



Grant Athletics Upper Field Project

Creating an equitable high-quality home softball field facility for women athletes at Grant High School.



Project Summary

The Grant Upper Field Improvement project involves the addition of a lighted softball field at 2245 NE 36th Avenue, between the Grant Bowl and Grant High School. The goal is to provide a safe, well-functioning sports facility to support softball and other sports at Grant, through the addition of lights and infrastructure. Grant is the only PPS high school without field lighting. The facility is co-owned by PPS and Portland Parks & Recreation and can be used by the public through a permit process when not in use by the school.



"Having a softball field isn't just about having a home field to play on. It's about women athletics and women in general being recognized and valued."

Madyson Roach
Grant High School Senior



Reason for the Project

The Grant High School women's softball team has for many decades had to practice and play games in other locations, due to the lack of softball facilities at Grant. This additional travel placed an extra burden on these student athletes and did not provide them equal access to comparable facilities. To provide equity and bring Grant athletics into Title IX compliance, PPS is adding softball to the upper field. The addition of lights will extend usable hours for practices and games and make the field safer for students and the community.



Grant Athletics Upper Field Project FAQs

What is the Grant High School's Upper Field Project?

The Grant Upper Field Improvement project involves the addition of a lighted softball field at 2245 NE 36th Avenue, between the Grant Bowl and Grant High School. The goal is to provide a safe, well-functioning sports facility to support softball and other sports at Grant, through the addition of lights and infrastructure. Grant High School is the only PPS high school in the city of Portland without field lighting. The facility is co-owned by PPS and Portland Parks & Recreation and can be used by the public through a permit process when not in use by the school. Portland Parks & Recreation use is primarily geared towards youth soccer and Little League teams.

Why is PPS improving Grant High School's Upper Field?

The Grant High School women's softball team has for many decades had to practice and play games in other locations, due to the lack of softball facilities at Grant. This additional travel placed an extra burden on these student athletes and did not provide them equal access to comparable facilities. In an effort to provide equity and bring Grant athletics into Title IX compliance PPS is adding softball to the upper field.

Isn't this a new field? Why wasn't this done as part of the modernization?

While baseball has been played in the upper field since the 1950s, the upper field was renovated as part of the modernization, adding synthetic turf and fencing. The field was designed to be a multi-use field, for baseball, soccer and lacrosse. Softball was not added at the time of the modernization for a couple of reasons, primarily because there was no funding for lights. Subsequently the District undertook a Master Planning process to assess placing softball in Grant's bowl. See the Grant Bowl Master planning documents: <https://www.pps.net/Page/16065>

Why are you adding lights to the field?

Grant High School is the only PPS high school without field lighting. The addition of lights will extend usable hours for practices and games and make the field safer for students and the community. Softball and baseball are both spring sports. Grant's school day ends at 3:30 p.m. practices usually start at 4:00 p.m and each team aspires to practice for about three hours. To provide field time after school for both teams to practice, the field will need to be used into the evening with practices set to end at 9:30 p.m. and lights off at 10:00 p.m.

How is the lighting system designed to be low impact on the neighborhood?

The lighting system that will be installed employs the latest in LED technology. The system is specifically designed with lighting towers placed at a sufficient height to focus the lighting down directly onto the field. This design creates less glare, is more Dark Sky compliant and limits the spread of light into the surrounding neighborhood.

What will be the hours of use and how was that determined?

The field use schedule is developed on an annual basis by Portland Public Schools and Portland Parks & Recreation. The schedule is developed in concert with the other PPS high schools. Currently, Grant High School is the only PPS high school without field lighting.

All other PPS high schools use their lights until 10:00 p.m., and most are located in dense residential neighborhoods. PPS is requesting the same hours as other PPS fields with the understanding that practices or games would end at 9:30 p.m. At that time the light level will be dimmed while teams move off the field. Lights will be turned off at 10:00 p.m. Additionally, the lights will not be on every night. If there are no practices, games or permitted community use, the lights will not be turned on. This is consistent with field usage across PPS, and it allows for district-wide scheduling of athletic events.

