, the preferred location for parking and access is between the athletic field and the creek corridor.

5. *Large tournaments are noisy and generate a lot of traffic.*

Response: This is not intended to be a tournament style complex and it is not a part of a larger Master Plan coordinated with the school district. These are youth fields and not programmed in conjunction with nearby high school sports fields. Prolonged peak level parking and traffic for organized tournaments is not anticipated.

6. *Light pollution will negatively affect our neighborhood and the wildlife.*

Response: The Parks Department has a need to provide athletic fields within the parks system that are operational beyond the normal daylight hours based on current and anticipated demand for field use. While field lighting will be necessary, it will be directional, LED lighting, with minimal direct glare. Minimal park lighting is anticipated, but whatever lighting there may be for the park the team will consider cutoff angles, directional throw, and color temperature to bring the most benefit to neighbors, park users and wildlife while providing safety in the park.

7. *Natural Turf is preferred to artificial turf.*

Response: While the natural beauty of the park is a priority and natural grass would seemingly fit for a playing surface at this park, it is prone to seasonal wear and tear. This greatly reduces the broader objective of the parks department to provide year-round athletic fields for the greater community. Additionally, a natural grass field requires substantial irrigation while a synthetic surface conserves water in the long run and is ultimately a more sustainable solution. Synthetic surfaces have reduced long-term maintenance costs, fewer pesticides, and greater playability.

8. *There's no covered picnic area (with a fireplace).*

Response: A covered picnic area was not purposefully left out in the original plans. Rather, it was simply not understood to be a priority. While a fireplace will not be feasible from a maintenance and safety standpoint, the team is considering if it will be feasible to add a covered structure.

Sincerely,



Steven Tuttle
Landscape Architect

c: Jenny Anderson – Lake Oswego Parks and Recreation