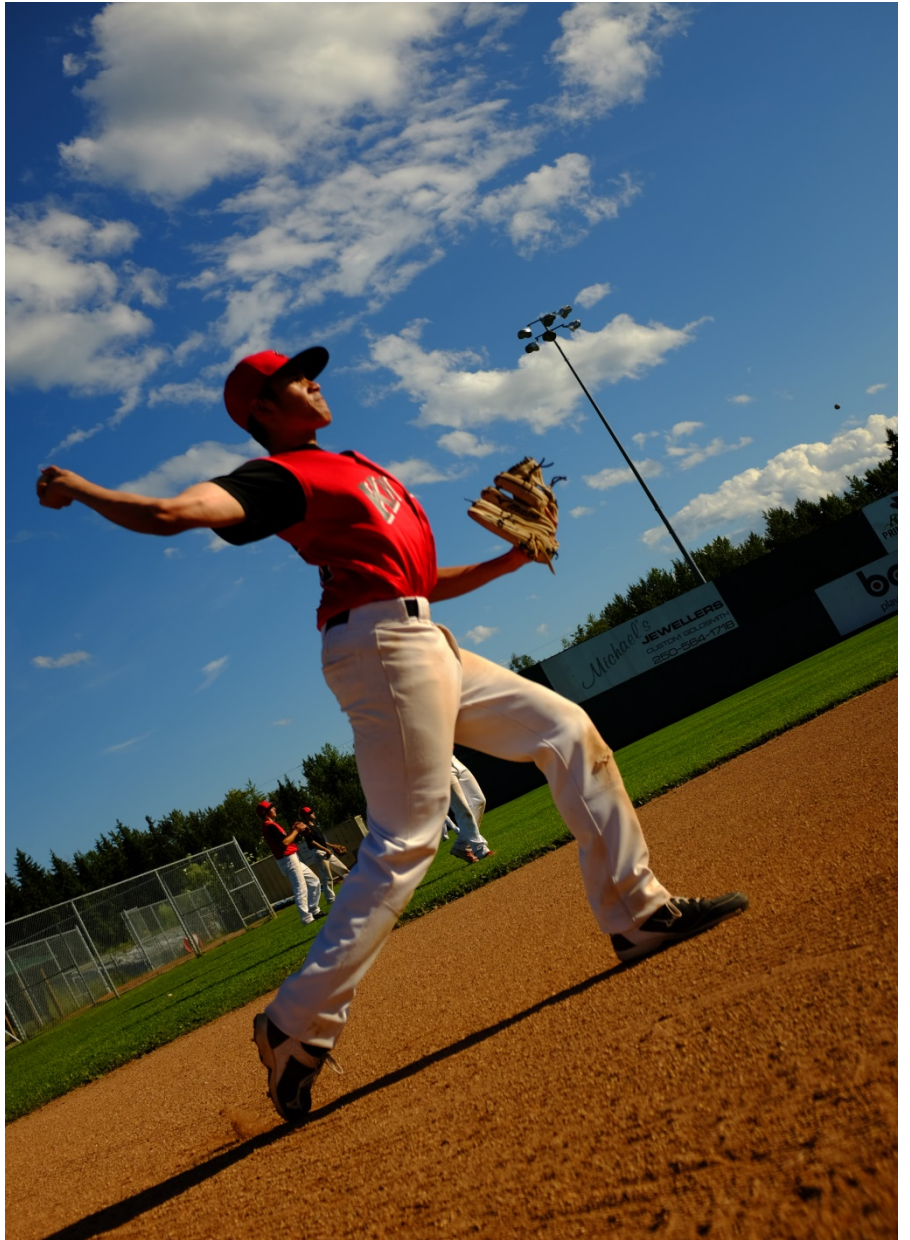




2018 Ball Diamond and Sport Field Strategy





ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES

LEGISLATIVE SERVICES DIVISION

1100 Patricia Blvd. | Prince George, BC, Canada V2L 3V9

p: 250.561.7600 | www.princegeorge.ca

January 23, 2018

Dave Dyer
General Manager of Engineering and Public Works
City of Prince George

Transmitted by email: dave.dyer@princegeorge.ca

At the City of Prince George regular Council meeting held January 22, 2018, Council gave consideration to your report dated December 29, 2017 regarding the 2018 Ball Diamond and Sport Field Strategy. The following is a certified copy of the section of minutes pertaining to this item:

Regular Council Minutes – January 22, 2018

Agenda Item E.5 | 2018 Ball Diamond and Sport Field Strategy

COUNCIL RESOLUTION:

Moved by Councillor Krause, seconded by Councillor Koehler, that Council APPROVES the 2018 Ball Diamond and Sport Field Strategy as attached to the report dated December 29, 2017 from the General Manager of Engineering and Public Works.

