

Los Alamos County

Artificial Turf Study

L I S T E N I N G S E S S I O N





Photo courtesy Los Alamos Daily Post

Introductions

Ania Pastuszewska
NV5, Inc.
Lead Project Manager



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Project Manager



Shasta Meehan
Sites Southwest
Landscape Designer

Todd Smith
R&R Engineer
Principal Civil Engineer



Purpose of the Study

To evaluate options for installing artificial turf on up to five fields at North Mesa Sports Complex and Overlook Park, to explore the feasibility of co-locating baseball and softball game fields in a single location, and to assess community interest in such actions.

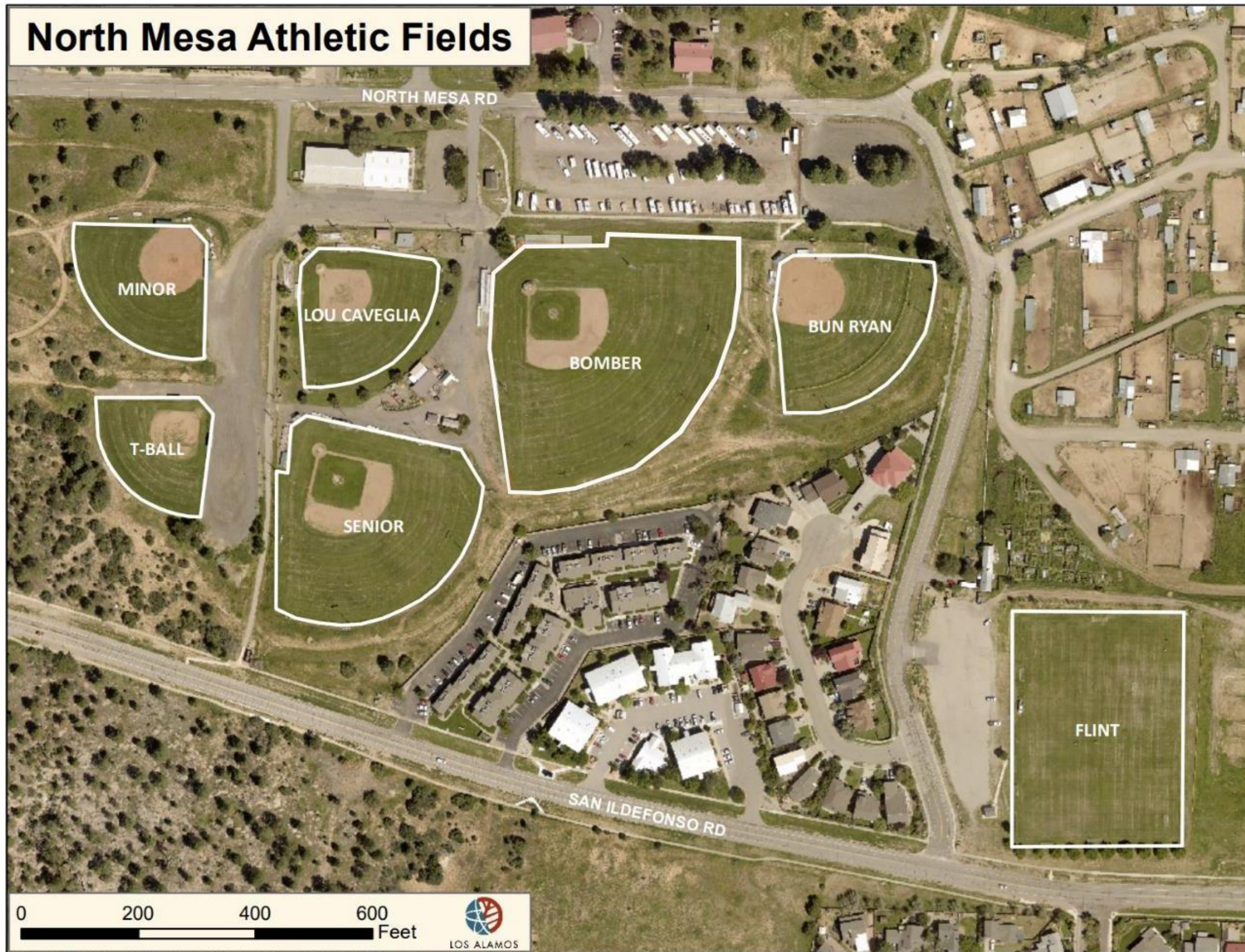
Deliverables

- Comprehensive Artificial Turf Conceptual Study
- To include recommendations for:
 - Field realignment and consolidation
 - Artificial Turf products and specifications
 - ADA improvements
 - Lighting improvements
 - Use of renewable energy and public WiFi
 - Field maintenance and management
 - Cost estimates
 - Renderings and site layout maps

Photos courtesy Los Alamos Daily Post



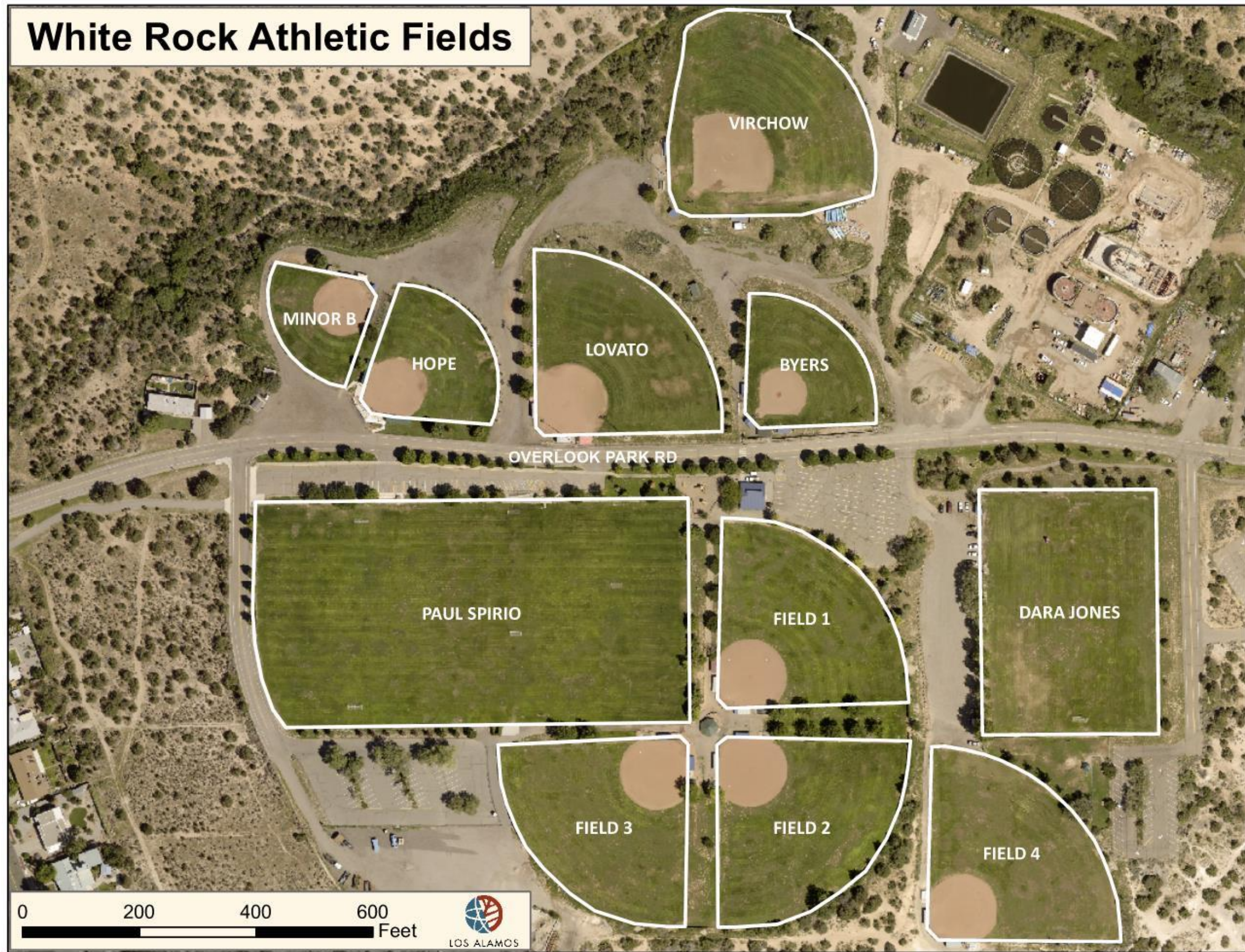
North Mesa Athletic Fields



0 200 400 600 Feet



White Rock Athletic Fields



Ground Rules



Photo courtesy Los Alamos Youth Soccer League

01

Be respectful of others and their ideas – in words, in tone, and in body language.

02

One person speaking at a time – avoid side conversations and interruptions.

03

Keep an open mind – be open to learning something new.

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Share ideas, ask questions, and contribute constructively to the discussion.

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Keep it brief and to the point – respect the group's time, giving everyone a chance to participate.

Questions for Discussion- Field User Experiences

01

What are your experiences with / perceptions of the existing field conditions and supporting amenities at North Mesa Sports Complex and/or Overlook Park?

02

- Are the sports fields at North Mesa and/or Overlook generally available when you need/want to use them?
- Do you utilize the County's scheduling system?

03

- Are the sports fields at North Mesa and/or Overlook conveniently located?
- Do you have any preferences between the two facilities or suggestions regarding the location of game and practice fields?



Questions for Discussion- Desires for Improvements

01

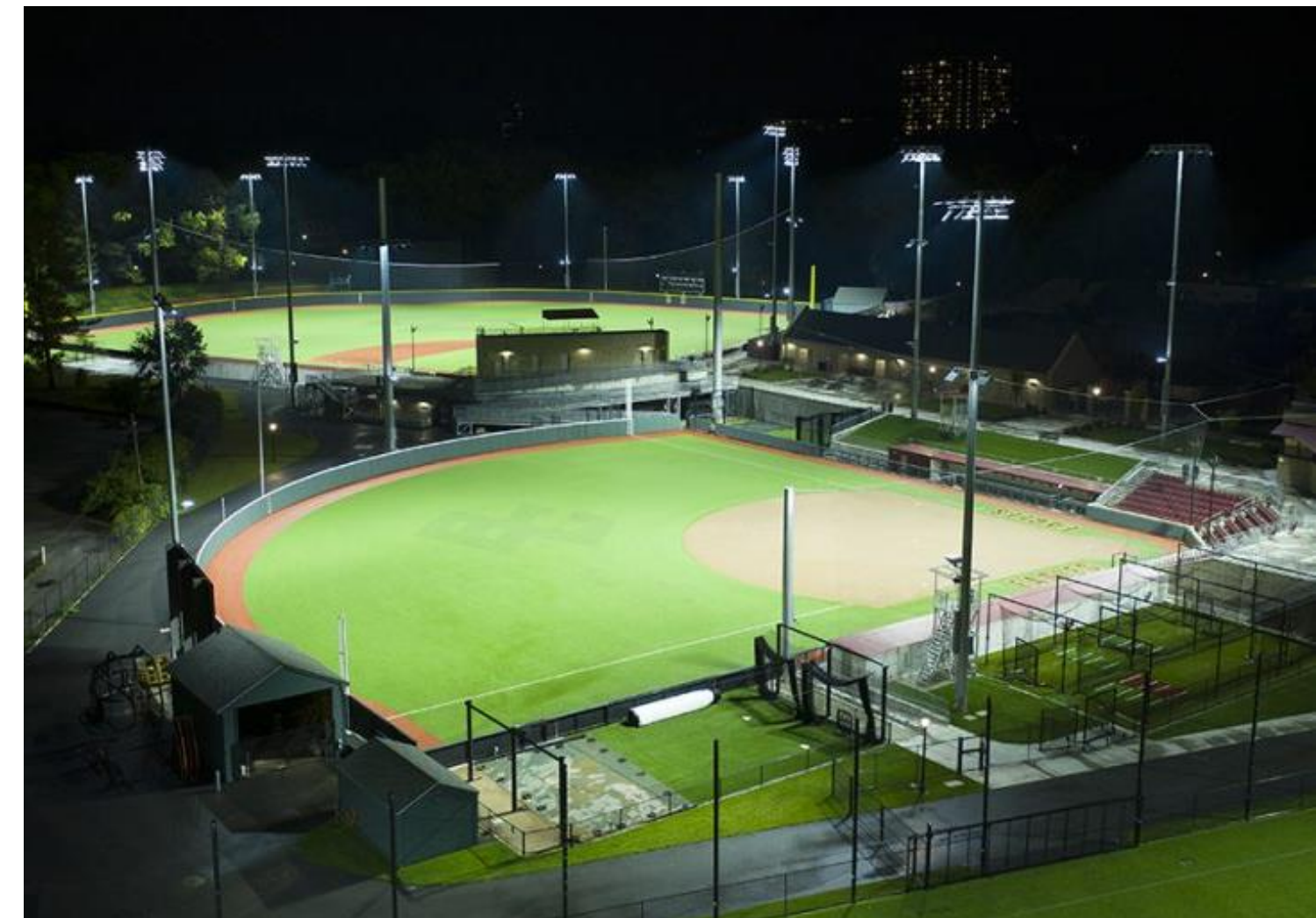
- Would co-locating baseball and softball game fields in a single location be desirable? Why / why not?
- What suggestions do you have about this idea? What is important for the County to consider?

