



Mission Oaks Recreation and Park District

Citizen Oversight Committee

Park Tour Report FY 2023-2024

November 9, 2023

Prepared by Nick Bloise
On behalf of
The Citizens Oversight Committee

I. Summary Tour of Mission Oaks Recreation and Park District:

1. Swanston Park, 2350 Northrop Avenue
2. Ashton Park, 4251 Ashton Drive
3. Eastern Oak Park, 3127 Eastern Avenue
4. Cowan Park, 3350 Becerra Way
5. Gibbons Park, 4701 Gibbons Drive

Total Parks in Mission Oaks Recreation and Park District – 14

II. General Notes:

A. Citizens Oversight Committee: Nick Bloise, Carole Sussman, Nikki Gracey, Larry Nicholas, David Moldoff, Derek Wong, and Hanna Stelmakhovych.

B. Attendees on Park Tour 9 Nov 2023:

1. Citizen Oversight Committee: Nick Bloise, Carole Sussman, and Nikki Gracey.
2. Mission Oaks Staff: Daniel Barton (District Administrator), J.R. Hichborn (Parks Superintendent), Danny Curtola (Recreation Manager), Nicole Friedrich (Administrative Services Manager), Darren Woodland (Finance Manager), Shayne Hawthorne (Administrative Assistant).
3. Mission Oaks Advisory Board Members: Pati Todd, Jeff Rothberg, and Robert Evans.

C. Sources of Funding / Historical Background:

1. Primary source of funding for all park improvements is based on the voter approved 2006 Mission Oaks Property Assessment. The property assessment primarily applies to residential homeowners in the boundaries of the Mission Oaks Recreation and Park District (MORPD). Businesses pay impact fees. Some funds are also obtained through Proposition 68 State Grants.
2. Mission Oaks L&L Assessment (2006) – The Mission Oaks Recreation and Park District: Parks & Recreation Maintenance and Improvement District (PRMID), organized under the Landscaping and Lighting Act of 1972, was approved by district homeowners in 1999 and provides revenue primarily for capital outlay projects and maintenance of facilities. Total residential assessment revenue (Single Family Residential, Condominium, Multi-Family Residential (2+ Units) make up 90% of the annual assessment while the remaining assessment revenue is mainly from commercial and office-type properties. This original PRMID measure was due to expire in January 2009. However, the district pursued another ballot measure in 2006 to renew the assessment, drop the automatic sunset, and add a cola of up to 3% annually. The ballot measure passed with a 68.78% vote of property owners. The current PRMID assessment has no sunset provision, and PRMID assessment increases are voted upon in the June Public Hearing of the Advisory Board. The PRMID Assessment was originally \$39.00 per residential household, and now is

currently, as of July 1, 2023, \$53.62 per residential household. Average annual assessment increases are minimal ($\$53.62 \times .03 = \1.61 per year increase). There are over 12,000 single-family residential homes (over 17,800 parcels) in the Mission Oaks Recreation and Park District: Parks and Recreation Maintenance and Improvement District (PRMID). In 2009, the MORPD serviced over 62,500 residents. Total Annual PRMID Assessment Revenue is approximately \$1,000,000 per year. The projected PRIMID Assessment Revenue for FY 2023-24 is \$1,04330. Currently, the allocation of the assessment funds is 60% for new projects (336B) and 40% for maintenance of existing infrastructure. None of the assessed revenue went to staff salaries. A detailed analysis of assessment administration can be found in the Annual Engineer's Report for the Mission Oaks Recreation and Park District: Parks and Recreation Maintenance and Improvement District (PRMID). The most recent edition is dated August 4, 2023, for Fiscal Year 2023-24.

D. Establishment of the Citizen's Oversight Committee (2006 Engineer's Report Chapter V Section C Paragraph 2): 23-24

1. A Citizen's Oversight Committee ("the Citizen's Oversight Committee") will be established for the Assessment District. The Citizen's Oversight Committee shall review potential projects that may be funded by the assessments and shall make recommendations on the expenditure of assessment funds. Members of the Citizen's Oversight Committee will be nominated by the Mission Oaks Recreation and Park District with ratification by the County Supervisor who represents the Park District. All members of the Citizen's Oversight Committee shall own property within Mission Oaks Recreation and Park District and shall not have conflicts of interest with the Assessment District or the Improvements and Services funded by the Assessments.

