



Allocation Policy

Research Summary Background Report
April 2021



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1. PROJECT BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

PROJECT BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

The City of Abbotsford (“the City”) is developing a new Allocation Policy (“the Policy”). The Policy will inform how space is allocated at City operated parks and facilities and will outline the responsibilities of both the City and user groups as it pertains to the allocation process. Additionally, the Policy will provide clarity on the following key allocation topics and questions:

- Which types of groups will receive priority access to facility space?
- How can the City make the most efficient and effective use of available facility space?
- How can the allocation processes and practices occur in a manner that is transparent and based on clearly understood rationale?

Ensuring that the right groups and activities are aligned with the right spaces will also help the City most effectively plan for the future and make optimal use of available resources. The Policy is critical to helping the City better understand the capacity of existing spaces and potential gaps within the inventory. As the City grows from its current population to 200,000 residents and beyond there will also be shifts in how residents engage in recreation and culture pursuits. As such, the allocation of space will need to occur in a manner that maximizes the benefits of available space for Abbotsford residents and considers the needs of both structured and spontaneous users.

ALIGNMENT WITH OTHER CITY PLANNING AND POLICIES

The City’s Parks, Recreation and Culture Master Plan (2018) identified the need to update the Allocation Policy in conjunction with the Draft Fees and Charges Policy given the relationship between space allocation and user fees. The Master Plan also clearly identifies that updating these policy documents (along with a number of others) is important to support the implementation of the actions outlined in the Master Plan.



Parks, Recreation and Culture 2018 Master Plan - Vision and Guiding Principles

Vision

Abbotsford is a complete and vibrant community with diverse parks, recreation and culture services that support a high quality of life for all residents and celebrate Abbotsford's uniqueness.

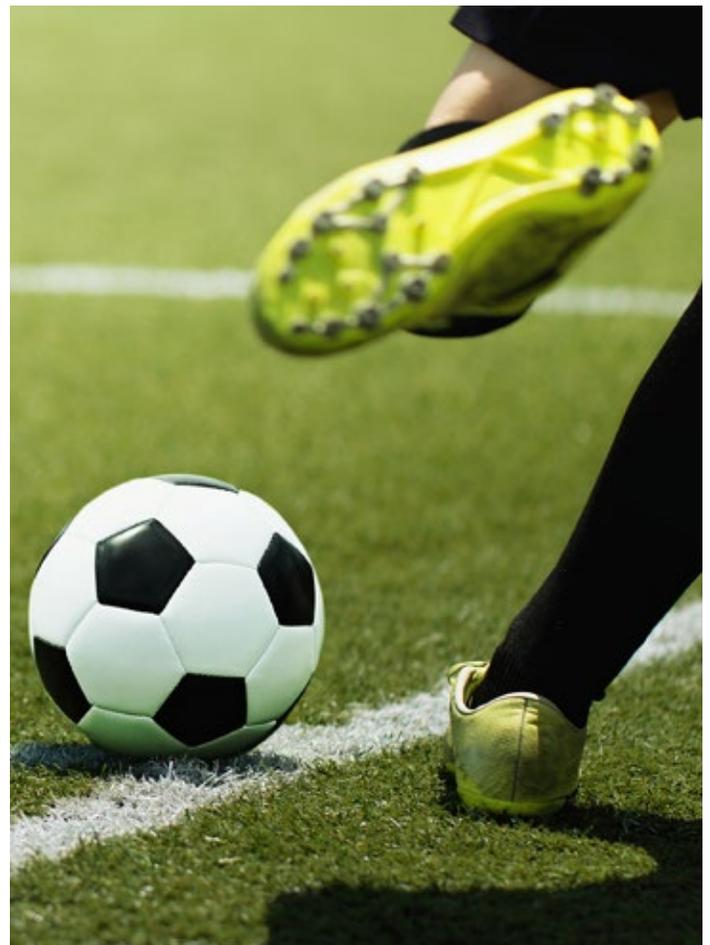
Guiding Principles

- Parks, recreation and culture spaces, programs, and services are comfortable, safe, and welcoming to all members of the community, including all ages, abilities, and cultures.*
- Abbotsford's parks and facilities are multi-use, flexible, multi-seasonal, inclusive, accessible, and adaptable to changing community needs.*
- The City supports excellence in sports, arts, and culture, as well as unstructured, self-scheduled and drop-in forms of participation.*
- Opportunities in recreation, sports and culture are nurtured at all levels and life stages.*
- Parks, recreation, and culture facilities, programs and services support healthy environments and mental, social, and physical well-being.*
- Parks, Recreation and Culture is creative and collaborative and works with other service providers to maximize the service delivery of parks, recreation and culture experiences and opportunities in Abbotsford.*
- Parks, facilities, programs, and services are implemented in a strategic and fiscally responsible manner, considering community needs, geography, operational sustainability, environmental longevity, and positioning the City to be grant and shovel ready.*

It is important to note that all planning and policies in Abbotsford fall under the purview of the City's Official Community Plan (OCP) "Abbotsforward", which was adopted in 2016. The PRC Master Plan provides a strategic roadmap to achieve the philosophical direction of Abbotsforward as it relates to parks, recreation and culture. The development of Policy documents across specific areas of service delivery, including space allocation, presents an opportunity to further achieve the mandate set forth by these overarching guiding documents.

ABOUT THIS REPORT DOCUMENT

This Research Summary Background Report contains the findings from the research and engagement that was undertaken to inform the development of the Policy. This investigation was necessary information to understand the current allocation context, potential issues and challenges that a new Policy can help resolve, and the dynamics and factors that are likely to influence future space allocation needs.