The hours are also consistent with other facilities at Grant Park. Tennis courts at Grant Park are lighted and available for use until 10:00 p.m. All members of the public have access to the button that turns on the tennis court lights.

Unlike the tennis courts, the Upper Field Lights would only be available for use permitted through Parks or PPS. The use of the field lights would not be allowed for general community use and will only be turned on when there is a scheduled school or permitted community event.

Who controls the Upper Field Lights?

The lights will only be used for Grant Athletics and users permitted through Portland Parks & Recreation. The lights will not be turned on for non-permitted, general community use. The main control unit is secured inside Grant High School.

Will there be a Public Address system?

There will be separate PA systems for baseball and softball. This is a system owned by Grant High School and only utilized by coaches and staff. The PA system has been designed to comply with Portland City Code 18.12.020.B, which states that operation of a PA is prohibited between 10:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. During the hours of 7:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m., sound is limited to 55dBA at the southern and eastern property boundaries. The proposed PA system meets these requirements.

Will the field be more actively used than before?

The field should not be busier or more populated as it is currently used by multiple teams; baseball, soccer and lacrosse. Due to space constraints there will never be two games played concurrently. Since the fields overlap each other, only one activity can take place at a time. For example, softball and baseball can have concurrent infield practices, but will never have games at the same time because the outfield overlaps. The same is true for soccer and baseball. It is likely there will be some activities into the evening.

When is construction expected to start and when will it finish?

The current schedule has work beginning in October 2021 and completing in time for the start of the Spring 2022 softball season.

What are the traffic impacts of the new field?

Traffic study results demonstrated that the project is in compliance with Portland Bureau of Transportation (PBOT) regulations and PBOT has approved the project. If neighbors desire additional traffic calming measures these can be requested directly through PBOT.

How was the public involved in the design of the project?

The Grant Bowl Master Plan was initiated in October 2019 to find a way to bring softball to Grant Park/High School. After an extensive public engagement process that included a number of design advisory group meetings and community workshops, the group developed two strategies for bringing softball to Grant: one placing softball within Grant Bowl and a second placing softball in the upper field. Both included the addition of lights. The Master Plan report was brought to the Board of Education in February 2020 and the Board directed the project to proceed with placing softball on the upper field as Phase One of the field renovation.

Subsequently a Design Advisory Group (DAG) was assembled for the Grant Upper Field Improvement Project. The DAG included representatives from Grant High School, including both the softball and baseball coach and the Athletic Director, Portland Interscholastic League, Portland Parks & Recreation and four community members. These meetings were held virtually due to COVID-19. Additionally the project team held a public meeting available on the PPS YouTube channel and attended a Grant Park Neighborhood Association meeting in September 2020.

This project is required to complete a Type III Land Use review, which is a public process and includes a public hearing open to anyone in the community. For more information see the section below titled, "What are the future opportunities for public comment."

How is PPS working with the neighborhood on this project?

PPS and the Parks bureau have followed up their extensive engagement efforts by establishing an ongoing line of communication with the Grant Park Neighborhood Association. In that way, neighborhood concerns, including those related to operational issues can be addressed proactively.

How is this project related to the Grant Bowl Planning Project?

The Grant Bowl Master Planning project was undertaken to explore adding lights, bleachers and two regulation softball fields in addition to the existing sports fields in the Grant Bowl. Some of the goals include the ability to host Grant football games on a home field and support Grant's softball team at the school, rather than remote locations. Grant Upper Field improvements are not related to potential future improvements to the Grant Bowl.

What are the future opportunities for public comment on the project?

This project is required to complete a Type III Land Use review, which is a public process that includes a public hearing open to anyone in the community. The date for the hearing hosted by the City of Portland is scheduled for Wednesday, May 10, 2021 from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.

The hearing will be virtual on ZOOM. PPS will send follow up communications with instructions and a meeting invite link in the public notice. PPS will also provide notifications to the GPNA and the neighborhood. Comments can either be submitted in writing to the hearings officer or presented during the online meeting.