



**City of Kingston
Report to Council
Report Number 25-056**

To: Mayor and Members of Council
From: Jennifer Campbell, Commissioner, Community Services
Resource Staff: Luke Follwell, Director, Engineering Services
Amy Elgersma, Director, Recreation & Leisure Services
Date of Meeting: February 18, 2025
Subject: Cricket Field Baseball Diamond Fencing Options

Council Strategic Plan Alignment:

Theme: 3. Build an Active and Connected Community

Goal: 3.1 Expand parks and recreation opportunities and participation.

Executive Summary:

In 2023, a junior baseball diamond was constructed in Cricket Field. It was a renovation of an existing diamond in the park. The project was undertaken to create the venue for the 2024 Canadian Little League Championship tournament.

As the park is in a heritage conservation district, the new diamond project required a heritage permit. The park historically did not have outfield fencing. Council approved the project on September 6, 2022 with the condition that the outfield fence and clay warning track be removed after the Little League tournament. The Sydenham District Association (SDA), district Councillor, at the time, and Kingston Baseball Association (KBA) were in agreement with this condition in 2022.

The Little League tournament was held in August 2024 at which time a significant amount of public concern was expressed about the removal of the fence. On September 3, 2024, Council approved a motion directing staff to consult with the SDA and the Kingston Heritage Properties Committee (KHPC) to identify options for temporary event or permanent fencing at the Cricket Field baseball diamond and report back in 2025.

February 18, 2025

Page 2 of 10

Four fencing options are included in this report for consideration. Options 1 and 2 include a permanent outfield fence. Options 3 and 4 include a temporary outfield fence. The SDA supports Option 4 as it poses the least constraint on the multiuse function of the open space in the park.

Recommendation:

Option 1:

That staff be directed to modify the existing baseball diamond fence in Cricket Field to include pedestrian gaps and gates as shown in Exhibit B to Report Number 25-056; or

Option 2:

That staff be directed to modify the existing baseball diamond fence in Cricket Field to include pedestrian gaps and gates, to reduce outfield sideline fencing and to provide temporary fencing for events as shown in Exhibit C to Report Number 25-056; or

Option 3:

That staff be directed to modify the existing baseball diamond fence in Cricket Field to include pedestrian gaps and gates, and to remove the existing homerun fence and replace it with seasonal fencing from May 15 to September 15 as shown in Exhibit D to Report Number 25-056; or

Option 4:

That staff be directed to modify the existing baseball diamond fence in Cricket Field to include pedestrian gaps and gates, to remove the existing homerun fence and to provide temporary fencing for events as shown in Exhibit E to Report Number 25-056.

February 18, 2025

Page 3 of 10

Authorizing Signatures:

ORIGINAL SIGNED BY COMMISSIONER

**Jennifer Campbell,
Commissioner, Community
Services**

ORIGINAL SIGNED BY CHIEF

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

**Lanie Hurdle, Chief
Administrative Officer**

Consultation with the following Members of the Corporate Management Team:

Paige Agnew, Commissioner, Growth & Development Services	Not required
Neil Carbone, Commissioner, Corporate & Emergency Services	Not required
David Fell, President & CEO, Utilities Kingston	Not required
Ian Semple, Acting Commissioner, Transportation & Infrastructure Services	p.p.
Desirée Kennedy, Chief Financial Officer & City Treasurer	Not required

February 18, 2025

Page 4 of 10

Options/Discussion:**Background**

The Cricket Field was proposed as part of a bid for the Little League Canada 2023 national championship tournament due to its unique setting and location in the City. There was a delay due to the pandemic but Kingston was ultimately awarded the 2024 event. Planning for the project began in 2022 and Council approved the capital budget in 2023. The community association and local Councillor were consulted and were in support of the event but had some concerns about changes to the park. Fundamentally, they did not support a new fully enclosed baseball diamond in the park. The park did not have outfield fencing on the baseball diamond which historically allowed for a high level of multiuse function of the open space in the park (Exhibit G).

As the park is located in the Sydenham Heritage Conservation District, the renovation of the existing baseball diamond required a heritage permit which was reviewed and recommended by the Heritage Committee and approved by Council on September 6, 2022. The application included a number of conditions as seen in Exhibit F. Notably, the following conditions were required:

- A temporary outfield fence was permitted but was to be removed after the tournament.
- A new clay “warning track” to demarcate the outfield fence was permitted but was to be removed after the tournament.

The SDA and local Councillor were satisfied that these conditions addressed their concern about the changes to the park at the time. The KBA accepted the conditions.