2. ENGAGEMENT FINDINGS

OVERVIEW OF THE ENGAGEMENT METHODS

The engagement undertaken for the project was designed to ensure that perspectives and viewpoints were gathered from a cross-section of the community; including organized user groups that currently access space, groups that face challenges accessing space, and members of the public that may or may not be affiliated with a group. The following chart summarizes the engagement tactics and the level of participation.

Engagement Tactic	Participation / Responses
Public Survey	135 responses
User Group Survey*	18 responding organizations
Stakeholder Discussions*	8 discussion sessions (26 participating organizations)

**In total, 35 individual groups participated in the engagement with a number of groups participating in both the User Group Survey and Stakeholder Discussions. A list of participating organizations is provided in Appendix A.*



Public Survey Findings

A public survey was fielded through Let's Talk Abbotsford, the City's online engagement portal, for approximately three weeks in late October – early November 2020. The survey was promoted via the City's social media feeds and available to all members of the public. In total, 135 responses were provided. Presented as follows are findings from the public survey.

OVERVIEW OF RESPONDENT CHARACTERISTICS

Noted as follows are key characteristics of the public survey respondents.

- 127 of the 135 respondents (94%) identified that they are Abbotsford residents.
- The majority of respondents are long-term residents; 88% identified that they have lived in Abbotsford for more than 10 years.
- Respondents represent a wide variety of recreation, parks and culture opportunity "consumers".
 - » 67% of respondents identified that they are a "frequent user of City parks and facilities for spontaneous recreation".



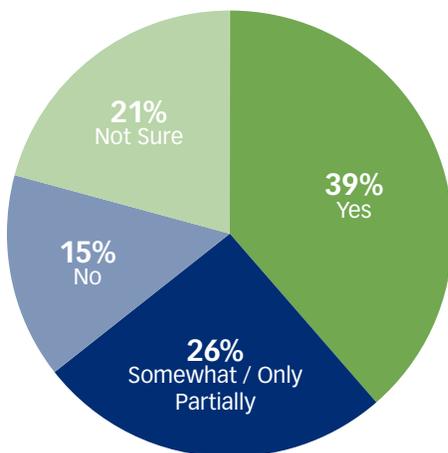
- » 61% of respondents identified that they “participate in organized sports programs or leagues”.
- » 51% of respondents identified that they are a “frequent user of City parks and facilities for fitness classes or programs”.
- » 16% of respondents identified that they “participate in performing arts, culture and heritage programs or groups”.
- » 13% of respondents identified that they “Participate in creative/visual arts, culture and heritage programs or groups”.



EXPERIENCES WITH SPACE BOOKING

Approximately two-thirds of respondents (64%) indicated that they or a group they’re involved with have tried to book space at a City operated park or facility in the past five years. These respondents were then asked to indicate if they were able to access the space at the time required for their activity. As illustrated by the below graph, most respondents indicated that they (or their group) were either fully or partially able to access the space and time needed, while 15% identified that they (or their group) were not able to access the space and time needed.

WHERE YOU ABLE TO ACCESS THE PARK OR FACILITY AT THE TIME YOU NEEDED?

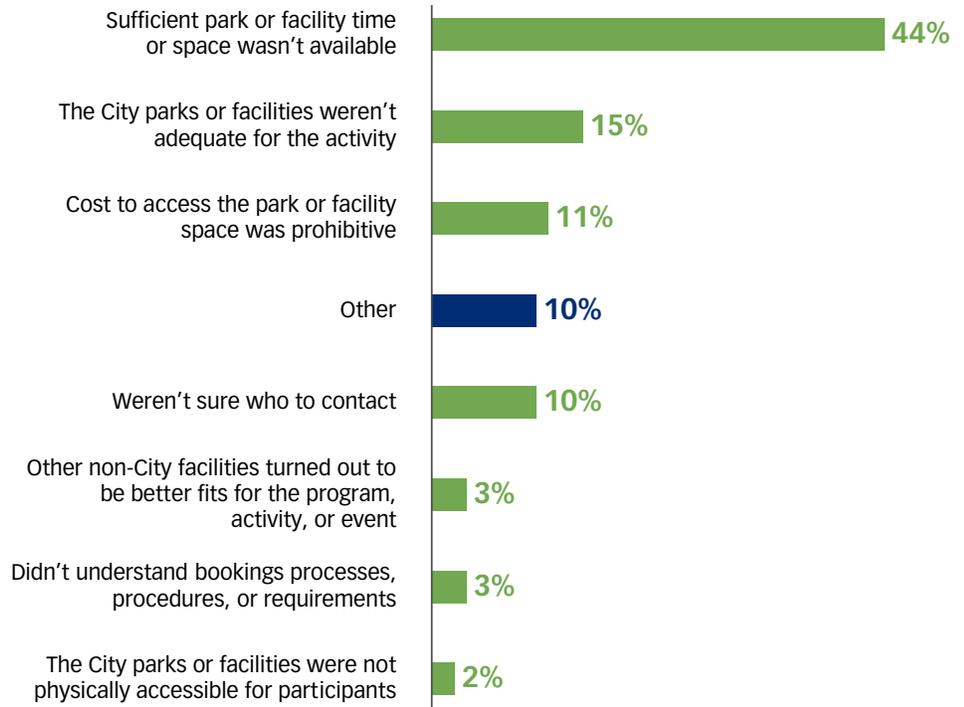


Respondents that indicated some level of challenge with accessing space and/or sufficient time were then provided a list of potential factors and asked to identify challenges when accessing space. As reflected by the graph, the highest proportion of respondents identified that “sufficient park or facility time or space wasn’t available”.

Space was then provided for respondents to expand on their selections to the previous question. Noted below are key themes from the 24 comments provided.

