

THE CITY OF CALGARY

Sport Field Strategy

October 2016





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Sport Field Strategy

Acknowledgments

City of Calgary

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Executive Summary

The City of Calgary has undertaken the development of a Sport Field Strategy in order to ensure that a consistent, agreed to approach for the development and delivery of these valued public assets exists; ultimately leading to sustained and enhanced community benefit. The Strategy further intends to align The City's role in providing sport fields with current needs, best practices, and trends in sport field infrastructure, allocations, and user group interactions. The Strategy also provides clear philosophical and practical objectives and goals that will help guide future decision making and ensure that existing sport field assets can be sustained. Ultimately, the Strategy seeks to align the right sport fields with the right users at the right times.

Research and engagement was a critical element to the development of the Sport Field Strategy. The Strategies (recommendations) were heavily informed by research and public and stakeholder engagement. Key research elements undertaken included:

- Review of previous City and partner strategic documents;
- Current provision/practice analysis;
- Trends and leading practice analysis; and
- Benchmarking.

Through the engagement activities, the project team gained valuable insight into the current strengths, gaps, and potential opportunities to enhance sport field service delivery. Multiple mechanisms were used to gather feedback from various stakeholders including not-for-profit organizations, sport organizations, and citizens.

The complete research and engagement findings were compiled into a Research Summary Report (found under separate cover). A "What We Heard" engagement report was also developed and can be found in the appendices. The information gathered was analyzed in order to identify and develop strategic directions and areas of focus for the Sport Field Strategy. Table 1.1 of this report outlines a S.W.O.C. (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Challenges) analysis of the current state of sport fields; this assessment was used in the development of strategic directions and areas of focus.

The research, engagement, and subsequent analysis resulted in the development of a Mission, Vision and desired Service Outcomes for City owned sport fields in Calgary. Based on the Mission, Vision, and desired outcomes; 10 Strategies (recommendations) have been identified and are intended to provide The City with specific direction moving forward. While some of the Strategies have been developed to help realign certain aspects of the sport field delivery system, others simply reflect practices that are already occurring within the Recreation and Parks business units. In the event where appropriate practices are already in place, the Strategies are intended to emphasize the importance of continuing with the practice and/or enhancing efforts where possible.

Canadian Sport for Life Alignment

A fundamental aspect of the Sport Field Strategy is alignment with the Canadian Sport for Life (CS4L) Long Term Athlete Development framework (LTAD). CS4L is an internationally recognized and Sport Canada endorsed movement to improve the quality of sport and physical activity in Canada. CS4L recommends a number of principles and practices for the allocation of sports fields to user groups which is included as part of this strategy. See page 4 for further information on the Canadian Sport for Life and Long Term Athlete Development framework.

Executive Summary

The Strategies (recommendations) provided will guide The City in a number of areas related to the delivery of sport fields. These areas include allocations, rates and fees, infrastructure (existing and future planning), and interactions with groups. Critical to informing all of these areas is enhanced data collection and interpretation.

To support the Sport Field Strategy, an Implementation Plan will be developed which will outline tactics to execute on the Strategies outlined. This Plan will need to be developed collaboratively with user groups and other stakeholders in order to ensure success.

Overview of Strategies

Strategy #1

The City will place a priority on data collection and analysis and will use this information to inform sport field service provision and future planning. To implement on this area of priority, digital interfaces to facilitate efficient data collection from users will be developed. An accompanying platform to interpret sport field usage patterns and trends will also be established. User groups will be required to submit annual statistics on their organization in order to be considered for permits in the forthcoming year.

The electronic tool should include the following key functional elements:

- Ability to create a database of sport field inventory (including condition and amenities relative to the classification system, dimensions, utilization, etc.).
- Ability to collect and analyze participant data from groups (including demographics, location of booked field, location of residency of participants, registration numbers, levels of play offered, etc.).
- Ability to track, monitor, and analyze local sport field usage trends and patterns.

Strategy #2

An internal tool will be developed to accurately determine the costs associated with providing sport fields (e.g. cost recovery per hour/day/season). The parameters associated with this tool need to be consistent for all sport fields regardless of departmental operational responsibility. The tool should be used jointly by the Parks and Recreation business units in both capital and operational planning.

Executive Summary

Overview of Strategies

Strategy #3

All City sport field inventory is to be redistributed into seven new classes (Community, Artificial Turf, Class A, Class B, Class C, Class D, and Class E; see Table 3.1). Included in this reclassification will be the establishment of a new sport field inventory dedicated to community “spontaneous use”. These fields will be removed from the booking system and geographically distributed throughout the city. The City will strive to provide sport fields and associated amenities at consistent levels based on this refreshed classification system.

Strategy #4

The City will identify tactics to increase the proportion of mid-level (Class C) fields within the overall sport field inventory. The City will aim to meet a benchmark of 70 – 80 mid-level fields (~6% of total).

Strategy #5

The City’s Parks and Recreation business units will continue to work with relevant business units on an ongoing basis to ensure that future sport field development is well coordinated, based on accurate data, of consistent quality, and addresses gaps in the inventory based on classification.

Strategy #6

The City will engage in ongoing dialogue with sport field user groups and place a high priority on communicating the importance of aligning groups with the right sport field infrastructure based on the principles of Canadian Sport for Life framework. The following strategies should be part of a formalized, ongoing user group communications strategy:

- Formal engagement a minimum of every 2 years (e.g. Information session).
- Annual process to collect end of season feedback and participation data.
- Updated web interface to educate users and improve ease of booking.

The field booking interface should be a seamless, consistent process regardless of field type or managing business unit.

Executive Summary

Overview of Strategies

Strategy #7

The City will implement sport field specific filters for allocating field time to user groups based on key data input (collected annually) as suggested in the filter models. Moving forward, allocations will be based on the following inputs:

- Appropriateness of use (e.g. alignment with Long Term Athlete Development framework guidelines and The City's Classification System, age of participant, skill level, location of residency).
- Field quality (ensuring that adequate shutdowns and field maintenance are allotted sufficient time).

Historical bookings will be preserved when possible if deemed appropriate via the allocation filter.

Strategy #8

Emerging groups, and those who currently have inadequate access to sport field time/space, should be prioritized over groups that are deemed to have appropriate access to sport field/time space. Overall allocations for sport fields will be prioritized as follows:

1. Tournaments and competitions
2. Youth programs
3. Adult programs

The filter tool referenced in Strategy #7 will be utilized to help make further assessments as required.

Executive Summary

Overview of Strategies

Strategy #9

The City will develop a cost alignment model in order to establish rates and fees. This model will utilize the following inputs:

1. Benchmarking (comparison to other municipalities)
2. Accessibility to citizens
3. Cost recovery targets as defined in overarching City strategic planning
4. Youth cost set at 25 – 50% of adult cost (depending on type of field)

The new rates and fees structure will need to define differential rates for a number of user group categories, which include:

- Community sports and recreation program providers (youth and adult);
- For profit/commercial users; and
- Events

The new cost alignment model will require rates for Class D minor fields (and potentially other classes) to be adjusted. Class D field rates have been demonstrated to be a significant outlier in national benchmarking exercises and through other research indicators. A critical aspect to the implementation of this recommendation will be the establishment of a plan to achieve the new rates structure in a manner that is viable for user groups and ensures continued accessibility.

Strategy #10

Future sport field partnerships will be evaluated and developed in consideration of the following guiding principles:

- Alignment with overarching City strategic planning and policies.
- Alignment with The City's strategic intent for sport fields.
- To implement the Strategies as outlined in the Sport Field Strategy.
- To achieve full cycle partnerships.

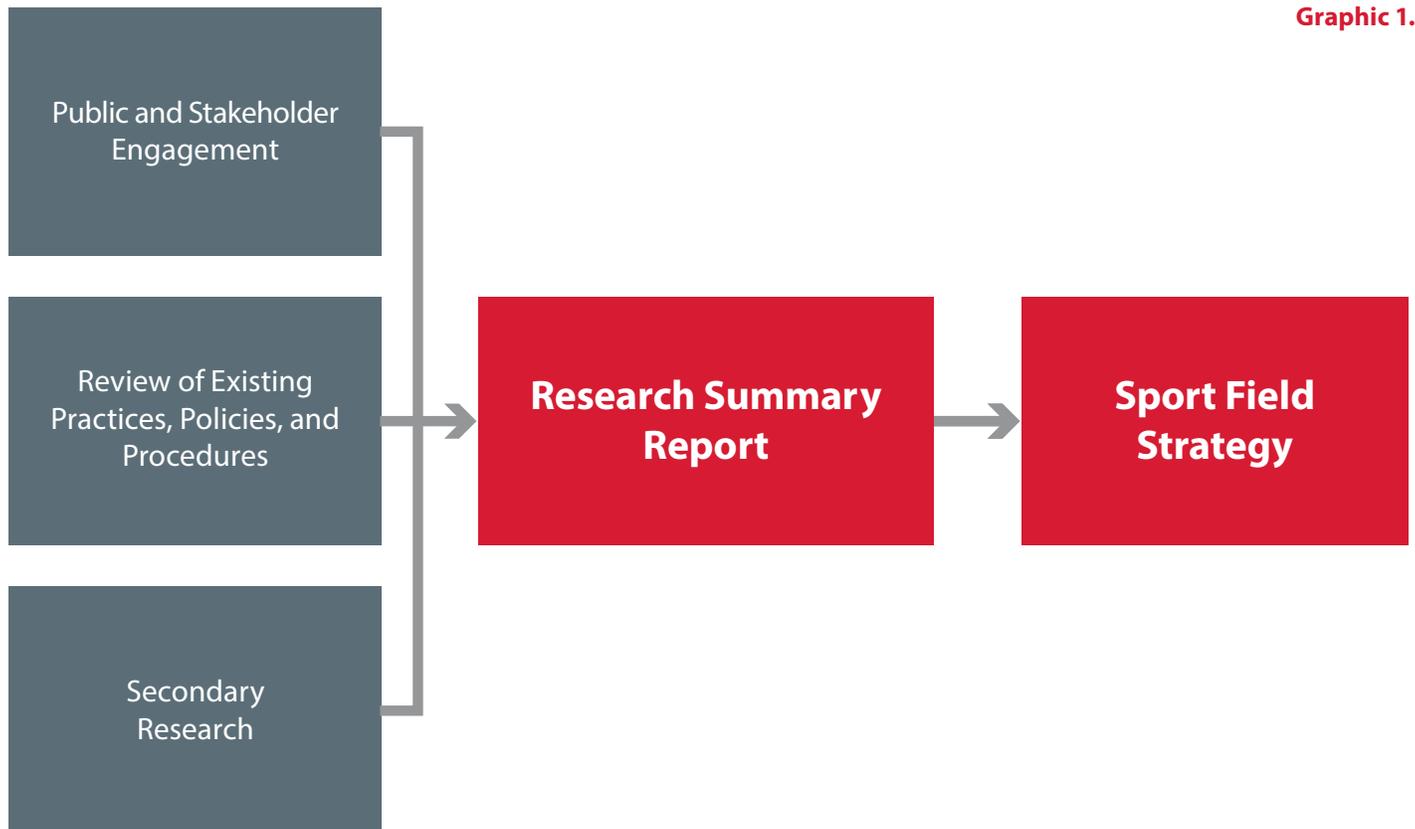
The City will utilize the suggested partnership process outlined (see the Graphic 3.1) when evaluating potential partnerships. The City will also develop a sport field amenity gap assessment that will be used to direct partner investment to areas of greatest need.

Table of Contents

1: Strategy Background and Process	1
Corporate Alignment and Policy Direction	3
Canadian Sport for Life	4
2: Philosophical Approach to Sport Field Provision	5
3: Strategies (Recommendations)	8
Strategic Focus Area: Research and Analysis	10
Strategic Focus Area: Sport Field Infrastructure (Facilities and Amenities)	12
Strategic Focus Area: Allocations	20
Strategic Focus Area: Rates and Fees	23
Strategic Focus Area: Partnerships	26
4: Implementation Plan	30
Appendices	
A: Strategic Alignment	31
B: “What We Heard” Engagement Report	34

Strategy Background and Process

The City of Calgary has undertaken the development of a Sport Field Strategy in order to outline a consistent, agreed to approach for the development and delivery of these valued public assets. Through extensive research and public and stakeholder engagement the Strategy aims to ensure an adaptable approach to addressing market trends and meeting public demands for sport fields, while balancing stakeholder objectives and optimizing public investment in sport fields. The below process map outlines the steps that were undertaken to develop the Sport Field Strategy.



