City of Winnipeg



Athletic Field Review

Final
May 2018

Winnipeg

RC strategies + PERC

Executive Summary

Project Overview

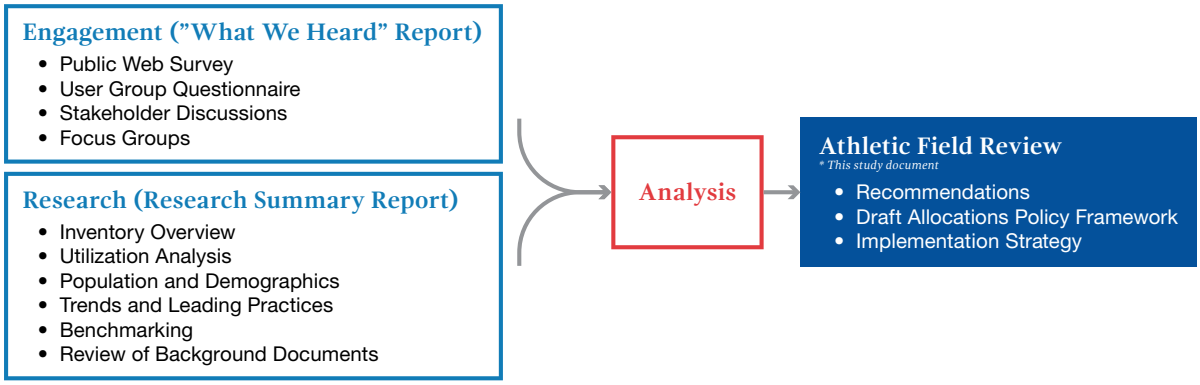
The Athletic Field Review project was approved by City Council in March 2016 and launched in the fall of 2016. While allocations was the focus of the project, the Athletic Field Review also looked at a number of other areas that impact allocations and the overall provision of athletic fields in the city. These areas included management and maintenance practices, partnerships, user group communications and the overall inventory of fields in the city. A review of these areas helped identify the current state of athletic field provision in the city and potential future needs and priority areas.

The overarching intent of the Athletic Field Review project is to provide the City with strategic guidance that can inform future decision making policy and ensure the City's provision of athletic fields is focused, efficient and optimized.

Research and Engagement Inputs

The recommendations provided in this document are the product of engagement and research. The following graphic identifies the engagement and research methods that were used and the overall project process. As reflected in the graphic, the detailed engagement and research findings can be found under separate cover in the "What We Heard" Report and Research Summary Report.

Recommendations



Executive Summary

Provided in this study document are fourteen recommendations that are intended to enhance and optimize the provision and delivery of athletic fields. These recommendations have been organized into the following overarching topic areas:

- **Inventory Management:** The overall approach to managing the current athletic field inventory.
- **Allocations and Fees:** The manner in which the City provides users with access to athletic fields.
- **Communications and Customer Service:** The methods and processes by which the City communicates and interacts with athletic field users (groups and the public).
- **Future Planning and Partnerships:** Processes and protocols used by the City to plan future athletic field development and undertake partnership identification, formation and evaluation.

Summarized as follows are key recommendation themes and strategic policy directions:

- The athletic field inventory should be organized into a classification system. Doing so will enable the City to better identify gaps, develop clear maintenance standards and better align users with the right types/ levels of fields. *(See Recommendations #1, 2, 7.)*
- Data collection and analysis should be enhanced and used across athletic field management and planning. *(See Recommendation #3.)*
- A new process for the allocations of athletic fields should be adopted. This process should sustain the opportunity for Community Centres to have prioritized access to athletic fields for youth sports programs, however the existing practice of blanket booking should be adapted . Three potential approaches have been identified for consideration. *(See Recommendations #4 and 5.)*
- Annual cost recovery targets for athletic fields should be established and used to set fees on an annual basis. *(See Recommendation #6.)*
- The three hour booking block should be adjusted to maximize efficiency and optimize the use of the existing field inventory. *(See Recommendation #8.)*
- The City should invest in additional resources that will enhance the ability to provide timely customer service, collect and analyze data (field use, demographics, trends, etc.) and coordinate important processes (e.g. field inspections and allocations). This investment in additional resources will have a downstream effect which will optimize all aspects of athletic field provision. *(See Recommendation #9. This recommendation for additional resources is also required to fully implement many of the recommendations provided.)*
- The City should invest in web based and mobile tools that can enhance customer service and user convenience. *(See Recommendation #10.)*
- Opportunities for spontaneous/unstructured play on athletic fields should be promoted. *(See Recommendation #11.)*
- Future planning and capital investment in athletic fields should be linked to targeted provision levels (based on a classification system and gap identification) and focused on multi-field “hub” sites. Prioritizing the development of these sites in new and growing communities can help address geographic gaps and meet user group needs. *(See Recommendations #12 and #14.)*
- Future partnership decisions should be based on clear and transparent evaluation protocols that consider a variety of factors and make the best use of public resources. *(See Recommendation #13.)*

The draft Athletic Field Review was shared with the public and stakeholders through a series of Open House events in March 2018 (the session materials and Feedback Questionnaire were also available on the project website). The feedback provided was used to help inform the Final Athletic Field Review report presented to SPCC, EPC and Council for their review of the recommendations and approval.

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Project Context

Opportunities for residents of all ages and ability levels to be active and engaged in physical activity is an important cornerstone of a vibrant city. The City of Winnipeg realizes the social, economic and community value of providing residents with recreation and sport opportunities and continues to invest significantly in the infrastructure that supports these activities. When looking at the array of recreation and sport facility types that are operated or otherwise supported by the City, athletic fields comprise the greatest overall quantity and variety of these spaces. Athletic fields also support numerous different activity types which include both structured/ organized programs and spontaneous play. In total, there are 661 standalone fields located on City property. It is also important to note that additional fields exist outside of City property (i.e. on school sites, sites owned by public and private sector groups, etc.).

The following chart reflects the total inventory of fields, including joint use fields and overlapping fields (those fields that encroach onto each other thus limiting use to one group at a time).

Type	Baseball	Combo Football/Soccer	Cricket Pitches*	Disc Sport	Football	Rugby	Soccer	Total
Total Amount of Fields (overlapping occurs)**	358	24	2	26	22	5	534	971
Standalone Fields (no overlapping occurs)**	277	24	2	16	22	5	455	801

* These numbers reflect dedicated cricket pitches. However cricket is also played on other outdoor surfaces (e.g. soccer fields, community parks).

** The term "overlapping" refers to fields that encroach onto each other (e.g. ball diamond outfield that overlaps onto a soccer field) and/or can be configured into different sizes.

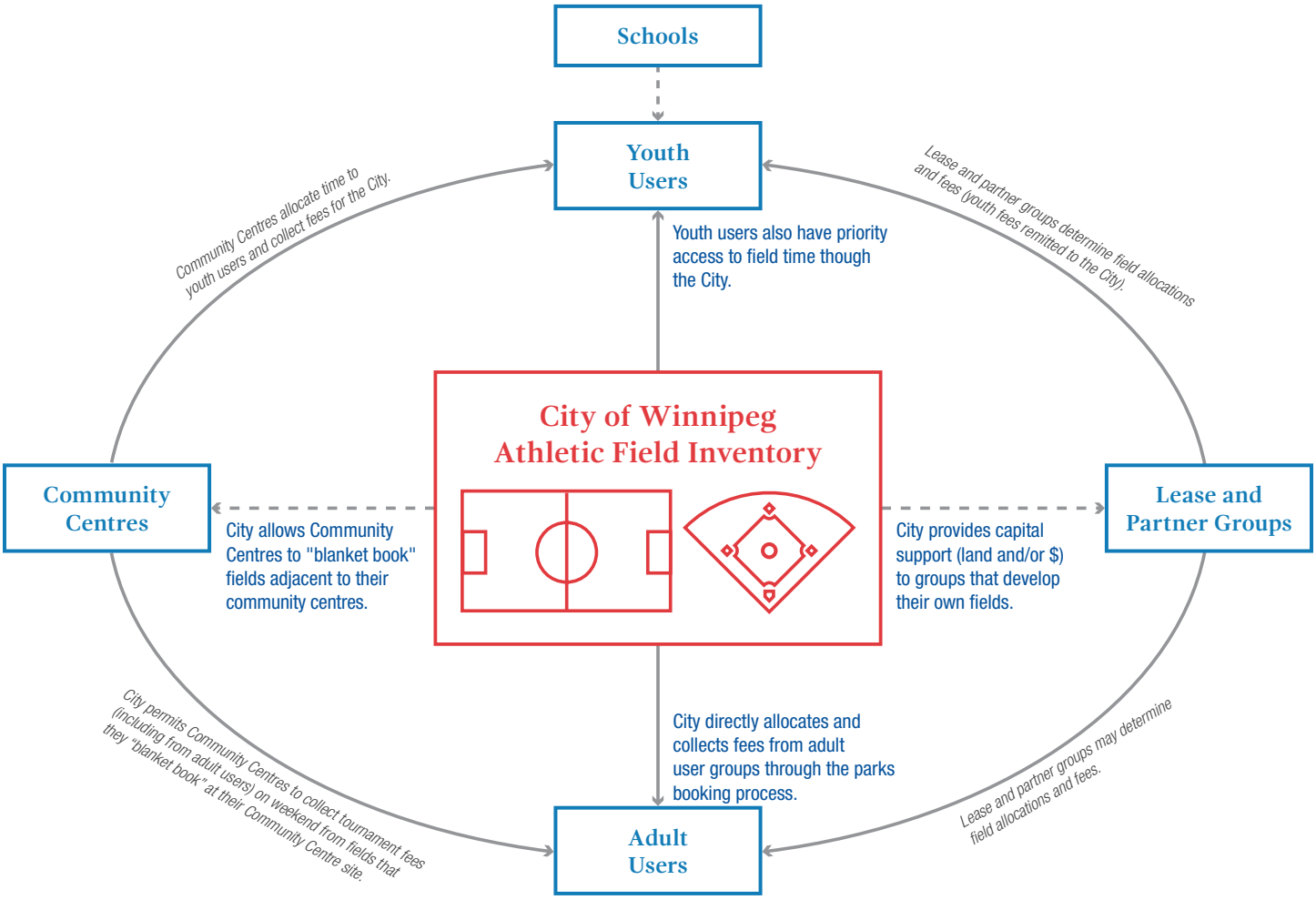
The provision of athletic fields in Winnipeg involves numerous partnerships and collaborations with user groups and community organizations. Two significant forms of partnerships include lease agreements with user groups (over 90 fields are under lease agreements, a significant number of which fall under Joint use Agreements) and the opportunity for Community Centres to blanket book the athletic fields adjacent to their Centres and allocate them to youth user groups. Community Centres can also opt to maintain these fields through the Sweat Equity Maintenance Program. Currently, 328 fields are maintained through the Sweat Equity Maintenance Program. Overall responsibility for athletic field management and maintenance is the responsibility of the City's Public Works Department, specifically the Parks and Open Space Division. Allocation (booking) of the fields is resourced by Public Works, however the bookings clerk is an employee of the Community Services Department.

Definitions

The term **blanket book(ing)** when used in this document refers to the current practice which allows Community Centres to retain all available time at athletic fields in their catchment area. Community Centres also have the ability to generate additional revenue by booking eekend field time to tournaments and adult sport user groups.

The term **Community Centre Athletic Field Reservation,** which is introduced in the recommendations section, to assist with adapting the existing blanket bookings practice, refers to the booking of all available time for a defined period of time (e.g. April 15 – June 15) based on the demonstrated season of play/use.

Fees are currently collected from the majority of youth user groups on a per participant basis through Community Centres and youth sports organizations. Athletic fields that remain within the City's inventory are booked using 3 hour blocks of time. The following graphic illustrates the current allocations protocol for athletic fields maintained by the City.