Carried Unanimously

The undersigned hereby certifies the above resolution to be a true and correct copy of the resolution passed by the Council of the City of Prince George on January 22, 2018.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "M. Connelly".

Maureen Connelly
Manager of Legislative Services

Cc: Laurie-Ann Kosec, Strategic Parks Planner
Robyn McConkey, Community Coordinator

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The City of Prince George has a well-established ball diamond and sport field delivery system that is unique to our community. Most of Prince George's ball diamond and sport fields are exclusively used and maintained by volunteer sport organizations. In most communities the municipality typically maintains full operations of the outdoor sport facilities including booking and maintenance.

Over the years, Prince George sport groups have built most of the ball diamonds and sport fields at local parks and continue to operate 72% of the City's facilities through Exclusive Use Rental Agreements. This agreement provides a sport group with 'exclusive use' of facilities in exchange for a \$1,000 annual rental fee and the responsibility for facility upgrades and some ongoing maintenance. The remainder of the City and School District 57 (SD57) ball diamonds and sport fields are booked for community use through a Shared Use Agreement with SD57.

A number of issues such as aging infrastructure, increasing community demands and limited resources have prompted the need to develop a strategy for Prince George ball diamonds and sport fields. Local sport groups were invited to provide their feedback through meetings, surveys, and site visits. This engagement identified an emerging need for an improved sport delivery system that provides equitable access to quality, centralized facilities for seasonal play and tournament hosting.

A review of the current system also identified a number of issues and opportunities as follows:

- A number of the Exclusive Use facilities are underutilized as the use is controlled by the Exclusive Use rental groups who often do not share the facility with other sport groups;
- Many ball diamonds and sport fields are dispersed, do not meet current standards, or are in poor condition and require over \$10 million of upgrades;
- Many of the Exclusive Use rental groups struggle to keep up with the growing demands from rising costs, volunteer decline, declining participation rates and facility conditions; and
- City funding is limited with an operational budget that is half of other peer communities and little to no cost recovery from field revenues or from the Exclusive Use Rental Agreement fee.

The 2018 Ball Diamond and Sport Field Strategy identifies the following key focus areas that will be pursued by the City to address these issues and improve the sport delivery system in Prince George.



Ball Diamond & Sport Field Investment

- Develop an Infrastructure Renewal Plan
- Identify potential funding sources/strategies
- Identify partnerships to advance investments



Ball Diamond & Sport Field Usage

- Revisit the Exclusive Use Rental Agreement model
- Identify opportunities for improved utilization of ball diamonds and sport fields, fees, and customer service



Tournament Hosting

- Refine the City's role in tournament hosting
- Prepare for the 2022 BC Summer Games and other major tournaments

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Appendix 1 – Inventory and Maps

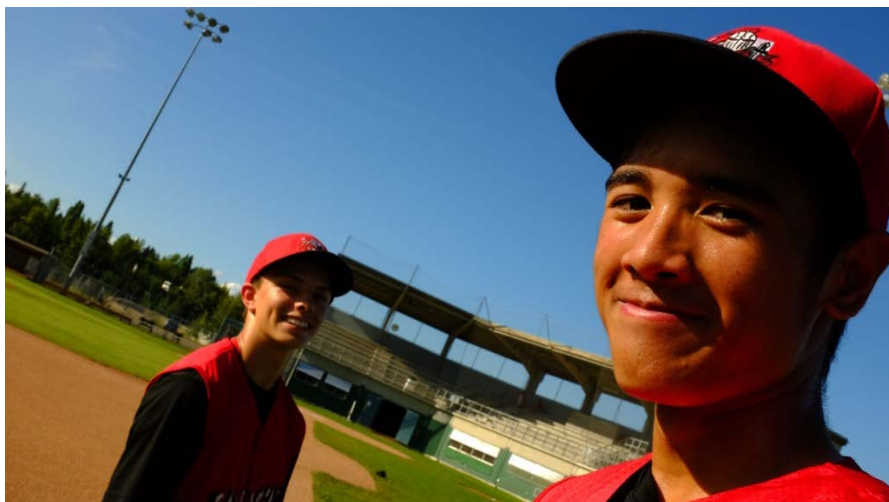
The detailed results of the sport group engagement and facility score cards are available in a separate ***2018 Ball Diamond and Sport Field Strategy Background Document – Scoring & Consultation***.

