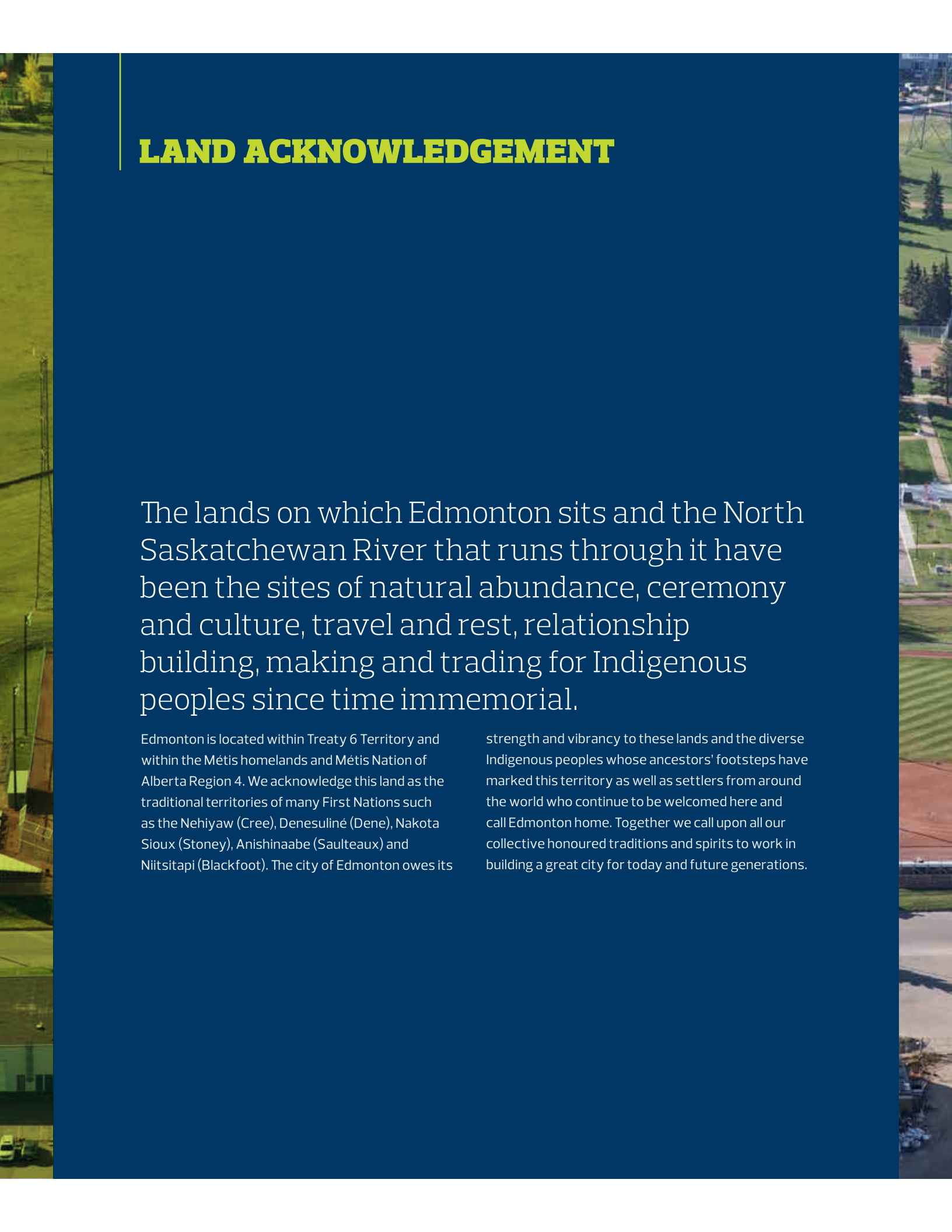




SPORTS FIELD STRATEGY

Prepared by the City of Edmonton

Edmonton

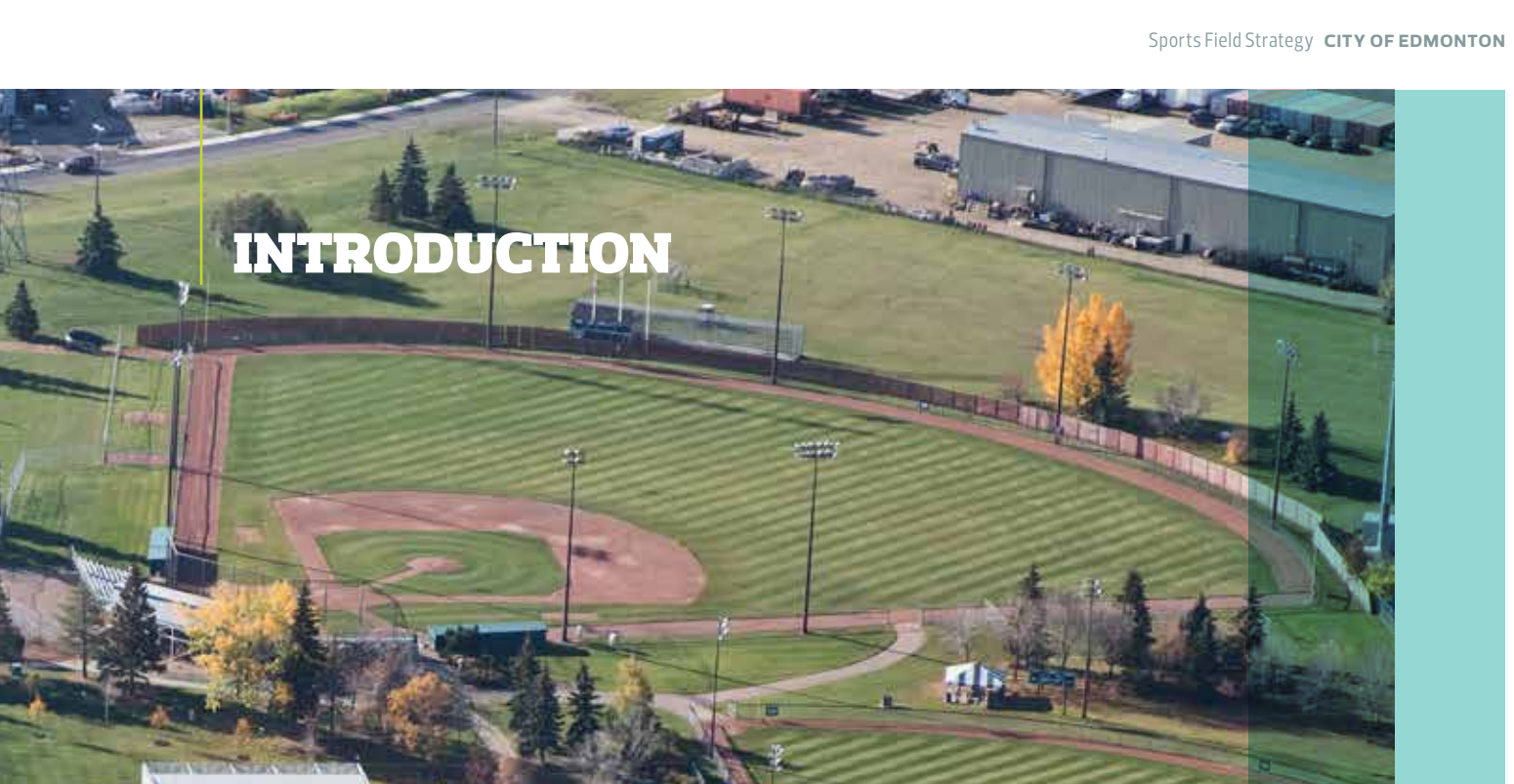
An aerial photograph of a park with a baseball field, trees, and a path, serving as a background for the text.

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The lands on which Edmonton sits and the North Saskatchewan River that runs through it have been the sites of natural abundance, ceremony and culture, travel and rest, relationship building, making and trading for Indigenous peoples since time immemorial.

Edmonton is located within Treaty 6 Territory and within the Métis homelands and Métis Nation of Alberta Region 4. We acknowledge this land as the traditional territories of many First Nations such as the Nehiyaw (Cree), Denesuliné (Dene), Nakota Sioux (Stoney), Anishinaabe (Saulteaux) and Niitsitapi (Blackfoot). The city of Edmonton owes its

strength and vibrancy to these lands and the diverse Indigenous peoples whose ancestors' footsteps have marked this territory as well as settlers from around the world who continue to be welcomed here and call Edmonton home. Together we call upon all our collective honoured traditions and spirits to work in building a great city for today and future generations.



INTRODUCTION

The City of Edmonton is a vibrant urban centre, and the world's largest northernmost city. The City of Edmonton's City Plan predicts that the city will reach a population of two million by 2040.

Edmonton's population continues to grow and Edmonton will receive new residents from rural Alberta, from other provinces, and from around the world. Being proactive in the delivery of outdoor recreation options is essential as we welcome our second million residents.

The City of Edmonton's sports fields are an important asset to our growing community. The City of Edmonton oversees the maintenance, redevelopment, user allocation, and allotment of over 1,500 sports fields. This vast inventory ranges from mini soccer fields and ball diamonds, to competition-sized sport complexes complete with lighting, stands, washrooms, and scoreboards. Sports fields enable Edmontonians to recreate in spaces close to home – typically within a 5 to 10 minute walk.

The majority of sports fields provide affordable recreation opportunities to Edmontonians to participate in a variety of activities. They are

available at no cost or low cost, and require only minimal equipment to enjoy. Sports fields provide outdoor recreation opportunities for all ages in the community and provide a place for everyone to participate in activities that promote healthy communities and provide physical and mental wellbeing. Healthy citizens are a key to active and inclusive communities, which in turn leads to a happier, more connected city.

The planning and development of the majority of sports field sites occurs in partnership with the three school boards; Edmonton Public Schools, Edmonton Catholic School Board, and the Conseil scolaire Centre Nord, as many of the 1,500 sports fields are on school sites. The City of Edmonton's sports fields must meet the needs of schools, various sports field user groups, and the community at large. Tens of thousands of Edmontonians use sports fields during any given year for competition, recreation and celebration.



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of the Sports Field Strategy is to help address issues and opportunities in the planning, provision, maintenance and renewal of sports fields in Edmonton.

Specifically, the strategy will ensure Edmonton has the right inventory and right quality of sports fields appropriately distributed, now and into the future. Based on research and user feedback, the strategy will assess the current sports field inventory, provide

a needs assessment for user groups, establish customer service requirements, as well as propose appropriate user allocation and fees, and inform future sport field development.



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1.0 GUIDING PRINCIPLES

In alignment with key City of Edmonton policies and strategies including the City Plan, the following guiding principles have been prioritized. These principles steer the Strategy Recommendations and will inform future implementation plans and decision-making.

1

FUTURE-ORIENTED:

The Sports Field Strategy is designed to adapt and fit user needs now and into the future. Flexibility and agility are valued as the City recognizes the shifting trends and the landscape of field sports in Edmonton.

2

ENCOURAGE PARTICIPATION:

Sports fields are useful only if they are used. Strategy recommendations keep usability, accessibility, and the customer experience front of mind to encourage participation.

3

ENSURE SUSTAINABILITY:

Sports fields must be designed, placed, maintained, and used with longevity and sustainability in mind. They will be designed to support and contribute to the city's multifunctional green network including integrating ecological considerations into site planning and design. The Strategy recognizes operational constraints such as budget and land availability concerning the construction and maintenance and lifecycle management of sports fields; care must be taken to ensure continued access to sports fields.

4

FOSTER COMMUNITY:

Sports fields are multigenerational and multipurpose spaces – they serve as gathering grounds for communities, whether in the context of sport or celebration events. The Strategy recognizes the opportunity to foster community through effective management of sports fields.

5

PROVIDE FAIR ACCESS:

Fair and equitable access to sports fields underpins the other four guiding principles by removing barriers to access for all Edmontonians. Barriers might include cost, proximity, and ease of accessing and understanding booking information. The Strategy recognizes the importance of equity and has applied Gender Based Analysis Plus (GBA+) to the strategic recommendations to ensure they support and promote inclusion.

2.0 SETTING THE CONTEXT

Two important past events shaped the place of sport and recreation services in Edmonton.

