

**SOLVING THE FIELD DEVELOPMENT PUZZLE:  
HOW TO NAVIGATE THE MAZE OF DEVELOPING A  
SOCCER COMPLEX?**

**THE PROCESS!!!!**

## **INTRODUCTION**

Developing your own soccer complex will be an adventure that will truly test your love for the game. There will be times when you will be frustrated with the lack of progress, there will be times where you want to throw in the towel, and there will be times when you know that you must be crazy for getting involved in such a venture. But when you see a completed pitch (field) and you see the most important aspect of this sport and that is the kids playing, you will know that all of the pain you endured to see the project complete was worth it.

Is it easy to develop a complex? NO! But if you follow the process and have a project that is needed you can be successful. There will be many areas you will get involved with where you personally may have no experience, but if you follow what we outline in the following sections your chances for success will be improved. Keep in mind that you will need a worthwhile project, a solid team to help with the process, and the passion to get the project completed.

Most of what you will see in the following sections is nothing more than common sense. I have used this process in working with many different organizations. Each project is unique and as a result, all of the steps may not apply to you. Use what material you can and have an open mind to issues you may not have considered. Good Luck! And let us know what you have accomplished.

***“If you can dream it, you can do it. Never forget that this whole thing was started by a mouse”***

***Walt Disney***

***“If at first the idea is not absurd, then there is no hope for it.”***

***Albert Einstein***

## **PICKING YOUR TEAM**

## **Picking Your Team**

This will be as important as selecting a soccer team. Just as a coach, you need to have an open mind about what you need and the positions that need to be filled. Keep an open mind, don't make decisions you may regret at a later date, and most importantly don't burn any bridges with someone you may need at a later date.

## **Select A Field Development Committee**

When putting your team together you will need a diverse group of individuals. Your team will encounter a variety of regulation, permit, and inspection approval steps throughout the site selection and construction process. Through these processes, they will encounter individuals at each level who have different backgrounds and experience. Your steering committee will need the experience and authority to make policy and program decisions, recommendations to the board of directors, and delegate responsibilities. Make sure this committee is a dynamic group and has the capability to complete the process.

## **Select A Chairman**

You should select an individual as chairman to have primary responsibility for the committee. This individual will have responsibility for insuring all approval requirements and deadlines are met, as well as meeting with local officials. The chairman will discuss your club's plans with officials and will determine which permits, zoning regulations and inspection processes will regulate construction. It may also be helpful if this person understands the design, contracting, and approval processes.

This is a great deal to ask of one individual, but an easy solution is to have other committee members who can inform the chairman as to the specifics of each area. Since the chairman is the individual who will do most of the speaking and networking for the club, it is important they have the dynamics to be able to understand all of the issues in developing a site and then be able to communicate those issues to the public.

## **Set Specific Meeting Times**

Regular meetings should be scheduled so committee members can coordinate efforts, share ideas, anticipate problems and do some green-light thinking. Assign someone to record and distribute minutes to the team following each session. This will serve as a good reminder for those who were in attendance and will inform those who were not present at the session.

## **Select An Administrator**

The administrator is responsible for keeping track of all of the detail. They will track invoices, correspondence, contracts, and daily communications during the project. Having a single person responsible for this information means it is less likely to misplace important papers or miss deadlines. This also makes it easier not only for other members of the committee, but also for those outside of your club who you will be dealing with on an on-going basis.

## **General Duties Of The Field Development Committee**

- Appoint Chairman
- Appoint Administrator(s) to:
  - ◆ Coordinate paperwork
  - ◆ Record and distribute minutes of meetings
  - ◆ Keep calendar of important dates and events
  - ◆ Keep timeline on project and prepare progress reports
  - ◆ Insure all important events and deadlines are met
- Schedule meetings
- Coordinate
  - ◆ Schedules
  - ◆ Deadlines

- Select site
- Choose professionals
  - ◆ Architect/site planner
  - ◆ Contractor
  - ◆ Turf expert
  - ◆ Irrigation contractor
- Assign representative(s) to:
  - ◆ Meet with local governing agencies
  - ◆ Act as point of contact
- Handle approvals
  - ◆ Funding
  - ◆ Budget
  - ◆ Purchases
  - ◆ Marketing

**NEEDS ANALYSIS, SURVEY, WORKSHOPS AND OTHER  
PRELIMINARY PLANNING ISSUES**

## **Let's Get It Together**

The first step is to see if there is any true interest in the development of a soccer complex or even in the concept of neighborhood fields. Consideration should be given to the following:

- Does your own Board of Directors support the concept and are they willing to do what is necessary to see such a project through to its completion?
- Is there significant support from within your club for such a project?
- Are your teams struggling to find adequate space to train and to play your matches?
- Do you continually have conflicts with other sports on the utilization of green space?
- Has your local Parks and Recreation Board or Department in its long-term plan identified the need for such a project? If they have, has land been purchased or is it to be purchased? If they have not included such a concept in the long-term plan, what will it take to convince them of the need for such a project?
- Has any other organization indicated an interest in such a project such as county or state government agencies? School Districts? Colleges and Universities? Private schools? Churches? Etc.

Not only do you need to determine the level of local support for such a project from the desire or need level, but you also need to determine if there will be support from a financial level. However, the support from a financial level can be an easy obstacle to overcome if there is strong public support and need for such a project in the community.

## **Before You Start Your Project**

Before you get too far into a project, there are certain items you should consider completing, before you spend significant time or financial resources. The following items will answer many questions for you and will also answer questions others will have regarding your complex.

## **Needs Analysis**

See the appendix for the fields and parking needs analysis.

## **Conduct a Survey**

- Conduct the survey. You may wish to use and develop different surveys based upon the types of groups that you are surveying. Sample questions might include the following:
  - ◆ Are you a soccer fan?
  - ◆ Do you attend soccer games?
  - ◆ Are you familiar with our club's programs?
  - ◆ What benefits do you believe our organization provides to youth, minorities, special interest groups, schools, and the community?
  - ◆ Do you believe that programs such as this may have been beneficial in preventing tragedies such as the Columbine High School incident?
  - ◆ If asked, would you contribute to our program?
  - ◆ How much would you give?
  - ◆ Would you be willing to donate your time and talents?
  - ◆ Do you think others in your workplace, neighborhood, or professional organization would donate?
- Analyze your survey data.
- Schedule informational meetings with the following:
  - ◆ Player's
  - ◆ Parents
  - ◆ Other youth organizations
  - ◆ Special interest groups (i.e. ethnic and minority groups)

- ◆ School officials
- ◆ Representatives from state and local government agencies
- Get the word out:
  - ◆ Local news articles
  - ◆ Public service announcements
  - ◆ Television
  - ◆ Radio
  - ◆ Club newsletter
  - ◆ Goalpost Scripts (State soccer newspaper)
  - ◆ Billboards

### **Planning and Design Workshops**

This part of the process can be used to rally strong support for your project, focus individuals on what is truly needed, and to learn from future users of the complex what they want in the complex. When looking at what types of groups should be involved in this process you want to make sure that you will involve all of the groups who will be using the complex. There is one group you want to make sure you do not exclude and that is the kids. When you are conducting the workshops there should be separate sessions for the kids, do not have joint sessions with adults until near the end. You will get some fantastic information from the kids and the kids will typically be the primary users of a complex, so who better to assist in the design process.

