

# SANTA BARBARA COUNTY BOARD AGENDA LETTER



Clerk of the Board of Supervisors  
105 E. Anapamu Street, Suite 407  
Santa Barbara, CA 93101  
(805) 568-2240

**Agenda Number:**  
**Prepared on:** 4/30/01  
**Department Name:** 3rd District  
**Department No.:** 011  
**Agenda Date:** 5/15/01  
**Placement:** Departmental  
**Estimate Time:** 40 minutes  
**Continued Item:** NO  
**If Yes, date from:**

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**TO:** Board of Supervisors

**FROM:** Gail Marshall  
Third District Supervisor

Susan Rose  
Second District Supervisor

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County Parks Director  
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**SUBJECT:** Dedicate \$800,000 from South Coast West Quimby Fund towards the acquisition of the Ballfields at Girsh Park in Goleta

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## **Recommendation(s):**

That the Board of Supervisors:

1. Dedicate \$800,000 from the South Coast West Quimby Fund towards the Acquisition of the Ballfields at Girsh Park in Goleta.
2. Direct the Parks Department to develop the necessary agreements to facilitate the contribution towards the purchase.

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

The recommendation(s) are primarily aligned with Goal No. 7. A Community that Fosters the Safety and Well-Being of Families and Children, and Goal No. 1, An Efficient Government Able to Respond Effectively to the Needs of the Community.

**Executive Summary and Discussion:**

Last month the ownership group of the Camino Real Marketplace announced their intent to sell the 13 acre property that is the home to the Dos Pueblos Little League (DPLL) and other user groups. The appraised value of the property is \$6 million, based on an appraisal report completed in July of last year. The request before you is to dedicate \$800,000 from the South Coast West Quimby account towards the purchase of the ballfields at Girsh Park.

The purchase of these ballfields is a high priority for the Goleta Valley and a good use of the requested funds for several reasons. Primarily, we have a willing seller for the property, and the purchase price includes the existing fields and facilities, which make this overall proposal extremely attractive.

In 1997, the Dos Pueblos Little League moved from its former location at the corner of Hollister and Pacific Oaks Road to its present location at the southwest corner of the Camino Real Marketplace, adjacent to the 12 acre Girsh Park. As part of the Camino Real Marketplace project's approved Specific Plan, the 13 acres that currently host the ballfields retained its residential zoning for 130 housing units because the Board of Supervisors as concerned about the importance of providing an appropriate balance of jobs to housing in the Goleta Valley, particularly when considering large commercial projects. The 130 units were designed to provide affordable apartments for the Goleta area.

There were also discussions at the Board hearing about placing a recreation zone designation on the 13 acres where the ballfields are currently located in order to provide a permanent home for the DPLL but the developer resisted the suggestion of setting aside over 30% of the 83 acre property for recreation. However, 12 separate acres were dedicated for a community park, now known as Girsh Park.

At that time, the Santa Barbara Shores Park property in west Goleta was envisioned to accept a significant amount of active recreation including ballfields. But a recently completed biological resources study resulted in the County Parks Commission's recognition last month that the original master plan for the property was not a viable option and a recommendation that active recreation uses at Santa Barbara Shores Park be eliminated from consideration.

The ownership group has expressed an interest in discounting the property from its \$6 million appraisal to make it more affordable and to reflect the ownership's desire to retain this property as a community recreation use. The General Services Department is in the process of updating an appraisal of the property, which is about one year old, for a more accurate picture of the existing value of the property. The goal for the capital campaign to acquire the ballfields at Girsh Park has been set at \$5.9 million. This will allow for the purchase of the property as well as establish an endowment for the future.

The value associated with the purchase of this property cannot be overstated. The ownership group estimates that the existing ballfields cost over \$1 million to construct in 1997. To build new fields on another property today would cost far in excess of that figure. In fact, the County's adopted value for residentially zoned property in the Goleta Valley is \$400,000/acre based on our updated Quimby fees. At 13 acres, it appears that the publicly stated asking price is reasonable and the existing ballfields bring significant value as a community resource.

In addition, the Ballfields at Girsh Park will be a collaborative fundraising effort including many different sources. Our State representatives, Jack O'Connell and Hannah-Beth Jackson, have committed to request a significant amount of funding from this year's California State budget. A clearer picture of State resources will be available once the revised budget is developed later this month.

Also, the residents of the Goleta Valley understand that a community fundraising effort will be necessary in order to accomplish the goal of acquiring these ballfields. The Foundation for Girsh Park and the Dos Pueblos Little League, both non-profit organizations, have agreed to work together and raise the necessary funds from individuals, local businesses, and foundations that place a priority on active recreational opportunities.

It is incumbent upon our Board to act decisively in order to provide leadership at the local government level and become an active partner in the purchase of the property. Our action today will send a clear message to the community that we are committed to this effort. It will also provide our State delegation the local momentum they require as they prepare to take their requests to the Sacramento.

The recommendation submitted before you is to apply existing Quimby funds which are recreation impact mitigation fees generated from development projects throughout the County. In the Goleta Valley, they are deposited into the South Coast West Quimby account. Currently, \$987,000 rests in the South Coast West Quimby fund and \$18,800 has accumulated in the newer Goleta Commercial-Industrial account that the Board established to address the need to accommodate the increase of new residents in the Goleta Valley. These funds can be used for the purchase of land and capital facilities, and are the most logical and available source of funds for this purpose at our Board's discretion.

If the Board desires, we could set aside these funds based on the performance of the overall success of the project. Thus, if the fields were not acquired for public use, the funds will be returned to the original account.

In conclusion, the cooperative nature of the seller, the added value of this property with respect to the existing developed ballfields and facilities, its location immediately adjacent to the 12 acre Girsh Family Park, and the high priority the community, as well as our State legislators, have placed on this project, give us the confidence in our ability to succeed in purchasing the Ballfields at Girsh Park.

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Your support of this recommendation will allow the fundraising effort to purchase this 13 acre property to begin in earnest, provide leadership to the community and the financial commitment necessary for our legislators to leverage our local funds at the State level. Finally, our positive action today will demonstrate our sincere interest in this creative opportunity to effectively provide quality recreation for the families and children of the Goleta Valley.

**Mandates and Service Levels:** No Mandates. No direct impact to County services levels.

**Fiscal and Facilities Impacts:** Dedication of \$800,000 from the South Coast West Quimby Fund will leave a balance of \$187,000.

**Special Instructions:** The Parks Department is to develop the necessary agreements to facilitate the contribution towards the acquisition of the Ballfields at Girsh.

**Concurrence:** Parks Department