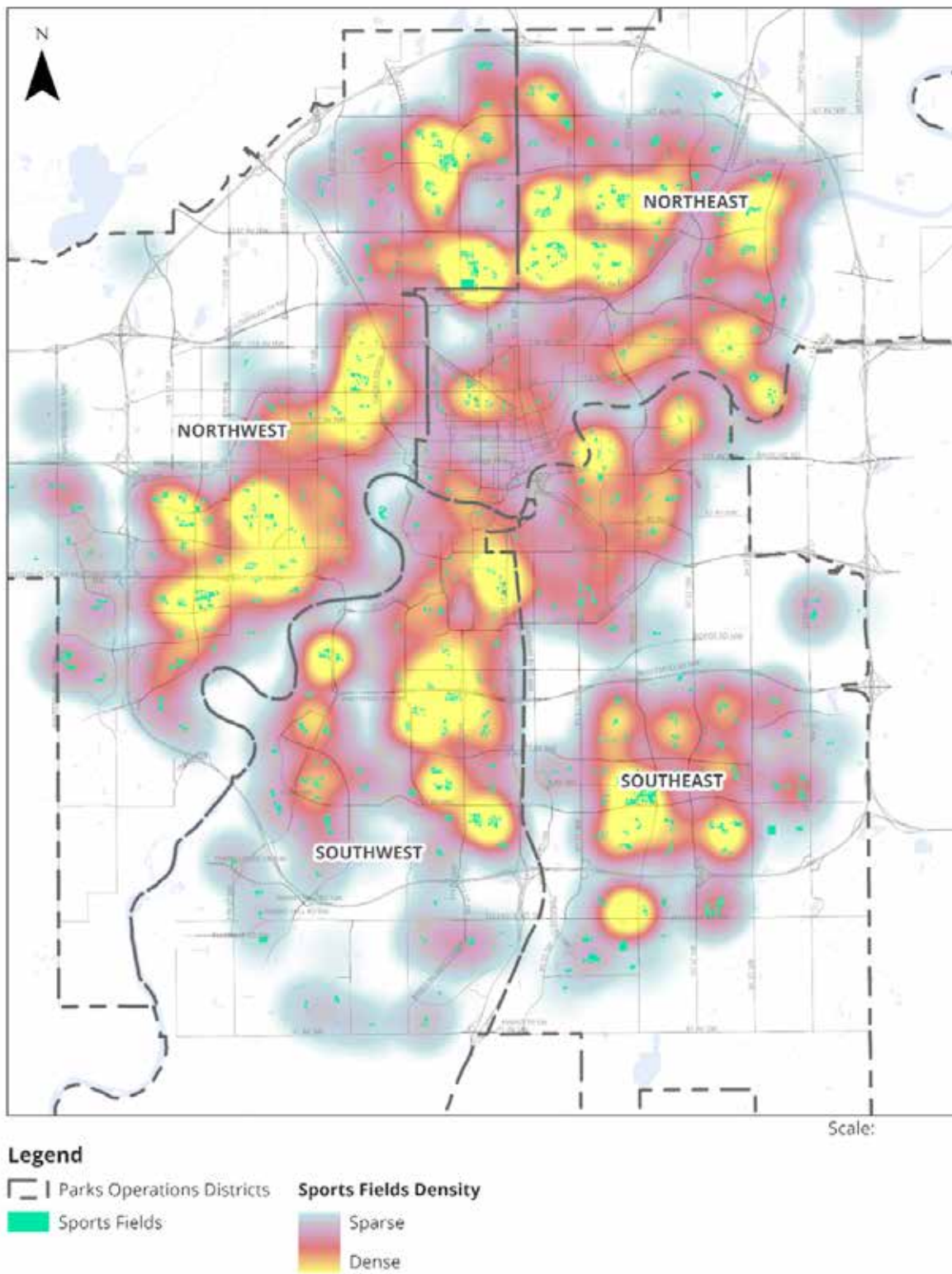
First was the creation in 1959 of a Joint Use Agreement for the public use of both recreation and school infrastructure. This agreement established the importance of the joint use of sports field infrastructure by community and schools. Second was the recognition in 1961 of the importance of athletic fields and swimming pools to support the health of citizens with the adoption of the Parks and Recreation Bylaw. As a result, today the City of Edmonton has a well-entrenched system of field

recreation services to deliver community and school sports field programs. In 2007, the most recent year the "Joint Use Agreement: Facilities" was signed, 1,765 sport fields (931 rectangular and 775 diamonds) were recognized as joint facilities. It is against this background knowledge of continuous and on-going delivery of quality field services that the Sports Field Strategy seeks to review current needs and standards and make recommendations on the future state of sports field delivery in the City of Edmonton.

FOR THE POOR, THE ONLY ALTERNATIVE TO TELEVISION FOR THEIR LEISURE TIME IS THE PUBLIC SPACE. FOR THIS REASON, HIGH- QUALITY PUBLIC PEDESTRIAN SPACE, AND PARKS IN PARTICULAR, ARE EVIDENCE OF A TRUE DEMOCRACY AT WORK.

— ENRIQUE PEÑALOSA – FORMER MAYOR OF BOGOTA, COLOMBIA

CITY OF EDMONTON – SPORTS FIELD HEAT MAP 2022



3.0 THE CURRENT STATE SPORTS FIELD DELIVERY MODEL

Unlike other types of City operated recreation facilities, the provision of sports fields is driven not only by demand, but also by supply as part of a continuum.

In pools and arenas, demand drives the supply, meaning development guidelines are in place using ratios per thousand population to trigger the expansion of the city's inventory of a given recreational amenity. Because land is assembled for sport fields based on a portion of the developable area, and not by population, the supply is a driver in Edmonton's sport fields model. Partnerships

and Sports Field Maintenance and Redevelopment influence both the City's supply and demand for sports fields.

Currently City sports fields are divided into four categories based on construction, amenities provided, and size:

- 1 STANDARD SOCCER AND COMBINATION FIELDS:**
These rectangular grass fields are typically named by neighbourhood or nearby parks and schools. They range from full-sized fields and mini soccer pitches to diamonds with grass infields.
- 2 PREMIER SOCCER, DIAMONDS, AND COMBINATION FIELDS:**
Irrigated, full-sized rectangular fields and shale diamonds where the City provides a high level of maintenance.
- 3 HOMEBASE FIELDS:**
The Home Base Program is a partnership between an organization and the City of Edmonton. As part of this agreement, the organization agrees to develop or upgrade and then maintain the sports field to a Premier Level or better. When the site is not in use by the Home Base group, the City can book additional users on the site.
- 4 STAFFED FIELDS & ARTIFICIAL TURF:**
Premier sports fields include rectangular artificial turf and grass fields, shale diamonds, and track facilities. All have bleachers and an on-site attendant, and most have lights.

COUNT OF FIELDS (2022)	STANDARD	PREMIER	HOME BASE	STAFFED	ARTIFICIAL TURF
	1359	136	30	13	4

3.1 SUPPLY METHODOLOGY

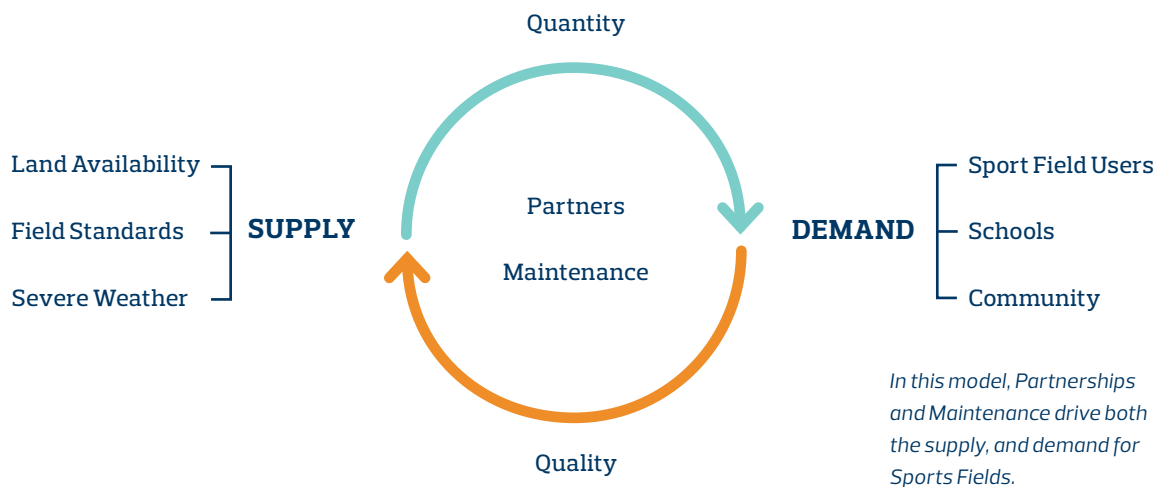
In the case of sport fields, the initial supply or land availability comes from land earmarked for sports field allotment during neighbourhood development, and is part of a hectare guideline as outlined in the Urban Parks Management Plan (UPMP). Variables such as parkland classification, school construction, and site constraints such as street frontage, tree stands, and natural features, etc. are factors in the quantity of land that can be dedicated to sport fields on any given site. Once the quantity of land dedicated to sports fields is established, the size and types of fields to be assembled, otherwise known as the sports field standards, are established. Field standards are largely school driven, and prescribe the number and sizes of fields to be added to a given site based on the classification and whether or not there are any schools and/or recreation facilities on the site.

Weather also plays a role in affecting the supply of sports fields. Extreme weather conditions, including prolonged or heavy rain, and extended periods of dry heat can cause unexpected field closures. Finally, the supply is affected by the City's regular rotation of sports fields, which is based upon the rest and rejuvenation schedules.

3.2 DEMAND METHODOLOGY

The measurement of sports field demand is reviewed by taking into account the needs of three major field user groups: the organized sports field user groups, schools, and community use. Demand is measured by analyzing booking data, sports group surveys, school boards need analysis, community surveys, and from internal staff feedback.

THE SPORT FIELDS MODEL



3.3 PARTNERSHIPS

The City of Edmonton has a long standing history of partnerships specializing in sports field delivery. The City of Edmonton works with partners to develop sports fields and amenities that are outside of the City's basic commitment to sports field provision. This includes planning, building and maintaining fields to a higher level than the City's standard service. The type of partnerships vary from lease or license agreements on public lands, to maintenance agreements and sport organization access and operation agreements ("Home Base"). These types of partnerships provide an opportunity for sport-minded organizations to partner with the City to improve the quantity or quality of fields available to Edmontonians.

3.4 MAINTENANCE AND FIELD REDEVELOPMENT

The supply of sport fields is heavily influenced by the maintenance and rejuvenation required to keep fields safe and to prolong their life cycle. Premier and staffed fields are more heavily used than standard fields, and use is typically by older youth or adult teams. Older youth and adult sports play is much more demanding on turf grass, as the players are typically bigger and stronger with longer games and longer seasons of play. For this reason, premier and staffed sport fields must be rested throughout the year. A rest/rejuvenation formula is in place with each premier field receiving 5 to 6 consecutive weeks of rest and rejuvenation per year, which typically includes overseeding, top dressing, and irrigation. The rest/rejuvenation schedule is set during the winter months for the upcoming sports field season.

As the level of play and age of competitors increases, the demand for well maintained sports fields also escalates. This is because high quality turf is desirable for the majority of older youth and adult teams. Maintenance levels are directly linked to booking fees, with staffed and Home Base fields having the highest booking rates as well as the highest fees. Standard fields are booked at nominal fees, currently less than \$6 per hour for adult groups, and free for minor groups. Sports field users expect a correlation between the booking rate and the quality of the maintained turf.