Graphic 1.1

As reflected previously in Graphic 1.1, a detailed Research Summary Report was published (found under separate cover) which provides a complete overview of the research and engagement conducted during the planning process. Research and engagement was a critical component to the development of the Strategy and has helped the project team gain an understanding of current market demands, future needs, issues, and overall perspectives on the value that sport fields provide to Calgarians. The Research Report includes public and stakeholder engagement findings, trends and leading practices analysis, benchmarking, and a review of previous City and stakeholder strategic planning.

The following chart outlines key findings from the research and engagement that were used to identify preliminary areas of focus for the Sport Field Strategy.

S.W.O.C. Analysis		Table 1.1
Strengths	Weaknesses	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public consultation revealed relatively high levels of overall user satisfaction with current sport fields. Existing provision ratios (number of residents per field) for the overall sport field inventory is higher than comparators. Sport fields are highly valued assets. Interactions/relationships between sport field users and City staff are generally positive. The current geographic distribution of sport fields is not ideal but acceptable given Calgary's size and growth. Athletic Parks (a classification of sport fields) are valued and generally well maintained due to the presence of on-site staff. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is inconsistency in sport field maintenance processes. The sport field allocation and booking processes are unclear to some user groups. There is some dissatisfaction over Class D and E sport field quality. Benchmarking revealed that there is an oversupply of community level fields (Class D and E) and an undersupply of mid-level fields (Class C). 	
Opportunities	Challenges	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improvements to the sport field development process and establishment of standards related to sport fields in new neighborhoods could increase the overall quality for community level fields. Enhanced communication protocols and mechanisms could help provide clarity and understanding to sport field user groups. Revisiting the allocations system provides the opportunity to better align the overall delivery of sport fields to broader strategic initiatives. Alignment with national best practices (e.g. Canadian Sport For Life and the Long Term Athlete Development plan) could help ensure appropriate sport field use and equitable access for a variety of users and groups. Identification of mutually beneficial partnerships could help address needs in an efficient and effective manner. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Users and user groups express increasing demand for sport field support and convenience amenities (e.g. washrooms, spectator seating, change rooms, etc.). "Hoarding" (holding on to sport fields that aren't being used) is perceived to be an issue by a number of stakeholders and user groups. User groups believe that there is a lack of quality sport fields available during prime hours. Some emerging groups perceive barriers to accessing sport fields. The sport landscape is evolving, with sport groups practicing and playing further away from participants' homes due to programming and skill level. Expectations for sport field playing surface quality are increasing (including increased demands for access to artificial turf fields). 	

Engagement with sport field stakeholders, residents, and user groups informed the development of the Strategy. The following chart identifies the responses/participants that provided input into the process and ultimately helped shape the Strategy.

Engagement Overview		Table 1.2
Engagement Method	Responses/Participation	
Stakeholder Interviews	20 interviews (~30 Participants)	
User Group Discussion Sessions (4 sessions)	34 participants	
User Group Web Survey	87 responses*	
Public Web Survey	2,446 responses	

* Unique group responses.

A “What We Heard” engagement report summarizes the findings from the above engagement activities and was shared with participating groups, stakeholders, and the general public. This report can be found in the appendices.

Corporate Alignment and Policy Direction

The Sport Field Strategy has been developed in alignment with pre-existing City of Calgary strategic planning and policy documents. Aligning with overarching City strategic planning is necessary and will best position the Sport Field Strategy for success, ensuring that the recommendations outlined reflect broader philosophical principles and goals of The City in the overall provision of services for residents. Key documents and initiatives reviewed included:

- *imagineCalgary*
- *imagineParks*
- Triple Bottom Line (TBL) Policy Framework
- Recreation Master Plan
- Open Space Plan
- City of Calgary User Fees and Subsidies Policy

The importance of providing quality of life opportunities and spaces to accommodate healthy, positive activities for residents and visitors is commonly mentioned throughout City strategic planning. The need to effectively and efficiently manage existing assets and plan for future growth is also consistently reflected. Appendix A further identifies specific principles and themes from these initiatives and documents that were considered in the development of the Sport Field Strategy.



Where possible, the Strategy has also been developed in alignment with applicable provincial and national policy and framework documents such as *A Framework for Recreation in Canada: Pathways to Wellbeing (2015)*, *the 2011 Active Alberta Policy*, *Going the Distance: The Alberta Sport Plan (2014 – 2024)*, *the Canadian Sport Policy 2012 – 2022*, and the principles of the Canadian Sport for Life framework (Long Term Athlete Development).

Canadian Sport for Life Sport for Life

Alignment with the Canadian Sport for Life (CS4L) framework and Long Term Athlete Development (LTAD) are of particular importance as they are widely accepted as a leading practice to substantiate the relevance of physical literacy and inform the delivery of physical activity opportunities for individuals of all ages. CS4L calls on municipalities to assist in the implementation of LTAD in a number of ways; one of the most influential being around protocols for the allocation of facilities and spaces to user groups.

Recommended CS4L Principles and Practices	Table 1.3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allocation practices are based on “standards of play” principles in terms of the time and space required by each group. • Allocation policies are transparent and reviewed with the groups. • Allocation is not done by tradition, but rather on actual requirements of all groups, including the needs of emerging sports. • Seasonal allocation meetings are held with common users groups to review their requests and try to achieve consensus on sharing available spaces and times. • As seasons progress, groups are encouraged to be flexible in the reallocation of spaces with other groups when no longer needed, either temporarily or for longer periods. • User fees and subsidies need to reflect community taxpayer support, and the rationale should be shared with sport organizations. 	

What is physical literacy?

Physical literacy is the cornerstone of both participation and excellence in physical activity and sport. Individuals who are physically literate are more likely to be active for life.

Physically literate individuals:

- Demonstrate a wide variety of basic human movements, fundamental movement skills and fundamental sports skills.
- Move with poise, confidence, competence and creativity in different physical environments (on the ground, both indoor and outdoor; in the air; in and on water; on snow and ice).
- Develop the motivation and ability to understand, communicate, apply and analyze different forms of movement.
- Make choices that engage them in physical activity, recreation or sport activities that enhance their physical and psychological wellness, and permit them to pursue sport excellence commensurate with their ability and motivation.

Canadian Sport for Life: www.canadiansportforlife.ca

Philosophical Approach to Sport Field Provision

Establishing a philosophical foundation for sport field provision in Calgary is important in order to align all aspects of the delivery system with consistent and accepted values and goals; all leading to sustained and enhanced community benefit. In this section a Mission and Vision have been developed, which articulate the intent and focus of The City in providing sport fields to residents and user groups. The Vision provides an overarching context for how Sport Fields within The City of Calgary should be planned, managed, and designed moving forward while the Mission speaks to the overall reasoning for providing sport fields as a public service.

Mission

The City of Calgary provides sport fields so that supportive environments exist for all Calgarians and user groups to participate in a wide array of healthy, active, and fun activities.

Vision

Through The City of Calgary's continued investment in sport fields, Calgarians and user groups will have access to quality sporting environments that are appropriate, safe, and sustainable.



The Sport Field Strategy has been created to further eight **outcomes** that outline an overarching course of action for the Strategy. These service Outcomes were identified through the research and public and stakeholder engagement (as explained in Section 1) and align with the Mission and Vision for sport fields in Calgary. The Outcomes are ultimately intended to reflect the strategic intent; the results that will be achieved through successful implementation of the Strategy.

Desired Service Outcomes		Table 2.1
Outcomes	Associated Research and Engagement	
1. To achieve fair cost recovery targets based on accurate data.	User groups indicated that they would like more clarity and understanding around how rates and fees are set.	
2. To ensure that sport fields accommodate a wide variety of traditional and emerging activities.	Engagement revealed the importance of supporting both existing user groups and emerging activities.	
3. To provide health and wellness opportunities for Calgarians of all ages and abilities.	Research and engagement strongly reflected the health, wellness, and quality of life benefits that sport fields provide.	
4. To achieve a base level of sport field service provision in all communities.	The City of Calgary is growing. Future planning will need to ensure that fields are adequately provided in both new and established neighborhoods.	
5. To align the provision of sport fields with overarching City planning, policies, and strategies.	Alignment with overall City strategic direction ensures the provision of sports fields is pertinent and justified. Previous strategic planning conducted by The City reflects the importance of providing recreation, sport, and leisure opportunities.	
6. To align with the principles of the Long Term Athlete Development framework.	Canadian Sport for Life identifies a series of best practices and suggestions for allocations and infrastructure management to promote physical literacy and long term athlete development.	
7. To facilitate sport tourism and event hosting.	Calgary values and has been successful in attracting sport tourism; sport fields are a key contributor to current and future successes.	
8. To consistently maintain sport fields at a service level that is aligned with the classification system and optimizes available resources.	Consistency in sport field quality and amenity provision was identified as being important to user groups and is an important consideration in clarifying overall expectations regarding classes of sport fields.	

Based on the outcomes, five **Strategic Focus Areas** have been identified and are reflected in the following chart (Table 2.2). These Strategic Focus Areas reflect the core areas of sport field provision and fundamental questions that the forthcoming recommendations are intended to answer.

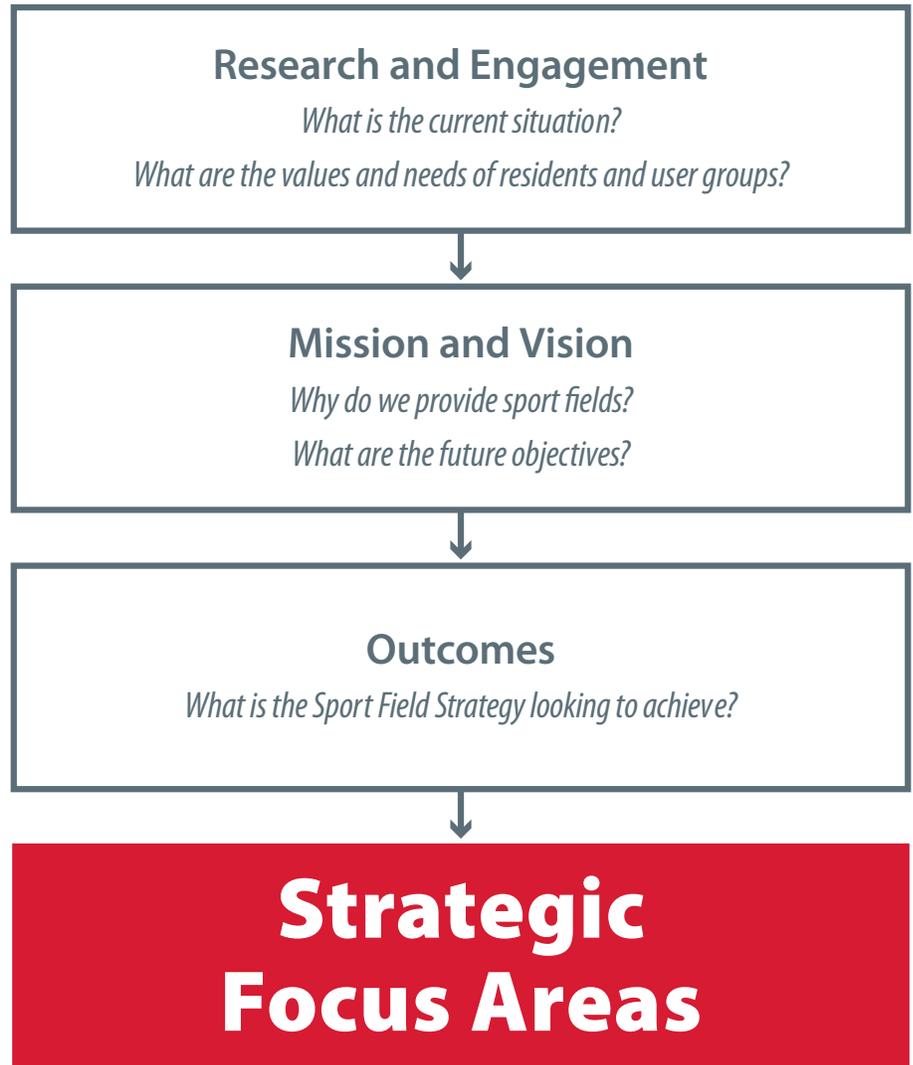
Strategic Focus Areas		Table 2.2
Strategic Focus Areas	Description	
Research and Analysis	How can The City collect and analyze sufficient data and use it on an ongoing basis to ensure optimal sport field provision?	
Sport Field Infrastructure	How can The City's optimize existing infrastructure and plan for future sport field needs?	
Allocations	How can The City sport fields be equitably allocated in an appropriate manner that provides the greatest benefit to Calgarians?	
Rates and Fees	How can The City best balance sustainability, accessibility and resource needs related to sport field provision?	
Partnerships	In what ways can The City leverage partnership opportunities to meet the sport field needs of Calgarians and, where possible, strengthen community organizations?	