Acknowledgements

The 2018 Ball Diamond and Sport Field Strategy has been developed by City of Prince George staff with the involvement of many stakeholders that include user groups and partner organizations within the community.

1. Introduction

Prince George ball diamonds and sport fields serve close to 10% of Prince George residents who enjoy playing, watching, and supporting sport in our community. Ball diamonds and sport fields give residents the opportunity to get outside and exercise, build team and community spirit, and to play their sport within the relatively short season in Prince George.



Challenges with aging infrastructure, demands for more or better facilities, the need for improved sport scheduling, and support for tournaments, all lend to the development of a Ball Diamond and Sport Field Strategy which can support Council's focus on healthy and active living.

A number of emerging issues such as aging infrastructure, trends in sport, community demands, and the Exclusive Use operational model have prompted the need to review the sport delivery in Prince George. The development of a strategy for ball diamonds and sport fields has been recommended to address this issue for three (3) key reasons:

- User Groups and residents want to see high quality ball diamond and sport field facilities.
- A key Council strategy is to assess and prioritize service delivery and infrastructure.
- Park operations and capital budgets are challenged to keep up with the growing demands.

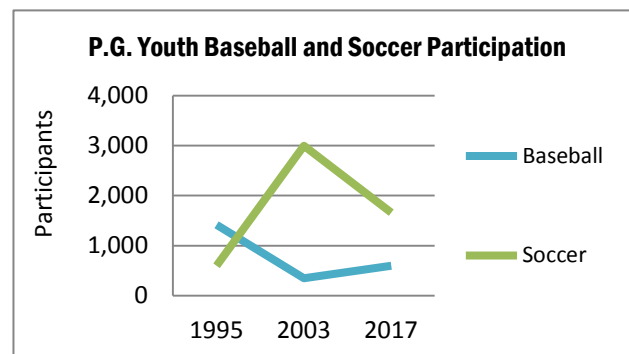


The 2018 Ball Diamond and Sport Field Strategy will help to guide the strategic investment of the City of Prince George's ball diamond and sport fields with a long-term vision to meet community demands while allocating the City's resources efficiently.

2. What We Have

History of Development

Most of the City's ball diamonds and sport fields were built by sport groups decades ago and continue to be run by volunteers within their organizations. Many ball diamonds were established in the 1970s and 1980s to meet the growing demand for baseball and softball. However, baseball participation rates declined in the 1990s and early 2000s while soccer grew in popularity with large youth and adult sport field complexes built to meet the growing demand.



The drop in local participation rates is aligned with national trends which indicate an overall decline in sport participation of 17% for participants aged fifteen (15) years and older between 1992 and 2010¹. Locally, the SD57 student population has also declined by over 30% since 2000, although it has been slightly increasing in the past three (3) years².

Many residents might assume that the City has full responsibility for all of the ball diamonds and sport fields in Prince George, when in fact volunteer sport groups manage the use and ongoing investment at 72% of these facilities.

Inventory and Operations

The City's current inventory includes twenty-five (25) ball diamonds and eighteen (18) sport fields that range in service standards and are dispersed throughout the community (see Appendix 1 Inventory and Maps). The facilities represent a combined total replacement value estimated at \$36.9 million.



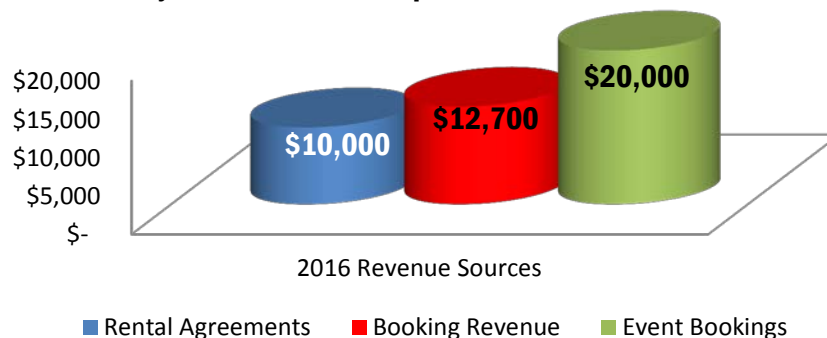
City Ball Diamond and Sport Field Facility Inventory			
City Facility	Ball Diamonds	Sport Fields	Total
Rental Agreement (Exclusive use)	18	13	32
Community Use	7	5	11
TOTAL	25	18	43

¹ Source: Sport Participation 2010, February 2013, Government of Canada, Canadian Heritage.