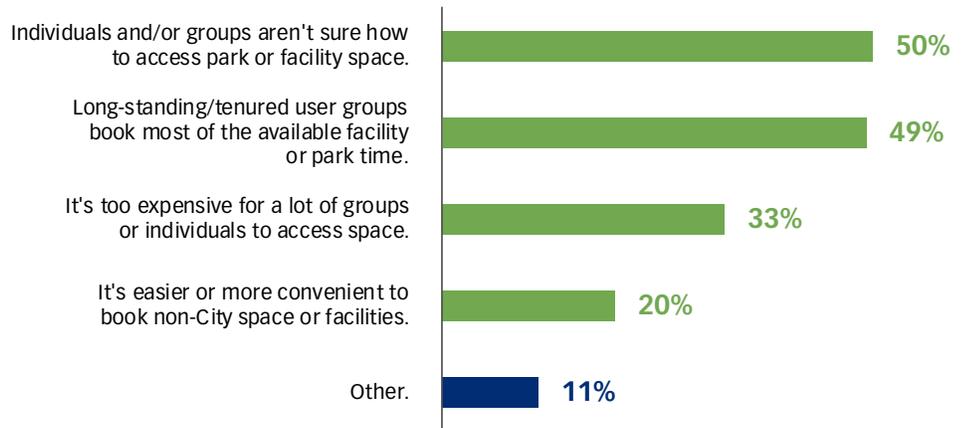
- Existing user groups consume all (or most) of the available time.
- Overall lack of facilities to accommodate growth of the city.
- Quality and condition of some facilities limits capacity and functionality; therefore impacting availability.

WHY WEREN'T YOU OR YOUR GROUP ABLE TO ACCESS ALL OF THE TIME THAT YOU NEEDED?



Respondents were asked to identify (from a list) barriers that they perceive as preventing some residents or community groups from booking City parks and facilities. Illustrated by the adjacent graph, the top two barriers identified by approximately half of respondents were a lack of knowledge how space can be accessed (the bookings and allocation process) and the consumption of space by tenured / longstanding groups. Approximately one-third of respondents also identified cost as a barrier.

BARRIERS PREVENTING RESIDENTS OR COMMUNITY GROUPS FROM BOOKING CITY PARKS AND FACILITIES



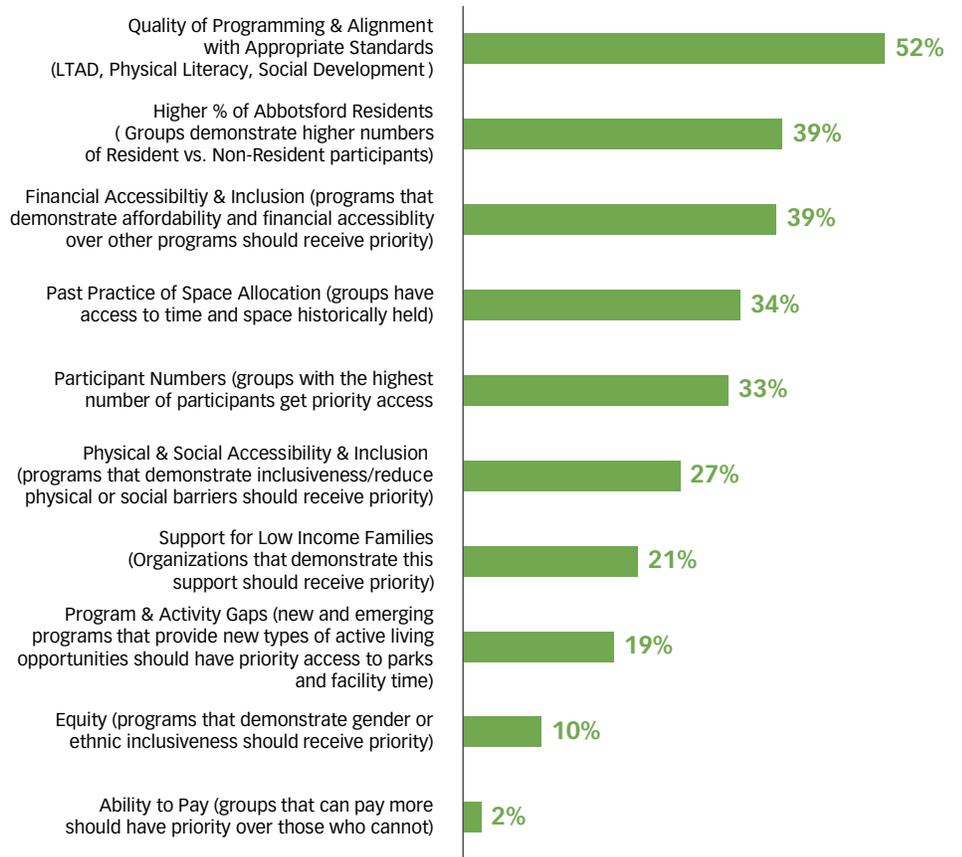
ALLOCATION PRIORITY

Respondents were provided with a number of activity categories and asked to indicate whether they should receive “primary access priority”, “secondary access priority”, or “minimal / no access priority” to City parks and facilities. The following chart reflects the responses ordered by those categories that the highest proportion of respondents thought should receive primary access priority. As reflected in the chart, there was a strong belief among most respondents that sport programs and leagues for youth should receive priority within the allocation process. Of note, 70% of respondents also identified that programming offered by the City should receive primary access priority.

