



Draft Athletic Field Review

Open House Feedback Summary

April 2018





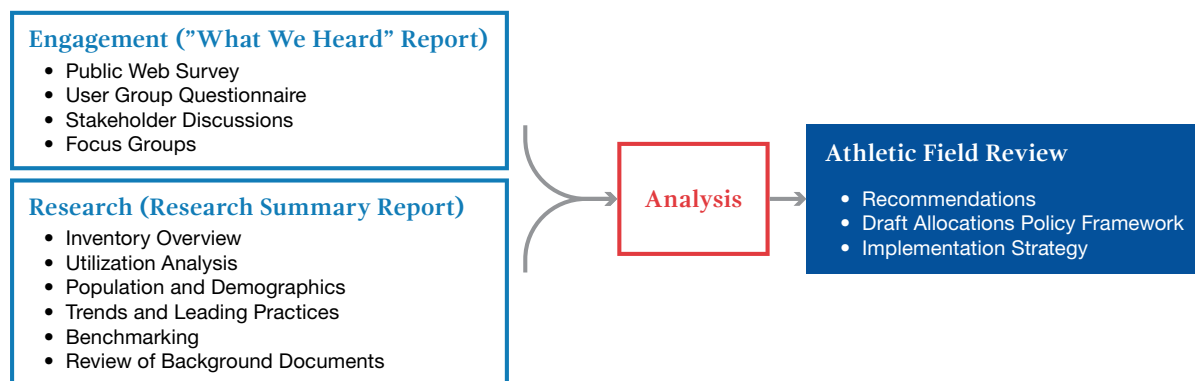
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The City of Winnipeg has developed a draft Athletic Field Review document. Once finalized, this strategic document will provide a point of reference for the City and help guide how athletic fields are allocated and managed in the future.

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.*

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 Assisiboine 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.

Appendices

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A



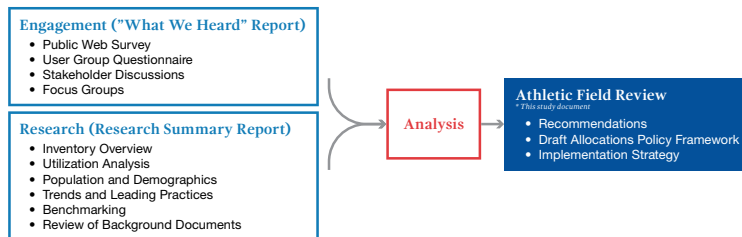
Welcome!

Draft Athletic Field Review: Public and Stakeholder Review

Please review the display materials and provide your feedback.



Project Process and Inputs



Project Engagement

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



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.



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. However, 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).

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.

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 <small>Potential naming protocol.</small>	Characteristics/Description <small>Examples of distinguishing features that could be used to classify the inventory.</small>	Types of Fields <small>Based on the current inventory and categorization, potential types of fields that would fit into the class.</small>
Premier (A)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partner/lease sites. • Selected premier fields and multi-field sites within the City’s inventory.
Community (B)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regularly maintained field with basic functional amenities. • Likely to be located on a community park site. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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).

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.



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.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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).

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.



- 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.



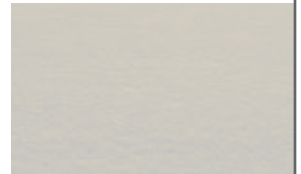
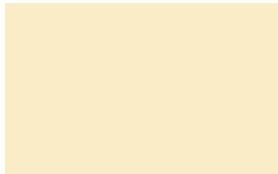
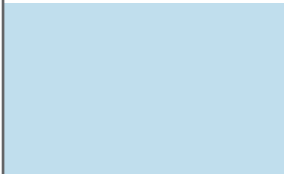
Communications and Customer Service Recommendations

- 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).



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.



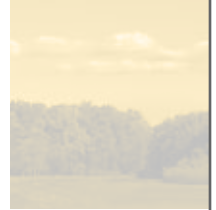
Future Planning and Partnerships Recommendations (Continued)

- 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.



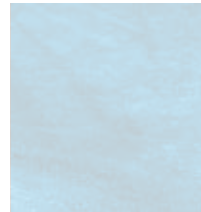
Next Steps

- 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

Draft Athletic Field Review



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.

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.

Draft Athletic Field Review

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!

C

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



