

## **PLAY ALL DAY PARKS PROGRAM**

### **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS AND CONCERNS**

Updated 2/11/19

#### **Introduction:**

**The Play All Day Parks Program** is an exciting initiative to build over 45 new joint-use parks. This is an ambitious goal made possible by strong collaboration between the City of San Diego and the San Diego Unified School District to expand recreational opportunities in our city. The initiative strengthens the long-standing partnership between the city and the school district to maximize the shared use of public facilities and resources for educational and community use.

The Play All Day Parks Program also advances San Diego Unified's goal to develop quality schools in every neighborhood of San Diego. Quality neighborhood schools provide resources and support the needs of each and every community.

The new joint-use parks will be opened on existing school sites; and, for the most part, will be constructed with the school district's Proposition S and Z bond funding. The city will commit to operating and maintaining the new joint-use parks.

#### **Why are joint-use parks needed?**

One of the biggest challenges San Diego faces in providing new parks in our communities is the limited amount of available land. Joint-use partnerships with schools fill an essential gap in addressing the city's need for more park land and additional recreational opportunities for all residents.

#### **What hours are joint-use parks available to the public?**

Joint-use parks are typically open to the public when school is not in session. This includes before and after school, on school breaks, holidays and weekends.

The specific hours of use will be determined with each school site depending on the school's schedule. Typically, public hours end 30 minutes before the first bell at the start of the school day, and begin 30 minutes after the school dismissal bell at the end of the school day.

### **Will trees be provided in the joint-use parks?**

A small number of shade trees may be included in joint-use parks if funding is available. However, shade trees will not be planted within the turf field area. All tree plantings must be irrigated, and tree species will be selected from the school district's list of approved trees. If future trees are planned, an irrigation connection can be provided during construction for future tree locations.

### **Can items be donated to be included in the proposed joint-use parks?**

Donated items such as additional trees or benches can be included in joint-use parks. Contact the school principal for specific requests. Donated items must conform to all school accessibility and safety standards.

### **Can security be increased, especially by locking the gates?**

The Park and Recreation Department's operations and maintenance budget for the new Play All Day joint-use park sites includes an operational cost to hire a security company to lock the joint-use park gates every evening at dusk. School custodial staff will be available to unlock the gates in the morning before school starts, and unlock the gates after school each day. When school staff is not available to unlock the gates (on school holidays, weekends and school breaks), the security company will lock and unlock the gates.

### **Can screening and privacy for adjacent neighbors be increased?**

The city and school district will examine screening options at joint-use parks, such as adding trees or slats in the joint-use park boundary fence when needed. The outcome of the evaluation will be site specific since conditions vary from school to school. However, any screening must be accomplished without compromising the surveillance of the joint-use park.

### **Will the joint-use parks have lighting?**

Lighting of fields, even on a temporary basis, will not be contemplated at these new joint-use parks where lighting would negatively impact adjacent residential neighbors.

### **Will amplification of noise be allowed?**

Activities that include amplification of noise (boom boxes, megaphones) will not be permitted at joint-use parks. During the public use hours of operation, city staff will respond to complaints of excessive noise. If noise is determined to be the result of league play, staff will take action with league permit holders.

### **How are impacts to parking and traffic being addressed?**

Project impacts including parking and traffic caused by the proposed public use of a joint-use park (not the school itself) will be studied as part of the environmental review process. Any identified impacts will be addressed. In addition, the city's Park and Recreation Department will work with community sports leagues on the permitting and scheduling of the league play activities to further reduce parking impacts to the community.

### **Can permitted use hours or activities be restricted?**

Each joint-use park is permitted through the Park and Recreation Department. The hours and types of permitted activities vary from site to site depending on a variety of factors. If there are specific concerns regarding permitted uses, they may be addressed on a case by case basis with the Park and Recreation Department.

### **Why isn't synthetic turf being considered at the proposed joint-use parks?**

At this time, the city is not able to make a commitment that funding will be available to replace the synthetic turf fields in 10 years. Therefore, no joint-use agreements requiring the replacement of synthetic turf will be pursued with San Diego Unified .