When planning the design workshops consideration should be given to the following items:

- The workshop process should be realistic and honest.
- You should incorporate green-light thinking through the entire process and there should be no preconceptions.
- Those who will be leading the workshops should listen to all that is said and not direct the workshops towards their own special interests.

- Workshop coordinators should be willing to deal with difficult issues and questions.
- Workshops should be structured so that there is a great deal of active participation and all participants should be engaged in the process.
- Involve a broad base of individuals and included everyone who will be a user.
- Have a pre-appointed scribe so that all of the issues, which are discussed at the workshop, will be recorded.
- Make it fun.

Select appropriate members from your field development committee to plan and oversee these workshops. You may also want someone who does not have a vested interest in the outcome of the complex to function as the coordinator/facilitator. Consideration should even be given to using someone who actually has experience as a facilitator.

#### **Scheduling of the workshops:**

- Determine how many workshops will be needed. Typically you will want a series of three workshops. You can schedule the adult and the kid's workshops concurrently even though they should be held separately.
- Workshops should be scheduled three to six weeks apart.
- Be careful in scheduling workshops when participation will be low, such as during the holidays or the summer.

#### **Format of the workshops:**

- Set specific goals and time frames.
- Each workshop should flow easily into the next workshop.
- Make them active and fun, not only to keep the participants active, but also to get them to come back.

- Contain exercises that engage the group and require them to give serious consideration to the issues that need to be dealt with.
- Each workshop should have a statement of purpose and review what has been accomplished at previous workshops.
- Always end with a summary of what happened, what was learned, what will take place at the next workshop and how the group's input will be incorporated.

The following are examples of workshops that have been conducted in the past. They may work well for you or you may desire to incorporate other items, which may be more unique to your circumstances. There is no concrete way to conduct a workshop as long as you understand the purpose for the workshops and what they will do for you. Have fun with them and experiment.

### **Workshop # 1 – Big Ideas, Visions, Panic Attacks and Money (No Problem)**

- Concept in this workshop is to get the participants to discuss what they would hope and dream the complex to become, as well as to hear what concerns they may have concerning the complex.
- Consider giving a slide show or some type of graphics presentation of similar projects in other communities.
- Break into small groups to discuss and get specific information about what they want in a complex.
- Pull the small groups together to discuss the points that came about in the individual small groups.

### **Workshop #2 – Let's Make A Deal**

- This workshop will focus on getting the group to complete a detailed list that prioritizes what will be in the complex.
- Split into groups.

- Each group is given a set of game pieces that represent components of the complex that were discussed in the first workshop. Along with the game pieces they are given play money representing half of the value of all of the game pieces. It is the responsibility of each group to buy their ideal complex and then present it to the group as a whole.
- When making the individual group presentations to the entire group it is important to discuss the areas of controversy the group experienced and how decisions were made.
- The primary focus of the process are the following points:
  - ◆ It helps the field development committee understand what the priorities of the users are.
  - ◆ It helps the participants to understand about the decisions that must be made to keep the facility within a limited budget.
  - ◆ It keeps the process fun and users involved in the process.

### **Workshop #3 – Fantasy’s, Options, and Concepts**

- Purpose of this workshop is to present the overall concept based upon the options that were discussed in the second workshop and to arrive at a preferred plan for the complex.
- Sketches and renderings of the all of the proposed complexes should be placed around the room for everyone to view.
- A presentation should be given which discusses such items as what the objective of the complex is, budget, input obtained from the group, what the different concepts will bring to the complex, and then should invite comments and feedback from the group.
- Then give the each member of the group sticky notes and a pen so that they can make comments on the concepts. Have available a general comment board as well.

- When everyone has had the opportunity to make the comments, reconvene the meeting and try to get an overall consensus on the most favored approach for the complex.
- Close by giving an overall schedule of what will take place focusing on the following items:
  - ◆ When will the final complex design be available?
  - ◆ When will the project break ground?
  - ◆ When will the complex be available for use?
  - ◆ What can the participants do in the mean time?

### **Preliminary Site Issues**

You should be as creative as you possibly can in this area. This may be one of your most difficult tasks or it may be one of the easiest. Consideration should be given to the following:

- Contact your local “Geographic Information Systems” office. This can be located in either your city or county government offices. They should be able to provide information to you in the form of detailed maps, as to available open spaces, zoning of the areas, and even ownership.
- Lease verse purchase options
- Donations
- Club members
- Corporate entities and real estate developers
- City, County, and State land
- Estate planning considerations.
- Joint ventures.

## **Preliminary Financial Resource Considerations**

- Major donors
  - ◆ Your club
  
  - ◆ Corporate sponsor's
  
  - ◆ Agencies or organizations who have a vested interest in the soccer community or in youth programs
  
  - ◆ Government support.
  
- Donation of goods and services (in-kind donations)
  
  
- Foundation grants
  - ◆ See sample list in appendix.
  
  - ◆ Look to special interest groups. Especially those who deal with ethnic or minority interests.
  
- Other
  - ◆ Lions Club
  
  - ◆ Rotary Club
  
  - ◆ United Way
  
  - ◆ Kiwanis Club
  
  - ◆ Benevolent Orders (Elks, Mason's, Moose, Eagles, etc.)
  