In 2024 as the start of the tournament was imminent, staff and Council began to receive a significant amount of public feedback over the fence removal requirement. This feedback continued through the event and on September 3, 2024 Council approved the following motion:

Whereas the Cricket Field located at 32 Bagot Street has been utilized by the community for many years and is part of a municipally designated property under the Ontario Heritage Act; and

Whereas in 2022 following engagement with the Sydenham District Association and the Heritage Kingston, City Council approved improvements to the Cricket Field, including a temporary fence and gates around the outfield to support a national championship tournament in Kingston; and

Whereas the temporary fence around the outfield was intended to be removed post-tournament based on direction from City Council; and

Whereas some members of the community have shared concerns about the removal of the temporary fence as they see value in its retention for future uses, including potential future events; and

February 18, 2025

Page 5 of 10

Whereas City Council wants to ensure that it maximizes the taxpayers' investments in community infrastructure;

Therefore Be It Resolved That City Council direct staff to consult with the Sydenham District Association and the Kingston Heritage Properties Committee to identify options that could possibly result in an event based or permanent outfield fence at the Cricket Field, either through use of the existing temporary fence or a new fence; and

That Council direct staff to consider options for reuse or relocation of the temporary outfield fence should it not remain at the Cricket Field to maximize taxpayers' investment; and

That Council direct staff to leave the temporary outfield fence at Cricket Field until staff report back with options in early 2025.

Analysis

The following options meet the outfield fencing requirements for league, divisional, provincial and national-level championships. These options were presented for discussion through consultation with the SDA and the KHPC. The SDA supports Option 4. The SDA does not support Options 1-3 but prefer Option 3 over 1 and 2.

In addition, staff engaged with the KBA, Tourism Kingston (TK) and the Kingston Accommodation Partners (KAP) for their awareness and input.

While the number of events hosted at the Cricket Field will vary from year to year, KBA has been selected to host the 2025 National Little League Championships, July 15-23, and intends to submit a bid to host the Championships for the next five years. For the upcoming season, KBA has expressed interest in hosting approximately six events of varying play levels at the park.

Fencing Options

Option 1 – Permanent outfield fencing (Exhibit B)

This option provides a permanent fully enclosed ball diamond. Pedestrian gaps and gates would be added to increase park circulation and safety.

Approximate cost: \$50K

Option 2 – Permanent homerun fence with open sidelines (Exhibit C)

- This option provides a semi-enclosed ball diamond with the outfield sideline fencing removed but the homerun fence retained. Pedestrian gaps and gates would be added as well. The open sidelines of this option provide improved sight lines, park circulation and safety over Option 1. While sideline fences are not a requirement for the championships,

February 18, 2025

Page 6 of 10

they enhance safety, particularly during highly attended games. For the Cricket Field, in particular, the first baseline is in close proximity to the roadway, making the addition of sideline fences for championship events an important safety measure.

Temporary event fencing for the sidelines would be purchased by the City and provided for events.

Approximate cost: \$75K

Operating cost per event: \$2-3K

Option 3 – Seasonal homerun fence (Exhibit D)

This option provides an enclosed ball diamond between May 15th and September 15th.

The existing homerun fence would be removed and sideline fences retained. The homerun fence would be replaced with a modular fence that would be used 4 months a year aligning with typical baseball programming. Pedestrian gaps and gates would also be added to increase park circulation and safety. The seasonal homerun fence would allow for a high level of park circulation as well as multiuse of the open space in the off season. While prime park usage occurs in May to September, Cricket Field does see significant shoulder season use by university students which would be accommodated with this option.

Seasonal or semi-permanent sports fencing is used extensively in multi-use university sports facilities. It is typically aluminum or steel with below grade socket-type post sleeves similar to tennis posts. The sockets would have safety covers installed in the off season.

Approximate cost estimate: \$220K

Operating cost per season: \$15-20K

Option 4 – Temporary event homerun fencing (Exhibit E)

This option provides an enclosed ball diamond during baseball events but not for day-to-day league play. The existing homerun fence would be removed and sideline fences retained. The removal of the homerun fence would allow for the highest level of park circulation as well as year-round multiuse of the open space.

Temporary event fencing for the homerun fence would be purchased by the City and provided for events. The per use installation cost of the temporary homerun fence would need to be incorporated into tournament rental rates or added as a be a charge back to the user groups requesting the installation for their event. In this option, a professional quality portable sports fence would be used. It was selected based on its ease of installation, safety and expected performance for the application, and for its robust construction and expected lifespan. The product has a proven track record of use in NCAA softball and baseball facilities and for a number of their national championship events. It is also widely used by high schools, softball

February 18, 2025

Page 7 of 10

and Little League baseball facilities, and for their national championship events. It is used in municipalities in multiuse sports parks and can be found in recreational complexes on US military bases. The 2015 Pan Am games in Toronto used this product for their events as well.

Little League Canada, the Ontario Baseball Association (OBA) and typical rep (competitive local team) tournaments require a full outfield fence. Typical house league tournaments require a homerun fence. The proposed temporary event fencing would be acceptable for championship play within these different levels of tournaments.