III. Park Tours: The Park Tours were led by Parks Superintendent J.R. Hichborn, who gave a very thorough discussion of all the assessment dollars spent in FY 2023-2024, and he noted additional projects planned. Recommendations by Citizen Oversight Committee Members were made during the tour.

A. Swanston Park, 2350 Northrop Avenue

1. Completed projects:
 - DG Walking Path and Exercise Equipment – QR codes help parkgoers understand how to use the equipment. A water fountain was installed for folks who forgot their water. DG walking trail around the park perimeter installed using Proposition 68 State Grant funds and Impact Fees.
 - a. Request: Upgrade water fountain to have bottle filler attachment.
 - Surveillance System – Updated at each District center. The system has been used several times to help law enforcement catch perpetrators in the parks.
 - Electronic Locking System – The electronic locking system allows doors to remain locked, so only staff may enter. It helps reduce the need to change locks when employees leave as the codes can be changed whenever necessary which reduces the need and cost for replacement lock changes.

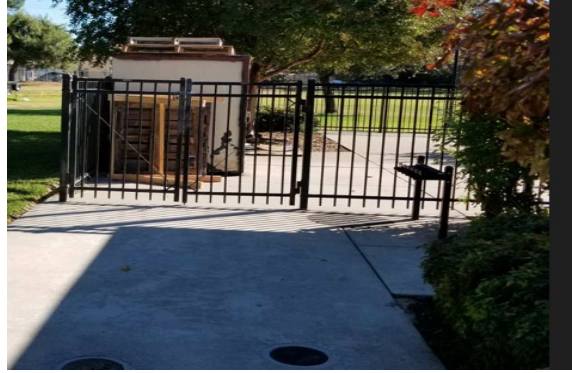
Swanston DG Walking Trail



2. Potential FY 2024-2025 Projects:

- Playground Replacement – A new playground is needed in the near future.
- Sand Pit Conversion – Intent to convert the area to a picnic shelter for larger picnic rentals. Area is not being used efficiently as a sand pit.
- Car Port – Intent to move district vehicle from its current location, due to vandalism, to a more secure location on the patio of the Swanston Community Center. A gate would need to be installed and storage buildings would need to be moved. Estimated cost \$15,000 to \$20,000.

Potential site for district vehicle



- Dog Run – An area where dogs can run unleashed. Mission Oaks Park policy is dogs must be leashed at all times. The concept of “Dog Run” was developed by staff to allow dogs to run freely in an enclosed area. The potential location for the Dog Run is behind the tennis courts.

B. Ashton Park, 4251 Ashton Drive

1. Projects for FY 2023-2024:

- New park signage was developed and will be implemented in Fiscal Year 24/25.

2. Potential FY 2024-2025 Projects:

- Pickleball Courts – Tennis court conversion will no longer be taking place as the cost of conversion would be \$100,000. Also of concern to staff are several noise complaints received from neighbors regarding pickleball courts, and the extremely loud sound coming from the paddle striking the ball. Sound mitigation would be required if pickleball courts were installed at this park.
- Soccer fields – Replace benches with bleachers to accommodate soccer teams and parents of soccer players.
 - a. Requested: were shade structures near the bleachers.
- DG Walking Path – A small “tester” walking path continuing from the existing walkways will be extended to the picnic area that is in the grass. A full path around the backside of the soccer fields will be considered if the noise to neighbors is minimal from the “tester” walking paths.

