



Municipality of Anchorage, Alaska
Parks & Recreation Department

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MEMORANDUM

Date: July 14, 2016

To: Parks & Recreation Commission

Cc: Josh Durand, Parks Superintendent

From: Steve Rafuse, Park Planner

Project: **PRC 16-23 Pena Sports Fields at Centennial Park – Parking Lot Expansion and Athletic Field Upgrades**

OVERVIEW

The Parks and Recreation Department is proposing an expansion of the parking lot at Pena Sports Fields to accommodate current uses and meet demand for limited parking. Pena Sports Fields is located within Centennial Park in northeast Anchorage. The park includes one baseball field and one athletic field. The park also includes a picnic shelter and parking lot with 55 spaces. The proposed expansion would add an additional 64 parking spaces and would include landscaping and lighting.

Pena Sports Fields is home to a popular Hmong Farmers Market. In recent years, the Farmers Market has grown in size creating access and circulation challenges as well as safety concerns for both park users attending the market and those enjoying other recreational activities at the park. The proposed expansion of the parking lot is intended to address these concerns and provide a safe environment for all park users.

BACKGROUND

In 2014, The Anchorage Parks and Recreation Department entered into an agreement with Price Gregory International to allow use of Pena Sports Fields for a staging area for construction of the nearby ML&P power plant. As part of the agreement, Price Gregory International has agreed to restore and upgrade the existing athletic field and to expand the parking lot at no cost to the Parks and Recreation Department.



PARKING LOT PROPOSAL

The proposed parking lot expansion will increase parking from 55 spaces to 119 total spaces. Parking will be expanded to the north, adding one row of stalls directly north of the existing parking lot and one row of “front-in” parking running parallel to Starview Drive. The new parking lot will include two new access/egress points to improve access and circulation. Gates will be installed to allow seasonal closure of the southern portion of the parking lot during winter, reducing maintenance costs for the Department. Lighting will be installed on the north “front-in” parking area to improve safety and support winter recreation. Landscaping will also be provided. All proposed improvements are compliant with Title 21.

ATHLETIC FIELD REHABILITATION

The athletic field will be rehabilitated as a result of the use of the park as a staging area of the ML&P power plant construction project. Rehabilitation of the athletic field will include drainage improvements to address pre-existing issues. The field will be graded and topsoil and seed will be added.