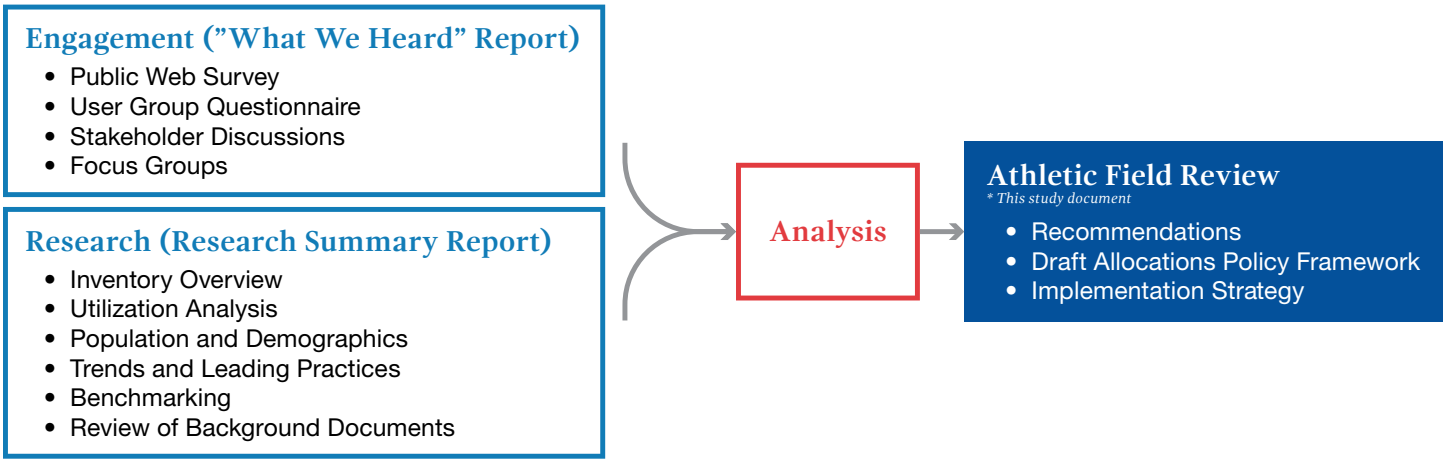
Project Background and Methodology

The Athletic Field Review project was approved by City Council in March 2016 and launched in the fall of 2016. The following statement provides an overview of the intended project purpose:

> *"It is envisioned this plan will form the framework for an implementation strategy and field allocation policy framework that will guide the City over the coming years. The implementation strategy will identify all risks, costs and implications associated with each aspect of the athletic field booking recommendation alternatives so that the rationale behind the recommended policy is transparent to the public and the elected officials. The recommendation should include options that are affordable and support the public's willingness to pay for the field use."*[1]

While allocations was the focus of the project, the Athletic Field Review also looked at a number of other areas that impact allocations and the overall provision of athletic fields in the city. These areas included management and maintenance practices, partnerships, user group communications and the overall inventory of fields in the city. A review of these areas helped identify the current state of athletic field provision in the city and potential future needs and priority areas.

Research and engagement was critical to the Athletic Field Review project. As reflected in the following graphic, a number of different research and engagement methods were used to gather the information and data that was required to develop the strategic content (recommendations and policy framework) provided in this study document.



The draft Athletic Field Review was reviewed with the public and stakeholders. Provided in the appendices is a summary of the feedback received at the Open House events and afterward through the project website. This feedback helped inform the finalization of the Athletic Field Review document.

Purpose of the Athletic Field Review Study Document

The overarching intent of the Athletic Field Review project is to provide the City with strategic guidance that can inform future decision making policy and ensure the City's provision of athletic fields is focused, efficient and optimized. The chart below further explains the content provided in each of the following sections of this study document.

Athletic Field Review Document Section	Section Overview
Section 2: Research and Engagement Summary	Summary of key research and engagement findings (detailed findings published under separate cover in the "What We Heard" Report and Research Summary Report).
Section 3: Recommendations	Identification of potential areas of optimization, enhancement, and change for athletic field provision in the city.
Section 4: Draft Athletic Fields Allocation Policy Framework	Draft framework that can be used to guide the development/ formalization of a new Athletic Fields Allocations Policy.
Section 5: Implementation Strategy	Identification of implementation tactics, timing and resource requirements.

1 From the Request for Proposal document.

Section 2

Research and Engagement Summary

Summarized in this section are key themes and findings from the research and engagement that was conducted for the Athletic Field Review project. The detailed research and engagement findings have been published under separate cover in the “What We Heard” Report (engagement findings) and Research Summary Report (non-engagement research findings). Pertinent research and engagement findings are also identified for the topic areas and recommendations provided in Section 3.

As previously identified, the collection and analysis of this information and data formed the basis of the recommendations and draft policy framework outlined in forthcoming sections of this document. This information and data also provides a resource that can be used to inform future planning and decision making beyond the scope of this project.

Engagement Summary—From the "What We Heard" Report

Overview (Methods and Responses)

The following chart summarizes the engagement mechanisms that were used to collect feedback from the public, stakeholders and user groups.

Engagement Mechanism	Responses/Participation Levels
User Group Questionnaire	31
Public Web Survey	814
Stakeholder Discussions	17 sessions
Focus Groups	4 sessions

Key Themes and Findings

User Group Questionnaire

- Responding groups/organizations indicated that the top three factors that influence their organization's year-to-year participation numbers are: having sufficient numbers of coaches/instructors/volunteers (57%); program costs for participants (53%); and competition with other types of programs/activities (47%).
- Forty-eight percent (48%) of responding groups/organizations indicated that the current athletic fields in Winnipeg "completely" meet their needs while 44% indicated that their needs are "somewhat" being meet.
- Approximately half (52%) of responding groups/organizations indicated that they currently have access to enough athletic field time. Forty-one percent (41%) indicated that their organizations do not have access to enough field time. These groups commonly identified access to fields of sufficient quality and limited access to fields that are blanket booked. Seven percent (7%) of groups were unsure.
- Nearly one-third (30%) of responding groups/organizations indicated that they would be willing to pay more to access better quality fields.
- Responding groups/organizations indicated a strong desire for enhanced online or mobile tools for booking fields and providing feedback related to specific field issues.

Public Web Survey

- Ninety-four percent (94%) of public web survey participants use athletic fields in Winnipeg.
- The top three barriers to use identified were: poor quality of athletic fields (67%), lack of amenities (45%), and booking conflicts (32%).
- Enhancing athletic field quality and supporting existing user groups were identified as the top two priority areas for future athletic field planning.
- Nearly one-third (31%) of respondents think that user fees should recover 0% to 25% of overall athletic fields costs and twenty-eight percent believe that 25% to 50% is a fair recovery rate. Less than half of respondents (41%) indicated that the City should target recovery of over 50% for athletic fields.
- If new athletic fields are required in the future, 61% of respondents indicated that partnerships should be a primary method to fund projects and 51% indicated that the City should look to re-allocate resources from under-utilized athletic fields. Just under half of respondents (44%) indicated that user fees should be a primary funding method and only 19% indicated that property taxes should be a primary funding method.

Stakeholder Discussions and Focus Group Sessions

- Overall field quality issues were frequently identified by stakeholders.
- Various opinions exist on the practice of blanket booking fields to Community Centres. While some stakeholders believe that this system works well, others identified issues and suggested that the City needs to revisit this approach.
- Many user groups believe that multi-field "hub" sites should be a priority for future athletic field planning and new development. However, comments were also provided on the need to ensure that activity and use is sustained on existing fields in mature communities (concerns that developing more multi-field sites may draw usage away from these existing community fields).
- Issues with athletic field capacity (having access to enough field time) were most frequently identified by adult groups and "emerging" sports.
- Interactions with the City are generally positive; however, some room for improvement exists. The need for timely response from the City to issues and inquiries was commonly mentioned.
- Stakeholders indicated that the City needs to get a better sense of its "actual" inventory of quality fields and better understand the degree to which booked fields are being used. These comments related to utilization were generally directed at those fields which are blanket booked.
- It was suggested by a number of stakeholders that an investment in support amenities (e.g. washrooms, parking, storage) could help make better use of existing fields.

Research (Non-Engagement) Summary—From the Research Summary Report

Overview (Methods)

Methods used to collect non-engagement research and data included:

- Review of current practices.
- Review of background planning documents.
- Analysis of utilization data and revenues.
- Trends and leading practices research.
- Benchmarking (comparison to other municipalities).

Key Themes and Findings

- Overall field quantity does not appear to be deficient based on the demand analysis and benchmarking. The one potential exception (based on benchmarking) is artificial turf fields. However, it is important to note that needs for artificial turf fields are often dependent on local market characteristics, including: ability/willingness to pay for access to artificial turf, climate, demand during "shoulder" seasons (spring and fall) and quality of the natural surface field inventory.
- Multi-use and multi-field sites continue to be a trend observed in many urban centres. Benefits include: increased tournament hosting capabilities, operational efficiencies and the ability to cluster support amenities. However, as these sites often require a quantity of land that is beyond what is accrued through reserve dedications acquired through development, many municipalities are choosing to include capital allocations for the purchase of land.
- Municipalities and sport organizations continue to seek alignment with Canadian Sport for Life (CS4L) and the Long Term Athletic Development framework (LTAD).
- Youth users pay significantly less to access fields than do adults.
- The quantity of hours booked through the City has decreased since 2012 (~16%). Available data also suggests an overall decrease in the number of youth participants.
- Revenue from rental fees has trended downwards from 2012 ($290,944) to 2017 ($273,477).
- The City of Winnipeg has a unique rates and fees approach compared to other Canadian cities. Notable differences include:
  - Per participant user fee for youth (collected using an honour system from user groups through the Community Centres).
  - Single rate for adult users (most cities have 3 – 5 pricing levels linked to quality/type/class of field).
  - Three hour bookings block (most municipalities use a one hour block of time and build transition time into the bookings system).
- The city continues to experience steady growth. Like most urban centres provincially and nationally, Winnipeg is evolving and diversifying.
- Winnipeg is experiencing new residential growth in outlining South West and South East areas of the city. Parts of North West Winnipeg have also experienced growth in recent decades. Overall, athletic field provision is less in many newer communities compared to more mature areas of the city and some geographic gaps appear to exist.

Section 3

Recommendations

Provided in this section are 14 recommendations that are intended to enhance and optimize the provision and delivery of athletic fields. These recommendations have been organized into the following topic areas:

- **Inventory Management:** The overall approach to managing the current athletic field inventory.
- **Allocations and Fees:** The manner in which the City provides users with access to athletic fields.
- **Communications and Customer Service:** The methods and processes by which the City communicates and interacts with athletic field users (groups and the public).
- **Future Planning and Partnerships:** Processes and protocols used by the City to plan future athletic field development and undertake partnership identification, formation and evaluation.

It is important to note that while some of these recommendations suggest changes in how the City provides athletic fields, others are simply intended to re-embed or further build upon practices that are already in place. In some instances, the recommendations provided also suggest the need for additional planning to address a potential information gap or further define needs for a specific type of field or geographic area. A number of the recommendations provided in this section also form the basis for the draft Allocation Policy Framework outlined in Section 4.

Topic Area: Inventory Management

Current Situation Overview

The Parks and Open Space Division, within the City's Public Works Department, is responsible for the overall management of athletic fields in the city that are not privately managed or owned. The City books some school fields and also undertakes basic maintenance functions (e.g. top-dressing, aerating, fertilizing and mowing) at some school sites. The City's inventory of athletic fields is diverse and includes a mix of field types, quality levels and available support amenities. Over three-quarters of the City's athletic field inventory consists of standalone fields.

The maintenance of athletic fields on City are primarily conducted by a combination of City staff, Community Centres and lease holder groups (as defined by their agreements with the City). Through the "Sweat Equity Maintenance Program", Community Centres are provided with the option to maintain and upkeep athletic fields located on their site and within their catchment area in exchange for grant funding from the City. It is important to note that in addition to funds provided through the Sweat Equity Maintenance Program, many Community Centres are also eligible to receive additional City grants for other types of programs, services and activities. The Sweat Equity Maintenance Program is administered through the General Council for Winnipeg Community Centres (GCWCC) who are provided with an annual grant ($350,300 in 2017). The program has two tiers:

- Full maintenance
- Assisted Maintenance

Community Centres are not required to participate in the program. If a Community Centre chooses not to participate, the City assumes responsibility for maintenance of the fields located on their site or within their catchment area. Currently of the 63 Community Centres, 46 participate in the "Sweat Equity Maintenance" Program. Approximately 328 fields receive full maintenance and 68 fields receive assisted maintenance. Community Centres can opt to perform full field maintenance at one location, while providing assisted field maintenance (or none at all) at a different location.