² Source: www.princegeorgecitizen.com, November 29, 2016 (SD57 Board of Education).

Ball diamonds and sport fields are maintained through a service level program with Class AA, A, B, and C. Three quarters (3/4) of the facilities are maintained to a Class AA or A which represents the highest level of service. The facility operations primarily include turf and irrigation maintenance which is costly and heavily subsidized with a six percent (6%) cost recovery and annual operating expenses in the order of \$680,000.00 in 2016. Ball diamond and sport field revenues are generated through bookings, special events, and the annual Exclusive Use Rental Agreement fees which are regulated by the Comprehensive Fees and Charges Bylaw No. 7557, 2004.

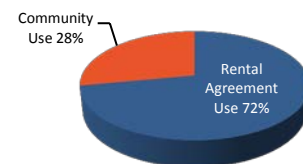
City Ball Diamond and Sport Field Revenue in 2016



The City's ball diamond and sport field facilities are delivered through three (3) very different operational models as follows:

- Exclusive Use Rental Agreements:** A total of ten (10) rental user groups have signed an agreement with the City where they have 'exclusive use' of a facility. 72% of the City's inventory of ball diamonds and sport fields have Exclusive Use Rental Agreements and the facilities are scheduled and used solely by the Exclusive rental user group for a \$1,000 annual fee to the City.
- Community Use:** The City books community use into the remaining 28% of the City's fully operated facilities.
- Shared Use Agreement:** The City also schedules community use of School District 57 (SD57) facilities which includes 28 ball diamonds and 28 sport fields through a joint use agreement.

City Ball Diamond and Sport Field Use



Prince George Sport Delivery Models					
Operational Model	Facility Ownership	Facility Operations	Community Use Bookings	Number of Facilities	% City Inventory
Rental Agreement	City	City & Rental User Groups	0%	31	72%
Community Use	City	City	100%	12	28%
SD57 Shared Use Agreement	SD57	SD57	100%	56	0%

The 10 Exclusive Use Rental Agreement groups are listed below along with the facilities that are included in their agreements and their most recent participation rates.

Exclusive Use Rental Group Facility Use & Participation				
Rental User Group	Park Name	Facility Name	Division ³	Participants (2017) ⁴
N.C. Senior Soccer (3)	Exhibition Park	Men's Soccer Fields (3 total)	Adult	308
P.G. Minor Girls Fastball (3)	Freeman Park	Freeman Park 1 & 2	Youth – all ages	220
	Carrie Jane Gray	Girls Fastball Home Field		
P.G. Mixed Slo-Pitch (2)	Nechako Park	Nechako 1 & 2	Adult	416
P.G. Senior Men's Baseball	Carrie Jane Gray	Citizen Field	Midget & Adult	60
P.G. Women's Fastball	Freeman Park	Chuck Cawdell	Adult	70
P.G. Women's Soccer (2)	Exhibition Park	Women's 1 & 2	Adult	400
P.G. Youth Baseball (8)	Balsum Park	Joe Martin	Mosquito	569
	Carrie Jane Gray	Rotary Field	Bantam	
	Lheidli T'enneh M. Park	Gyro Park	Mosquito	
	Harry Loder Park	Harry Loder	Tadpole	
	Volunteer Park	Volunteer 1, 2, 3, & 4	Blast Ball to Mosquito	
P.G. Youth Soccer (8)	Exhibition Park	Rotary Fields (8 total)	Youth – all ages	1660
S.C. Men's Fastball	Carrie Jane Gray	Spruce City Stadium	Adult	40
S.C. Minor Boys Fastball (2)	Carrie Jane Gray	Boys Fastball Home Field	Youth – all ages	48
	Carrie Jane Gray	Ron Wiley Field		
TOTAL				3,791



³ Includes use by divisional age group within the sport.

