

---

**PROGRAM:** Athletic Field Improvements

---

**DEPARTMENT:** Parks, Recreation and Community Resources

---

**PROGRAM DESCRIPTION:** Over 25,000 youth and adult sports league participants utilize the County's athletic fields ten months a year. Many of the fields require improvements in turf surfaces and support elements. The purpose of this program is to make major upgrades to the surfaces and amenities at the County's 75 athletic fields, 70 playgrounds, and numerous tennis and basketball courts.

This year, two new programs are being introduced. Synthetic fields provide for low maintenance fields that can tolerate minimally three times the amount of usage as natural grass, and thus represent a significant investment in the life of County fields. Playground renovations are proposed to be enhanced this year as a result of a new accessibility initiative. This initiative strives to make playgrounds accessible to all children regardless of ability so that each may play at their highest capable level. A discussion regarding these policy issues will be addressed during the County Board's CIP review process.

### **FY 2003 Bond Projects:**

Playground Renovations – This program provides a 15-year replacement schedule to keep playground apparatus safe and functional. The priority list for playground renovations is based on a survey completed by staff from Risk Management, Safety and Parks. The playgrounds proposed to be completed with FY 2003 bond funds are: Walter Reed Community Center, Langston-Brown Community Center, Penrose Park, Nauck Park, and Parkhurst Park.

Synthetic Field – Synthetic grass is a polyethylene fiber surface that provides all weather traction for players. It is durable yet has a similar feel, foot movement, ball response, and appearance to natural grasses. It is resistant to UV sunlight, rot, mold, and mildew. Synthetic grass typically has an in-fill, either a ground rubber/sand or rubber with an underground drainage system that permits rapid removal of water during heavy rainfalls. Games can continue to be played during light rainfall with no threat of lightning and start shortly after a heavy rainfall has subsided. Synthetic grass fields are low maintenance fields that can tolerate minimally three times the amount of usage as a natural grass field on an annual basis without being removed for restoration. This project will provide a synthetic grass surface at a Level 1-stadium field. The location for this synthetic field will be determined following a community process.

Field Lighting – Because of the additional availability a new synthetic field will provide and because of the age of the existing lighting, the field lighting will be replaced in conjunction with synthetic field construction.

Tennis/Basketball Court Improvements – Tennis and basketball improvements are proposed at Ft. Scott. The County's public tennis and basketball courts are asphalt base with fill coats and painted surfaces. The life expectancy of a non-vehicular asphalt surface is approximately 20 years. The majority of the County's courts were built in the 1960s and 1970s. Many of these courts are deteriorating and developing major cracks, sinkholes, and crumbling surfaces. This program will restore existing courts to a safe and usable condition. Fencing, nets, and lighting fixtures will be repaired or replaced at the time of renovation.

Athletic Field Improvements – Because of the high use at the County's athletic fields, many fields require major improvements in turf surfaces and support elements. The purpose of this program is to make major upgrades in turf surfaces and amenities to elevate the County's 75 athletic fields to acceptable standards. The fields proposed to be upgraded are: Wakefield High School softball field, Arlington Hall, Fairlington, H-B Woodlawn, Jamestown, Barcroft School, Eads Street Park, Lacey Woods Park, Madison Center, Oakridge, and Virginia Highlands #2.

**PLANNING RELATIONSHIP:** Currently, the standards used for athletic fields have been developed based on the Sports Commission Ad Hoc Athletic Field Committee's recommendations for improvements. Additional standards will be developed as part of a comprehensive CAPP/maintenance plan and be used as the basis for future funding requests.

**OPERATING IMPACT:** Significant operating cost savings are anticipated through the use of synthetic fields. It is currently estimated that the annual operating costs for synthetic fields is approximately \$500. No mowing, fertilization or irrigation is required. Rather, the operating costs are associated with combing and vacuuming the field and potential re-striping if necessary.

**CIP PROJECTS:**

<b>PROJECT DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>AMOUNT (\$ in 000's)</b>	<b>FISCAL YEAR</b>	<b>FUNDING SOURCE</b>
<b>I. NEW PROJECTS &amp; MAJOR RENOVATIONS</b>			
1. Playground Renovations	900	2003	Bond
2. Synthetic Fields	650	2003	Bond
3. Synthetic Fields	750	2005	Bond
4. Synthetic Fields	750	2007	Bond
<b>II. CAPP/MAINTENANCE &amp; MINOR RENOVATIONS</b>			
1. Field Lighting	220	2003	Bond
2. Tennis/Basketball Court Improvements	360	2003	Bond
3. Athletic Field Improvements	570	2003	Bond
4. Wakefield Stadium – Track Covering	64	2004	PAYG
5. Field Lighting	220	2005	PAYG
6. Athletic Field Improvements	570	2005	PAYG
7. Athletic Field Improvements	570	2007	Bond

**PROGRAM TOTALS:**

	<b>FY2003</b>	<b>FY2004</b>	<b>FY2005</b>	<b>FY2006</b>	<b>FY2007</b>	<b>FY2008</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
Bond	2,700	-	750	-	1,320	-	4,770
PAYG	-	64	790	-	-	-	854
<i>Less Other Financing Sources</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Net Tax Support</b>	2,700	64	1,540	-	1,320	-	5,624