  - ◆ Boy & Girl Scouts
  
  - ◆ Other Civic Organizations unique to your area
  
  - ◆ US Soccer
  
  - ◆ Adult soccer

- ◆ Semi-pro or professional organizations
- ◆ Celebrities
- Consider joint ventures
 

Cost for a project can be so great that you have no alternative, other than joining with some other group in order to complete your project. Any one or combinations of the following need to be considered when looking at a joint venture:

  - ◆ Ownership of the facility
  - ◆ Usage agreements
  - ◆ Maintenance
  - ◆ Purchase and ownership of equipment
  - ◆ Leases
  - ◆ User fees
  - ◆ Revenue sharing arrangements (i.e. tournaments)
  - ◆ Long term leases
  - ◆ Rights to purchase
- Possible joint venture candidates
  - ◆ School Districts
  - ◆ City, County, and State Government
  - ◆ Park & Recreation Districts
  - ◆ Other special metro districts
  - ◆ Other private special interest groups
  - ◆ Corporations and developers (soccer fields are great buffer zones between their projects and residential areas)

- ◆ Other sports groups
- ◆ Professional and semi-pro sports teams
- ◆ Colleges & Universities

### **Recruit Your Volunteers**

This is such a critical process. You want to make sure that you have individuals who possess the following characteristics:

- Passion for the project.
- Vision not only for this project, but also for the development of the community as a whole.
- Dedication to soccer and to the community.
- Experience
- Time
- Energy

## **SITE SELECTION**

The following information should act only as a guideline in selecting your site. There will be many unique issues specific to your area that you should give consideration to and plan accordingly. Guidelines for site selection help you choose the site that will most closely fulfill the requirements of your program.

Knowing what to look for in a potential site for your soccer facility will help you avoid problems, such as poor or heavy soil that may require excessive maintenance or even replacement. Research of potential sites will help you to avoid flood plains, wetlands, hazardous waste issues, and other potential problem areas.

### **Site Analysis**

Analysis of a potential site is a three-step process:

- Obtaining data on your potential sites.
- Analysis of information obtained.
- Sites impact upon your overall design.

### **Site Data**

Information regarding your site or potential site should be obtained using the following methods:

- **Photo Analysis** – an analysis of the site using photographs will aid you in many aspects. It will provide an overall view of the site, will serve to remind you of specifics on the site, provides an immediate source of reference for those who are new to the project, can be used in meetings and discussion, and will assist in the design process. The analysis can be completed using any of the following:
  - ◆ Slides
  - ◆ Digital Camera Shots
  - ◆ Video

- ◆ Still Prints

➤ **Site Issues To Consider**

- ◆ Access to the site
  - Traffic volumes
  - Will major and secondary access routes be able to handle volumes?
  - Will you be required to pay for access route modification?
- ◆ Circulation within the site
  - Roads (paved and unpaved)
  - Trails
  - Other (bridges, pedestrian tunnels, etc.)
- ◆ Availability of utilities
  - Water (domestic and irrigation)
  - Sewage disposal (sewer lines or septic systems)
  - Electricity
  - Telephone
  - Other
- ◆ General area surrounding the site
  - Residential
  - Commercial
  - Agricultural

- ◆ Basic characteristics of the site
  - Topography of the site (flat, sloping, or hilly grade)
  - Excessive trees or brush to clear
  - Slope analysis to determine necessary grading and fill
  - Hydrology (surface water, drainage)
  - Existing structures
  - Fauna (any hunting in the area?)
  - Flood-ways or flood plains
  - Easement issues
  - Jurisdictional lands
  - Endangered species affected animal or plant?
- ◆ Type and condition of soil
  - Should support vegetation without excessive conditioning
  - Surface and subsurface issues
  - General geology of the site (oil or mineral deposits)
  - US Soil Conservation site analysis
- ◆ Environmental issues
  - Special testing or clean-up
  - Hazards, nuisances, or bad smells
  - Danger associated with chemical runoff into nearby lakes or rivers

- Noise issues
- Wetlands
- ◆ Weather issues
  - Fields should be set up on a north/south orientation
  - Players must not look directly into the sun
  - Temperature and humidity
  - Air movement (wind breaks)
  - Precipitation (important in determining irrigation issues)
  - Sun – fields should be set-up on a north/south orientation
  - Special conditions (storms, flooding, etc.)
- ◆ Zoning
  - Current building and zoning ordinances
  - Rezoning issues
- ◆ Potential conflict with the surrounding area
  - Disturbing the neighbors
  - Interference with schoolyard
  - Major traffic areas
- ◆ Adequate amount of land
  - Accommodates fields and parking
  - Room for future expansion

- ◆ Access to
  - Roadways
  - Emergency services
  - Easements
- ◆ Program factors that affect site selection
  - Number of participating teams
  - Ages of players
  - Seating availability
  - Number of games played simultaneously
  - Night games

### **Site Selection Guidelines**

Make a wish list before you investigate sites. Know what you want, need and desire. This will allow you to choose the site that best meets your needs and objectives. Be creative in looking for potential sites. Do not overlook sites that at first glance may not appear to meet your needs.

➤ **Know your objectives**

Create a detailed wish list of all of the features your club wants to incorporate. Show how the site(s) you are considering will accommodate those features. If it is necessary for you to construct something in phases, show each phase and then the finished product.

Completion of the site analysis using the above items will aide you in making sure that you have properly done your research. There may be other issues, which are unique to your area when you start the process, so look to have someone on your team who will be able to give you the proper guidance.

- Additional research items
  - ◆ Understand zoning and construction requirements for each site
  - ◆ Analyze existing soccer facilities
  - ◆ Talk with county extension agents
  - ◆ This is a good project for landscape architect students
- Consider alternatives to purchasing a site
  - ◆ Seek donations
  - ◆ Lease
  - ◆ Joint venture

**DESIGN, COST, AND CONSTRUCTION ISSUES**

## **Site Plan**

Your site plan may be known by other names, such as General Development Plan, General Site Plan or Master Plan. The important thing to remember however is that regardless of what you call your plan, it will show all of the site features imposed on a topographic map at an appropriate scale. It will be the coordinating plan that insures that all of the various elements of the complex fit together. This is where you will involve a landscape architect to his or her full potential.

In addition to the site plan, you will also find the following backup drawing will typically be used:

- Building footprints
- Utilities
  - ◆ Water
  - ◆ Sewer
  - ◆ Irrigation systems
  - ◆ Electrical & Communication
  - ◆ Lighting
- Grading and Drainage
- Complex access system
- Planting concept

This is also where you will integrate the information you obtained when you conducted your workshops. You may find it to your advantage if you include your landscape architect in the workshops, as a silent observer. It will save some time when they know what you and your group truly are looking for in the design process.

## **SAMPLE COST ESTIMATE**

The preparation of the cost estimate is an important step and the point where your dreams and plans will be met with a reality check. At this point in time in your complex development you have enough detail information to determine with a high degree of accuracy what your complex will cost. Your cost estimate may be higher (considerably higher) than expected. If this is the case do not become discouraged, but you will be faced with the question – What next? You essentially have four options to consider:

- Complete the complex in phases
- Scale the complex back
- Obtain additional funding
- Scrap the complex completely

The cost for soccer field construction vary widely from state to state. Current statistics place the average cost of construction at \$45,000 to \$60,000 per field. The information that follows illustrates how these costs may be allocated.