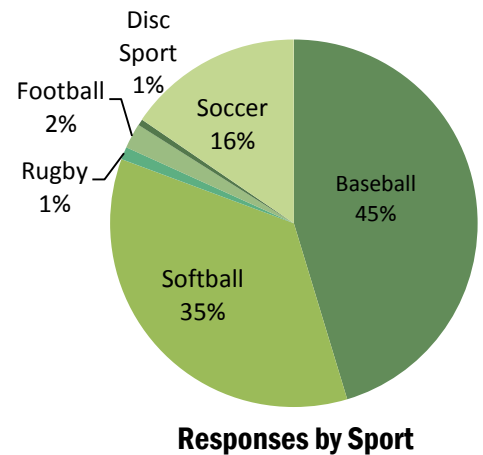
⁴ The 2017 participation rates have been provided by the rental user groups and are assumed to be estimations with some firm registration numbers provided by the larger sport groups.

3. What We Heard



The development of the 2018 Ball Diamond and Sport Field Strategy included extensive engagement with sport groups in order to understand the relevant issues, demands, opportunities, and suggestions.

Through October 2016 to June 2017, 181 ball diamond and sport field users from sixteen (16) different sport groups participated in executive meetings, an online survey, and site visits. The following three (3) common themes emerged from this feedback in addition to the input that was received from 2,330 participants of the 2017 Park Strategy and 2014 Community Recreation Services Plan.



Further details on the stakeholder engagement are available in the *2018 Ball Diamond and Sport Field Strategy Background Document – Scoring & Consultation*.

Key Themes:



Improved Facilities

- Aging facilities & limited resources
- Facilities are not sized properly
- Dispersed facilities that strain resources & minimize use



Facility Management

- Rental Agreement inequalities & inefficiencies
- Limited access to high quality facilities for some sport groups



Tournaments

- Demand for high quality, centralized & properly sized facilities with amenities
- Potential economic benefits through tournament hosting

Over half of respondents would like to see improved facilities and more fields in close proximity in order to draw tournaments to Prince George which suggests a key priority for investment of **QUALITY** over **QUANTITY**.

4. What We Learned

Facilities & Operations

The ball diamond and sport field delivery system in Prince George is truly a “Made in PG” model that is unlike other peer communities who typically maintain full operations of their facilities with cost recoveries of around 20 to 25% vs. 6% in Prince George⁵. The various strengths and weaknesses that characterize this unique system in Prince George are listed below and present a number of opportunities and challenges for sport delivery.

Strengths and Weakness of the “Made in PG” Sport Delivery Model:



Large quantity of facilities
Some higher quality facilities
Shared maintenance agreements
Community support for sport



Dispersed or undersized facilities
Aging, lower quality facilities
Changing use, underutilized facilities
Declining resources, volunteer base
Lack of control, limited cost recovery

Many of the City’s ball diamonds and sport fields require reinvestment with one-third (1/3) that are near or beyond their full life expectancy with replacement valued at \$13 million. Many facilities were built to minimum standards by volunteer sport groups and are now deteriorating from a lack of investment. Reinvestment is constrained by high replacement costs and limited City and Exclusive User group resources.

A number of the Exclusive Use Rental Agreement groups struggle to keep up with the growing demands associated with rising costs, volunteer decline, aging facilities, and lower participant rates.

Reinvestment has recently occurred at Masich Place Stadium with new track and field infrastructure, the City’s first synthetic turf field, and a resurfaced running track through the combined support of City and government grant program funding.

An inventory and maps of ball diamonds and sport fields is available in Appendix 1 of this document.



⁵ Benchmarking was conducted on peer communities such as Kamloops, Nanaimo, and Lethbridge.

Use & Agreements

The City schedules community use within twenty-eight (28%) of the City's ball diamonds and sport fields, as well as SD57 facilities. The remaining seventy-two (72%) of the City's ball diamond and sport field inventory is scheduled by the Exclusive User groups. The Exclusive Use Rental Agreement model was established decades ago and provided a low cost model for the City when rental user groups had a large resource base of volunteers and participants. However the current reality is that there are a number of inequities and inefficiencies as follows:

- The Exclusive Use Rental Agreement facilities are not used to capacity as the City does not schedule their use and they are often not shared with other groups who would like to book these facilities.
- There is little to no cost recovery from the Exclusive Use Rental Agreement annual fee or from field bookings at other City operated facilities.
- There is no charge for youth community bookings which can result in non-use.