3.4.1 Redevelopment

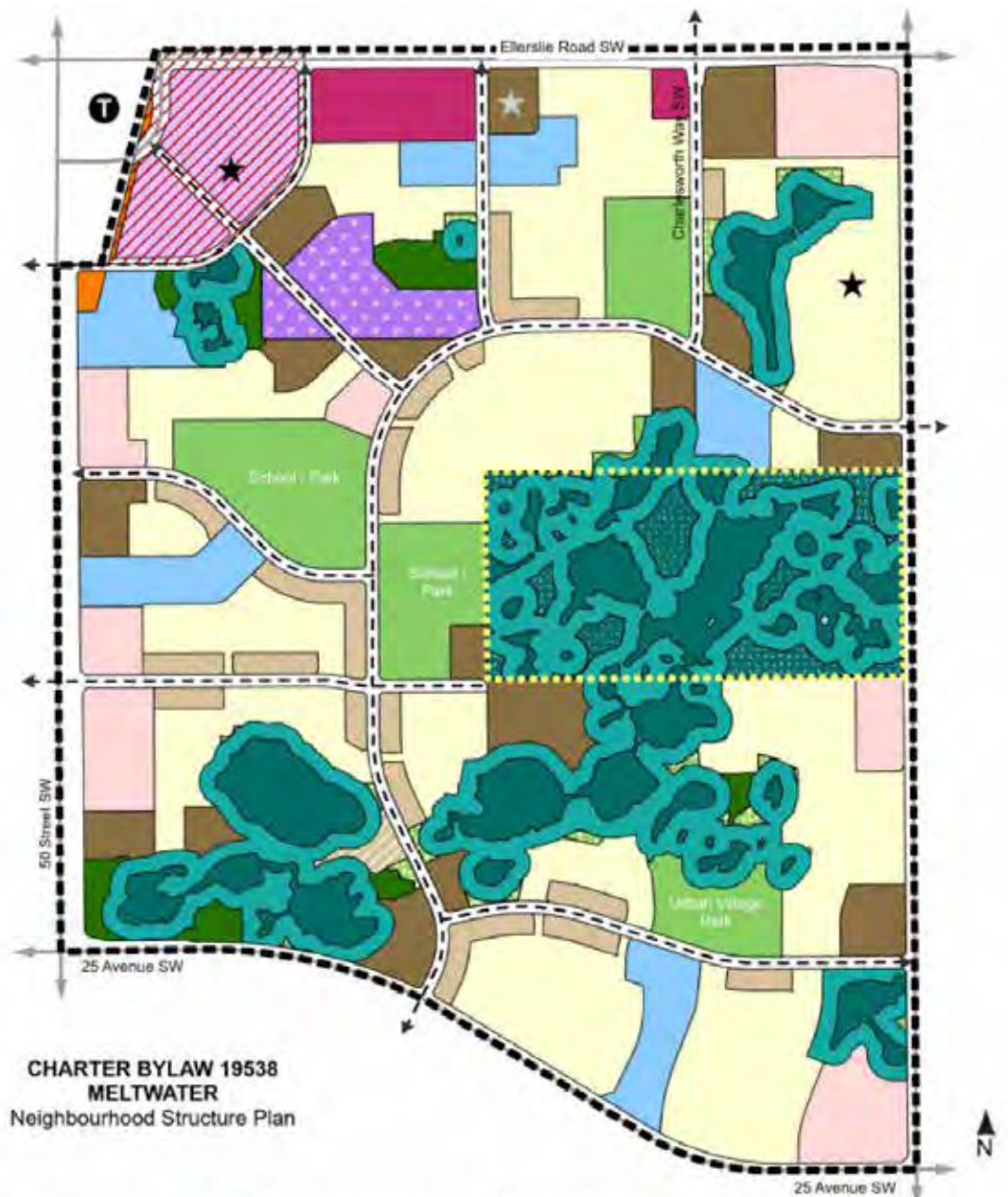
The Parks Renewal Composite provides funding to support the renewal requirements of city park assets such as sport fields and fixtures (to refurbish worn out and heavily used neighbourhood and district sports fields), running tracks, and artificial turf fields. The projects undertaken within the program extend the life of existing sports fields, reduce longer term repair costs, and correct potential or impending safety concerns within the parks system. Projects are generally required in order to improve condition, meet user requirements, and reduce/prevent injuries, maintenance costs and closures.

Sports fields experience degradation due to weather and usage. Failure to keep up with required rehabilitation work could result in structural failure, increased user injuries, closure of sports fields and/or amenities, and increased corrective or major maintenance costs at a later date.

ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES OF SPORTS FIELD REDEVELOPMENT ARE AS FOLLOWS:

- 1 : Sports fields are safe and enjoyable for all users and meet safety/legislative requirements
- 2 : Assets are maintained in good condition until the end of their life cycle
- 3 : Service reduction/closures are avoided; visitation increases
- 4 : Improved level of service and customer satisfaction

EXAMPLE OF AN AREA STRUCTURE PLAN SHOWING DESIGNATED SCHOOL/PARK SPACE



- | | | | |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Low Density Residential | Neighbourhood Commercial | Natural Area (ER) | Collector Roadway |
| Street-Oriented Residential | Institutional / Residential Mixed Use | Natural Area (ER) to be determined | NSP Boundary |
| Medium Density Residential | Stormwater Management Facility | Pipeline R/W | Pocket Park (MR) |
| Potential Development Area (MDR) | Parkland (non-MR) | Non ER on City Owned Parcels | Civic Use |
| Town Centre Mixed Use | School / Park (MR) | Special Study Area | Future Transit Centre/Park & Ride |
| Mixed Use | Natural Area (MR) | City Owned Lands | |
| Community Commercial | | Arterial Roadway | |

Note: Location of collector roads and configuration of stormwater management facilities are subject to minor revisions during subdivision and rezoning of the neighbourhood and may not be developed exactly as illustrated.
*Buffer to be determined through SSNAMP

4.0 SCOPE

The Sports Field Strategy addresses the process of managing all sports fields owned or jointly owned by the City of Edmonton, the Edmonton Catholic School Board, the Edmonton Public Schools Board, the Conseil scolaire Centre-Nord and by other community partners. This includes:

- » Rectangular fields including soccer, football, rugby, lacrosse and Aussie rules football fields
- » Ball Diamonds including baseball, softball, and slo pitch diamonds
- » Oval grass fields for cricket
- » Fixtureless fields for ultimate frisbee
- » Artificial turf fields
- » Support amenities such as washrooms, field lighting, scoreboards, storage, and shelters

The following spaces and places are out of scope of this Strategy:

- » Commonwealth Stadium and RE/MAX Field
- » Recreational and/or non-programmable green space
- » Hard surface courts such as tennis, pickleball and basketball
- » Outdoor rinks
- » Track and field amenities: poured surface tracks, shale tracks, throwing cages, jump pits
- » Golf courses
- » Disc golf courses
- » Beach volleyball courts



5.0 STRATEGIC AND POLICY ALIGNMENT

The Sports Field Strategy aims to align with existing City of Edmonton strategic documents and key City policies. It has been influenced by external provincial and national plans, especially as they relate to the provision of sport, recreation, outdoor enjoyment, and of park spaces for a multitude of uses. The Strategy integrates with a number of documents such as:

- 1 :: The City Plan
- 2 :: BREATHE – Edmonton's Green Network Strategy
- 3 :: Live Active
- 4 :: Approach to Community Recreation Facility Planning in Edmonton
- 5 :: WinterCity Strategy
- 6 :: The Urban Parks Management Plan 2006–2016
- 7 :: The Joint Use Agreements (Facilities and Land)
- 8 :: The Canadian Sport for Life (CS4L) – Long Term Development (LTD) and Quality Sport Frameworks

5.1 THE CITY PLAN

The City Plan is Edmonton's highest order statutory plan, providing strategic guidance for all City departments. The Sports Field Strategy is aligned with The City Plan through the following foundational directions:

- » **Policy Direction 1.1.1.2:** Design new and retrofit existing open spaces networks to encompass wellness, celebration and ecology at the district level.
- » **Policy Direction 1.1.1.3:** Collaborate with school boards to identify, allocate and deliver municipal and school reserves that will allow for educational spaces and community facilities that provide learning, recreation and gathering opportunities.
- » **Policy Direction 2.3.3.4:** Animate open spaces at all scales through programming, activities and events that encourage daily and all-season use.
- » **Policy Direction 2.3.3.5:** Collaborate with private developers, utility providers and communities on innovative and creative solutions for temporary and permanent infrastructure and amenities that support the public realm.
- » **Policy Direction 2.4.2.7:** Efficiently use public land and develop multifunctional and multipurpose facilities in new and redeveloping neighbourhoods.





5.2 BREATHE, EDMONTON'S GREEN NETWORK STRATEGY – 2017

The Green Network Strategy adopts a multifunctional network planning approach to ensure a range of highly-valued open space functions and services are well distributed through the city. The Strategy evaluates the amount, function, and pattern of all open space. Breathe recognizes that open space includes a range of important functions including ecology (habitat for plants and animals), celebration (community spaces and heritage sites), and wellness (sporting amenities and recreation). Sport fields have an opportunity to contribute to the multifunctional design of parks and provide an opportunity to enhance overall sustainability and ecological functions of the open space network including landscaping and onsite stormwater management.



5.3 LIVE ACTIVE, EDMONTON'S COLLABORATIVE PHYSICAL ACTIVITY STRATEGY 2016–2026

Live Active: A Collaborative Strategy for Active Living, Active Recreation, and Sport in Edmonton (Live Active) is a catalyst to empower Edmontonians to value physical activity as demonstrated through engaging in active living, active recreation, and sport. At its heart, the strategy seeks to shift attitudes and behaviours about active living, active recreation, and sport in our community, encouraging and supporting people of all ages, abilities, and interests to become more physically active. Specific to the Sports Field Strategy, the Live Active Implementation plan identifies under the theme of Active Environments goal E1 "Advance accessibility for all Edmontonians to engage in physical activity in a range of inviting safe spaces, recreation and sport infrastructure, parks and green spaces, active transportation systems, work places, and more." with the desired outcome of "Edmonton's recreation and sport facilities are equitably accessible by all Edmonton user groups."

5.4 THE APPROACH TO COMMUNITY RECREATION FACILITY PLANNING IN EDMONTON

The Approach is the City's overarching plan to meet community recreation facility planning in Edmonton. It outlines specific action related to existing or future community recreation facilities and amenities, as well as provides an overall direction to providing recreation opportunities in the city. To help the City plan, provide and prioritize publicly supported community recreation amenities, The Approach includes principles, a planning method and recommendations to help guide decisions on recreation facility development in Edmonton and surrounding region.



5.5 WINTERCITY STRATEGY

Edmonton's WinterCity Strategy is about creating a city that is inviting, vibrant, and exciting for residents and tourists throughout the winter months.

The WinterCity Strategy goals fall under four pillars:

- » Winter Life – make it easier and more fun to be outside
- » Winter Design – urban design elements that provide warmth to make the most opportunities to stay outdoors
- » Winter Economy – strong foundations upon which the city can grow and prosper
- » Our Winter Story – spreading the word on the things you can do in the winter

The WinterCity Strategy will influence the Sports Field Strategy by:

- » Encouraging more opportunities for outdoor activity
- » Incorporating urban design elements for winter fun, activity, beauty, and interest
- » Promoting grant funding where feasible to encourage winter activity such as cross country skiing, snowshoeing, winter events
- » Identifying sports/activities that can take place on sports fields during the winter months that will not cause turf damage

5.6 URBAN PARKS MANAGEMENT PLAN (UPMP) 2006–2016

The standards to which sports fields are constructed within the city of Edmonton have evolved over a period of more than 60 years. The Urban Parks Management Plan (UPMP) guides the acquisition, development, maintenance, preservation, and use of parkland. It provides strategic direction for all river valley and ravine parkland, as well as all school and park sites outside the river valley.

UPMP SPORTS FIELD STANDARDS REVIEW

One of the deliverables of a recent UPMP review was to re-assess sports field standards. The goal of the review was to examine all current sports field standards to ensure that they represent the needs of the sports field community, the school divisions, and parks business areas within City administration.

The following chart, City of Edmonton Sports Field Program Standards Guidelines, shows the general guidance given to the planning and design process for the provision of sports fields at Edmonton parks over the last 40 years. The Sports Field Strategy will set the direction for updated sports field standards.

CLASSIFICATION	PRE 1986	1986	1990	2006
Elementary school	» 2 soccer 150 x 240 » 2 fastball 150 » 2 soccer 100 x 180 » 2 fastball 100 » 4 jump pits	» 2 soccer 150 x 240 » 1 fastball 150 » 1 soccer 100 x 180 » 2 fastball 100 » 4 jump pits	» 1 soccer 210 x 330 » 1 fastball 275 » 2 teaching stations » 2 fastball 100 » paved area 50 x 100 » 2 jump pits	» 1 soccer 210 x 330 » 1 fastball 275 » 2 teaching stations » 2 fastball 100 » paved area 50 x 100 » 2 jump pits
Senior high school	» 4 fastball 225 » 2 combo 210 x 480 » 1 soccer 210 x 330 » 1 soccer 195 x 270 » 5 jump pits	» 3 fastball 225 » 1 combo 210 x 480 » 2 soccer 210 x 330 » 4 jump pits	» 3 fastball 275 » 2 combo 210 x 480 » 1 soccer 210 x 330 » 2 jump pits	» 3 fastball 275 » 1 combo 210 x 480 » 2 soccer 210 x 330 » 4 jump pits
District Athletic	» 132 wide 400 m track » 8 tennis courts » 1 field hockey 180 x 300 » 1 baseball 180 » 5 jump pits » 1 combo 210 x 480 » 1 fastball 225 » 1 special use area	» 132 wide 400 m track » 8 tennis courts » 1 field hockey 180 x 300 » 1 baseball 180 » 5 jump pits » 1 combo 210 x 480 » 1 fastball 225	» 18 lane 400 m track » 8 tennis courts » 4 volleyball courts » 1 baseball 330 » 1 combo 210 x 480 » 1 fastball 275	» 18 lane 400 m track » 8 tennis courts » 4 volleyball courts » 1 baseball 330 » 1 combo 210 x 480 » 1 fastball 275 » field parking
District Passive	» No formal fields	» No formal fields	» No formal fields	» No formal fields
Park and Community League	» No formal fields	» No formal fields	» No formal fields	» No formal fields



5.7 JOINT USE AGREEMENTS

The Joint Use Agreements are reciprocal partnerships of the City of Edmonton, Edmonton Public Schools, Edmonton Catholic School Board, and Conseil scolaire Centre-Nord (Central North Francophone Schools). Of the two agreements, one speaks specifically to facilities, and how the parties share amenities such as fields, gymnasiums, pools, and arenas. The other is specific to land in relation to school park site planning, assembly, and maintenance.

