

Executive Summary

Introduction

Athens Drive High School is an existing facility located in the City of Raleigh. At the time of its construction, the school was designed for a capacity of 1,600. It now has a student enrollment of 2,025. Due to the constraints of the current site, the stadium was constructed nearby on property owned by the City of Raleigh. At the present time, there are challenges with respect to student parking, parking for stadium events, and availability of field facilities for the stadium.

Scope of Study

Based upon functional challenges at the existing stadium, Anegram Studio was retained to analyze the existing facilities relative to their adequacy relative to:

- Compliance with WCPSS Educational Specifications.
- Overall scope to address deferred maintenance / facility condition needs.
- Overall scope to address handicap accessibility needs.

These factors have been analyzed and incorporated into three scenarios that represent a range of options to address the needs of the stadium facilities. We have identified three distinct strategies for doing so, along with order of magnitude probable costs.

Description of Alternatives

The scenarios we identified present three basic strategies:

School Alternative – this strategy consolidates all school site functions on WCPSS property.

School/City Alternative – this strategy relocates the stadium function onto WCPSS property adjacent to the school, so that existing locker and shower facilities in the school can be used in conjunction with the stadium.

City Alternative – this strategy keeps the stadium in its current location, but provides new locker and shower facilities at the stadium, as well as addressing condition and accessibility needs at the existing stadium.

Each of these strategies is outlined with a scope description, an analysis of advantages and disadvantages, and an order of magnitude project budget in the sections that follow.

Cost of Alternatives

The probable project costs for each of the alternatives is:

School Alternative	\$ 9,302,000
School/City Alternative	\$ 4,339,000
City Alternative	\$ 4,451,000

None of these figures contains phasing costs, nor do they consider the relative operating costs. The School/City Alternative would have a much greater site area to maintain. This was beyond the scope of our study, though. We have presented initial construction costs in order for the comparative purposes only.

Analysis and Recommendations

Overall

In evaluating the existing stadium, there were functional concerns, condition concerns and accessibility concerns. The first framework to evaluate is the functionality.

The primary functional compromise currently is the distance between the stadium and the locker and shower facilities. So the basic strategy is either to provide those facilities at the stadium, or to move the stadium. The notion of consolidating all functions on WCPSS property seemed a logical extension of the latter strategy. But that factor was tertiary.

The secondary functional compromises at the stadium have to do with the condition and capacity of event parking, including suitable emergency vehicle access. As we surveyed the existing facility, though, there were some pedestrian flow concerns that emerged, such as the awkward placement of the existing ticket booth and the narrowness of the main gates.

The lack of existing parking capacity at the campus was a discovery made during our analysis, and one which we felt was essential. Our findings are outlined in Section 03C. We believe that any significant capital project at this campus needs to address this need. Therefore, all of the alternatives address this concern by providing an additional 218 parking spaces.

Alongside the scopes of work that need to be included in each alternative is a possibility that a driveway connection will be required between the stadium property, which is owned by the City of Raleigh, and the adjacent neighborhood via Thea Lane. Therefore, these costs are included in all of the alternatives for a controlled-access driveway connection.

Individual Alternatives

City Alternative: The first basic strategy is to leave all the athletics functions in their current locations. Initially, this seemed very straightforward and logical. One advantage of this is to maintain the identity of the existing school and Williams Stadium. Leaving the stadium in place would require locker and shower facilities to be constructed at the stadium. At the same time, it would not be

reasonable to provide these facilities without also addressing other functional, deferred maintenance and handicap accessibility needs.

School Alternative: The second basic strategy is to relocate the stadium so that it is near the school building. This would allow the team locker and shower facilities in the school to be shared between the gymnasium and the stadium. In order to fit the entire stadium on site, it would be necessary to redevelop the western end of the site where the play fields are currently located. In order to accommodate all of the field functions and the additional parking capacity, it would be necessary to construct an elevated parking structure. The result of this would be that all of the WCPSS facilities would be located on WCPSS property.

School/City Alternative: The third basic strategy is a blending of the other two. The proximity need for the team locker and shower rooms is primarily for football games. So the blended strategy relocates the football/soccer/lacrosse field function near the school and leaves the track and field events in their current locations. One benefit of this strategy is that it limits redevelopment of the existing school site to the multipurpose field, and a narrow strip adjacent to Stadium Drive. The existing stadium parking would be redeveloped to provide the second multipurpose field. The conditions at the existing stadium still would need to be addressed, to the extent that they relate to drainage, accessibility and program components relative to track and field events.

Conclusions

As with any capital project, it is important to draw conclusions not merely on the basis of programmatic advantage, but rather on the basis of best value or return on investment.

We believe that all three alternatives would address all of the issues and are viable solutions.

Going back to the primary functional issue, we ask what is the most cost effective way to achieve proximity between the stadium and the locker and shower facilities? Clearly, the School Alternative presents an advantageous consolidation of WCPSS facilities onto WCPSS property. However, at over double the initial cost, this is not a good value to achieve the stated objectives.

The other two alternatives are very close in budget. Under the circumstances, then, the preferred alternative should be the one that has the better functionality and serviceability to the WCPSS over time. Both the City and the School/City alternative fulfill the programmatic requirements. The essential difference between the two is that the City Alternative keeps the football/soccer/lacrosse venue remote from the school in a location that is not convenient, while the School/City Alternative moves that function to a convenient, visible location. The other advantage of the latter alternative is that it yields an additional play field at a lower overall initial cost. For these reasons, on an initial cost basis, we would recommend implementation of the School/City Alternative.