Type of User	Primary Access Priority	Secondary Access Priority	Minimal / No Access Priority
Recreational sport programs / leagues for youth provided by Abbotsford not for profit organizations	81%	17%	2%
Competitive sport programs / leagues for youth provided by Abbotsford not for profit organizations	72%	26%	2%
City programs	70%	27%	3%
Sports tournaments and competitions organized by Abbotsford not for profit organizations	65%	33%	2%
Arts, culture and heritage programs offered by Abbotsford not for profit organizations	44%	41%	15%
Arts, culture and heritage events organized by Abbotsford not for profit organizations	44%	42%	14%
Recreational sport programs / leagues for adults provided by Abbotsford not for profit organizations	34%	58%	8%
Competitive sport programs / leagues for adults provided by Abbotsford not for profit organizations	33%	57%	10%
Sports tournaments and competitions organized by non-local organizations	11%	39%	50%
Sports training, leagues, or programs offered by commercial for profit entities (e.g. hockey training programs / academies, adult hockey leagues operated by for profit entities, etc.)	10%	57%	33%
Trade shows and other commercially focused events	10%	56%	34%
Arts, culture and heritage events organized by non-local organizations	9%	42%	50%

Respondents were provided a list of ten potential criteria used to determine space priority and asked to select up to three they believe are most important. As illustrated by the adjacent graph, program quality and alignment with appropriate standards were identified as key criteria by over half of respondents. Allocating based on residency in Abbotsford and the financial accessibility and inclusion of the program were both also selected by 39% of respondents. Of note, only 2% of respondents identified the ability of a user group to pay as a key criteria.

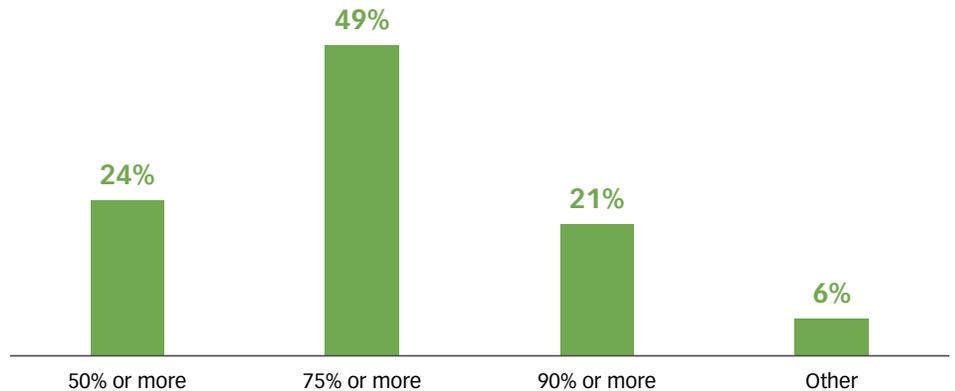
POTENTIAL ALLOCATION CRITERIA



USER FEES AND SPACE ALLOCATION

Respondents were asked to provide their opinion on the residency percentage of user group’s members / participants in order for a group to receive an “Abbotsford Rate” (local user fee). As illustrated by the adjacent graph, over two-thirds of respondents (70%) felt that a group should consist of 75% or more Abbotsford residents in order to receive the local rate.

WHAT % OF ABBOTSFORD RESIDENTS SHOULD USER GROUPS BE COMPRISED OF TO QUALIFY FOR THE “ABBOTSFORD RATE”?



GENERAL COMMENTS

To conclude the survey, space was available for respondents to provide any additional comments. Summarized below are the prevalent themes from allocation related comments.

- Affordability and cost are a barrier to participation and it is important to ensure accessibility for all residents.
- Children and youth should be a priority in space allocation (many of these comments also cited the benefits of sport and recreation for children and youth).
- Abbotsford residents and groups should receive priority.

In addition to comments on space allocation, a number of other wide-ranging comments were provided on issues with specific spaces or aspects of service delivery.



User Group Survey Findings

A User Group Survey was fielded to gather information and perspective from a diverse array of organizations in the community. An email request was sent to group representatives to complete the survey on behalf of their organization. In total, 18 responses were provided from groups that provide a multitude of recreation, sport, culture, and social opportunities and integrate with the City's space booking and allocation process in a variety of ways:

- 8 groups identified that they "provide recreational sport programming to adults".
- 8 groups identified that they "provide recreational sport programming to children and youth".
- 8 groups identified that they "book facilities for sporting events".
- 8 groups identified that they are a "local sports organization that is affiliated with a Provincial and/or National Sports Organization".
- 7 groups identified that they "provide competitive sport programming to children and youth".
- 6 groups identified that they "provide competitive sport programming to adults".
- 4 groups identified that they "book facilities for arts, culture and heritage events".
- 3 groups identified that they "provide creative/visual arts, culture and heritage programming to children and youth".
- 3 groups identified that they "provide performing arts, culture and heritage programming to adults (including dance)".
- 1 group identified that they "provide programs or other activities that focus specifically on older adult populations".

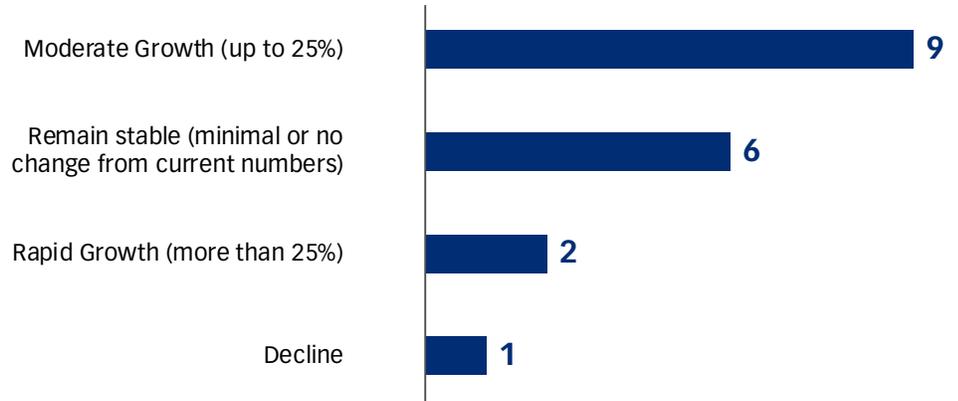
Also notable, the 18 groups that participated in the survey indicated that they do not currently receive space allocations in other jurisdictions.

