

Greater Fort Bragg Field Improvement Association
*"Dedicated to Improving and Making Local Fields
Safe and Enjoyable for Our Community and Visitors"*



BACKGROUND –Groups of individuals have been working on doing something, anything, to improve the quality and playability of the local fields for several years. This past March 2017, we began in earnest to organize people from various walks of life who all had one goal, to improve the local playing fields in Fort Bragg. Our outreach effort resulted in a variety of citizens coming together and forming the “Greater Fort Bragg Field Improvement Association” and on April 4, 2017 the Association received Internal Revenue Service approval that we are recognized as a non-profit, charitable organization.

Since then the Association has been meeting monthly to continue organizing, expanding its membership and planning its first field improvement projects.

In March 2015, the City of Fort Bragg commissioned a study of the local fields due to the general concern over the field conditions and the apparent continued deterioration of the fields. The result of the study was the release in January 2016 of the Athletic Fields Master Plan under the direction of Verde Design of Santa Clara, California. A copy of this plan is available from the City of Fort Bragg, but the essence of the findings is that the level of use for each of the fields exceeds the level of maintenance available for those fields. The report goes on to identify each field, the current use and maintenance levels and the recommended maintenance levels, assuming that the use continues as it is.

OUR RESPONSE – The Athletic Fields Master Plan makes several recommendations for improving the local fields, one of which is that the community needs to take a stake in the wellbeing of the fields. According to the City’s report, the school district does provide enough maintenance for each of the fields to cover their educational uses of the fields but it is really the other uses, the community’s uses, that have caused the deteriorating conditions of each of the fields because the fields’ maintenance couldn’t keep pace with the community’s use of the fields. This, then, is the purpose of our organization, to organize field improvements and to augment the School District’s current maintenance budget through volunteer actions, fund raising efforts, and providing a hub for the community’s field improvement activities.

OUR FIRST PROJECT – There are six local fields desperately needing improvements and two of the fields are at Redwood School: a smaller field on the north end of the campus that includes the only community running track that the public can access, and a larger field at the southern end of the campus. Our first project will be the Redwood School campus. The first field we will look at is at the lower end of community use and our initial planning indicates to us that we will be able to raise enough money for this project and to start-and-complete the project in a relatively short time span. Here is a summary of what this project will look like:

- Enlarge the track to a length of 300 meters;
- Put a new subsurface down for the track and then a red-clay top dressing for the track;
- Level and repair the playing field inside the track; improve drainage of the playing field;
- Install short solar lighting around the exterior of the running track for safety and to enhance evening exercise;

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- Install seating around the field, outside the running track and playing field, so people can sit and enjoy activities at the facility;
- If room exists install a Fitness-Course for the community;
- Install two small buildings on the site to house field equipment;
- Remove moles, voles and other surface-destroying pests;

The irrigation system for this field is in excellent shape and the well that serves this field is an excellent producer.

On the southern end of the campus is a large field suitable for a full-size soccer field plus a T-Ball field and probably an area for a softball field. If the Fitness-Course doesn't fit in the smaller field, then it would be installed on this field.

One of the important recommendations included in the Athletic Fields Master Plan is to give each of the main fields a break in use so it can recover from heavy uses. Since the field we've selected as our first project is also the least-used field, we will inconvenience less playing time on the field with our project plus the resulting field will be a very useable replacement for any of the other fields that are now getting heavy community use. Thus, when we need to give another field in the group of local fields a break, this field will be available to pick up the use.

If all goes well, this initial project will convert a little-used field to one that will be a convenient location for a variety of community functions and will serve to alert the community to our existence and our determination and ability to improve other local fields.

PROJECT COST – We are working on detailed plans for this project and the full cost of this project will need to wait until we have gotten further along on the project. The City Master Plan for this field shows an estimated cost to renovate the track and multi-use field to be \$1,600,000. Our initial planning fees for the Redwood School Project will be about \$60,000 and will go higher as we get into the specifics of the field renovation plans.

All of the community fields are going to be considered for our work, but funding will dictate the selection and speed at which each field can be considered.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

We are a community organization and we need your support to make this entire endeavor a success. Here are some ways you can help.

EXPERTISE – Do you have any expertise in putting a construction project together? Any abilities that could help in planning and building athletic fields and structures at the fields will be needed to successfully complete the projects.

LABOR – Could you spare a few hours on a weekend or even a week day to actually do some work on the field: turning sod over, raking and leveling, anything with a hammer or tractor?

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BOARD PARTICIPATION – Do you have the time to be on our board and help plan the field renovation projects or fund-raising events? Our board usually meets once a month (on the first Tuesday of the month) and the meetings last about an hour to or hour-and-a-half. Projects and events will eventually be broken out into committees to plan and run them so there may be other meetings as well as our monthly board meeting but they shouldn't be burdensome for any participant.

CONTRIBUTIONS – Field renovation projects will take both manpower and money to see them through. Your charitable contributions are invaluable to the success of the field renovations.

HOW TO MAKE A CONTRIBUTION – Our organization can receive your donations via US Mail (Post Office Box 959, Fort Bragg, CA 95437; make your checks payable to Greater Fort Bragg Field Association). We also have a web site (www.fbfields.org) and on page one of the web site is a Pay-Pal button and you can contribute on-line over the secure Pay-Pal platform.

HOW TO CONTACT US – You can contact us by writing to us at PO Box 959, Fort Bragg, CA 95437 or by e-mailing us at fia@mcn.org

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