



UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
Tradition With The Future In Mind



Joint News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

City of Hughson Purchase of Lebright Fields from the Hughson Unified School District Reflective of Strong Local Collaboration and Shared Vision for Facility

“To get to this point is very important and I really appreciate that we have had a tremendous amount of cooperation from the School Board [Hughson Unified].” – Councilmember Ramon Bawan, Hughson City Council, August 27, 2018 Regular Meeting

On November 7, 2018, the transfer of ownership for Lebright Fields from the Hughson Unified School District, over ten years in the making, was made official. In August, both the Hughson Unified School District Board of Trustees and Hughson City Council authorized their respective administrators (School Superintendent and City Manager) to execute the said agreement and associated escrow documents.

The transaction resulted in the City of Hughson acquiring nearly 8 acres of property near the corner of Charles Street and Fox Road locally known as Lebright Fields for the agreed purchase price of \$295,000 based on an appraisal earlier in the year. A portion of the subject property was retained by the District which is the current site of Billy Joe Dickens Continuation School.

Originally contemplated back in 2008, the District and City instead entered into an agreement that saw the City maintain and operate the facility over the last decade in exchange for it being made available as a public park. This arrangement worked well until the City expressed interest in retaining ownership of the property so that it could actively pursue grant funding for its development as a state-of-the-art facility.

Although primarily used for baseball and softball, Lebright Fields has over the years supported other uses such as football, cheer, soccer and a host of community events. When not reserved for exclusive use, Lebright Fields is available on a first come, first serve basis.

Hughson Parks, Recreation and Entertainment Commission to Facilitate Lebright Fields Modernization Project

Following the acquisition of the Lebright Fields property from the Hughson Unified School District, the Hughson City Council directed City staff to work with the Hughson Parks, Recreation and Entertainment Commission to develop next steps for its development. This includes outreach with

Hughson residents and local youth sports organizations to solicit input and ideas, hiring a park architect to develop a design for the facility based on outreach, pursuing grant funding and private donations, and ultimate delivery of the Lebright Fields Modernization Project. The City intends to pursue grant funding from the California Parks and Water Bond (2018) which will require these efforts to begin in earnest in early 2019. The Hughson Parks, Recreation and Entertainment Commission, which meets the 2nd Tuesday of each month at City Hall at 6:00pm, will utilize a conceptual drawing that was prepared by the Hughson Youth Baseball/Softball organization several years ago as a starting point. It intends to revisit the design to ensure that it meets local needs but also considers the adjacent Rolland Starn Park in the planning.

Hughson Unified School District to Utilize Lebright Property Proceeds to Deliver Locust Street Improvements at Hughson Sports and Fitness Complex

The Hughson Unified School District has openly shared that it intends to use a portion of the proceeds to deliver the Locust Street Improvements at the Hughson Sports and Fitness Complex.

The Hughson Sports and Fitness Complex is located south of Samaritan Village with its main entry gate and parking lot just off Euclid Avenue. The 16-acre complex is nestled between the Hughson Arboretum and Gardens, the Province Place Development, the east end of Husky Memorial Stadium, and Samaritan Village.

Three soccer fields and a softball field are now in place as are four fitness courses and practice field space for football. A sidewalk has also been installed along with tribute benches connecting the parking lot area near Samaritan Village to the Hughson Arboretum and Gardens.

A large play space area has been developed to serve the recreation needs of the community. In 2017, the Deputy Dennis Wallace Soccer Fields were dedicated along with the construction of a Veterans Memorial Wall erected in memory of military service members and peace officers from Hughson that paid the ultimate sacrifice.

The facility is provided non-potable water from the City of Hughson at a reduced rate in exchange for it being made available to the public when not in use by the Hughson High School for its sport programs.

Now substantially completed, the Hughson Unified School District is interested in completing the necessary off-street parking improvements to improve traffic flow. The District will work with the City of Hughson, who will manage the construction project, to deliver the necessary improvements in early 2019 using the proceeds of the Lebright Fields properties.

The Hughson Unified School District is also working with the Hughson Sports and Fitness Complex Steering Committee, the City of Hughson and Stanislaus County to identify funding to pave the parking lot, currently undeveloped, and thereby fully complete the Hughson Sports and Fitness Complex.

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