



**COUNTY OF ESSEX  
NEWARK, NEW JERSEY**

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

The Essex County Board of County Commissioners will hold an in person public meeting on Wednesday, January 17, 2024 at 5 P.M. After 6 P.M., the Commissioners will hold a public hearing. The purpose of the hearing is to obtain public comment on a grant application to be submitted by the County of Essex to the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection's Urban Parks Grant Program, as well as a grant application to be submitted by the county of Essex to the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection's Green Acres Park Development Grant Program.

The Urban Parks application is for improvements to Irvington Park, located at the corner of Grove Street and Lyons Avenue in Irvington, New Jersey (Block 221, Lot 1), including improvements to the ballfields. The Park Development application is for improvements to the East Orange portion of Watsessing Park, located at the corner of Dodd Street and Glenwood Avenue in East Orange, New Jersey (Block 600, Lot 2), including improvements to playgrounds. Concept plans, cost estimates, and Environmental Impact Assessment documents will be available at <https://essexcountynj.org> no later than January 2, 2023. A full copy of the application can be obtained by contacting [jzaitz@parks.essexcountynj.org](mailto:jzaitz@parks.essexcountynj.org) after the February 7, 2024 application deadline.

The meeting will take place at 465 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd, Newark, NJ 07102, Room 506. The public can view the meeting online at <https://ecfnj.com>, however, please note that all comments must be made in person. Call-in or virtual comments are no longer accepted. The Commissioners will be available to discuss the project and answer questions. All residents are encouraged to attend and participate.

**2024 GREEN ACRES**  
**County of Essex**  
**IRVINGTON PARK - BALLFIELD IMPROVEMENTS**

**Cost Estimate**

<b>IRVINGTON PARK - BALL FIELD IMPROVEMENTS</b>	
Site Demolition	\$250,000.00
Site Preparation and Earthwork	\$350,000.00
Synthetic Turf Surface System Ball Fields	\$620,000.00
Dugouts, Backstop, Bleachers, bases	\$450,000.00
Concrete and HMA Walkway	\$180,000.00
Chain Link Fence and Gates	\$100,000.00
Miscellaneous Drainage	\$150,000.00
Landscaping, trimming, irrigation	\$450,000.00
Park appurtenances	\$150,000.00
<b>SUBTOTAL</b>	<b>\$2,700,000.00</b>
Professional Services @ 13%	\$351,000.00
Contingency @20%	\$540,000.00
<b>IRVINGTON PARK - TOTAL BUDGET</b>	<b>\$3,591,000.00</b>

  
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Sanjeev Varghese, Essex County Engineer  
Essex County Department of Public Works

12/26/23  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date



# 2024 GREEN ACRES

County of Essex

## IRVINGTON PARK - BALLFIELD IMPROVEMENTS



## Environmental Impact Assessment Outline

### 1. DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT

#### *a. Briefly Describe the Total Development Project*

The Essex County Parks Department is seeking to complete upgrades to the baseball/softball fields at Irvington Park. The proposed scope of work includes resurfacing the existing two baseball/softball diamonds with synthetic turf infields, installing dugouts, bleachers, bases, and backstops at each field, completing improvements to walkways (concrete and asphalt), and chain link fences, as well as landscaping, drainage, and irrigation improvements, and miscellaneous park appurtenances.

#### *b. State Objectives of the Project*

The project seeks to complete much-needed upgrades to Irvington Park, specifically at two baseball/softballs diamonds that are heavily used by local public schools, youth athletics associations, and adult sports leagues. The objectives of the project include create a safer facility through the use of synthetic turf infield surface, reduce maintenance costs, increase playability, and enhance the spectator experience through installing bleachers that do not currently exist at this location.

#### *c. Fully Describe Multi-Phase Projects*

Not applicable.

#### *d. Synthetic Turf Addendum*

#### Due Diligence:

1. Synthetic turf field drainage systems must be well-designed and properly maintained to avoid increased run-off from synthetic turf fields. Successful applicants whose projects include a synthetic turf field should design their projects in conformance with the requirements of the NJDEP Stormwater Management rules, even if the project is otherwise exempt.

The County of Essex will work with consulting engineers during the construction design process to minimize run-off and comply with NJDEP Stormwater Management rules. The project only proposes to use synthetic turf on infields, and will drain to natural grass outfields that already exist at the site.