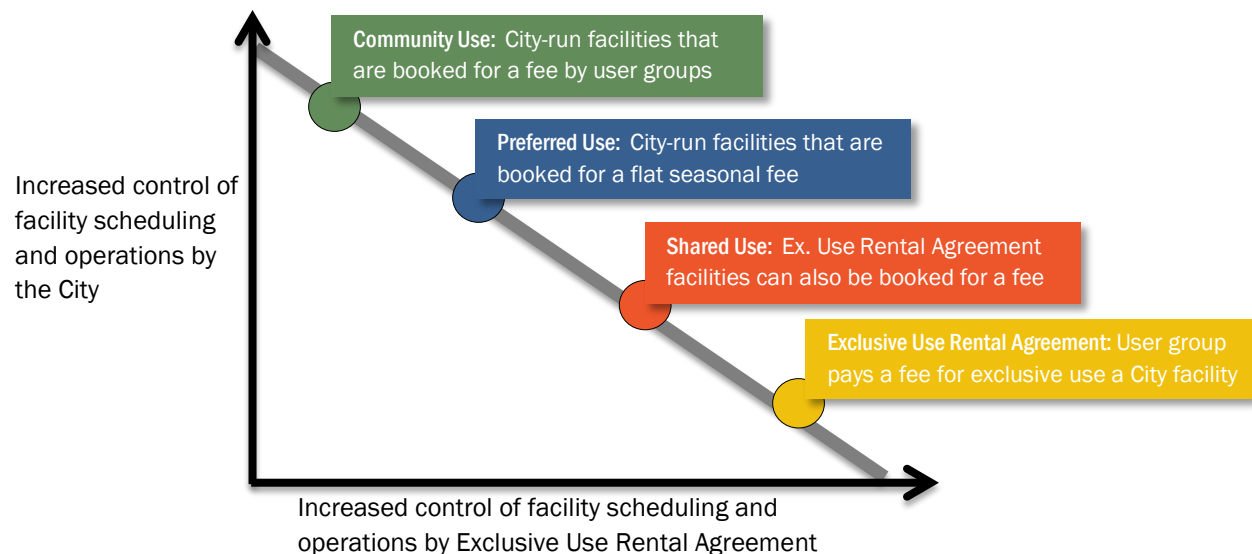
A benchmarking exercise with peer communities identified Prince George as the only municipality with Rental Agreements where a ball diamond or sport field group can have 'exclusive' use of a City facility.

The need for additional ball diamonds and sport fields is unclear as the City generally has limited knowledge of use at the Exclusive Use Rental Agreement facilities. The City obtained recent use schedules for these facilities and identified that the current inventory meets most of the user group needs with opportunity for increased scheduling on Fridays and weekends. Much of the seasonal and tournament hosting needs may also be facilitated within the existing inventory with sharing of Exclusive User group facilities.



DID YOU KNOW ... All Exclusive Use Rental Agreement groups pay the same annual \$1,000 rental fee to the City for their exclusive use. For example, P.G. Youth Soccer has 1,660 players and 8 fields together and pays the same as Spruce City Minor Boys Fastball with 40 players and two (2) diamonds at Carrie Jane Gray Park.

There are a number of alternative options for the Rental Agreement model that range in their operational responsibilities and can strengthen the weaknesses of the sport delivery model with higher utilization, efficiencies, cost recovery, and opportunities for improved facilities as follows:



Customer Service & Tournament Hosting

The City has pursued improvements to ball diamond and sport field customer service in order to provide quality results while managing the various expectations of sport groups. Parks Operations is defining a clear and transparent process for relationship building and has made stakeholder and community engagement a priority with the following initiatives:

- A new mysportsfields@princegeorge.ca email address which provides a direct link between park operations and sport field groups;
- Revised City website function to provide enhanced visitor services with a sport event calendar, an e-notify system, and online booking application form; and
- Other initiatives such as improved event coordination, online tournament booking forms, and improved communications with Exclusive User groups.

There are a variety of mechanisms in place to support tournament hosting and realize a number of community benefits, particularly from larger events such as the 2022 BC Summer Games. The City will be identifying the various ball diamond and sport field requirements in order to prepare for the provincial event and welcome young athletes who will be competing at various locations within our community.



The SportPG Hosting Grant provides up to \$75,000 and subsidies for sporting events that attract out of town participants. The City of Prince George, Tourism PG, and Volunteer PG also provide tournament hosting support with professional services, promotions, volunteers, improved facilities, and special event services. Access to quality, grouped facilities within central locations is needed to provide the foundation for tournament hosting and draw out of town sport groups to the community.