02

- What amenities would you like to see at North Mesa and/or Overlook in association with the sports fields?
- What is needed to improve the experience of players, coaches, and supporters?

03

- Would field lighting upgrades and/or installing lighting on more fields be desirable?
- What does the County need to know about field lighting needs at North Mesa and/or Overlook?



Questions for Discussion- Artificial Turf

01

- Tell us about your experiences using artificial turf fields in and around Los Alamos.
- What about it do you like or dislike? What do you feel are the benefits and drawbacks as a user of these facilities?

02

- What do you know about artificial turf?
- What are your understandings / perceptions about artificial turf products?

03

Would an expanded or lengthened playing season as a result of installing artificial turf on sports fields at North Mesa and/or Overlook be desirable and needed? Why / why not?



Community Survey





Photo courtesy Los Alamos Daily Post

Next Steps

- Up to four additional public / community meetings
- Next meeting: January 2025 (date TBD)
- Digital Community Survey (ongoing through February 2025)
- Targeted interviews with community groups
- Development of recommendations and design concepts to share at public meetings for input and feedback
- Final report to be completed by July 2025

Stay in Touch!



[https://www.losalamosnm.us/
County-Projects/Artificial-Turf-Study](https://www.losalamosnm.us/County-Projects/Artificial-Turf-Study)



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Los Alamos County Artificial Turf Study

L I S T E N I N G S E S S I O N # 2





Photo courtesy Los Alamos Daily Post

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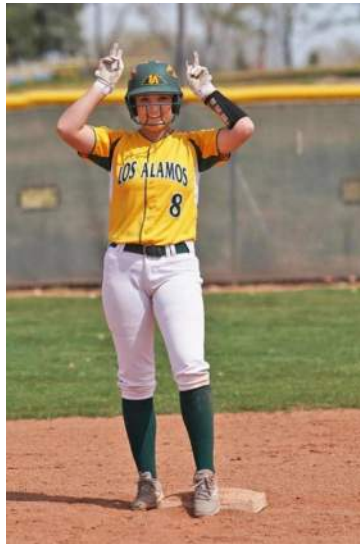
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Will include recommendations for:

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- ADA improvements
- Lighting improvements
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- Cost estimates
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North Mesa Athletic Fields



White Rock Athletic Fields

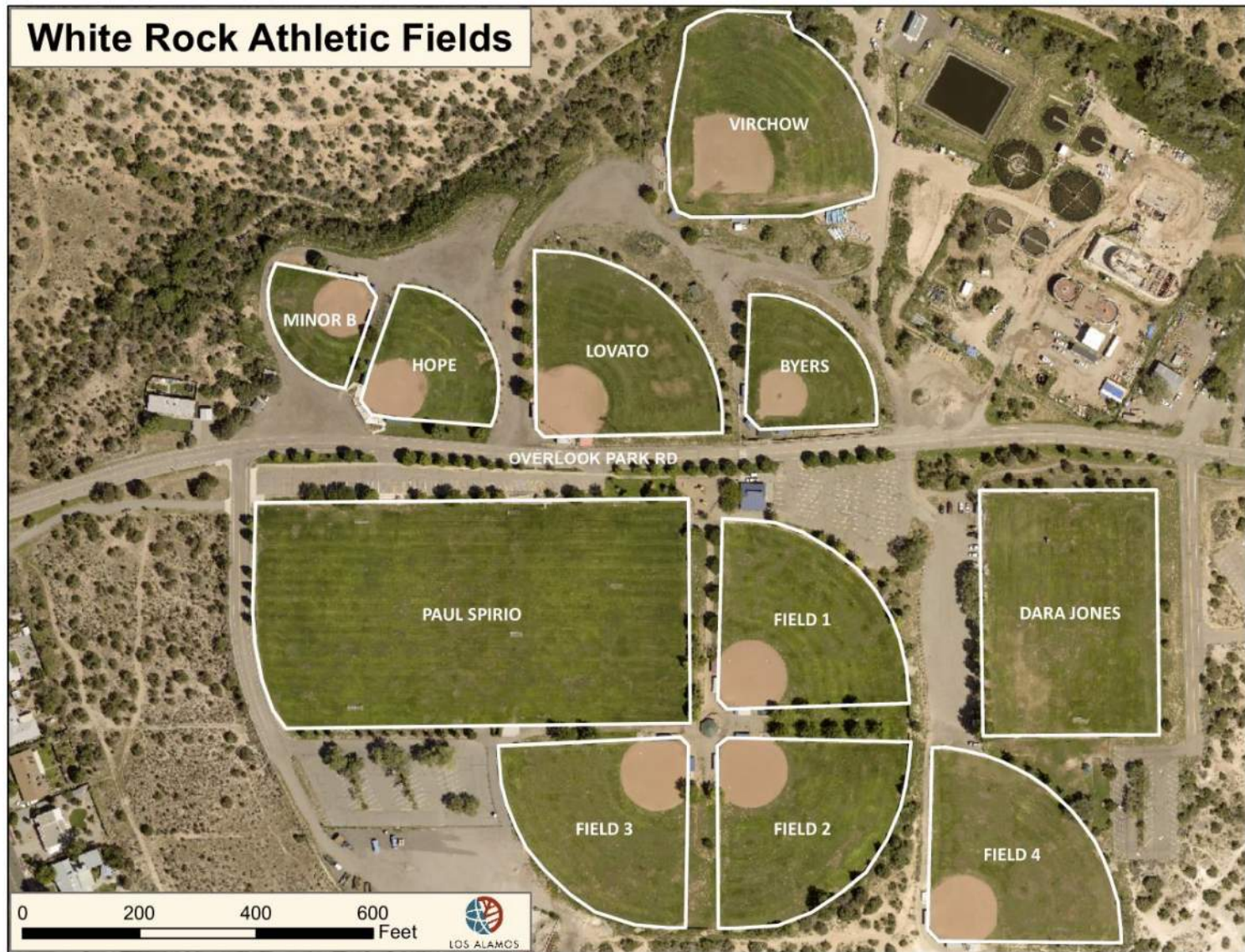




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What we have heard so far...

Field User Experiences

- Concern about the number of injuries attributable to the condition of natural turf.
- Due to conditions on all fields, overuse on particular fields, and scheduling conflicts, the number of existing fields cannot accommodate the number of games and practices.
- Drainage issues at Flint are a significant issue, and grass is often too high for effective play.
- Gopher holes are particularly an issue at Bomber and Senior fields but are present at all fields.
- Fields are used 7 days/week but much more frequently M-F.
- Dog waste is a problem on the soccer fields.
- Not enough field options for youth football.



What we have heard so far...

Desired Improvements

- Extending the playing seasons would be a desirable benefit of installing artificial turf.
- Options for flex / multiuse fields should be considered when evaluating field realignment, consolidation, and artificial turf renovations.
- Consider dugout improvements, more batting cages, athlete changing rooms, better storage for teams, more bathrooms, safety netting, shelters for spectators and players, and scoring booths.
- Co-locating baseball and softball game fields would be more convenient for families, would increase attendance, and create more opportunities for new programs, concessions / fundraising.
- Parking and circulation needs improvement at both North Mesa and Overlook.
- Install or upgrade lighting at more fields – this will increase playing time.
- Consider improved/expanded transportation options to/from facilities.
- Expand/improve access to drinking water.
- Higher (8-ft) fencing behind goals at soccer fields.
- Retain as many trees as possible at the facilities (provide much needed shade).
- Accessible pathways, parking, restrooms, seating all need improvement.

What we have heard so far...

Artificial Turf

Benefits

Extending playing seasons is a high priority, and artificial turf would accomplish this.

Safety of players is of utmost importance, and artificial turf would reduce injuries.

Artificial turf fields are appealing and inspiring to players and supporters.

Artificial turf fields have been very well received and popular at LAPS facilities.

Artificial turf fields create an opportunity for tournaments.

Games are more competitive on artificial turf fields.

Younger kids are less afraid of sliding on artificial turf than on natural turf.

Easier to maintain, less water use, reduced need for pest management.

Reduced travel for players in the colder months when there are more away games where other teams have artificial turf fields.

Artificial turf fields would allow LA and WR players to have facilities of comparable quality to competitor teams.

There are advantages of artificial turf at both North Mesa and Overlook Park.

What we have heard so far...

Artificial Turf

Concerns

Artificial turf is not the complete answer to issues with the fields.

Artificial turf will make fields more desirable but will also lead to more competition for use.

Artificial turf fields are hot in the summer months.

Baseball/softball players will need two sets of equipment (this may already be the case).

Players can't eat sunflower seeds on artificial turf.

Concern that there will be more abrasions and skin infections with artificial turf fields.

Desire to retain some natural turf fields.

Concerns about environmental and human impacts due to potential toxicity of materials.



Environmental & Human Impacts

Some concerns have been expressed regarding:

- Presence of PFAS in materials
- Resulting microplastics in the environment
- Life-cycle / recyclability of the materials
- Increased risk of abrasions and skin infections

List of RESOURCES has been placed on website.

Team is continuing to review research and address specific questions.



What we'd like to hear more about...

01

SCHEDULING: Hearing that there may not be enough fields for user demands, but scheduling data does not validate this. How far in advance are you scheduling games/practices? And submitting this to LAC staff? How is this working?

02

DOG WASTE: Hearing concerns about dog waste on fields. This will be more of a concern on artificial turf fields. Should we consider expanding Overlook dog park? What suggestions do you have for addressing this issue?

03

LOCATION: Hearing that of advantages to artificial turf at both North Mesa and Overlook. If only one location is selected, are we correct in concluding that artificial turf at North Mesa would be most effective in extending the playing season? Tell us more.



What we'd like to hear more about...

04

FLEX / MULTIUSE FIELDS: Are you familiar with how these work? Scheduling will become more of an issue for these. How do you see these working? Would they be beneficial?

05

MINI-PITCH: Growing in popularity, can be synthetic or natural. Are you familiar with these? Would this be desirable? Why/why not? Tell us more.



What we'd like to hear more about...