2. Turf type should be evaluated to address potential ecosystem contamination.

During the design construction phase, the County will work with consulting engineers to evaluate turf type to address potential ecosystem contamination.

3. Synthetic turf fields can increase the ambient temperature of the neighborhood, especially in highly developed areas.

The three turf infields are located in a large public park and surrounded by heavy tree canopy. Any impacts on ambient temperature are anticipated to be negated by existing green park features that reduce urban heat island effect.

4. Synthetic turf fields have been shown to have elevated surface temperatures, which can increase the risk of heat-related injuries, especially in children. Applicants are strongly encouraged to design projects so

that adjacent shade trees are preserved whenever possible, additional shade trees are planted, and/or shade structures are provided to mitigate this risk.

No tree removal is proposed under the scope of work, as existing infields will be replaced with synthetic turf.

5. The industry standard for synthetic turf field warranties is eight years, though properly maintained fields may last up to fifteen years. Applicants should ensure that the individuals responsible for field maintenance adopt best management practices to maximize the life of the field. End-of-life recycling for the turf carpet and infill is available and should be explored. When budgeting for a synthetic field, applicants should keep in mind the anticipated life of the facility, cost and frequency of replacement, and Green Acres' policy to not re-fund facilities for at least 20 years.

The Essex County Parks Department will be responsible for park maintenance. The Department is skilled at maintaining turf fields, which are found throughout the Essex County Parks System. All best management practices will be used to maximize the life of the fields, and recycling at end of life will be completed.

Alternative: Discuss in the Environmental Impact Assessment Alternatives to the Proposed Actions section why synthetic turf is a necessary or preferable alternative to natural turf.

1. The alternative is to leave the grass and sand field surfacing in place, which is not the preferred alternative due to increase maintenance costs.

Communication: Discuss the potential benefits and risks, including the Environmental Impact Analysis of Proposed Action and Alternatives to the Proposed Actions sections of the Environmental Impact Assessment, during the required public hearing for the project application.

1. The use of synthetic turf will be discussed during the public hearing.

## **2. DESCRIPTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT**

### *a. Vegetation*

Irvington Park is a 25-acre open space resource in Irvington, New Jersey. There are many trees planting throughout the property, including along the park perimeter and all walking paths. There are several lawn areas, yet minimal vegetation throughout.

### *b. Wildlife, including State and Federal Threatened and Endangered Species and Critical Habitats*

The park is home to a variety of non-migratory birds and is a known flyover for various species of migratory birds travelling along the North American Flyway. Further, the environment in Irvington Park supports a variety of mammalian quadrupeds, such as foxes, raccoons, chipmunks, and squirrels. There are no known state or federal threatened or endangered species or critical habitats within the park, which is located in a densely populated urban area.

### *c. Geology, Topography, and Soils*

The topography is flat and there is a pond in the northwest corner of the site.

### *d. Water Resources/Hydrology*

A small 1.65-acre pond fed by an artesian well provides fishing and model boat sailing.



*d. Historic/Archeological Resources*

There are no known historic or archeological resources in the park.

*e. Transportation/Access to Site*

The park is accessible via NJ Transit Bus routes 37, 90, and 107, with northbound and southbound stops located at the northeast and southeast corners of the park. Adjacent land uses are primary dense residential and commercial.

*f. Adjacent land uses/description of the surrounding neighborhood*

The surrounding neighborhood is composed of dense residential uses.

**3. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT. ANALYSIS OF PROPOSED ACTION**

*a. Discuss All Affected Resources and the Significance of Each Impact*

There are few significant impacts to Irvington Park as a result of the project. The proposed scope of work includes the replacement of existing park features, including two baseball/softball diamonds at Irvington Park, including landscaping, signage, dugouts, fencing, and bleachers. The improvements will primarily be in-kind, with the exception of the synthetic turf infield surfacing.

*b. Discuss Short Term and Long Term Project Impacts*

Short-term impacts include the removal and replacement of existing park amenities, including two baseball/softball diamonds, landscaping, signage, dugouts, fencing, and bleachers. There will be minimal soil disruption and the site work will incorporate drainage improvements to protect the longevity and recreational usefulness of the site. Since the improvements are minor and focus on replacing existing features in-kind, therefore, there are no long-term impact anticipated.

*c. Discuss Anticipated Increase in Recreation and Overall Use of Site Over Time*

The County anticipates that use of the project site will continue to increase over time. Essex County and the Township Irvington have all experienced significant growth in population in recent years. This is coupled with a low rate of new park development in Irvington, which is one of the most densely populated communities in the state and has minimal property available for open space development. As such, it is anticipated that the current rate of growth in usage at Irvington Park will continue, regardless of whether this project is completed.

