Dear Editor,

I am writing to express my concern about the recent events that have taken place in the city. The violence and disorder that occurred over the weekend have had a profound impact on our community. As a responsible citizen and member of this city, I feel compelled to speak out.

The recent protests have been met with a heavy-handed response from law enforcement. This has not only led to further escalation of violence but also created an environment of fear and mistrust. It is crucial that we address these underlying issues to prevent a recurrence of such events in the future.

I urge all parties to come together and engage in meaningful dialogue. It is only through open communication and mutual understanding that we can build a safer and more cohesive community. We must work towards creating a future where everyone feels safe and respected.

Sincerely,
[Your Name]
Sexton says, “Potter Park Field frequently hosts the Colorado State High School District Playoff games for 4A, 3A, 2A, and 1A classifications. It has also been the site of numerous Babe Ruth Summer Baseball state and regional tournaments, and such special events as Fourth of July fireworks shows and donkey-baseball games. It’s not unusual for both the Tigers and the Rattlers to hold double-headers on the same day. I think Tony lists the field as his home address for most of the year.”

Field maintenance

Each member of the five-person, full-time staff has an area of specialization. Madrid focuses on the athletic facilities, but notes that cooperation is terrific and everyone pitches in willingly wherever needed. He explains, “I’ve had a five-person, part-time crew of ballfield maintenance workers from early March to mid-September. With the new field under construction, we’ve moved Mike Romero, a part-timer since 1992, to a full-time position as my right-hand man.

“Our day starts at 7:00 am, and goes until the work is done. When high school and junior college baseball are both active in the spring, we’ll start at Potter Park Field. Our field maintenance schedule works around the coaches’ scheduling. During the summer, typically we’ll spend a couple hours at the coed-adult softball fields, a couple hours at the junior college softball field, and at least an hour at the two tee-ball fields before lunch.

“Next we’ll groom the field used by the 8- to 10-year-olds. We won’t get to Potter Field until after 2:00 pm, to put in another two to three hours of grooming, even without a night game. We do keep someone on-site all during in the paths leading from each dugout to the batter’s box, in the coaches’ boxes, and in the transition area from the home-plate dirt to the grass. The purchase of a utility tractor with a core aeration system has allowed Madrid to do more in less time.

Madrid follows an intensive maintenance program to keep the field in shape despite all this activity. He says, “Daily care of the basepath, batter’s box, and mound pay off in the long run. Those are areas I care for myself. Mowing times and height-of-cut are adjusted to accommodate changing weather conditions, turf growth, and ‘in-kind’ assistance, which has been provided by the city, county, and field users.

Sexton notes that upgrades to all athletic facilities are made with long-term maintenance efficiency in mind. For example, a warning track of crusher fines installed in 1995 was replaced in 1997 with a more workable red clay mixture. The city also installed a red, poured-mat material in 1998 13 bat-

In-Season Maintenance Plan

**Daily schedule:**
- Clear infield grass edges
- Inspect batting cage nets
- Repair pitching mound and batter’s box
- Drag and groom infield skinned area
- Drag warning track

**As needed:**
- Weed control
- Irrigation system inspection

**Fertilization:**
- Every six weeks from mid-Feb. to end of active growth period
- 20-20-10 formula and alternating 2% or 7% iron

**Aeration:**
- Core aeration every six weeks preceding fertilization
- Cores removed from infield; dragged into outfield
- Topdressing with same sand as infield, mixed with compost produced in-house or with straight sand

**Irrigation:**
- Infield system: 27 Toro Super 700 series heads
- Outfield system: 43 Toro 2001 heads
- Scheduling contingent on weather and field use:
  - 10- to 15-minute intervals three times a week
  - 15-20 minute intervals four or five times a week
  - 25-45 minute intervals seven days a week
- Additional irrigation of grass edges with hand-held hose as needed
- System inspected, repairs made, and water turned on in Feb.

**Other:**
- Re-sod any worn areas of infield in June, July, Aug., and Sept.
- Overseed outfield in Oct. or Nov.
- Sod cutter cleans infield edges in Oct. or Nov.

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and stress of play. The bluegrass infield is mowed with two 21-inch, walk-behind rotary mowers as frequently as every other day. The bermudagrass outfield is mowed at least twice a week with a 72-inch, ride-on rotary mower.

Madrid explains that the coaches and players take pride in the field and do their part to keep it in top condition: "Following the last game of the night, they’ll broom-off grass edges, hit the high spots in the skinned area with the rakes, water lightly, and put the tarps on the batter’s box and the mound. It gives us all a head start the next day."

Sexton adds, "Our goals with the city council and administration are to put forward the positive image of La Junta. Earning the award for Potter Park Field is part of our department’s contribution to that. Now that we’ve achieved that standard, our new goal will be to never fall below it."

Bob Tracinski is manager of public relations for the John Deere Company in Raleigh, N.C. He also serves as public relations co-chair for the national Sports Turf Managers Association.

The Beam Clay Baseball Diamond of the Year Awards are sponsored by the STMA, sportsTURF Magazine, and Beam Clay. This is the 12th year the awards have been presented. Each year, four Major League groundskeepers serve as judges. This year’s judges were: Tom Farrell of the Toronto Blue Jays (AL-East), Barney Lopas of the Anaheim Angels (AL-West), Ralph Frangipani of the Philadelphia Phillies (NL-East), and Eric Hansen of the Los Angeles Dodgers (NL-West).