The City currently categorizes fields within its inventory in the following manner:

- **Blanket Booked Fields:** Fields located in the catchment area of a Community Centre that are currently available for blanket booking.
- **League/Casual Fields:** Fields that may be booked for either league or casual play.
- **Leased Fields:** Fields under a lease agreement, where the fields are maintained and managed by the lessee/user group, on behalf of the City. The lessee has exclusive use of the fields for their requisite sport.
- **Walk-On Only Fields:** Fields that are designated as non-bookable to accommodate walk-on play; intended for use on a first-come, first-serve basis.

While the City does have the above categories of field types, there is not currently a system in place to classify fields within the City's inventory based on size or quality. As such, these factors are not formally taken into account during the allocations process.

As further described in the Allocations and Fees topic area and recommendations, the City has a relatively good understanding of its athletic field revenues. However, the expenditures to provide athletic fields are integrated with other parks and open space services and thus challenging to delineate. It has been determined that cost recovery for athletic fields is approximately 15% (cost recovery refers to the percentage of expenses recovered through revenues).

Engagement and Research Considerations

- A variety of perspectives exist on current athletic field quality and maintenance standards among user groups and stakeholders. Issues with field quality and maintenance were expressed by stakeholders during the interviews and discussion sessions. However, the majority of respondents to the User Group Questionnaire identified that current athletic fields either “completely” or “somewhat” meet their needs.
- Field quality was identified as the top barrier to athletic field use by Public Web Survey respondents (67% identified field quality as a barrier).
- A lack of clarity exists around the actual (“functional”) inventory of athletic fields in the city. During the stakeholder discussions and in the comments provided in the User Group Questionnaire, there was skepticism expressed over whether the City has an accurate understanding as to the number of athletic fields that are of “playable” condition. The perspective held by some is that the quantity of “playable” fields is significantly less than the inventory numbers presented in project materials (e.g. 971 total athletic fields in the city).
- Benchmarking and demand analysis research suggests that the overall quantity of fields in the city is sufficient. On a per resident basis, Winnipeg is consistent with other cities in the overall provision of athletic fields. However, it is important to note that benchmarking research is challenged to compare quality of provision (e.g. turf quality, amenity provision). As Winnipeg does not have a classification system based on the quality of fields and amenity provision, benchmarking analysis was not able to compare the proportion of field types (e.g. % of “A” fields) to the other cities.
- The majority of comparator municipalities have a classification system that is aligned with field quality and amenities.
- Winnipeg, like most large urban centres in Canada, is continuing to diversify. Interests in sport and recreation pursuits are also evolving and have led to demands for new types of spaces and facilities.
- Current practices such as the ability for Community Centres to blanket book fields and the three hour booking block are current factors that impact the City’s ability to analyze and manage the current inventory.
    - » The three hour booking block results in unused field time as not all users require a full three hour block for games/practices.
    - » The practice of blanket booking removes a significant proportion of the athletic field inventory from City bookings. While this long-standing practice benefits many established youth user groups it presents barriers for some newer and emerging groups and also limits the revenue that can be generated through City bookings.

Recommendation #1: The City should develop a classification system for athletic fields that is based on field quality and available amenities.

The following chart outlines a potential classification system, including the characteristics and amenities pertaining to each class of field. This new classification system should be transparent and communicated to all athletic field stakeholders.

* Example Only: Naming, amenities and site characteristics will require further refinement.

Athletic Field Class *Potential naming protocol.*	**Characteristics/Description** *Examples of distinguishing features that could be used to classify the inventory.*	**Types of Fields** *Based on the current inventory and categorization, potential types of fields that would fit into the class.*
Premier (A)	• Multi-field "hub" site, artificial turf field or premier natural surface field. • Includes high level of on-site support amenities (e.g. washrooms, grandstand spectator seating, change facilities, lights, scoreboard, irrigation, portable nets, storage, dugouts).	• Partner/lease sites. • Selected premier fields and multi-field sites within the City's inventory.
Community (B)	• Regularly maintained field with basic functional amenities. • Likely to be located on a community park site.	• Athletic fields that are currently blanket booked by Community Centres and maintained through the Sweat Equity Maintenance Program. • Athletic fields within the City's inventory with regular levels of use.
Neighborhood (C)	• Basic "playfield" spaces with reduced levels of maintenance and amenities. • Likely to have some barriers that impact playability for programmed use (e.g. quality of turf, size, lack of amenities, size of backstop, overlap, and field orientation).	• Many school sites. • "Walk on" fields. • Selected fields in the City's inventory that do not receive enhanced maintenance and have reduced levels of use.

It is also suggested that the City enhance a maintenance and service level protocol for each class of field that could apply to both City maintained fields and those that are maintained by community centres and other partner organizations. This protocol should include:

- Annual spring (start-up) and fall (shut-down) maintenance programs.
- Grass cutting and line marking frequency.
- Site care (e.g. litter pick-up).
- Field quality inspection including field amenities (e.g. goals, player's boxes, etc.).

The above noted requirements should also be integrated into the Sweat Equity Maintenance Program and lease agreements with partner groups. It is also important that the City communicate the maintenance and service protocol to user groups and other stakeholders. Doing so will increase clarity and understanding as to the level of care provided for each class of field.

Recommendation Rationale and Benefits

- Provides a structure from which to allocate, maintain, assess and plan athletic fields.
- Helps more clearly communicate to users the level of service provided at each field/site.
- Aligns field quality and levels of use with the level of maintenance care provided.
- Potential to align fees (revenues) with expenditures for different classes of fields.

Recommendation #2: The City should align its inventory and assessment data with a classification system (such as the example proposed in Recommendation #1).

The City currently has inventory and assessment data on file through its asset management practices and the ongoing inspections of athletic fields. This data is likely sufficient to classify most fields based on quality, typology and amenities. However, some additional resources will required in the following areas:

- Organization of the existing data in alignment with the new classification system.
- Adjustments to inspection and assessment checklists in alignment with the new classification system.
- Clarification of key attributes/characteristics/definitions that could impact the classification of fields that fall into a grey area (e.g. barriers/issues that may warrant classifying a field as C vs. B).

The tasks identified above are project based in nature and thus could be undertaken by additional short term/seasonal staff or could fall under the portfolio of the incremental permanent staff as suggested in Recommendation #11.

Recommendation Rationale and Benefits

- Aligns existing data and information with a classification system (creates better overall alignment across the management of athletic fields).

Recommendation #3: The City should invest in the enhanced collection and analysis of athletic field data, including:

- *Expenditures specific to athletic field provision.*
- *Utilization data from groups (consistent annual data that can be used to identify local trends and emerging user needs).*
- *Data from an athletic field inspector (including field and asset condition monitoring that is conducted throughout the year).*

As previously noted, the City does have information on the physical athletic field inventory, there is a lack of data for a number of other important aspects that impact athletic field provision and decision making. Analysis of cost structures (expenditures) and actual utilization will help more accurately inform decision making and is required to undertake a number of the forthcoming recommendations provided in this document.

Recommendation Rationale and Benefits

- Provides further clarity as to the true cost of athletic field provision.
- Provides a quantitative basis that can inform decision making (i.e rates and fees, maintenance investment, partnerships, etc.).
- Assists the field booking technician in resourcing fields that are in-demand.

Topic Area: Allocations and Fees

Current Situation Overview

A large proportion of the City's athletic field inventory is blanket booked by Community Centres who then allocate these fields to youth sport organizations. Fees are collected for the City by the respective Community Centres on a per participants basis. The current per participant fee for youth is approximately $12. This fee increases by approximately 2% each year as approved by Council as per the Fees and Charges Policy.

Athletic fields that remain in the City's inventory (those fields that aren't blanket booked by Community Centres) are allocated to user groups in three hour blocks of time. First priority for these fields are given to youth leagues, followed by adult leagues. Remaining field time is then available for casual bookings. The current cost to book a three hour block of field time from the City for adult use is $77.70.

Also located throughout the city are a number of leased athletic field sites. Through these lease agreements, the lease holder organization is responsible for field maintenance, allocations and directly receives all revenues associated with the fields that they lease from the City.

As reflected in the adjacent chart, the City has collected annual average revenues of $271,887 for athletic fields over the past two years. This figure represents a decrease from the average revenues collected from 2012 – 2015. Approximately 58% of athletic field revenues come from the fees collected from youth participants. In 2016, Community Centres reported 13,914 youth which resulted in total youth based revenues of$163,629 (based on a 2016 youth per participant fee of $11.76). As previously mentioned, the number of youth is self-reported by Community Centres.

Year	Revenues
Average (2016 – 2017)	**$271,887**
Average (2012 – 2015)	**$305,488**
2016	$270,296
2017	$273,477

Engagement and Research Considerations

- City bookings data reflects a gradual decline in the number of youth participants that contribute to the per participant fee and the overall hours booked by the City. This data is in contrast with the engagement findings (57% of User Group Questionnaire respondents indicated that their organizations expect to experience an increase in participation numbers) as well as available provincial and national participation trends. Potential explanations for this contrasting information are user groups accessing sport fields provided by lease holders and/or reporting discrepancies in the number of youth participants.
- Trends and leading practices reflect increased awareness and alignment nationally with Canadian Sport for Life (CS4L) and the Long Term Athlete Development (LTAD) framework. Many municipalities are integrating aspects of LTAD into allocation policies and practices to align with these standards and encourage user groups in their communities to follow best practices. Following CS4L and LTAD principles also helps provide a rationale for the public support (subsidization) of facilities and programs.
  - » Sixty-three percent (63%) of User Group Questionnaire respondents were aware of CS4L and LTAD.
  - » Fourty-one percent (41%) of User Group Questionnaire respondents indicated that their organization uses/aligns with CS4L and LTAD.

**National and provincial sport organizations are required to align with CS4L and LTAD principles. These findings suggest that some additional support and resources may be needed to assist groups with CS4L and LTAD alignment.*

- Fifty-two percent (52%) of User Group Questionnaire respondents believe that the current allocation system is "good".
- The City of Winnipeg has a unique rates and fees approach compared to other Canadian cities. Notable differences include the three hour time block, per participant fee and single price point (most municipalities have multiple price points aligned with field classes).

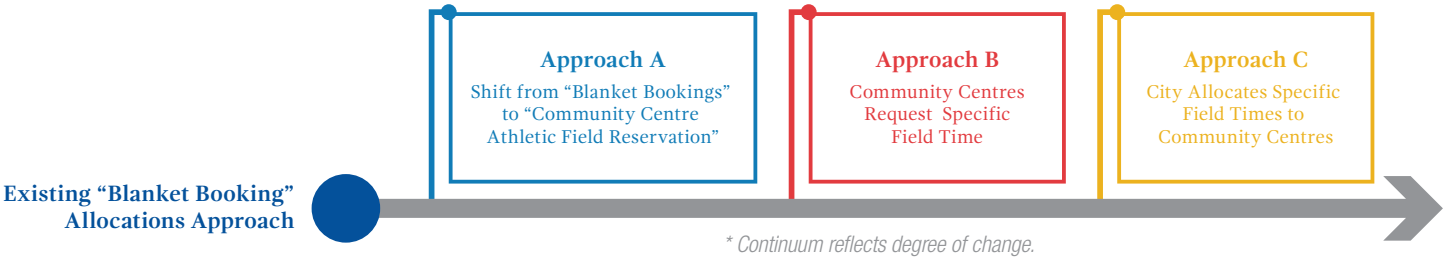
Engagement and Research Considerations (Continued)

- Various opinions and perspectives exist among user groups and stakeholders on the blanket booking of athletic fields by Community Centres. While this system works well for some user groups, it presents a barrier for others (e.g. existing adult user groups and new and emerging groups that are not historically embedded in the blanket booking system).
- A number of adult user groups indicated that they are challenged to access sufficient athletic field time. Many adult user groups also expressed frustration over their inability to access fields that are blanket booked by Community Centres for an entire summer, even when youth sports are not currently ongoing.
- The practice of blanket booking reduces City revenue opportunities and impacts the ability to assist emerging and growing groups with field time needs.
- Forty percent (40%) of User Group Questionnaire respondents believe that the per participant youth fee system works well for their organization. 36% were unsure if the system works well and 23% indicated that the system does not work well for their organization.
- User Group Questionnaire and Public Web Survey respondents indicated the following when asked about fair levels of cost recovery:
  - Public Web Survey: Thirty-one percent (31%) indicated that user fees should recover 0% to 25% of expenditures. Twenty-eight percent (28%) indicated that user fees should recover 25% to 50% of expenditures. Eighteen percent (18%) indicated that the City should target recovery of over 50% for athletic fields. Twenty-three percent (23%) were unsure.
  - User Group Questionnaire: Fifty percent (50%) of responding groups believe that the City should target cost recovery of 25% or less. Nineteen percent (19%) indicated that the City should target cost recovery of 25% to 50%. Eight percent (8%) indicated that cost recovery of 50% or more is fair. Twenty-three percent (23%) were unsure.