06

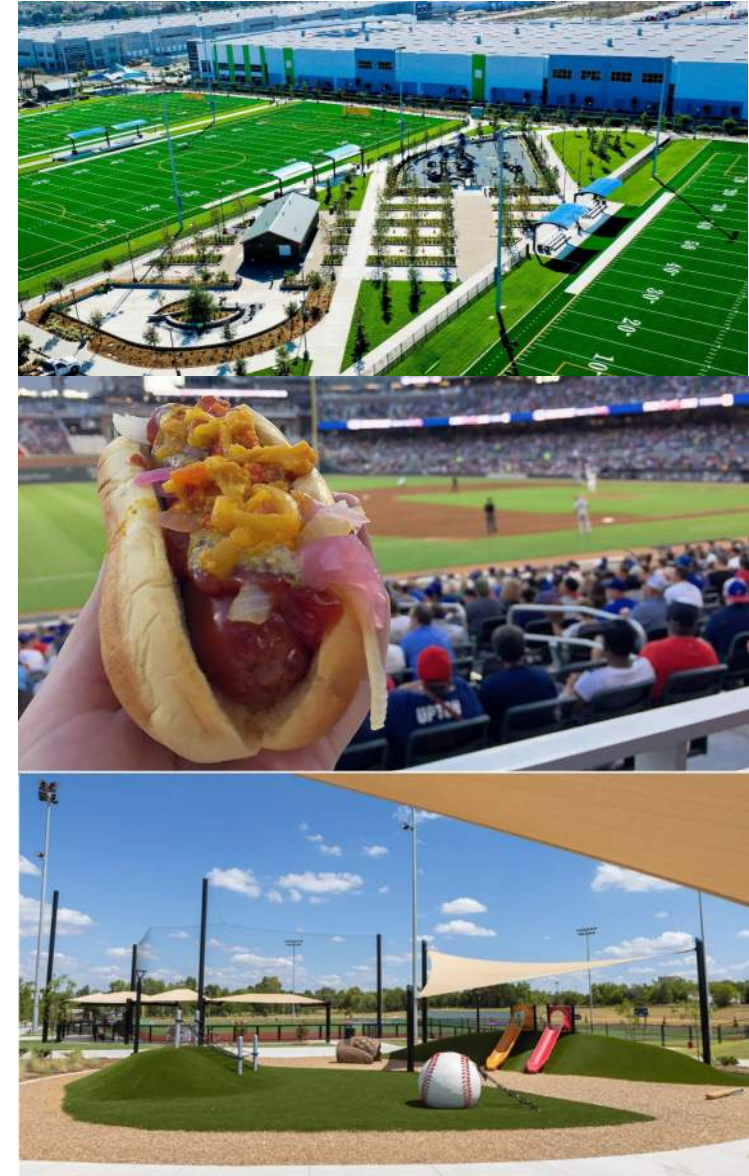
CENTRAL PLAZA: Would a central plaza for concessions, restrooms, changing rooms be a good solution to accommodating these amenities? Tell us more about why this hasn't worked well at Overlook Park?

07

TRANSIT: Hearing that better public transportation options are desired. What is not working currently? What should we keep in mind when considering site layout?

08

AMENITIES: Hearing requests for batting cages, safety netting, play areas, shade structures, EV charging stations, bottle filling stations, storage, changing rooms, restrooms. What else can you tell us about these requests? What are we missing?



Community Survey



SURVEY CLOSES FEBRUARY 7, 2025





Photo courtesy Los Alamos Daily Post

Next Steps

- Three additional public meetings
- Next meeting: February 27, 2025, at Fuller Lodge
- Conceptual field realignment and reconfiguration scenarios to be presented in February for feedback, then refined at subsequent public meetings
- Development of recommendations for input and feedback
- Final report to be completed in Summer 2025

Stay in Touch!



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Los Alamos County Artificial Turf Study

S E S S I O N # 3 : W o r k s h o p





Photo courtesy Los Alamos Daily Post

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Sites Southwest

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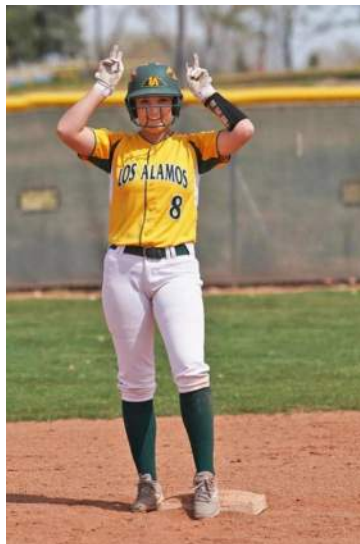
Deliverables

→ Comprehensive Artificial Turf Conceptual Study

Recommendations for:

- Field realignment and consolidation
- Artificial Turf products and specifications
- ADA improvements
- Lighting improvements
- Use of renewable energy and public WiFi
- Field maintenance and management
- Cost estimates
- Renderings and site layout maps

Photos courtesy Los Alamos Daily Post



North Mesa Athletic Fields



White Rock Athletic Fields

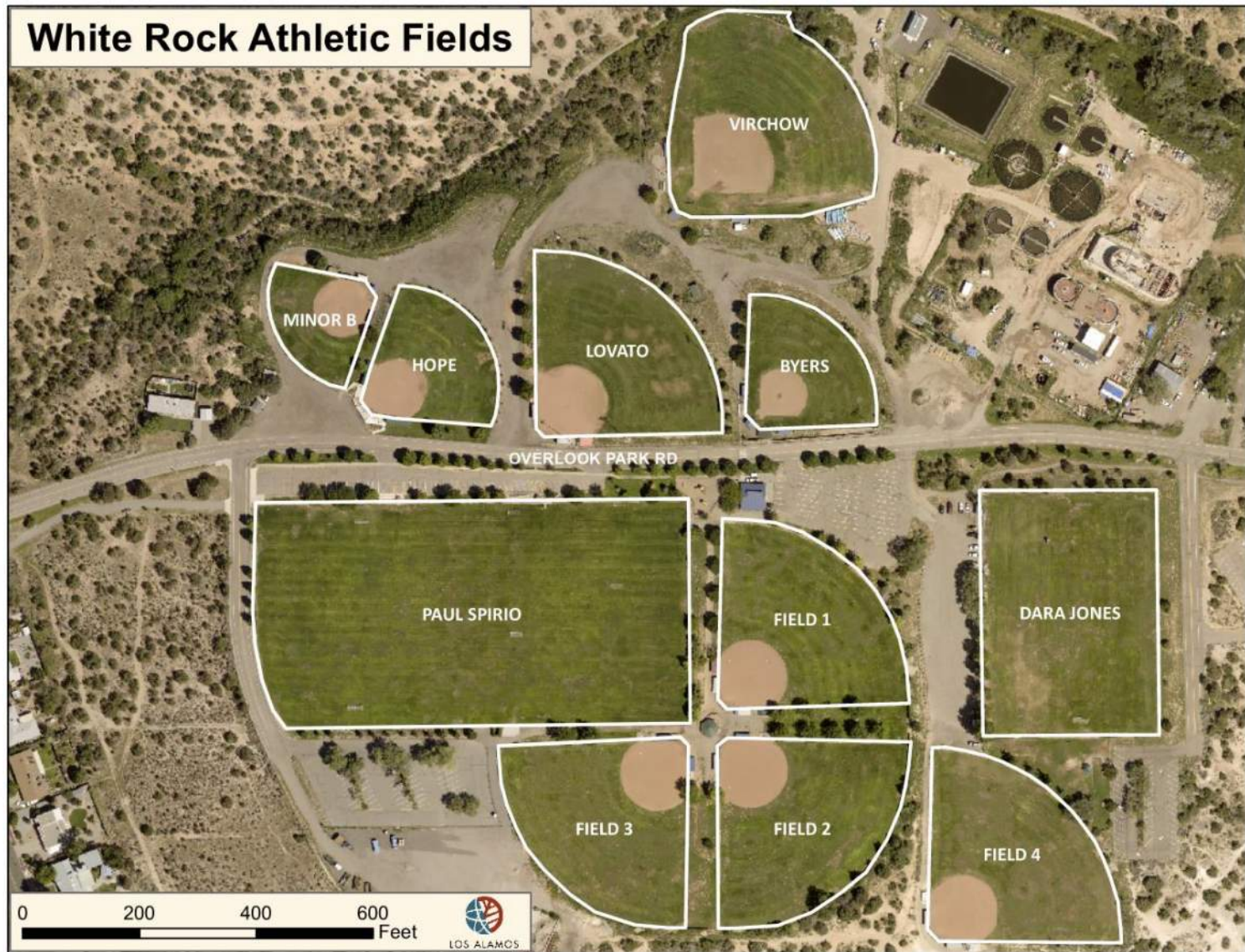




Photo courtesy Los Alamos Youth Soccer League

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How we got here...

- **Community Listening Sessions:**

- October 30th at Fuller Lodge
- January 30th at Fuller Lodge

- **Focused Group Interviews:**

- Los Alamos Public Schools (LAPS)
- Los Alamos Youth Soccer League (LAYSL)

- **Digital Community Survey:** 217 responses (Closed February 7th)

- **Insights shared by the following groups:**

- Los Alamos Little League
- Los Alamos Youth Lacrosse
- Los Alamos Softball Association
- Los Alamos Adult Competitive Soccer
- Los Alamos Extreme (youth football)
- Athletes, parents, and supporters of youth, LAPS, and adult sports
- Dog park users
- Residents of surrounding neighborhoods and LA County generally
- Residents of Espanola, Pojoaque, Santa Fe, Nambe, and surrounding areas



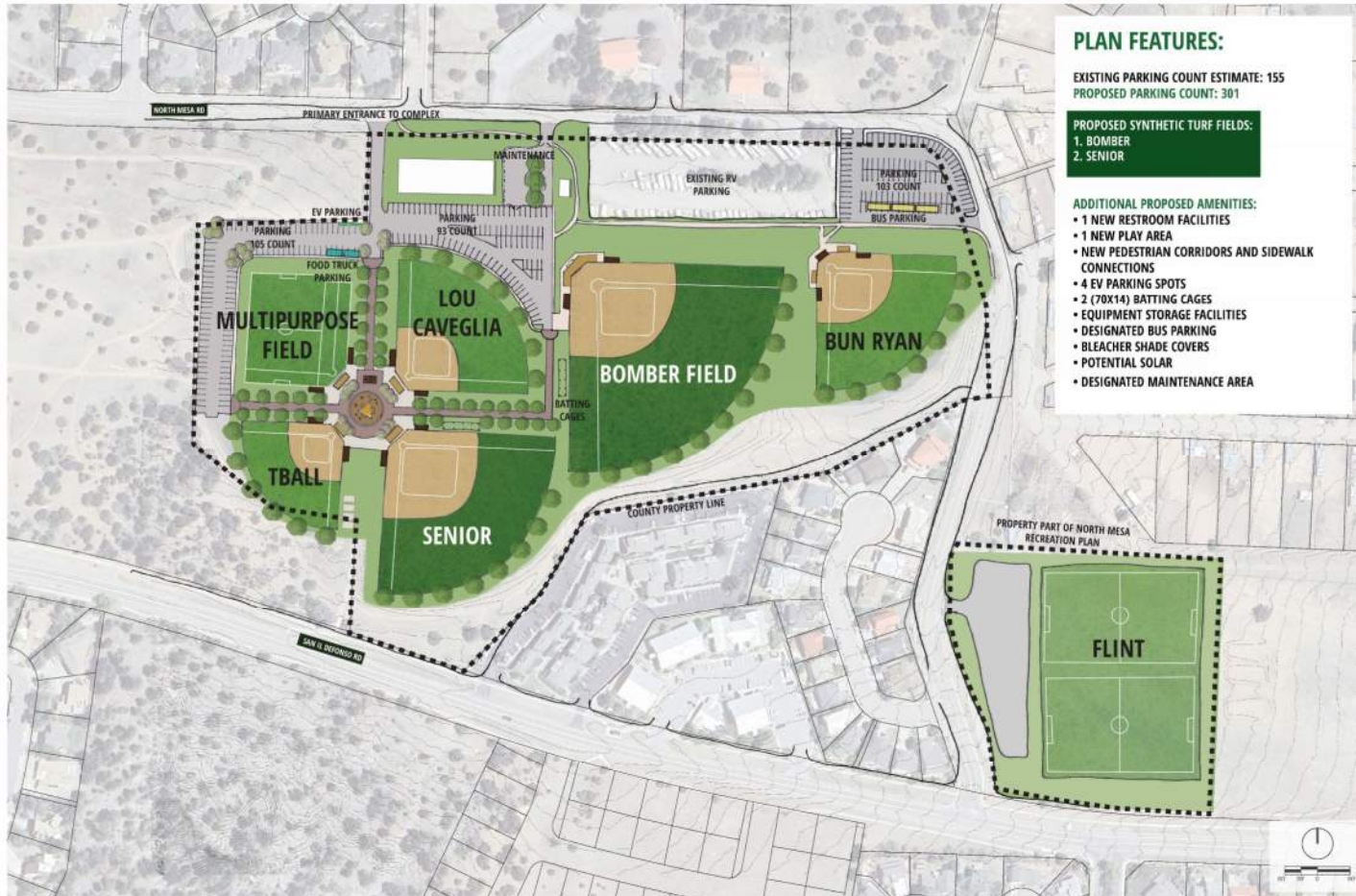
What we've heard so far...