### **Field Construction and Turf Planting**

- Professional fees
- Site clearing
- Site grading
- Field topsoil
- Other topsoil
- Seeding
- Field drainage
- Soil tests

- Topographical survey
- Irrigation system

### **Facility Construction**

- Shelter
- Storage facility
- Restrooms
- Parking Lot (gravel)
- Curbs
- Fencing
- Entrance gates
- Play/picnic area
- Electrical service hook-up
- Septic
- Wells
- Signage

### **Maintenance Equipment**

- Tractor
- Reel mower
- Aerator
- Roller
- Fertilizer

- Hand Mower
- Self-propelled line painter

As you can see none of the items noted above, include **Land Costs**. Cost of land is significant regardless of the area in which you live. This is why you must be creative in acquiring your facility site. Site selection is the key here, as well as ownership of the site.

See appendix for an analysis of site development costs on Veteran's Park Soccer Fields.

## **CONSTRUCTION**

This truly is the last step in the process. At this point, you will see the fruit of all of your hard labor start to become a reality. Below are several areas that you should give special attention to:

### **How should we select a general contractor?**

- Determine whether or not there is anyone in your organization who has the capability to perform this function. As with anyone they should be able to meet all of the necessary requirements of a contractor.
- Check with local trade groups (i.e. Associated Builders and Contractors).
- Check with local parks and recreation departments. Be careful here, because governmental agencies often go with the lowest bidder and as a result, they do not always do the best work.
- Check with owners of local golf courses. The contractors who perform work on golf courses, I have found to be the most reliable for the construction of athletic facilities.
- Other considerations
  - ◆ Experience
  - ◆ Reputation
  - ◆ Local
  - ◆ Understanding of site
  - ◆ Not reluctant to use in-kind labor, materials, equipment, etc.

**Get some general knowledge of the following:**

- The design of your complex
  - ◆ Review overall design and layout
  
  - ◆ Where will the sun be
  
  - ◆ Be familiar with any special mitigating factors (i.e. wetlands)
  
- Site
  - ◆ Obtain and review a site survey
  
  - ◆ Be familiar with the general topography and how it will impact grading, filling and contouring of the site.
  
  - ◆ Determine best time to start construction
  
- Soil Conditions
  - ◆ Have testing performed so you are aware of issues relating to the soil conditions at the site.
  
  - ◆ Drainage
    - How does the soil perk
  
    - Does the soil have clay, loamy, or sandy conditions?
  
    - Will we have to install subsurface drainage?
  - ◆ Will amendments be necessary?
    - Organic Material
  
    - Sand
  
    - Other
  
- Turf
  - ◆ Will we use sod or will we hydro-seed?
  
  - ◆ What type of grass will be used regardless of how it is installed?

- Irrigation System
  - ◆ What is the water source?
  - ◆ Is it clean water or a dirty water application?
  - ◆ Will we need to have ponds?
  - ◆ Who will install the system?
  - ◆ How difficult is the system to use and to maintain?

During the construction phase you should give consideration to the following items (several of these will be performed by your landscape architect or the contractor):

- Pre-construction meetings and site walk-through
- Obtain necessary permits and approvals
- Special groundbreaking ceremonies
- Change orders
- Regulatory inspections
- Pre-final inspection and preparation of punch list
- Site cleanup
- Final inspection /review
- Acceptance
- Dedication

## **WATER AND IRRIGATION REQUIREMENTS**

## **Water, Water Everywhere!**

Where is your water going to come from? Such a simple question, but one that can play a major role in the development of a field or field complex. The source of your water will typically fall into the following areas:

- Water rights that are attached to your site:
  - ◆ Canal
  - ◆ River
  - ◆ Creek
  - ◆ Lake
  - ◆ Other irrigation distribution networks
  
- Water rights from an unknown source, this is will typically come in the form of water well.
  
- Water purchased from a domestic water source:
  - ◆ Governmental service such as a city or county.
  - ◆ Private water company

All of the above items are viable sources for water to irrigate your complex. However, with each source of water there are several issues that arise as to the use of each source.

## **Cost**

This can be one of the biggest single issues in determining whether or not a complex can be constructed. Most complexes require a significant amount of water in order to irrigate the grass, regardless of where you live. If you have no choice but to purchase domestic water for your irrigation needs you could be looking at an annual water bill in the tens of thousands of dollars annually and depending on the size of the complex it is possible that you could be looking at costs in the hundreds of thousands on annual basis.

Purchasing water from a domestic supplier of water is typically not your best option. Even if you can negotiate a contract with the provider, there are still other issues that could affect your ability to irrigate your site. For example, would you be required to pay for an upgrade to the water supply line in order to handle the water volume needs that your complex would require?

An owned water right that is attached to your site is typically the best option that you have in order to be able to handle the watering needs of your complex. The biggest single issue at hand in this case is determining what your overall water requirements will be and planning accordingly to construct the necessary irrigation structure (pond) to retain the necessary water to meet your watering needs.

### **Irrigation Design Consultant**

Each area and location of a complex is unique and as such there are several issues relating to the irrigation of a complex that should involve an Irrigation Design Consultant. This can be a company that is local to your community or a company who has been involved in other design and development considerations in your area.

An irrigation design consultant can assist you in the following areas:

- Obtaining site information.
- Determining the overall requirements for your irrigation system.
- Determine the water and power supply considerations.
- Selecting the necessary irrigation equipment:
  - ◆ Pumps
  - ◆ Sprinklers
  - ◆ Controllers
  - ◆ Valves
  - ◆ Other irrigation equipment
- Design of the actual irrigation system.
- Determining the other considerations of your irrigation needs, such as:
  - ◆ Alternative water sources
  - ◆ Use of various filtration systems
  - ◆ Size of your irrigation source (pond)
  - ◆ Location of your irrigation source
  - ◆ Integration of your watering and site maintenance schedule

The use of someone who has significant experience in the area of irrigation design and is familiar with your area is something that cannot be stressed enough. The watering of your site is one of the single most important events that will need to take place on an on-going schedule in order to insure that you maintain a high quality complex. This is not your front-yard and as such you will get what you pay for in this area. There are many areas in the development of a complex where you can save money; this is not an area where you want to get cheap.

### **Watering Requirements**

Determining the overall requirements for watering a complex is a process that can be accomplished in a rather general manner in order to assist you with necessary preliminary planning issues. The overall approach is illustrated in the appendix. The complex that is used as an example is a mythical complex in the Atlanta, Georgia area. Remember, this is just a general approach to give you an idea of what is needed for the preliminary planning process; it is not a substitute for a final plan that should be prepared by an irrigation design consultant.

