

## DRAFT

**Date:** October 13, 2022

**To:** Board of Directors

**From:** Eileen Nottoli and Rachelle Sherris-Watt, Directors, staff

**Subject:** Recommendations for Kensington Park Improvements

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**Recommendation:** Review, discuss, amend (as necessary) and approve the attached improvements to Kensington Park. Rank the improvements with a priority of A, B, or C to address as resources permit. Incorporate these expenses into the 2022-23 Budget during the mid-year budget review process and direct staff to oversee and report on progress and completion during the 22-23 fiscal year.

**Background:** Since 2016, the Board began a dramatic series of improvements to Kensington Park. The Community Center was brought to current seismic safety standards and renovated for better functionality and aesthetic appeal. The tennis court was resurfaced and the backboard repaired and repainted. Netting inside the courts was replaced. The fencing of the tennis court was repaired (twice) due to vehicle damage. The playground woodchips have been replenished on a consistent basis. Swings have been repaired. Benches were cleaned and replaced as needed.

For the first time, diseased or dangerous limbs and trees were preemptively removed. Poison oak removal occurred on an annual basis. The staircase from Highland to Building E was replaced, and the storm drain on Highland running into the park was repaired. In collaboration with the Boy Scouts, the staircase from the parking lot to the Community Center was repaired and a handrail and new lighting added. Most recently, the grass area in front of the Community Center has been renovated with the installation of hardware cloth to prevent moles/gophers, new irrigation, and new sod.

Garbage service was increased and the dumpster hidden from view (built in 2015).

Additionally, needed upgrades would make the Park more attractive, usable and safe. As Park usage increases after a few years of Covid and intensely smokey autumns, it seems a good time to invest further in our park.

**Discussion and Analysis:** In general, the Park lacks signage, clear boundaries for the separation of activities and a few misplaced items that could pose safety concerns. The proposed improvements are listed by category, or as you travel from Arlmont to Windsor, from north to south.

**Signage:** Our Park signs are limited, not controlled by the KPPCSD, and/or in need of repair. The Park should have at least two (2) new main signs. One sign should be at the entrance or on Kensington Park Road, possibly directing people to various Park buildings. A second main sign should be a sign at the entrance of the Park on Windsor Avenue.

There should be a covered bulletin board controlled by the KPPCSD near the picnic tables by the playground and by the picnic area closest to Windsor. This would allow for reservations and notices to be posted. A bulletin board attached to the tennis court fencing would be helpful.

There should be at least four (4), "Dogs must be on a leash," signs posted throughout the Park. One at the bottom of the stairs on Highland, one near Building E by the meadow, one at the entrance or near

the Community Center lawn. A fourth sign would be at/near the Windsor entrance. There should also be signs requesting that dogs not relieve on planted areas. This includes the newly landscaped area by the Community Center and at Neilson Park (Coventry and Ardmere).

Two (2) handicapped parking signs should be replaced.

Two (2) rules for tennis and/or pickle ball courts signs should be created.

Ten (10) dog relieving signs

Cost estimate: \$5000-\$5200 (bulletin boards \$2125, new sign \$2000, metal signs \$550, other \$500).

**Branch Removal:** A branch that runs vertically over the Community Center pathway and blocks the view of the flagpole needs to be removed. Mr. Herrera can complete this project in October.

Cost estimate: \$400.

**Flagpole Improvement:** With the removal of the branch mentioned above, a local Boy Scout troop has offered to repair the flagpole. It is badly in need of repair and fresh paint. If this is not authorized and initiated before December, it will need to be professionally bid out.

Cost estimate: \$1000 for paint and snacks for Scouts. Professional service, TBD.

**Planter Improvement:** Planters surrounding the Community Center lawn are made of crumbling blocks and will be replaced with an enclosure that also integrates bench seating. Mr. Herrera can complete this project.

Cost estimate: \$2500-\$5000.

