Legislation Text

File #: 2026-0793, **Version:** 1

To: Board of Directors of the Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District
Department or Agency Name(s): Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District, Sonoma County Regional Parks
Staff Name and Phone Number: Misti Arias, General Manager, 565-7264; Pamela Swan, Grants Coordinator, 565-7348; Regional Parks: Bert Whitaker, Director, 565-3351
Vote Requirement: Majority
Supervisorial District(s): Fourth

Title:
Approval of Tom Schopflin Fields Phase 2 Community Spaces Matching Grant Project (Property No. 0659)

Recommended Action:

1) Adopt a Resolution of the Board of Directors of the Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District (Ag + Open Space):
   A) Approving a $993,342 in Community Spaces Matching Grant Program (Community Spaces funding to Atlético Santa Rosa (”Atlético”) towards its development and improvement of the Tom Schopflin Fields Phase 2;
   B) Determining that the project is consistent with the Sonoma County General Plan 2020 and the Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District's Expenditure Plan;
   C) Approving and authorizing the General Manager to execute a Matching Grant Agreement by and between Ag + Open Space, Atlético Santa Rosa, and the County of Sonoma, acting by and through its Regional Parks Department (”Regional Parks”);
   D) Approving and authorizing the President of the Board to execute a Recreation Covenant and associated certificate of acceptance to be conveyed by Regional Parks;
   E) Consenting to the recordation of an irrevocable offer of dedication in favor of Ag + Open Space pursuant to Public Resources Code §5565.5;
   F) Making findings as a responsible agency under the California Environmental Quality Act and directing the filing of a Notice of Determination;
   G) Authorizing the General Manager to take all other actions necessary to complete this transaction in consultation with County Counsel.
2) Adopt a Resolution of Board of Supervisors of the County of Sonoma:
   A) Approving and authorizing the Chair to execute a Matching Grant Agreement by and between Ag + Open Space, Atlético Santa Rosa, and the County of Sonoma, on behalf of the County of Sonoma;
   B) Approving and authorizing the Chair to execute a Recreation Covenant on behalf of the County of Sonoma in favor of Ag+ Open Space;
   C) Approving and authorizing the Chair to execute an irrevocable offer of dedication on behalf of the County of Sonoma in favor of Ag+ Open Space pursuant to Public Resources Code §5565.5.

Executive Summary:

The Tom Schopflin Fields Phase 2 project is a Community Spaces Matching Grant Program (Community Spaces) project, which will provide a $993,342 grant to Atlético Santa Rosa (Atlético), towards the improvements needed to develop a soccer field on Sonoma County Regional Parks (Regional Parks) property, including the planning and design, infrastructure, landscaping, and recreational improvements. Atlético will provide $506,658 in matching funds towards design, construction and operations and maintenance.
This grant builds upon Ag + Open Space's and the County's investment in the development of Tom Schopflin Fields, including the original acquisition in 1996, conveyance to Regional Parks, and acceptance of a conservation easement over the site in 2000, all intended to address the need for open space multi-use playing fields to serve youth in the county.

This item requests this Board to approve the implementation grant and related actions as noted above, which will result in the installation of a planned playing field and related infrastructure, thereby completing the final step in field construction of the Tom Schopflin Fields master plan. As a condition of funding, the County will convey a recreation conservation covenant to Ag + Open Space ensuring that the property remains open to the public forever.

Discussion:

History of Site:
Tom Schopflin Fields is a 21-acre County Regional Park located along Old Redwood Highway and lies in the community separator north of Santa Rosa (the Property). Ag + Open Space purchased the Property in 1996 and ultimately transferred the Property to Sonoma County Regional Parks on October 12, 2000, for a planned playing field site. As a condition of the transfer, the County conveyed a conservation easement over Tom Schopflin Fields to Ag + Open Space. At that time, Ag + Open Space did not require recreation conservation covenants concurrent with conservation easement acquisition. Consistent with the governing master plan, the Property currently hosts a multi-use baseball/soccer field, two all-weather soccer fields, a concession building, bathrooms, a parking lot, a paved walking trail, a restored wetland, and a 4.5-acre undeveloped area. The facilities have been constructed in phases using grant funding, park mitigation fees, and private donor contributions.

The first phase, completed in 2002, included a multi-use soccer and baseball field with an adjacent parking lot. A successive phase was originally planned to include one more combined-use baseball and soccer field. However, in 2006, the Board of Supervisors approved developing the area into two all-weather soccer fields. These fields, commonly referred to as Trione Fields, were financed and constructed by Sonoma Soccer Complex, which has a 25-year lease with the County. This change was made to meet the increasing demand for soccer in the community. The remaining undeveloped field area was included in a 2017 conceptual plan update as a field type change. Regional Parks staff performed a California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) review at the time of the update and did not find significant changes in project or project circumstances from the original Master Plan for Tom Schopflin Fields, which was adopted by the Board of Supervisors in compliance with CEQA on May 18, 1999, via Resolution No. 99-0633.