Recommendation #4: ***The City should adopt a new process for the allocation of athletic fields. Identified below are key overarching principles that should drive the allocation of athletic fields.***

- ***Community Centres should continue to be provided with the opportunity to have prioritized access to athletic fields for youth sports programs; however, the existing practice of blanket booking should be modified.***
- ***The allocations of athletic fields should be aligned with clear and transparent rationale (demonstrated user need that is supported by data).***
- ***Allocations practices should focus on making the most efficient and effective use of the athletic field inventory.***
- ***Allocations practices should be aligned with Canadian Sport for Life (CS4L) and the Long Term Athlete Development framework (LTAD).***
- ***Priority for athletic fields should follow the following overall hierarchy:***
  - ***Youth (via Community Centres)***
  - ***Youth and School User Groups (via the City)***
  - ***Adults (via the City)***

The suggested adaptation of blanket booking will be the most significant change to the current allocations system. Described below are three approaches that could be considered to achieve the principles outlined on the previous page and implement potential changes to how Community Centres access field time on behalf of youth teams and programs. Each of these approaches reflects a different degree of change from the current situation and has associated implications.



All three options require the City to collect accurate, consistent and up-to-date data from user groups to validate need and the quantity of field time that is allocated. As such, regardless of the option selected the City should require all groups to provide timely data to the City in the format requested. This data should include (at minimum) statistics on participant numbers, ages, practice and game requirements (those mandated by the league or sport governing body), and the nature of play (e.g. number of athletes in each age category and levels of play).

Definitions

The term **blanket book(ing)** when used in this document refers to the current practice which allows Community Centres to retain all available time at athletic fields in their catchment area. Community Centres also have the ability to generate additional revenue by booking weekend field time to tournaments and adult sport user groups.

The term **Community Centre Athletic Field Reservation,** which is introduced as follows, refers to the booking of all available time for a defined period of time (e.g. April 15 – June 15) based on the demonstrated season of play/use.

Approach A: Shift from Blanket Bookings to Community Centre Athletic Field Reservation.

Description: The City would allow Community Centres to reserve available time at fields located adjacent to their Centre for the season of play of the programs that utilize these respective fields (e.g. May – June). To continue receiving reservation privileges for the upcoming season, Community Centres would be required to:

- Submit a seasonal request to the City by March 1 of each year for fields within their catchment area.
- Pay the per participant youth fee by May 15.
- Demonstrate >75% prime time utilization during all time that is block booked ("prime time" utilization refers to weekday evenings and weekend hours).
  ** Will require the City to implement a system to obtain accurate utilization data from Community Centres.*

Approach B: Community Centres request specific field time from the City.

Description: In contrast to Approach A in which the Community Centre would receive an entire block of time (e.g. 2 months) based on their demonstrated season of play, Approach B would require Community Centres to request specific times based on the game and practice schedules of the primary users in their catchment area. All other available time would remain in the City's inventory. Outlined below are other potential requirements and aspects of this potential model:

- Community Centres would be required to submit a season request to the City by March 1 based on expected field needs of regular user groups. These expected needs could be based on current registration numbers and/or last years registration numbers.
- The City would need to add a contingency (e.g. 20 – 30% more than requested) onto the requested field time to account for factors such as rainouts, schedule changes, increase in last minute registrations, etc.

Approach C: The City allocates field time to Community Centres.

Description: Using this approach, the City would allocate specific field time to Community Centres based on clear "standards of play" which could include:

- Assessed need based on participation numbers, level of play, age of participants, and league scheduling requirements.
- Recommended game and practice ratios as identified by Provincial and/or National Sport Organizations.

Benefits and Limitations of the Potential Approaches

All of the three proposed approaches outlined above have associated benefits and potential limitations as further outlined in the following chart:

Approach	Potential Benefits	Potential Limitations
A: Shift from Blanket Bookings to Community Centre Athletic Field Reservation.	• Continues to provide Community Centres and their youth user organizations with flexibility during the season of play. • Will moderately increase the City's inventory of bookable field time that can be made available to new and emerging groups. • Utilization requirements (>75% of prime time) will place increased focus on ensuring fields that are booked are actually being used.*	• Field time will not be available for the City to book during the identified season of play. • This model will require the City to implement a system or process to track actual field utilization which could be challenging for the City and Community Centres.
B: Community Centres request specific field time from the City.	• Potential to more significantly (in comparison to Approach A) increase the City's inventory of bookable field time that is made available to new and emerging groups. • Further aligns bookings with actual demand.	• Likely to require increased human resource requirements (staff and/or volunteers) for Community Centres. • Likely to require increased human resource requirements for City bookings staff and field inspections. • The nature of athletic field use requires a degree of flexibility (e.g. to account for rainouts and rescheduling).
C: The City allocates field time to Community Centres.	• Of the approaches presented, likely to most precisely align actual field needs with fields booked/allocated. • Aligns allocations with clear and transparent standards of play.	• Establishing standards of play can be labour intensive and will require ongoing refinement (will require significant ongoing City human resource attention and collaboration with user groups).

* Prime time utilization could be easily calculated by requesting the overall hours of use through a standard reporting template that Community Centres are required to complete at the end of each season. Ex: If a Community Centre reserved a two month block of time (May – June) that would translate to approximately 260 prime time hours per field (weekdays at 3 hours per day, weekends at 8 hours per day). Therefore, a Community Centre would need to demonstrate 195 hours per use to meet the threshold of 75% prime time utilization. Some allocation could also be given within this threshold for rainouts and rest time (e.g. 10% of the 75%).

Recommendation #5: It is suggested that the City develop and implement a user friendly process and tools for, and in collaboration with, user groups to return unused time during their season of play to the overall City inventory. This time would be available for the City to allocate and book to user groups that are looking for additional field time.

The approaches outlined in Recommendation #5 are intended to ensure greater alignment between field time booked and field time used. However, regardless of the approach selected, there is still likely to be instances in which groups that book athletic fields (including Community Centres) have unused time that can be returned to the City's inventory. Providing a simple, efficient and mutually beneficial process for these organizations to return unused field time to the City could help address overall capacity issues that were expressed by some adult users and emerging groups. By participating in this initiative, Community Centres and user groups will demonstrate a commitment to making the best use of available fields and could receive future credit/priority in the allocations process.

Recommendation Rationale and Benefits

- Potential to expand the City's inventory of bookable athletic fields.
- Helps address capacity and access issues experienced by some groups.

Recommendation #6: The City should set annual cost recovery targets for athletic fields and link these targets directly with fees.

The City currently subsidizes athletic fields at a rate of approximately 15% (in other words, the City covers ~85% of the costs for providing athletic fields). The following chart provides an example of how cost recovery is tabulated, and how user fees could be aligned with specific cost recovery targets. While this example provides a basis for further discussion, a number of factors will required clarification before such a model is implement (see the text and bullets after the chart which outlines a number of these key factors and potential inputs).

Example Cost Recovery and User Fee Alignment Model

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
Cost Recovery Target	**Expenditures** **Expenditures are for example purposes only (not actual figures)*	**Revenues Required to Meet Cost Recovery Target** *(as identified in column A)*	**Youth Revenue Target** *(set annual proportion of revenues that need to be generated from Community Centre bookings for youth programs)*	**City Bookings Revenue Target** *(set annual proportion of revenues that need to be generated from fields that remain in the City's inventory)*	**Projected # of Per Participant Youth Fees** *(number to be adjusted annually based on the previous year)*	**Projected # of Hours of City Bookings** *(number to be adjusted annually based on the previous year)*	**Required Per Participant Youth Fee** *(based on the column F figure, this per participant fee is required to meet the cost recovery column identified in column A)*	**Required Average Hourly Fee for City Bookings** *(based on the column G figure, this hourly fee is required to meet the cost recovery column identified in column A)*
15%	$2,000,000	$300,000	60%	40%	15,000	1,500	**$12.00**	**$80.00**
20%	$2,000,000	$400,000	60%	40%	15,000	1,500	**$16.00**	**$106.67**
25%	$2,000,000	$500,000	60%	40%	15,000	1,500	**$20.00**	**$133.33**

To implement a model like the one presented on the previous page, the City will need to clarify a number of key factors and inputs that influence the model, including:

- The most appropriate cost recovery target based on user ability to pay and the overall impacts of each target.
- The benefit (or overall impact) that results from each cost recovery target (e.g. achieving X% will result in Y level of service).
- Expenditures specific to athletic fields. These expenditures will need to include those for ongoing maintenance and upkeep as well as upgrades that can help increase field quality for identified fields in alignment with the classification system. Further clarity on expenditures will be required before a linked cost recovery-user fee model can be implemented.
- The appropriate share to be collected from youth through the per participant youth fee vs. City bookings. The example model is based on 60% of revenues being generated from youth, and 40% from adults. Further discussions may be warranted on whether this is appropriate.

Also key to developing and implementing the model will be the identification of an ongoing cost recovery target (column A in the chart). The City's current cost recovery for athletic fields is estimated at 15%. It is suggested that the identification of a set and ongoing cost recovery target be undertaken as an implementation step emanating from this Athletic Field Review study. This process should involve input from Council, user groups, and stakeholders.

** **Findings of interest from the Resident Survey**: Nearly one-third (31%) of respondents think that user fees should recover 0% to 25% of overall athletic fields costs. Twenty-eight percent (28%) believe that 25% to 50% is a fair recovery rate. Eighteen percent (18%) of respondent households indicated that the City should target recovery of over 50% for athletic fields.*

Recommendation Rationale and Benefits

- Establishes a clear rationale for how fees are set.
- Helps ensure greater consistency in annual athletic field revenues.

Recommendation #7: If a classification system is implemented (such as the one proposed in Recommendation #1), the City should consider multiple price points for athletic fields.

The implementation of multiple price points presents the opportunity to further align the level of field provided to users with the fee paid by those users. It is also anticipated (based on engagement findings and trends) that the demand for higher quality fields (premier grass and artificial turf) and multi-field sites will continue to grow in the future. Implementing multiple price points will better position the City to project and model the financial impacts of future athletic fields that come online. The identification of specific price points could be determined using a number of inputs, including:

- Feedback from user groups on what they are willing to pay for each level of field.
- Benchmarking.
- Cost recovery targets (such as those outlined in Recommendation #6).

Recommendation Rationale and Benefits

- Creates alignment between user fees and the level of service provided.
- Over time, this will likely result in better alignment of user groups with the right type/class of field for their level of play or purpose.

Recommendation #8: The City should adjust the three hour booking block to maximize overall efficiency of the athletic field inventory.

The current three hour booking block has historically worked well for some users and activities that fit well within that time window or have self-adjusted to do so by booking multiple games or practices within a three hour booking. However the three hour block results in inefficiencies and excess downtime for users that only require a single game or practice time slot, especially during weekday evenings when available hours of play are dictated by the hours of daylight. The following chart outlines field "downtime" for three hour and one hour booking blocks. As reflected in the chart, moving to one hour booking would result in less downtime (more efficient use of field time) for shorter duration games and practices.