*d. Identify Adjacent Environmental Features that May be Affected by the Proposal*

There are no adjacent environmental features that will be affected by the project. The area surrounding the project site is composed of residential uses. The proposed activities are confined to an area of the park where baseball/softball diamonds already exist, and therefore, there are no anticipated impacts outside the primary project site.

*e. List Any Permits Required for Project and Brief Status*

A Soil Erosion and Sediment Control Permit is needed to complete the project.

*f. Natural Heritage Data Request Form*

Not applicable. The project is not being completed in an undisturbed portion of the site.

- g. Discuss if/how the project may be impacted by sea level rise and any related design considerations.*

The project is not anticipated to be impacted by sea level rise.

#### **4. ALTERNATIVES TO THE PROPOSED ACTION**

- a. Identify alternate sites*

The facilities at Irvington Park are in dire need of improvements and enhancements. Failure to complete these necessary improvements and enhancements can potentially result in a reduction of usability at the Park, as well as deterioration in safety conditions. Therefore, an alternative site for the proposed improvements does not exist.

- b. Discuss alternate levels and types of development*

No alternative levels or types of development have been identified for the proposed field renovations.

- c. Compare environmental impacts of each alternative*

No alternative levels of development have been identified for the proposed renovations, therefore, there are no alternatives to compare.

#### **5. MITIGATING MEASURES**

The County of Essex is dedicated to ensuring that Irvington Park is cared for with the utmost of respect and diligence. In this spirit, the County resolves to take all proper measures and precautions during and after the course of work to ensure that the surrounding environment is not negatively impacted. These measures and precautions include, but are not limited to, the erection of silt fencing during and after construction, the proliferation of soil and sediment controls, scheduling and staging efforts to minimize overall disturbance, and significant landscaping activities that include the replanting of any flora whose removal is required for the completion of work. Additionally, the Friends is committed to compliance with any and all rules and regulations promulgated by the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection and/or other regulatory agencies regarding building, remediation, and environmental conservation, and to the attainment of all necessary permits for building, remediation, and environmental conservation, as needed.

#### **6. AUTHOR(S) AND QUALIFICATIONS**

Chris Sprague  
Grants Consultant  
Millennium Strategies

**2024 GREEN ACRES**  
**County of Essex**  
**WATSESSING PARK - PLAYGROUND IMPROVEMENTS**

**Cost Estimate**

<b>WATSESSING PARK - PLAYGROUND IMPROVEMENTS</b>	
Site Demolition	\$100,000.00
Site Preparation and Earthwork	\$85,000.00
Playground Safety Surfacing	\$175,000.00
Drylaid Paver Walkway & Seating Area	\$35,000.00
6"x12" Flush Concrete Curb	\$27,000.00
2-5 Year Old Play Equipment	\$150,000.00
5-12 Year Old Play Equipment	\$300,000.00
Concrete and HMA Walkway	\$50,000.00
Chain Link Fence and Gates	\$75,000.00
Miscellaneous Drainage	\$75,000.00
Landscaping, trimming, irrigation	\$35,000.00
Park appurtenances	\$100,000.00
<b>SUBTOTAL</b>	<b>\$1,207,000.00</b>
Professional Services @ 13%	\$156,910.00
Contingency @20%	\$241,400.00
<b>WATSESSING PARK - TOTAL BUDGET</b>	<b>\$1,605,310.00</b>

  
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Sanjeev Varghese, Essex County Engineer  
Essex County Department of Public Works