I have had many discussions with individuals from all across the United States and I have never encountered a single instance where you could get away without irrigating a complex. The local climate is the primary factor that determines how much water is needed to maintain a quality facility. The watering requirement necessary includes the water lost by evaporation into the atmosphere from the soil and soil surface, and by transpiration, which is the amount of water used by the plant. The combination of these processes is known as ET (no not the little bald-headed alien in the movie); the true technical term is known as evapotranspiration. There are many sources for obtaining your local ET rates, most of these are published, and they can also be obtained from your local county extension agents or from individuals who are involved in irrigation in your local area.

An irrigation system should always be designed to adequately water your site in the worst-case condition (highest ET rate). This is typically midsummer when the average daily temperature is at or near its high or when humidity is averaging its lowest percentages. A combination of these extremes produces the greatest water requirement. Once you have determined what your ET rate is during the worst-case condition, have a general idea of the size of your complex, and know what your water source is you will be able to complete the worksheet in the appendix.

## **Soil Issues**

In addition to ET another primary factor in determining watering requirements is the type of soil that you are dealing with. Soil absorbs and holds water in much the same way as a sponge. A given texture and volume of soil will hold a given amount of moisture. The intake rate of the soil influences the precipitation rate and type of sprinkler that can be utilized. The ability of the soil to hold moisture, and the amount of moisture it can hold, will greatly affect the irrigation schedule.

Soil is made up of sand, silt, and clay particles. The percentage of each of these three particles is what determines the actual soil texture. Because the percentage of any one of these three particles can differ, there are virtually an unlimited number of soil types possible.

The simplest way to determine the soil type is to place a moistened soil sample in your hand and squeeze. Take the sample from a representative part of the site, and from approximately the same depth to which you will be watering. The following are the three main types of soil and their related characteristics:

<b>SOIL TYPE</b>	<b>SOIL TEXTURE</b>	<b>SOIL COMPONENTS</b>	<b>INTAKE RATE</b>	<b>WATER RETENTION</b>	<b>DRAINAGE EROSION</b>
Sandy	Course	Sand and loamy sand	Very High to High	Very Low to Low	Low erosion and Good Drainage
Loamy	Moderately course to Moderately fine	Sandy loam to silty clay loam	Moderately High to Moderately Low	Moderately Low to High	Low Erosion and Good Drainage to Moderate Drainage
Clay	Fine Texture	Sandy clay to clay	Low	High	Poor Drainage Severe Erosion

The following is a guide in determining what soil type you may be faced with at the site you are considering:

- Coarse – Soil particles are loose. Squeezed in the hand when dry, it falls apart when pressure is released. Squeezed when moist, it will form a cast, but will crumble easily when touched.
- Medium – Has a moderate amount of fine grains of sand and very little clay. When dry, it can be readily broken. Squeezed when wet, it will form a cast that can be easily handled.
- Fine – When dry, may form hard lumps or clods. When wet, the soil is quite plastic and flexible. When squeezed between the thumb and forefinger the soil will form a ribbon that will not crack.

One of the most significant differences between different soil types is the way in which they absorb and hold water. Capillary action is the primary force in spreading water horizontally through the soil. Both gravity and capillary action influence vertical movement of water. In coarser soils, water is more likely to be absorbed vertically, but will not spread far horizontally. The opposite is true for finer soils.

Water is available for plant use in different ways. The moisture held in the soil is classified in the following three ways:

- Hygroscopic Water – moisture that is held too tightly in the soil to be used by plants (essentially no drainage).
- Capillary Water – moisture that is held in the pore spaces of the soil and can be used by plants (slow drainage).
- Gravitational Water – moisture that drains rapidly from the soil and is not readily available to be used by plants (rapid drainage).

The boundary between capillary water and hygroscopic water is known as the permanent wilting point. Because hygroscopic water is not usable by plants, continuous soil moisture levels below the permanent wilting point will result in the death of the plants.

The boundary between gravitational water and capillary water is known as field capacity. It is the upper limit for soil moisture that is usable by plants.

Water is unique by its self. The following are factors that are unique to the nature of water:

- Water takes the shape of the container it is in.
- Water is not compressible.
- Water has its own volume and will seek its own level.
- One gallon of water weighs 8.3 pounds.
- One cubic foot will hold 7.48 gallons of water.
- One acre-foot will hold 325,850 gallons of water.
- One cubic foot per second equals approximately 450 gallons per minute.

As I noted earlier in this section there is no substitute for using a professional when designing your irrigation system. Your complex will not be a quality facility if you do not follow strict standards in this area.

**SOLVING THE FIELD DEVELOPMENT PUZZLE: YOU  
KNOW WHAT YOU WANT, BUT WHAT NEXT?**

**IF YOU BUILD IT, THE FUNDS WILL COME!**

So many times, I hear a statement like this. Just having a good idea or even a true need is not all you will need in order to raise funds for a facility. If individuals or organizations are going to give funding to a project they want to make sure they are going to get a lot of bang for their buck and they want to insure a complex will be around for years to come.

### **How easy is it to raise the funds?**

Today it is becoming increasingly more and more difficult to raise funds for parks and related activities; here are some of the reasons:

- City, County, State, and Federal budgets are being constantly squeezed
- Larger amounts of debt not only from the Federal level, but also at the local level
- More demands from taxpayers for other services
- Perception there are adequate facilities in place
- Individuals contributing less
- More nonprofits, who are looking at a smaller pie

### **Can the funds be raised?**

Yes, the funds can be raised. The real question is how hard are you willing to work to raise the funds? And can you recognize the right opportunity and with every opportunity, there can be dangers. Many of the issues we will discuss regarding financing a project will be filled with opportunities and the dangers can be significant.

## **FINDING FINANCIAL RESOURCES**

## **What financial resources are available?**

- Major donors
  - ◆ The club
  - ◆ Local corporate sponsors
  - ◆ Agencies and organizations with a vested interest in the soccer community or in youth programs
  - ◆ Government support
- Donations of goods and services (in-kind donations)
- Foundation grants
  - ◆ Large number of entities
  - ◆ Some are on a national basis
  - ◆ Some are specific to city, county, and state
  - ◆ Look to special interest groups, especially ethnic or minority interests
- Other
  - ◆ Lions Club
  - ◆ Rotary Club
  - ◆ United Way
  - ◆ Kiwanis Club
  - ◆ Benevolent Orders (Elks, Mason's, Moose, Eagles, etc.)
  - ◆ Boy & Girl Scouts
  - ◆ Other civic organizations unique to your area

- ◆ US Soccer
- ◆ Adult Soccer
- ◆ Semi-pro or professional organizations
- ◆ Celebrities

➤ Joint Ventures

- ◆ School districts
- ◆ City, county and State Government
- ◆ Park & Recreation Districts
- ◆ Other private special interest groups
- ◆ Corporations & Developers (soccer fields are great buffer zones)
- ◆ Other youth sports groups
- ◆ Colleges & Universities

Any, all or a combination of these approaches to financing a complex are a possibility. Cost for a project can be so great you have no alternative, other than joining with some other group in order to complete your project.