Approximate cost: \$130K

Operating cost per event: \$3-4K (charged back to the user as part of the event fee)

Common Elements to All Fencing Options

All fencing options include the following:

- The current yellow poly cap protective fence topper be replaced with a black fence topper.
- Minor reduction/adjustments of the fully enclosed fencing around the players’ benches (dugouts) and pitchers’ warmup areas (bullpens) would be implemented to reduce the risk of entrapment, illegal activity and to improve public safety. The KBA would be consulted on the details of those modifications.
- The clay warning track be retained.
- The existing yellow fence topper and surplus fence supplies (fabric, posts, rails, hardware, etc.) would be retained for ongoing asset maintenance in other parks.

Table 1: Fencing Options

Description	Restriction to Park Open Space	SDA Endorsement	Cost
Option 1 – permanent outfield fence	Highest level of restriction to open space	Does not support	\$50K + \$0 per event
Option 2 – permanent homerun fence, no sideline fence	Lower level of restriction than Option 1	Does not support	\$75k + \$2-3K per event

February 18, 2025

Page 8 of 10

Description	Restriction to Park Open Space	SDA Endorsement	Cost
Option 3 – seasonal homerun fence	Same restriction to open space as Option 1 from May 15 th to September 15 th . Same level of restriction as Option 4 in the off season	Does not support - but prefers over Options 1 and 2	\$220K + \$15-20K per season
Option 4 – temporary event homerun fence	Lowest level of restriction to open space	Support	\$130K + \$3-4K per event

Other Considerations

Fencing - Options 1 or 2 rely on the reuse of existing temporary chain link fence which was installed without footings. Ongoing operational costs and a reduced fence lifespan is expected with these options.

Cost estimates for Options 2 and 4 include professional grade sport-specific temporary event fencing. Alternate fencing materials could be used in place of the sport fence; however, they are not purpose-built as baseball diamond fencing. Lower-cost fencing options could include:

- Construction fence rental with weights for stability and a poly safety cap. Typically managed by a private installer. This type of fencing is regularly used when alternate field dimensions are required for tournaments. This fencing can be made safe for a sport use application but is not as high quality of a play experience as a purpose built product and requires more inspection and maintenance during an event. It was used in Kingston as an outfield fence for a 2019 provincial championship tournament at Veteran’s Field. This fencing is not likely to be suitable for Little League Canada events.
 - o Capital cost for Options 2 and 4 reduced to \$50K
 - o Approximate rental cost per tournament \$2-4K
 - o The purchase of professional grade sport specific event fencing could be deferred until a national level event was awarded with construction fence used in the interim for lower-level tournaments.

- Nylon fencing with plastic posts. This is a light duty sport specific fence that would not be suitable for provincial or national tournaments. Typically used for occasional house league events and managed by volunteers.
 - o Approximate cost to purchase \$2-5K

February 18, 2025

Page 9 of 10

Maintenance - There isn't expected to be a significant difference in park maintenance requirements in the four options.

Option 1 will provide a high level of protection to the play surface as vehicles would not be able to drive on the diamond and cause damage. This has been an issue in some other parks but not historically at Cricket Field.

The maintenance of the curved homerun fence warning track in Option 4 is expected to be more challenging with a lack of a permanent fence to guide grooming and grass cutting.

The current fully enclosed diamond is being used as an informal dog park. Some turf damage and waste issues are expected. Dog park use would be reduced with the removal of some or all of the outfield fence as shown in Option 2 or 4 and Option 3 in the off season.

Public Engagement

Staff met with the SDA in November 2024 to discuss options for the Cricket Field baseball diamond outfield fencing. While not part of the Council direction, staff briefed the KBA and TK on the fencing options being considered and took in feedback as well. At the request of the SDA, staff hosted a meeting with the SDA, the KBA and TK to discuss fencing options as a group. A representative from KAP also attended. There wasn't clear consensus on the topic by the end of the meeting.

The SDA prefers that the park function and appear as an unconstrained, multi-use, open space as per the park's historic configuration and usage. The retention of the homerun fence is the main concern as it divides the park and limits the use of the overall space. The SDA supports option 4 (temporary event fencing) as outlined in this report as it allows the multi-use of the park for all residents when temporary event fencing is not installed.

Kingston Heritage Properties Committee Report

Information [Report Number HP-25-003](#) was presented to the KHPC on December 18, 2024. Staff briefed the Committee during the meeting.

From a technical perspective there were no concerns by the Committee with any of the options. Comments from individual committee members included a range of preferences from retention of the fence in Option 1 or 2, to a preference for removal in Option 3 (seasonal fencing) and Option 4 (temporary event fencing). Heritage staff commented that while all options are sympathetic to the original use of the site, they supported the alternate, less visually obtrusive colour for the fence topper (black) as an improvement to the existing views of the courthouse.

A delegate from the SDA presented further information regarding the historic uses of Cricket Field and the SDA's preference for a temporary event fence to replace the existing outfield fence to better allow shared use of the park. A member of the public expressed concern over the perceived loss of the open space in Cricket Field and expressed a desire that the outfield fence and partial sideline fencing be removed.

February 18, 2025

Page 10 of 10

Existing Policy/By-Law

Kingston City Council Meeting, October 4, 2022 – Clause 3iii of Report Number 91: Received from Heritage Kingston with respect to Application for Ontario Heritage Act Approval – 32 Bagot Street.

