

APPENDIX A: STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS – SUMMARY NOTES

Stakeholder Interview: LAYSL

The interview with LAYSL organizers, parents and volunteers took place on November 12, 2024. Topics covered and insights offered are summarized below:

1) Field Usage: Most Used Fields, Seasons and Intensity of Use

- Primary Fields: Spirio, Dara Jones, Flint
- Current Use: Practices and recreational games mostly during evenings and weekends; Tournaments on Fridays and weekends
- Missed Opportunity: Dara Jones at Overlook could host tournaments but is currently unusable due to field conditions
- Season and Intensity of Use
 - Spring: February – early June
 - Fall: Early August – early November
 - Summer: No formal season, but frequent recreational use
 - Field Usage Volume: LAYSL alone has approx. 400–500 youth players, plus adult players

2) Field Conditions and Challenges

- Main Issue: Poor surface quality (ridges, gopher holes, erosion)
- Dog Conflicts: Waste on fields, off-leash dogs causing disruptions, especially at Overlook and North Mesa
- Maintenance Decline: Gopher issues worsened post-pandemic due to changed management practices
- Competition for Space: Lacrosse, rugby, and flag football also use the fields, stressing the turf
- Facilities:
 - Poor restrooms
 - Inadequate parking, especially at Flint
 - No storage or safe, pest-free equipment areas
 - Limited shade/shelter
 - Safety issues (e.g., gopher holes, erosion near Flint parking, and field access)

3) Preferences and Experiences with Artificial Turf

- Benefits:
 - Even, consistent surface
 - Extended season due to better snow/rain tolerance
 - Lower maintenance and fewer cancellation
- Drawbacks:
 - Heat buildup during peak summer
 - Mess/difficulty cleaning up small debris (e.g., seeds, trash)
 - Surface transition from grass to turf can be difficult for some players
 - Gophers can still impact turf edges unless mitigated
- Locations:

- Flint and Dara Jones seen as potential artificial turf candidates for soccer.
- White Rock hotter in summer—North Mesa may be better turf location.

4) Desired Amenities & Improvements

- Lighting for extended playtime
- Reliable, weather-proof restrooms
- Secure, rodent-free storage facilities
- Higher fencing behind goals
- Parking improvements (especially at Flint)
- Maintain existing trees for shade
- Do not combine flexible soccer fields with baseball/softball—prefer dedicated use

5) Final Thoughts

- LAYSL does not strongly prefer turf over grass but sees benefits if implemented well
- Turf could help host tournaments and improve field availability, but proper planning, maintenance, and design are essential
- Community investment in quality facilities could greatly enhance youth and adult soccer programming

Stakeholder Interview: LAPS

The interview with Los Alamos Public School (LAPS) coaches and athletes took place on December 10, 2024. Topics covered and insights offered are summarized below:

1) Field Usage: Seasons and Intensity of Use

- Year-Round Use, weather permitting.
- Spring (starting mid-February): Primary competitive season for all sports.
- Summer: Club sports continue; training and competitions.
- Offseason/Preseason: Training, club activity, informal use.
- Typical Weekly Use: 5–6 days/week for most fields and teams.

2) Existing Conditions: Concerns & Barriers

- Grass Management: Often too long, reducing play quality.
- Gopher Holes: Dangerous and frequent, especially at White Rock.
- Weather Constraints: Snow and mud delay spring season field access; Natural grass recovery is poor due to limited irrigation (water access not available until May).
- Lack of Lights: Hope Field and White Rock fields do not have lights, significantly limiting play and practice time.
- Scheduling Challenges: Limited daylight forces condensed schedules and missed class time due to travel.
- Facility Shortcomings:
 - No changing rooms at Overlook.
 - Bathrooms closed in winter due to freezing.

- No lightning shelters.
- Running water not available — parents must bring water.
- Poor-quality storage (infested, unsecured).
- Lack of batting cages or substandard cages (dirt floors).

3) Desired Improvements for North Mesa & Overlook Parks

- Field Quality & Turf Options: More consistent grass or appropriate turf species for local climate; Artificial turf installation to enable earlier season play and lower maintenance.
- Infrastructure & Amenities:
 - Lighting: Essential for extending usage hours.
 - Restroom Facilities: Need for year-round, weather-proof facilities.
 - Changing Rooms: Needed for athletes.
 - Storage: Pest-free, secure, and sufficient space.
 - Water Access: Drinking water and hydration stations.
 - Lightning & Weather Shelter: Small pavilions or shelters for player safety.
 - Batting Cages: Minimum of two at each location with concrete pads.
 - Transportation Access: Nearby bus stops or improved routes.
 - Scoring/Announcer Booth for games and events.
 - Explore tournament-hosting capability by clustering fields at Overlook.

4) Experiences & Preferences Regarding Artificial Turf

- Positive Feedback:
 - Performance: Students and coaches praise smoother, more predictable play.
 - Weather Resilience: Usable earlier in season; snow clears faster, especially in White Rock.
 - Lower Maintenance: Reduces need for irrigation and field upkeep.
 - Consistency: Fewer injuries, better ball control (especially soccer).
 - Tournament Hosting Potential: Attracts events, brings in revenue.
- Concerns & Conditions:
 - Quality Matters: Not all turf is created equal.
 - Sullivan Field is a successful model — durable and high-quality.
 - Turf should be climate-appropriate and long-lasting.
 - Vendor selection and turf specifications require due diligence.
 - Field Longevity & Replaceable Components: Areas like pitching circles and home plates wear out faster; suggest modular/replacable components.
 - Maintaining Some Grass Fields: Desired by some coaches for variety and injury prevention.

5) Can a Single Artificial Turf Field Serve Baseball and Softball?

- Not feasible due to:
 - Simultaneous game and practice schedules.
 - Field layout differences (fences, pitching circles, base paths).
 - Temporary fencing (e.g., caution tape) is a limitation.
 - Practice demand often requires multiple fields in use at once.

6) Equipment Compatibility

- Not a Barrier:
 - Athletes already maintain separate gear for turf and grass.
 - Baseball/softball players typically have plastic cleats.
 - Soccer cleats are compatible with both surfaces.