12/26/23

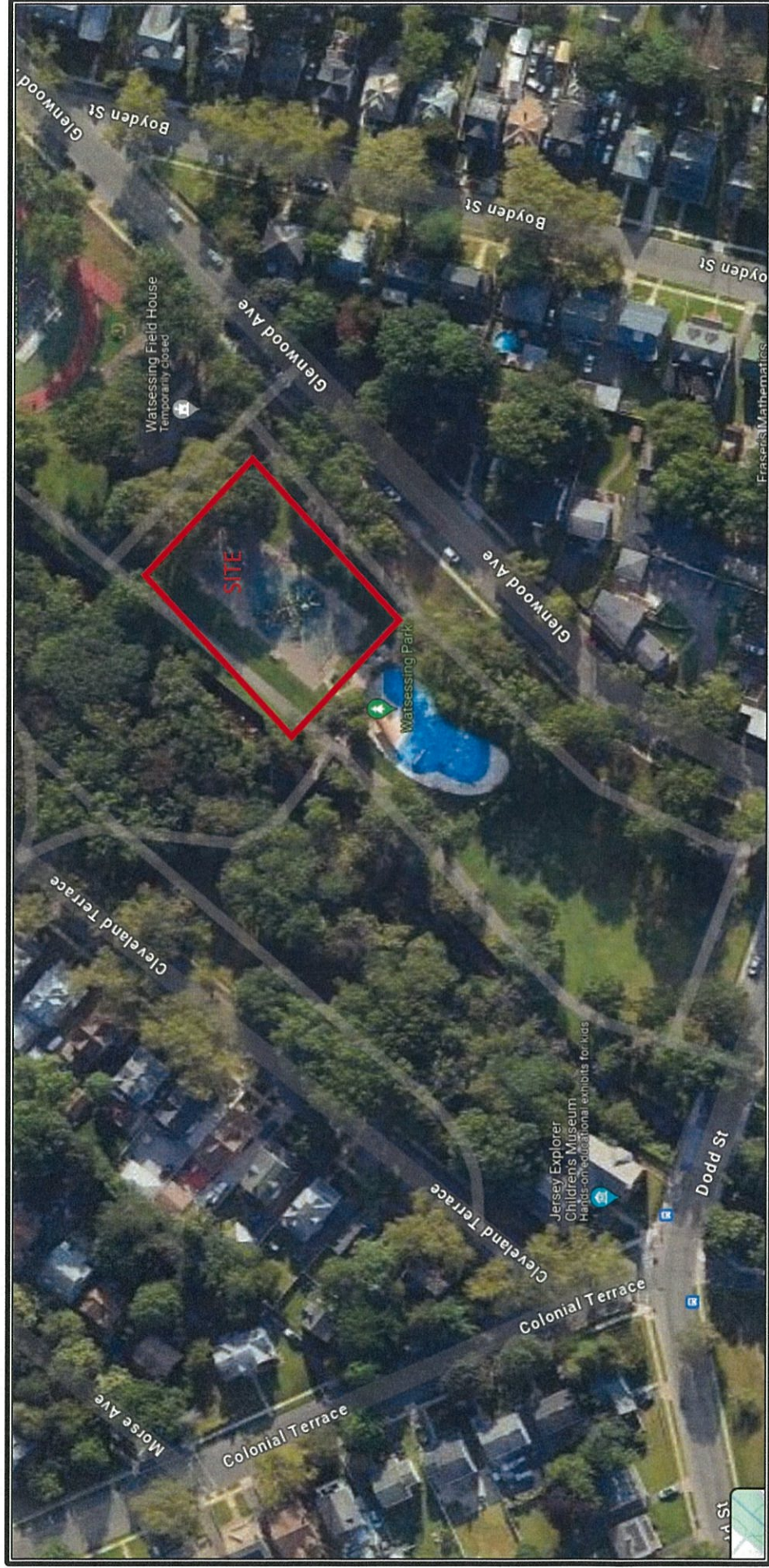
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# 2024 GREEN ACRES

County of Essex

## WATSESSING PARK – PLAYGROUND IMPROVEMENTS



## **Environmental Impact Assessment Outline**

### **1. DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT**

- a. Briefly describe the total development project

The Essex County Parks Department is seeking to replace the playground in Watsessing Park, located in a portion of the park footprint that is within the City of East Orange. The scope of work includes playground safety surfacing, paver and concrete walkways, separate play equipment for 2-5 year olds and 5-12 year olds, fencing, landscaping, drainage, and irrigation improvements, and park appurtenances such as benches for seating areas.

- b. State objectives of the project

The objective of the project is to upgrade the Essex County Park System to ensure that all facilities are in a good state of repair and provide safe and enjoyable play for residents and visitors of all ages. The existing playground equipment has surpassed its useful life and is in need of replacement to meet the current and future needs of youth and families visiting the park for play.

- c. Fully describe multi-phase projects

Not applicable.

### **2. DESCRIPTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT**

Describe existing environmental features:

- a. Vegetation

Watsessing Park is located on 69.67 acres in the Townships of Bloomfield and East Orange, in the eastern section of Essex County. The park is development is significant tree plantings and grass lawn areas.