Please refer to Appendix A for a complete listing of the participating User Group Survey participants.

EXPECTATIONS FOR GROWTH

Responding groups were asked to identify their expectations for participant growth over the next five years. As illustrated by the adjacent graph, half of the responding groups expect to experience moderate levels of growth.

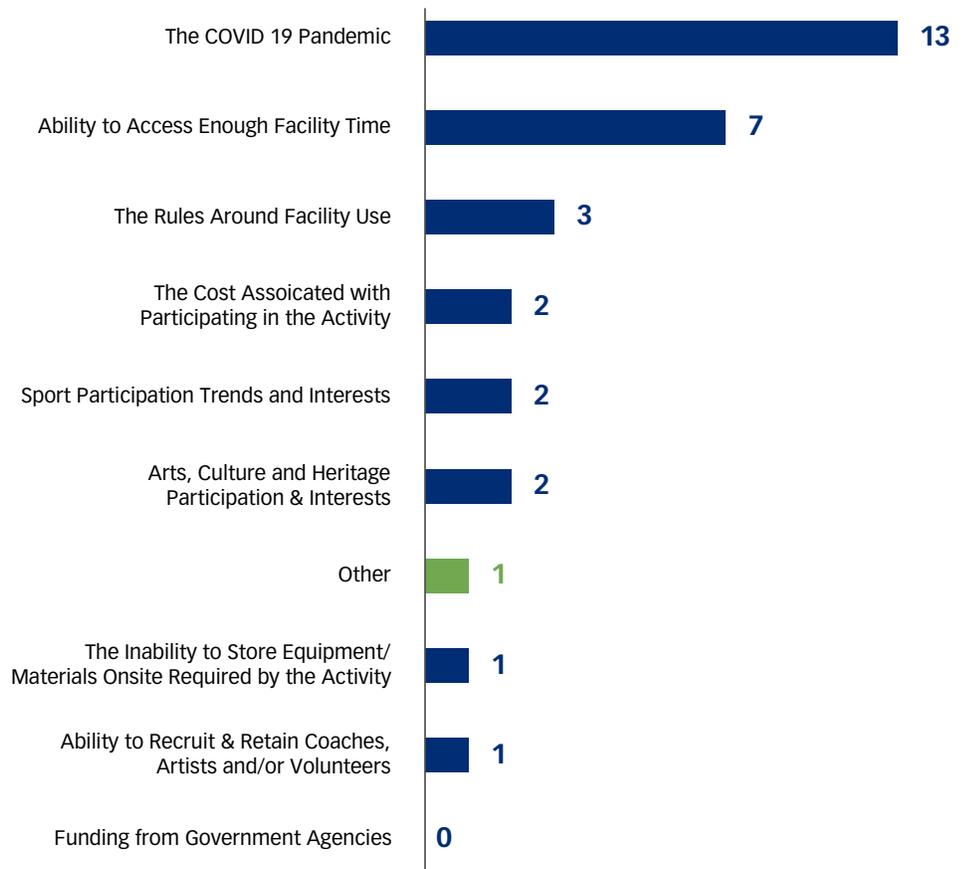
OVER THE NEXT FIVE YEARS, WHAT ARE YOUR EXPECTATIONS FOR PARTICIPANT NUMBERS?



Respondents were then asked to identify up to two factors that they believe will most significantly impact future participant numbers. As reflected by the graph, the impact of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic was top of mind for many responding groups. Of note, seven groups also identified that the ability to access enough facility time will influence future participant numbers.

Space was provided for groups to further expand on factors that will influence future participant numbers. The comments provided included further detail on how the COVID-19 pandemic may influence participation numbers and specific instances of challenges or situations that limit access to needed space. A handful of comments also touched on financial factors such as program costs and the cost of accessing facilities.

TOP 2 FACTORS IMPACTING FUTURE PARTICIPANT NUMBERS



CURRENT BOOKINGS AND ALLOCATION EXPERIENCE

Responding groups were next asked about their current experience with the City's booking and allocation processes and procedures. As reflected by the following chart, most responding groups agreed (definitely or somewhat) that the City's current bookings and allocation processes and procedures are convenient, user friendly, and clear.

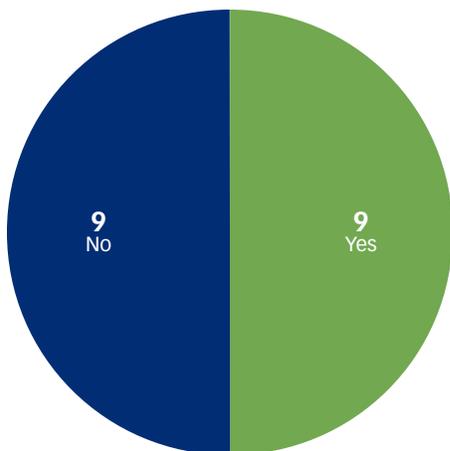
	City's Bookings & Allocation Processes and Procedures are Convenient and User Friendly	City's Bookings & Allocation Processes and Procedures are Clear
Definitely Agree	6	9
Somewhat Agree	6	4
Neither Agree nor Disagree	3	1
Somewhat Disagree	1	3
Definitely Disagree	2	1

CURRENT AND FUTURE SPACE NEEDS

Responding groups were next asked if their organization has access to sufficient facility time. As illustrated by the adjacent graph, responding groups were split, with half indicating they are able to access sufficient time while the other half are not. The groups that indicated that they are not able to access sufficient facility time were then asked how much additional time they require to meet current needs. Five groups indicated that they require a small to moderate amount of additional facility time (1-21%), two groups indicated that they require a moderate amount of additional time (21-30%), and four groups indicated that they require a significant amount of additional time (more than 30%).



