

University of Oregon Recreation Field Location Study

Purpose

The purpose of this study is to assess site options for locating physical education and recreation fields on and off campus, including potential partnerships, as directed by University President Michael Schill. In his May 11, 2018 response to the UO Senate action (US 17/18-14) regarding the university's North Campus Conditional Use Permit (CUP) application to the City of Eugene he states:

“Several suggestions have been made recently regarding different ways to approach the potential future need for recreation fields such as partnerships with nearby schools or additional locations accessible by EmX. While I cannot comment on the viability of these options, I can commit that the first step in the process to amend the *Campus Plan* to incorporate the area north of the tracks will be to complete a study that would look more closely at options available to us on where to locate additional recreation fields and potential partnerships. The study will be consistent with *Campus Plan* principles and take into account factors such as safety, proximity to students, operations, costs, environmental impacts, neighborhood impacts, and zoning limitations”

The results of this study will inform future Campus Plan amendments. Specifically, this study will be the first step in the process to amend the Campus Plan to incorporate the area of campus between the railroad tracks and the Willamette River, a portion of which the university has identified as a potential location for future year-round recreation fields.

Background

Recreation field uses were established between the railroad tracks and Willamette River beginning in 1978 when a Playing Fields Master Plan was proposed for the university. In the 1980's two grass playing fields were constructed based on this masterplan and remain in use today.

The Campus Physical Framework Vision Project (FVP), completed in 2015, identified the need for additional recreation fields to respond to university growth and program needs. The study concluded the area between the railroad tracks and the Willamette River could accommodate the two existing fields plus three new fields. The FVP assessed alternative locations for fields and found the fields could not be accommodated on existing campus open spaces due to spatial requirements and other uses.

The North Campus Conditional Use Permit (CUP) proposes a maximum of 3 playing fields with a gross square footage of 305,000 square feet (7 acres). The university's current recreational fields include four artificial turf fields near the Student Recreation Center and two grass fields between the Willamette River and railroad tracks. These fields accommodate thousands of students in physical education, club sports, intramural sports, and open recreation annually.

Current Issue

Existing recreation fields on campus, operated by the university Physical Education and Recreation Department, are at full capacity. In order to respond to existing program demands and future enrollment increases, the university must provide a plan to accommodate additional available hours of use for recreation fields in a location that is accessible for students. Location options must meet recreation field program criteria, campus planning requirements, and site selection criteria.

Field Location Study Process

The Field Location Study process will begin with a preliminary assessment of all potential sites. The initial assessment will consider the below criteria. The preliminary assessment will also include identifying potential partnerships that can be explored with local agencies that have recreation fields.

Site size: The site must be large enough to accommodate recreation fields sized to meet program needs and uses. If located off-campus vehicle parking, bike parking, and restrooms should also be considered.

Proximity to students: The closer the field(s) are to students the more they will be used. Viable sites should provide convenient access for students and staff.

Zoning Limitations: The site must be zoned to allow use for recreation fields.

Following the initial assessment, a consultant will further analyze viable sites and partnerships based on criteria identified in President Schill's response to the Senate resolution including Campus Plan principles, safety, proximity to students, costs, environmental impacts, and neighborhood impacts.