## **How can a natural-grass turf field comply with water restrictions?**

The city's Park and Recreation Department is proud of its record of conserving water during the drought restrictions. Overall usage in the city has decreased significantly, beyond the previously mandated reduction of 16 percent. The department is applying new watering methodologies to irrigate responsibly within San Diego's various climate zones, and the department is prioritizing water use on athletic fields such as joint-use parks. Active recreational turf areas are currently, irrigated three times per week. The following sites can provide additional information:

<https://www.sandiego.gov/water/conservation/drought>,  
<http://www.sdcwa.org/drought-resources>, and  
<http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/sandiego/>.

## **Are dogs allowed at the proposed joint-use parks?**

The Municipal Code has no prohibition of leashed dogs on public property. The city will place signage that reminds patrons that off-leash dogs are not permitted within the joint-use parks and that patrons are responsible to clean up after their dogs. Dog waste stations and trash cans will be provided at the entrance to joint-use areas. The sign will also have a phone number for the San Diego Humane Society (619-299-7012) to report any out-of-control or leash-free dogs. You can also email the Humane Law Enforcement team at [investigations@sdhumane.org](mailto:investigations@sdhumane.org).

## **How will laws be enforced?**

When a park patron or resident observes that a crime is being committed or a regulation is being violated in a joint-use park, they should either call 911 or (619) 531-2000 (non-emergencies). The San Diego Police Department (SDPD) will respond to these issues. Other issues related to permitting, unruly groups and other matters that do not warrant police attention should be referred to Park and Recreation. City staff monitors field use, but there is no on-site staff; and other than maintenance staff, there will not be daily visits. Park and Recreation staff work closely with user groups to ensure their use of the fields does not negatively impact neighborhoods (such as noise issues). Park and Recreation staff do not have the ability to issue citations or arrest individuals for criminal activity. The Humane Society enforces off-leash dog issues,

and SDPD is responsible for enforcing other laws and curbing criminal activity on joint-use parks during city joint-use hours.

### **How were the joint-use park sites selected?**

The determination to jointly use the selected school sites were made in partnership with the school district. A number of factors were evaluated based on the specific merits of each site. The following factors were taken into account in the selection of the Play All Day joint-use park sites:

- Pre-identified for school district funding
- On the school district's schedule for implementation
- Identified in the Community Plan or Facilities Finance Plan as a future joint-use park
- Located in park-deficient communities

### **What is the approval process for a proposed joint-use park?**

Council Policy 600-33 provides guidelines to assure that the public has adequate notification and opportunity to participate in the public input process for all public park projects, including joint-use parks.

A General Development Plan (GDP) is prepared for each joint-use park. The GDP is a conceptual master plan that identifies the activities and amenities to be included in a proposed joint-use park. The proposed joint-use park is presented to the public during a series of Recreation Council meetings. The Recreation Council is officially recognized by the city and is comprised of community members who are tasked to promote park and recreation opportunities within their designated community.

The Recreation Council is responsible for providing an advisory recommendation to the Park and Recreation Board, the city's recognized advisory park board. Prior to taking a proposed joint-use park to the Park and Recreation Board, the proposed project will undergo the appropriate environmental review process. Once the project is approved by the Park and Recreation Board, a Joint-Use Agreement is prepared. The Joint-Use Agreement is the legal agreement between the city and the school district and is first approved through the Board of Education and then City Council.

## **What is the procedure to secure a permit at a joint-use park?**

The city's department instruction publication, DI-8.3, has been created to establish a priority system for scheduling reserved use of athletic fields. Priority is given to: 1) organized activities operated by the city or the recognized Recreation Council; 2) "everyone plays" youth and adult sports groups; 3) "skill level" youth and adults sports groups. Youth sports groups are given priority during daytime hours, Monday through Saturday. Priority is also given to San Diego residents.

## **Questions**

For more information, please contact Shannon Scoggins, City of San Diego, Planning Department at (619) 236-6894, [sscoggins@sandiego.gov](mailto:sscoggins@sandiego.gov) or Thomas Calhoun, San Diego Unified School District, Facilities, Planning and Construction at 619-609-3431, [tcalhoun@sandi.net](mailto:tcalhoun@sandi.net)