**Bark Replacement and Plantings:** Bark should be replaced in front of the Community Center and alongside the chain link fencing that runs alongside the path around the meadow.

Cost estimate: \$200-\$400.

**Community Center:** Interior door handles were never replaced during the renovation and nine (9) new lever hardware would improve function and fit more securely. Five (5) need to have locking mechanisms with keys, four (4) should not lock.

Cost estimate: \$250-\$500 / 9 handles.

**Garbage/Recycling Cans:** See Staff Report #.

Cost estimate: \$20,034 plus installation (to be paid from solid waste franchise fees).

**Parking Lot Painting:** Restriping of parking spaces, red curbs and a refreshing of the designation on handicapped spaces is needed for the area across from the Annex and adjacent to the meadow and the turnaround area at the end of Windsor Avenue.

This improvement would ideally be completed in conjunction with the addition of safety bollards.

Cost estimate: \$1100, exact estimate needs to be obtained.

**Bollards for Safety:** In the last few years, two cars have overrun the parking area and plunged into the tennis court. Luckily, no one has been injured, but the tennis court fencing was damaged both times and a bench was destroyed had a person been walking on the pathway or a child reading on the bench, serious injury or death could have resulted. Seventeen (17) bollards would be placed to protect the picnic and playground area. We suggest the addition of at least eleven (11) bollards across the parking and turnaround area.

Cost estimate: \$8,850 for seventeen (17), \$15,000 for twenty-eight (28), plus installation.

**Stairs by Annex:** The stairs that run from the fire access road (adjacent to Hilltop) to Kensington Park Blvd are in need of complete replacement. The distance between stairs is no longer uniform and stairs jut out at unpredictable angles.

The cost to replace the stairs on Highland was \$19,000. With an approximate run of 65 feet, we predict that the replacement would be approximately \$20-22,000.

**Electrical Outlet:** Next to the tennis court an exposed electrical outlet sits adjacent to the baby swings. Mr. Herrera is securing the outlet immediately, but it should either be removed or covered in a way that prevents access without authorization. There is also an exposed outlet by Building E that should be secured in a similar manner.

Estimated cost for removal by a qualified electrician: \$500-\$1000.

**Tennis Court Bulletin Board / Court Roller:** The bulletin board outside the tennis court is worn and could be replaced with a longer lasting selection that matches other notice boards in the Park. The court roller is cracking and damaged.

Cost estimate: Court Roller - \$50 - \$120. Bulletin board included with other signs, but estimate alone is \$350 small, \$500 large.

**Pickle Ball Courts:** Pickle Ball has fast been growing as a recreational pastime. Currently, some recreational classes use portable nets to turn a tennis court into a pickle ball court. As the demand grows, it seems that repurposing the backside of one of the tennis courts, currently used only for a backboard, with a functional pickle ball court will expand the use of Kensington Park.

The following is from usapickleball.org

The USA Pickleball Rule Book states that “a total playing surface 30’X60’ is the minimum size that is recommended. A total size of 34’X64’ feet is preferred.” The actual playing lines measure 20’ x 44’. Whenever possible, a north-south orientation should be maintained to minimize the angle of the sun in the player’s eyes.

Asphalt or Concrete both provide an acceptable base for pickleball courts. Make sure to review surfacing requirements before having the base installed, as there are recommended specifications for slope, drainage, and surface finish, and overall construction.

Acrylic playing surfaces are low-maintenance. Outdoor courts benefit from the wind and rain, and very rarely need cleaning. If visible dirt, debris, or organic growth is spotted, cleaning may be performed. Trees, shrubs, and shade can increase the amount of organic growth on a court surface. Surface pressure washers or a push behind floor scrubber may be used, as needed, to clean court surfaces.

Cost of Pickle Ball Court: The estimate is anywhere from \$15-40/square foot.

Cost estimate: Given that we have a level surface, access to power and water, we would predict that our costs would be in the middle of that range suggested, approximately \$25,000-27,000.