EDMONTON JOINT USE AGREEMENT: FACILITIES

The Joint Use Agreement: Facilities document outlines the cooperative nature of sharing of publicly-funded facilities. The current agreement was signed in 2007. At the time, it listed 1,765 sports fields available for school use during school operational hours. Operating guidelines are established defining eligible users, eligible activities, and priority use for City and community use of school facilities and school and community use of sports fields. The expectations for field users are laid out concerning booking and use guidelines.

JOINT USE AGREEMENT: LAND

The Joint Use Agreement as it relates to land guides the planning, assembly, design, development, and maintenance of Joint Use Sites for school and park purposes. It also provides the framework for decision making related to surplus reserve and non-reserve sites and reserve accounts. As part of this agreement, the City is responsible for the maintenance and

renewal of the Joint Use Site outside of the School Building Land where community access to the School Playing Fields is provided. The Joint Use Steering Committee reviews and approves development on a Joint Use site.



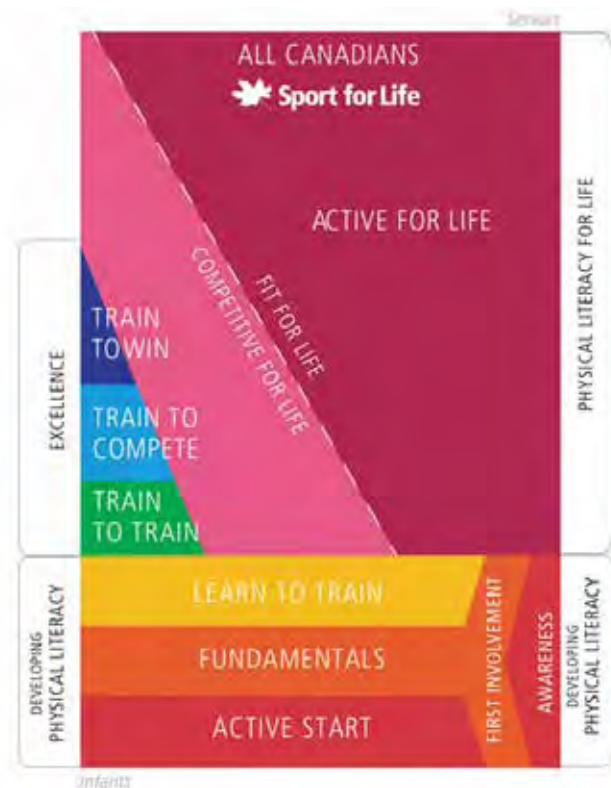
5.8 THE CANADIAN SPORT FOR LIFE (CS4L) – LONG TERM DEVELOPMENT (LTD) AND QUALITY SPORT FRAMEWORKS

On an annual basis, the City of Edmonton, in conjunction with the Sports Field Users Committee (SFUC), determines how much time organized sports groups are entitled to, based on criteria including the type of sport, participating age groups, and the level of each team within the sport. Based on this information, the City and SFUC have created Standards of Play for each sport at all levels. The Standards of Play identify the number of games, the number of practices, and the playing field requirements for each level of a sport or activity, that will ensure a quality program for Edmonton residents including partner programs. The Standards of Play are informed in large part by each sport's Long Term Development Model (LTD). The City of Edmonton and the SFUC review the Standards of Play annually to ensure equity, transparency, and to accommodate new and emerging sport trends.

LONG TERM DEVELOPMENT IN SPORT AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY (LTD)

CS4L links sport, education, recreation and health, and aligns community, provincial and national programming. The CS4L movement builds on the principles of LTD – a seven-stage training, competition and recovery pathway guiding an individual's experience in sport and physical activity from infancy through all phases of adulthood. In relation to the sports field plan similar to the LTD model, the majority of the user groups are building a foundation or are competitive or fit for life and the sports fields the City offers will align with these expectations.

Canadian Sport for Life:
www.canadiansportforlife.ca



Quality sport

Based on long-term development in sport & physical activity



Quality sport is developmentally appropriate, safe and inclusive, and well run. It consists of good programs, led by good people, in good places. From a facility perspective, the City of Edmonton will ensure that the places for sport are safe and at the level of quality required and that users can offer inclusive and fun and welcoming environments.

6.o STRATEGIC DIRECTION

A number of sources have informed the Strategy's strategic direction. These include stakeholder and public engagement, research of current trends, best practices and jurisdictional scans, as well as an analysis of the current state (via internal engagement). The future of sport and recreation, combined with strategic foresight, were considered to understand and predict the changing user needs. Research and engagement were used to establish a strategic and philosophical approach to how the City of Edmonton manages its sports field inventory now and in the future.

CONSULTATION PROCESS

As parts of the strategy developed, several rounds of engagement occurred. Internal engagement included in-depth interviews with several areas that touch sports fields provision and management in Edmonton.

Joint Use partner engagement took place over a series of meetings and included the Facilities Management Committee, The Land Use Management Committee, and the Phys Ed Department Leads from the partner school boards.

Stakeholder engagement was twofold – 16 in-depth phone interviews were held with user groups that met one or more of the following criteria:

- a) largest user group in their sport
- b) an emerging sport user group
- c) user group with a unique dedicated audience (special needs, post-secondary institutions).

The remaining user groups were sent a detailed electronic survey that 74/87 user groups completed (85% completion rate).

In addition, a public survey was published on the City of Edmonton Insight platform and received 1,611 responses. Of those, 908 indicated they used sport fields, and were asked to complete the entire survey (Appendix A).

6.1 DESIRED OUTCOMES

A number of key desired outcomes are identified. These recommendations balance the best practice research with stakeholder engagement within an operational context of the City of Edmonton.

6.1.1 DISTRIBUTION, DESIGN, AND CONSTRUCTION OUTCOMES:

- » Sports Fields are distributed throughout the city to enable equitable access by residents. Smaller fields will continue to be provided at the neighbourhood level for younger players/informal use, and larger fields will continue to be provided at the district level, where longer travel is expected.
- » Field design encourages multifunctional and intergenerational use.
- » Strategy describes sport field and diamond sizing, guidance on site amenities and safety buffers, and sets expectations for future sport field sites.

6.1.2 ALLOCATION OUTCOMES:

- » Equitable allocation criteria are in place to facilitate balanced community and user group access.
- » A coordinated, automated, and more flexible booking system is in place.
- » Allocation user needs are revisited regularly in a transparent and accessible way.

6.1.3 MAINTENANCE, RENEWAL, AND QUALITY OUTCOMES:

- » Clear maintenance Standards of Practice are in place for the City of Edmonton and community partners.
- » Education and training is consistently offered to potential, new and existing partners.
- » The current field inventory is well-matched to current maintenance capacity.
- » A minimum field quality commitment is met, and field inspections are aligned to help justify sports field renewal when required.

6.1.4 PARTNERSHIP OUTCOMES

- » The current Home Base Program is revamped and rolled into a suite of partnership opportunities.
- » Current State of Sport reviews are completed and kept up to date.
- » Sports field maintenance expectations for partners are consistent with the City of Edmonton's maintenance levels. The associated fees for groups booking at a partnered site will also be in line with corresponding City rates.

6.1.5 ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL OUTCOMES:

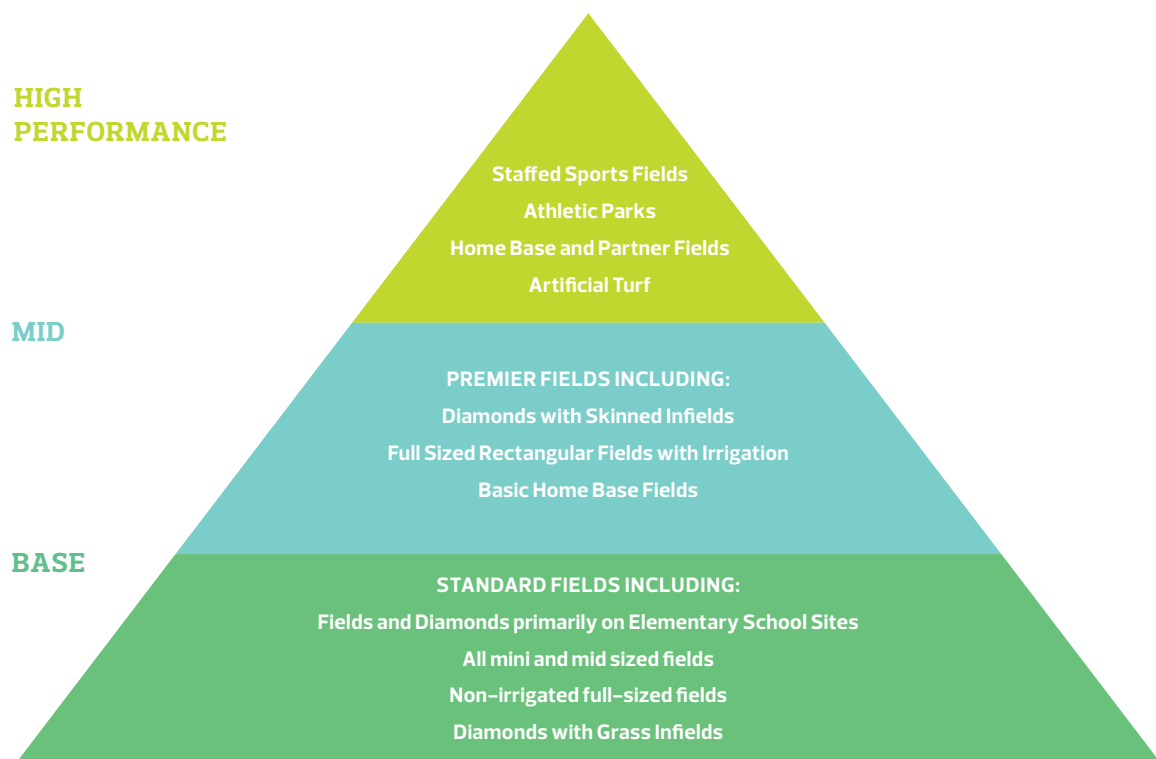
- » Ownership of the sports field delivery system is clearly defined and supported by staff.
- » The Sports Field Strategy aligns with the City's strategic goals and the City Plan, and will ensure that its direction supports building a Healthy City, Urban Places, Regional Prosperity, and Climate Resilience.
- » The City employs consistent and user-friendly public messaging and education on booking, use and maintenance of sports fields.
- » User fees represent a balance of maximized use and adequate cost recovery.
- » The fee structure is transparent and fees reflect the level of service.

7.0 STRATEGIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 SPORTS FIELD PROVISION PYRAMID

The City is involved in the provision of a variety of different types of sports fields that enable a wide range of sport and recreation opportunities. Sports fields and amenities are made available to Edmontonians via the effort and investment of many service providers. The City of Edmonton plays a leadership role in the provision of many sports field amenities, and it partners with groups and organizations in the provision of others.

COE Basic Field Commitment: To align with the City's Approach to Community Recreation Facility Planning (The Approach), the Sports Field Strategy will adopt a similar approach of establishing a basic commitment to the provision of sport fields. The Approach has determined the City's basic commitment as:



BASE LEVEL:

The base level contains the largest number of sports fields, and consists primarily of mini- and mid-sized standard-level rectangular fields and diamonds with grass infields. These fields are typically located at elementary and elementary-junior high school sites. The base level rectangular fields see the majority of their bookings in May and June. The base level diamonds see very few bookings. Bookings for base level fields are at no charge for youth groups and at a nominal fee for adult groups. The primary use of base level fields is by schools during the school day and minor sport in the evenings. This type of field is also often used spontaneously by the public. These fields are maintained to a basic level. Field lining is carried out by the user groups.

MID LEVEL:

The mid level contains full sized premier rectangular fields, and larger diamonds with skinned infields. The mid level also includes some Home Base Fields. Mid level fields typically receive a higher level of maintenance including field lining, and the rectangular fields in this category are irrigated. These fields are in high demand by user groups, and are typically found on high school sites and in District Parks.

HIGH-PERFORMANCE LEVEL:

The top level contains the fewest fields, and includes staffed fields, Athletic Parks, and the majority of the Home Base fields. Staffed fields and Athletic Parks have bleachers and on-site attendants, and most include additional amenities such as field lighting.

The Home Base Program is a partnership between an organization and the City of Edmonton. As part of this agreement, the Home Base organization agrees to enhance and maintain the sports field to a "premier level" or better. Sports fields in this category are considered either Mid Level or High Performance, depending on their level of upgrade.

Enhancements or specialized amenities to support high performance fields would be considered with the involvement of a sport partner. Examples of enhancements include field lights, spectator seating, scoreboards, and storage and support buildings.