DOES YOUR GROUP CURRENTLY HAVE ACCESS TO SUFFICIENT FACILITY TIME?



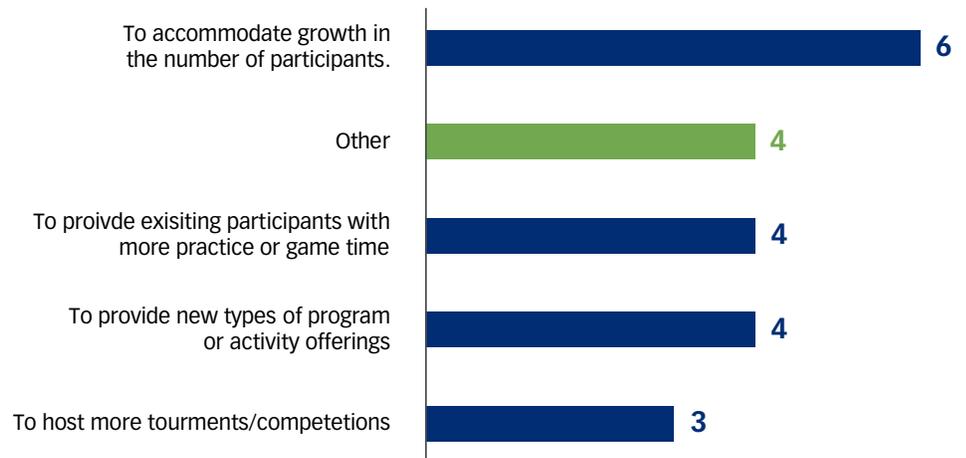
Responding groups were also asked to project forward and indicate how much incremental time they may need to meet future needs over the next 3 to 5 years. As illustrated by the graph, 7 groups indicated that they will require a fairly significant increase (>20%) in time relative to what they currently access.

HOW MUCH INCREMENTAL FACILITY TIME DOES YOUR ORGANIZATION REQUIRE TO MEET FUTURE NEEDS (3-5 YEAR HORIZON)?



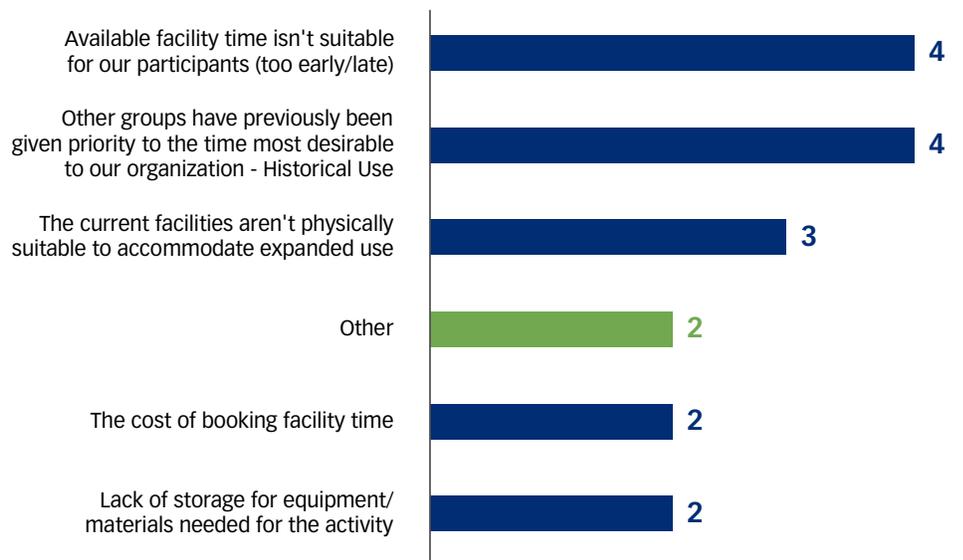
When asked about the reasons their organization will require additional time, growth was identified as being the most significant factor.

REASONS YOUR ORGANIZATION NEEDS ACCESS TO MORE SPACE



Responding groups were asked to identify from a list those factors that currently limit their organization from accessing enough facility time. A lack of suitable time and historical use (other groups having been assigned priority) were identified as a barrier by four groups.