## **LOCAL FUND RAISING**

## **WHAT IS NEEDED?**

### **Fund Raising Committee**

- Committee
  - ◆ Dynamic Group
  - ◆ Should have good local ties
  - ◆ Previous experience is a plus
- Establish Campaign
- Create Public Awareness
  - ◆ Radio & television
  - ◆ Direct Mail
  - ◆ Brochures
  - ◆ Newspaper
  - ◆ Billboards
  - ◆ Newsletters
  - ◆ Presentations

### **Informational Package**

- Field Development Plan
  - ◆ Similar to a business plan
  - ◆ Tells about you and what you do
  - ◆ Discusses your project, tells what it will do who it will serve and why it is necessary
  - ◆ Discusses benefit to the community

- ◆ Detailed renderings
- ◆ Cost estimates
- ◆ Discuss whether or not the project will be completed at one time or in phases
- ◆ Include site analysis discussion and reports
- ◆ Discuss types of plants and vegetations
- ◆ Describe how your clubs programs will be impacted
- Financial Information on the Club
  - ◆ Three to five years worth of financial statements
  - ◆ Three to five years worth of tax returns
  - ◆ Three to five years worth of budgets and comparisons to actual
  - ◆ Audited, reviewed or compiled financial statements from your accountant
  - ◆ Determination letter from IRS substantiating your non-profit status
- Other Information
  - ◆ Club demographics
  - ◆ Membership numbers
  - ◆ Future projections
  - ◆ Types of programs
  - ◆ Community demographics
  - ◆ Comparisons to other youth sports programs

- ◆ Fee structure associated with the programs
- ◆ Information relating to paid staff
- ◆ Volunteer information
  - Coaches
  - Referees
  - Others
- ◆ How and why the club is having a positive impact upon the community
- ◆ Other specific information relative to what you are doing

### **In-Kind Contributions**

- Can be the key in a project
- Often times large dollar amounts may be involved here
- This can be a real danger area. You do not want to tie yourself to companies or individuals who cannot perform, even if what they are doing is not costing you anything. The cost in the end can be astronomical.
- Types of in-kind contributions
  - ◆ Contractor Services
  - ◆ Planning & Design
  - ◆ Dirt Work (grading and soil prep)
  - ◆ Heavy Equipment Usage (graders, loaders, dump trucks excavators, etc.)
  - ◆ Plants (sod, trees, shrubs)
  - ◆ Top Soil

- ◆ Soil Amendments
- ◆ Irrigation Systems
- ◆ Installation Work
- ◆ Other

### **Corporate Sponsors**

- Look for well known entities and companies who could benefit from this type of sponsorship
- Present your information
- Obtain commitments
- Use their name in future informational material
- Use the corporate sponsors to leverage other community support
- Be careful in what you promise. It is important you do everything for a corporate sponsor that you indicated you would. You do not want to put yourself in a situation where you have promised to name the complex after several different companies. Your club's reputation and credibility will be ruined in the community forever.

### **Special Events**

Special events can truly be the item that pushes an organization over the top when it comes to raising funds for the construction of a complex. There are seven goals that you need to keep in mind when hosting a special event:

1. Raise funds now and raise more funds later.
2. Educate the public about your mission.
3. Motivate board members and major contributors.
4. Recruit volunteers and future board members.
5. Expand your organizations network.

6. Market your organization.
7. Solicit endorsements.

### **Types of Special Events**

- Raffle a house
- Raffle recreational equipment
- Auctions
- Challenge events
- Telethon
- Gift Catalogs
- Buy a tree
- Buy a brick
- Buy a square foot of grass
- Major events – such as a Red Baron Ball, Bachelor Night, etc.
- Host estate and gift planning sessions for senior citizens
- Consider creation of a foundation
- Be Creative!!!

Do not do anything to upset any major donor's or something that could endanger your nonprofit status with the IRS. Make sure to do all of your homework upfront and to be aware of all of the potential dangers. All of your fund raising should be well coordinated and orchestrated, if it is not you will only be asking for problems and the end result could be that the complex would fail. Do not be afraid to say no to a concept or an idea if it does not fit the overall plan.

## **JOINT VENTURES (PARTNERSHIPS)**

So many projects and complexes I am seeing completed today would not have been possible without a joint venture. Joint ventures come in many different forms, but the underlying concept is the bringing together of two or more entities for the successful completion of a project for a common purpose.

However, joint ventures can be filled with so many problems it is impossible to cover all of those areas here. There is a certain amount of good faith all parties must have with one another, but I would make sure most if not all of the issues you feel you will encounter through a joint venture are memorialized in writing in the form of a contract. This then leaves no issues open for speculation and keeps the attorneys happy.

### **Why a joint venture (partnership)?**

- Dollars are typically the main reason
- Money available for a project can be spent on three factors of development
  1. Property (land)
  2. Labor
  3. Facilities, equipment, physical materials

As an organization, you may not have the capacity to raise the necessary capital for all three factors of development; this is the primary consideration for a joint venture. In a joint venture, you can fulfill the needs others may not be able to and others can fulfill the needs you cannot.

- Types of Partnerships
  - ◆ With Business
    1. Agency pump priming (help you open the doors) – with land, low-cost capital tax incentives, permits, and zoning control.
    2. Land exchanges and use
    3. Use of commercial facilities
    4. Joint development (developers)
    5. Contracting out services

- ◆ With Government
  1. Schools, special districts, colleges and universities, cities, counties, state, and federal agencies.
  2. Land use and development
  3. Maintenance
  4. Grants
  5. Technical assistance
  
- ◆ With Other Nonprofit Groups
  1. Eliminate duplicate costs
  2. Eliminate redundant infrastructure
  3. Share costs
  4. Co-production benefits
  5. Community efforts
  
- Areas in a Joint Venture to Give Special Attention
  - ◆ Ownership
    1. If land is being purchased with joint funds who will hold title?
    2. What benefits do you get if only development funds are provided?
    3. Who assumes liability?
  
  - ◆ Usage Agreements
    1. Who has the right to use the facility?
    2. Who has priority to use the facility?