Game/Practice Length	Field "Downtime" with a 3 Hour Booking Block	Field "Downtime" with a 1 Hour Booking Block
60 minutes + 15 warm-up/transition time (75 minutes)	105 minutes	45 minutes ** User group would be required to book 2 hours.*
90 minutes + 15 warm-up/transition time (105 minutes)	75 minutes	15 minutes ** User group would be required to book 2 hours.*
120 minutes + 15 warm-up/transition time (135 minutes)	45 minutes	45 minutes ** User group would be required to book 3 hours.*
160 minutes + 15 warm-up/transition time (175 minutes	5 minutes	5 minutes ** User group would be required to book 3 hours.*

An additional benefit of moving to one hour booking blocks is the ability to better track "actual" field utilization as the number of hours booked is likely to more closely correspond to hours of play. Should the City undertake this recommendation, it will be important to ensure that the fee structure[1] is positioned in such a way that doesn't negatively impact revenues. The City will also need to build sufficient buffer time into the bookings system to allow for transition time between user groups.

Recommendation Rationale and Benefits

- Reduces athletic field "downtime" which is likely to result in increased athletic field capacity and associated revenue opportunities.
- Allows for better tracking and understanding of "actual" athletic field utilization.

1 The development of a fee structure will first require the classification of existing fields and the determination of pricing levels (as suggested in the Recommendation #6).

Topic Area: Communications and Customer Service

Current Situation Overview

Information on the athletic field allocations and booking process is available to current and prospective user groups on the City's website and by calling 311. On average over the past two years, the City has issued 192 permits to user groups. The responsibility for issuing permits and reacting to user group inquiries falls under the purview of a single booking clerk. The resources of this position are divided between the Parks and Open Space Division and Community Services Department.

Engagement and Research Considerations

- A more prompt response from the City to deal with issues and inquiries was identified as a desired improvement by some stakeholders.
- User groups and stakeholders identified a number of specific information sharing and communication improvements they would like to see occur, including: better communication of field closures, better online descriptions of field sites and amenities, and increased awareness of field locations.
- Over half of Public Web Survey respondents would like to see an online athletic field "finder" tool and online or mobile tools for providing feedback and identifying field specific issues.
- Over three-quarters (70%) of User Group Questionnaire respondents would like to see online or mobile tools for booking fields and online or mobile tools for providing feedback and identifying field specific issues. Just under half of responding groups would also like to see the City provide information sessions (e.g. how the allocations/bookings system works) and approximately one-third of groups would like to participate in other training opportunities (i.e. Long Term Athlete Development, issues in sport, etc.).
- Some user groups believe that "rogue" field users are an issue (individual or groups using fields that they did not book). User groups that mentioned the issue of "rogue" field users identified specific instances of confrontations with these groups/individuals, impacts on field quality and disruptions to their practices or games.
- Sixty-one percent (61%) of Public Web Survey respondents indicated that they use athletic fields for "pick-up" sports/casual play.
- Thirty-two percent (32%) of Public Web Survey respondents identified "not sure which fields are available for use" as a barrier to accessing athletic fields.

Recommendation #9: The City should invest in additional resources to support bookings functions, customer service, and optimize all aspects of athletic field provision.

Currently, booking and allocations responsibilities for athletic fields fall under a single City employee in Community Services Department. This employee also has responsibilities for the bookings of other City recreation assets (e.g. arenas). It is important to reiterate that as this employee works in the Community Services Department they do not have departmental synergy with other aspects of athletic field management such as budgeting, operations and maintenance (these tasks are the responsibility of the Parks and Open Space Division of the Public Works Department).

Engagement with user groups identified the need to more quickly respond to inquiries and issues. Additionally, a number of the recommendations presented in this document suggest the need to enhance the collection of data (field use, demographics, trends, etc.) and implement more rigorous requirements in the overall allocations and bookings of athletic fields. An investment in additional resources will enable the City to enhance and improve the efficiency of all aspects of athletic field provision. The increased collection and analysis of data will allow for the identification of local trends and shifts in utilization demands. Incremental resources will additionally result in increased lines of communication between bookings and maintenance functions as well as field users. These communication synergies will ultimately allow for the more optimal deployment of City maintenance crews and allow for a more timely response to user needs.

To achieve the desired outputs of this recommendation it is suggested that 2.0 FTE be added to the coordination and ongoing provision of athletic fields in the city. While specific tasks and duties will require further refinement with human resources and through the implementation process resulting from this study, outlined below are specific tasks and functions for which these positions should fill.

- **Bookings and allocations.** Resource investment should be dedicated to bookings and allocations functions. Doing so will improve customer service with user groups (quicker response times to inquiries) and the collection of data from user groups.
- **Utilization and trends analysis.** Resource investment should be dedicated to the analysis of data collected from user groups and available through the City's bookings software. This time allocation will allow for the City to more proactively identify trends and participation shifts and provide data that can be used in operations and capital planning.
- **Inventory management and operations.** Resource investment should be dedicated to the coordination of the overall athletic field inventory. Evaluating field conditions (annual or bi-annual inspections), updating the inventory database and classification system and using this data in the scheduling of maintenance and operational resources should be key aspects of this suggested investment.

Recommendation Rationale and Benefits

- Improved overall customer service (including the ability to respond to inquiries and issues in a timelier manner).
- Enhanced relationship building opportunities between the City and user groups.
- Enhanced ability to collect and analyze athletic field data (as per Recommendation #3).
- Increased revenue potential (more efficient use of available resources).
- Enhanced ability to trend and analyze emerging needs.
- Enhanced ability to analyze and form future partnerships.

Recommendation #10: The City should invest in enhanced web based and mobile tools. These tools should have the following capabilities:

- *Encourage users to submit inquiries and service issues to 311.*
- *Provide an overview of the amenities available at each field.*
- *Provide a calendar and schedule of available field time.*
- *Provide notices on field closures.*
- *Provide information on how to book fields (costs, processes, etc.).*

Ideally, this investment would result in web and mobile tools that are in-line with those currently used for ice arenas and aquatics facilities.

Recommendation Rationale and Benefits

- Development of platforms that allow for more effective and efficient communication.
- Enhanced ability to know about, and react to, issues and inquiries.
- Enhanced ability for residents and user groups to access information on available field quality, scheduling and available time.
- Enhanced ability to communicate processes and procedures for booking an athletic field.

Recommendation #11: The City should promote opportunities for unstructured/non-organized play on athletic fields in the city.

While organized user groups are key athletic field users, the benefits accrued from the City's investment in athletic fields needs to be spread as widely as possible. The continued diversification of the city and the emergence of new activities will continue to further the need for spaces that can be used for "pick-up" play and by groups that have not yet established a formal program or league.

Suggested tactics for increasing the promotion of unstructured/non-organized play on athletic fields are identified as follows:

- Increase the promotion of existing walk-on field locations.
- Communicate to residents the availability of sites during the day, or evening on unpermitted sites.
- Cleanup the unused "booked" sites (blanket book sites) to provide field space (even if it is on short notice).
- EAs best as possible within the overall field inventory, try to ensure that walk-on fields are geographically distributed across the city (within walking distance of all communities).
- Encourage Community Centres to promote and encourage spontaneous use of fields that they have booked from the City (and in most instances are being paid to maintain).
- Encourage weekend use of fields.

It is also suggested that the City identify methods to track the spontaneous use of walk-on and non-booked fields. This could be accomplished through regular counts and public engagement (e.g. asking residents how often they use fields for unstructured play). Tracking this data will help identify if the current supply of walk-on fields is sufficient or if more need to be allocated.

Recommendation Rationale and Benefits

- Increased opportunities for all citizens to benefit from the City's ongoing investment in athletic fields.
- Increased levels of physical activity and unstructured play.
- Increased utilization of athletic fields.

Topic Area: Future Planning and Partnerships

Current Situation Overview

The development of new athletic fields in Winnipeg primarily occurs in four ways:

1. The residential development process. Developers have basic requirements to grade, soil, and sod green space in new neighborhoods. These spaces are sometimes developed as basic athletic field spaces.
2. New school site development (fields developed as part of a new school project).
3. Partnerships between the City and community organizations (City contribution of land and/or capital funds for identified community organization led athletic field projects).
4. City led capital projects (City development of new athletic field sites outside of the ongoing residential development process).

Generally speaking, basic community level fields come online through the residential development process and new school site development. Specialty fields, premier fields and multi-purpose/multi-field "hub" sites typically occur through partnerships and City led capital projects.

The City currently has over 90 fields under lease agreements with athletic field user groups. These lease agreements are a key form of partnership that place responsibility for site maintenance, operations, and capital investment with the user group.

Engagement and Research Considerations

- Benchmarking and market analysis indicators suggest that the City's current quantity of athletic fields is sufficient. Overall, research and engagement indicators do not suggest that there is a need for a greater quantity of fields in the city.
- City bookings data reflects a gradual decline in the number of youth participants that contribute to the per participant fee and the overall hours booked by the City. This data is in contrast with the engagement findings (57% of User Group Questionnaire respondents indicated that their organizations expect to experience an increase in participation numbers) as well as available provincial and national participation trends. Potential explanations for this contrasting information are user groups accessing sport fields provided by lease holders and/or reporting discrepancies in the number of youth participants.
- There is a perception among some stakeholders and user groups that while the overall number of fields in the city is sufficient, there is a lack of quality playing fields, amenities (parking, lights, spectator areas, washrooms, changerooms, etc.), and multi-field sites.
- Sixty percent (60% of Public Web Survey respondents believe that partnerships should be a primary way in which the City funds future athletic field projects.
- Trends and leading practices reflect that partnerships continue to be key to the provision of athletic fields and programs in most large Canadian cities.

Recommendation #12: The City should aim to link future athletic field development with targeted provision levels based on a classification system (such as the one outlined in Recommendation #1).

The following chart outlines how these provision targets and potential gaps could be identified. As reflected in the chart, there are a number of unknowns that can only be determined once the current inventory has been organized into the classification system. A key implementation requirement emanating from this study document is the classification of the existing inventory which will enable the gap analysis to occur as suggested. The suggested incremental staffing resources will be critical to achieving the prerequisites that are required to complete this gap analysis (e.g. classification of fields).

Athletic Field Class	Current %	Desired %[B]	Desired #[B]	Gap
Premier Fields (A) and High Quality Community Fields (B+)	Unknown[A]	10%	90	Unknown[A]
Community Fields (B-) and Neighborhood (C) Fields	Unknown[A]	90%	810	Unknown[A]

A Unknown until the completion of the inventory and assessment of fields as identified in Recommendation #5.

B For example purposes only. Determination of these desired proportions may require additional capital and operational impact assessment.

The desired percentage (%) reflected in the above chart is based on inputs which include benchmarking, current provision levels, and the engagement findings (e.g. desire for the increased provision of multi-field and premier field sites). The desired percentage (%) may also require adjustment over time as demand levels fluctuate. The City will need to work with user groups to determine the desired proportion and further identify the benefits and financial impacts of achieving these proportions.

In an ideal state, future development decisions and the associated allocation of capital funding would be based on addressing gaps identified in a model similar to the one outlined in the above chart. However a number of factors impact athletic field development which could impact achieving these provision targets. Most notably, overall athletic field development in the city is tied to new residential and school site development. In many large cities, this factor often results in an oversupply of lower level fields as community and school design protocols require fields to be developed. It is suggested that the City continue to identify resources and opportunities to enhance the continued engagement and discussions with school boards and developers. The model presented could also provide a point of reference for these interactions and potential collaborations.

Recommendation Rationale and Benefits

- Provides a basis from which to make future planning and capital investment decisions.
- Helps identify gaps on an ongoing basis (as previously noted, will require an incremental investment in staffing resources).

Recommendation #13: It is recommended that the City implement a more rigorous impact assessment of potential athletic field capital partnerships.

Available City bookings and participant data suggests that the use of athletic fields in the city is gradually decreasing. Conversely, engagement conducted with stakeholders and user groups revealed that many organizations are experiencing growth and/or expect to grow in coming years. One possible explanation for this contrasting data could be that athletic field use is shifting from City and Community Centre fields to fields operated by partners. As the City considers future capital athletic field partnerships with sport and recreation groups, it will be important to understand the benefits and impacts of these potential projects on the overall athletic field landscape, revenues and user groups.