5. What Are We Going To Do

A number of key focus areas have been identified through the Ball Diamond and Sport Field Strategy and will help direct City and park operational work plans towards an improved sport delivery model in Prince George.

Ball Diamond and Sport Field Key Focus Areas



Ball Diamond & Sport Field Investment

- Develop an Infrastructure Renewal Plan
- Identify potential funding sources/strategies
- Identify partnerships to advance investments



Ball Diamond & Sport Field Usage

- Revisit the Exclusive Use Rental Agreement model
- Identify opportunities for improved utilization of ball diamonds and sport fields, fees, and customer service



Tournament Hosting

- Refine the City's role in tournament hosting
- Prepare for the 2022 BC Summer Games and other major tournaments

Appendix 1 – Inventory and Maps

City Ball Diamond Inventory – 25 Total						
Park Name	Facility Name	Field Class ¹	Rental Group ²	Year Est.	Fence Line ³	Amenities
Balsum Park	Joe Martin Field	B	PGYBA	1975	61m	Clubhouse, Washrooms, Bleachers & Score Clock
Blackburn Park	Blackburn 1	B	-	1984	61 m	Washrooms, Bleachers & Storage
	Blackburn 2	B	-		71 m	
Carrie Jane Gray Park	Carrie Jane Field	C	PGYBA	1975	-	-
	Citizen Field	B	PGSMB	2006	119 m	Grandstand, lights, Club House, Change rooms, Concession, Scoreclock
	Home Field – Boys Fastball	A	SCMBF	1975	71 m	Storage
	Home Field – Girls Fastball	A	PGMGFA	1975	66 m	Bleachers & Storage
	Ron Wiley Field	A	SCMBF	1975	75 m	Concession, Washrooms, Bleachers
	Rotary Field	A	PGYBA	1975	110 m	Lights, Storage Room
	Spruce City Stadium	A	SCMMFA	1967	75 m	Grandstand, Concession, Storage, Washrooms & Scoreclock,
Edgewood Park	Edgewood	B	-	1970	71 m	-
Freeman Park	Chuck Cawdell	A	PGWFA	1975	67 m	Bleachers, Concession, Washrooms, Storage, Lit diamond @ Chuck Cawdell, Irrigation
	Freeman 1	A	PGMGFA		61 m	
	Freeman 2	A	PGMGFA		61 m	
Harry Loder Park	Harry Loder	B	PGYBA	1970	61 m	Bleachers
Lheidli T. Mem. Park	Gyro Park	B	PGYBA	1975	61 m	Bleachers, Concession, Washrooms & Storage
Nechako Park	Nechako 1	A	PGMSL	2006	90 m	Lights, Irrigation, Bleachers, Concession & Washrooms
	Nechako 2	A	PGMSL			
Strathcona Park	Strathcona	B	-	1970	85 m	-
Vanier Park	Vanier 1	B	-	1970	-	-
	Vanier 2	B	-			
Volunteer Park	Volunteer 1	A	PGYBA	1994	61m	Irrigation, Clubhouse, Concession, Storage & Washrooms
	Volunteer 2	A	PGYBA			
	Volunteer 3	A	PGYBA			
	Volunteer 4	A	PGYBA			

1. Ball diamonds and sport fields are maintained through a Service Level Program using a high to low Class AA, A, B, and C level of service.