The adjacent graphic illustrates how the research and engagement was used to establish a philosophical approach to sport field provision (Mission and Vision), leading to the identification of desired Outcomes and Strategic Focus Areas.



Project Process

Graphic 2.1



Strategies (Recommendations)

The Strategies (recommendations) outlined in this section are organized under the five Strategic Focus Areas. The following graphic depicts the relationship between the five Strategic Focus Areas. As illustrated in the graphic, Research and Analysis is key to informing future service delivery and decision making related to Sport Field Infrastructure, Rates and Fees, and Allocations. Partnerships (of varying levels and types) provide a mechanism to deliver sport fields that can influence all areas of sport field provision.

Strategic Focus Areas

Graphic 3.1



The Strategies are based on research and public and stakeholder engagement and have been developed to align (and in some cases help re-align) the delivery system with the philosophical approach to sport field provision outlined in Section 2. In some instances, the Strategies reflect practices that are already occurring within the Recreation and Parks business units and are simply intended to further highlight the importance of continuing with the practice and/or enhancing efforts where possible. Provided below is a further explanation of the five Strategic Focus Areas under which the Strategies are organized.

Strategic Focus Area: Research and Analysis

Data is effectively and efficiently gathered and analyzed in order to help inform future decisions related to allocations, infrastructure, rates and fees, partnerships, and both internal and external communications.

Strategic Focus Area: Sport Field Infrastructure

Planning for existing and future sport fields requires a decision model based on trends and data, and helps identify future targets and resources.

Strategic Focus Area: Allocations

The process for how fields are allocated is equitable, well communicated, and aligns the right sports/groups with the right sport fields at the right times.

Strategic Focus Area: Rates and Fees

The rates and fees structure is based on a structured approach which is balanced and clearly communicated to all stakeholders.

Strategic Focus Area: Partnerships

Protocols, processes and categories are established in order to ensure potential partnerships are aligned with City objectives and fulfill the intended purpose of optimizing sport field provision.

Communications are important to all aspects of sport field provision. As such tactics to enhance communications are infused throughout most of the strategic directions presented. Ensuring that users understand, and are engaged in, The City's move forward approach to providing sport field opportunities is an important component to the successful implementation of the Strategy. An implementation plan is outlined in Section 4 which is intended to provide a roadmap for executing the Strategies.



Strategic Focus Area: Research and Analysis

The collection and use of data is a critical aspect to future sport field provision in Calgary. Enhancing research and analysis practices will allow The City to make informed decisions related to sport field infrastructure, allocations, rates and fees, and partnerships. Ultimately, investing in the ongoing collection and analysis of data will ensure that The City meets its objectives of providing users with appropriate allocation of sport fields, in the right geographic locations, and at appropriate costs.



Having user group “buy-in” will be a crucial aspect to enhancing data collection and its relevance to ongoing decision making. To do so, the tools and processes developed to collect data need to be clear and the importance and relevance of providing data strongly communicated to all. The City will also put in place requirements for user groups to provide input on an annual basis and tie other aspects of sport field services to these requirements where appropriate (e.g. permit process, partnerships, allocations, rates and fees, etc.).

Strategy #1

The City will place a priority on data collection and analysis and will use this information to inform sport field service provision and future planning. To implement on this area of priority, digital interfaces to facilitate efficient data collection from users will be developed. An accompanying platform to interpret sport field usage patterns and trends will also be established. User groups will be required to submit annual statistics on their organization in order to be considered for permits in the forthcoming year.

The electronic tool should include the following key functional elements:

- Ability to create a database of sport field inventory (including condition and amenities relative to the classification system, dimensions, utilization, etc.).
- Ability to collect and analyze participant data from groups (including demographics, location of booked field, location of residency of participants, registration numbers, levels of play offered, etc.).
- Ability to track, monitor, and analyze local sport field usage trends and patterns.

Supporting Research and Engagement Data

- Gaps in current sports field data (e.g. usage, user demographics, etc.) have been identified.
- The City has enhanced the collection of participation data from user groups; however there are opportunities for enhancement.
- User groups identified the importance of ensuring that digital interfaces are user friendly and convenient.
- Leading practices in sport field provision (including Canadian Sport for Life) reflect the importance of collecting and utilizing sound data.

Pre-Requisites

- Work with internal and external stakeholders to identify specific data collection elements and timing.
- Source the required expertise to develop the digital interface and platform.
- Allocate the appropriate resources to ongoing data collection and analysis.

Outcomes

- Ensures that sport fields are allocated based on an accurate understanding of existing needs, trends, and usage patterns.
- Provides necessary data to inform future infrastructure planning (e.g. type, location, and quality).
- Enhances The City’s ability to support sport groups and optimize overall opportunities that are available for Calgarians.

Strategy #2

An internal tool will be developed to accurately determine the costs associated with providing sport fields (e.g. cost recovery per hour/day/season). The parameters associated with this tool need to be consistent for all sport fields regardless of departmental operational responsibility. The tool should be used jointly by the Parks and Recreation business units in both capital and operational planning.

Supporting Research and Engagement Data

- Operating costs for some sport field types are difficult to gather and define.
- The Parks and Recreation departments currently use differing metrics and approaches for establishing sport field operating costs.
- User groups expressed the desire to have a better understanding and level of clarity around how rates and fees are set.

Pre-Requisites

- Develop the measurement parameters by establishing a working group to develop the tool (will require the working group to define a standardized list of in-scope costs, identify areas of uniformity, and methods to overcome differences in calculating operating costs).
- Develop and utilize the tool in operational and capital planning.

Outcomes

- Establishes a consistent tool that accurately identifies unit operating costs for all sport fields (regardless of operational responsibility).
- Informs future planning using accurate and consistent metrics.
- Allows The City to engage in more informed dialogue with internal and external stakeholders regarding partnerships, rates and fees, and other areas of sport field provision.



Strategic Focus Area: Sport Field Infrastructure (Facilities and Amenities)

Establishing a clear and relevant classification system is important as it provides an overarching context to guide the maintenance, planning, rates and fees, and allocations of sport fields. Moving forward, The City of Calgary will manage their sport field inventory using six distinct classes as outlined in the chart on Page 12. The refreshed classification system identifies the level of service that will be provided for each level of field as well alignment with the stages of LTAD.



Strategy #3

All City sport field inventory is to be redistributed into seven new classes (Community, Artificial Turf, Class A, Class B, Class C, Class D, and Class E; see Table 3.1). Included in this reclassification will be the establishment of a new sport field inventory dedicated to community “spontaneous use”. These fields will be removed from the booking system and geographically distributed throughout the city. The City will strive to provide sport fields and associated amenities at consistent levels based on this refreshed classification system.

Supporting Research and Engagement Data

- Comparative research suggests that The City has lower proportions of mid-level fields within its overall inventory.
- Stakeholder and user group discussions revealed a need to enhance clarity and consistency related to sport field service levels and associated expectations.
- Leading practices in recreation and leisure suggest that municipalities should place a priority on ensuring that adequate outdoor spaces exist for “pick-up”, unstructured sports and unsupervised, spontaneous play.
- Sport field quality and consistency is an area of concern for many user groups, especially pertaining to current Class D and Class E playfields.

Pre-Requisites

- Further establish and define amenity and maintenance standards (service levels) for each class of field (e.g. define what characterizes “high level” of maintenance as compared to a “moderate” level of maintenance).
- Assessment of current inventory based on the parameters of the classification system.

Outcomes

- Ensures clarity for users regarding expected service levels for each class (i.e. quality of turf, amenities, on-site support, etc.).
- Properly aligns sport fields in the city with their appropriate class based on an updated inventory and assessment.
- Helps articulate the intended ‘purpose(s)’ for different sport field types (right sport, right field, right group).
- The establishment of a new sport field class dedicated for community “spontaneous use” will help ensure that all residents have access to supportive environments that facilitate physical activity, physical literacy, and skill development, and overall wellness.
- Improved consistency throughout the sport field delivery system.
- Future sport field planning and development is guided by clear standards and expectations.

The following chart outlines the refreshed classification system for sport fields in Calgary. The classes identified are intended to help provide a guiding framework to guide service levels, allocations, rates and fees, future inventories, and sport field development. The City will need to further define (or establish) maintenance protocols for each class and communicate these to users. Table 3.2 also identifies alignment with the seven stages of the LTAD framework to help guide future allocations and ensure that the right types of users are aligned with the right types of sport fields.

		Recommended Sport Field Classification							Table 3.1
		Field Class	Community	Artificial Turf	Class A	Class B	Class C	Class D	Class E
		Description	Non-bookable, spontaneous use fields. Minimal level of ongoing maintenance.	Includes all artificial turf fields.	Performance grade natural surface fields.	Semi-performance grade natural surface fields.	Natural surface fields with base levels of maintenance and amenities.	Natural surface fields with reduced ongoing maintenance.	School fields.
Maintenance	Full	On-site Staff (located at Athletic Park)		✓	✓				
	↑	High Levels of Maintenance (irrigated; regular fertilization, aeration, cutting; ball diamond shale is dragged on a regular basis)		N/A	✓	✓			
		Moderate Levels of Maintenance (semi-regular maintenance occurs but at reduced levels)		N/A			✓		
		Base	Base Field Maintenance	✓	N/A				✓
Amenities	Full	Full Complement of Amenities Provided to User (e.g. bases and corner flags; permanent washrooms; lights; may include a self-contained facility and concessions)		✓	✓				
	↑	Moderate Complement of Amenities Provided to User (some sites have lights, change rooms, and concessions, include washrooms but some may be portable)				✓			
		Base	Base Amenities Provided to User					✓	✓

Alignment with LTAD Stages								Table 3.2
Field Class	Community	Artificial Turf	Class A	Class B	Class C	Class D	Class E	
1 (Active Start)	✓					✓	✓	
2 (Fundamentals)	✓					✓	✓	
3 (Learn to Train)				✓	✓	✓		
4 (Train to Train)			✓	✓	✓			
5 (Train to Compete)		✓	✓	✓	✓			
6 (Train to Win)		✓	✓	✓	✓			
7 (Active for Life)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	

The research conducted revealed that while The City provides a higher quantity of sport fields in comparison to other similar municipalities, the distribution of field types is not aligned with comparators. The City provides higher proportions of higher and lower quality sport field but is deficient, based on comparators, in the provision of mid-level sports fields. It is however important to note that benchmarking has been conducted using the classification systems of The City and other municipalities; differences in classification and actual maintenance in comparator communities have not been measured.

Moving forward, The City may need to develop and implement strategies to adjust the proportion of different sport field types within the inventory to best meet the needs of Calgarians. It is important for The City to consider doing so in such a way that is both technically and financially viable. The adjustment of sport fields quantities throughout the classification system could simply be a re-allocation exercise or may require investment in additional sport fields.



