



Blue Heron Park Improvement Project Picnic/Shade Shelter & Restroom Proposal

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Why is the Board considering adding a restroom to the Park?

Blue Heron Park is owned by all 460 homes in Eastbluff and all homeowners are entitled to use it. Its lack of sanitary restroom & hand-washing facilities limits access by families, adults and seniors who may otherwise enjoy an afternoon in the park. Unsanitary porta-potties must be rented for HOA-sponsored events.

Community complaints have been received about children and adults relieving themselves behind bushes, on the slope, or behind the previous dangerous electrical box, and parents have been known to hold their small children over a trash can to urinate. These practices are illegal, unseemly, unsanitary and unsafe, and not characteristic of our upscale Eastbluff neighborhood.

Following the Community Survey response of 31.5% of respondents in favor of a restroom in the park, the Board approved studying the feasibility of adding a restroom that would address the issues of cost, impacts, need, community support, and security. There was no "AGAINST bathrooms in the park" choice in the survey, so there is no way to estimate how many would have been opposed to such improvements. Presumably some who didn't respond would be neutral or don't care. Additional members supported adding a drinking fountain and/or a clubhouse.

2. Why do we need a restroom in the park? Can't people just go home to use the bathroom?

Eastbluff HOA is more than a mile long. Not all homes are convenient to the park and many residents choose to walk there for the exercise. Families, children & adults alike must cut their visits short or forgo trips to the park due to need for a restroom. Urinary urgency affects many adults, seniors & kids who "just can't wait!"

The Picnic/Shade Shelter would include a restroom to provide hand-washing, diaper-changing & toilet facilities for Eastbluff homeowners and their guests who visit the park for relaxation or recreation including moms with kids, picnicking families, seniors out for a walk, residents walking their dogs, joggers, grandparents with their grandchildren, teens playing or on the way home from school, children at birthday parties, guests at Eastbluff sponsored events, etc.

3. What size would it be?

- The Picnic/Shade Shelter including the restroom would be approximately 960 Square feet total, including a roof to cover 4 picnic tables, drinking fountain, single stall gender-neutral ADA restroom and storage area for supplies.
- The restroom & storage enclosed restroom/storage structure would be 9'9" x 17'4"
- A low roofline below the height of previous trees would keep a low profile & allow horizon views over the structure.
- Handicap ADA accessible for all of our Eastbluff neighbors with mobility challenges.
- Removal of over 1,000 SF (including walkways) of turf area is fiscally and environmentally responsible & will reduce our water usage & cost.
- The restroom would include a changing table, hot-air hand dryers, water-saver automatic faucets, soap dispensers, graffiti-resistant surfaces, anti-microbial fixtures.
- The single restroom allows for mixed parental/child genders or patient/caretakers of different genders.

4. What about security? Are owners going to be responsible for contacting the police to report suspicious activity or file complaints?

- The central location is visible from all sides and open design with minimal landscaping will allow clear views by police patrols and neighbors.
- A lock with key fob controlled access would grant access by homeowners & accompanied guests only, with audit capability.
- "No Trespassing" signs in the park identify Blue Heron Park as a private park to discourage non-residents from using the facility and to authorize police enforcement.
- Regular police patrols will monitor the park and restroom. NBPd has officers assigned to each area of the city that they routinely patrol, including Eastbluff. They have 4 shifts for a 24 hour period. Patrols would be 10-12 times a day depending on traffic, and more frequently after dark.
- Rules and Private Property signs are posted in the park and the Association has filed documents with the City to permit NBPd enforcement of the park rules on Eastbluff's private property.
- Eastbluff has an active and successful Neighborhood Watch program in which neighbors are encouraged to watch out and report suspicious activity. All owners are encouraged to police the park as we all have a vested interest in this Association asset.

5. Would it invite vandalism & graffiti?

- Tamper resistant locks, vandal & graffiti-resistant materials and exterior lighting with a motion sensor will discourage loitering and vandalism.
- Scott Smith indicated that SCPM manages 7 other communities with pools and bathrooms and there have been no issues with the bathrooms being vandalized.
- Other HOAs with restrooms and City unlocked restrooms report no or minimal graffiti or vandalism attempts.