Financial Considerations

The current approved project included a requirement to remove the outfield fence and warning track which was expected to cost approximately \$25K for which budget has been preserved. The costs for the options in this report range from \$50-220K. The increased capital cost of these options over the original project scope would be accommodated within the current capital budget.

Annual operating cost of the options in the report range from \$0-25K.

Contacts:

Luke Follwell, Director, Engineering Services, 613-546-4291 extension 3139

Other City of Kingston Staff Consulted:

Amy Elgersma, Director, Recreation & Leisure Services

Tony Gargaro, Manager, Recreation & Leisure Services

Kevin Gibbs, Director, Heritage Services

Karen Santucci, Director, Public Works & Solid Waste

Troy Stubinski, Manager, Public Works

Exhibits Attached:

Exhibit A – Cricket Field Aerial Photo

Exhibit B – Option 1 - Permanent Fencing

Exhibit C – Option 2 - Permanent Fencing with Sideline Openings

Exhibit D – Option 3 - Seasonal Fencing

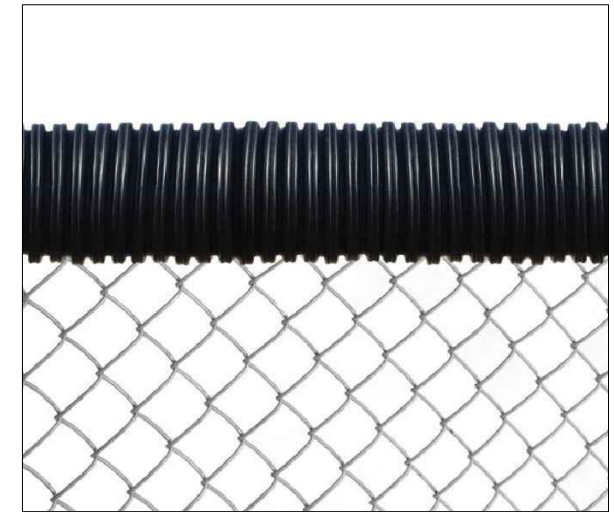
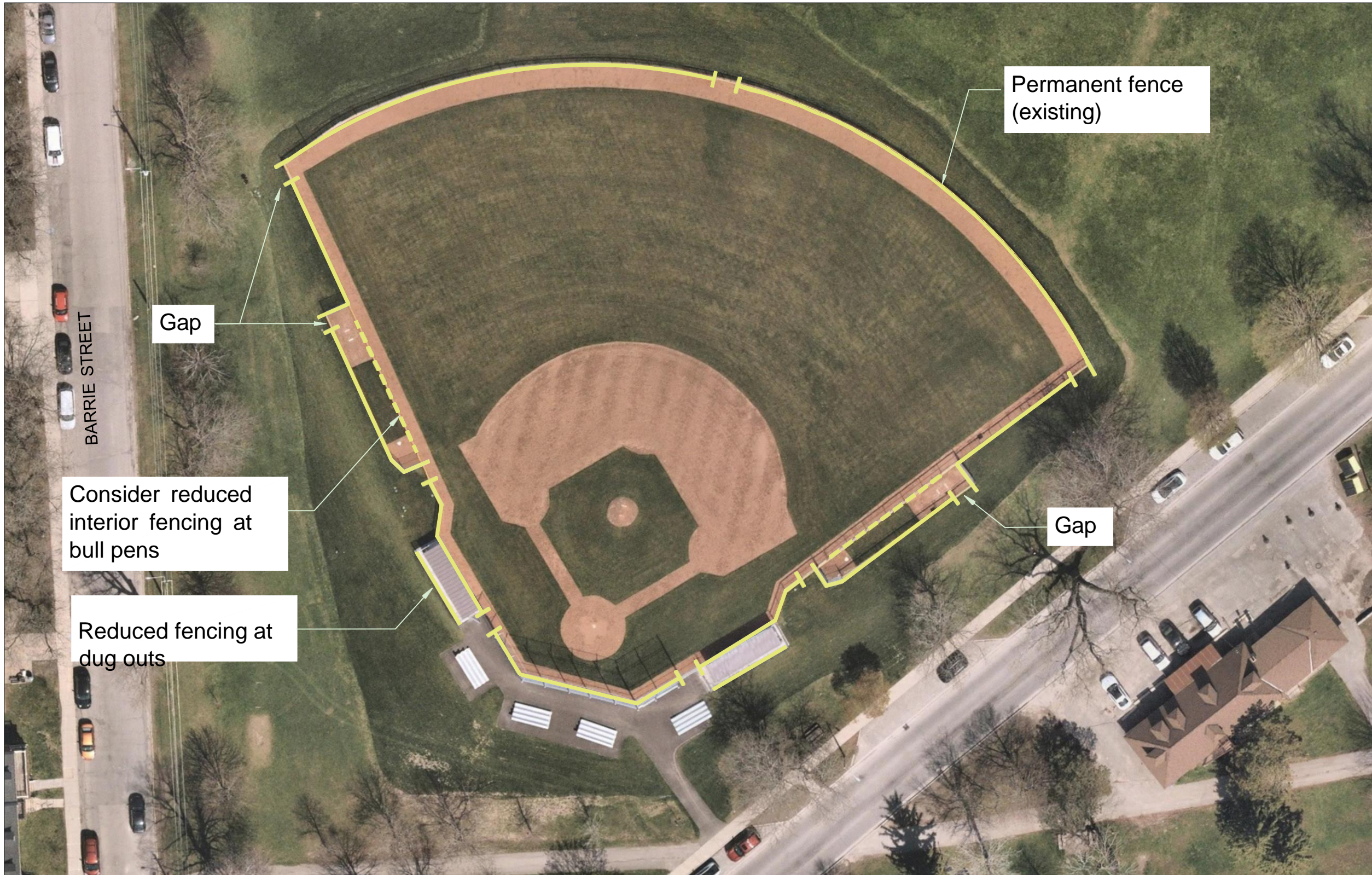
Exhibit E – Option 4 - Event Fencing