Provided as follows is a potential Impact Assessment Scoring Framework that could be implemented as an initial filter to evaluate potential partnerships. Those projects that receive 11 or more points could then proceed to the next phase of evaluation, which is suggested to include the development of a detailed business case.

Consideration	Scoring Metric
User Group and Public Benefit	3 Points: The project will add a completely new athletic field opportunity to the city. 2 Points: The project will significantly enhance athletic field opportunities in the city. 1 Point: The project will moderately enhance athletic field opportunities in the city. 0 Points: The project will duplicate existing athletic fields and/or is deemed to have minimal benefit.
Accessibility	3 Points: High level of accessibility (the athletic field facility will be available to the general public and all outside user groups). 2 Points: Medium level of accessibility (the athletic field facility will primarily be used by the main user group but will have some availability for outside user groups and the public). 0 Points: Low level of accessibility (the athletic field facility will have no or minimal availability for outside user groups and the public).
Financial Impact On Existing City Athletic Fields	3 Points: The project is deemed to have no financial impact on revenues collected for existing athletic fields (will not draw users away from City fields). 1 Point: The project has minimal financial impacts on revenues collected for existing athletic fields (may draw away some users but the overall impact is not significant). 0 Points: The project will have draw away significant athletic field users and associated revenues.
Trends Alignment	3 Points: The rationale for the project is strongly supported by available trends (e.g. supporting local, provincial and national participation data and/or athletic fields' infrastructure development trends). 0 Points: There is little or no supporting trends rationale for the project.
Financial Capacity (for potential capital partnerships)	3 Points: The potential partner group will contribute >75% or more of the projects capital cost. 2 Points: The potential partner group will contribute 50 – 75 % of the projects capital cost. 1 Point: The potential partner group will contribute 25 – 50% of the projects capital cost. 0 Points: The potential partner group will contribute <25% of the projects capital cost.
City Planning Alignment	3 Points: The project aligns with pertinent City strategic planning (i.e. Athletic Field Review, Recreation and Parks Strategic Plan, Regional Parks Investment Strategy, community and neighborhood planning). 0 Points: The project does not align with pertinent City strategic planning (i.e. Athletic Field Review, Recreation and Parks Master Plan, community and neighborhood planning).

Recommendation Rationale and Benefits

- Ensures that impacts and benefits of potential partnership projects are identified and understood.
- Provides a clear and transparent system for evaluating potential partnerships.

Recommendation #14: ***Future City-led capital athletic field projects should focus on the development of multi-field "hub" sites. It is also suggested that the City put aside sufficient funds to acquire land needed for future multi-field sites. Key factors that should influence future multi-field projects include:***

- ***Developing multi-field sites and associated amenities that can increase the capacity of user groups to host tournaments.***
- ***Mitigating negative impacts on existing standalone and community athletic fields.***
- ***Achieving maximum geographic distribution of major multi-field "hub" sites (e.g. ensuring that quadrants of the city have access to a major athletic field site).***
- ***Servicing growing communities that may be underserved.***
- ***The potential to increase overall athletic field revenues.***

Winnipeg is experiencing strong residential growth in many new outlining communities, particularly in the South West and South East areas of the city. While less recent, many outlining areas of North West have also experienced growth in recent decades. Available user group data and mapping (see Research Report Summary document) suggests that inventory gaps exist in some of these newer outlining communities. As such, it is suggested that priority be given to developing future multi-field sites in newer and growing communities. Doing so will help address geographic gaps and is also likely to be more easily obtainable due to the availability of land in developing areas vs. mature areas.

While this recommendation suggests a preference for new multi-field "hub" sites, the future development of athletic fields in the city will need to occur in alignment with other city planning and community development strategies. The City, through other recent strategic planning, has placed an emphasis on active and green transportation. As such, future multi-field "hub" sites will need to be designed in such a way that allows for sufficient non-vehicular access and mitigates other potential issues (i.e. traffic congestion, parking issues communities, "dead space" in communities, etc.).

Recommendation Rationale and Benefits

- Multi-field "hub" sites provide operational efficiencies.
- Opportunity to increase tournament hosting capacity in the city.
- Focusing on multi-field "hub" sites is likely to help address some issues around field quality and amenity availability.

Section 4

Draft Athletic Fields Allocation Policy Framework

A key objective of the Athletic Field Review project is the development of a framework for a new policy to guide athletic field allocations. Based on the recommendations provided in Section 4 and other considerations identified through the project research and engagement, a draft Athletic Fields Allocation Policy Framework has been developed and is presented in this section. This Framework is intended to present the basis for the development of the City policy and has been developed to align with the City's Community Sport Policy.

Draft Athletic Fields Allocation Policy Framework

Guiding Allocation Principles

1. Athletic field stakeholders and the City will work collaboratively to ensure that opportunities are available for all residents to be active.
2. Athletic field stakeholders and the City work will work together to make the most effective use of athletic field infrastructure.
3. Athletic field provision in Winnipeg will find the best balance between ensuring financial accessibility and sustainability.
4. Wherever possible, athletic field user groups will be aligned with the right type of field for their level of play.
5. Partnerships between the City, sport organizations, and other stakeholders will be focused on achieving maximum public benefit and a sustainable revenue model for athletic fields in Winnipeg.
6. Athletic field provision in Winnipeg will consider and, wherever possible, integrate trends in sport as well as the strategic priorities of regional, provincial and national sport and recreation organizations.

Policy Statement: **Prioritized access to athletic fields will be given first to youth and then adult activities that provide active living opportunities that increase the wellness of citizens.**

Policy Priority: The important role Community Centres play in facilitating access for youth programs to athletic fields will be acknowledged by providing Community Centres with the opportunity to have priority access to athletic fields. Increased reporting and data collection protocols will be introduced to ensure that the City's athletic field inventory is optimized and aligned with resident and user group needs.

Policy Statement: **Affordability and financial accessibility will continue to be a primary consideration in the allocations of athletic fields.**

Policy Priority: Allocations and related aspects of athletic field provision (e.g. the setting of fees on an annual basis) will balance making the best use of public (City) resources with the need to ensure that all citizens have access to athletic fields regardless of their financial situation. The City will accomplish this policy goal in a number of ways, which include: continuing to leverage the ability of Community Centres to provide access to athletic fields in their communities at an affordable cost, creating a link between cost recovery targets and fees that is fair and affordable, and ensuring that sufficient athletic fields are available free of charge for unstructured and spontaneous use.

Policy Statement: **Wherever possible, the City will integrate Canadian Sport for Life (CS4L) and elements of the Long Term Athlete Development framework (LTAD) into athletic field allocations.**

Policy Priority: The City's Community Sport Policy acknowledges the seven stages of LTAD and the importance of fostering fundamental movement skills through the lifespan. Although the City does not directly offer programs on athletic fields, it does provide the majority of spaces used by program providers. As such, it is appropriate for the City to require groups to demonstrate CS4L and LTAD alignment in order to access subsidized athletic field time (demonstrates that public resources are being provided to organizations that operate in a quality and "best practice" manner). Alignment with CS4L and LTAD will ensure that athletes at all levels (competitive and recreational) will be prioritized with the goal of ensuring that participation opportunities exist for all ages and ability levels.

Policy Statement: **Wherever possible, the City will seek to align user groups with athletic fields that are most appropriate for their level of play and that make optimal use of the athletic field inventory in the city.**

Policy Priority: The City will identify tactics and methods to create better alignment between users and the types of fields that they are provided with access to. The primary method to achieve this policy goal will be the creation of a classification system that identifies characteristics and amenities pertaining to each class of field. Each class will also have a defined maintenance standards and user fees. Principles of CS4L and LTAD will also be used to create this alignment.

Policy Statement: **Citizens will have access to sufficient athletic fields for unstructured and spontaneous play.**

Policy Priority: Sufficient quantities of athletic fields in the city will remain un-booked and available for walk-on use. The City will strive to ensure that residents across the city have access to these fields and will place an emphasis on promoting the availability of these spaces.

Policy Statement: **The ongoing allocation of athletic fields in Winnipeg will be a collaborative effort between the City and user groups.**

Policy Priority: The City and user groups will work to increasingly operate as partners in the allocation of athletic fields. Achieving this policy outcome will require increased communication and engagement between the City and user groups as well as an understanding of the factors that are important to all involved stakeholders. The City will strive to create increased rationale and structure for how fees are set (i.e. creating a link between cost recovery targets and fees). Doing so will provide a foundation for ongoing collaboration and clarify the factors that impact fees, maintenance standards and other key aspects of athletic field provision.

Policy Statement: **Future partnership and lease agreements between the City and community organizations will be required to demonstrate sufficient community benefit and outside user group access.**

Policy Priority: Partnerships and lease agreements are a key aspect of athletic field provision in the city. Moving forward, the City will prioritize partnerships that demonstrate the highest level of benefit to citizens. While it is understood that the partner group/lease holder is likely to be the primary user of the facility, the City will prioritize partnership opportunities that can demonstrate maximum levels of outside group and public access. This factor will be a key rationale in the decision making process as potential partnerships are reviewed and decisions are made. The impacts on the existing athletic field inventory will also be measured and understood before partnerships are formed.

Section 5

Implementation Strategy

Approval of the recommendations and suggested policy framework will occur through review and presentation of the Athletic Field Review to SPCC, EPC and Council. Following this approval process, successful implementation will require a collaborative effort between the City and athletic field stakeholders.

The chart on the following pages outlines an implementation strategy for the recommendations provided in Section 4. Included in the chart is suggested timing and resource requirements pertaining to each of the recommendations.

Implementation Action Plan and Resourcing

#	Recommendation *(Summarized)*	Suggested Implementation Timing		Resource Requirements		Parties Involved
		Short Term *(0 - 5 years)*	Medium Term *(5 - 10 years)*	Project Based *(One Time $)*	Human Resources[A] —	
1	Develop a classification system for athletic fields that is based on field quality and available amenities.	✔		$0	** Assumes use of existing City staff resources.*	City Athletic field user groups and stakeholders
2	Align the inventory and assessment data with a classification system (such as the example proposed in Recommendation #4).	✔		$0	** As per Recommendation #9.*	City
3	Invest in the enhanced collection and analysis of athletic field data.		✔	$50,000 *(assumes use of existing City software with additional enhancement)*	** As per Recommendation #9.*	City
4	Adopt a new process for the allocations of athletic fields (see Recommendation #4 for the continuum of potential approaches).		✔	$25,000 *(external resources will be required to develop the data collection and reporting tools/thresholds/ protocols and to host information and training sessions with CC's)*	** As per Recommendation #9.*	City Community Centres Athletic field user groups and stakeholders
5	Develop and implement a user friendly process and tools for user groups that book fields (including Community Centres) to return unused time during their season of play to the overall City.	✔		$0	** As per Recommendation #9.*	City Community Centres Schools Athletic field user groups and stakeholders
6	Set annual cost recovery targets for athletic fields and link these targets directly with fees.		✔	$15,000 *(additional resources may be required to help determine/ clarify athletic field expenditures and other key factors that influence the model)*	** Will require ongoing staff support.*	City Community Centres Schools Athletic field user groups and stakeholders
7	Consider having multiple price points in alignment with a classification system		✔	$0	** Assumes use of existing City staff resources.*	City Community Centres Athletic field user groups and stakeholders

A Incremental to current staffing levels.