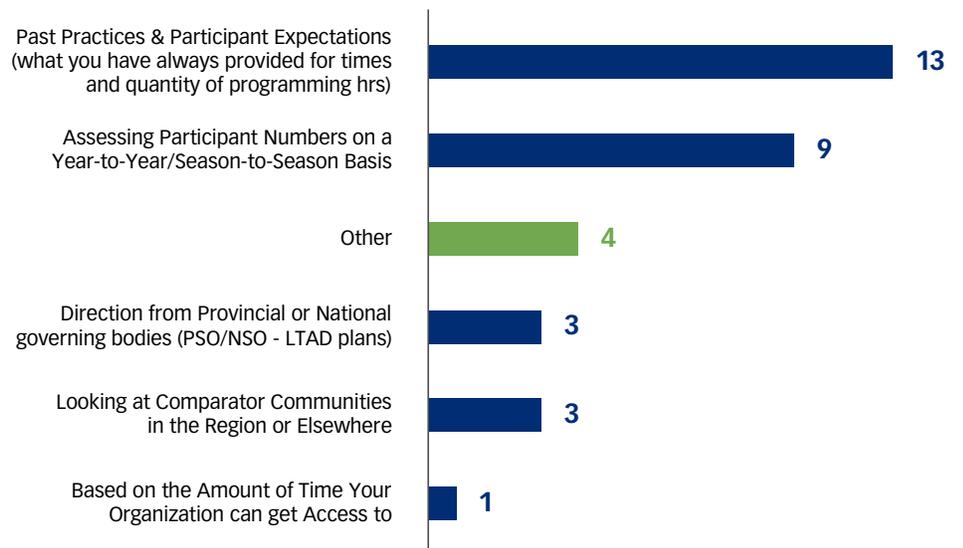
FACTORS THAT LIMIT ACCESS TO SUFFICIENT FACILITY TIME



DETERMINING SPACE NEEDS

Responding groups were asked to identify how they currently determine the amount of facility time that they need for their various activities. As reflected by the graph, past practices, participant expectation and an ongoing assessment of participant numbers on an annual basis are the two primary ways that groups determine that amount of time needed.

HOW GROUPS DETERMINE HOW MUCH FACILITY TIME IT NEEDS



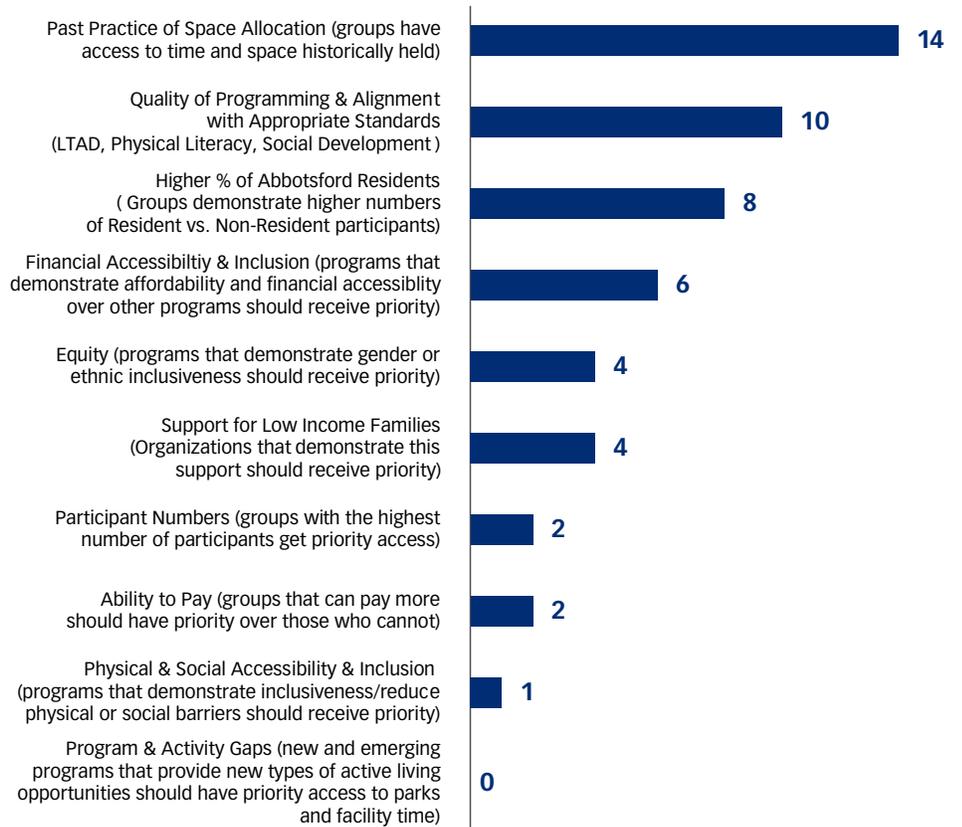
ALLOCATION PRIORITY CONSIDERATIONS

Respondent groups were provided with a number of activity categories and asked to indicate whether they should receive “primary access priority”, “secondary access priority”, or “minimal / no access priority” to City parks and facilities. The following chart reflects the responses by category that the highest proportion of respondents thought should receive primary access priority. Similar to the responses provided in the Public Survey, there was a general belief that youth and Abbotsford residents should receive a level of priority within the allocation process.

Type of User	Primary Access Priority	Secondary Access Priority	Minimal / No Access Priority
Arts and culture events organized by Abbotsford not for profit organizations	13	5	0
Competitive sport programs / leagues for youth provided by Abbotsford not for profit organizations	13	4	1
Sports tournaments and competitions organized by Abbotsford not for profit organizations	12	6	0
Recreational sport programs / leagues for youth provided by Abbotsford not for profit organizations	12	5	1
City programs	10	8	0
Arts and culture programs offered by Abbotsford not for profit organizations	10	7	1
Recreational sport programs / leagues for adults provided by Abbotsford not for profit organizations	8	9	1
Competitive sport programs / leagues for adults provided by Abbotsford not for profit organizations	8	8	2
Trade shows and other commercially focused events	7	6	5
Sports training, leagues, or programs offered by commercial for profit entities (e.g. hockey training programs / academies, adult hockey leagues operated by for profit entities, etc.)	3	11	4
Sports tournaments and competitions organized by non-local organizations	3	6	9
Arts, culture and heritage events organized by non-local organizations	1	8	9

