



Mission Oaks Recreation and Park District

**Citizen Oversight Committee**

**Park Tour Report**

7 November 2021

By

Nick Bloise

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

1. Gibbons Park, 4701 Gibbons Drive
2. Orville Wright Park, 2331 Saint Marks Way
3. Oak Meadow Park, 2734 American River Drive
4. Swanston Park, 2350 Northrop Avenue

Additional Parks visited by the Committee

5. Eastern Oaks Park
6. Mission North Park

Total Parks in Mission Oaks Recreation and Park District -- 14

## **II. General Notes:**

A. This is the first Citizens Oversight Committee Park Tour since the Fall of 2019. Each attendee drove separately to each park location rather than in one van out of precaution for the prevention of the spread of the COVID-19 virus.

B. Attendees:

1. Citizen Oversight Committee: Nick Bloise
2. Mission Oaks Staff: Daniel Barton (District Administrator); J.R. Hichborn (Parks Superintendent); Rodney Dahlberg (Recreation Manager Mission Oaks Community Center); and Danny Curtola (Recreation Manager Swanston Community Center); Debra Tierney (Admin Services Manager); Darren Woodland (Finance Manager)
3. Mission Oaks Advisory Board Members: Pati Brown Todd; Robert Evans (Carl Burton)
4. Interviewees: Brian (MORPD resident and Gibbons Park Tennis Court user – 11 years)

C. Sources of Funding

1. Primary source of funding for all these 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. 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, 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 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 assessment has no sunset provision, and assessment increases are voted upon in the July Public Hearing of the Advisory Board. The

Mission Oaks Property Assessment was originally \$39.00 per residential household, and now is currently \$52.06 per residential household. Average annual assessment increases are minimal ( $\$52.06 \times .03 = \$1.56$  per year increase). There are over 12,000 single family residential homes in the Mission Oaks Park and Recreation District. In 2009, the MORPD serviced over 62,500 residents. Total Annual Assessment Revenue is approximately \$1,000,000 per year. The assessment revenue for 2021 was budgeted in two main sections as follows: 1) Maintenance Related: \$469,037 and 2) Structures: \$609,433 for park improvement projects. None of the assessed revenue went to staff salaries.

Mission Oaks PRMID Assessment Summary Fiscal Year 2020-21	
Property Type	Assessment Amount
Single Family Residential	\$717,245.50
Condominium	\$57,268.80
Multi-Family Residential (2+ Units)	\$157,790.74
Commercial	\$30,635.54
Office	\$60,930.10
Shopping Center	\$10,194.12
Industrial	\$220.26
Self Storage or Parking Lot	\$75.28
Institutional	\$5,451.94
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$1,039,812.28</b>

D. Establishment of the Citizen’s Oversight Committee (2006 Engineer’s Report Chapter V Section C Paragraph 2)

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 Supervisor J.R. Hichborn, who gave a very thorough discussion of all the assessment dollars spent in 2021, and he noted additional projects planned. Recommendations by Citizen Oversight Committee Members were made during the tour.

**A. Gibbons Park, 4701 Gibbons Drive**

1. Major Park Improvements: Sidewalks, DG Trail, and Playground fiber.
2. The number one goal of improvements at Gibbons Park was ADA compliance. The Citizen Oversight Committee saw the substantial work done to replace broken and exposed concrete to be more ADA compliant and accessible. In addition, concrete in the center of the park was replaced for ADA compliance as well as water mediation to reduce the impact of flooding on the park walkways and trails.



3. DG Trail was completed on the eastern side of the park thus completing a larger walking trail for MORPD residents. This was a recommendation made by the 2019 Citizen Oversight Committee that was completed in 2021.



4. Playground fiber was installed at all playground sites. Playground fiber is similar to wood chips. Playground fiber must be replaced every two years. PIP – Pour in Place landscape was used minimally as it is very expensive. PIP landscape material feels spongy, and it is commonly used at athletic tracks at local colleges and universities and many new athletic tracks at local high schools.