Strategy #4
<p>The City will identify tactics to increase the proportion of mid-level (Class C) fields within the overall sport field inventory. The City will aim to meet a benchmark of 70 – 80 mid-level fields (~6% of total). Potential ways in which this could occur are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify Class D fields that are already of Class C standard. • Identify Class D fields that could be enhanced to Class C standards with minimal investment. • Prioritize mid-level field improvements in partnership discussions and agreements. <p>As the Parks business unit has a detailed understanding of the Class D field inventory, it may be prudent to consider shifting responsibility for the re-alignment and ongoing maintenance of all mid-level fields (Class C) to Parks where efficiencies can be found.</p>
<p>Supporting Research and Engagement Data</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benchmarking research (comparison to other cities) revealed that there is an undersupply of mid-level fields in Calgary (see Table 3.3 on the following page). • The City has permitted some user groups to conduct enhancements to some Class D fields; bringing them up to current Athletic Park standards.
<p>Pre-Requisites</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiate other key Strategies that will impact indications of demand for different classes of sport fields (e.g. re-alignment of the allocation process and assessment of current assets). • Conduct data analysis and benchmarking on an ongoing basis so that strategies are based on accurate and current information. • Further investigate actual field conditions and re-classify existing sport fields if warranted.
<p>Outcomes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensures inventory is aligned with needs and benchmarking practices. • Ensures that decisions pertaining to the management of the existing inventory and new development are well informed. • Sets benchmarks and expectations for new development.

Further to this recommendation, the following benchmarking analysis chart outlines the current distribution of sport fields and gaps that may exist within the existing inventory. Demand indicators (current and future) are outlined as they may impact assessment and future approaches. Strategies to address future needs are also identified for each type of field. As indicated in the chart, benchmarking suggest that The City may be deficient in the provision of mid-level (e.g. Class C fields). However, this is likely a reflection of how existing fields are organized within the current classification system and is not likely to require significant levels of new development or investment in the short term.

Benchmarking Analysis							Table 3.3	
Field Class	Denver	Edmonton	Mississauga	Ottawa	Average	Calgary	Percentage of Total Fields (Average)	Percentage of Total Fields (Calgary)
	663,826	812,201	713,443	883,391	768,215	1,096,833		
Artificial Turf	10	5	6	6	7	7	1%	1%
Classes A/B	39	16	10	4	17	56	2%	4%
Class C	29	42	40	87	50	15	7%	1%
Classes D/E/Community	180	1,437	242	670	632	1,241	90%	94%
Total	258	1,500	298	767	706	1,319	100%	100%

Provision of Sport Fields							Table 3.4	
Field Type	Denver	Edmonton	Mississauga	Ottawa	Average	Calgary	Percentage of Total Fields (Average)	Percentage of Total Fields (Calgary)
	663,826	812,201	713,443	883,391	768,215	1,096,833		
Artificial Turf	10	5	6	6	7	7	1.0%	0.5%
Classes A/B	39	16	10	4	17	56	2.4%	4.2%
Class C	29	42	40	87	50	15	7.0%	1.1%
Classes D/E/Community	180	1,437	242	670	632	1,241	89.6%	94.1%
Total	258	1,500	298	767	706	1,319	100.0%	100.0%



Based on benchmarking and other indicators, the following chart outlines a gap analysis for sport fields in Calgary. The chart confirms that a gap exists in “mid-level fields” and that 70 – 80 mid-level fields will need to be added to bring Calgary in line with comparators.

Gap Analysis							Table 3.5
Field Class	Demand Indicator (Known)	Future Demand Indicator (Unknown)	Current Proportion of Inventory	Desired Proportion (Based on Benchmarking Indicators)	Gap	Strategy to Address	
Artificial Turf	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • User feedback indicates that more artificial turf fields are required/ desired. • High level of utilization. • Benchmarking suggests that provision is similar to comparator municipalities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excess demand. • Willingness/capacity of users to absorb additional capacity if made available. • Impact of re-aligning the allocations process. 	1% (7 fields)	1%	N/A (maintain current proportion)	Build with growth at multi-venue sites and as appropriate partnership opportunities arise.	
Classes A/B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • User feedback indicates that more artificial turf fields are required/ desired. • High level of utilization. • Benchmarking suggests that provision is similar to comparator municipalities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excess demand. • Willingness/capacity of users to absorb additional capacity if made available. • Impact of re-aligning the allocations process. 	4% (56 fields)	3 - 6%	N/A (maintain current proportion)	Build with growth at multi-venue sites and as appropriate partnership opportunities arise.	
Class C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benchmarking suggests that provision is deficient to comparators. • User feedback indicates that a gap exists. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quantity of D fields that could be reclassified without significant investment. • Impact of re-aligning the allocations process. 	1% (15 fields)	5 - 10%	Reallocation of 70 – 90 new Class C fields are be required to meet benchmark of 6 % of overall inventory (consistent with comparators)	Re-allocate existing Class D fields (based on an assessment of field quality and amenities) and prioritize in new capital development where possible.	

Gap Analysis

Table 3.5

Field Class	Demand Indicator (Known)	Future Demand Indicator (Unknown)	Current Proportion of Inventory	Desired Proportion (Based on Benchmarking Indicators)	Gap	Strategy to Address
Class D/E	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Benchmarking suggests that provision is sufficient. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Excess demand. Impact of re-aligning the allocations process. 	94% (1,241 fields)	80 - 90%	Benchmarking suggests slight oversupply	Build new only as required by future growth (as part of residential and commercial development). Identify Class D fields with potential for reclassification to Class C.
Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research and consultation identified the need to ensure opportunities for spontaneous field users. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trends suggests a continued demand for spontaneous recreation and sport opportunities. 	0%	To be determined through pilot project.	Unknown	Identify fields for spontaneous use dedication through a pilot project.



While communication with external stakeholders such as user groups and partner organizations is vital to the successful provision of sport fields, internal communication within The City is also critically important. The current situation by which the provision of sport fields occurs through two business units (Parks and Recreation), while involving other relevant business units, further necessitates that internal communications be undertaken in an efficient and effective manner. This is especially true as it pertains to new sport field development which entails both a significant capital (which can be a City or private sector responsibility depending on the application) and ongoing operational cost. A coordinated approach will help ensure that identified gaps in the sport field inventory are recognized and addressed in an efficient and effective manner.

Strategy #5
The City's Parks and Recreation business units will continue to work with relevant business units on an ongoing basis to ensure that future sport field development is well coordinated, based on accurate data, of consistent quality, and addresses gaps in the inventory based on classification.
Supporting Research and Engagement Data
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Users expressed concerns around the development process and quality of sport fields in newer neighborhoods. • Opportunities were identified to collect and use data in decision making related to new sport field development.
Pre-Requisites
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parks and Recreation to communicate pertinent content areas of the Sport Field Strategy to relevant business units. • Continue to work collaboratively to refine definitions, planning protocols, and processes.
Outcomes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helps ensure that The City's investment in sport fields properly aligns with existing needs. • Available public lands are utilized in the most appropriate and efficient manner. • Avoids unnecessary duplication of sport field types. • Optimizes long term sport field operations.

Key to the effective management of sport field infrastructure is ensuring that user groups are accessing the right fields for their skill level and type of activity/sport. By taking a leadership role in aligning users with appropriate quality and quantity of sports fields, The City can make sure that these public assets are being accessed in a way that maximizes benefits to all Calgarians. The City can also make sure that its investment in sport fields is justified through optimized use of various field types; each having distinct maintenance and amenity attributes and associated levels of operating cost. The Canadian Sport for Life framework (including the Long Term Athlete Development framework) provides nationally accepted guidelines under which alignment can be based to facilitate LTAD and promote physical literacy.



Critical to ensuring proper alignment is prudent data collection and transparent and effective communications. As identified previously, numerous benefits can be gained through the collection of data related to both sport field user group participation (e.g. participants, age demographics, etc.) as well qualitative user feedback based on experience with sport fields. The enhanced digital interface technology that will be created by The City will help ensure that both qualitative and quantitative data can be collected and interpreted on an ongoing basis.

Strategy #6
<p>The City will engage in ongoing dialogue with sport field user groups and place a high priority on communicating the importance of aligning groups with the right sport field infrastructure based on the principles of Canadian Sport for Life framework. The following strategies should be part of a formalized, ongoing user group communications strategy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formal engagement a minimum of every 2 years (e.g. Information session). • Annual process to collect end of season feedback and participation data. • Updated web interface to educate users and improve ease of booking. <p>The field booking interface should be a seamless, consistent process regardless of field type or managing business unit.</p>
<p>Supporting Research and Engagement Data</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • User group and stakeholder engagement identified opportunities for enhanced communication and interactions between user groups and The City. • Overarching City planning documentation and policies express the importance of ongoing dialogue and a clear understanding of roles and responsibilities. • The alignment of service provision with clearly defined goals and objectives is a practice that is encouraged by Canadian Sport for Life.
<p>Pre-Requisites</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alignment of the sport field classification system to the Canadian Sport for Life framework (as suggested in Strategy #2). • Continued improvement of sport field user group communication tools, interfaces, and protocols (e.g. webpage, in-person communications, training and information sessions).
<p>Outcomes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensures that current and future sport field infrastructure is utilized in a manner that maximizes the benefit for Calgarians.

The City may wish to formalize ongoing engagement and data collection practices by establishing a certification program for user groups. Requirements for groups could be established through this program as it pertains to alignment with CS4L, providing on-time data and information to The City, and participation in training and information sharing opportunities. Once the certification program is further developed and implemented, it is reasonable that participation in the certification program should be required in order for user groups to have access to sport fields at the subsidized rate. Doing so will help ensure public investment in sport fields can be justified and that activities taking place on these valued public spaces provide maximum public value and benefits.



Strategic Focus Area: Allocations

The City of Calgary will allocate sport fields based on the overarching principle of placing users on the right field, at the right time. In order to do so, The City will be required to create an allocation filter aligned with principles of the Canadian Sport for Life framework and intended to achieve the strategic intent (vision, mission, goals, outcomes) that The City has established for sports fields. The success of this approach will require The City to place a priority on communicating the benefits, rationale, and principles associated with this filter. The City will collect data in a user friendly manner (as outlined in Strategy #1) to ensure that adequate information exists to properly align sport fields with the appropriate users and user groups.

CS4L and LTAD principles and tactics are being increasingly integrated into The City's allocations process in order to ensure that the process prioritizes equitable access and appropriateness of use. Aspects such as age of participant (stage within the LTAD model), skill level, location of residency within the city, and type of activity/field are important considerations that will form the basis of this refreshed approach to sport field allocation. Engagement and research conducted with user group revealed that while historically based allocation works well for many established groups, it poses a challenge and barrier for some emerging or growing sport field user groups. While some realignment of the allocation system will need to occur, historical practices and precedents that work well and are aligned with CS4L and LTAD will be sustained as The City recognizes the contributions that many longstanding groups have made to providing opportunities for Calgarians to be active.

Many of the allocation recommendations proved in this section build off a pilot initiative that has already been implemented. This pilot provides a basis from which to undertake further realignment (if required).



Field attribute requirements of users should also receive enhanced consideration within the allocation process. The issue of sport field “hoarding” (holding onto field time that isn’t being used) was justified by some user groups and stakeholders in order to help preserve field quality. Building increased maintenance time into the booking system and adapting current sport field practices and protocols (i.e. movement of goal posts) are potential methods that should be explored.

Strategy #7
<p>The City will implement sport field specific filters for allocating field time to user groups based on key data input (collected annually) as suggested in the filter models. Moving forward, allocations will be based on the following inputs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriateness of use (e.g. alignment with Long Term Athlete Development framework guidelines and The City’s Classification System, age of participant, skill level, location of residency). • Field quality (ensuring that adequate shutdowns and field maintenance are allotted sufficient time). <p>Historical bookings will be preserved when possible if deemed appropriate via the allocation filter.</p>
Supporting Research and Engagement Data
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Canadian Sport for Life identifies a number of leading practices related to allocations that should be implemented by municipal sport and recreation facility providers. • The City has undertaken previous efforts to ensure that user groups are properly aligned with the right sport fields; these efforts were accepted and effective.
Pre-Requisites
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further develop and finalize the suggested sport field filter tool. • Involve user groups in the development of the sport field filter model where possible. • Identify tactics (ex. letter, web page updates) to communicate with stakeholders the benefits, rationale, and principles for the allocation criteria that impact the ability for user groups to book sport fields.
Outcomes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aligns sport field users with the right field, for the right participant, at the right time. • Ensures that The City’s investment in sport fields is justified and optimized; that benefit to all Calgarians is achieved to the greatest degree possible. • Can help inform future planning for sport fields, specifically as it relates to gaps in the inventory. • Aligns with the Canadian Sport for Life framework (and specifically the Long Term Athlete Development framework); an accepted leading practice for sport and physical activity delivery in Canada.