6. Would it attract undesirables – mischief makers, vagrants, homeless, “outsiders”?

- Blue Heron Park is closed from sunset to sunrise every night and park rules are enforceable by the Newport Beach Police Department, who regularly patrol the neighborhood.
- A tamper-proof lock with key fob controlled access will prevent non-residents from using the restroom.
- The Committee contacted Newport Beach property managers and public officials to research this question.
 - George Ross, property manager for Harbor View Hills (Port Streets where homes are similar to Eastbluff), reports experiencing some attempts at vandalism & breaking into their community pool but has had no issues of crime, vandalism, vagrants or criminal behavior at the unlocked public restroom in their park, which is a City facility.
 - Sean Levin, Assistant Director of Senior and Recreational Services, City of Newport Beach: “What few instances of loitering occur in the parks at the beach, not those located in residential areas. This is despite the fact that almost all City restrooms are open 24/7 with no locks. Newport Beach has 18 public parks with restrooms, and we’ve had no major enforcement issues.”
 - Newport Beach Police Department Lt. Steve Rasmussen: “I have worked for the Newport Beach Police Department since 2001 and I can tell you that public restrooms have not traditionally been a magnet for crime in our city, especially on the east side of the city where the Eastbluff neighborhood is located. Over the years, we have had some issues on the peninsula with vandalism or transients sleeping in restrooms overnight, but this is mainly due to these restrooms’ open access and location near high traffic areas like the boardwalk. Also, it is quite routine for our police officers to check public restrooms in their area during their patrols, so even this type of behavior is infrequent. If the association does decide to install a restroom in the park, and they put in place a system where it is either locked after-hours or is limited only to residents via an access code, this will further prevent it from being accessed by vandals as well as limit its use as an over-night shelter for someone passing through.”
- The Committee has concluded that a restroom in the park would not attract outsiders or vagrants because it would be accessible by controlled key fob entry only.
- Our active and successful Neighborhood Watch program encourages residents to call police if suspicious or unlawful activity is observed. Blue Heron Park is posted as a private park which discourages non-resident use of the park and enables police enforcement.

7. Who would keep it clean?

- HOA would hire a professional cleaning service 3 times a week and after HOA events.
- CVL, our landscape company would also do a light cleanup on their service days to tidy & empty trash.
- Homeowners who take pride in the community would help keep it tidy.
- Signs would encourage a good neighbor policy.
- Blow dryers will eliminate paper towels.
- Graffiti-repellent materials would make cleanup easy.
- Maintenance & supplies cost estimated at \$8,330 per YEAR = \$18.11 per home per YEAR

8. Will it cause a substantial increase in the use of our park as a venue for large gatherings, outside groups such as athletic teams, or unauthorized nighttime use?

- A Picnic/Shade Shelter with a restroom would allow more Eastbluff residents to enjoy using Blue Heron Park by providing shade, hand-washing, diaper changing and toilet facilities near the playground for Member use only.
- A locked restroom with owner-only key fob controlled access would not be accessible to or attract unauthorized users.
- Blue Heron Park is closed from sunset to sunrise every night. Due to this concern, adding pathway lights in the park was removed from the project.
- Police patrols will monitor and intercede in any illicit nighttime activity in the park.
- Neighborhood Watch participants would report suspicious behavior.
- Motion sensor lighting the shelter would discourage people from lingering after dark.
- Door lock can be secured remotely after park closes at dusk and reactivated at dawn.
- Shelter is large enough for only 4 picnic tables.

9. What is the potential for Long-Term Disrepair by an uncaring board?

- Reserve funds would be set aside to cover any necessary maintenance and repair to the facility.
- Neighbors who have pride of ownership in a well-designed and well-built facility will demand upkeep as needed.
- Regular professional cleaning service will keep it well-maintained & report any needed service or repair to the property manager.

10. What impact if any will this have on the association insurance regarding liability?

- There is no significant increase to the association insurance. The association increased the umbrella coverage from 3 million to 5 million with very little difference in cost.

11. How far is the structure from nearby homes?

- The setback requirement by City of Newport Beach is 6' from the property line. The shelter location is 37 feet from the property line at the bottom of the slope of the nearest home, with additional 10-15 feet to the house.

12. Would picnic tables would be bolted down under the shade structure?

- No, to allow flexibility for use of the shade.

13. Would there be a fund-raising campaign to reduce costs?

- Yes, if the project is approved by voters, a campaign would seek voluntary contributions to offset construction costs, upgrade the structure and reduce assessments to owners. A donor recognition program would acknowledge donors at different levels and encourage community-wide participation.

14. What would it cost?

The one-time cost to build the shelter-restroom facility is estimated at \$265,848 including:

Facility	131,979
Hardscape	27,240
Utilities	33,980
Permits	15,409
Professional Fees	22,000
Locks and Landscape Repair	8,000
Contingency 12.5%	27,240
Total	\$ 265,848

Maintenance (3 x \$50 x 4/mo)	7,200
Special After Events (7 x \$50)	350
Supplies (\$10/wk x 4/mo)	480
Water and Sewer (\$25/mo)	300
Total Annual Maintenance	\$ 8,330

Financing Costs ¹

Total construction Cost	265,848.00
Down payment 10%	-26,584.90
Loan Amount	239,264.00
10-year Loan at 6%	\$31,876.00

Estimated annual cost per home per year

10-Years @ 6% 460 Households

Loan ²	69.30 per year for 10 years only
Capital Replacement Reserves	12.46 per year ongoing
Maintenance	18.11 per year ongoing
Total Cost per Home per YEAR	\$99.87

This assumes NO voluntary contributions. To the extent that residents donate to the project, the loan would be lower.

¹ Financing costs were obtained from one lender. Two additional lenders will be interviewed & one selected in open session by the Board once final construction plans and permits are obtained.

² Will terminate at end of loan period. Estimated cost after loan repayment would be \$30.57 per home per YEAR.