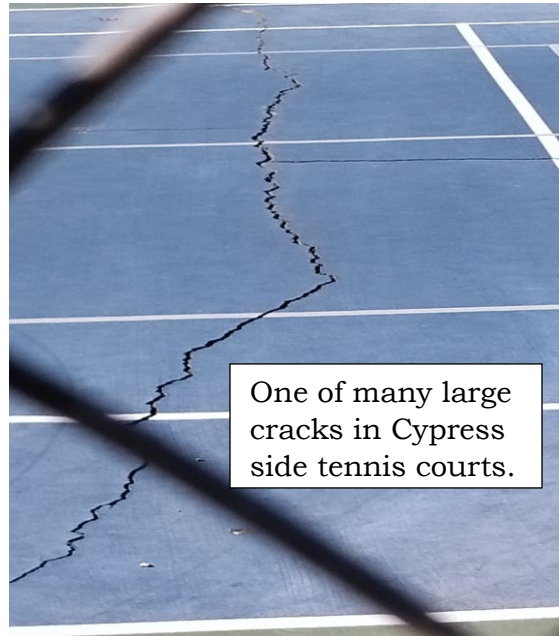
5. Trees – 3 new trees were noted at Gibbons Park. One tree is a new Oak tree located near the Cypress frontage of the park as recommended in the 2019 Citizen Oversight Committee Report. Two memorial trees were also noted: One redwood tree and one crepe myrtle.



6. Basketball courts were resurfaced and repainted.

7. Landscaping. The committee observed substandard completion of landscaping (mowing and hedge clipping) around the park. Some areas of the park were not mowed due to the contractor limiting the amount of time their staff can be on site at each park. A Request for Proposal (RFP) has been prepared to obtain a new landscaping contractor. MORPD has withheld payment on current landscaper for failure to perform duties according to the contract.

8. Tennis Courts / Cypress side – These tennis courts are currently being used for pickle ball. Plans are to overlay the current at approximate cost of \$110,000. Cracks are too deep for resurfacing. Interview with Brian, MORPD resident and Gibbons Park tennis court user, said, “current resurface of tennis courts only lasted one year at the most.” Overlay will come with a five-year warranty if there are any cracks. Once overlaid these courts will used as only two tennis courts in Gibbons Park.



9. Tennis Courts / Gibbons side – These tennis courts are continuing to be used as tennis courts. Plans are to resurface these courts at cost of \$20,000 and replace the two existing tennis courts with six pickle ball courts. Pickle ball is a popular sport that is a mix between tennis and ping pong that is played at a slower pace, and these courts require 1/3 the space of a traditional tennis court. New entrance will be installed from the center of the park rather than the current parking lot side.

10. Mission Oaks Community Center Building: HVAC quit working September 2021 and replacement needed.

11. Oversight Committee Recommendations (Gibbons Park):

- a. Repair / Replace current HVAC (Air Conditioning) system at Mission Oaks Community Center. Estimated cost to repair/replace estimated at \$350,000.
- b. Install more native Oak trees to replace the heritage oaks that have been lost in recent years. Locations should be chosen away from heavy irrigation and flooding.

## B. Orville Wright Park, 2331 Saint Marks Way

1. Major Improvements: Playground

2. Acquired in 1984 from San Juan Unified School District, Orville Wright Elementary School play area. Currently the old schools' buildings were acquired by a charter school.

3. Three Story playground installed with playground fiber. Cost of project about \$175,000. Playground fiber installed instead of PIP (Pour in Place) resulting in an \$80,000 project cost savings. Residents chose a redwood theme.



4. Volleyball courts were noted in this park. Volleyball courts are being used by the public.

### 5. Oversight Committee Recommendations (Orville Wright Park):

a. Monitor the potential sale of charter school buildings adjacent to the park. Could be site for future community center and a cost lower than building a new facility.

b. Potential DG walking trail around the perimeter of the park if community demands.



### **C. Oak Meadow Park, 2734 American River Drive**

1. Major Improvements: Sidewalks, Playground fiber
2. ADA Compliance / Sidewalks – A lot of sidewalks that were both cracked and raised due to tree roots were replaced in the last year.
3. Playground fiber was added to the playground equipment sites.
4. Gopher holes – Numerous gopher holes were noted throughout the park. Currently, a one-year pest control contract is underway. Small amounts of poison are placed each month to lessen the risk to animals and small children. A similar vermin eradication program was instituted at Swanston Park that was very effective. Estimated contract cost \$4,500 one time.



5. Drink Fountains – Drinking fountain that was previously in need of repair was fixed. Fountains for both humans and animals were working. Water quality was good and palatable. Drinking fountain also allows large water bottles to be filled as well with filtered water.