Desired Improvements

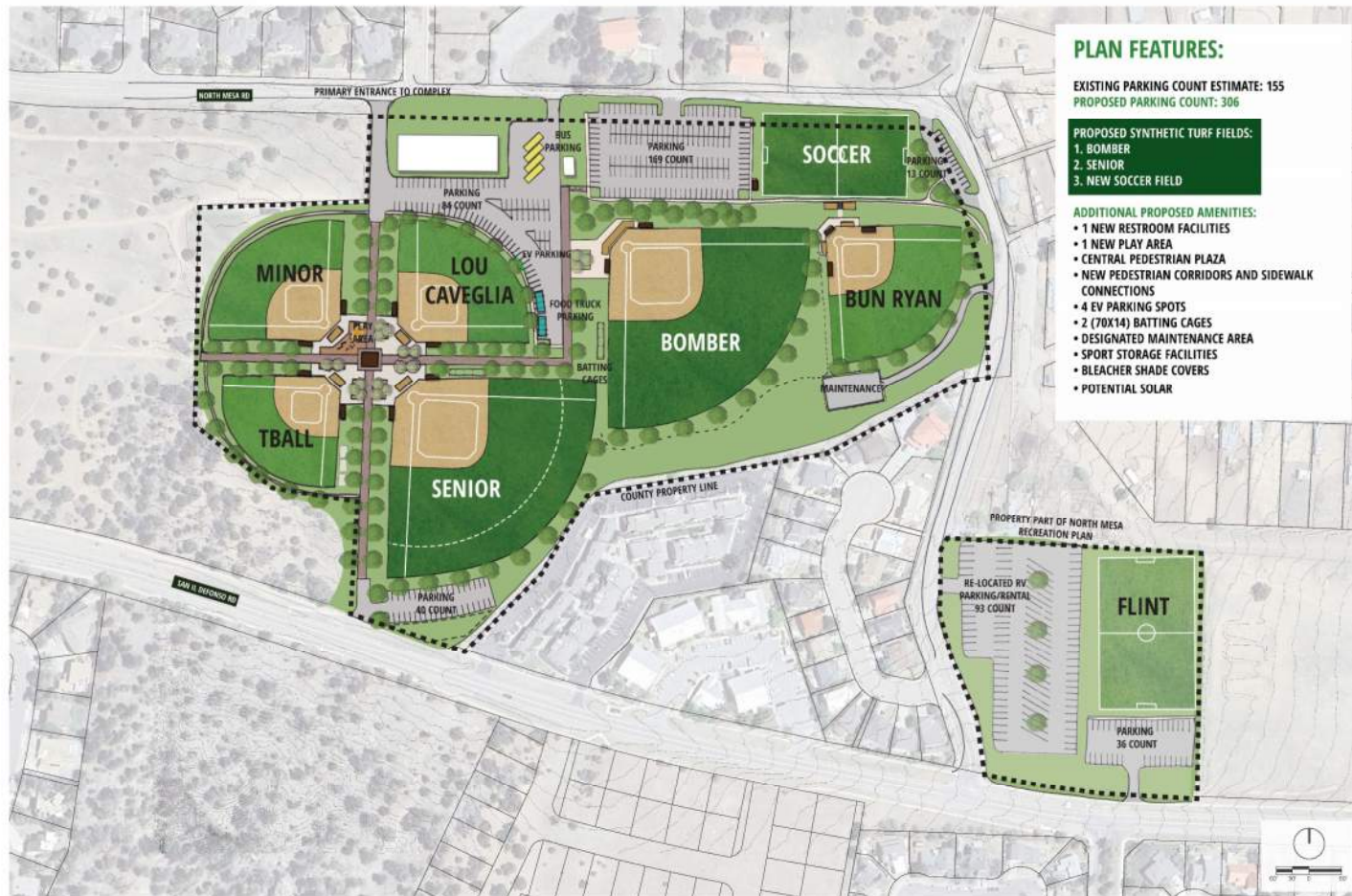
- Extend playing season
- Improve field conditions/quality
- Flex/multi-use field options
- Dugout improvements
- Batting cages
- Athlete changing rooms
- Safety netting
- Shelters for spectators & athletes
- Scoring booths
- Storage
- Co-locate baseball and softball game fields
- Co-locate varsity and JV game fields
- Parking and circulation
- Lighting
- Drinking water
- Higher fencing behind soccer goals
- More trees for shade
- Accessibility



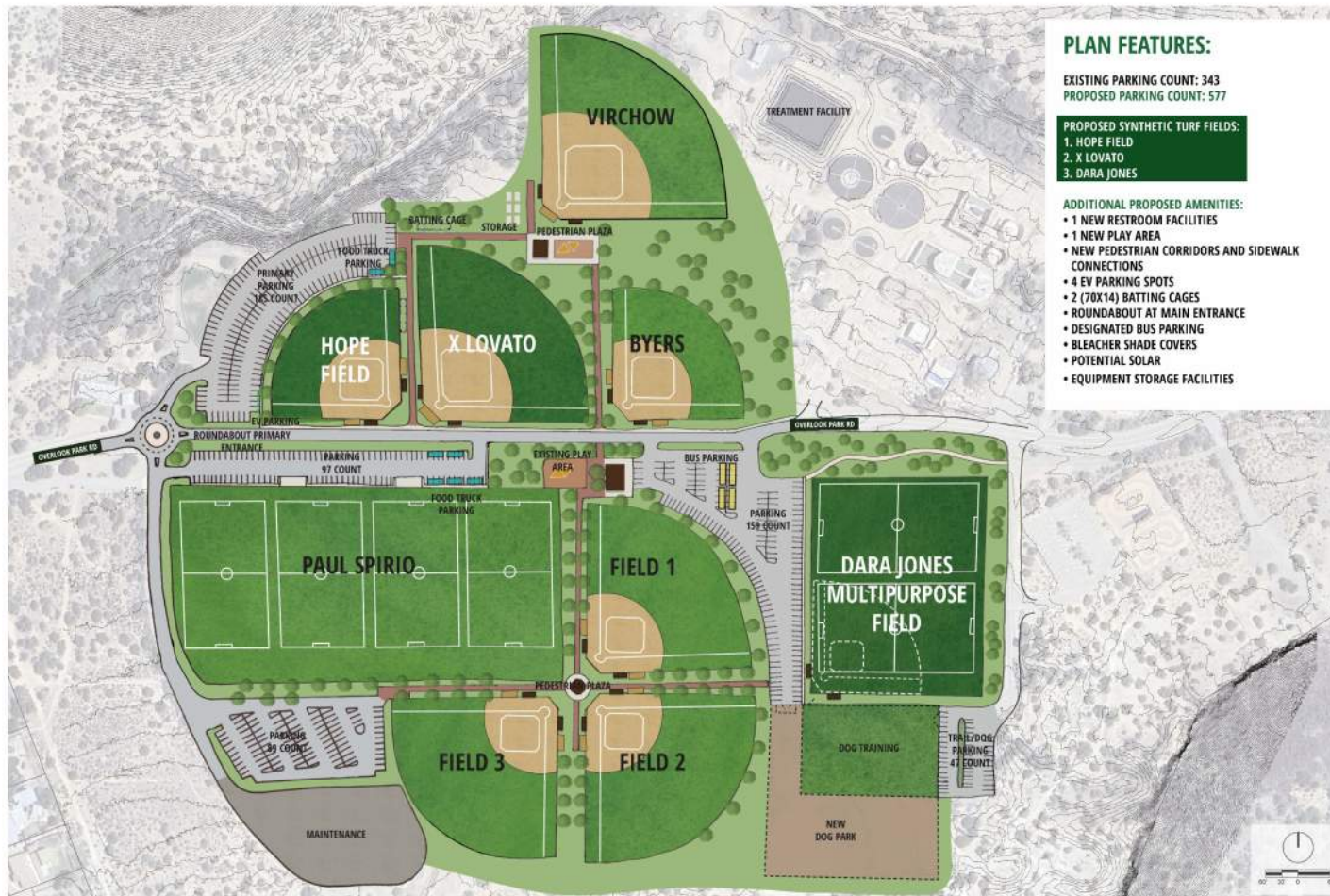
North Mesa Recreation Area – Proposed Option I



North Mesa Recreation Area – Proposed Option 2



Overlook Park – Proposed Option I



Overlook Park – Proposed Option 2

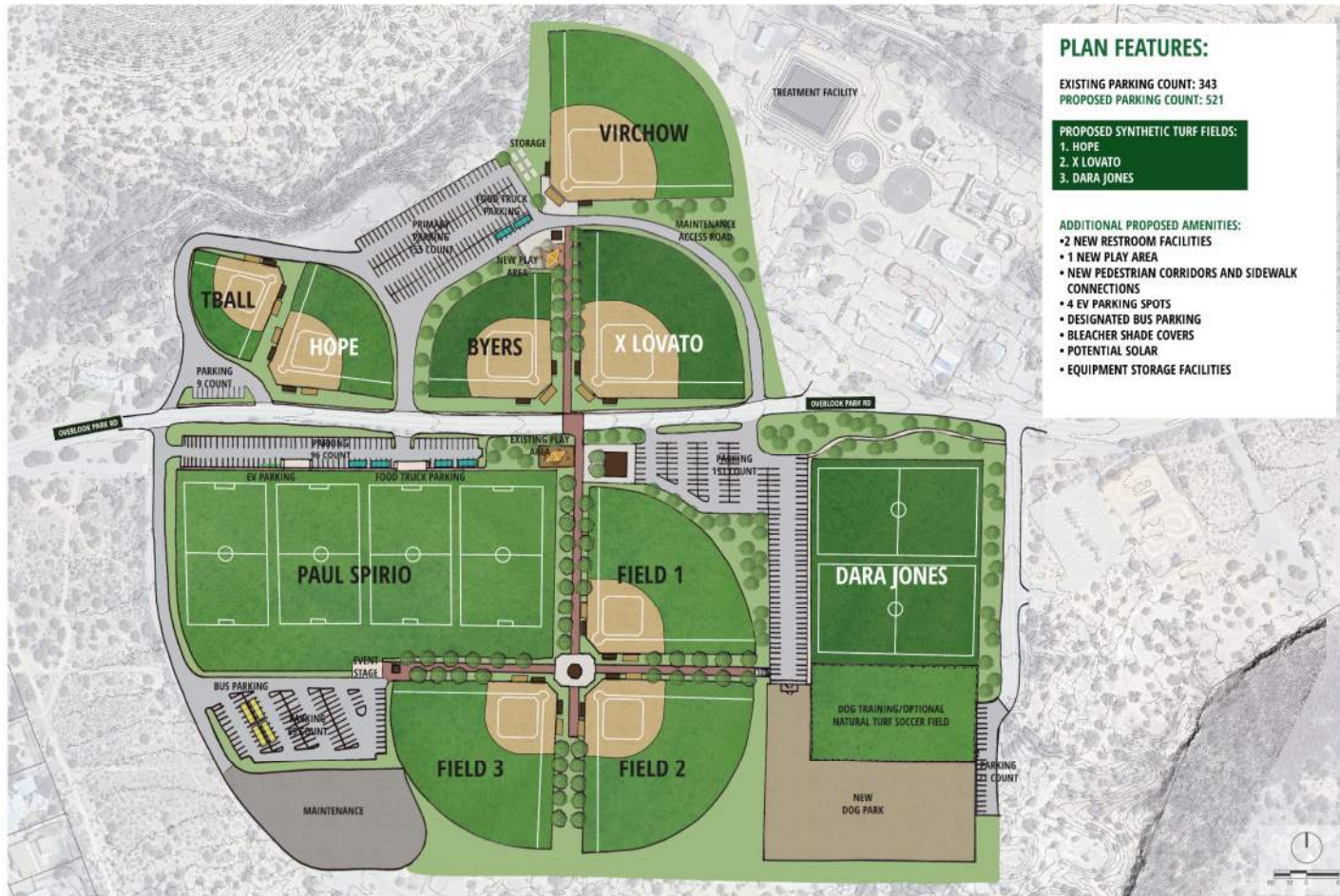




Photo courtesy Los Alamos Daily Post

Next Steps

- Two additional public meetings.
- Next meeting:
April 24, 2025, 5:30pm at Fuller Lodge
- Updates to the conceptual field scenarios to be presented for further feedback and refinement.
- Development of recommendations for input/feedback.
- Final report to be completed in Summer 2025.