7.2 CURRENT FIELD ANALYSIS

When developing or redeveloping sports fields, the City of Edmonton typically builds soccer fields, combo fields, diamonds, and tracks to the base level. With over 1,500 sports fields in the City of Edmonton, there is currently enough supply to meet the basic demand for fields by sports field user groups. Sport groups who require a different type of field, who require a higher level of field, or who require additional support amenities, typically partner with the City of Edmonton to meet their sport field requirements.

2022 SPORTS FIELDS BY TYPE OF SPORT

Soccer Fields	821
Diamonds	511
Combo Fields*	57
Artificial Turfs	4
Cricket Pitches	4
Tracks	13
No Fixture Fields**	14
Teaching Stations***	115
Rugby Fields	3

* Combo fields are combination soccer and football fields

** No Fixture Fields do not have goal posts, uprights, or backstops

*** Teaching Stations are smaller backstops primarily for school use





7.3 FUTURE SPORTS FIELD PROVISION

At present, there are 78 approved structure or redevelopment plans that contain undeveloped park sites. These plans commit the City to the assembly and construction of parkland to meet the recreational needs of residents. There are 353 sites, representing approximately 1,114 hectares of parkland, within approved plans that are actively being assembled or where land assembly is complete but development remains pending. Many of the parks where land assembly is ongoing may be years from completion and integration into City inventory (Appendix C – Park Development Priorities).

Base level park development (primarily turf, sport fields, landscaping, and signage) is prioritized based on:

- » the status of residential construction and parkland assembly in the neighbourhood,
- » the type and quantity of parks assembled,
- » identified community needs,
- » facility plans, and;
- » the schedule for school construction set out by School Districts.

The total estimated municipal cost to undertake design and construction of all sites identified in the Capital Investment Outlook (CIO) is \$379.9 million. Approximately \$17.2 million was allocated for new park development during the 2019–2022 capital budget cycle.

Urban Planning and Economy have identified park development priorities for the 2023–2026 budget cycle. The majority of these priorities remain unfunded at this time. As new school sites are announced they will need to be developed pursuant to the Joint Use Agreement. Therefore, “Appendix C – Park Development Priorities” may evolve through the budget cycle.

8.0 SPORTS FIELD STRATEGIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 DISTRIBUTION, DESIGN, AND CONSTRUCTION

The City of Edmonton maintains over 1,500 sports fields. This gives Edmonton a very high ratio of sports fields to population compared to other municipalities. Therefore, the Sports Field Strategy needs to

consider the types, sizes, and distribution of fields that will meet the needs of Edmontonians for both short and longer term planning horizons.

MUNICIPALITY	NUMBER OF FIELDS	POPULATION	FIELDS PER 100,000 POP
Edmonton	1,507	981,280	153.57
Calgary	1,319	1,336,000	98.73
Ottawa	767	994,837	77.10
Winnipeg	325	749,534	43.36
Mississauga	345	828,854	41.62
Hamilton	135	579,200	23.31

**School provided fields may or may not be included.*

The overall distribution of sports fields throughout the City of Edmonton has traditionally occurred in tandem with new neighbourhood development as neighbourhood parkland is acquired through the subdivision process and parks and schools are developed in accordance with approved plans. Planning and land acquisition to accommodate sports field development is based on taking a percentage of the Gross Developable Area (GDA) in new subdivisions as Municipal Reserve and delivering a standardized field program. Generalized standards, however, do not take into account site constraints such as park programming needs for other non-sport field activities, road frontage limitations, access constraints, topography and slope, variable soils, buffering requirements for natural areas and public

utilities, the presence of existing tree stands or other natural features, or unusual site configuration that may impede complete development of an approved sports field standard. Therefore, land requirement guidelines for sports fields cannot be used as a sole indicator that the appropriate amount of land is available to meet overall sports field needs.

The Urban Parks Management Plan 2006–2016 requires sports fields at the District Level to be regulation-sized, adult oriented, rectangular or diamond dominant, but with some of both field types. Within District Parks, the large field standard is generally provided, based on their larger area requirements (ie., footprint). At the neighbourhood level, there is a broader range of smaller field sizes provided, to serve local needs.



STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS:

1

8.1.1 | The sports field standards will be reviewed and updated.

One of the implementation initiatives identified in the Urban Parks Management Plan included undertaking a Sports Field Standards review. The goal of the review was to examine all current sports field standards to ensure that they reflected the needs of the sports field community, the school boards, and parks. The last time the sports field program standards were updated was in 2006. In 2017, City Council approved Breathe, Edmonton's Green Network Strategy, which replaced the Urban Parks Management Plan as the City's open space strategic plan. The implementation of Breathe includes the development of park programming and design guidelines that include consideration for sport fields. To date, the implementation of Breathe has not advanced, including further development of park programming and design guidelines.

It is recommended that the City of Edmonton initiate a review of the sports field standards which would inform future park programming and design work as part of Breathe implementation. A review would be done in conjunction with the Joint Use partners with input from various stakeholders including sports field user groups and other community partners. The review would be informed by Breathe, Edmonton's Green Network Strategy, the Ball Diamond Manual, and the Artificial Turf Strategy.

2

8.1.2 | When designing or redesigning larger neighbourhood, district, or city-level sports field sites, the City will work with internal and external stakeholders to determine which sport is furthest away from meeting their sports field needs and will try to accommodate that sport first.

When considering sports field development or redevelopment, variables such as the basic field commitment, parkland classification, school construction, and site constraints such as frontage, tree stands, etc. are factors in the quantity of land that can be dedicated to sport fields on any given site. Existing field standards prescribe the number and sizes of fields to be added to a given site based on the classification and whether or not there are any schools and/or recreation facilities on the site.

In order to meet the needs of underserved sports field user groups, when a sports field site is being designed or redesigned, and when the opportunity exists to consider multiple sports field types, consultation with potential sports field user groups will take place early in the design process. Underserved sports, meaning those sports whose needs are not being met under the current sports field delivery system, will be given a higher priority in the consultation process.

3

8.1.3 | A process will be developed for various sports field stakeholders, including community leagues, sports groups, schools, and the City of Edmonton, to request a change of use of existing sports fields in order to best serve changing demographic needs.

The City of Edmonton has a very high number of sports fields compared to other municipalities with a similar population. Forty-seven percent of City of Edmonton sports fields are never or seldom booked (fewer than 30 hours per year). Unbooked fields on non-school sites are occasionally used by the community for various active and passive recreational activities. There are also sports field sites that see very little use at all. These spaces could potentially be considered for naturalization or to meet other recreational or park programming requirements, particularly in areas where population increases/demographic shifts are anticipated.

To meet the needs of various sports field stakeholders, including community groups, sports groups, schools, and City of Edmonton, a process is being developed to request a change in the use of existing sports fields in order to best serve changing demographic needs. In certain instances whereby the neighbourhood changes are significant, a comprehensive parks planning review and updated concept plan may be warranted.



8.2 ALLOCATION

The City of Edmonton has a robust allocation model for the allotment of sports fields. The allocation model is driven by the user groups who book time on City sports fields, and is based on a fair and equitable model.

Fair: users have input into the allocation model and the space conflict resolution process.

Equitable: all citizens should have a fair opportunity to access space.

Within the current allocation model, the Sports Field Users Committee (SFUC) develops the processes and strategies for sport field users, which advance an equitable allocation system. The committee serves in an advisory capacity, providing objective advice and recommendations from a citizen perspective (i.e. rental user group) to Administration in all matters that impact the available rental/allocation of sport field inventory in the City of Edmonton.

The Sports Field User Committee (SFUC) is composed of:

- » One Representative from each of the nine core outdoor sports (Soccer, Slo Pitch, Football, Baseball, Rugby, Cricket, Ultimate Frisbee, Softball, and Lacrosse).
- » One Diamond Field Users Representative
- » One Rectangular Field Users Representative
- » One Representative from each of the following Partners
 - » Edmonton Public School Board
 - » Edmonton Catholic School Board
 - » Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues
- » Three Department Representatives from the City of Edmonton including bookings, operations, and maintenance.
- » One Member at Large

This user-driven model of allocation gives the sports field users and partners a voice in the allotment of sports fields. The City of Edmonton relies on the expertise of the SFUC to guide the sports field allocation process, and to stand behind it.

Standards of Play

The Standards of Play identify the number of games, the number of practices, and the playing field requirements for each level of a sport, or activity, that will ensure a quality program for Edmonton residents including partner programs. Based primarily on the Canada Sport for Life and the Long Term Development in Sport and Physical Activity model, sports field user groups and the joint use partners develop standards of play for each sport or activity using sports fields. These standards are reviewed on an annual basis to ensure accuracy and are used in the calculation of the demand for fields.

Demand

The demand for fields is the sum of the number of teams (at each level) multiplied by the standard of play for that sport. For non-team activities, the number of participants is used. The sum of the demand for all sports and activities when added to school use equals the total demand for sports fields.

**“Standard of Play” X “Number of Teams” =
“Groups Demand”**

**“Sum of All Groups Demand” + “School Use” =
“Total Demand”**

Supply

Two major factors determine the supply of fields:

- 1. current inventory**
- 2. field requirements of users**



Allocation

The allotment of field time for a group is equal to that group's demand compared to the total demand, i.e. if a group is five percent of the total demand, their entitlement would be five percent of the total availability of fields. The allotment only identifies the number of hours of field time. The day, time, and field location is determined by the allocation committees. A group's allotment may fluctuate from year to year, as its allotment is directly proportional to its increase or decrease in the number of teams when compared to the overall demand for all groups.

Conflict Resolution

Sports field scheduling conflicts may occur from time to time for various reasons. To resolve these conflicts, the Sports Field User Committee annually establishes a three-person Conflict Resolution Sub-Committee. The Conflict Resolution Sub-Committee will make a final and binding decision based on the following criteria (not necessarily in order of importance):

- » Age of team members – youth will be given preference over adults
- » Total size of each group, based on the number of teams
- » Registration as a non-profit society
- » Historical field / facility usage as determined by the previous year's actual use for teams within the same category of users
- » Whether a temporary or permanent change in the schedule is being requested
- » Willingness of one group to accept an assignment to a different facility, or another time slot at the particular facility
- » Relative impact of the scheduling conflict on each of the disputing parties. Specifically, if one of the two parties has obtained satisfactory time slots for most of its total allocated field time, then preference may be given to the other group which has been less successful in finding adequate time slots for its allotted field time
- » Standards of Play for each disputing party

STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS:

1

8.2.1| The City of Edmonton will remove unbooked and seldom booked standard fields from the bookable inventory and convert them to “open space fields.” These open space fields will continue to be maintained, and will continue to be available on a first-come, first-served basis.

The City of Edmonton maintains a large number of sports fields. Within this vast network of sports fields, approximately 35 percent of sports fields do not receive any bookings in a given year, and another 11 percent are booked on average fewer than 30 hours per season. Although these sites are seldom used by organized sporting groups, they play an important role in the provision of sports fields to schools and neighbourhood residents. In order to build efficiencies, it is recommended that fields with a history of little to no booked use be removed from the bookable inventory and converted to “open space fields”.

2022	
Total Count of Fields	1,542
Fields with fewer than 30 hrs	104
Fields with no bookings	540

These open space fields will continue to be maintained to the base level, and will continue to be available to schools and residents, including organized sporting groups, on a first come, first served basis. Schools and user groups can continue to line open space fields as long as they follow the City’s Line Marking Guidelines.

Because they would not be part of the bookable inventory, open space fields would therefore be available at no cost to all users.

If the needs of the community shift over time, and there is a desire to move an open space field back into the bookable inventory, the request will need to be made to the sports field bookings area prior to the start of the annual booking cycle.

2

8.2.2 | The City of Edmonton’s website will be updated to fully describe the allocation process which will be clearly explained in plain language. Website improvements will also include public education on issues such as the impacts of maintenance and sports field health on field allocation, and the impacts of hoarding and unregulated use.

The City of Edmonton’s Fair and Equitable Model for the allocation of Sports Fields is fairly robust and can seem complicated, especially to new groups. There is also a general lack of understanding, due largely to a lack of public information, regarding the role of the Sports Field Users Committee (SFUC).

The SFUC develops the processes and strategies for sport field users which advance an equitable allocation system. This committee serves in an advisory capacity, providing objective advice and recommendations from a citizen perspective (i.e. rental user group) to Administration, in all matters that impact the available rental/allocation of sport field inventory in the City of Edmonton. As a part of this model, the SFUC will review allocation user needs on an annual basis, and will revisit and revise best practices as required. The review process will be transparent and accessible.

