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DEPARTMENT OF
PARKS AND RECREATION

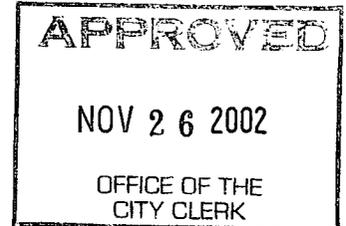
CITY OF SACRAMENTO
CALIFORNIA

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OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR

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November 8, 2002



City Council
Sacramento, California

SUBJECT: REQUEST TO RENAME THE FREEPORT SHORES YOUTH SPORTS COMPLEX THE "BILL CONLIN YOUTH SPORTS COMPLEX"

LOCATION AND COUNCIL DISTRICT: The Freeport Shores Youth Sports Complex is located on Freeport Boulevard in Council District 7.

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that City Council rename the Freeport Shores Youth Sports Complex the "Bill Conlin Youth Sports Complex" in memory of Bill Conlin.

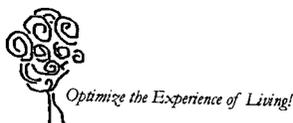
CONTACT PERSON: BOB OVERSTREET, DIRECTOR OF PARKS AND RECREATION
264-1190

FOR MEETING DATE OF: November 26, 2002

SUMMARY: A proposal has been made to name a youth sports facility in memory of local sports writer, editor, advocate, and community volunteer, Bill Conlin. Several facilities were reviewed and the Freeport Shores Youth Sports Complex is the suggested facility. The proposed renaming request has followed the City Council's naming policy for park and recreation facilities.

COMMITTEE/COMMISSION ACTION:

The Parks and Recreation Citizen's Advisory Committee discussed and approved the renaming request at their November 7, 2002 meeting.



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BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Information on Bill Conlin

Bill Conlin, a sports columnist and newspaper editor who chronicled losers and winners in Sacramento for 60 years, passed away on June 9, 1997 at the age of 84. Mr. Conlin, considered by many in the sporting community to be local legend, was the only person to hold the title of sports editor at both Sacramento daily newspapers, the Union and the Bee. He spent 39 years at the Sacramento Union, where his assignments ranged from reporter to sports editor, sports columnist, editor and assistant to the publisher. In 1979, Conlin was named the Sacramento Bee's sports editor.

Throughout his life, he took great pride in his sports column, a literate and newsy collection of impertinent questions, notable quotes, subtle jabs and understated opinions that brought Conlin's wit, humor and intelligence to three generations of Sacramentans. For several years, he wrote eight columns a week for the Union, seven on sports and one that covered local radio and television. In the 1950s and 1960s, he served as host on several radio and TV programs. At the Bee, his productivity astonished colleagues as Conlin passed age 70. In retirement, he didn't stop writing. His nostalgic Sunday column ran for almost 12 years in the Bee's sport pages.

Mr. Conlin's Contribution to Local Youth Sports

Mr. Conlin's focus was not only on professional level, adult sports. He gave major promotional assistance and support to the annual Father and Sons baseball banquet, which was a major event on the Sacramento social calendar in the 1960s and 1970s. (The banquet drew hundreds of Little Leaguers and their fathers, plus professional baseball players from Sacramento.) Mr. Conlin helped convince the owners of the old Solons baseball team at Riverside and Broadway to open the stadium free of charge to Little Leaguers on Opening Days, a Sacramento tradition for many years.

Mr. Conlin was a close friend of administrators and coaches from Sacramento and McClatchy high schools and a tireless promoter of their "Turkey Day Classic," the annual football game between the two high school that drew a packed house at Hughes Stadium. He also provided significant financial support to Christian Brothers High School and its youth sports programs. He wrote countless columns promoting the need for lighted baseball fields in Sacramento, arguing that kids in other communities had better facilities and thus better foundations for success in sports.

Mr. Conlin was the first journalist in Sacramento to get behind the idea of encouraging youth to take up golf, and encouraged city and county officials to establish youth-oriented instructional programs at municipal courses. He also encouraged families to take up fishing and hunting in the

regional area and teach these lifetime sports to youth.

He helped raise funds for Police Athletic League boxing events and the boxing training program for local youth at the Sam Gordon Washington Neighborhood Center.

He was a tireless advocate for quality public sports and recreational facilities in Sacramento, and believed that Sacramento youth deserved such facilities.

Citizen's Request and Process

The initial request to name a youth sports facility came from a group of Sacramento citizens including Jean Runyon, Bob Graswich, Randy Paragary, Charlie Coyne, and Gordon Robinson. In response, the following possibilities were suggested by City staff: 1) Freeport Shores Youth Sports Complex; 2) a diamond at William Land Park; 3) the new jogging path at William Land Park; 4) Airport Little League Fields, and 5) the Sacramento Softball Complex or any of the four individual fields.

It is recommended that renaming the Freeport Shores Youth Sports Complex is the most appropriate choice. It is a relatively new and developing facility with baseball fields. The other suggestions either do not provide as much visibility (2 & 3), or, the current name is reflective of the user group (4). Naming a diamond at the Sacramento Softball Complex was considered, however, it too would not provide as much visibility. To rename the Sacramento Softball Complex would not reflect Mr. Conlin's support of baseball and, this is a regional complex with an established name.

The proposed renaming of the Freeport Shores Youth Sports Complex meets with the approval of the citizens mentioned above who are making the request. They are offering to raise funds to develop new signage at the facility, visible from Interstate 5 (see site map), and to launch the "Bill Conlin Youth Sports Foundation" to help subsidize youth sports opportunities at the complex for low income youth.