Path extension to picnic tables

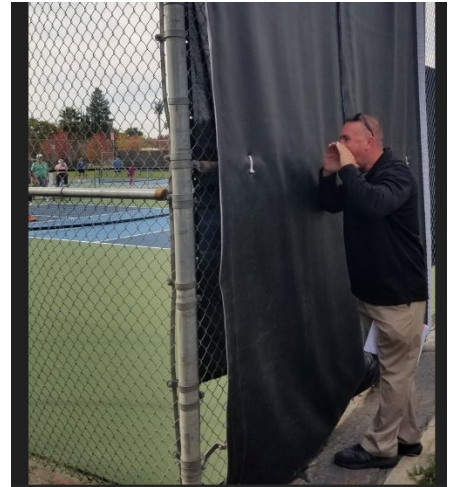


C. Eastern Oak Park, 3127 Eastern Avenue

1. Completed projects for FY 2023/2024:

- Sound screens - To mitigate loud noises resonating from pickleball courts sound screens were installed. MORPD has received several noise complaints from neighbors regarding loud noise from the pickleball courts, and installation of sound screens initially quoted at \$98,000 were installed by staff for \$18,000 saving taxpayers \$80,000.

Sound Screen panel being tested



2. Potential FY 2024/2025 Projects:

- Pathways – Extend the current cement walking path to lead around the futsal courts to the pickleball courts so all areas in the park will be connected with a straight path of travel.
- Drinking fountain – A bottle filler will be added to the drinking fountain.

D. Cowan Park, 3350 Becerra Way

1. Projects Fiscal Year 2023/2024:

- Playground – Students at Cowan School voted on the design of the playground before it was built. Pour-in-place material was also updated. Only the playground and sidewalk area around the playground are maintained by MORPD, and the rest of the area is maintained by the San Juan Unified School District.

Cowan Playground



E. Gibbons Park, 4701 Gibbons Drive

1. Completed projects for FY 2023-2024:

- Electronic locking system – The locking system was updated to allow for electronic locks with key fobs. Key fobs make it easy to change locks or lock doors when staff are alone in the building or leave employment with MORPD.
- HVAC Replacement and Relocation – The HVAC system was replaced and relocated for more efficient use of building space and aesthetics.
- Surveillance System – A new security system has helped deter criminal activity and the system has been used by law enforcement to catch perpetrators in the park.

2. Potential FY 2024-2025 Projects:

- Shade for Courts – Pickleball players have requested sunshades for courts due to the heat in the summer months.
- Electric Car Charging Stations – Potential four-car charging stations to be added. Potential SMUD grants are also a potential funding source.
- Sidewalk around Pickleball Courts – This is to keep players from walking through mud and dirt to use the pickleball court’s side entrance.

IV. Summary of Oversight Committee Recommendations: A follow-up meeting was held on December 6, 2023, to discuss recommendations for Fiscal Year 2024-2025.

A. Oversight Committee Park Recommendations for Fiscal Year 2024-2025

1. Based on a discussion of potential park projects for 2024-2025 the Citizens Oversight Committee decided these parks and projects would be the best use of the 336B assessment funds. These projects will cost an estimated \$600,000 which is the 60% allocation of the annual PRMID assessment.

PARK	PROJECT
Swanston	Replace Playground (2003)
Oak Meadow	New playground shade
Maddox	New playground shade
Eastern Oaks	New pickleball shade
Shelfield	New playground shade
All Parks	Replenish playground fiber

B. Additional Recommendations

2. Attach a copy of the Engineer’s Report for the 2006 Mission Oaks L&L Assessment in the MORPD Website (<https://www.morpd.com/>) on the Transparency tab. This will allow property owners to see the details of the assessment they are paying for.

3. Attach a copy of the most recent Engineer's Report for Mission Oaks Recreation and Park District: Parks and Recreation Maintenance and Improvement District (PRMID) for the Fiscal Year 2023-2024 dated August 4, 2023, to the MORPD Website (<https://www.morpd.com/>) on the Transparency tab. This will give property owners current assessment rates and a discussion of current assessment benefits and current assessment allocations.
4. Under MORPD Website (<https://www.morpd.com/>) under the Projects tab discussion of the Citizens Oversight Committee can be mentioned. In addition, a copy of our most recent Citizen Oversight Committee Park Tour Report could be available for download. We also need to update the Projects tab on the website for the 2023/2024 projects completed.