

RECEIVED ON: December 1, 2022

Council Meeting: 12/13/2022
Agenda Item No. 13.A.

From: Lorena Fuentes <fuentes.lorena@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, December 1, 2022 2:38 PM
To: WebMail - PubWks <PubWks@cityofwhittier.org>
Subject: Support for Murphy Ranch Little League Baseball Field Lighting Project

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Dear City of Whittier Leadership,

Thank you for your unanimous decision last year to allocate the necessary funding for Murphy Ranch Little League to install lights on Murphy Ranch Field as the solution for lack of field space and showing your support for our parents, children and community.

During the Covid-19 pandemic, children had no opportunity to play organized sports, including Murphy Ranch Little League. The negative physical and mental health impacts on Whittier's children were apparent and we continue to work through it. Our children, parents and league are resilient and forward thinking!

Field access and space are the constraints of many youth sports organizations, especially youth baseball. We are blessed with beautiful playing fields (which we maintain to the highest standards) however, now that our merger with Whittier Little League (founded in 1939) is official, and because we also serve children from surrounding communities, we are at a crossroads.

In the past, accommodating more than 500 players without lights was a logistical challenge. Now that we are the ONLY remaining Little League organization serving the City of Whittier, we expect a continued surge of players and are desperate to accommodate the challenging Rubik's Cube of practice and game scheduling.

As of the end of November 2022, we have nearly 600 registered players for a season that will not start for three more months. We will soon have to close registration and place families on a Wait List, not because we have constraints on coaches, equipment, uniforms but because of the limit on field space.

Murphy Ranch Little League, founded in 1958, is perhaps the only youth sports facility in Whittier without the benefit of lights. Our kids deserve great recreational facilities and without lights we cannot operate to our full potential. Installing lights at Murphy Ranch will alleviate the current constraints of our fields and our ongoing battle against the setting sun.

Like many underserved communities, most of Whittier (per capita income \$2,800 below national average, \$5,000 below state average) is comprised of families with working adults, moms and dads who are police officers, firefighters, car mechanics, carpenters, plumbers, grocery clerks who need to be at their jobsite. Whittier white collar and professional positions have to go into work with travel times longer than the national average.

CC: CM; ACM; CA; Council; Original to CC; Public Binder; Department

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Without lights, most weekdays, only one team or one game can be played on each of our two fields.

Your decision to install lights will change that. We will not have to fight for daylight, and we will have the ability to accommodate working-class families in our underserved communities. Our coaches and parents always ask the league if there is any way we can start the practices later. Or they ask if we can we stack more games on weekends so they can come and watch their son or daughter play their games?

Unfortunately, without lights, we cannot accommodate the schedules of many of our parents. We have REAL issues with many players missing practices and games because of parent/guardian work schedules.

We are asking for the City of Whittier to please finalize, approve and complete this project for the year 2022. We are eager, and desperate to get this project completed so we can continue our responsibility of mentoring, teaching, and helping grow ALL the children of Whittier. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Lorena Briones, parent of MRLL player