The proposed renaming is recommended by the Director of Parks and Recreation and the City Manager. Councilmember Robbie Waters supports the renaming of the complex, which is in Council District 7.

Should City Council support this request, Department staff will move forward with the citizen group on designing and implementing new signage. Staff will also work with them to carry out the Youth Sports Foundation concept as appropriate.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS:

If this item is approved, Park Planning, Design and Development staff will estimate the cost of signage. Two signs have been recommended, at a cost of \$6,000 - \$7,000 each. The citizens group has committed to raise funds to pay for new signs.

POLICY CONSIDERATIONS:

City staff is following Council adopted procedure for naming park and recreation facilities.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS:

The action recommended is exempt from CEQA review.

ESBD CONSIDERATIONS:

No goods or services are being purchased with this action.

Respectfully submitted,



Robert G. Overstreet,
Director of Parks and Recreation

RECOMMENDATION APPROVED:

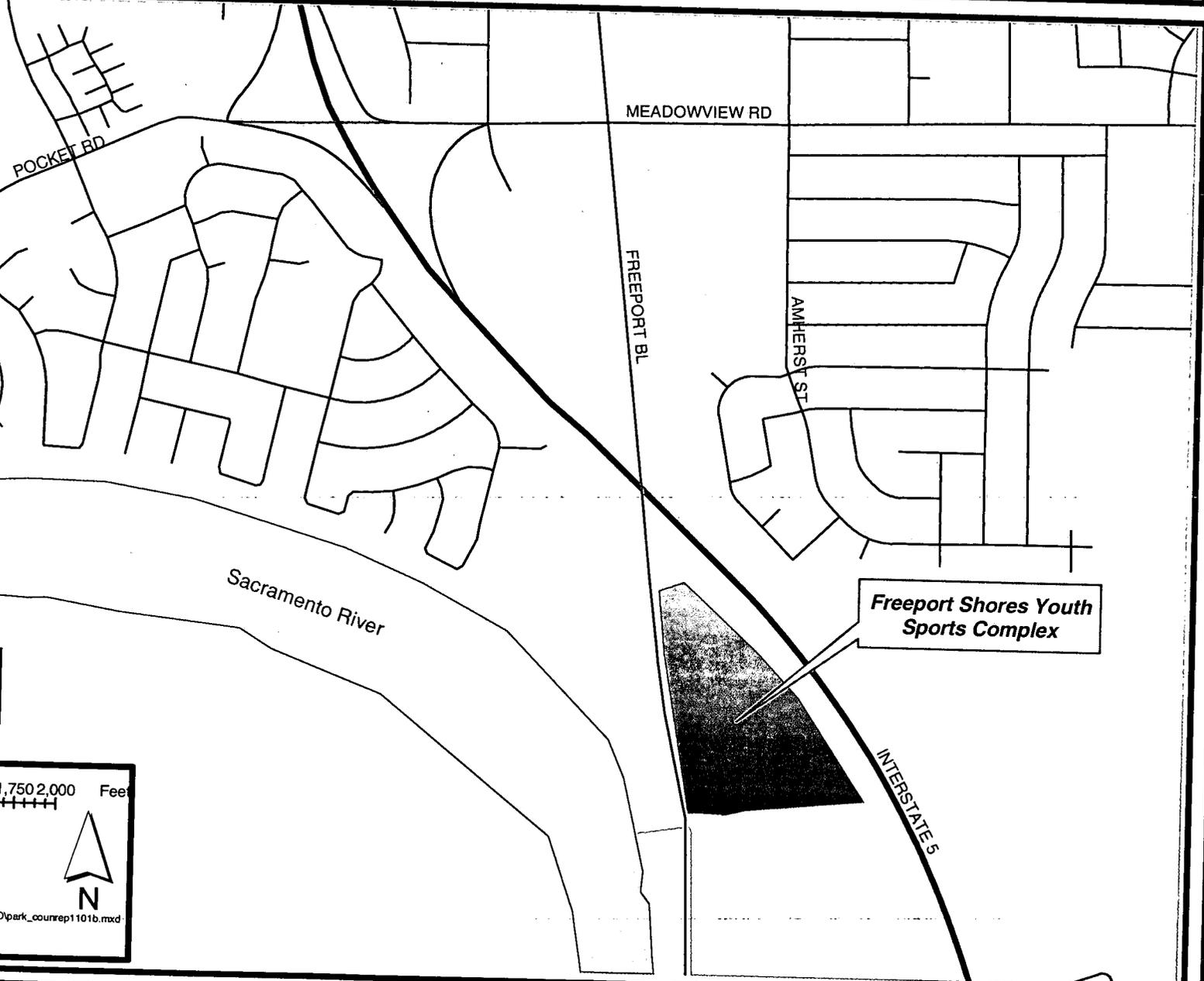
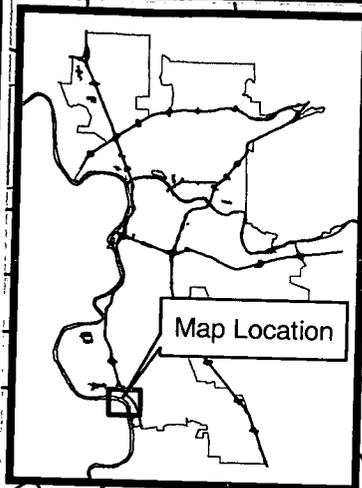


Robert P. Thomas, City Manager

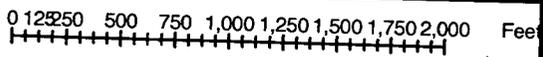
Attachment: Site Map



City of Sacramento Department of Parks and Recreation Freeport Shores Youth Sports Complex



City Limits



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November 4, 2002 jms