Stay in Touch!



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County-Projects/Artificial-Turf-Study](https://www.losalamosnm.us/County-Projects/Artificial-Turf-Study)



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Los Alamos County Artificial Turf Study

C O M M U N I T Y S E S S I O N # 4





Photo courtesy Los Alamos Daily Post

Introductions

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Project Manager



Shasta Meehan

Sites Southwest

Landscape Designer

George Radnovich

Sites Southwest

Principal Landscape Architect

Todd Smith

R&R Engineer

Principal Civil Engineer



Purpose of the Study

- *Evaluate potential location and field sizes, types, or configurations that would improve field user experiences at North Mesa Sports Complex and Overlook Park.*
- *Evaluate whether synthetic turf is an option to increase field usability, reduce maintenance, and/or otherwise improve field user experiences.*
- *Make recommendations for field realignment/reconfiguration, synthetic turf products and installation options, accessibility, amenities, lighting, maintenance and management.*
- *PLEASE NOTE: This is a study only, meant to guide future decision-making. There is no funding allocated at this time for field upgrades or improvements.*

Photos courtesy Los Alamos Daily Post

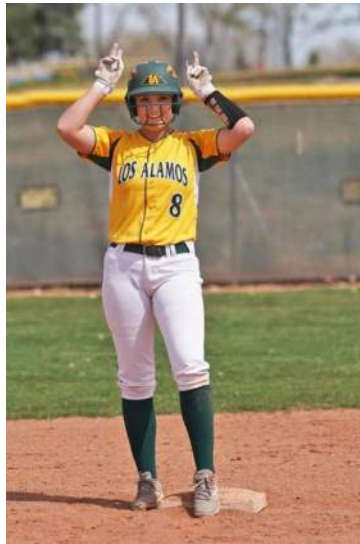




Photo courtesy Los Alamos Youth Soccer League

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How we got here...

- **Community Engagement Sessions To-Date:**
 - October 30th , January 30th , and February 27th at Fuller Lodge
- **Focused Group Interviews:**
 - Los Alamos Public Schools (LAPS)
 - Los Alamos Youth Soccer League (LAYSL)
- **Community Survey:** 217 responses (Closed February 7th)
- **Follow up Feedback Survey:** 141 responses (Closed March 31st)
- **Insights shared by the following groups:**
 - Los Alamos Little League
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 - Athletes, parents, and supporters of youth, LAPS, and adult sports
 - Dog park users
 - Residents of surrounding neighborhoods and LA County generally
 - Residents of Espanola, Pojoaque, Santa Fe, Nambe, and surrounding areas



What we've heard so far...

- **Field User Experiences:**

- Injuries due to field conditions / gopher holes
- Overuse of fields limits their usability and condition
- Insufficient facilities to accommodate all needs of user groups
- Current field layout not serving user groups as well as possible
- Dog waste on soccer fields is a big concern

- **Desired Improvements:**

- Extend playing seasons with synthetic turf and lighting
- Add amenities (batting cages, safety netting, changing rooms, storage, shelters, scoring booths, dugout improvements, concessions, higher fencing at soccer fields, etc.)
- Co-locate high school (varsity and JV) baseball and softball game fields
- Add accessible pathways, parking, restrooms, seating
- Explore options for flex/multi-use fields
- Improve parking and circulation for player and spectator safety
- Retain trees and add plantings for shade



What we've heard so far...

- **Concerns about Human and Environmental Impacts:**

- Concerns expressed regarding Artificial Turf:

- Presence of PFAS / “forever chemicals” in materials
- Resulting “microplastics” in the environment
- Life-cycle / recyclability of the materials
- Increased temperatures during warmer months
- Water-use to cool down artificial turf
- Increased risk of abrasions and skin infections

- Concerns expressed regarding Natural Turf:

- High water use to maintain natural turf
- Pesticide & fertilizer use on natural turf
- Gophers creating significant safety hazards to athletes and pest management challenges for County staff
- High maintenance demands exceed capacity
- Grass fields need more resting time than they currently get, leading to overuse



Human and Environmental Impacts

Considerations...

- “AstroTurf” is a brand from the 1960s. The newer materials used in synthetic turf have improved greatly in the last 15 years.
- Current synthetic turf manufacturers have developed recyclable and cradle-to-cradle products that limit waste and pollutants.
- Synthetic turf now has far fewer “forever chemicals” and “microplastics” than many common household items we are exposed to every day.
- Natural turf maintenance requires emissions from equipment and far more labor hours per week than synthetic turf.
- Natural turf maintenance requires much more water to maintain:
 - Small softball field requires over 700,000 gallons/irrigation season
 - Full-size baseball field requires over 2.2M gallons/irrigation season
 - Full-size soccer field requires over 1.5M gallons/irrigation season
- Natural turf requires pesticide use and regular fertilization that can adversely affect nearby water supplies.

List of **RESOURCES** is available online:

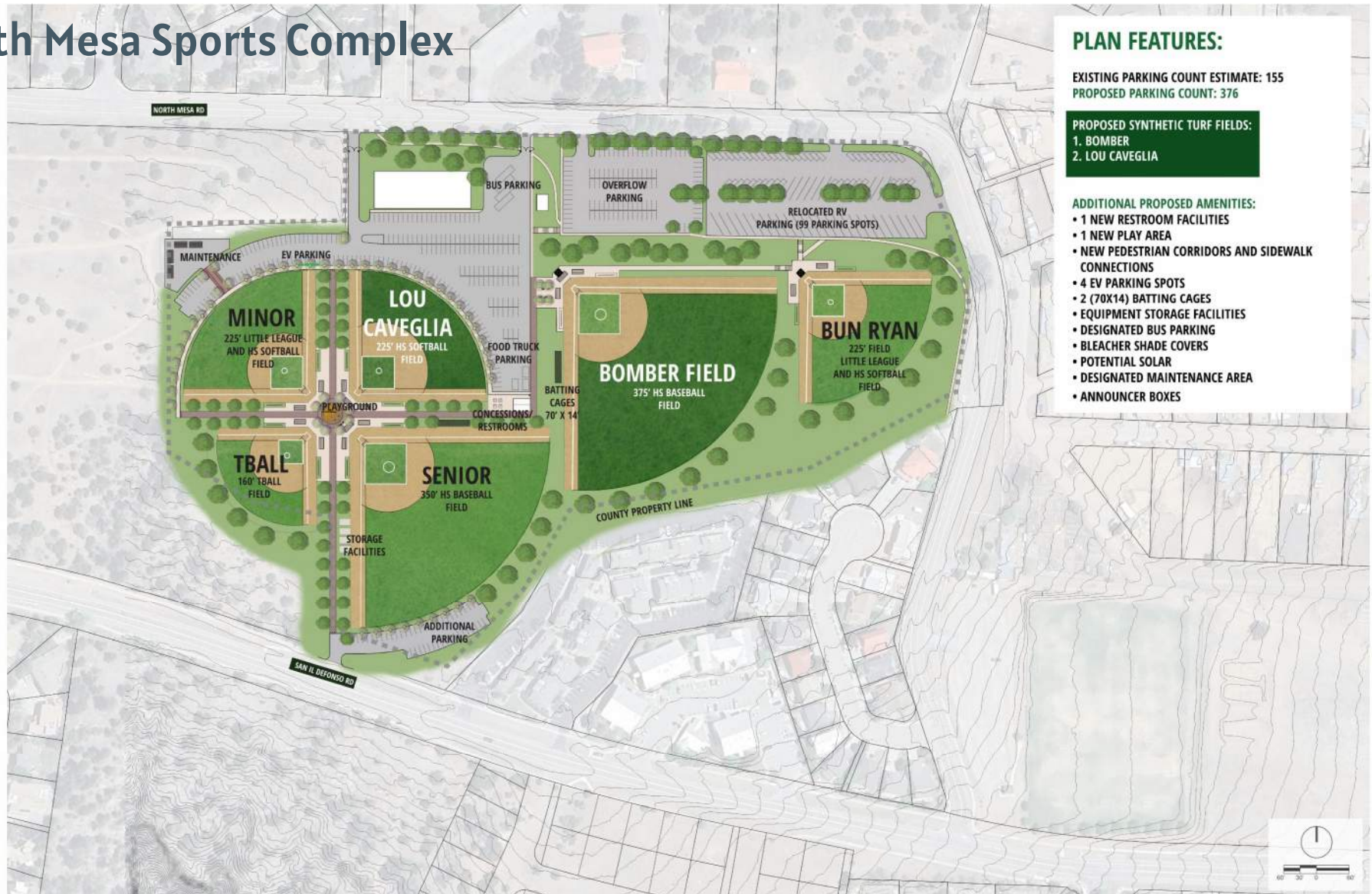
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North Mesa Athletic Fields



North Mesa Sports Complex

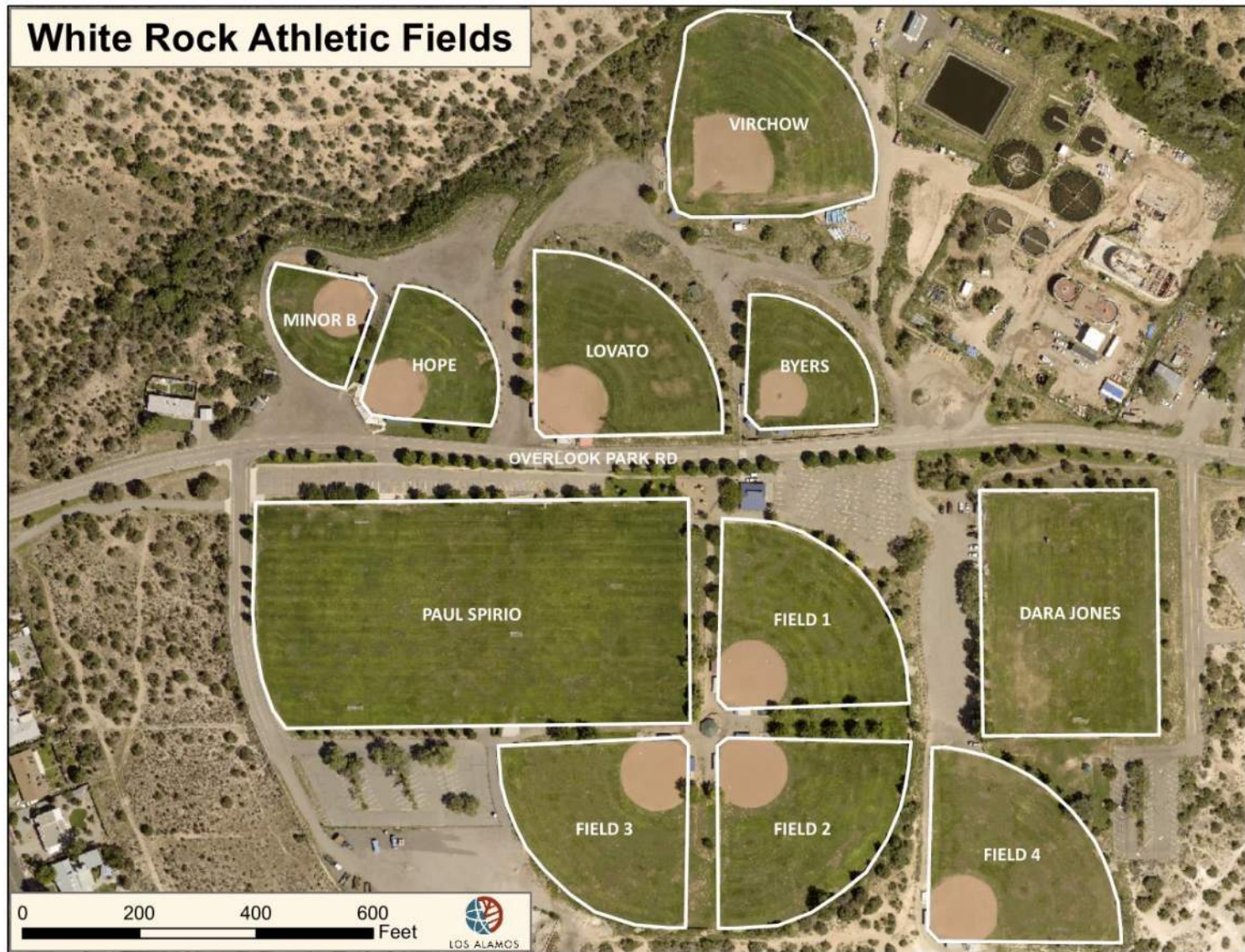


Questions to consider...

