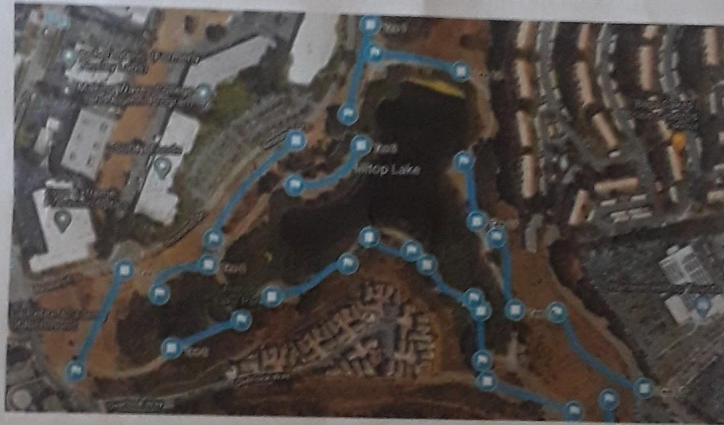


The Committee to Preserve Hilltop Lake Park

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The Hilltop Lake Park is under great threat by a group of individuals who are planning to build a Disc Golf Course around the lake. For those of you unfamiliar with Disc Golf, it is similar to regular golf in name only. Instead of using balls, sharp-edged discs, the size of small Frisbees are hurled at "highway speeds" toward baskets many yards away. These discs have sharp edges and cannot be outrun by people or animals who might get in their way. The potential for injuries to people and animals is serious. It would be impossible for non-players to enjoy their park as long as a game is underway. No one would feel safe to walk their dogs, to stroll, to fish, or to simply enjoy the quiet nature of this beloved preserve. It is estimated that as many as 100 players might show up at any given time.

At every blue dot on the map, serious construction would need to be done in order to place the baskets on poles five feet high as well as the necessary cement bases, which would seriously disrupt the habitat for our animal friends, not to mention the peace and quiet we all crave.



We believe this beautiful park is not an "underutilized resource," but rather a natural habitat in the midst of an urban jungle, a place of solitude for all use—to stroll, to think, to walk your dog, to fish and to enjoy the wildlife (raccoons, skunks, ducks and the occasional visit by Canadian geese and deer.)

As Sierra Club's John Rizzo said of a similar proposal for Disc Golf across the Bay, "This activity has the potential to do serious damage to McLaren Park's wild, open spaces. In Golden Gate Park, disc golf has destroyed the undergrowth and ground cover that provide habitat for animals."

The Committee to Preserve Hilltop Lake Park
Rosie Sorenson, MA, MFT, Chairperson
RosieSorenson29@yahoo.com

March 14, 2021

We are writing to inform everyone living or working near the park that a dangerous project is now in the early stages of construction at the Hilltop Lake Park.

A small group of Disc Golf players have convinced several Richmond City Departments to allow them to take over the entire park by putting in an 18-hole Disc Golf Course. In case you are unfamiliar with Disc Golf, it is played with Frisbee-like, sharp-edged discs which are hurled at speeds of up to 70 mph, into metal baskets.

The entire 36 acres of park will be littered with many 5' X 12' x 4" cement "tees" and baskets hanging on poles 5' off the ground. Whenever players are flinging around their sharp-edged, 70 mph discs, no one will be safe—not animals, not adults and certainly not children.

The developers have not been honest with the "deciders" in Richmond. They never bothered to consult park users. We only found out about it two week ago, by accident. Ever since then we've been working 8-9 hours per day to contact the Parks and Rec folk, the City Council, the Neighborhood Council, and others. We have been to The Parks and Rec Commission meeting, as well as the City Council meeting and are doing other out-reach activities as well.

In fact, the City Council had never heard of this plan until we contacted them. We gave a tour on Saturday to Councilman Nat Bates and Councilman Eduardo Martinez. They became very concerned and want to stop this ill-conceived project.

We are working with an engineer who has given us Google maps with diagrams of exactly where all the tees and baskets will be placed. They are also going to install stairs at several sites!

Here's the link for the locations of the tees, baskets, stairs, etc. I think you will be as shocked as we are.

<https://www.google.com/maps/@37.5000000,-77.2000000,15z/data=!3m1!1e3!3m2!1s0x8962c7c7c7c7c7c7:0f167bd6d6e&>

If you are as outraged as we are, please contact council members NOW!! This boondoggle is going to be discussed at the Tuesday, March 16 City Council meeting:

NatBates@comcast.net; Tom.Butt@intres.com; Eduardo_Martinez@ci.richmond.ca.us;
Gayle_McLaughlin@ci.richmond.ca.us; melvin_willis@ci.Richmond.ca.us;
Demnlus_Johnson@ci.richmond.ca.us; Claudia_Jimenez@ci.richmond.ca.us.

Mayor Butt and his son, Andrew, Greg Hardesty of Parks and Rec and Jon Braidman, President of the East Bay Disc Golf Association and a contractor named Scott Riley are behind this selfish and dangerous project. So far, they've blown off all our concerns. They are going to push this through, the park users and animals be damned.

This beloved park will no longer be a park for everyone. I'm afraid that these players will deprive everyone, including wildlife, of their right to enjoy the park. I haven't read or heard anything about their plans to recruit more women or minorities. Where is the diversity?

Thank you very much for your help!

Kind regards,



Rosie Sorenson, MA, MFT
Chairperson, The Committee to Preserve Hilltop Park Lake