#	Recommendation *(Summarized)*	Suggested Implementation Timing		Resource Requirements		Parties Involved
		Short Term *(0 - 5 years)*	Medium Term *(5 - 10 years)*	Project Based *(One Time $)*	Human Resources[A] —	
8	The City should adjust the three hour booking block to one hour.	✔		$0	** Implementation will require staff support. The staffing position suggested in Recommendation #9 will be tasked with initial and ongoing user group communication and may require additional support in the short-term.*	City Athletic field user groups and stakeholders
9	Invest in additional resources to enhance multiple aspects of athletic field provision (including bookings/allocations, data collection and analysis, customer service, revenue opportunities and operations).	✔		$0	** Bookings and allocations (0.75 – 1.0FTE); Utilization and trends analysis (0.25 – 0.5FTE); Inventory management and operations (0.5 – 1.0 FTE)*	City
10	Invest in web based and mobile tools.		✔	TBD *(Requires further investigation to see if existing resources can be used of if new app development if required)*	** Assumes use of existing City staff resources.*	City Community Centres Athletic field user groups and stakeholders
11	Place a priority on promoting opportunities for unstructured/non-organized play on athletic fields in the city.	✔		$0	** Sufficient resources for seasonal Athletic field monitoring.*	City Community Centres Athletic field user groups and stakeholders
12	Link future athletic field development with targeted provision levels based on a classification system.		✔	$0 *(current proportion of field inventory will be determined during the recommended inventory and assessment exercise)*	** As per Recommendation #9.*	City Athletic field user groups and stakeholders
13	Implement a more rigorous impact assessment of potential athletic field capital partnerships.		✔	$0	** Assumes use of existing City staff resources.*	City Athletic field user groups and stakeholders
14	Future City-led capital athletic field projects should focus on the development of multi-field "hub" sites.	✔		$0	** As per Recommendation #9.*	City Athletic field user groups and stakeholders

A Incremental to current staffing levels.

Appendix

A. Open House Feedback Summary 33

City of Winnipeg



Draft Athletic Field Review

Open House Feedback Summary

April 2018

Winnipeg

RC strategies + PERC

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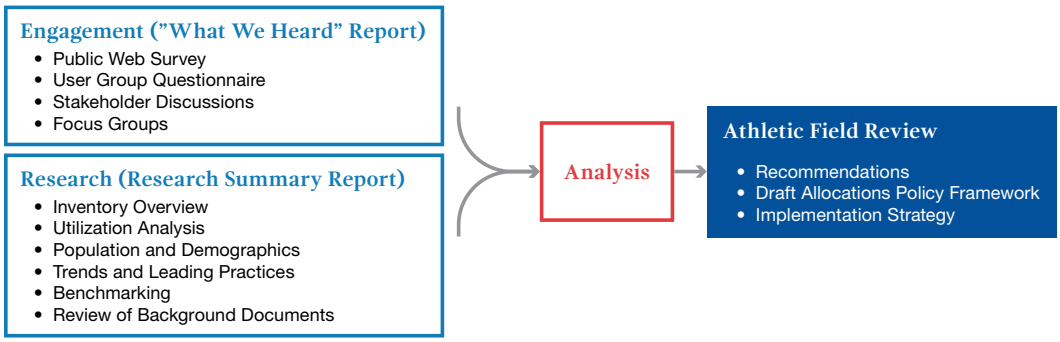
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Section 1

Overview & Background

The City of Winnipeg has developed a draft Athletic Field Review document. Once finalized, this strategic document will provide a point of reference for the City and help guide how athletic fields are allocated and managed in the future.

The draft Athletic Field Review document was informed through engagement with stakeholders and the public as well as other forms of research that have been undertaken over the past year (including analysis of current utilization data, trends and leading practices, and benchmarking). The following graphic summarizes the process that has been undertaken to develop the draft Athletic Field Review document.



An important step in finalizing the Athletic Field Review document was feedback from the public and stakeholders. From March 19-20, the project team hosted four Open House events at the following locations in the city.

- March 19, 1 p.m. - 3 p.m. at the Crescentwood Community Centre
- March 19, 7 p.m. - 9 p.m. at Crescentwood Community Centre
- March 20, 1 p.m. - 3 p.m. at the Notre Dame Recreational Centre
- March 20, 7 p.m. - 9 p.m. at the Notre Dame Recreational Centre

The Open Houses were promoted in a number of ways which included newspaper advertisements, direct emails to stakeholder groups, and through the City's website and other online platforms.

Display panels were available at the Open House events which provided information on key aspects of the draft Athletic Field Review, including:

- A summary of the research and engagement findings;
- The draft recommendations; and
- Anticipated next steps.

A Feedback Questionnaire was available at the Open House events for attendees to provide their perspectives on the draft Athletic Field Review, and members of the project team were also available at the events to answer questions and discuss the recommendations. The display materials and an online version of the Feedback Questionnaire were also made available on the project website: www.winnipeg.ca/AthleticFieldReview

**All Open House materials were available in English and French.*

***See the Appendices of this document for the display materials.*

Section 2 Feedback

In total, approximately 20 individuals attended the Open House events and 11 Feedback Questionnaires were completed (at the events and online). Summarized as follows in this section is a synopsis of the feedback that was provided by the 11 respondents to the questionnaire.[1]

Levels of Support for the Draft Recommendations

Feedback Questionnaire respondents were asked to indicate their level of support for the recommendations contained in the draft Athletic Field Review. As reflected in the chart below, respondents had varying levels of agreement with the recommendations. However in total, the majority of respondents were supportive to some degree with the recommendations.

	Very Supportive	Somewhat Supportive	Neutral / Not Sure	Not Supportive
Inventory Management Recommendations	2	4	2	3
Allocations and Fees Recommendations	0	6	1	4
Communications and Customer Service Recommendations	3	3	1	3
Future Planning and Partnership Recommendations	2	3	3	3
TOTAL	**7**	**16**	**7**	**13**

Comment Themes

Respondents were also asked to provide overall comments on the recommendations contained in the draft Athletic Field Review. Provided as follows are the comments from the completed Feedback Questionnaires.

Note: The following text is generally verbatim from the questionnaire responses. A few minor grammatical edits / adaptations have been applied to some of the responses to improve readability.

Comments on the Inventory Management Recommendations

Mostly supportive. My main concern is that the classification will be used to justify the neglect or closure of neighborhood facilities.

These spaces are currently city owned a taxpayer funded. How about directing some money away from the big fat pensions that several city employees get and into programs and services for the general public that funded them!

Support classification system based on quality/amenities there needs to be clearer plans with regard to maintenance of field's community centres should have control over their fields. The city seems to have issues managing what they currently do community club fields need to be able to blanket book for their community needs. It is next to impossible to schedule for rain outs team practices without the capability of blanket booking. Cost in field maintenance and admin would increase enormously. Community centres do not have the staffing or enough funds to go to specific times. Fields would be in worse shape with no tie to maintain. There should only be 1 group booking fields, not four.

I am in support of maximizing field use. With youth U13 and up we usually book 2 games on one field in an evening. Refs get 2 games. Shortage of refs. I agree if the field is not used 75% it should be offered up. If men's or women's teams hooked up the community clubs. Get access to our fields when youth are not using them.

1 Additional information on the Feedback Questionnaire respondents is provided in Appendix C of this document.

Comments on the Allocations and Fees Recommendations

No opinion, I would defer to the opinion of those who work in area already.

Need to ensure equitable access

Reallocation of fields that become available through non-use needs to be assessed relative to who receives these permits (i.e. a community centre has 3 fields that they maintain through the sweat equity program. They only require 2 fields and one field goes to another group that ends up destroying the field. Who is responsible for field repair, etc.?).

Time allocation should allow people to book adequate time actually needed and costs should reflect quantity of field and how the length of time the field is used blanket booking provides community centres the ability to tailor fit their programs to their needs. The community centres require control over their property. With added use by non-community centres sports, who pays for this added maintenance? Keep field allocation the same for community centres.

I agree with youth access first. Other leagues need access.

Comments on the Communications and Customer Service Recommendations

These all seem like easy wins to me.

Strongly support maintainable access to unstructured/non-organized play

#11 (disagree) - How does this get controlled?

Need to continue having CC's book their own fields (fields at their location). This should only be an issue with non-community centre fields.

Difficult questions to answer, as the sport of soccer should be able to communicate to assign fields in our neighbourhoods. After youth the people holding permits need to identify the spots open.

Comments on the Future Planning and Partnerships Recommendations

The briefing material isn't clear on the advantages of a focus on the development of multi-field "hub" sites, but I can think of some clear disadvantages. Having more local facilities makes them more accessible to communities, encourages greater use thereof by those who might not otherwise be active, fosters travel using active transportation modes and reduces the need to accommodate larger traffic and parking needs. Concentrating facilities into multi-field hubs generally involves locating them on cheaper real estate, further from residential communities, which decreases accessibility and usage by lower-income families, and also requires new transportation infrastructure.

I understand the need and preference for premier facilities, but I think it's important to keep in mind the outsized impact they have in terms of supportive infrastructure outside of the facility as most user will be driving there - roads, parking, etc. So use of those facilities should be price appropriately.

Capital partnerships would be great asset and lends itself to better maintenance of fields.

There needs to be a primary role for community centres, because the capacity varies dramatically how our community centre to another. There will likely need to be a level of flexibility. It may be that community centres with less capacity will need to have fields rated "3". Those with more capacity will need to have fields rated "2". The ability for people in some inner city areas to pay is limited, plus some inner city community centres do not have people present full time to monitor use.

Why change something that is not broken? Community centre fields are well used

I am interested to participate more in the process and use the fields better as youth and adult leagues.

General Comments

I understand the need and preference for premier facilities, but I think it's important to keep in mind the outsized impact they have in terms of surrounding infrastructure. I think it's fair to assume that most of facilities will be car-dependent, or at least most users will be driving there. That means high capacity roads, large amounts of parking, contributing to urban sprawl etc. Those costs should be factored into the cost recovery for the facilities. Further, the high costs of those facilities means the poor/lower class kids are unlikely to be able to use them. If those facilities can be run at a profit, then those profits can be used to support neighbourhood/community facilities.

The Assisiniboine Park uses an online booking system for areas in the park. Something similar could be used for these fields.

It is important to leave the community Centre fields as is. Our fields are full during the summer. The cost to administer and for field maintenance would be much higher under new proposal. Fields would become unsafe to play without enough time to fix and not enough resources to fix - staff and money

At NKCC I do not have a full sized field in our community centre boundaries and even in youth are short fields.

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Appendix

Display Panels

A

Winnipeg | Draft Athletic Field Review: Public and Stakeholder Review

1

Welcome!

Draft Athletic Field Review: Public and Stakeholder Review

Please review the display materials and provide your feedback.

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2

Project Process and Inputs

Engagement ("What We Heard" Report)
- Public Web Survey
- User Group Questionnaire
- Stakeholder Discussions
- Focus Groups

Research (Research Summary Report)
- Inventory Overview
- Utilization Analysis
- Population and Demographics
- Trends and Leading Practices
- Benchmarking
- Review of Background Documents

→ Analysis →

Athletic Field Review
* This study document
- Recommendations
- Draft Allocations Policy Framework
- Implementation Strategy

Project Engagement

Engagement Mechanism	Responses/Participation Levels
User Group Questionnaire	31
Public Web Survey	814
Stakeholder Discussions	17 sessions
Focus Groups	4 sessions





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Draft Athletic Field Review: Public and Stakeholder Review

3

What is the purpose of the project?

- Assess the current situation (What works well? What potential issues exist?)
- Provide the City with a strategic point of reference to inform future decision making and actions.
- Identify opportunities to better align resources and ensure that athletic fields can be sustainably provided.
- Outline recommended enhancements and tools in the following areas:
  - » **Inventory Management:** The overall approach to managing the current athletic field inventory.
  - » **Allocations and Fees:** The manner in which the City provides users with access to athletic fields.
  - » **Communication and Customer Service:** The methods and processes by which the City communicates and interacts with athletic field users (groups and the public).
  - » **Future Planning and Partnerships:** Processes and protocols used by the City to plan future athletic field development and undertake partnership identification, formation and evaluation.





Draft Athletic Field Review: Public and Stakeholder Review

4

Research and Engagement: Key Findings

Analysis of Current Practices

- A number of unique practices exist in Winnipeg (Community Centre “Blanket Booking”, 3 hour time slot, per head youth fee).
- The City does not currently have a classification system for the athletic field inventory (i.e. a system such as Class A for premium fields, Class B for mid-level fields, Class C for community fields, etc.)
- Athletic field revenues collected by the City have generally declined over the past five years.
- While many user groups indicated that they are experiencing growth, youth participation numbers reported to the City reflect a decline (this may be the result of youth user groups shifting their field use away from Community Centre fields to leased sites).
- The City currently recovers approximately 15% of athletic field expenditures from user fees (the remaining 85% is subsidized through general revenues).