Allocations Process	Table 3.6
Inputs	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statistics and Data from Sport Field Users • Qualitative Feedback from Sport Field Users • City Utilizations and Booking Database 	
Allocations Filter	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Aligned with The City’s Strategic Intent for Sports Fields (e.g. Mission, Vision, Outcomes, overarching planning and policy documents)</i> • <i>Canadian Sport for Life/Long Term Athlete Development</i> 	
Result	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Right Field, Right Participant, Right Time 	

Many large urban centres, including Calgary, are becoming increasingly diverse both in terms of cultural demographics and overall recreation activity preferences. Currently, many emerging groups have limited access to sport fields at prime hours which inhibits the introduction and growth of new emerging activities; the potential of the actual user groups is therefore also inhibited. Access to sports fields is a right of all Calgarians regardless of activity type or traditional provision. Increased access to better sport field times will help foster an environment that allows emerging groups to prosper. Addressing this situation will ultimately increase the array of recreational and sport opportunities that are available to Calgarians.

Strategy #8

Emerging groups, and those who currently have inadequate access to sport field time/space, should be prioritized over groups that are deemed to have appropriate access to sport field/time space. Overall allocations for sport fields will be prioritized as follows:

1. Tournaments and competitions
2. Youth programs
3. Adult programs

The filter tool referenced in Strategy #7 will be utilized to help make further assessments as required.

Supporting Research and Engagement Data

- Some emerging programs and activities lack adequate facilities (including but not limited to sport fields) and amenities to accommodate growth and the increasing diversity of Calgary.
- Recreation and sport participation is evolving and requires municipalities to support new program and activity interests.
- Diversity of program offerings and opportunities is a key theme of The City's Recreation Master Plan and other documentation.

Pre-Requisites

- Further develop and finalize the suggested sport field filter tool.
- Continue to foster relationships with emerging groups in order to identify needs, opportunities, and limitations.

Outcomes

- Fosters the growth of sport in Calgary.
- Increases the diversity of sport opportunities available for Calgarians.
- Further positions Calgary as a diverse and forward thinking organization.



Strategic Focus Area: Rates and Fees

The City of Calgary will continue to strive to provide sport fields at an affordable and fair price while balancing the financial resources of The City with the principles of inclusion, access, and citizen wellness. Identified as follows are Strategies which are intended to provide a fair basis for which future rates and fees for accessing sport fields can be established. The enhancements to data collection and analysis identified previously are critical to ensuring that rates and fees can be established in a structured, transparent, and consistent manner based on inputs to include benchmarking, accessibility, and operational cost recovery.

The City will need to work with user groups to develop a plan to achieve the new cost alignment model. Potential strategies that could be employed to achieve these targets may include:

- Substantial initial rate and fee adjustment followed by less significant incremental increases;
- Establishment of thresholds for which annual sport field rates and fee increases cannot exceed; and
- Establishment of differential increases based on usage types/ purposes/ability to pay.

The user group certification program (suggested after Strategy #6) could also factor into the cost alignment model. Participation in the program could be mandated as a requirement for groups to access sport fields at the subsidised rate.



Strategy #9

The City will develop a cost alignment model in order to establish rates and fees. This model will utilize the following inputs:

1. Benchmarking (comparison to other municipalities)
2. Accessibility to citizens
3. Cost recovery targets as defined in overarching City strategic planning
4. Youth cost set at 25 – 50% of adult cost (depending on type of field)

The new rates and fees structure will need to define differential rates for a number of user group categories, which include:

- Community sports and recreation program providers (youth and adult);
- For profit/commercial users; and
- Events

The new cost alignment model will require rates for Class D minor fields (and potentially other classes) to be adjusted. Class D field rates have been demonstrated to be a significant outlier in national benchmarking exercises and through other research indicators. A critical aspect to the implementation of this recommendation will be the establishment of a plan to achieve the new rates structure in a manner that is viable for user groups and ensures continued accessibility.

Supporting Research and Engagement Data

- Rates and fees are not currently based on standardized criteria that apply to all classes of fields.
- Inputs such as cost recovery and comparative benchmarking data have not been comprehensively identified and consistently used in the determination of rates and fees.
- A lack of clarity exists among some user groups as to how rates and fees are set.
- Benchmarking research revealed that rates for Class D fields in Calgary are lower than comparators (see Table 3.6 on the following page.)

Pre-Requisites

- Set benchmarking comparators.
- Determine and define citizen accessibility, measurements, and baselines.
- Establish scoring and weighting for the three inputs presented.
- Identify effective ways to communicate with stakeholders on an ongoing basis, sharing information about rate changes and the pricing model.

Outcomes

- Establishes a consistent and structured approach to setting sport field rates and fees.
- Increased clarity pertaining to sport field rates and fees.
- Aligned with operational cost recovery targets/needs for sport fields.
- Market conditions (benchmarking) and accessibility considerations will be established as important inputs.



From the Research...

The following chart contrasts sport field fees in Calgary with other comparator cities. As reflected in the chart, fees in Calgary for lower levels of fields (e.g. Class D) are considerably less than the average of the comparators.

Fees Benchmarking		Table 3.7						
Field Type		Denver	Edmonton	Mississauga	Ottawa	Regina	Average of Comparable Cities	Calgary
Artificial Turf and Premium Grass	Minor	\$54 For-Profit \$27 Non-Profit	\$67.65	\$70.70 For-Profit \$60.06 Non-Profit	\$101.45	\$32.00 – \$63.80	\$65	\$35.05 – \$97.20 (Class B – A)
	Adult	\$92 For-Profit \$46 Non-Profit	\$135.25	\$160 For-Profit \$98.28 Non-Profit	\$136.95 For-Profit \$126.80 Non-Profit	\$49.20 – \$98.20	\$108	\$70.55 – \$123.30 (Class B – A)
Standard	Minor	\$25	\$20.80	\$7.80	\$8.70	\$15.60	\$16	\$23.65 (Class C)
	Adult	\$40	\$41.60	\$17.58 For-Profit \$9.78 Non-Profit	\$45.20	\$24.00	\$33	\$47.10 (Class C)
Community/ Neighbourhood	Minor	\$5.00 Weekday \$6.75 Weekend	Free – \$4.95	\$3.48	\$5.85 – \$7.05	\$12.60	\$6	\$1.10 – \$2.23 (Class E – D)
	Adult	\$31	\$4.95 – \$9.80	\$7.85 For-Profit \$4.73 Non-Profit	\$30.35 – \$34.25	\$19.40	\$19	\$4.30 – \$20.10 (Class E – D)



Strategic Focus Area: Partnerships

The City of Calgary enters into an array of partnerships with the intended purpose of improving citizen quality of life. Partnerships in The City range in scope from partner operations of a public facility to working with a sport groups on smaller scale enhancements or initiatives.

Partnerships ultimately enable The City to optimize public investment in the provision of services. Generally speaking there are five benefits that should occur as a result of a partnership between The City and not-for-profit organizations. These benefits include:

1. Improved response to customer needs.
2. Support for and leverage from a strong and established network of community expertise and volunteers.
3. Access to alternative sources of funding and partners not typically available to the municipality on its own (e.g. leverage not-for-profit groups ability to access grant funding).
4. Reduced duplication of services.
5. Strategic selection of critical programs and services that contribute to a stronger community.

Partnerships in the provision of sport fields and related amenities provide the opportunity to achieve many of these benefits. However a careful and structured approach to partnerships should be undertaken to ensure that overall strategic intent is met. Future partnerships in the provision of sport fields will ensure that The City is partnering with organizations in a manner that is mutually beneficial and supports the philosophy (Mission, Vision) of the Sport Field Strategy.



Strategy #10

Future sport field partnerships will be evaluated and developed in consideration of the following guiding principles:

- Alignment with overarching City strategic planning and policies.
- Alignment with The City's strategic intent for sport fields.
- To implement the Strategies as outlined in the Sport Field Strategy.
- To achieve full cycle partnerships.

The City will utilize the suggested partnership process outlined (see the Graphic 3.1) when evaluating potential partnerships. The City will also develop a sport field amenity gap assessment that will be used to direct partner investment to areas of greatest need.

Supporting Research and Engagement Data

- Local (City), provincial and national frameworks and policies identify the importance of aligning aspects of service provision (such as partnerships) with desired outcomes.
- Best practices demonstrate that establishing clear processes and evaluation tools can help create the clarity and understanding that is important to user groups and stakeholders.

Pre-Requisites

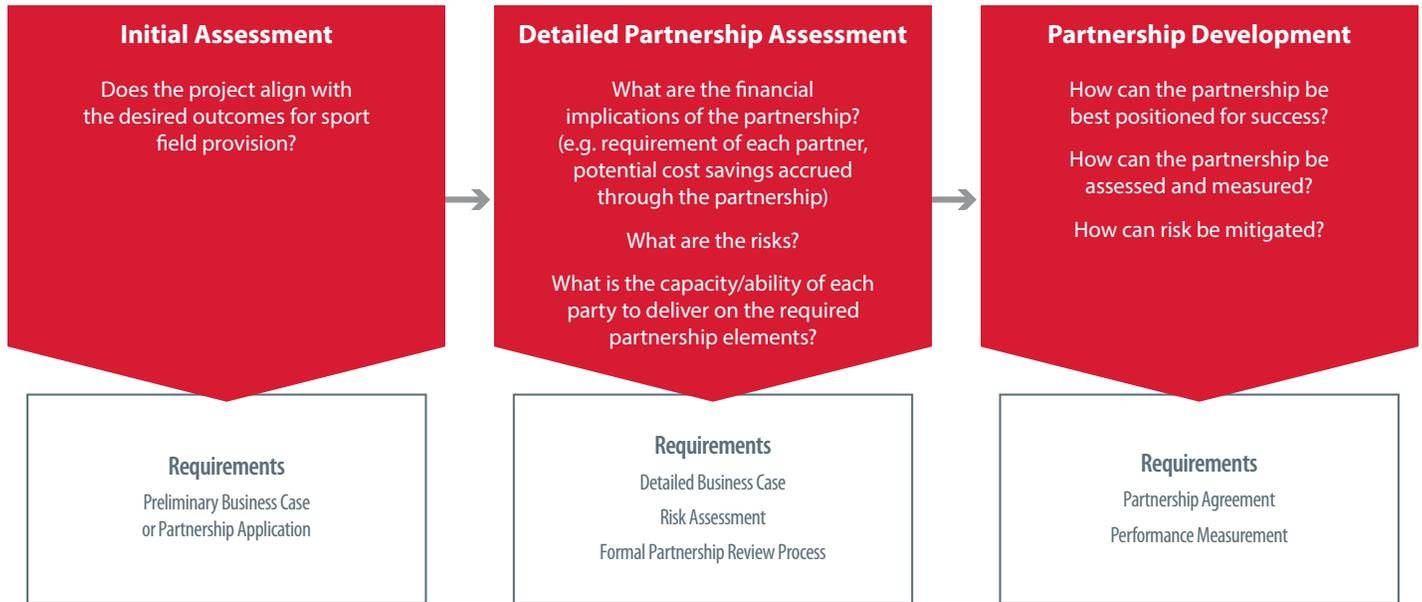
- Internal and external communication of the Sport Field Strategy.
- Development (or refinement) of an assessment tool to cross-reference the Sport Field Strategy's strategic intent with potential partnerships.
- Communication of the partnership process to internal and external stakeholders.
- Ensure that all potential partnerships follow the appropriate steps and requirements.