Exhibit F – Reporting Out – October 5, 2022 Clause 3iii of Report Number 91

Exhibit G – Open Space Diagram

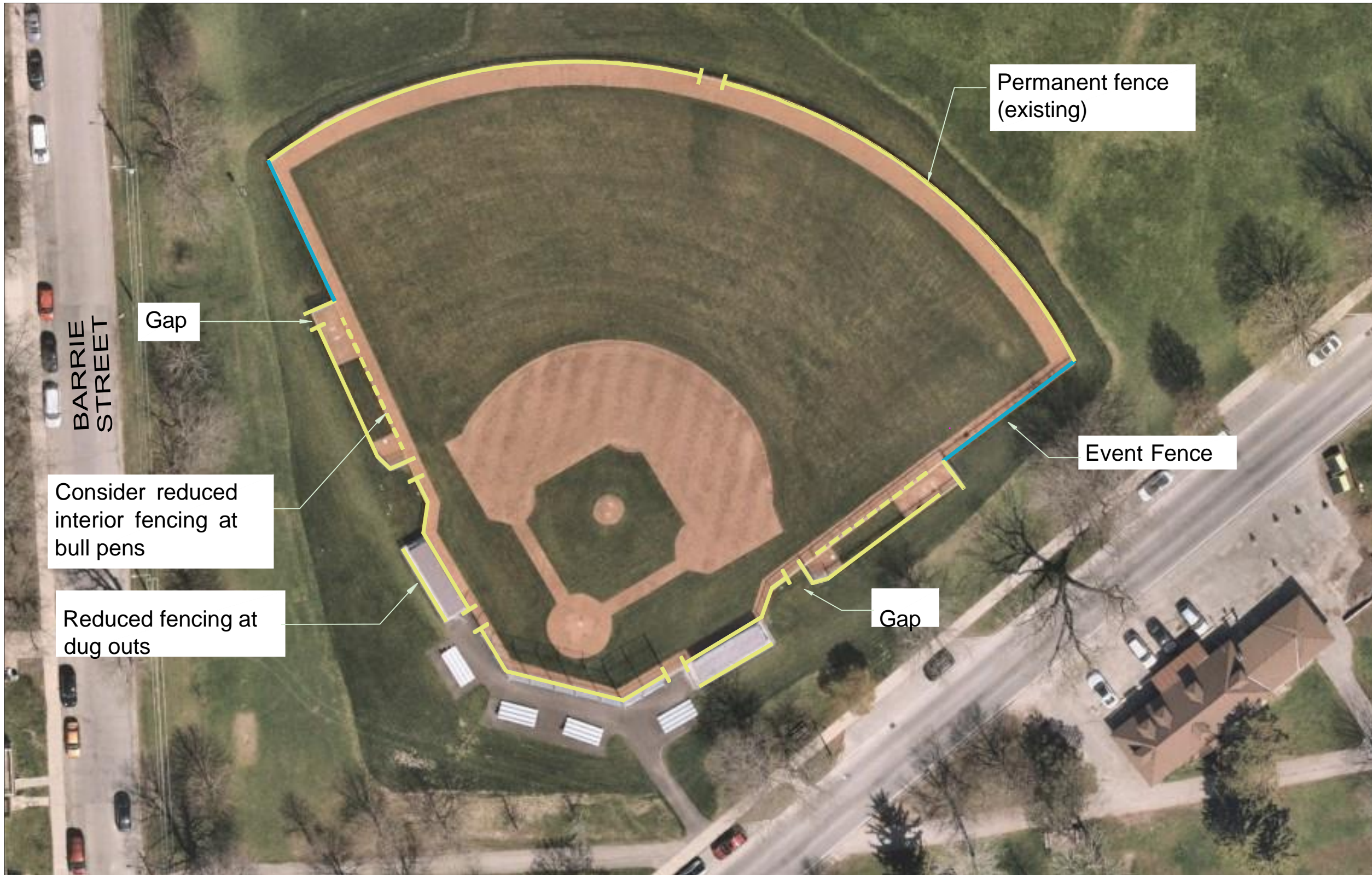


Cricket Field - Existing Condition




New fence topper

OPTION 1
Permanent fencing.
New fence topper.
All gaps would have gates.
Maintenance gate included.