Stakeholder and User Group Perspectives

- Field quality is an issue for many groups. However, there is limited desire to pay more to access better fields.
- Varying perspectives exists on the current Community Centre “blanket booking” system. This system works well for many established groups, but presents a challenge for other new or growing groups.
- There is a need to balance sustaining stand-alone athletic fields in mature communities with the demand for more multi-field “hub” sites.
- Interactions with the City are generally positive. Hwever, many groups would like to see a more timely response to inquiries and issues.
- Many stakeholders believe that the City needs more clarity as to the “actual” inventory of fields (those fields that are of sustainable quality to support safe and regular use).

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Research and Engagement: Key Findings

Trends and Leading Practices

- User preference for multi-field "hub" sites with shared support amenities (e.g. washrooms/change rooms, parking, warm-up areas). Many urban municipalities are moving away from developing stand-alone fields.
- Emergence and growth of athletic field activities such as cricket and ultimate.
- Increasing demand for artificial (synthetic) turf.
- Integration of athletic fields with indoor recreation facilities and other community amenities and spaces.
- Alignment with Canadian Sport for Life (CS4L) and the Long Term Athlete Development model (LTAD).
  - » Increasing awareness and integration of fundamental movement skills based programming at all levels of sport.
- Participation in soccer remains strong at the national level.
- Participation numbers in youth baseball have experienced a resurgence nationally over the past 3 years.
- Sport tourism continues to be a driver of many major athletic field capital projects in large urban centres.

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Inventory Management Recommendations

1. The City should develop a classification system for athletic fields that is based on quality and amenity standards.
2. The current athletic field inventory should be aligned with a classification system.

Example Classification System ** Naming, amenities, and site characteristics will require further refinement.*

Athletic Field Class *Potential naming protocol.*	**Characteristics/Description** *Examples of distinguishing features that could be used to classify the inventory.*	**Types of Fields** *Based on the current inventory and categorization, potential types of fields that would fit into the class.*
Premier (A)	• Multi-field "hub" site, artificial turf field or premier natural surface field. • Includes high level of on-site support amenities (e.g. washrooms, grandstand spectator seating, change facilities, lights, scoreboard, irrigation, portable nets, storage, dugouts).	• Partner/lease sites. • Selected premier fields and multi-field sites within the City's inventory.
Community (B)	• Regularly maintained field with basic functional amenities. • Likely to be located on a community park site.	• Athletic fields that are currently blanket booked by Community Centres and maintained through the Sweat Equity Maintenance Program. • Athletic fields within the City's inventory with regular levels of use.
Neighborhood (C)	• Basic "playfield" spaces with reduced levels of maintenance and amenities. • Likely to have some barriers that impact playability for programmed use (e.g. quality of turf, size, lack of amenities, size of backstop, overlap, and field orientation).	• Many school sites. • "Walk on" fields. • Selected fields in the City's inventory that do not receive enhanced maintenance and have reduced levels of use.

3. The City should invest in the enhanced collection and analysis of athletic field data (including: expenditures to provide athletic fields, utilization data from groups, data from field inspections).

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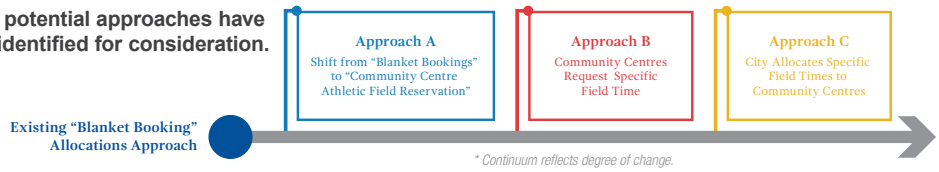
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Allocations and Fees Recommendations

4. The City should adopt a new process for the allocations of athletic fields. Key aspects of this process should include:
   - » Community Centres should continue to be provided with the opportunity to have prioritized access to athletic fields for youth sports programs, however the existing practice of "blanket booking" should be modified.
   - » The allocations of athletic fields should be aligned with clear and transparent rationale (demonstrated user need that is supported by data).
   - » Allocations practices should focus on making the most efficient and effective use of the athletic field inventory.
   - » Allocations practices should be aligned with Canadian Sport for Life (CS4L) and the Long Term Athlete Development framework (LTAD).
   - » Youth should continue to be prioritized in the allocations process

Three potential approaches have been identified for consideration.



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Draft Athletic Field Review: Public and Stakeholder Review

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Allocations and Fees Recommendations (Continued)

Potential Allocation Approaches for Consideration

Approach	Potential Benefits	Potential Limitations
A: Shift from Blanket Bookings to Community Centre Athletic Field Reservation.	• Continues to provide Community Centres and their youth user organizations with flexibility during the season of play. • Will moderately increase the City's inventory of bookable field time that can be made available to new and emerging groups. • Utilization requirements (>75% of prime time) will place increased focus on ensuring fields that are booked are actually being used.	• Field time will not be available for the City to book during the identified season of play. • This model will require the City to implement a system or process to track actual field utilization which could be challenging for the City and Community Centres.
B: Community Centres request specific field time from the City.	• Potential to more significantly (in comparison to Approach A) increase the City's inventory of bookable field time that is made available to new and emerging groups. • Further aligns bookings with actual demand.	• Likely to require increased human resource requirements (staff and/or volunteers) for Community Centres. • Likely to require increased human resource requirements for City bookings staff and field inspections. • The nature of athletic field use requires a degree of flexibility (e.g. to account for rainouts and rescheduling).
C: The City allocates field time to Community Centres.	• Of the approaches presented, likely to most precisely align actual field needs with fields booked/allocated. • Aligns allocations with clear and transparent standards of play.	• Establishing standards of play can be labour intensive and will require ongoing refinement (will require significant ongoing City human resource attention and collaboration with user groups).

Draft Athletic Field Review: Public and Stakeholder Review

9

Allocations and Fees Recommendations (Continued)

5. Develop and implement a user friendly process and tools for user groups to return unused time during their season of play to the overall City inventory.
6. The City should set annual cost recovery targets for athletic fields and link these targets directly with fees.

Expenditures
** The cost to manage, maintain, and provide athletic fields.*

→

Cost Recovery Target
** Set annual % of expenditures to be recovered through user fees.*

=

User Fees
** Determined based on the cost recovery target.*

7. If a classification system is implemented (see Recommendation #1), the City should consider multiple price points for athletic fields that remain in its inventory. **E.g. Class A, B, C fields have tiered pricing that reflects quality and amenity availability.*
8. The City should adjust the three hour booking block to one hour.





Draft Athletic Field Review: Public and Stakeholder Review

10

Communications and Customer Service Recommendations

9. The City should invest in additional resources to support bookings functions, customer service, and optimize all aspects of athletic field provision.
10. The City should invest in web based and mobile tools that allow users to submit inquiries and issues, view field amenities, check field status and schedules and provide information on how to book fields.
11. The City should promote opportunities for unstructured/non-organized play on athletic fields in the city (e.g. increase the promotion of walk-on field locations, ensure that fields are available for spontaneous use across the city, promote day-time use, encourage Community Centres to promote spontaneous use of their fields).





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Draft Athletic Field Review: Public and Stakeholder Review

11

Future Planning and Partnerships Recommendations

12. The City should aim to link future athletic field development with targeted provision levels based on a classification system (i.e. % of the overall inventory that are Class A fields, % of the overall inventory that are Class B fields, etc.).
13. The City should implement a more rigorous impact assessment of potential athletic field capital partnerships. This assessment should include:
    - » Impacts on the existing field inventory.
    - » User Group and Public Benefit.
    - » Alignment with trends.
    - » Alignment with City planning and priorities.
    - » Public access.





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Draft Athletic Field Review: Public and Stakeholder Review

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Future Planning and Partnerships Recommendations (Continued)

14. Future City-led capital athletic field projects should focus on the development of multi-field “hub” sites.
    - » The City will need to ensure sufficient land exists to support future projects.
    - » Where possible, the City should focus on addressing geographic gaps (including new neighborhoods that are growing and may not have the same level of field availability as existing neighborhoods).
    - » Multi-field projects that can achieve higher levels of cost recovery should be prioritized.
    - » The impact(s) on existing fields in a catchment area should be fully analyzed before new multi-field sites are developed.





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Draft Athletic Field Review: Public and Stakeholder Review

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Next Steps

- Public and stakeholder review and feedback.
- Finalization of the Athletic Field Review document.
- Implementation (in collaboration with stakeholders and user groups).





Thank You!

Your attendance at this event and input is very important.



Please don't forget to complete a feedback questionnaire.

winnipeg.ca/AthleticFieldReview

For more information, contact:
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Phone: (780) 441 – 4267
Email: slawuta@rcstrategies.ca

Appendix B

Feedback Questionnaire

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Feedback Questionnaire

Inventory Management Recommendations

1. Please indicate your level of agreement with the **Inventory Management** Recommendations.
   - ☐ Very Supportive
   - ☐ Somewhat Supportive
   - ☐ Neutral/Not Sure
   - ☐ Not Supportive

2. Please use the space below to provide your comments on the **Inventory Management** Recommendations.

Allocations and Fees Recommendations

3. Please indicate your level of agreement with the **Allocations and Fees** Recommendations.
   - ☐ Very Supportive
   - ☐ Somewhat Supportive
   - ☐ Neutral/Not Sure
   - ☐ Not Supportive

4. Please use the space below to provide your comments on the **Allocations and Fees** Recommendations.

Draft Athletic Field Review

Communications and Customer Service Recommendations

5. Please indicate your level of agreement with the **Communications and Customer Service** Recommendations.

- ☐ Very Supportive
- ☐ Somewhat Supportive
- ☐ Neutral/Not Sure
- ☐ Not Supportive

6. Please use the space below to provide your comments on the **Communications and Customer Service** Recommendations.

Future Planning and Partnerships Recommendations

7. Please indicate your level of agreement with the **Future Planning and Partnerships** Recommendations.

- ☐ Very Supportive
- ☐ Somewhat Supportive
- ☐ Neutral/Not Sure
- ☐ Not Supportive

8. Please use the space below to provide your comments on the **Future Planning and Partnerships** Recommendations.

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Other Comments

9. Please use the space below to provide any additional comments on the Draft Athletic Field Review.

About You

10. Please identify the term(s) that best describe you. Please select all that apply.

- ☐ Athletic field user (active participant)
- ☐ Member of an athletic field user group (e.g. coach, manager, volunteer, staff person)
- ☐ Community Centre member
- ☐ Parent
- ☐ Other (please specify): _____

11. What activities do members of your household participate in at athletic fields in Winnipeg? Please select all that apply.

- ☐ Soccer (organized league/program)
- ☐ Football (organized league/program)
- ☐ Rugby (organized league/program)
- ☐ Ball (organized league/program)
- ☐ Cricket (organized league/program)
- ☐ Ultimate (organized league/program)
- ☐ Drop-in/casual play (not part of an organized league)
- ☐ Spectator (watch friends or family)
- ☐ Other (please specify): _____

12. How did you hear about the open house?

- ☐ Email
- ☐ Newspaper ad
- ☐ Social media
- ☐ City website (project web page)
- ☐ Other (please specify): _____

Thank you for your feedback!

Appendix C

Questionnaire Respondents Profile

Please identify the term(s) that best describe you.

Term	#
Athletic field user (active participant)	6
Member of an athletic field user group (e.g. coach, manager, volunteer, staff person)	3
Parent	4
Community Centre member	7

What activities do members of your household participate in at athletic fields in Winnipeg?

Activity	#
Soccer (organized league/program)	8
Drop-in/casual play (not part of an organized league)	8
Spectator (watch friends or family)	6
Ball (organized league/program)	3
Football (organized league/program)	1
Rugby (organized league/program)	1
Ultimate (organized league/program)	1
Bocce	1

How did you hear about the open house?

Method	#
Email	6
Newspaper ad	1
Social media	2
City website (project web page)	1
Engagement Newsletter	1


Winnipeg