The most effective way to communicate information on the allocation process and the SFUC to Sports Field User Groups is through the City of Edmonton’s website. In order to be more user friendly and transparent, the City of Edmonton’s website will be updated to fully describe the allocation process which will be clearly explained in plain language. This will include:

- » An overview of the allocation process
- » A description of the Allocation Committees, including a list of the sport representatives
- » A list of relevant allocation timelines
- » The allocation priorities
- » The conflict resolution model

3

- » A clearly articulated and publicly-posted processes for contacting the booking team
- » Maps and information on how to book fields (currently a work in process)

Additionally, sports field user group accountability has been identified as an ongoing issue. Accountability concerns include hoarding, damage, bylaw infringement, and unregulated use of fields for practice, play, and equipment storage. Website improvements will include public education on the impact of hoarding and unregulated use on the fields and on other groups.

Finally, the allocation process will aim to continuously improve by soliciting feedback from allocated user groups and casual bookings groups through a year-end survey.

8.2.3 | The City of Edmonton will explore automation and self-serve functionality within the booking process to empower users to cancel/trade/reschedule bookings.

Sports Field user groups expect to be able to book sports fields online, much like they do for other venues and services offered by the City of Edmonton. Access to utilization information for real-time use including maintenance and booking data would help leagues and individual teams to guide decision making. As such, the City of Edmonton will explore automation and self-serve functionality within the booking process to empower users to cancel, trade or reschedule bookings.





8.3 QUALITY, MAINTENANCE, AND RENEWAL

The City of Edmonton is committed to maintaining sports fields to the quality standards identified by City Council and the Joint Use field strategy with the goal of providing the best sports fields possible.

The supply of sport fields is heavily influenced by the maintenance and rejuvenation required to keep fields safe and to prolong their life cycle. Premier and staffed fields are generally more heavily used than standard fields, and they are typically used by older youth or adult teams. Older youth and adult sports play is generally more demanding on turf grass as the players are often bigger and stronger with longer games and longer playing seasons. For this reason, Premier and Staffed sport fields must be rested throughout the year. A rest/rejuvenation formula is in place with each premier field receiving six weeks of rest and rejuvenation during which time no bookings are permitted. Field rejuvenation typically includes dethatching, aerating, fertilizing, overseeding, top dressing, and irrigation.

Natural turf grass is judged by its playability, density, resilience to wear, ability to withstand pests and diseases, and its uniformity of growth and colour. In order to practice effective cultural maintenance and management of the sports fields facility, it is essential to conduct regular inspections of the fields and track the improvement over the years. Effective inspections should also be timed to observe the field in a variety of conditions. These inspections are the best source of information on which to root maintenance and program decisions.

In addition to turf maintenance, sports field maintenance also includes additional elements such as:

- » Goal posts and backstops
- » Bleachers and benches
- » Outfield fencing
- » Line marking
- » Irrigation

Past reliance on pesticides as the primary control for turf grass weeds and disease must change to recognize and support sports field Best Management Practices, which hold the principles of Integrated Pest Management (IPM) as the foundation for creation of sound turf management plans and practices. IPM incorporates effective, economical and environmentally sound methods and strategies that include preventative measures (such as use of resistant varieties, mowing, aeration, topdressing, fertilizing, irrigation), as well as biological, mechanical, and chemical controls. The best defense against pests and poor quality turf is to grow and maintain a robust and resilient sward of turf grass. This requires the support, expertise, and resources to properly build, grow, and maintain excellent, safe sports turf.

Maintenance levels are directly linked to booking fees, with staffed fields having the highest booking rates as well as the highest fees. Standard fields are booked at a nominal rate of less than five dollars per hour for adult groups, and free for minor groups. Sports field users therefore expect well maintained quality turf on higher level fields.

STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS:**1****8.3.1 | Build a Sports Field Asset Management Plan**

- » Include long-term field health considerations in capital budgeting and user fees.
- » Conduct annual inspections for maintenance programs, asset management, inventory of fields, and life cycle management to guide maintenance strategies.
- » Outline best practices for ongoing operating costs and capital investment strategies for Plant Health Care and Integrated Pest Management Programs in alignment with Corporate Plans.
- » Implement a Sports Field Reserve to ensure adequate funding for renewal priorities.

2**8.3.2 | A map detailing the City of Edmonton's sports field assets will be created and available to citizens.**

This map will include live maintenance updates and will be available on the City of Edmonton's website.

3**8.3.3 | Education for partner groups on the City's maintenance standards and practices is consistently offered.**

There is a current lack of publicized field quality standards and expectations for both City and partner maintained sports field sites. Without clear, publicly accessible guidelines or standards around field maintenance, it is difficult for partners to manage their fields.

The development of sports field maintenance standards will inform and assist in the management of existing partners regarding maintenance standards and expectations. These standards will also provide necessary operational information to new partners developing sites as they move through the Park and Facility development process when considering field improvements. Influencing and educating sports field partners, specifically school boards, will reduce the wear and tear on sport fields adjacent to schools.



8.4 PARTNERSHIPS

The City of Edmonton has a long standing history of partnerships specializing in sports field maintenance and operations. The types of partnership vary from lease or license agreements on public lands, to maintenance agreements and Home Base agreements. These types of partnerships provide an opportunity for sport and community-minded organizations to partner with the City to improve the quantity or quality of fields available to Edmontonians.

The majority of sports field partnership agreements are Home Base agreements. The Home Base program is a City-led initiative that began in 1986, primarily focused on enhancing ball diamonds. In this program, the City retains the ownership of the identified fields, and external groups or Home Base Sport Partners, are responsible for the field of play, enhancements, and capital improvements of specific sports fields. In return, the partner receives priority booking during the allocation process on these specific fields. Additionally, the partner group receives a portion of the City's revenue when Home Base fields are booked by other groups.

With an increased demand for specialized and better quality fields, sport groups are seeking ways to partner with the City of Edmonton to enhance fields to meet their sporting needs. The implementation of an enhanced sport field program would help to increase membership within a particular sport organization as players would be playing on preferred fields. The existing Home Base program has worked primarily as the agreements have stated; however, there have been some challenges with partner capacity to maintain the allocated sports field space. Moving forward, existing and new partnerships should consider the lessons learned and the current City priorities for sport and recreation.

The approach to the partnership strategic recommendations is to ensure that partnered sports fields remain relevant, useful, and affordable. This includes identifying and evaluating new and existing partnerships to facilitate access, distribution, maintenance, renewal, and cost-sharing.

SPORTS FIELD PARTNER PROGRAM

In 2015, the Approach to Recreation Facility Planning in Edmonton identified the importance of partnerships in meeting the sport and recreation facility needs of Edmontonians. This crucial relationship is also a key element of the 2020 ReImagine Strategy. In addition, the City is likely to see a sustained reduction in its base level maintenance on sports fields. As such, the City is interested in conducting a formal review of current sports field partnership opportunities and developing a suite of partnership opportunities that align with current priorities and trends. As part of this work, the City is also interested in updating its communication strategies for attracting new partners and supporting existing partnerships.

The development of partnership opportunities will require multi-departmental input throughout the City. Beyond the City's commitment to provide base level fields and amenities, partnerships would be used to maintain and develop high-tier fields. This requires a flexible and modernized partnership program, as well as ongoing engagement with partners and user groups to ensure adequate supply and long-term sustainability of premier sites. The City recognizes that sport partners are the experts in understanding their field requirements, which includes the sports' governing body's mandates, physical literacy, and the long-term athlete development model guidelines. Partners developing sites that suit their needs will improve the user experience for Edmontonians. This would include the development of sites that can host national or international events.

A strong sports field partner program will;

- » Build on the internal and external integration for the provision of sports fields.
- » Further define roles and responsibilities,
- » Establish standards for construction of fields and life cycle management.
- » Standardize communications and public education for partner groups.



STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS:

1

8.4.1 | A suite of partnership opportunities will be created that aligns with the Sports Field provision triangle and will include a revamped Home Base program.

In looking towards the future of sports field partnerships, a suite of partnership opportunities is being proposed. Once confirmed, the Sport Partnerships section will work together with Sport Field Operations and Sport Field Bookings to create the specific requirements of each tier. Generally, high performance sites require the inclusion of a partner to develop the amenities associated with that level of site.

2

8.4.2 | Align partnered sports field sites with the City's classification system, including associated user fees.

Partnered sports fields will be classified using the same language and criteria used for City operated sports fields. This will include alignment with the associated user fees.

3

8.4.3 | Establish a “current state” for specific sports to inform the demand for partnerships. Understand the distribution, sport standards of play, and design requirements for sport at various levels of play.

Keep the state of sport current to be proactive versus reactive. Position sports field partnerships to accommodate the recruitment of partners to address anticipated needs and continue to manage partners who approach with proposals. This information will help facilitate decision making on the feasibility of partner development of sport fields.

8.5 FEES AND ADMINISTRATION

The City of Edmonton's Sports Fields are an important asset to the community, providing Edmontonians with access to available recreational spaces close to home. In order to offer the quantity and quality of sports fields that Edmontonians expect, the current sports field delivery model is serviced by various departments and branches within the City.

In addition to these internal sports field stakeholders, the planning and development of the majority of sports field sites occurs in partnership with three school boards. As well, land development companies, private and post secondary schools, and sport and community partners also influence the sports field landscape of our city.

The provision and maintenance of the City of Edmonton's sports fields is largely funded through the tax levy, which is supported and approved by City Council. Under the current model, service levels for sports fields are driven by the budget. As a result, maintenance quality and service levels for sports fields fluctuates. Demand for well maintained sports fields has been steadily increasing as high quality turf is desirable for the many older youth and adult teams. No cost and low cost fields make up the bulk of the City's sports field inventory, and are used primarily by recreational field users.

STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS:

1

8.5.1 | The existing fee structure is reviewed

The City of Edmonton's sports field fees offer a wide range of options, from no-cost and low-cost standard fields, to higher priced fields that offer a full range of amenities. Over the past 20 years, sports field fees have remained fairly consistent. Over this same period of time, the cost of maintaining sports fields has risen due to such factors as:

- » The past practice of relying on chemicals as a primary tool against pests, including weeds and disease, did not recognize the principles of Integrated Pest Management (IPM) nor was it a financially or environmentally sound practice. IPM is an integral part of professional sport fields best management practices (BMP). Sports turf BMPs encompass a wide array of strategies to maintain a healthy, vigorously growing grass field, which is ultimately the best defence against pests and damage resulting in unsafe playing conditions. BMPs require adequate support and funding for the necessary resources, including expertise, equipment, materials, time, and potentially pesticides as one of many tools required to achieve the desired product – a healthy, robust, self-healing and safe playing surface.
- » Climatic change has increased the need for field irrigation and repair, both of which can be costly.
- » A shift in user preference has led to an increased demand for higher quality turf and support amenities.

A review of the existing fee structure would include cost-recovery strategies that align with the City's values, as outlined in the Strategy's Guiding Principles. Fair and equitable access, including affordability, is a priority. The fee structure review would also include an evaluation of revenue-generating opportunities on artificial turf and at major recreation facility fields, which could include package pricing and sponsorship opportunities. Sports field fees will be regularly reviewed and will include an analysis of the costs and revenues of sport fields.

2

8.5.2 | The City of Edmonton's website as it pertains to sports fields is overhauled

The City of Edmonton's website currently houses 24 pages related specifically to sports fields. These pages include the main pages for sports fields, sports field maintenance, and sports field bookings. Within each of these main pages there are links to more specific sub pages, and within the child pages, there are another three layers of additional links.

The easiest and most effective way for the public to learn about the City's sports field delivery system is through the City's website. Key areas for sports field information include:

- » sports field inventory
- » sports field maintenance
- » sports field bookings

In order to provide an excellent user experience for citizens accessing the City's website, all City of Edmonton web pages relating to sports fields will be revised and updated. These updates will include user friendly language and content that is up to date and relevant. This would also include a review of the number of web pages to determine if all should be retained.

The positive outcomes of a more user-friendly, transparent, and robust website include:

- » Reduced need for citizens to call 311 and Sports Field Bookings
- » Increased trust in the City
- » Improved awareness and behaviors towards issues such as hoarding and overuse

3

8.5.3 | The oversight of the City of Edmonton's sports field planning and delivery system is centralized.

The City of Edmonton's sports field delivery system is currently housed within various city departments. Having a collective point of reference for sports field coordination would help to reduce overlap, streamline council and citizen inquiries, and act as the lead in the facilitation of multi-branch decision making. The Strategy recommends several initiatives that require an integrated approach including:

- » A complete website overhaul of all web pages referencing sports fields
- » An updated and real-time field inventory system
- » Development and ongoing updates for the various Current State of Sport documents
- » Development and oversight of the Sports Field Change of Use process
- » Coordination of a sports fields standards review
- » Review, recommendation, engagement, and approval of an updated sports field fees structure

It is recommended that a staff position be created to offer strategic coordination and oversight for the City of Edmonton's sports field delivery program.