3. When can the facility be utilized?
  4. What will the frequency of use be?
- ◆ Maintenance
    1. Who is going to be responsible?
    2. Who will purchase and maintain necessary equipment?
    3. Frequency?
  - ◆ Ownership of Other Equipment
    1. Who will purchase and maintain?
    2. Who has liability?
    3. Who will be responsible for setting up and tearing down?
  - ◆ User Fees
    1. Will there be user fees?
    2. How will they be established?
    3. When will they be assessed?
    4. Increases?
    5. What will they cover?
  - ◆ Revenue Sharing Agreements
    1. Tournaments?
    2. Who will set responsibilities?
    3. How is shared revenue to be determined?

- ◆ Long Term Leases
  1. Is a lease necessary?
  2. Fee?
  3. Default provisions?
  4. Termination clauses?
  
- ◆ Rights to Purchase

## **FOUNDATIONS (GRANTS)**

## **What is a Grant?**

- Mechanism through which one organization can influence the behavior of another organization.
- Generally in the form of money.
- May be in the form of technical assistance or equipment.
- Serve as incentives to promote the interests and agenda of a specific foundation.
- It is an INVESTMENT by a foundation in you.
- It is a CONTRACT; you must perform according to the terms of the grant. Failure to do so will result in you not receiving the necessary funding. Even if you have already spent it.
- It is putting both their reputation and your reputation on the line.
- Cost sharing not cost bearing.
- About helping people and organizations to help themselves.
- It is the end result of a successful process!

## **Elements of a Successful Grant Proposal**

- Uniqueness of proposal subject matter
  1. How special is the project?
  2. What sets your project apart from every other project?
  3. Who will you be serving?
  4. Given almost two identical proposals, what will make yours the successful proposal?

- A clear, well-written grant application, focusing on the problem you are trying to solve. In the movie “Patch Adams” the question was asked, “How many fingers do you see?” Do not just focus on the solution! We all know the solution would be for the foundation to just hand the money over. Focus more on the problem.
- A realistic budget. Do your homework! Trust me a foundation will do theirs and the chance is they have already examined thousands of proposals just like yours, so they are ready for all the gloss, and they will go right to the dirt.
- Make sure you can do what you say you can do! A foundation may go through your organization much more thoroughly than the IRS ever thought about.
- Select the correct foundation! Make sure the foundation that you are requesting funding from has an interest in doing what is in your proposal. **DO NOT WASTE THEIR TIME!**

Each grant application that you complete will always be unique. The forms may look the same, the information that is requested may appear similar, but each foundation has its own purpose, mission, and projects that it likes to fund. The following are some additional considerations to keep in mind when you are dealing with a foundation:

- Is the foundation interested in your type of organization?
- Is the foundation located only within your community, county, state, or geographic region?
- What is the typical grant size that the foundation issues?
- Is the foundation interested in the constituents that your organization serves?
- Has the foundation previously awarded grants to your type of organization?
- Given the typical grant size that a foundation issues, is it worth your time and efforts to apply to the foundation for a grant?

## **Where Do You Find Foundations?**

This is actually the last thing you should be doing. You need to have all of your ducks in a row before you ever go after a funding source. Be prepared for rejection and realize a foundation will typically not finance a project completely. Do your research on the foundation before you apply. Know who they are, what they like to fund, the typical grant award, how often they award grants, and what they expect in their grant applications.

- Check various publications in your state.
- Check your library.
- Internet. ([www.fundraiser.com](http://www.fundraiser.com))
- Most foundations will be found within your state. There are however, some nation-wide foundations.
- Athletic Business Journal subscription
- Meet with others in your area that have applied for grants.

The following information was provided to me from an officer of a large foundation, who has asked to remain anonymous. The information they have provided to me covers two specific areas, the first being what they consider a good proposal and the second being how they assess a proposal. As I have indicated before each foundation is unique, but there are many common sense items here that would apply to almost any foundation.

## **What makes a good proposal for Foundation X?**

Clear summary of what is to be accomplished with your grant request:

- Minimum of professional jargon
- Major features of the proposed plan set forth clearly and logically
- Objective assessment of the importance of the problem addressed

Defense of why this plan is needed:

- Why are others not meeting this need now?
- Can you meet the need?
- Would others be able to meet the need better than you if the funds were made available to them?
- If a new organization is proposed, is it required? Are you sure?
- If others are performing a similar function or parts of a proposed function, how does the proposed function differ and why is the difference important?
- Is this the right time for the endeavor?

Description of the people to be involved:

- Brief explanations of positions and corresponding duties.
- Biography or curriculum vitae for each key individual involved.
- Defense of the qualifications of the people responsible for the job to be done

Realistic financing scheme:

- Annual budgets, including projected income (if any) by source, and projected expenditures accumulated in logical categories, usually natural expense object classifications (e.g. salaries, benefits, rent supplies, etc.).
- Limited time horizon (many foundations prefer two or three year projects and often set an outside limit).
- Program for eventual self-support or support from sources other than the foundation.

Appropriate organizational arrangements:

- Funds administered by an existing or a new organization, frequently a tax-exempt educational or philanthropic charity.
- Appropriate guidance from a responsible board of trustees, directors, or advisors.

**What criteria does Foundation X use in assessing a proposal?**

Competence of individuals involved:

- Quality of references and of reference sources.
- Opinions of members of the foundation staff.
- Opinions of outside proposal reviewers
- Quality of project staff (Are they among the best of all possible people to undertake the project?).

Feasibility and realism of the proposal:

- Is the time right for the endeavor?
- Is the action proposed adequate to the problem addressed?
- Is the sponsoring agency or institution clearly enthusiastic about the substance of the proposal?
- Are the proposed facilities and staffing sufficient for the job?

Importance and utility of the venture to the community or to society:

- Is there a demonstrable need for the project?
- Whom will the project benefit, and how will it do so?
- Is it based on ethical and moral premises?

- Will there be a measurable improvement if the venture is successful?  
Will harm be done if it fails?

Originality and creativity of the proposed venture:

- Is the project already a part of any other existing program?
- Does the project duplicate or overlap other existing or past programs?
- Is it new and innovative? Alternatively, does it help conserve beneficial programs that might otherwise be lost?
- Could the project be carried out better elsewhere or by other persons?

Appropriateness of the project to the foundations policy and program focus:

- Is the proposal consistent with the foundations current program objectives?
- If so, does it address an area that should receive priority in consideration of proposals?

Prospects for leverage and pattern making effects:

- Will the project attract other financial support (if needed)?
- Will the project produce significant changes in a wide circle?
- Will the results be transferable to other projects and localities?

Need for foundation support:

- Are public sources of funds available (i.e., federal, state, and local governments)?
- Are other private sources more appropriate?