2. Rental Group Names:

PGMGFA – P.G. Minor Girls Fastball Association

PGMSL – P.G. Mixed Slo-Pitch League

PGSMB – P.G. Senior Men's Baseball

PGWFA – P.G. Women's Fastball Association

PGYBA – Prince George Youth Baseball Association

SCMBF – Spruce City Minor Boys Fastball

SCMMFA – Spruce City Men's Fastball Association

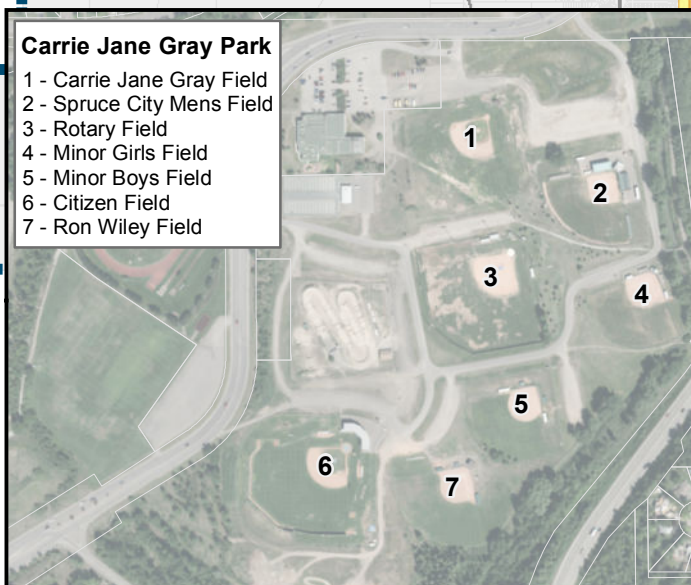
3. The fence line is measured from home plate to the centerfield fence.



- | | |
|--|--|
| 1 - Balsum Park
<i>Joe Martin Field</i> | 6 - Harry Loder Park
<i>Diamond 1</i> |
| 2 - Blackburn Park
<i>Diamond 1, 2</i> | 7 - Lheidli T'enneh
Memorial Park
<i>Gyro Diamond</i> |
| 3 - Carrie Jane Gray Park
<i>Carrie Jane Gray Field</i>
<i>Spruce City Mens</i>
<i>Rotary Field</i>
<i>Minor Girls Field</i>
<i>Minor Boys Field</i>
<i>Citizen Field</i>
<i>Ron Wiley Field</i> | 8 - Nechako Park
<i>Diamond 1, 2</i> |
| 4 - Edgewood Park
<i>Diamond 1</i> | 9 - Strathcona Park
<i>Diamond 1</i> |
| 5 - Freeman Park
<i>Freeman 1</i>
<i>Freeman 2</i>
<i>(John Dinsmore)</i>
<i>Chuck Cawdell</i> | 10 - Vanier Park
<i>Diamond 1</i> |
| | 11 - Volunteer Park
<i>Diamond 1, 2, 3, 4</i> |

Carrie Jane Gray Park

- 1 - Carrie Jane Gray Field
- 2 - Spruce City Mens Field
- 3 - Rotary Field
- 4 - Minor Girls Field
- 5 - Minor Boys Field
- 6 - Citizen Field
- 7 - Ron Wiley Field



 Ball Diamonds

0 500 1,000 1,500 2,000 2,500
Meters

Coordinate System: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 10N
Projection: Transverse Mercator
Datum: North American 1983

1:90000

Ball Diamonds



CITY OF PRINCE GEORGE

City Sport Field Inventory – 18 Total						
Park Name	Facility Name	Field Class ¹	Rental Group ²	Year Est.	Field Size	Amenities
Duchess Park	Duchess	A	-	1975	65 x 100m	Irrigation, Duchess School (Storage, Change Rooms, Washrooms)
Exhibition Park	Men's Soccer Fields (3 total)	A	NCSSL	1996	65 x 100m	Clubhouse with Meeting Room, Washrooms, Change Rooms, Officials Room, Storage, Bleachers, Irrigation, Lights
	Women's Soccer Fields (2 total)	A	PGWSA	2005	65 x 100m	Bleachers, Irrigation
	Youth Soccer Fields (8 total)	A	PGYSA	1996	varies	Six Lit fields, Irrigation
Heather Road Park	Heather Park	B	-	1996	-	-
Masich Place Stadium	Masich infield	AA	-	1990	65 x 100m	Grandstand, Washrooms, Concession, Storage, Scoreclock, Irrigation
Moran Park	Heritage Field	B	-	1975	-	-
Strathcona Park	Strathcona	B	-	1970	90 m	-

1. Ball diamonds and sport fields are maintained through a Service Level Program using a high to low Class AA, A, B, and C level of service.

2. **Rental Group Names:**

NCSSL – North Cariboo Senior Soccer League

PGWSA – P.G. Women's Soccer Association

PGYSA – P.G. Youth Soccer Association



- 1 - Duchess Park
Field and Diamond
- 2 - Exhibition Park
*Rotary Soccer Fields
Mens Fields
Womens Fields*
- 3 - Heather Road Park
Field
- 4 - Masich Place Stadium
Infield
- 5 - Moran Park
Heritage Field
- 6 - Strathcona Park
Field and Diamond

3

5

1

2

4

6

 Sport Fields

0 500 1,000 1,500 2,000 2,500 Meters
Coordinate System: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 10N
Projection: Transverse Mercator
Datum: North American 1983
1:90000

Sport Fields