On March 18, 2025, Sonoma County Board of Supervisors approved the Regional Parks lease agreement with Atlético, a non-profit soccer academy, for the construction, operation, and maintenance of a new all-weather soccer field at Schopflin Fields. The lease supports the expansion of public recreational opportunities consistent with the adopted Master Plan for the site, helping to address a shortage of year-round sports fields

while fostering organized youth and community soccer programs in the region.

Community Spaces Project:

The Community Spaces project grantee is the nonprofit Atlético, which submitted the Tom Schopflin Fields Phase 2 application for the 2024 Community Spaces funding cycle. The application was accepted by Ag + Open Space's Board of Directors on December 10, 2024, with the recommendation of a $993,342 improvement grant. Atlético will contribute $506,658 in matching funds toward this improvement project. The grant application is in partnership with Sonoma County Regional Parks, which manages this county-owned property. Atlético, will conduct all improvements and operations as described in the Community Spaces matching grant agreement, and in alignment with governing planning documents, including the Tom Schopflin Fields Master Plan. As noted above, the Property is subject to an existing Conservation Easement held by Ag + Open Space. As a condition of the Phase 2 grant, Regional Parks is conveying a recreation covenant to Ag + Open Space.

The Tom Schopflin Fields Phase 2 Project will develop, operate and manage a planned, new public all-weather soccer field addressing the county's significant shortage of accessible sports facilities, providing a vital outdoor open space for physical activity and community building. Special attention will also be paid to target services for underrepresented minority youth, including bilingual outreach and collaboration with local organizations serving these populations. Regional Parks' and Atlético's primary objectives for Tom Schopflin Fields Phase 2 are to create an open space soccer field to address the demand for practice and playing fields for the county's youth. The Tom Schopflin Fields Regional Park Master Plan outlines a sports complex featuring three multi-use soccer and baseball fields, a concession stand, restrooms, paved walking path, and a parking lot. The Tom Schopflin Fields Phase 2 Community Spaces project represents the last field development phase of the property's Master Plan.

Conservation Easement and Recreation Conservation Covenant

The existing Conservation Easement over the Property allows the parcel to be used for active public recreation and protects open space and scenic values while allowing for recreational uses on the Property. As a condition of the grant, Ag + Open Space will require a Recreation Conservation Covenant that will require the Property to remain open to the public for recreational and educational purposes in perpetuity. To secure performance of the Recreation Covenant, Regional Parks will record and offer to dedicate the property as a condition of the grant.

Matching Grant Agreement

Funding for this $993,342 improvement grant will be administered through a Matching Grant Agreement between Ag + Open Space and Atlético, in partnership with Regional Parks. The grant funds will support planning and design, site preparation, and field installation. As the match, Atlético will contribute $506,659, which represents a 50% match. The matching funds will be used for project implementation, design, and operations. The match is secured and comes from District 4 Infrastructure Funds and other fundraising.

Vital Lands Initiative

This Project meets multiple objectives described in the Vital Lands Initiative:

- Protect open space and publicly accessible lands in and near cities and communities and connect people with protected lands.
- Protect open lands that surround and differentiate the County's urban areas and contribute to the unique scenic character of the County.

Sonoma County General Plan 2020

This Project furthers several goals and policies in Sonoma County's General Plan 2020, specifically in Land Use, Open Space and Resource Conservation, as noted in the following below:

- Preserve the visual identities of communities by maintaining open space areas between cities and communities. (Goal OSRC-1)
- Promote a sustainable future where residents can enjoy a high quality of life for the long term, including a clean and beautiful environment and a balance of employment, housing, infrastructure, and services. (Goal LU-11)

Ag + Open Space's Expenditure Plan

This project is consistent with Ag + Open Space's Expenditure Plan because it will offer opportunities for public recreation and access. Further, this project is consistent with the Expenditure Plan as it provides urban open space through the Community Spaces Matching Grant Program.

Ag + Open Space Fiscal Oversight Commission Approval

On June 4, 2026, the Fiscal Oversight Commission, in approving Resolution No. 2026-005, concluded the acquisition of the Recreation Covenant as a condition of Ag + Open Space's grant towards the Project does not result in the Ag + Open Space paying more than the fair market value for the acquisition of that interest.

California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)

The proposed resolution authorizing execution of the Matching Grant Agreement and Recreation Covenant makes responsible agency findings pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA"), as required by CEQA Guidelines section 15096. The proposed actions by Ag + Open Space promote planned recreational uses of the Property, and no mitigation is required for any part of the project to be funded by the grant. However, Ag + Open Space is required to make broader findings about the significant impacts of the larger project as a responsible agency relying on the County's prior environmental review. The proposed resolution makes the required findings, which are also described here.