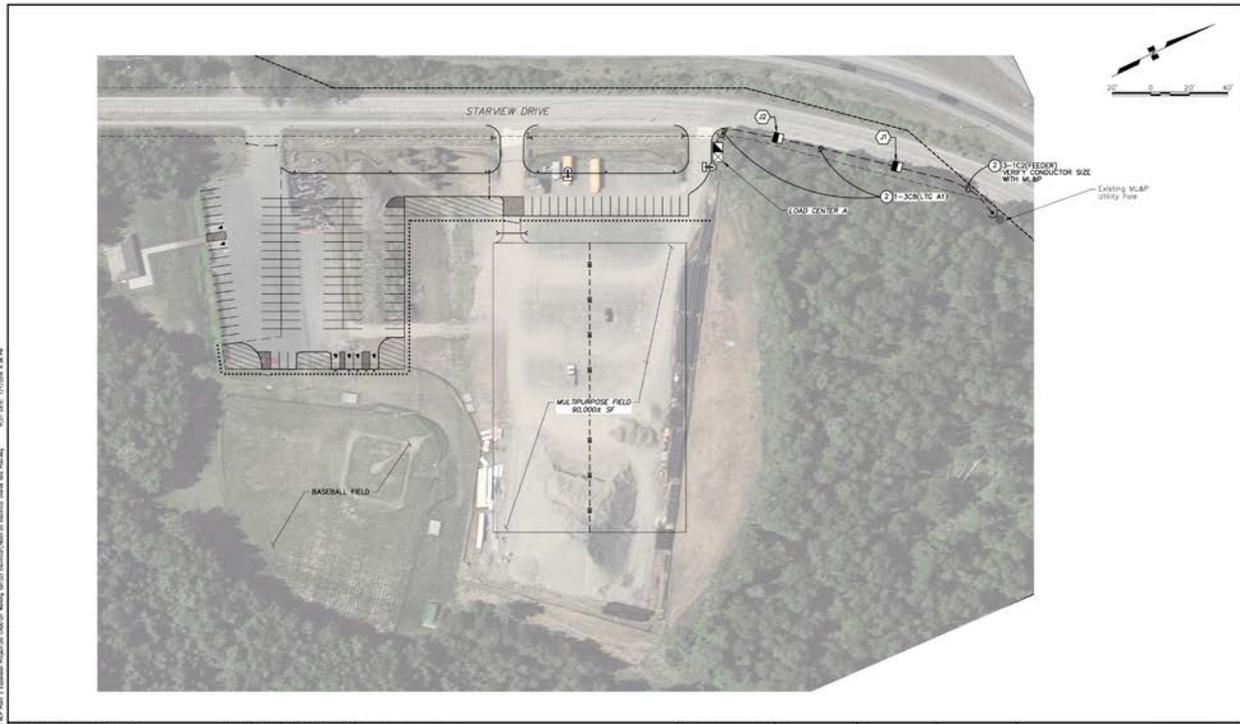
PLANNING PROCESS AND FUNDING

In June 2016, the Parks and Recreation Department Director and staff presented the proposed improvements to the Northeast Community Council. The NECC has been aware of this project since the agreement was formalized between Price Gregory International and the Municipality of Anchorage in 2014 and there have been on-going updates to the community council as the project has advanced. The NECC is generally supportive of the Hmong Farmers Market and the Parks and Recreation Department’s support of the market. A formal resolution was not requested.

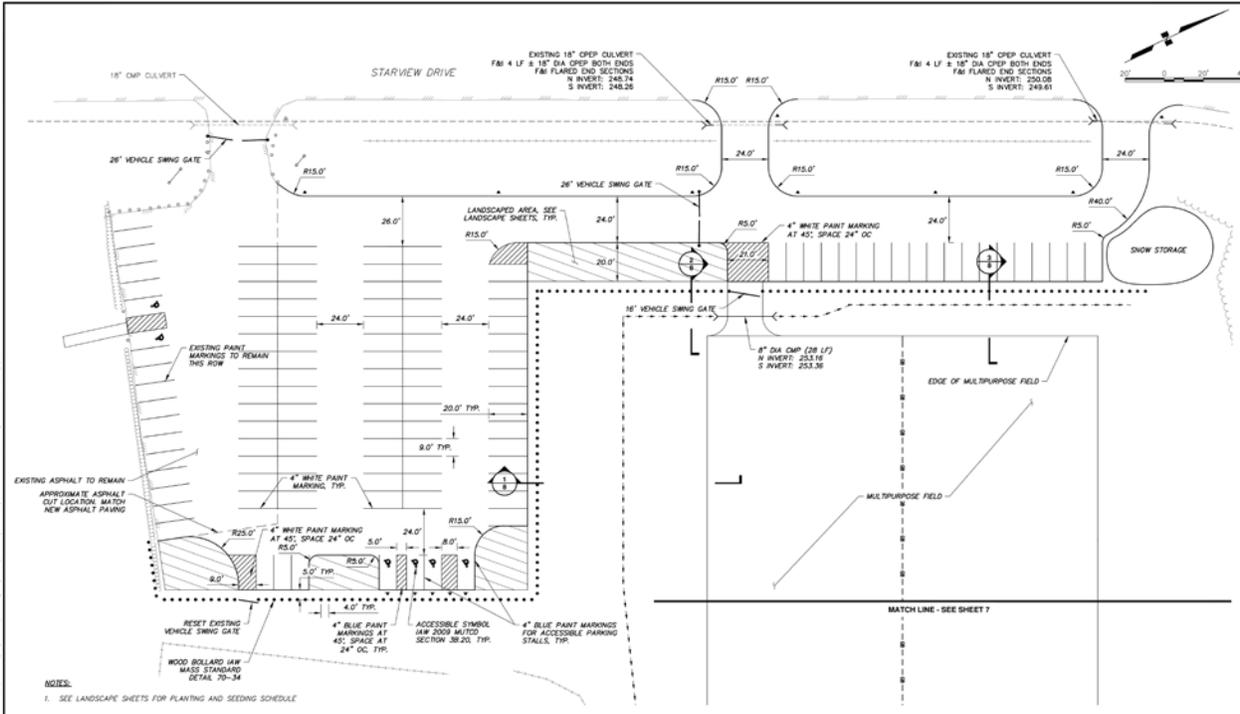
As part of the agreement between Price Gregory International and the Municipality of Anchorage, Price Gregory will be responsible for all costs of this project.

RECOMMENDATION

The Anchorage Parks and Recreation Department recommends approval of this project. The expansion of the Pena Sports Fields parking lot will improve the overall safety of park users by addressing the issues of access and circulation experienced in the parking lot’s current configuration. Further, this project provides real and lasting value to the citizens of Anchorage and demonstrates the benefits of public-private partnerships as a means to investing in Anchorage Parks.



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