#### 6. Oversight Committee Recommendations (Oak Meadow Park)

- a. MORPD residents near this park have requested installation of more shade trees (Crepe Myrtles, etc.) along the walking paths. Trees should have roots that are noninvasive to protect the sidewalk pathways. MORPD residents using the park need more shady spots on a hot day. Perhaps adding 10 or more trees would be the appropriate recommendation.
- b. Potential DG walking trail around the perimeter of the park if community demands.

## D. Swanston Park, 2350 Northrop Ave

1. Major Improvements: Parking lot, sidewalks, playground fiber, Splash Park features, splash park equipment.

### 2. Splash Park and Splash Park Equipment

a) The Splash Park feature is fish themed with an outside shower point for children. Sheds and water processing equipment, shade structures, and fencing were installed.



b) Initial bids received for creation of the Splash Park Water Features and equipment amounted to \$1.2 Million. Special thanks to MORPD staff: Daniel Barton (District Administrator) and JR Hichborn (Parks Superintendent), for creatively bringing in multiple contractors to complete the project for \$400,000 saving MORPD taxpayers \$800,000 from the original cost estimates.



3. Oversight Committee Recommendations (Swanston Park)

DG walking trail around the perimeter of the park are scheduled to be installed using Proposition 68 State Grant funds and Impact Fees. The new DG walking trail will also provide exercise equipment along the way. The committee supports this plan.

**E. Eastern Oaks Park, 3127 Eastern Ave (Off Tour Committee Visit)**

1. Found Pickle Ball Courts in use. Six Pickle Ball Courts with three in use early on a Sunday morning.



2. Complete walking path around the perimeter of the park. Excellent.

**F. Mission Oaks North Park, 3344 Mission Ave**

1. Complete walking path around the perimeter to the park. Excellent.
2. Restroom facilities were clean and maintained. No graffiti noted.

**3. Oversight Committee Recommendations (Mission Oaks North Park)**

In 2019, and now again in 2021, the committee is asking for a bridge to be built connecting the East and West portions of the park together. A Creek and Streambed alteration agreement will be needed for a bridge to cross Chicken Ranch Slough. Sacramento County Department of Environmental Management and State Fish and Wildlife will likely need to be contacted. There is a perfect clearing across the slough about one third the way down from the Mission Avenue Entrance.



## **IV. Summary of Oversight Committee Recommendations**

### **A. Oversight Committee Park Recommendations**

#### 1. Oversight Committee Recommendations (Gibbons Park):

- a. Repair / Replace current HVAC (Air Conditioning) system at Mission Oaks Community Center. Estimated cost to repair/replace estimated at \$350,000.
- b. Install more native Oak trees to replace the heritage oaks that have been lost in recent years. Locations should be chosen away from heavy irrigation and flooding.

#### 2. Oversight Committee Recommendations (Orville Wright Park):

- a. Monitor the potential sale of charter school buildings adjacent to the park. Could be site for future community center and a cost lower than building a new facility.
- b. Potential DG walking trail around the perimeter of the park, if community demand.

#### 3. Oversight Committee Recommendations (Oak Meadow Park)

- a. MORPD residents near this park have requested installation of more shade trees (Crepe Myrtles, etc.) along the walking paths. Trees should have roots that are noninvasive to protect the sidewalk pathways. MORPD residents using the park need more shady spots on a hot day. Perhaps adding 10 or more trees would be the appropriate recommendation.
- b. Potential DG walking trail around the perimeter of the park, if community demand.

#### 4. Oversight Committee Recommendations (Swanston Park)

DG walking trail around the perimeter of the park are scheduled to be installed using Proposition 68 State Grant funds and Impact Fees. The new DG walking trail will also provide exercise equipment along the way. The committee supports this plan.

#### 5. Oversight Committee Recommendations (Mission Oaks North Park)

In 2019, and now again in 2021, the committee is asking for a bridge to be built connecting the East and West portions of the park together. A Creek and Streambed alteration agreement will be needed for a bridge to cross Chicken Ranch Slough. Sacramento County Department of Environmental Management and State Fish and Wildlife will likely need to be contacted. There is a perfect clearing across the slough about one third the way down from the Mission Avenue Entrance.

### **B. Additional Recommendations**

1. Attach a copy of the Engineer's Report (MDP) for the 2006 Mission Oaks L&L Assessment in the MORPD Website on the Transparency tab. This will allow property owners to see the details of the assessment they are paying for.
2. Attach a copy of the most recent Engineer's Report (MDP) for the Fiscal Year 2020-2021 to the MORPD Website on the Transparency tab. This will give property owners current assessment rates and discussion of current assessment benefits and current assessment allocations.