

## STAFF REPORT

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**Date:** April 24, 2024

**To:** Mayor and City Council

**Thru:** Doug Thornley, City Manager

**Subject:** Staff Report (For Possible Action): Presentation about the status of the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funded, City-owned Pembroke Flat Field project and discussion, potential direction to staff regarding construction, operations, and maintenance of the project, and/or identifying other next steps related to the project.

**From:** Karina Mercier, Project Manager

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### **Summary:**

Staff will provide an update regarding flat field improvements on a City-owned parcel on Pembroke Drive (east of Veterans Parkway), including project feasibility, and potential next steps based on Council direction.

### **Previous Council Action:**

March 8, 2023 – Council approved an allocation of the Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (SLFRF) through the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) for flat field support in the amount of \$2,000,000.

September 13, 2023 – Council approved an agreement for professional services with CFA, Inc. to conduct a land survey, civil engineering, and land use planning services covering the project's initial analysis and site layout of Pembroke Flat Fields in the amount of \$158,990.

### **Alignment with Strategic Plan:**

Arts, Parks, and Historical Resources  
Economic and Community Development

### **Background:**

On March 11, 2021, President Biden signed the ARPA of 2021 establishing the SLFRF. The City of Reno received \$51,519,997 from the SLFRF and began allocating funds to critical projects on August 25, 2021, following initial acceptance of the funds. Since acceptance, Council adopted seven priority categories based on community input, Council direction, Treasury requirements, and the City of Reno master and strategic plans. On March 8, 2023, Council voted to allocate

\$2,000,000 of the SLFRF ARPA funds for the planning and execution of flat fields throughout Reno. Increasing flat field offerings within the City supports open space preservation efforts and expanded opportunities for sporting events.

The City of Reno owns 19 rectangular multi-purpose fields, referred to as flat fields. According to the National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA), the average government agency in the United States has enough flat fields to provide a level of service of one flat field per 9,177 residents. The level of service for the City of Reno is one flat field per 14,150 residents, signifying a significant service gap compared to the national average. Flat fields are the City's most deficient recreation amenity, with an additional 45 flat fields needed to reach the national average standard based on the City's population. For this reason, the addition of new flat fields has been identified as a priority for the Parks and Recreation Department, which aims to improve levels of service and access to recreation for all residents.

City-owned property located north of Pembroke Drive and west of Veterans Parkway (Assessor's Parcel Numbers [APNs] 021-050-01 through 021-050-03) has been identified as an ideal location for flat field development. The identified parcels are within the Washoe County and City of Reno Critical Flood Zone 1. Per Section 18.04.102(c)(8) of the City of Reno Municipal Code (RMC), construction of flat fields at this location would require floodplain mitigation for the ball fields and associated concessions and supporting buildings. To this end, on September 13, 2023, Council approved entering into a professional services agreement with CFA Inc., a Northern Nevada land surveying, civil engineering, and land use planning firm, for the planning and design of flat field construction at this site. These services included land survey, civil engineering, and land use planning services covering the project's initial analysis and a conceptual site layout of the Pembroke Flat Fields taking into consideration the critical flood pool and groundwater table information that has been prepared for the site

On March 7, 2024, the City received a letter of interest from Richard Jay, representing the Great Basin Youth Soccer League (GBYSL), expressing a desire to construct, operate, and maintain multi-use turf flat fields and other related community amenities on the City's behalf to enhance the quality of life for the City of Reno residents and visitors.

**Discussion:**

Developing flat fields at the Pembroke site would reduce the City's greatest amenity gap as well as provide opportunities for increased tourism from sports tournaments. If the project potential is realized, ten fields would reduce the shortfall of flat field space by 22%. The property is in a critical flood zone. Staff and lead consultant CFA have been working to determine the proper grading and flood mitigation in order to construct multiple flat fields. Early estimates exceed \$10,000,000 to complete all ten fields, including grading; 156,000 cubic yards of excavation for volumetric mitigation; irrigation; natural turf; asphalt parking lot; landscaping; fencing; and any

other improvements. While the \$2,000,000 ARPA allocation is not sufficient to complete the project, it will provide funding to perform some preliminary tasks, including final design and limited site improvements.

Before submitting a building permit for the flat fields, a Site Plan Review application and approval are required, because the flat fields are a nonresidential development located within 150 feet of residentially zoned property. The Site Plan Review application will take approximately one to two months and is currently being done administratively. This application is not required to go before the Planning Commission or a Neighborhood Advisory Board (NAB).

Council could direct staff to initiate a Request for Proposal (RFP) to identify if an interested party can design, build, operate, and maintain a flat field complex on behalf of the City. If a partner is found with a viable plan to move the project forward, the remainder of the ARPA allocation (expected \$1,840,010) will be used to support the initial phase of the project.

With direction to pursue a partner through an RFP process, staff could advertise the RFP during the months of May and June. The RFP would seek a partner who can demonstrate an understanding of the City's goals for the project and experience in capital fundraising, design, construction, operation, and maintenance of similar projects. There would also be a community access requirement to ensure that the fields would be available for City programs and partners. The ability to complete the project will be a significant consideration given the time constraints of ARPA funding.

Council could also receive the report from CFA and not move forward with seeking a partner or further construction at this time. This could mean reallocating funding to another project.

**Financial Implications:**

Council previously allocated \$2,000,000 in ARPA funds to support this project. After the initial site analysis, there is \$1,840,010 remaining to be expended. No additional funds are requested at this time.

**Legal Implications:**

Funds will be allocated and spent in compliance with ARPA, Department of Treasury Final Rule, and City purchasing policies and procedures.

**Recommendation:**

Staff recommends Council direct staff to advertise an RFP to identify potential partners to design, build, maintain, and operate the project.

**Proposed Motion:**

I move to approve staff recommendation.

**Attachments:**