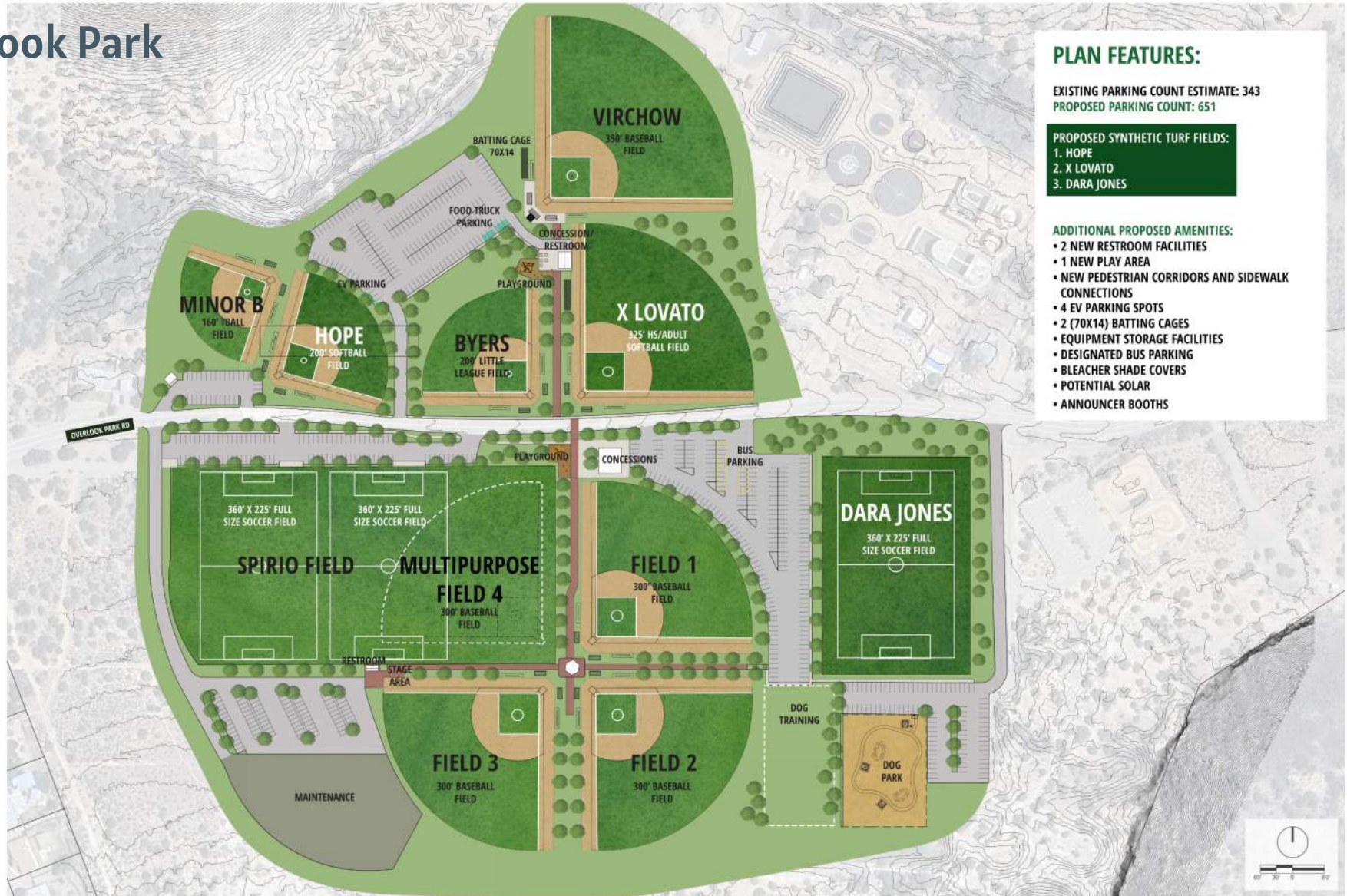
North Mesa Recreation Area

1. What is the community's opinion on relocating the existing RV parking lot in order to introduce more parking closer to the complex and improve safety and accessible connections?
2. How would increasing the size of Minor field and Lou Caveglia to 225', so that it could be used by both little league and high school softball, influence users at the complex?
3. How would providing additional parking below Senior field, off of San Il Defonso Rd, impact users?
4. The proposed option shows an expanded Senior field (350') so that there could be two high school baseball fields at North Mesa. How would this be a favorable addition?
5. The proposed option shows an arrival point with central concessions, plaza, and restrooms. Are there any additional amenities that could be included at this plaza location?
6. Could Bun Ryan (225' field size) be used as both a high school softball and little league field so that high school softball has more field options at North Mesa?
7. When considering improved and new lighting for the park, would the fields Lou Caveglia, Senior, and Bomber be the most beneficial fields to consider?

White Rock Athletic Fields



Overlook Park



Questions to consider...

Overlook Park

1. How would a multipurpose field that includes a 300' baseball field at Spirio Field influence field availability at Overlook Park?
2. If X Lovato field increased in size to a 325' field to accommodate adult and high school softball, how would that benefit or impact users at the complex?
3. Would creating designated areas for dog training and the dog park and prohibiting dog users from sport fields be an asset to the complex?
4. When considering improved and new lighting for the park, would the fields Hope, X-Lovato, and Virchow be the most beneficial fields to consider?
5. How would a central parking area with accessible concessions, plaza, restrooms, and playground area influence the usability of the northern part of the complex?
6. Are there any amenities that are not currently shown and should be considered?



Photo courtesy Los Alamos Daily Post

Next Steps

- Final Community Meeting:
May 15, 2025, 5:30pm at Fuller Lodge
- Updates to the conceptual field layouts to be presented, along with lighting recommendations.
- Final report to be completed in Summer 2025.

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C O M M U N I T Y S E S S I O N # 5





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- Make recommendations for field realignment/reconfiguration, synthetic turf products and installation options, accessibility, amenities, lighting, maintenance and management.
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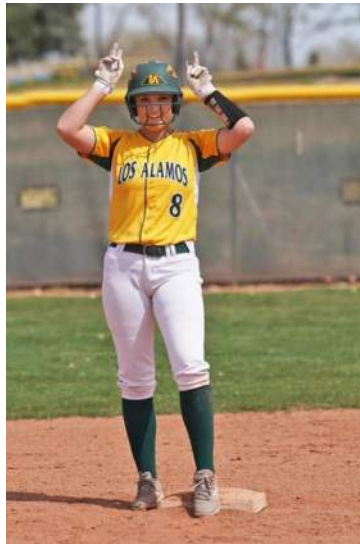




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Concerns expressed regarding Artificial Turf:

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- Increased risk of abrasions and skin infections



What we've heard so far...

- **Concerns about Human and Environmental Impacts:**

Concerns expressed regarding Natural Turf:

- High water use to maintain natural turf
- Pesticide & fertilizer use on natural turf
- Gophers creating significant safety hazards to athletes and pest management challenges for County staff
- High maintenance demands exceed capacity
- Grass fields need more resting time than they currently get, leading to overuse



Human and Environmental Impacts

Considerations...

- “AstroTurf” is a brand from the 1960s. The newer materials used in synthetic turf have improved greatly in the last 15 years.
- Current synthetic turf manufacturers have developed recyclable and cradle-to-cradle products that limit waste and pollutants.
- Synthetic turf now has far fewer “forever chemicals” and “microplastics” than many common household items we are exposed to every day.
- Natural turf maintenance requires emissions from equipment and far more labor hours per week than synthetic turf.
- Natural turf maintenance requires much more water to maintain:
 - Small softball field requires over 700,000 gallons/irrigation season
 - Full-size baseball field requires over 2.2M gallons/irrigation season
 - Full-size soccer field requires over 1.5M gallons/irrigation season
- Natural turf requires pesticide use and regular fertilization that can adversely affect nearby water supplies.

List of **RESOURCES** is available online:

<https://www.losalamosnm.us/County-Projects/Artificial-Turf-Study>



What we've heard so far...

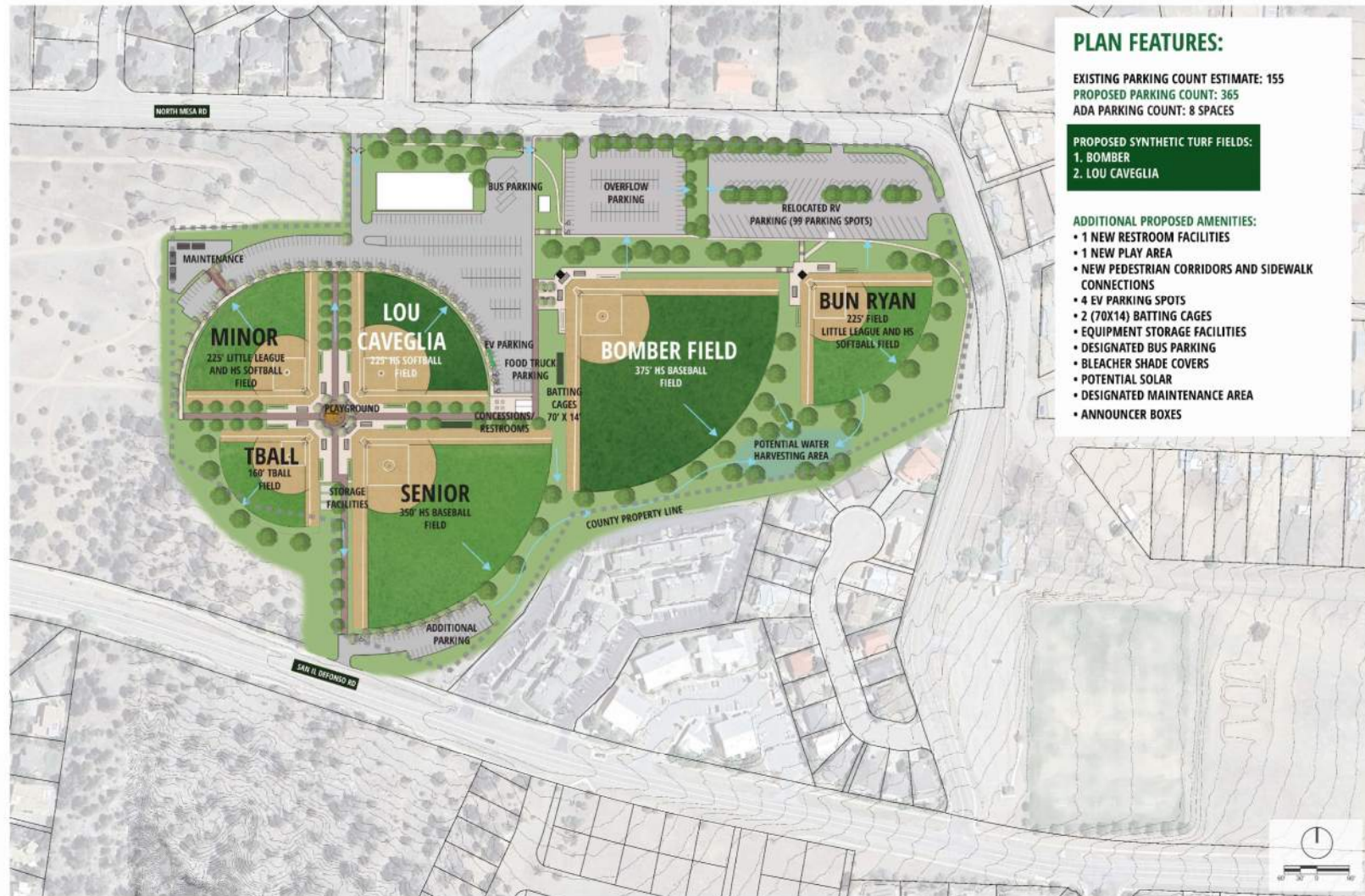
- **Comments from PEM#4**
 - Parking concerns behind outfields
 - Connectivity between fields and parking
 - Grading considerations
 - Concerns about lighting spill over
 - Multiuse field usability concerns
 - Desire for basketball courts
 - Gopher management
 - More field availability for adult softball