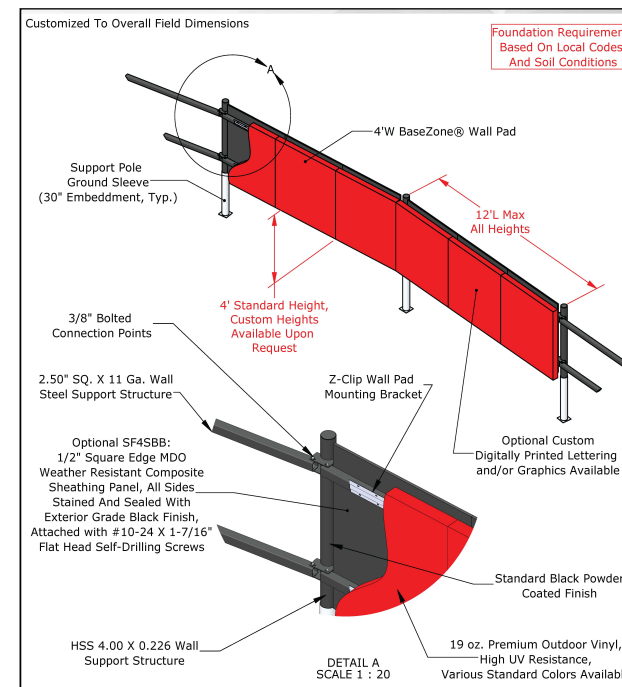
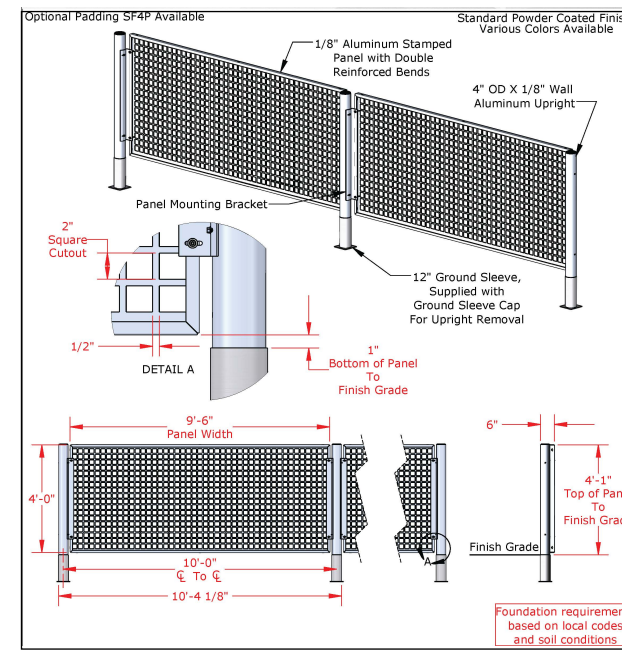
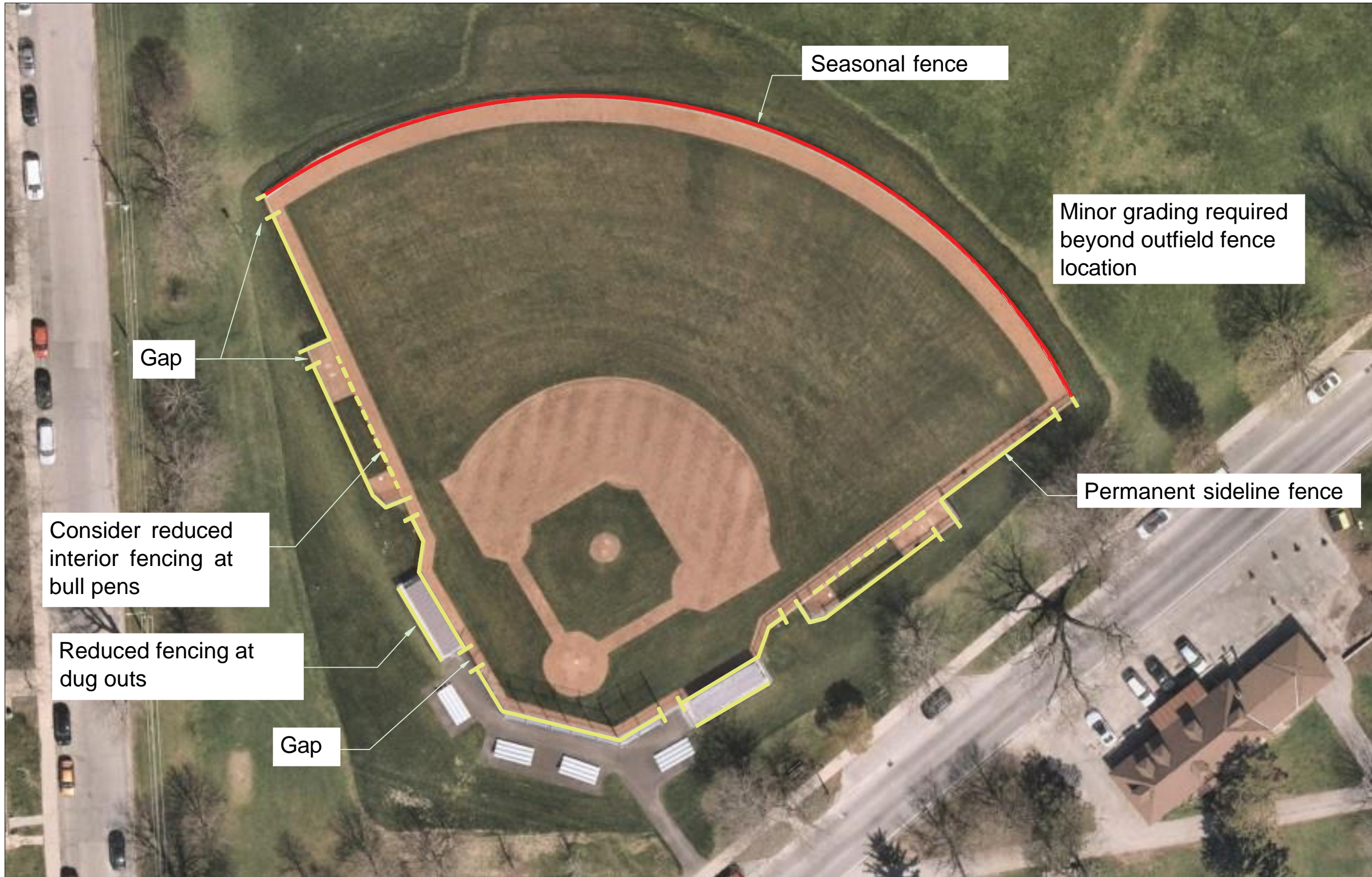