- b. Wildlife, including State and federal threatened and endangered species and critical habitats

The park is home to a variety of non-migratory birds and is a known flyover for various species of migratory birds travelling along the North American Flyway. Further, the environment in Watsessing Park supports a variety of mammalian quadrupeds, such as foxes, raccoons, chipmunks, and squirrels. There are no known state or federal threatened or endangered species or critical habitats within the park, which is located in a densely populated urban area.

- c. Geology, Topography, and Soils

The park is relatively flat. The property sits on the Passaic Formation, a Triassic-era formation consisting mainly of shale and sandstone. The soils found within the park consist mainly of loam and sandy-silts with varying amounts of gravel and pebbles to be found intermixed.

- d. Water Resources/Hydrology

The meandering Second River (originally "Wigwam Brook"), joined in Watsessing Park by Toney's Brook, flows through this long open park alignment.

- d. Historic/Archeological Resources

There are no known historic or archeological resources in the park.

- e. Transportation/Access to Site

The park is accessible to multiple transportation options. Watsessing Train Station is located a short distance to the south of the park and Bloomfield Train Station is located a short distance north of the park, both within a 5 minute walk to a park boundary. Watsessing Park is also bounded by the Garden State Parkway, making it accessible to travelers from throughout northern New Jersey. Watsessing Park is also intersected by Bloomfield Avenue, Dodd Avenue, and Glenwood Avenue, major thoroughfares in Essex County that include multiple NJ Transit bus stops.

1. Adjacent land uses/description of the surrounding neighborhood

The surrounding neighborhood is composed of dense residential and commercial uses. The eastern boundary of the park is comprised primarily of the Garden State Parkway, with the southern portion bounded to the east by Glenwood Avenue.

**3. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ANALYSIS OF PROPOSED ACTION**

a. Discuss all affected resources and the significance of each impact

The proposed project is to replace existing playground equipment that has surpassed its useful life. The impacts are minimal as the project proposes one-for-one replacement of existing park features, including walkways, benches, and playground equipment.

b. Discuss short-term and long-term project impacts

The short-term impact is lack of access to playground equipment while the project is under construction. The long-term impact is a quality, safe play space for kids ages 2 to 12.

c. Discuss anticipated increase in recreation and overall use of site over time

Recreation and overall use of the site is not anticipated to change over time as a result of the project, which proposes one-for-one replacement of exiting park features that have surpassed their useful life.

d. Identify adjacent environmental features that may be affected by the proposal

Adjacent features include grass lawn areas and tree plantings. Also, across the adjacent paved pathway runs the Second River. The project is not anticipated to impact these adjacent environmental features, however, the County of Essex will ensure proper sediment and soil controls to ensure no materials enter the river as a result of the project.

e. List any permits required for project and brief status (i.e., waterfront development)

The only permit anticipated is a Soil Erosion and Sediment Control permit.

f. For development that would impact an undisturbed portion of the project site, the local government must submit a Natural Heritage Data Request Form to the DEP's Office of Natural Lands Management (form available at the website or by writing to Natural Heritage Program, PO Box 404, Trenton, New Jersey 08625-0404). Please attach and discuss the results of the search.

Not applicable. The project is not located at an undisturbed portion of the site.

g. Discuss if/how the project may be impacted by sea level rise and any related design considerations.

The project is not anticipated to be impacted by sea level rise. Severe weather may result in flooding of the Second River, however, impacts to the playground area are anticipated to be minimal, if any.

**4. ALTERNATIVES TO THE PROPOSED ACTION**

a. Identify alternate sites

The project proposes one-for-one replacement of existing playground equipment and park amenities. There are no alternative sites for the proposed scope of work, which is site and location specific.

b. Discuss alternate levels and types of development

The project proposes one-for-one replacement of existing playground equipment and park amenities. There are no alternative sites for the proposed scope of work, which is site and location specific.

c. Compare environmental impacts of each alternative

Not applicable. There are no alternatives to replacing existing playground equipment and park features.

## **5. MITIGATING MEASURES**

The proposed improvements will be occurring within the park's footprint, with no land acquisition required for project execution. As a result, adverse impacts to the surrounding area to the surrounding environment are not anticipated. Any required construction within the confines of the park will be executed with the intent of avoiding any unnecessary impacts to the park environment.

## **6. AUTHOR(S) AND QUALIFICATIONS**

Chris Sprague  
Grants Consultant  
Millennium Strategies