9.0 CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS

9.1 SUMMARY OF STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS

1 DISTRIBUTION, DESIGN, AND CONSTRUCTION

- » The sports field standards will be reviewed and updated.
- » When designing or redesigning larger neighbourhood, district, or city-level sports field sites, the City will work with internal and external stakeholders to determine which sport is furthest away from meeting their sports field needs and will try to accommodate that sport first.
- » A process will be developed for various sports field stakeholders, including community leagues, sports groups, schools, and the City of Edmonton, to request a change of use of existing sports fields in order to best serve changing demographic needs.

2 ALLOCATION

- » The City of Edmonton will remove unbooked and seldom booked standard fields from the bookable inventory and convert them to "open space fields." These open space fields will continue to be maintained, and will continue to be available on a first-come, first-served basis.
- » The City of Edmonton's website will be updated to fully describe the allocation process which will be clearly explained in plain language. Website improvements will also include public education on issues such as the impacts of maintenance and sports field health on field allocation, and the impacts of hoarding and unregulated use.
- » The City of Edmonton will explore automation and self-serve functionality within the booking process to empower users to cancel/trade/reschedule bookings.

3 MAINTENANCE AND QUALITY

- » A sports field asset management plan will be built.
- » A map detailing the City of Edmonton's sports field assets will be created and available to citizens.
- » Education for partner groups on the City's maintenance standards and practices is consistently offered.

4 PARTNERSHIPS

- » A suite of partnership opportunities will be created that aligns with the Sports Field provision triangle and will include a revamped Home Base program.
- » Align partnered sports field sites with the City's classification system, including associated user fees.
- » Establish a "current state" for specific sports to inform the demand for partnerships. Understand the distribution, sport standards of play, and design requirements for sport at various levels of play.

5 FEES AND ADMINISTRATION

- » The existing fee structure is reviewed
- » The City of Edmonton's website as it pertains to sports fields is overhauled
- » The oversight of the City of Edmonton's sports field planning and delivery system is centralized.

9.2 CONCLUSION

The City of Edmonton's Sports Field Strategy has addressed issues and opportunities in the planning, provision, maintenance, and renewal of sports fields in Edmonton. Specifically, this strategy ensures Edmonton will have the right inventory and right quality of sports fields appropriately distributed, now and into the future. A number of key desired outcomes are identified. These Strategic Recommendations balance best practice research with stakeholder engagement within an operational context of the City of Edmonton.

9.3 NEXT STEPS

The City of Edmonton will develop a comprehensive implementation plan for the Sports Field Strategy. Opportunities for public and stakeholder participation and engagement on each specific action will be assessed as part of an implementation plan. Collaboration will be required from both internal and external stakeholders to successfully accomplish the recommended actions.

9.4 STRATEGY ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thank you to everyone who contributed their time, ideas, and expertise to the development of the Sports Field Strategy. We gratefully acknowledge the support and contributions from the following individuals and groups who have participated in this interdepartment strategy development:

City of Edmonton Departments and Branches

» Community Services

- Community Recreation and Culture Branch
- Community Standards and Neighbourhoods Branch
- Integrated Strategic Development Branch

» City Operations

- Parks and Road Services Branch

» Integrated Infrastructure Services

- Building Great Neighbourhoods and Open Spaces Branch
- Infrastructure Planning and Design Branch

» Urban Planning and Economy

- Planning and Environment Services Branch

» Communications and Public Engagement

- Relationships and Customer Access Branch

» Joint Use School Boards

- Edmonton Public School
- Edmonton Catholic Schools
- Conseil Scolaire Centre Nord

Thank you to the numerous clubs, organizations, and individuals who took time to participate in various public engagement opportunities, helping to shape the City of Edmonton's strategic direction for sports fields.



APPENDICES

APPENDIX A – PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

As part of the strategy development, several rounds of engagement have occurred. Internal engagement included in-depth interviews with 9 areas that touch sports field provision and management in Edmonton.

- » City Planning
- » Customer Relationship Management
- » Parks and Roads Services Branch
- » Partnership and Event Strategy
- » Neighbourhood Services
- » Arena and Field Operations
- » Partnership Center of Excellence
- » Civic Events
- » Integrated Infrastructure Services

In addition to the internal engagement, the City's Joint Use partners through the Facilities Management

Committee, the Land Management Committee, and the school divisions' Physical Education Department Heads have been engaged and involved throughout the span of the project.

Stakeholder engagement was twofold – 16 in-depth phone interviews were held with user groups that met one or more of the following criteria:

- » largest user group in their sport
- » an emerging sport user group
- » user group with a unique dedicated audience (special needs, post-secondary institutions).

The remaining user groups were sent a detailed electronic survey that 74 of the 87 user groups completed (85% completion rate).

CATEGORY OF SPORT	ORGANIZATION/PARTNER	ENGAGEMENT TYPE
Football	Edmonton Elks	Survey
Soccer	FC Edmonton	Interview
Soccer	FC Edmonton Academy	Interview
Baseball	Alberta West Central Baseball Assoc. (AWCBA)	Survey
Lacrosse	Apex Lacrosse Club	Survey
Baseball	Capital City Men's Fastball League	Survey
Slopitch	Capital City Slo-pitch	Survey
Football	Capital District Minor Football Association	Interview
Ultimate	Carbon Ultimate	Survey
Football	Edmonton Chargers Football Club	Survey
Baseball	Community Park Little League	Survey
Baseball	Confederation Park Little League	Survey
Baseball	East Park Little League	Survey
Baseball	Edmonton Amateur Baseball Association	Interview
Cricket	Edmonton and District Cricket League	Interview
Soccer	Edmonton and District Soccer Association	Interview
Slopitch	Edmonton Area Mixed Slo Pitch Association	Survey

CATEGORY OF SPORT	ORGANIZATION/PARTNER	ENGAGEMENT TYPE
Football	Edmonton Australian Football Club	Survey
Slopitch	Edmonton Christian Slo Pitch League	Survey
Rugby	Edmonton Clansmen Rugby Club	Survey
Soccer	Edmonton Drillers Youth Soccer Club	Survey
Football	Edmonton Huskies Football Club	Interview
Slopitch	Edmonton Insurance Slo Pitch Association	Survey
Soccer	Edmonton Interdistrict Youth Soccer Association	Interview
Baseball	Edmonton Jewish Baseball League	Survey
Soccer	Edmonton Juventus Soccer Club	Survey
Softball	Edmonton Ladies Softball	Survey
Slopitch	Edmonton Lutheran Mixed Slo-Pitch	Survey
Soccer	Edmonton Minor Soccer Assn	Interview
Lacrosse	Edmonton Razorbacks	Survey
Mixed Sport	Edmonton Rec League	Survey
Slopitch	Edmonton Restaurant Slopitch League	Survey
Slopitch	Edmonton Seniors Slo-Pitch Association	Survey
Mixed Sport	Edmonton Sport and Social Club	Interview
Football	Edmonton Storm Football	Survey
Soccer	Edmonton Strikers Soccer Club	Survey
Track	Edmonton Track and Field Council	Interview
Ultimate	Edmonton Ultimate Players Association (EUPA)	Interview
Football	Edmonton Wildcats	Interview
Cricket	Incognitos Cricket Club	Survey
Soccer	Edmonton North Zone Soccer Soccer Association	Survey
Soccer	Edmonton West Zone Soccer	Survey
Soccer	Mill Woods Soccer Association	Survey
Soccer	EMSA South West Edmonton Soccer	Survey
Soccer	Eri-Can Minor Soccer Club	Survey
Field Hockey	Alberta Field Hockey Association/Edmonton Junior Field Hockey Association	Interview
Soccer	Free Footie Soccer Society	Interview
Rugby	Golden Bearristers Rugby Club	Survey
Soccer	Internazionale Soccer Club	Survey

CATEGORY OF SPORT	ORGANIZATION/PARTNER	ENGAGEMENT TYPE
Soccer	KC Trojans Soccer Club	Survey
Rugby	The Leprechaun Tiger Rugby Club	Survey
Soccer	MacEwan University Soccer	Survey
Track	MacEwan University Athletics	Survey
Football	Edmonton Metro High School Athletic Assn	Interview
Football	Millwoods Minor Football Association	Survey
Soccer	NAIT Athletics	Interview
Football	NorthEast Minor Football Association Edmonton Seahawks	Survey
Baseball	Northeast Zone Baseball	Survey
Softball	Northeast Zone Softball	Survey
Slopitch	Oil City Slow Pitch	Survey
Soccer	Punjab Warriors Sports and Heritage Association	Interview
Slopitch	The Original Six Slo-Pitch League	Survey
Cricket	Strathcona Cricket Club	Survey
Soccer	Scottish United Soccer Club	Survey
Baseball	South Edmonton Elite Baseball Association	Interview
Softball	South Edmonton Minor Softball Association (SEMSA)	Survey
Slopitch	South Edmonton Mixed Slo-Pitch League	Survey
Soccer	Edmonton South East Softball Association	Survey
Slopitch	South Edmonton Slo Pitch Administration	Survey
Baseball	South Jasper Place Minor Baseball	Survey
Football	South West Edmonton Minor Football Association	Survey
Soccer	Southwest United Soccer	Survey
Softball	Southeast Industrial Softball League	Survey
Slopitch	Southside Slo-Pitch	Survey
Baseball	South West Edmonton Minor Baseball Association (SWEMBA)	Survey
Soccer	Spartan Soccer	Survey
Mixed Sport	Special Olympics Edmonton	Interview
Slopitch	TMSL Slopitch	Survey
Slopitch	Triple B Slopitch	Survey
Soccer	Victoria Soccer Club	Survey
Soccer	Warriors Athletic Association	Survey
Slopitch	West Edmonton Mixed Slo Pitch League	Survey

CATEGORY OF SPORT	ORGANIZATION/PARTNER	ENGAGEMENT TYPE
Football	West Edmonton Raiders	Survey
Lacrosse	Chaos Lacrosse	Survey
Soccer	Concordia University of Edmonton	Interview
Football	First Class Football Academy	Survey
Soccer	Gentlemen's Soccer League	Survey
Softball	Northwest Zone Softball	Survey
Chair	Sports Field User Committee	Interview
Ultimate	Sports Field User Committee	Interview
Baseball	Sports Field User Committee	Interview
Cricket	Sports Field User Committee	Interview
Diamond Users	Sports Field User Committee	Interview
Fastpitch/ Softball	Sports Field User Committee	Interview
Football	Sports Field User Committee	Interview
Rugby	Sports Field User Committee	Interview
Slo Pitch	Sports Field User Committee	Interview
Soccer	Sports Field User Committee	Interview
Track & Field	Sports Field User Committee	Interview
EPSB	Sports Field User Committee	Interview
ECSB	Sports Field User Committee	Interview
EFCL	Sports Field User Committee	Interview

In addition, a public survey was published on the City of Edmonton Insight platform in January 2020, and received 1,611 responses; of these, 908 indicated they used sport fields, and were asked to complete

the entire survey. The summary of the current state, as reflected in each of these three tiers (internal perspective, stakeholder perspective, public perspective) is provided below.

DISTRIBUTION

ENGAGEMENT TIER	KEY INSIGHTS	OPPORTUNITIES
CoE Internal	» Encourage using different fields – time, location, type of field.	» Encourage non prime–time usage.
	» Provide multi–functional spaces.	» Multi functional space that can be easily repurposed/ redesigned is key. » Emerging sports need to be considered.
	» Provide strategic and equitable access when developing or repurposing new fields.	» Equal inventory across four city quadrants. » New field development needs to consider the overall network of sport fields and open spaces. This could include: type of field, open space, festival space and neighbourhood space.
	» Increase partnership opportunities.	» Design and implement a partnership program that is flexible and modernized. » Allow for acquisition of partners with a variety of maintenance capacity.
Stakeholders	» The Southwest quadrant of the city is the least booked for games and practices. » Field use patterns by classification: 65% standard class field; 36% use artificial turf, 38% premier fields; 22% staffed premier fields. » Diamond use patterns: 28% standard diamonds and 19% premier diamonds. » 45% of user groups agree that overall, sport fields meet their organization's needs. » 61% of user groups disagree that there are enough playable fields in Edmonton. » 62% of user groups agree that proximity to residence and/or convenient location is a strength of Edmonton's sport fields. » 91% of respondents do not consider availability of artificial turf fields to be a strength. » 81% of respondents are satisfied with the location of fields they typically book, and 77% are satisfied with access to the fields (eg. parking).	» Demographics, demand and bookings history must be considered in field inventory maintenance. » Partnerships may help meet the smaller demand for premier fields. » Quality over quantity.
Public	» Soccer is the top choice of sport for both organized and spontaneous field users. For organized users, slo pitch is second, followed by baseball as a distant third. Top spontaneous fields uses are football and ultimate frisbee. » 86% of respondents are either very or somewhat satisfied with field location/proximity to home. » Ensuring sport fields are sustained in established communities was important to 94% of respondents. » There is not a clear public distinction of standard sport fields as opposed to green spaces.	» Green space preservation is valued, especially in established communities. » The lack of public distinction between standard sport fields and neighbourhood green space is an opportunity to declassify underused fields. » Maintaining equitable access to organized sports includes fields within walking distance/accessible by public transit.