Sports event fencing

Legend

 Event fence

OPTION 2
Permanent fence.
New fence topper.
All gaps would have gates.
Reduction of sideline fencing. Event fencing to enclose outfield as required.



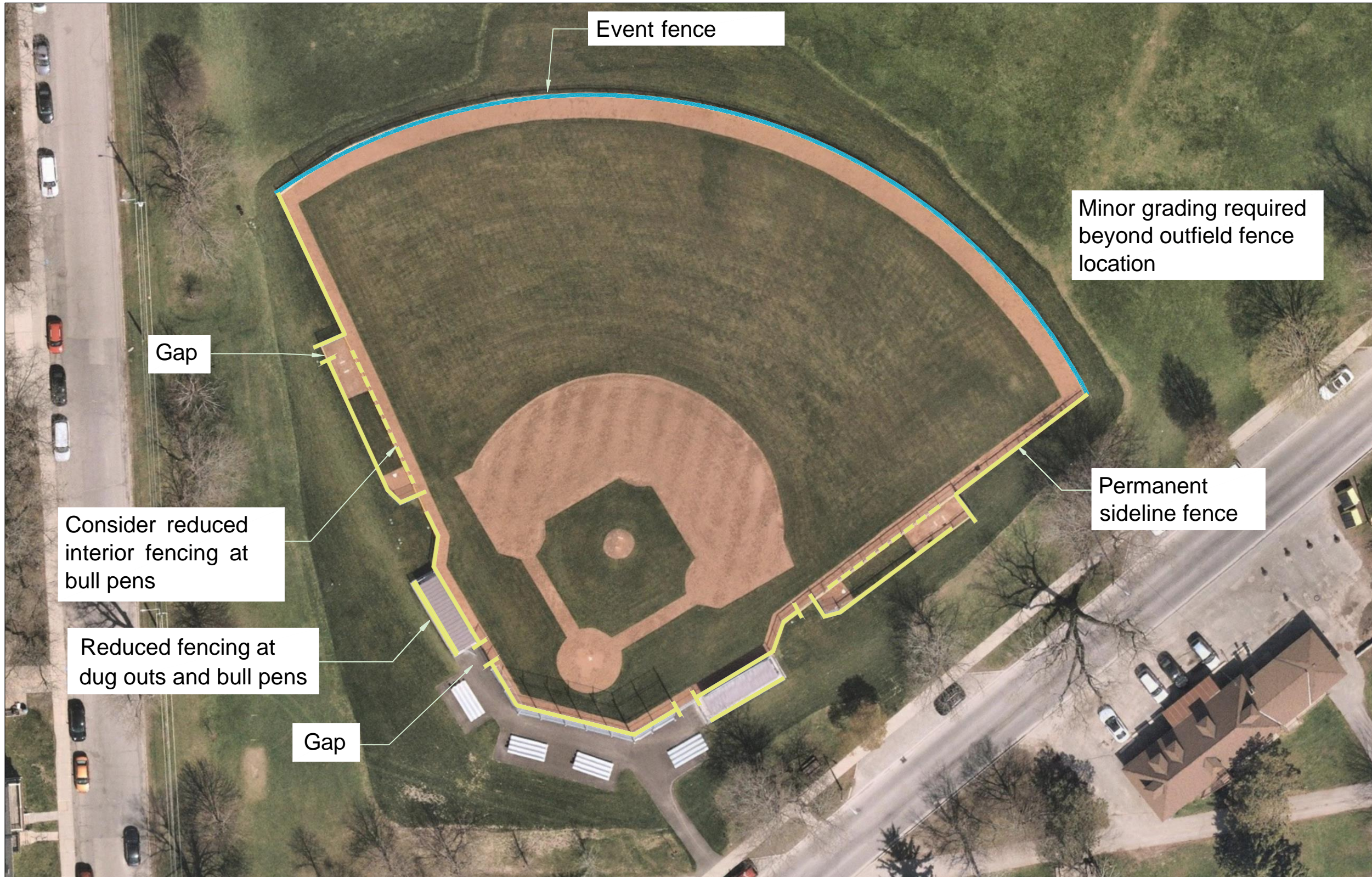
OPTION 3

Seasonal outfield fence - in place May 15 - September 15.
Permanent sideline fence with maintenance gate. All gaps would have gates.
Outfield fencing to be removed and stored in off-season.

Legend

— Seasonal fence

Seasonal Fencing Options



Event fencing



Fence topper

OPTION 4
Event fencing.
Permanent sideline fence with maintenance gate. All gaps will have gates.
Event fencing to be removed and stored between events.

Legend
Event Fence



Office of the City Clerk

October 5, 2022

Via email: lpquin@cityofkingston.ca
nunsworth@cityofkingston.ca

Laurie Paquin, Project Manager
Neal Unsworth, Manager
The City of Kingston
216 Ontario Street
Kingston, ON K7L 2Z3

Dear Laurie & Neal:

Re: Kingston City Council Meeting, October 4, 2022 – Clause 3iii of Report Number 91: Received from Heritage Kingston with respect to Application for Ontario Heritage Act Approval – 32 Bagot Street

At the regular meeting on September 6, 2022, Council approved Clause 3iii of Report Number 91: Received from Heritage Kingston with respect to Application for Ontario Heritage Act Approval – 32 Bagot Street:

That alterations to the property at 32 Bagot Street be approved in accordance with the details as described in the application (P18-082-2022), which was deemed complete on July 25, 2022 with said alterations to include:

1. Relocate the baseball diamond approximately 30 metres southwest;
2. Grade the baseball diamond and outfield;
3. Replace the existing backstop with a new backstop. The new backstop is to be 6.75metres tall and 23.25 metres wide with a canted overhang of 1.5 metres, with galvanized posts and chain-link fencing;
4. Install an asphalt pathway to connect the diamond to the existing paved pathway and sidewalk at Bagot Street;