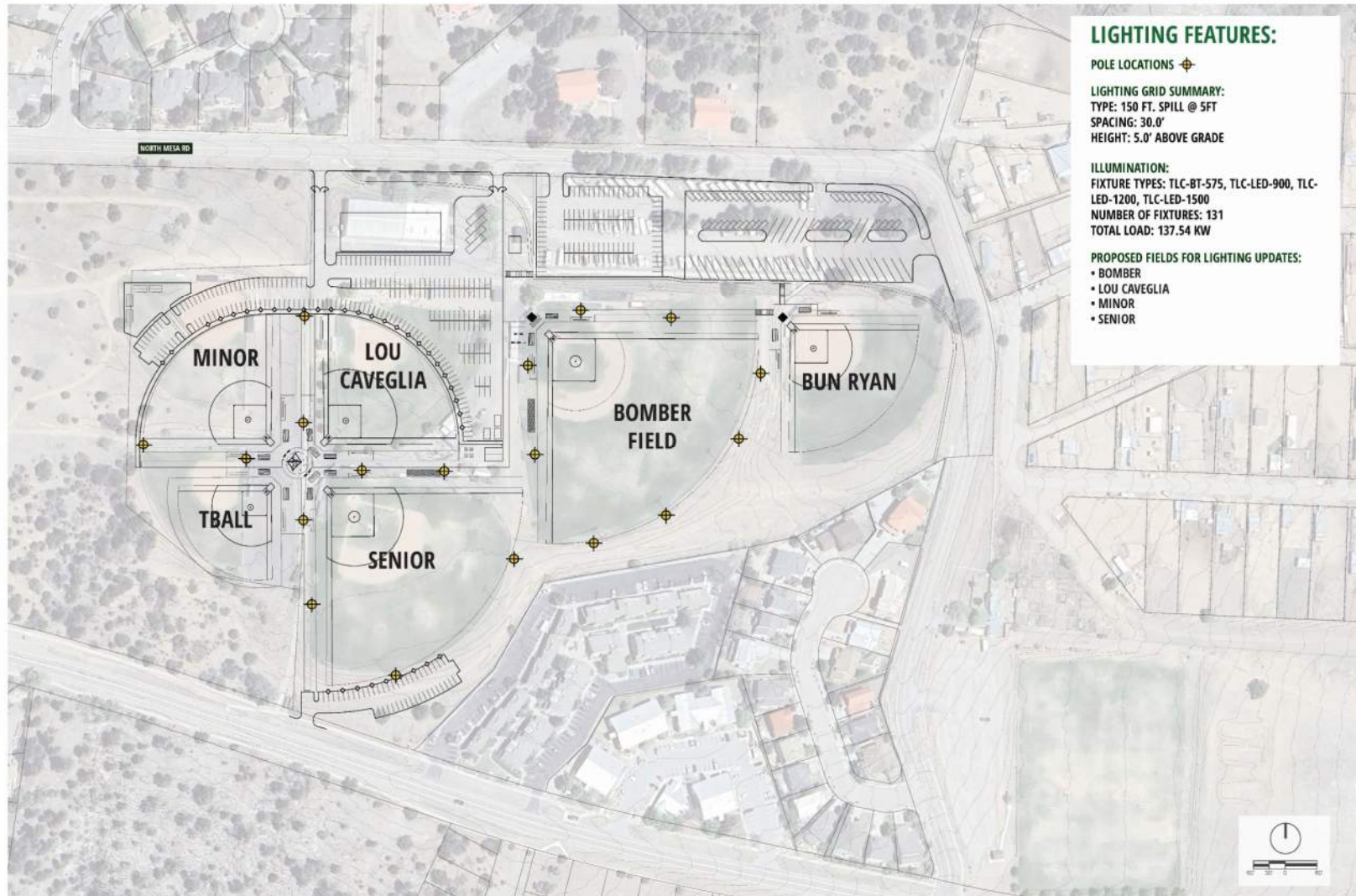
North Mesa Athletic Fields



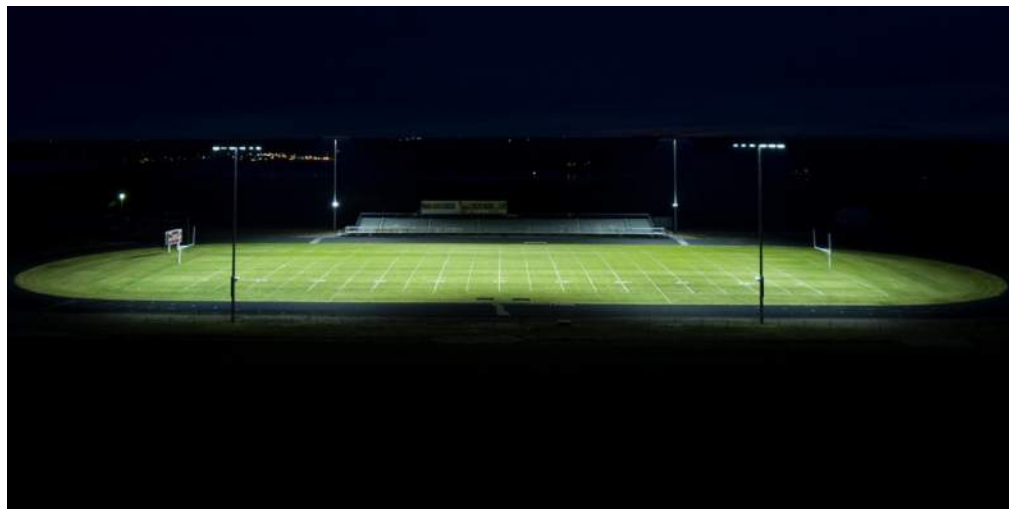
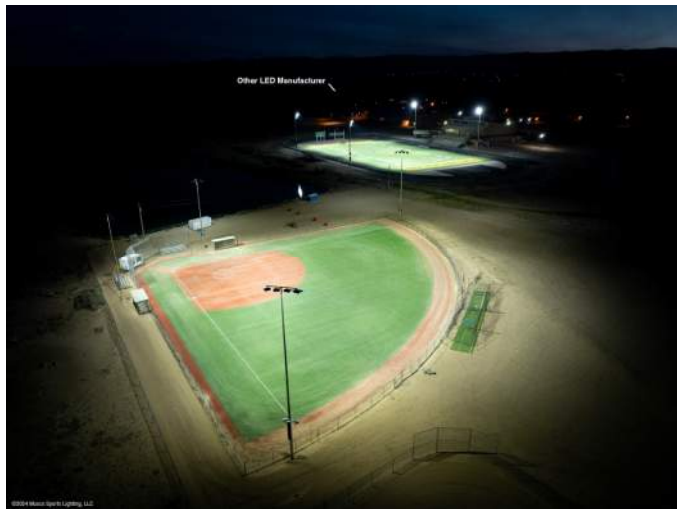
North Mesa Sports Complex



North Mesa Sports Complex – Lighting Improvements



North Mesa Sports Complex– Lighting Improvements

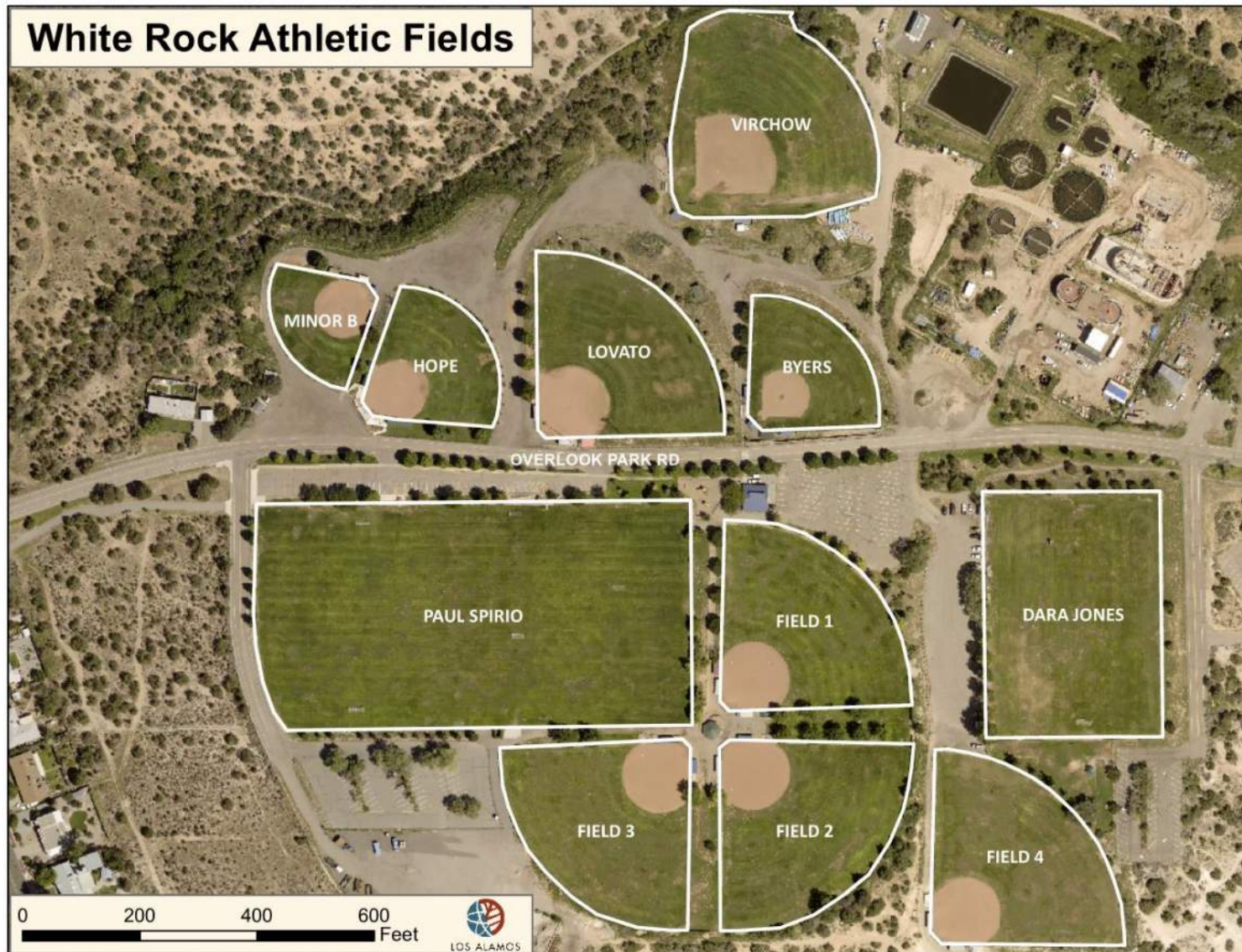


Questions to consider...