Outcomes

- Ensures potential partnerships are aligned with City strategic planning.
- Helps establish an initial vetting process for potential partnerships.

Partnership Process

Graphic 3.2



The following principles are suggested to help The City understand the relevance and validity of potential partnerships opportunities in providing sports fields. Should the opportunity not align with The City's desired goals for sports fields (Initial Assessment) then partnership discussions should not proceed. The following considerations should be used to filter all partnerships related to sport fields:

1. Expected level of financial benefit to The City.
2. Level of risk assumed by The City.
3. Assessment of the tenure, board governance and capacity of the potential partner organization: for example, demonstrates excellence in board governance, providing sports field infrastructure and programming/has limited experience/has no experience/is likely to default

The City should then further develop specific scoring metrics for the following three categories of partnerships types.

Infrastructure Partnerships: *Capital development and/or operations of sport field(s) through a formalized partnership with The City.*

Maintenance Partnership: *Formalized agreement that allow user groups to undertake sport field maintenance on public lands.*

Amenity Partnerships: *Addition of activity specific amenities to sport field sites to accommodate enhanced program and/or competition hosting capacity.*

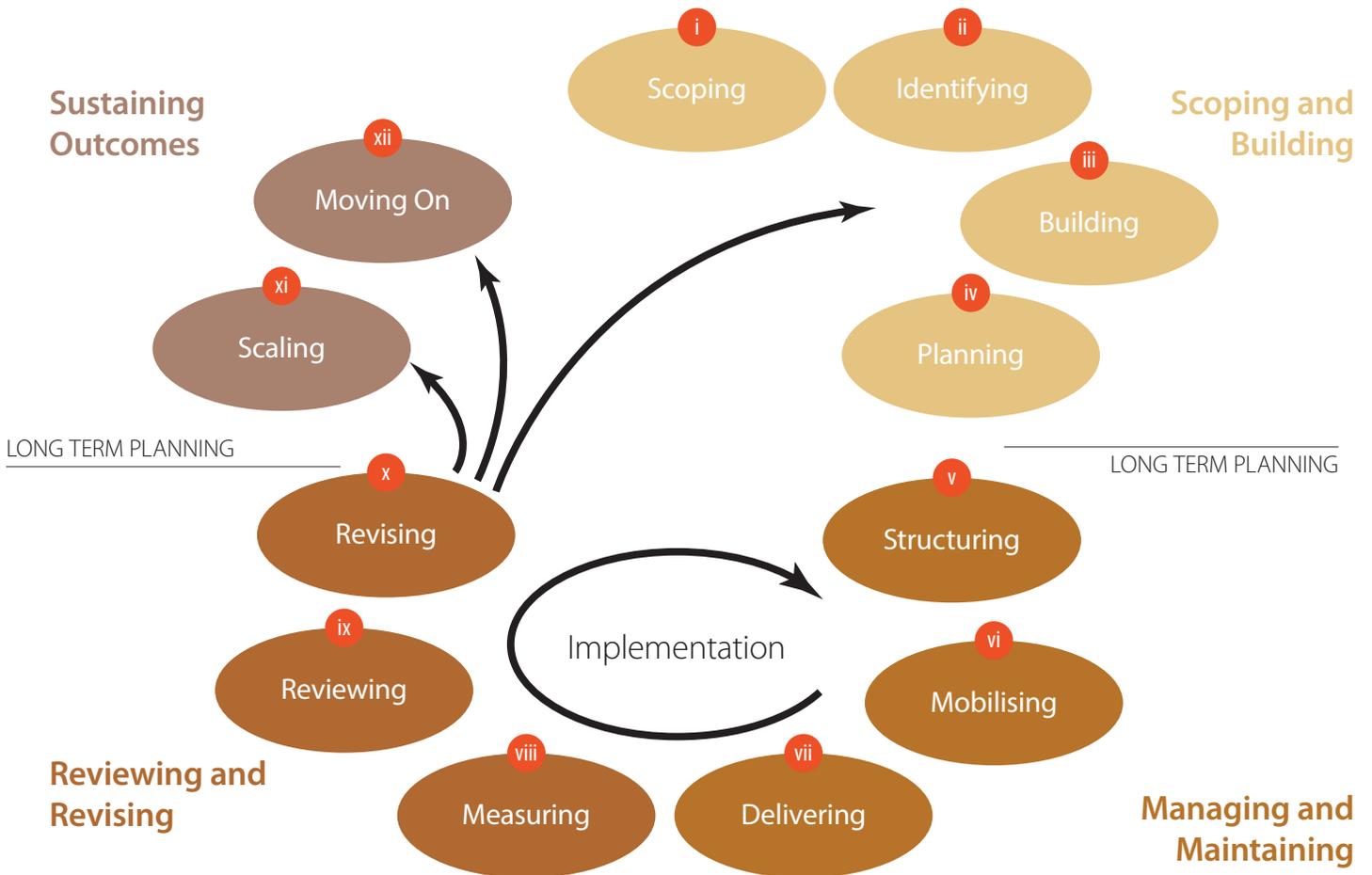
When contemplating potential partnerships in the delivery of sport fields, The City will consider limiting the quantity of each type of sport field in relation to overall provision. For example, it may not be in the best interests of The City to engage in partnerships that impact the level of operational control it has for more than 50% of a certain sport field type. Due to the dynamic nature of partnerships in the provision of sport fields and lack of clarity around specific partnership opportunities, these thresholds have not been defined and will be considered on a relationship by relationship basis based on current market conditions.



The City has identified the need to ensure that partnership development, execution, and measurement considers the cyclical and evolutionary nature of partnerships. The following graphic explains the Full Cycle Partnership Model which is based around the four overarching partnership phases of Scoping and Building, Managing & Maintaining, Reviewing and Revising, and Sustaining Outcomes. Following the steps outlined within these phases will ensure that partnerships are best positioned for success and can continue to meet mutual benefit over the long term.

Full Cycle Partnership Model

Graphic 3.3



© The Partnership Initiative

Partnerships specific to sport fields infrastructure in particular also need to be measured on their ability address gaps that exist and alignment with The City’s philosophic intent for overall sport field investment. The following chart identifies key partnership considerations that should drive the identification and assessment of future infrastructure partnerships.

Key Partnership Considerations		Table 3.8
Consideration	Required Benefits of the Partnership	Measurement Metrics (Examples)*
User Group and Public Access	User groups and residents must have access to a satisfactory proportion of available field time. Rates, fees and allocations should be consistent with those of The City.	>50% of evening and weekend capacity should be available for non-partner group/public use.
Geographic Distribution	Partnership needs to help address a disparity in the geographic distribution of sport fields and not duplicate an existing public or partner provided sport field asset.	To be demonstrated as part of preliminary business case.
Inventory Gaps	The Partnership should help address one or multiple gap(s) in the current sport field inventory (i.e. proportion of mid-level fields, geographic inequalities, emerging sport/activity, etc.)	Increases City inventory of mid-level (Class C) fields. Preliminary business case sufficiently demonstrates that gap would be addressed in a meaningful way.
Financial Benefit	The partnership should result in a capital and/or operating cost savings to The City. The demonstrated cost savings needs to also factor ongoing considerations such as life cycle and amenity refreshment contributions.	>10% capital costs savings. >20% annual operating cost savings. A life cycle and amenity refreshment strategy is sufficiently identified .

* The measurement metrics provided are examples which should be further defined during the implementation of the Strategy



Implementation Plan

A Sport Field Strategic Plan implementation team comprising of Calgary Parks and Calgary Recreation staff will be created and a detailed implementation plan developed.

Successful implementation will require input and participation from both internal and external stakeholders to achieve the desired outcomes. Implementation pre-requisites have been built in to each Strategy which, at a high level, outline key steps that will be required for successful execution.



Strategic Alignment

The following chart outlines pertinent findings and principles from a number of applicable City documents that have influenced development of the Sport Field Strategy.

Document Name	Findings
<i>imagineCalgary</i>	<p><i>imagineCalgary</i> outlines a number of 100 year targets for quality of life aspects and City service areas. Identified as follows are targets that relate to the provision of sport fields and that were considered in the development of the Strategy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By 2036, 95 per cent of Calgarians receive sufficient information and support to maintain and improve their health and foster their independence at all ages and stages of life (Target 92). • By 2036, 90 per cent of people living in Calgary report that they participate in active lifestyles that include informal and structured recreational opportunities (Target 107). • By 2036, 100 per cent of Calgarians report that they can access a range of high-quality recreational experiences, regardless of gender, socio-economic status, age, ability, religion, race, sexual orientation or heritage (Target 108).
<i>imagineParks</i>	<p><i>imagineParks</i> organizes a number of goals into 3 key Focus Areas (People, Open Space, Governance and Management). Identified as follows are goals that are addressed, and/or aligned with, in the Sport Field Strategy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responsive to Citizens: Parks enables and responds to changing citizen needs with diverse and equitable programs, events and amenities (Goal 1.1). • Individual and Community Well-being: Parks and programs support healthy lifestyle choices (Goal 1.3). • Access and Connectivity: Communities grow and renew in a way that supports access to connectivity of open space (Goal 2.3). • Optimized Resources: Sound management of parks and programs contributes to Calgary’s economic, environmental and social sustainability (Goal 3.1). • Collaboration: People contribute to and collaborate in decisions that advance Calgary’s high-quality park system (Goal 3.2).

Document Name	Findings
Triple Bottom Line (TBL) Policy Framework	<p>The Triple Bottom Line is an approach that considers economic, social, environmental, and smart growth and mobility implications in the decision-making processes. The purpose of the TBL Policy is the following:</p> <p><i>Vision: To advance Council's vision to create and sustain a vibrant, healthy, safe and caring community by providing clarity on the definition and meaning of Triple Bottom Line.</i></p> <p><i>Action: To embed the Triple Bottom Line into The City's Corporate policies, performance measures, actions and implementation procedures, and enhance The City's decision making.</i></p> <p><i>Community: To place Calgary's efforts in the broader context of efforts of cities around the world to improve their sustainability performance, and make a contribution to global sustainability.</i></p>
Recreation Master Plan	<p>The City's Recreation Master Plan identifies a number of facility related goals with potential application and relevancy to sport fields. The need for a diversity of recreation, leisure, and wellness offerings is a consistent theme throughout the document. An identified facility goal and desired outcome reflected in the Master Plan included the following statement:</p> <p><i>Recreation facilities act as cornerstones to complete communities and are equitably situated throughout the city and across the facility continuum.</i></p>
Open Space Plan	<p>The City's Open Space Plan identifies the need to undertake a "Sports Field Management Plan" to address the issues of cost recovery, underutilization, seasonality of use and ways to improve booking and programming. The Open Space Plan also identifies the benefits of improving data collection related to sports fields. The Plan identifies 17 specific policies for sports fields which are pertinent to consider in the development of the Sport Field Strategy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The intensification of use within the current inventory of sports fields should be pursued through retrofit opportunities before new site development. • Retrofitted and new play field sites should be designed to accommodate alternative field uses in the off-season. • Community—and district-level fields and the surrounding park space shall be designed and constructed in accordance with the current edition of the "Development Guidelines and Standard Specifications—Landscape Construction." Fields at the city-wide level will be constructed to a higher standard and in accordance with specifications, as determined on a site-by-site basis. • District and community fields should have good connections to the regional pathway system to encourage alternative transportation to the site. • District and city-wide fields should be situated to take advantage of multiple use opportunities, particularly those offered by senior high school development or regional recreation facilities. • Community fields should be acquired through the 10% reserve dedication, district fields through land swapping/negotiation or JUCC purchase and city-wide fields through partnership negotiation, donation or direct purchase. • All community—and district-level fields should be designed conceptually and approved at the outline plan stage by the Site Planning Team of the Joint Use Coordinating Committee.