**Basketball Court:** The basketball hoops and backboards are useable, but not in pristine shape. The court should be restriped however. The 3-point line is embarrassing, and unacceptable to anyone who lives in the same state as Stephen Curry.

This could presumably be completed at the same time as other parking lot painting.

Cost estimate: included with parking lot painting.

**BBQ Removal:** A BBQ is bizarrely placed at the bottom of the staircase leading from the pathway around the meadow to the basketball court. It should be removed and the concrete filled.

Cost estimate: \$200.

**Bench Replacement:** Two benches sit alongside the basketball court. Broken plastic planks were removed in 2018, but new benches should be placed. This is probably the least vital suggestion of this list, but should not be forgotten.

Cost estimate: \$1500-\$3000.

**Concrete Hillside:** The hillside below the pathway around the meadow is held up with a combination of concrete staircase and wire mesh and concrete encasement. This strange encasement is beginning to show holes and wear. It should be inspected for safety and the tree with exposed roots may need to be removed.

Cost estimate: Inspection \$500.

**Dog Park:** Many evenings, the meadow in front of Building E is being used as an off-leash dog area. This has created a few problems. First, owners are not always waiting for the recreation classes or camps to conclude. Off leash dogs have been running amongst the kids. Secondly, we have received complaints of dogs physically injuring children. (See meeting archives). Parts of the meadow have holes after being dug out due to dogs going after gophers. Lastly, a few dog owners are leaving waste for other park users to step in. All of Kensington Park is dog friendly, but the dog must be leashed. This is in compliance with the laws of Contra Costa County.

In order to support all Park users, Kensington should build a dog park. There is an area adjacent to Windsor Avenue and below the picnic area that could be used. The area measures 27x75. For an added cost, an additional space that measures 25x25 could be utilized as a dog park for small breeds. We would suggest a 6-foot-high fence and a double-gated entrance for maximum safety. The site is accessible to water and electricity. By adding benches, a watering station and disposal containers, the dog park could be a major community asset.

A discussion with Kensington residents who are dog owners would be advised. While we understand that some might not see the need for dramatic change, with social media, a space that is used casually can go from unknown to inundated with one viral post. It seems prudent to be proactive.

Director Sherris-Watt raised this issue with Board and community members in 2015 and it was seen as undesirable at that time.

Mr. Herrera prepared and fenced the Bruce King Memorial Dog Park in El Cerrito. We would want him to oversee all areas of this project.

Cost estimate: \$30,000-\$37,000.

**Stairs from BBQ to Dog Park:** Stairs need to be rebuilt in the area that runs from the two picnic tables to the proposed dog park. It is a distance of approximately 15 feet. Mr. Herrera could complete this work.

Cost estimate: Included with dog park estimate.

**Meadow:** The meadow has several gopher holes which pose a safety concern. The meadow should be renovated by removing existing grass, installing hardware cloth throughout the area, install irrigation, and replant with sod.

Cost estimate: \$4000.

**Building E Repairs:** There is water damage on the west side of the building resulting from prior window replacement that did not include flashing. The roof has been leaking and is in need of repair. The bathroom door may not close correctly. The entire structure should be assessed and repaired as necessary. The new proposed contract with KCC has the KPPCSD taking over responsibility for maintaining the building in order to ensure compliance with government requirements including paying prevailing wages.

Cost estimate: \$36,000–\$75,000.

**Removal of Diseased, Distressed and Dead Trees:** See staff report #.

Cost estimate: \$60,150 (to be paid from solid waste franchise fees).

**Attachments:**

Park Map

Photos from Kensington Park

Photos illustrating suggested improvements

<https://usapickleball.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/court-layout-print-version.pdf>

<https://pickleballspots.com/cost-of-installing-pickleball-court/>

<http://el-cerrito.org/Facilities/Facility/Details/Bruce-King-Memorial-Dog-Park-22>

Establishing a dog park: <https://images.akc.org/pdf/GLEG01.pdf>