



Park it here?

The Great Park Board has a tough decision — just how great will the proposed sports park be?

BY SONYA SMITH IRVINE WORLD NEWS

Basketball guards, running backs, skaters and runners pay attention: the number of fields, courts and parking spaces for the Great Park sports park will be decided soon, maybe even today.

In the sports park discussion, the Great Park Board has tough decisions to make. The answers will set the stage for the rest of the Great Park — how the contents will be decided, how public and private partnerships will work, how construction is phased and how money will be made.

Here are the issues:

WHAT WILL THE SPORTS PARK INCLUDE?

The map shows the proposal for the sports park. The board is being asked to either approve this preliminary plan or recommend a different plan.

This preliminary plan was created by a consultant, Griffin Structures Inc. The consultant started by surveying Orange County residents about what they want in the sports park and by gathering information on the current sports facilities in the county. From that information the Griffin consultants found what was needed. Great Park board members criticized the plan at their April 27 meeting, saying it is not big enough. "I think it's woefully too few sports fields," said board member Bill Kogerman. He asked the Griffin consultants if they thought the presented plan had enough fields and courts for Orange County. They replied that it does, based on surveys of the public.

Board members will ultimately decide if the plan is sufficient or if more courts, tracks and buildings will be added. But, adding more acres to the sport park will mean taking away from the rest of the Great Park.

HOW WILL THE SPORTS

PARK BE BUILT?

Construction cost of the sports park (without the elite athletic center) would cost \$84 million if built today, according to Griffin Structures. Money will also be needed to pay Ken Smith's team for designing the sports park and a firm will need to be paid to oversee construction.

Griffin's cost estimate report says construction prices may rise as much as 15 percent next year; the city's regular estimate is that construction prices rise 5 percent each year.

Great Park directors have often said the sports park will be among the first projects to be built, adding that sports park revenues could help pay for other Great Park elements.

Griffin, the consultant, says the sports park could be built in phases to spread out the heavy construction costs. In that plan, the various fields, the walking track and smaller venues would be built first.

HOW WILL THE SPORTS

PARK MAKE MONEY?

The plan (without the elite athletic center) when fully built would have a net income of \$3.3 million per year.

At the April 27 meeting, board members asked how more money could be made with the park. The Griffin consultants said naming rights could be sold for every spot in the park – such as naming the courts the “Nike Basketball Courts.”

“You can sell the (Great Park) place to death,” said one consultant. “You can put ads on the sides of the orange hotair balloons, but would you want to?”

Board members will have to decide. But, for now the \$3.3 million estimated net income does not include any corporate sponsorships.

HOW WILL PRIVATE AND

PUBLIC ENTITIES

COORDINATE?

The board will decide. A few organizations like the YMCA have already asked to be a part of the operation – in some cases offering to develop and operate the whole sports park.

The board is already coordinating with the Lennar Corp.’s Heritage Fields, which is developing the private portions of the Great Park. Whatever the board decides to do in the sports park may set up how other partnerships will work throughout the park, such as with the museum district.

WHAT’S NEXT?

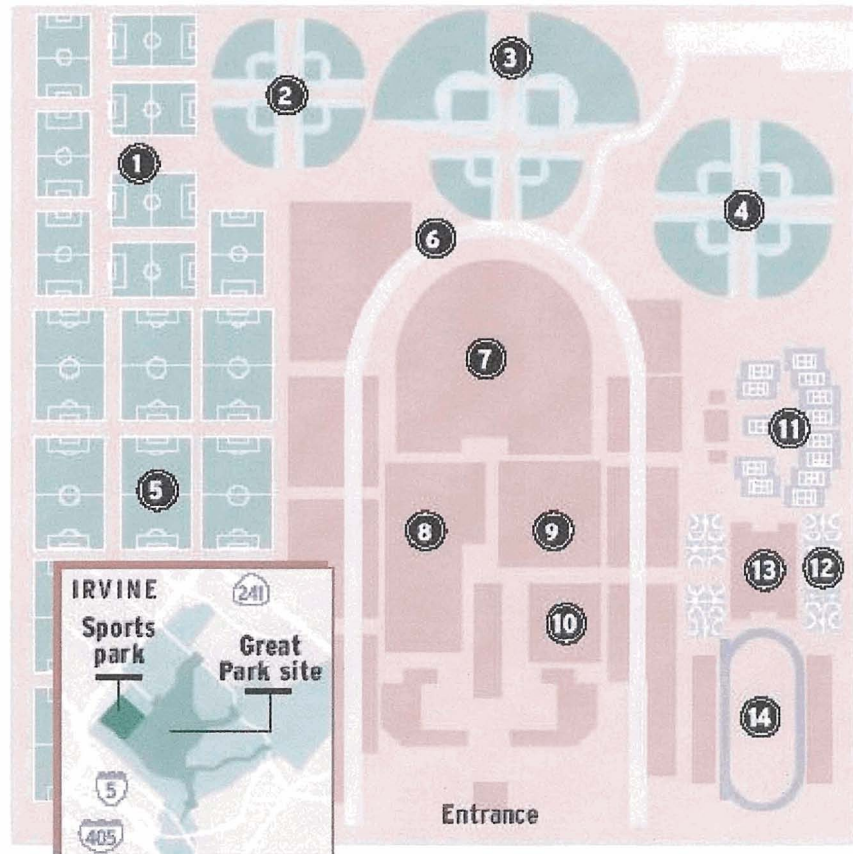
The board will decide whether to move forward with the preliminary sports park plan. That would mean Ken Smith’s design team would begin working with Griffin on the design, construction and operation of the sports park.

The design of the sports park would then need approval by the Great Park Board and the City Council. Construction could begin as early as 2007. Griffin consultants say the sports park could be built in as little as two years, if the board has the money and if it is built separately from the rest of the Great Park.

Great sports!

The Great Park Corp. Board is faced with deciding how many baseball fields, basketball courts and soccer fields will be in the Great Park sports complex. The proposal put together by the board's sports park consultant Griffin Structures, Inc., is 165 acres with an additional, optional 50-acre elite athlete training center (not shown).

- 1 Junior-size soccer fields: Eight fields.
- 2 Youth baseball fields: Six fields with a 250-foot baseline.
- 3 Full-size baseball fields: Two 360-foot baseball fields.
- 4 Softball fields: One cluster of four softball fields, each 300-foot.
- 5 Regulation-size soccer fields: Twelve fields that combined with the junior-size fields would attract large regional tournaments like the Pateadores Invitational in Orange County that draws 450 teams and hundreds of thousands of dollars.
- 6 Walking, jogging and bicycling track: A road would allow for multiple uses.
- 7 Plaza: An area of shops and support for the sports.
- 8 Open fields: For free-sport activities; could also be used four to six times a year for festivals.
- 9 Skate park and BMX: A 2.5-acre park for skateboarding and BMX bicycle riding; times would be set for different experience levels.
- 10 Indoor soccer and football stadium: Two indoor fields for indoor or football with room for 400 spectators; also includes lockers and small shops.



- 11 Racquetball and tennis courts: Twelve hard (not grass) courts and one center court, a small pro shop and two frontenis courts.
- 12 Basketball and volleyball courts: Twelve basketball and volleyball courts where some handball courts could be added.

- 13 Field House: A one or two-story building with rooms for sports such as basketball; also includes meeting and conference rooms.

- 14 Football and track stadium: A high-school sized football stadium and track for 2,000 spectators.

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