

# CLASSIFIED/BIDS Grant Fields



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*continued from front*  
a drainage system.

"It's been a long haul, but it's slowly advancing," says Lloyd Lindley, the president of the friends of Grant group, a non-profit created to raise funds for the project as well as create community awareness of neighborhood sports programs. "We're about 60 percent of the way toward completion of the design process, and it's a great time to show the public where we're at."

The boosters will join school and parks officials during an open house to showcase the project designs on Wednesday, March 16 at 5 p.m. in the Grant High foyer.

When completed, Grant will be the fourth public school in Portland to install an artificial turf field, although this project is unique because the Grant Bowl is owned by Portland Parks and involved administrative approval from two public organizations, which has created additional hurdles beyond simply raising funds.

"There's been some additional paperwork involved," says Matt Shelby, the public information officer for the school district, "but that's given the project another advocate and that's very helpful, especially because the Parks Department has some funding available for the capital campaign."

The district has installed artificial turf fields at Lincoln (2001), Cleveland (2007) and Roosevelt, which opened its field in fall. Roosevelt is still working to complete fundraising for its track.

When the Lincoln field opened, the school system provided architectural drawings for revamping the fields at its other nine high schools in order to provide a sense of unity. The key ingredient to each upgrade was securing monies for the projects, which remains the single largest hurdle for every school.

Lincoln parents raised more than \$1 million for their field and resurfaced track. Cleveland parents raised

more than \$2 million. Roosevelt's project included a fundraising manager who worked within the school to raise nearly \$2 million.

Friends of Grant Athletics kicked off its capital campaign in September and, Lindley says, has raised more than \$400,000 from more than 600 donors.

Lindley says the vision to install turf at the Grant Bowl began in 1999 when then football coach Gary Thorson proposed playing home games inside the bowl. The vision quickly evolved to installing turf and advanced once Lincoln installed its field. Because of the Grant Bowl being a public park, the overall project required a significant level of public input, which slowed the process and altered the original design.

and they've been itching to get going for a long time. It's great to see it moving forward."

Not only would the fields be used by Grant High athletics, but nearly two dozen community organizations, from Police Activities League to soccer clubs and Little League, would use the facilities.

With three fields already constructed at PPS high schools, Lindley says the Grant High project may ignite the larger project to install turf fields at Madison, Franklin, Jefferson and Wilson at the same time. Installing turf fields is a feature of the \$548 million facilities bond measure the school district has put before voters on the May 17 ballot.

"We don't know how the ballot measure is going to come out, and that's a bit of a hurdle because some potential donors are waiting to see the results," Lindley says. "But there's a lot of interest in helping create equity for students throughout the district and that involves

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- Matt Shelby, public information officer for the school district

The original vision included construction of permanent seating within the bowl to accommodate fans for home football and soccer games. It also included installation of lights. To address neighborhood concerns related to noise and increased traffic, the plans for seating as well as lights were eliminated.

Shelby says there are still neighborhood concerns related to traffic and parking, but there is significant neighborhood support as well.

"Facilities like these are a neighborhood asset and can quickly turn into a source of neighborhood pride," he says. "They've got the capacity to raise the funds for this

building fields at more than just Grant at the same time.

"In a broader view, it makes a lot of sense to build more fields because that gives the district more inventory and makes the fields last longer."

The field at Lincoln is past its marketed life span, but remains one of Portland's most used fields with youth clubs and adult recreational leagues running events most nights throughout the year.

Passage of the facilities bond would provide most, but not all, of the funding for turf fields at the other Portland high schools.

For more information on the Grant project, visit [friendsofgrant.org](http://friendsofgrant.org).

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