On May 18, 1999, the County adopted a Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) for the Tom Schopflin Fields Project, which includes development of a 21-acre site for the sports fields which now comprise Tom Schopflin Fields. Environmental analysis of the whole Tom Schopflin Fields Project resulted in a determination that the Project will not have a significant effect on the environment, as mitigated. Ag + Open Space must, as a responsible agency, make certain findings prior to approving the recommended grant to Atlético Santa Rosa, and acceptance of the Recreation Covenant. No substantial changes are proposed to the previously approved Project and there are no substantial changes in circumstances or new information that would require revisions to the MND. Therefore, no further environmental review is required under CEQA.

The attached resolution finds that the Board of Directors of Ag + Open Space has, in its independent judgment, reviewed and considered the MND prepared by the County, which is on file with the Clerk of the Board, and further finds, as to those potential impacts within Ag + Open Space's powers and authorities as a responsible agency, that the MND contains a complete, objective, and accurate reporting of the Project's potential impacts and that mitigation measures have been adopted to substantially lessen the potentially significant effects of the Project. The resolution further finds that (1) a new subsequent or supplemental MND is not authorized by CEQA Guidelines sections 15162 and 15163, as none of the triggers for further environmental review are met, (2) no alternatives or additional mitigation measures are required to address

the direct or indirect environmental effects of the limited parts of the project that Ag + Open Space is deciding to fund or approve.

The Board's adoption of the proposed resolution directs the General Manager to file with the County Clerk and the Office of Planning and Research a notice of determination pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21152.

Strategic Plan:
This item directly supports the County's Five-year Strategic Plan and is aligned with the following pillar, goal, and objective. Evaluating Community Spaces applications with the Portrait of Sonoma Human Development Index, it was determined that the Tom Schopflin Fields Phase 2 census tract's residents experience lower than county average income, health and education rates.

Pillar: Healthy and Safe Communities
Goal: Goal 2: Establish equitable and data-driven distribution of services
Objective: N/A

Racial Equity:
Was this item identified as an opportunity to apply the Racial Equity Toolkit?
No

Prior Board Actions:
On March 25, 2025, the Board of Directors approved a Tom Schopflin Lease Agreement between Atlético Santa Rosa and Sonoma County Regional Parks.

On December 10, 2024, the Board of Directors approved the recommendation from Ag + Open Space staff to accept Atlético Santa Rosa's Community Spaces Matching Grant Program application with recommended funding of $993,342 in an implementation grant.

On September 12, 2023, the Board accepted the County of Sonoma Capital Project Plan 2023-2028, including subject Schopflin Fields project.

On October 3, 2000, by Resolution 00-1224, the Ag + Open Space Board of Directors approved the transfer of Tom Schopflin Fields to the County and the County conveyed a conservation easement to Ag + Open Space.

On May 18, 1999, by Resolution 99-0633, the Board of Supervisors adopted a Mitigated Negative Declaration, and Approved the Use Permit/OSAA Authorization for three (3) Multi-Use Baseball/Soccer fields on Tom Schopflin Fields, a 21-acre property and authorization for an Outside Service Area Agreement (OSAA) for Sever to a Public Agency.

On September 17, 2017, the Board of Directors approved the Schopflin Fields Master Plan.

On April 4, 1996, Ag + Open Space acquired Tom Schopflin Fields (formerly known as "Unity Fields").

FISCAL SUMMARY

Expenditures	**FY 26-27 Adopted**	**FY 26-27 Projected**	**FY 27-28 Projected**
Budgeted Expenses	$993,342		
Additional Appropriation Requested			
Total Expenditures	$993,342		
Funding Sources			
General Fund/WA GF			
State/Federal			
Fees/Other	$993,342		
Use of Fund Balance			
Contingencies			
Total Sources	$993,342		

Narrative Explanation of Fiscal Impacts:
Ag + Open Space has adequate appropriations in its FY 26-27 budget for the $993,342 contribution to this improvement grant, which is funded by Sonoma County voter-approved Measure F.

Narrative Explanation of Staffing Impacts (If Required):
N/A

Attachments:

1. Ag & Open Space Resolution
2. Regional Parks Resolution
3. General Plan Map 2020
4. Location Map
5. Site Plan
6. Notice of Determination
7. Matching Grant Agreement
8. Recreation Covenant
9. Offer to Dedicate
10. Project Structure Map

Related Items "On File" with the Clerk of the Board:

1. Conservation Easement
2. Sonoma County Regional Parks Lease Agreement with Atlético Santa Rosa
3. Tom Schopflin Fields Master Plan
4. Tom Schopflin Fields Community Spaces Matching Grant Application