Document Name	Findings
Open Space Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnership opportunities with sports organizations should be encouraged for the development, operation and maintenance of district and city-wide sports fields, including both retrofitted and newly developed sites. • Strategies to increase cost recoveries in the day-to-day operations of city-wide fields, as per Council-approved directives, should be pursued, with the long-term lifecycling cost shared between partners. • Development of any new city-wide fields should follow the community needs assessment process. • Where possible in new communities, new sports fields should minimize the residential/field interface and provide good access and parking. The site should be large enough to provide flexibility for off-season alternate uses. • New ball fields or retrofitted fields located with community centers should be restricted to informal play within the neighbourhood. They should have grassed infields for better multiple use of the site. • No new ball fields smaller than 76 square metres should be built with shale infields. • Soccer fields located adjacent to school sites and within the community may conform to one of the three sizes of play (i.e. mini, minor or major fields, as described in the “Development Guidelines and Standard Specifications—Landscape Construction”). However, there should be no clustering of large size fields within a community. • Locations for community field sites should be identified at the community plan level. • MR land in commercial or industrial areas may be considered suitable for the development of sports fields, depending on the site’s location and its immediately adjacent neighbours. (Refer to Open Space Land Use Policies, E4, Commercial and Industrial Districts).
City of Calgary User Fees and Subsidies Policy	<p>The Policy identifies six (6) guiding principles for the User Fee Policy:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Benefits Principle: Those who receive benefits from a particular municipally provided good or service should pay for that good or services according to the level or value of the benefit received. 2. Cost Recovery Principle: The full cost of providing a good or service, including operating expenses, administrative costs, capital expenses (including depreciation), as well as implicit costs of foregone opportunities or activities that are not being undertaken, environmental costs and social costs, should be the starting point when calculating the appropriate user fee. 3. Management of Public Assets Principle: Public assets have a value and The City has a responsibility to recognize this value and protect these assets. 4. Allocation of Resources Principle: In an environment with limited resources available and increasing public demand for goods and services, user fees have value as a mechanism for allocating scarce resources. 5. General Tax Supported Subsidies Principle: When consumption or use of a good or service benefits society as a whole, all citizens should pay for the societal benefit. 6. Tax Supported Subsidies for Individuals Principle: In cases where individuals may have resources below an acceptable level and are not able to make the choice to consume and pay for City goods and services, The City could provide a subsidy to the individual in order that they are allowed the choice to consume.

“What We Heard” Engagement Report

THE CITY OF CALGARY

Sport Field Strategy

“What We Heard”

Project Overview

The City of Calgary initiated the development of a Sport Field Strategy in February 2015 in order to assess the current state of provision and ultimately develop a long term strategy to guide the delivery of sport fields. Stemming from the strategic plan will be a Sport Field Policy that will guide the overall delivery of sport fields by the City of Calgary.

Engagement with Calgarians, stakeholders, and user groups was identified as a key element to the project. The information gathered from this engagement will help inform the Strategy and future provision of sport fields in Calgary. The Strategy is scheduled for completion in late 2015. Summarized in this document is an overview of the engagement and key findings.

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graph LR; A[Public and Stakeholder Engagement] --> C[Research Summary Report]; B[Review of Existing Practices, Policies, and Procedures] --> C; D[Secondary Research] --> C; C --> E[Sport Field Strategy]
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Public and Stakeholder Engagement

Review of Existing Practices, Policies, and Procedures

Secondary Research

Research Summary Report

Sport Field Strategy

Calgary

RC strategies

1

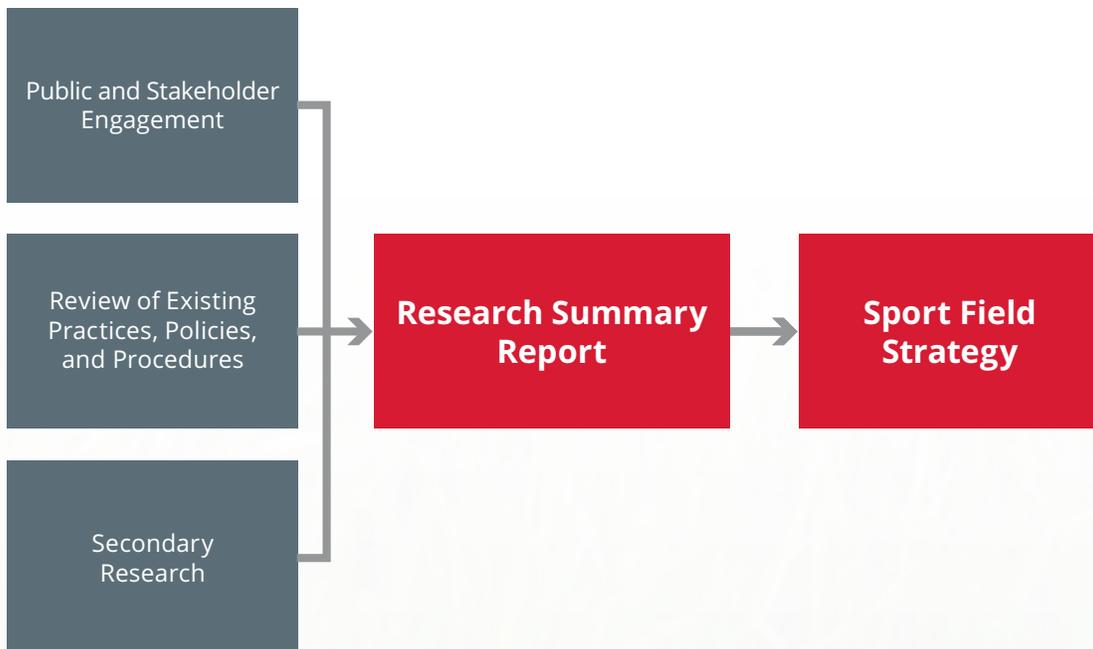
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Engagement Overview

Four engagement mechanisms were used to gather feedback on the current state of, and future needs, for sport fields in Calgary. The following chart identified the engagement mechanism and corresponding response/participation levels.

Engagement Method	Responses/ Participation
Stakeholder Interviews	20 interviews (~30 participants)
User Group Discussion Sessions (4 sessions)	34 participants
User Group Web Survey	87 responses*
Public Web Survey	2,446 responses

* Unique responses (a number of groups provided multiple responses).

Each engagement mechanism was designed to ensure that a wide array of perspectives could be heard and considered in the context of the project. The **stakeholder interviews** presented an opportunity for members of the project team to meet one on one or in a small group setting with key stakeholder group representatives. The **user group discussions** included individuals with a variety of interests and levels of involvement with sport field user groups in Calgary. Participants included volunteers, staff, coaches and board members from a number of organizations that use fields. Each discussion session was facilitated and participants were challenged to identify both issues and possible solutions to enhance sport field provision in the city. The **User Group Web Survey** was fielded to all sport field users in the city. The objective of the Survey was to gather data from groups on their current participation levels, current utilization, and anticipated future needs. The **Public Web Survey** was available through the City's website and promoted through a number of channels. The Survey provided Calgarians with an opportunity to identify their current levels of use, areas of strength (what they like) and areas of improvement that are required.

Key Findings (What We Heard)

Presented as follows are key findings and prevalent themes from the engagement.

Stakeholder Interviews and User Group Discussion Sessions

The stakeholder interviews and discussion sessions revealed similar themes and are thus summarized jointly.

- **Strengths of sport fields in Calgary:**
 - » User groups indicated that they generally have positive interactions with City staff.
 - » Athletic Parks provide key "hubs" for sport activity and are generally well maintained due to the presence of on-site staff.
 - » Utilization at many fields is high, due to the growth and strength of many user groups.
 - » Artificial turf fields in the city are highly valued and allow many groups to have extended seasons.
 - » Many group representatives and stakeholders acknowledged that the City has generally been fair and equitable in its dealings with groups.
 - » The geographic distribution of fields, while not ideal, was acknowledged as being relatively strong given the size and growth of the city.
- **Areas of concern:**
 - » Field maintenance and quality were commonly cited as an issue, especially pertaining to Class D and E playfields.
 - » Communications and clarity around the allocations and the booking process can be enhanced (through volunteer training, improved website interface, FAQ, etc.).
 - » Issues with the development process in newer communities were identified as a main contributor to poor sport field quality. In many instances, development of many new sports (over the past decade) has not adequately considered functionality (private developers not adhering to adequate standards when constructing fields in the neighbourhoods).
 - » "Hoarding" (over booking of sport fields) was identified as an issue by a number of groups. Reasons suggested for why hoarding occurs were: preservation of field quality, protection of historical field rights, and low user fees.

Stakeholder Interviews and User Group Discussion Sessions (Continued)

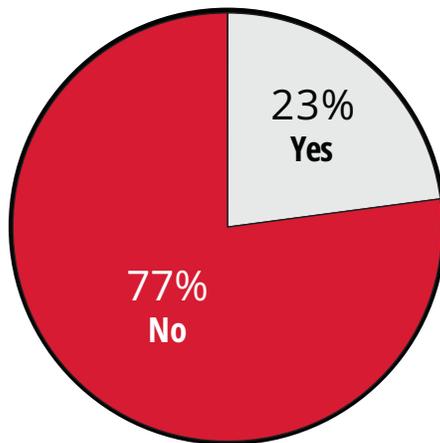
- **Areas of concern (continued):**
 - » The competitive (open) nature of minor soccer in the city was identified as impacting field allocations and equitable access.
 - » A number of stakeholders and group representatives indicated that there is a lack of amenities (washrooms) at some field locations.
 - » While improved, the online booking system should continue to be enhanced and made more user friendly.
 - » There was belief among some stakeholders and group representatives that Calgary is deficient when compared to other cities with regards to sport field quality and overall provision.
 - » Some emerging programs and activities (i.e. cricket) lack adequate facilities and amenities to accommodate growth and the increasing diversity of Calgary.
- **Looking forward—future needs and planning considerations:**
 - » The historical bookings process is important to some groups (ensures efficiency for staff and volunteers), but also recognized as a barrier for emerging or growing groups.
 - » Quality over quantity—interview and discussion session participants commonly mentioned that the city should focus on developing high quality fields (including artificial turf) and “hubs” of fields (Athletic Parks).
 - » Group representatives and stakeholders commonly identified the need for the City to hold developers to a higher standard when constructing fields in new communities.
 - » Varying opinions exist on whether it is appropriate to raise user fees to enhance sport field quality and amenities.
 - » Opportunities to align with the Long Term Athlete Development Model and other national/provincial policies were identified by some stakeholders.
 - » The City should look to implement enhanced communication structures and protocols to guide interactions between user groups and the City.

User Group Web Survey

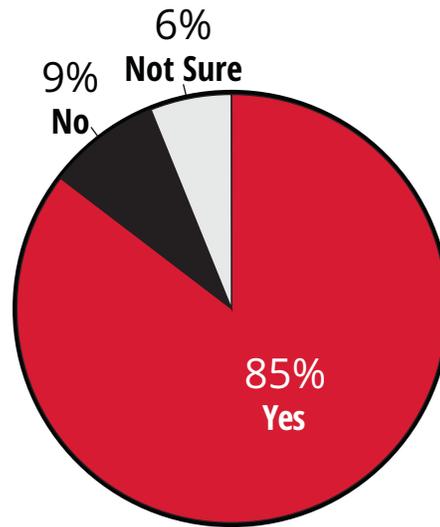
- **Respondent Overview:**
 - » User group survey respondents represented a wide array of interests and age groups.
 - 26% of respondent groups have members/participants/clients that are preschool aged (0 – 5 years old).
 - 52% of respondent groups have members/participants/clients that are youth (6 – 12 years of age).
 - 53% of respondent groups have members/participants/clients that are teens (13 – 17 years of age).
 - 51% of respondent groups have members/participants/clients that are adults (18 – 39 years of age).
 - 35% of respondent groups have members/participants/clients that are adults (40 – 59 years of age).
 - 13% of respondent groups of respondent groups have members/participants/clients that are seniors (60+).
 - » 61% of groups indicated that they expect to grow in coming years, while 39% expect to remain stable (0 groups indicated that they expect to decline).

User Group Web Survey (Continued)

Has your organization ever turned away potential new members due to lack of access to facilities?



Does your organization actively use all of the time that you book (not accounting for limitations do to weather)?



When asked about the strengths and areas of improvement required to sport fields in Calgary, the following themes were commonly identified.