ALLOCATION

ENGAGEMENT TIER	KEY INSIGHTS	OPPORTUNITIES
CoE Internal	» Encourage using different fields – time, location, type of field.	» Need to understand why certain fields are being used and others are not. » Specifically look at artificial turf; under used. » Process/guidelines for changes to allocation mid season. » Encourage non prime time usage. » Casual bookings are on the rise.
	» Provide multi-functional spaces.	» Emerging sports need to be considered in allocation priority.
	» Designing and maintaining accountability is important.	» Accountability is an issue: hoarding, damage and unregulated use/storage.
	» Increase and improve partnership opportunities.	» Homebase agreements need to be tighter in terms of accountability; tiered system.
Stakeholders	» 54% of user groups anticipate membership will grow slightly in the next 5 years; 16% anticipate membership will double in size. » If available, the homebase field is the preferred field for game and practice bookings. If not available, user groups prefer to book in a particular quadrant rather than anywhere in the city, especially for practices. » 53% of user groups agree that bookable fields meet their sport's Standards of Play. » Only a third of respondents consider the booking/ allocation process a strength. » 35% suggest eliminating or repurposing underutilized sport fields. » 78% of respondents have not had to turn away potential new members due to lack of access to fields, especially diamonds. » 45% have experienced challengers with booking requested fields. Of these, 76% dealt with requested time slot unavailability, 61% with field closure or unavailability and 27% with exceeding allocated hours. » 11% of respondents book most of their hours during public booking registration. 36% book 60 hours or less during public registration. » 38% of responders believe the allocation process should be more self-serve/online; 31% believe it should occur earlier and 24% believe the process should be easier to understand. » 39% of respondents are willing to practice on lower-quality fields if it guarantees the same field all season. » Lower-level, more proximal fields are preferred to higher-level, more distant fields. » 58% of respondents are willing to collaborate with other user groups on scheduling and allocation.	» Booking preferences vary from games to practices, and practice bookings may be incentivized to occur in off-peak times and on otherwise underused fields. » Standards of Play requirements should be regularly assessed against inventory, booking allocation and operational reality. » A process to request additional allocated hours may reduce the number of user group bookings during public registration. » The bookings and allocation process can be streamlined and optimized. » Emerging sports and growing organizations are somewhat limited by field availability or allocation, and may greatly benefit from prioritized allocation. » Lower-level, more proximal fields are preferred to higher-level, more distant fields. » Allowing user groups to "trade" bookings among themselves may contribute to efficiency of the booking services.

ALLOCATION CONTINUED

ENGAGEMENT TIER	KEY INSIGHTS	OPPORTUNITIES
Public	» Organized sport use is more frequent than spontaneous (drop-in use). » 79% of respondents are either very or somewhat satisfied with field availability in Edmonton. » 33% of respondents suggest clustering premier fields at athletic parks with access to amenities and parking. » 38% suggest eliminating or repurposing underutilized sport fields. » Meeting the needs of minor users (child and youth recreational sports) was important to 93% of respondents. » Meeting the needs of adult users was important to 89% of respondents.	» There is no clear prioritization of adult/minor user groups in the public eye. » Readily-available access to fields is top priority.

QUALITY

ENGAGEMENT TIER	KEY INSIGHTS	OPPORTUNITIES
CoE Internal	» Encourage using different fields – time, location, type of field.	» Develop clear guidelines for usage caps & resting fields; this will require enough of inventory to rotate fields. » Inventory is sufficient; focus on quality improvement. For example: game fields vs practice fields; rehab to more shale diamonds, rehab to more premier fields.
	» Provide multi-functional spaces.	» Safety and maintenance standards for multipurpose fields must be developed.
	» Strategic & equal access when developing or repurposing new fields.	» Develop clear quality guidelines for new development.
	» Clear guidelines and SoPs will improve operational planning.	» Look at maintenance alternatives, including outsourcing of labour. » Field health guidelines and plans for each field type.

QUALITY CONTINUED

ENGAGEMENT TIER	KEY INSIGHTS	OPPORTUNITIES
Stakeholders	» For 58% of user groups, the standard of fields used for games and practices is the same. For the rest, games require a higher tier, such as artificial turf or premier field. » 43% of user groups do not agree that fields are maintained (grass is mowed, fields are lined). » 58% suggested higher standards of maintenance. » 54% of respondents suggested developing and/or strengthening partnerships with sport user groups to provide amenities. » 47% of respondents are not sure if they have the capacity to enter a partnership with the City. » 75% of respondents see the following benefits of Homebase Agreements: better level of service to members; more control over field quality; predictable field allocation and maintenance schedules; higher levels of field quality. » 94% of respondents would like to be made aware of new partnership opportunities. » 62% of respondents are satisfied with the maintenance of the fields they book. 59% are dissatisfied with amenities on site. » 59% would like to see a dedicated City contact email, and 68% would like to see a dedicated online submission form for maintenance issues. » 57% would like to see published field maintenance standards for each field class. » 53% would like early and frequent communication about field rest schedules. » 59% of respondents would partner in the development of new and/or upgraded sport fields.	» The allocation system could differentiate between game and practice time. » The City's basic commitment to the provision of sport fields should be well-matched with maintenance capacity. » The Homebase agreement process, commitment, expectations and benefits are not clear to potential partners. » There is an appetite for partnering with the City around field maintenance. » User information, including ways to communicate maintenance issues to the City exists, but must be made more readily available and accessible.
Public	» Sport fields' biggest contribution to quality of life is the opportunity to be physically active; opportunities for fun and entertainment is a close second; contribution to mental health and well-being is third. » 74% of respondents are either very or somewhat satisfied with field quality in Edmonton. » 50% of respondents suggested developing and/or strengthening partnerships with sport user groups to provide amenities. » 45% suggested higher standards of maintenance. » Parking and washrooms were the top missing amenities at sports fields.	» Public safety and maintenance is important on sport fields, and must meet a standard that accommodates multi-generational use. » Amenities and other higher-end field properties may be better managed in a partnership setting.

FEES

ENGAGEMENT TIER	KEY INSIGHTS	OPPORTUNITIES
CoE Internal	» Encourage using different fields – time, location, type of field.	» Fees that encourage non-prime time usage. » Fees that are proportional to maintenance costs.
	» Designing and maintaining accountability is important.	» Design a fee structure that discourages hoarding of fields (booking a field without actually using it, making it unavailable for others).
	» Increase partnership opportunities.	» Explore revenue channels for partners, including offering field time to the public/other user groups. » Explore advertising revenue.
Stakeholders	» 69% of user groups consider the fields affordable. » 58% of user groups consider affordable field fees a strength. » 61% of respondents would book at Athletic Parks, regardless of proximity, if it meant consistent field quality. » 46% of respondents indicated their group would book more time on artificial turf if there were pricing incentives.	» Price incentives and “bulk” packages may increase booked hours at premier facilities. » There is willingness to pay more for higher service.
Public	» 74% of respondents are either very or somewhat dis-satisfied with amenities at sport fields in Edmonton (for example, washrooms). » There is opposition to using taxpayer money to improve amenities at premier fields that are utilized/accessible by few.	» The City's basic commitment to sport fields must maintain a healthy financial standing through proper planning and budgeting.

APPENDIX B – SWOT ANALYSIS

DISTRIBUTION

Defined as the physical locations of the different sports field types.

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES	OPPORTUNITIES	RISKS
» Over 1,600 fields across the City.	» Lack of strategic direction around requirements and placements of new fields. » Lack of partnership development strategies and models to provide higher-level fields. » Quantity over quality » Limited winter use » The design does not promote multi-generational/multipurpose use	» Multifunctional space that can be easily repurposed/redesigned is key. » New field development needs to consider the overall network of sports fields and open spaces. This could include: type of field, open space, festival space and neighbourhood space. » The lack of public distinction between standard sport fields and neighbourhood green space and the opportunity for spontaneous recreation.	» Lack of understanding of public demand for sports fields, including school, user group and community needs. » Accessibility of fields (transit/active transportation/walking distance/parking and accessible access).

ALLOCATION

Field booking processes, restrictions and allocation to user groups across sport field types.

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES	OPPORTUNITIES	RISKS
» Current system aligned with Standards of Play. » Once mastered, the allocation process is a consistent experience for users year to year.	» Process/guidelines for changes to allocation mid-season doesn't exist. » Accountability is an issue: hoarding, damage and unregulated use/storage. » The allocation process is manual, resource-heavy and confusing for users. » Emerging sports and growing organizations are limited by field availability and historic bookings. » Lack of equity considerations in the current allocation system (eg. non-profit, youth, non-competitive, educational institutions, emerging sport). » Lack of access to and/or utilization of real-time use, maintenance and booking data to guide decision making.	» Encourage non prime time usage. » Casual bookings are on the rise. » Emerging sports need to be considered in allocation priority. » The bookings and allocation process can be streamlined and optimized. » Allowing user groups to "trade" bookings among themselves may contribute to efficiency of the booking services.	» Standards of Play requirements should be regularly assessed against inventory, booking allocation and operational reality. » Revenue loss to private facilities with more availability.

DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION

Refers to the guidance and direction that informs and influences design and implementation.

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES	OPPORTUNITIES	RISKS
» A lot of design content is available on the quality of fields, how they should be constructed, etc.	» No consolidated source of design and construction guidelines. Limited institutional memory. » Homebase partners have no guidance for amenity construction. » Various interpretations of current sizing and design guidelines are inconsistent. Non-standard field sizes are difficult to book. » No rubric of field sizes and classifications.	» Remove non-standard sized fields from the inventory. » Consolidate existing design and construction guidance.	» Non-standard fields are non-booked. » Developer-led construction may be inconsistent with City standards, or standards may not be available. Decreases process efficiency. » Mismanaged community expectations in community-led projects. » Unable to meet the public's expectation of consistency and quality.

QUALITY AND MAINTENANCE

Physical maintenance of the fields including grass cutting, lining, aerating, irrigating, resting and upgrading/restoring fields.

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES	OPPORTUNITIES	RISKS
» Sufficient inventory. » Initial capacity & efficiency studies data is available.	» Lack of documented field quality standards for both public and partner expectation-management. » No documented field health guidelines and plans for each field type. » Lack of partnership development strategies and models to provide maintenance. » Lack of ongoing communication and education efforts to build awareness around field health. » Lack of long-term field health considerations in capital budgeting and user fees. » Lack of access to and/or utilization of real-time use, maintenance and booking data to guide decision making. » Maintenance capacity does not correspond to the demands of the inventory. » No consolidated channel for reporting field maintenance issues.	» Develop clear quality guidelines for new development. » Enable strong partnerships by providing clear maintenance expectations. » Post-event field maintenance cost recovery.	» Reduced maintenance capacity due to budget cuts. » Public safety and maintenance are important on sport fields, and must meet a standard that accommodates multi-generational use.

APPENDIX C – PARK DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES

SPORTS FIELD PARKS IN STRATEGY OR DESIGN (2019–2022)

- » Secord South Park – in detailed design; funding requested in 2023–2026 budget
- » Bryan Anderson Athletic Grounds – artificial turf; funded to CP2
- » Bryan Anderson Athletic Grounds – irrigated sport fields; funded to CP3
- » John Fry Sports Park – sport fields; funded to CP2
- » Bryan Anderson Athletic Grounds/Meadows – upgrade ball diamonds; funded to CP3
- » Rollie Miles Athletic Grounds Redevelopment – sport field renewal; funded to CP3
- » Terwillegar Towne Community Park – sport field amenities; funded to CP3

SPORTS FIELD PARKS THAT COMPLETED DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION (OR UNDER CONSTRUCTION) (2019–2022)

- » McConachie West School/Park – constructed
- » Orchards North School/Park – constructed
- » Chappelle East School/Park – constructed
- » Heritage Valley District Park – under construction
- » Keswick East School/Park – under construction
- » Keswick West School/Park – under construction

UNFUNDED SPORTS FIELD PARKS (2023–2026)

- » Secord School/Park – unfunded for construction – recommended for funding (see above)
- » Bryan Anderson Athletic Grounds – artificial turf; not recommended for delivery funding
- » Bryan Anderson Athletic Grounds – irrigated sport fields; not recommended for delivery funding
- » John Fry Sports Park – sport fields; not recommended for delivery funding
- » Bryan Anderson Athletic Grounds/Meadows – not recommended for delivery funding
- » Rollie Miles Athletic Grounds Redevelopment – not recommended for delivery funding
- » Terwillegar Towne Community Park – sport field amenities; not recommended for delivery funding



SPORTS FIELD STRATEGY