5. Install a “warning track” made of clay to demarcate the perimeter of the field/outfield (outfield portion to be removed post-tournament);
6. Install a home plate and a pitching plate;
7. Install two foul posts;
8. Install two covered dugouts in concrete approximately 2.7 metres tall, 2.5 metres side and 1 metres wide. Dugouts to have a powder coat finish, with the final colour to be determined with staff;
9. Install two bullpens and associated catcher’s areas, one on each side of the diamond infield;
10. Replace, like-for-like, two aluminum sports field bleachers with an approximate capacity of 30 persons each;
11. Install galvanized chain-link fencing around the infield at approximately 1.8 metres tall;
12. Install temporary tournament fencing and gates in a galvanized steel colour around the outfield approximately 1.2 metres tall (outfield portion to be removed post-tournament); and

That the approval of the alterations be subject to the following conditions:

1. Heritage planning staff shall be consulted on the relocation of any trees;
2. Heritage Planning staff shall be consulted on the final colours of the fencing and dugout;
3. Heritage planning staff shall be circulated the Grading Plan for review/comment;
4. A Grading Plan be submitted and approved, as necessary;
5. A Building Permit shall be obtained, as necessary;
6. Heritage Planning staff shall be circulated the drawings and design specifications tied to the Building Permit application for review and approval to ensure consistency with the scope of the Heritage Permit sought by this application; and
7. Any minor deviations from the submitted plans, which meet the intent of this approval and does not further impact the heritage attributes of the property, shall be delegated to the Director of Heritage Services for review and approval.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John Bolognone', with a stylized flourish at the end.

John Bolognone
City Clerk
/nb

C.C. Erin Semande, Ontario Heritage Trust
Ryan Leary, Heritage Planner



Cricket Field - Park Open Space