The aspect that your organization likes the best (strengths) about these spaces or facilities.	The aspects that require improvement.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proximity/convenient location (25 mentions). • Quality/maintenance (12 mentions). • Artificial turf fields (9 mentions). • Price/affordability (3 mentions). • Bookings/allocations (3 mentions). • "Hubs" of sport fields (3 mentions). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased grass cutting and/or overall quality of natural surface fields (30 mentions). • Improved drainage and irrigation (7 mentions). • Replacement or upgrades to backstops and fencing at ball diamonds (4 mentions). • Need for more fields (4 mentions). • Lack of locker rooms/washroom facilities (4 mentions). • Improvements to parking lots and access roads (3 mentions).

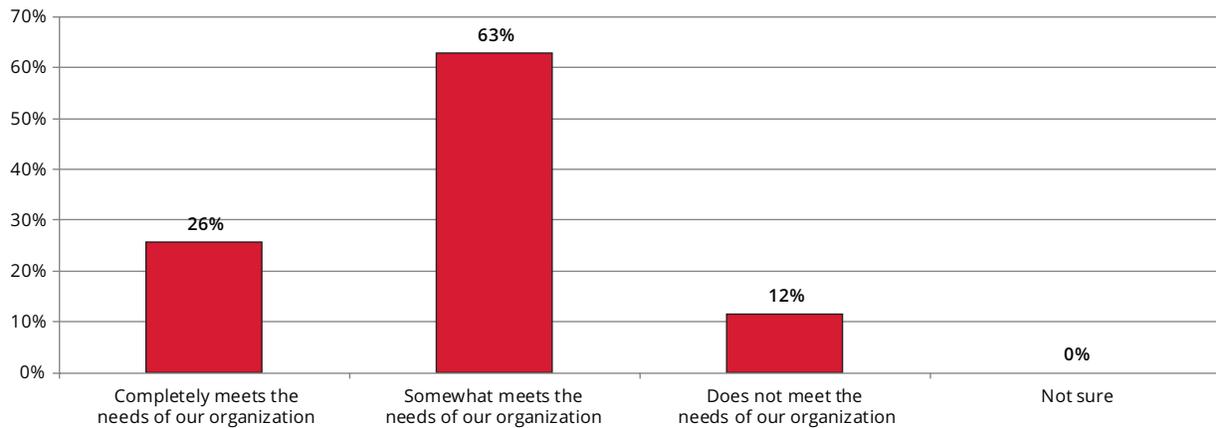
User Group Web Survey (Continued)

Level of satisfaction with the following aspects of sport field provision:	Very Satisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	Somewhat Unsatisfied	Very Unsatisfied	Not Sure/ Doesn't Apply
Allocation System (how sport fields are made available to groups)	24%	44%	10%	14%	8%
Booking System/Process	19%	54%	8%	9%	10%
Quality of Artificial Turf fields: Class A	25%	17%	3%	1%	55%
Quality of Athletic Parks (Grass Fields): Class A, B, or C	14%	33%	18%	4%	31%
Quality of Playfields: Class D or E	9%	27%	28%	12%	24%
Relationship with City Staff Related to the Provision of Sport Fields	33%	36%	8%	1%	22%
Geographic Distribution of Sport Fields Across the City	14%	45%	14%	9%	18%

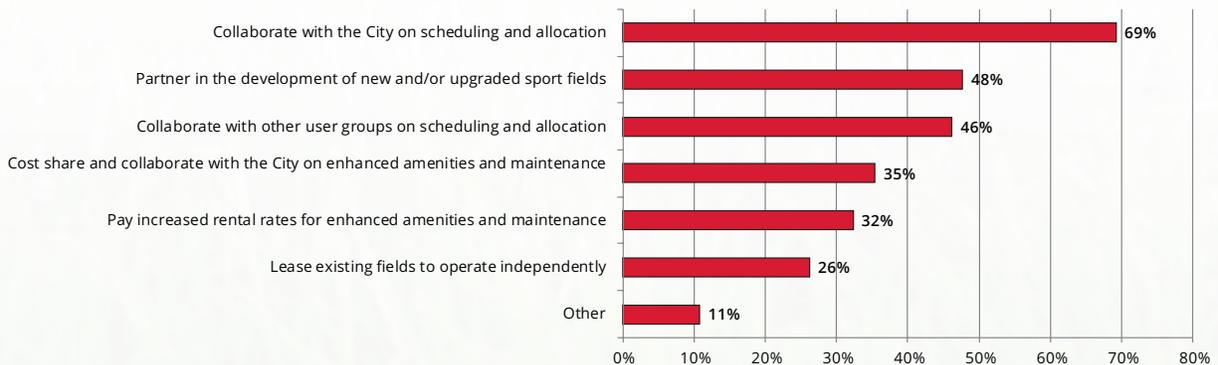
Satisfaction with Rates and Fees	Very Satisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	Somewhat Unsatisfied	Very Unsatisfied	Not Sure/ Doesn't Apply
Class A Athletic Parks (Grass Rectangular Fields and Ball Diamonds) Adult: \$94.80 Minor: \$47.40	8%	25%	15%	8%	45%
Class A Artificial Turf Adult: \$123.30 Minor: \$97.20	1%	21%	17%	9%	51%
Class B Adult: \$70.55 Minor: \$35.05)	0%	19%	14%	10%	58%
Class C Adult: \$47.10 Minor: \$23.65)	4%	22%	18%	5%	51%
Class D Adult: \$20.10 Minor: \$2.23	25%	25%	9%	8%	32%
Class E Adult: \$4.30 Minor: \$1.10	27%	19%	10%	0%	45%

User Group Web Survey (Continued)

To what level do the current sport fields in Calgary meet the need of your organization?



What ways would your group be willing to work with the City to improve sport fields in Calgary?



User Group Web Survey (Continued)

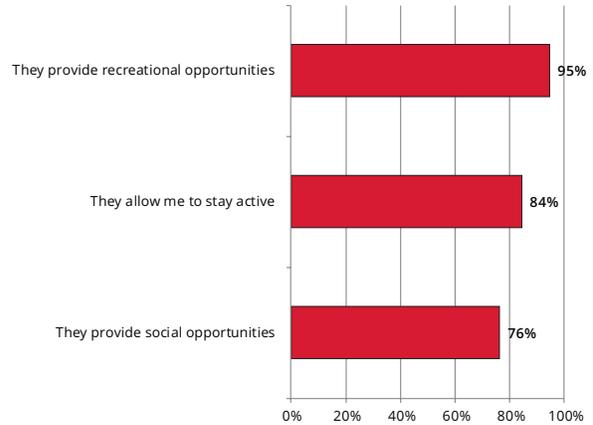
Importance of planning criteria for each of the following is in the decision to develop new sport fields or re-purpose existing sport fields:	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Unsure/ Don't Know	Somewhat Unimportant	Very Unimportant
Current Utilization Levels (of various sport field types)	60%	30%	10%	0%	0%
To Accommodate Growth of Existing Sport Field Programs	68%	22%	10%	0%	0%
Availability of Partnerships in Sport Field Development/ Construction	33%	40%	25%	1%	1%
Availability of Partnerships in Sport Field Operations and Maintenance	32%	44%	21%	1%	1%
Providing Sport Fields for New or Emerging Activities	30%	42%	17%	10%	1%
Cost of Developing Sport Fields	28%	51%	18%	1%	1%
Cost of Operating and Maintaining Sport Fields	38%	44%	17%	0%	1%
Geographic Distribution of Sport Fields in Calgary	49%	33%	13%	5%	0%

Public Web Survey

- Respondent Overview:

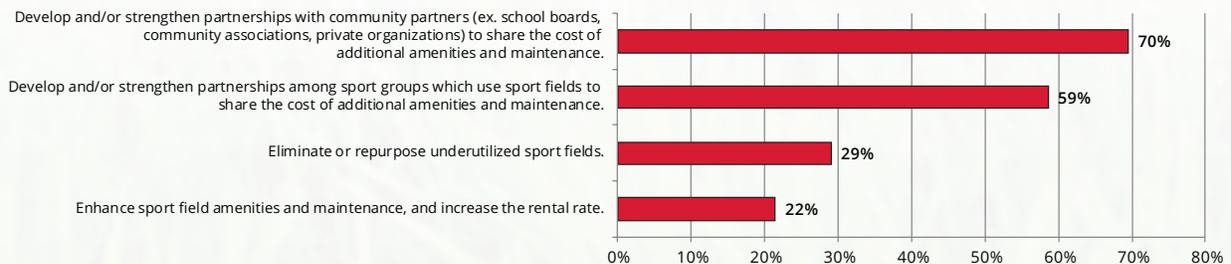
- » The majority of respondents were frequent users of sport fields (84% of responding households had used sport fields on more than 20 occasions in the previous year).
- » The majority of respondent households have family members that participate in soccer (88% indicated that youth in their households play organized soccer, 52% indicated that adults in their household play organized soccer).
- » Respondents also indicated a high level of “unstructured” or casual use of City sport fields (51% of respondents indicated that youth in their households use fields for unstructured or casual use, 60% of respondents indicated that adults in their households use fields for unstructured or casual use).

How do sport fields add to your household’s quality of life?



Level of satisfaction with areas of sport field provision:	Very Satisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	Somewhat Unsatisfied	Very Unsatisfied	Unsure/ Don't Know
Availability of Sport Fields in Calgary	22%	52%	16%	8%	3%
Quality of Sport Fields in Calgary	10%	44%	30%	16%	0%
Location/Proximity of Sport Fields in Relation to your Home	32%	45%	15%	8%	1%
Amenities at Sport Fields in Calgary	6%	36%	35%	20%	3%

Preferred Options to Optimize the Provision of Sport Fields in Calgary

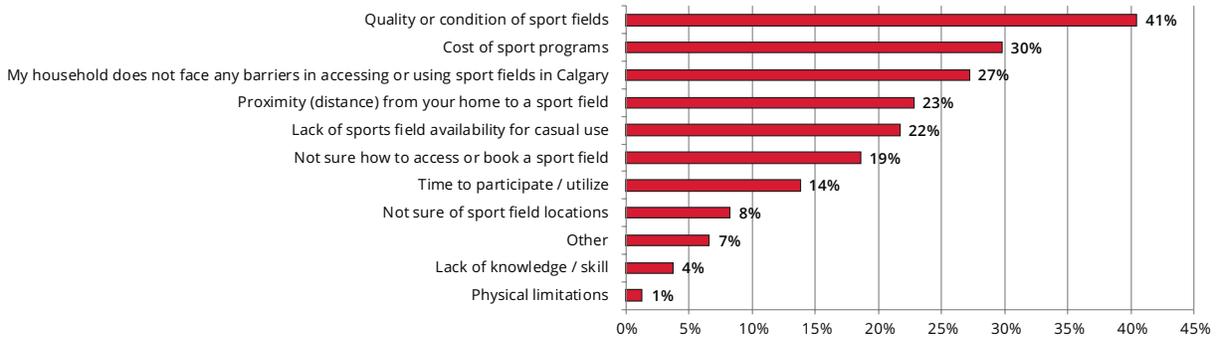


Public Web Survey (Continued)

Importance of decision making considerations	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Somewhat Unimportant	Very Unimportant	Unsure/ Don't Know
Meeting the needs of user groups that focus on child and youth recreational sport.	76%	20%	2%	1%	1%
Meeting the needs of user groups that focus on child and youth competitive sport.	72%	24%	3%	1%	1%
Meeting the needs of adult sport user groups (competitive and recreation).	42%	49%	7%	1%	2%
Ability for fields to be multi-purpose.	42%	40%	13%	4%	2%
Ensuring that fields are available for new or emerging activities and user groups.	30%	49%	15%	3%	3%
Ensuring that sport fields are available to residents for "casual" or "spontaneous" use (e.g. pick-up games, throwing a ball around).	41%	41%	14%	3%	1%
Ensuring quality sport fields are available in new neighbourhoods and communities.	63%	29%	5%	2%	1%
Ensuring sport fields are sustained in established communities.	77%	20%	1%	1%	1%

Public Web Survey (Continued)

Barriers to Accessing/Using Sport Fields



Desired Amenity Additions