Soundness of the budget:

- Is it adequate for the job to be accomplished but not so generous as to be wasteful?
- Is it evident that the project director is familiar with the administrative issues involved in conducting the proposed project and that he or she has planned carefully for contingencies?

Persistence, dedication, and commitment of the organization:

- Have they persevered in efforts to secure needed funds?
- Have they devoted sufficient time to planning and launching the venture?
- Is the project one of their primary interests or a major professional preoccupation?

Provision for objective evaluation of results, where feasible:

- Will the project staff maintain adequate records to demonstrate the success of the project?
- Where the project lends itself to statistical evaluation, has provision been made for recording and analyzing relevant data?
- Where necessary, has appropriate evaluation advice been sought?

## **ADDITIONAL RESOURCE LIST**

**The following items are where you can go for additional resources when considering the development of a soccer fields or complexes:**

**Rain Bird**

145 North Grand Avenue  
Glendora, CA 91741-2469  
626.963.9311  
[www.rainbird.com](http://www.rainbird.com)

**Athletic Business**

P.O. Box 807  
Ft. Atkinson, WI 53538-0807  
920.563.1761  
[www.athleticbusiness.com](http://www.athleticbusiness.com)

**The Foundation Center**

79 Fifth Avenue, Dept. GM  
New York, NY 10003-3076  
800.424.9836  
[www.fdncenter.org](http://www.fdncenter.org)

**Turf Magazine**

50 Bay Street  
St. Johnsbury, VT 05819-9920  
800.422.7147  
[www.turfmagazine.com](http://www.turfmagazine.com)

**Fund\$Raiser Cyberzine**

[www.fundsraiser.com](http://www.fundsraiser.com)

**Purdue University**

Turf Science Program  
[www.agry.purdue.edu](http://www.agry.purdue.edu)

**Colorado State University**

Agricultural Sciences Department  
[www.colostate.edu](http://www.colostate.edu)

**US Soccer Foundation**

[www.ussoccerfoundation.com](http://www.ussoccerfoundation.com)

**Charity Choices**

[www.charitychoices.com](http://www.charitychoices.com)

**Internet Nonprofit Center**

[www.nonprofits.org](http://www.nonprofits.org)

**Guide Star**

[www.guidestar.org](http://www.guidestar.org)

**Grant Makers in Health**

[www.gih.org](http://www.gih.org)

**Council on Foundations**

[www.cof.org](http://www.cof.org)

[www.cof.org/foundationnews](http://www.cof.org/foundationnews)

**The Chronicle of Philanthropy**

[www.philanthropy.com](http://www.philanthropy.com)

**Other**

[www.pgdc.net](http://www.pgdc.net), [www.helping.org](http://www.helping.org)

[www.give.org](http://www.give.org)

## **APPENDIX**



## **BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION**

### **Les McPherson**

#### **Soccer Experience**

Over thirty years of experience in the sport of soccer, experience as a player, coach, official, club administrator, club director, and board member/officer of Colorado State Youth Soccer Association.

##### Current Involvement

- Competitive Boy's Coach for Grand Mesa Youth Soccer
- National speaker on the topic of field development

##### Past Involvement

- High School Men's Coach Grand Junction High School
- President and CEO – Colorado State Youth Soccer Association 2002-2005
- Treasurer and Director – Colorado State Youth Soccer Association 1998-2002
- President – Grand Mesa Youth Soccer
- Tournament Director for several different tournaments

#### **Business Experience**

Certified public accountant practicing in the state of Colorado, since May of 1988, and maintaining an active certificate today. Active in public accounting from June 1981 – November 1993 in various capacities, but specializing in the banking, financial services, insurance and construction industries, for a regional CPA firm in Grand Junction, Colorado. Former Chief Financial Officer for a publicly traded company from December 1993 – November of 1997, when we sold the company to a competitor. Currently active in senior management and set on the Board of Directors for a privately owned holding company on the western slope of Colorado.

#### **How To Reach Me**

Direct Dial Line 970.256.4415  
Main Dial Line 970.243.4604  
Fax Line 970.241.6622  
Toll Free Line 800.748.1564  
Cell Phone 970.260.2056  
Home Phone 970.243.7356  
E-Mail soccer\_cpa@yahoo.com

Office Mailing Address:  
Grand Junction Pipe & Supply Co.  
P.O. Box 1849  
Grand Junction, CO 81502

# Field Assessment Guidelines

*To be used as a guide only.*

## **GRADE A**

These fields are in perfect condition and have the following characteristics:

- Level playing surface with no crowning in any direction.
- Adequate drainage is noted on the field with no soft or wet areas. Even in times of rain.
- Irrigation heads and system are undetectable.
- Grass is mowed to the appropriate height and is similar to walking on carpet.
- Size of the playing surface is at or near the maximum limits as specified by FIFA.
- All areas of the field are adequately marked.
- Adequate technical areas for teams are available.
- There are adequate buffer zones around the field of play, which work to minimize any potential danger to the players.
- There are no conditions on the field of play that could create a potentially hazardous situation for the players.
- In addition to the field of play there are adequate facilities at the site. These include restroom, shelters, and plenty of available parking.

## **GRADE B**

These are fields that may have some of the characteristics of those fields noted as Grade A, but will typically have the following characteristics:

- Crowning of the playing surface is noted. However, the playing surface is adequately groomed and maintained.
- Some drainage problems may be noted but are not prevalent and are in areas where there is infrequent play and do not pose a danger to the players.
- Irrigation heads are present and noticeable.
- Grass is mowed to the appropriate height, but there are areas where it may be sparse and stressed.
- Size of the playing surface is less than the maximum limits as specified by FIFA.
- Markings on the field are present in most places, but others are not well noted.
- Technical areas are small and poorly designated.
- There are little or no buffer zones around the field, which may present possible hazards to the players.
- There may be conditions or areas on the field of play that could create hazardous playing conditions for the players.
- The facilities at the site are only minimally adequate. There are times when parking may not be adequate and restrooms are poorly maintained.

### **GRADE C**

These are fields that may show some of the characteristics noted at Grade B, but will have most of the following characteristics:

- Playing surface very irregular and has many problem areas.
- Drainage for the field is poor or none existent.
- Irrigation system is a problem where heads may protrude above the playing surface.
- The field does have grass, but there are also several bare areas noted.
- Size of the playing surface is well below the minimum size as noted by FIFA and may not even be rectangular in shape.
- Markings on the field are poor and may even be nonexistent.
- There are virtually no technical areas.
- There are virtually no buffer zones.
- There are conditions on the field that create hazardous playing conditions for the players.
- Site facilities are inadequate. This includes parking, restrooms, and other amenities.

### **GRADE D**

These fields are not suited for play and are marginal for training purposes.