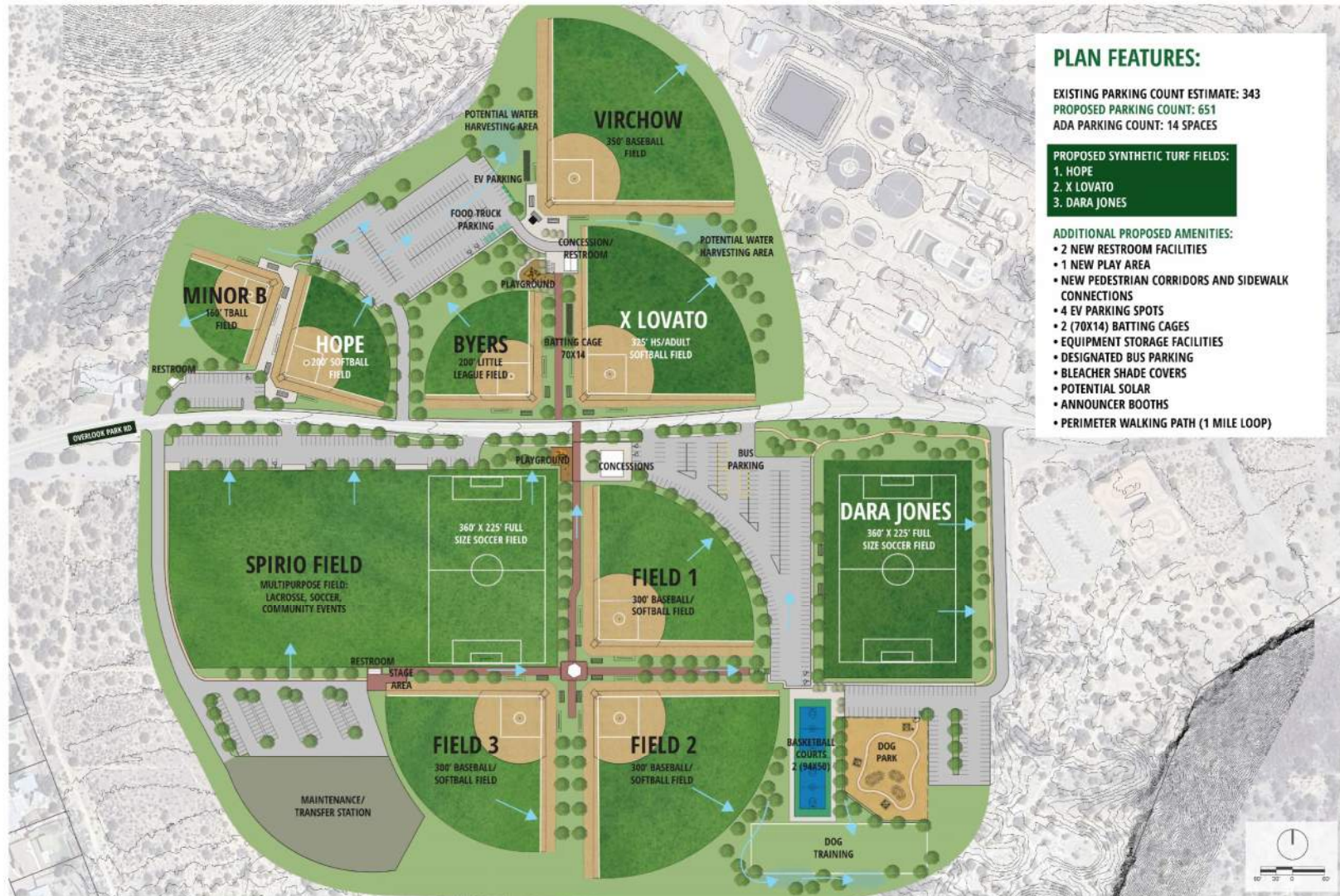
North Mesa Recreation Area

1. The proposed plan includes the realignment of several fields and parking areas to create a more centralized complex while also improving safety and providing accessible connections for users. Are there any areas not currently shown that could have improved connections?
2. When considering improved and new lighting for the park, would the proposed fields be the most beneficial fields to consider? Are there any other lighting considerations that we haven't included?
3. How important is it to the community to have high school and JV facilities co-located at North Mesa for both softball and baseball?

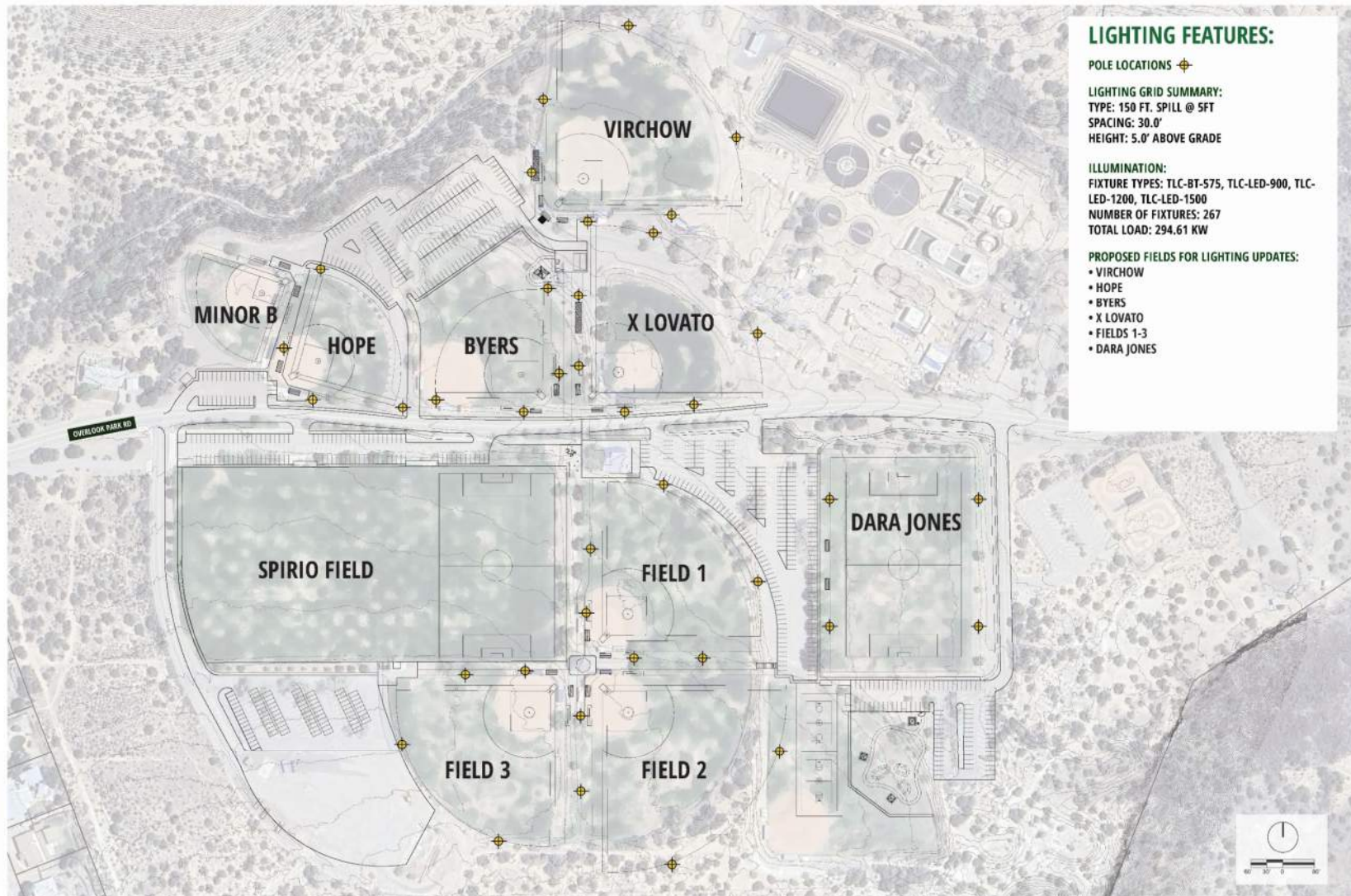
White Rock Athletic Fields



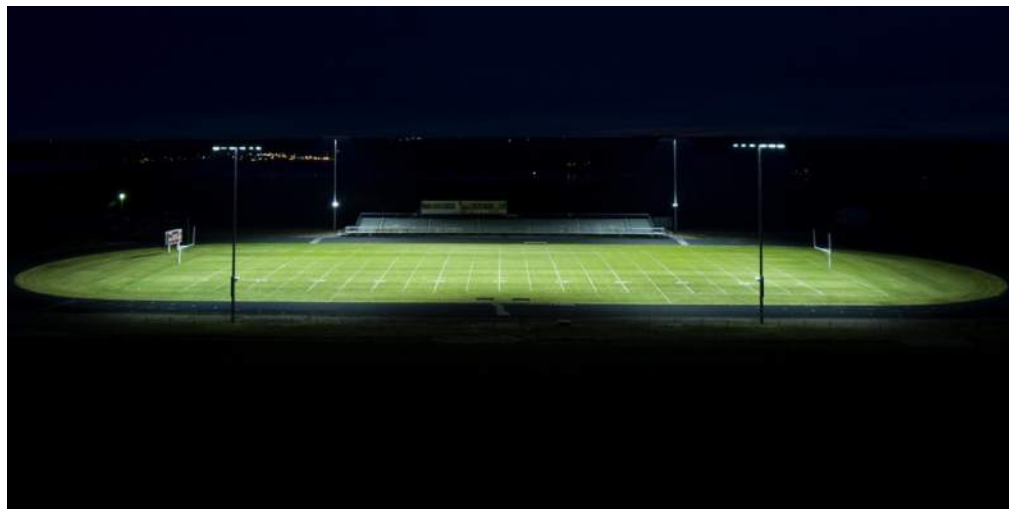
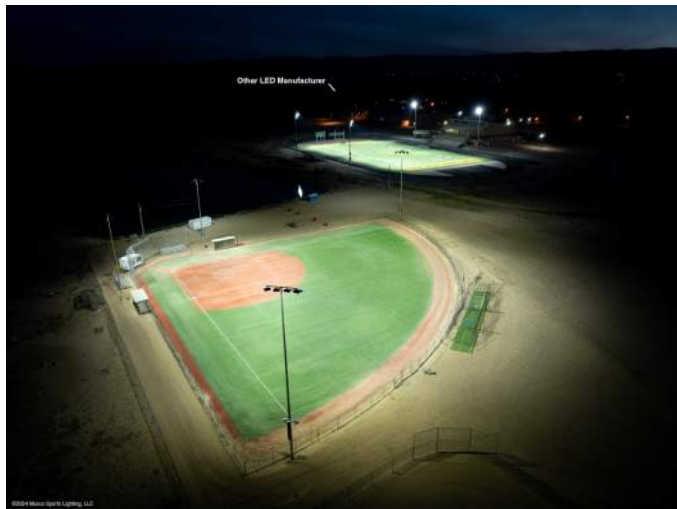
Overlook Park



Overlook Park – Lighting Improvements



Overlook Park Complex– Lighting Improvements



Questions to consider...

Overlook Park

1. The plans shows proposed lighting options on fields 1-3 to increase the availability and duration of field use for softball users. How would this benefit or impact users at the complex?
2. When considering improved and new lighting for the park, would the proposed fields be the most beneficial fields to consider? Are there are any other lighting considerations that we haven't included?
3. The proposed plan includes 2 basketball courts with accessible connections. Would these facilities be a beneficial addition to the complex and are they in a preferable location?
4. A 1 mile walking loop around the perimeter of the southern portion of the site is shown as a proposed addition to the complex. How would this benefit or impact users at the complex?
5. How important is it to the community to have high school and JV facilities co-located at Overlook Park for both softball and baseball?
6. Which complex in your opinion is the preferred plan in terms of layout and overall improvements?



Photo courtesy Los Alamos Daily Post

Next Steps

- NV5 and Consultants are working on the report summarizing public input, proposed framework plans, cost estimates, and various recommendations.
- Final report to be completed in Summer 2025.
- Final report to be approved by the Parks & Rec Advisory Board and City Council in August/September 2025.

Stay in Touch!



[https://www.losalamosnm.us/
County-Projects/Artificial-Turf-Study](https://www.losalamosnm.us/County-Projects/Artificial-Turf-Study)



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