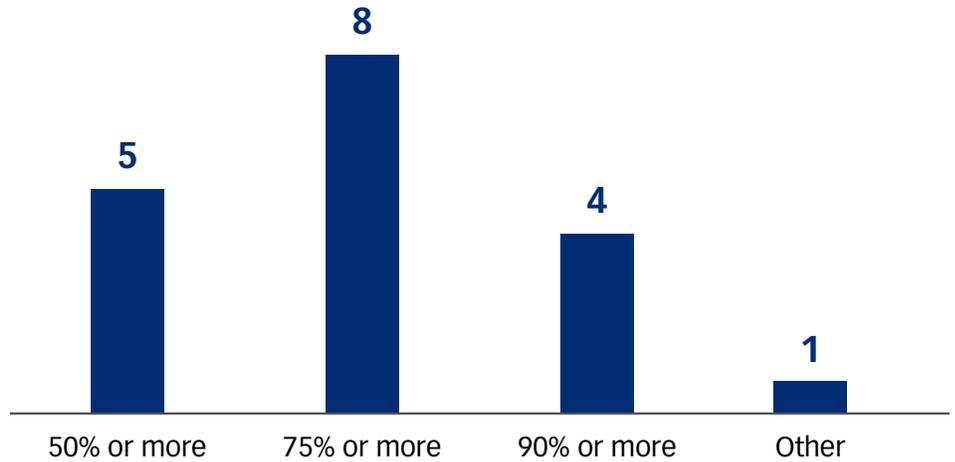
Responding groups were provided a list of potential criteria that could be used to prioritize access and asked to identify up to three they believe are most important. In contrast to the responses provided in the public survey, the majority of group survey respondents identified past space allocation practices as a key criteria. Similarly to the Public Survey responses, quality of programming was identified as an important criteria. Notably, no responding groups identified meeting program and activity gaps as a key prioritization criteria.

POTENTIAL ALLOCATION CRITERIA



Similar to the Public Survey responses, the majority of responding groups believe that 75% or more of a user group's participants / members should be Abbotsford residents in order to get a local rate.

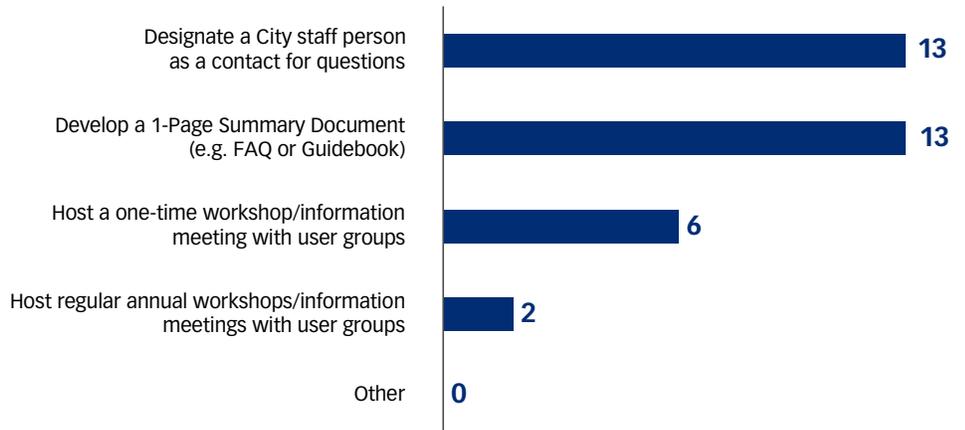
WHAT % OF ABBOTSFORD RESIDENTS SHOULD USER GROUPS BE COMPRISED OF TO QUALIFY FOR THE "ABBOTSFORD RATE"?



COMMUNICATIONS

Responding groups were asked to identify how the City can best communicate important aspects of the new Policy (once developed) to them. As reflected by the following graph, the majority of groups would like to see the City designate a staff contact for questions and develop a summary document.

DESIRED COMMUNICATION METHODS



Stakeholder Discussions – Key Themes

Eight facilitated discussions were convened from October 26 – 28, 2020 and were attended by 26 organizations representing a variety of recreation, sport, and culture interests. **Please refer to Appendix A for a complete list of participating organizations.** To mitigate COVID-19 safety concerns, the sessions were all conducted virtually. Each session was approximately one hour in length and focused on the following overarching topics:

- Current allocation practices / experiences
- Prioritization considerations
- Opportunities to optimize (improve) the allocations process

While the discussions were wide ranging in nature and participants were encouraged to present divergent viewpoints and perspectives, a number of key themes did emerge. Summarized as follows are key themes and other notable points of interest from the eight discussion sessions.

- **The current allocation process works better for some groups than others.** User groups that are tenured and “embedded” into the system tend to have an easier time accessing the space they need in comparison to newer and emerging groups. This situation is particularly challenging for spaces that are at capacity or have limited supply such as gymnasiums, arenas, and major sports field venues.
- **Varying opinions exist on whether a new allocation process can create efficiencies and help the City make better use of existing space.** While the majority of groups believe the City is prudent to refresh and update how space allocation occurs, some stakeholders expressed that an overall lack of facilities is the fundamental problem and minimal opportunity exists to make more effective use of the existing inventory. However, other stakeholders do believe that some efficiency opportunities exist and a refreshed approach to allocation can help free up time by refreshing priority and creating better alignment between groups and spaces.
- **Opportunities exist to make the allocations process more clear and user friendly.** While some groups communicated that they have minimal issues, others expressed varying levels of frustration with some elements of the space bookings process. In general, the stakeholders level of satisfaction with the bookings and allocation process appeared to be related to tenure and regularity of bookings. Larger groups that book a large block of space and have regular contact with a City staff person seemed to have greater ease than groups with more infrequent or complex booking requirements.
- **While challenges with past practices were acknowledged by both tenured and emerging groups, there exists a hesitancy to shift away from these practices.** Recognizing that the practice of “block booking” can be problematic for a number of reasons (including: limiting access for new groups, resulting in unused time for some spaces, etc.) stakeholders also expressed that this practice is necessary to some degree based on shifting schedules and weather concerns for outdoor spaces. Some stakeholders were also concerned that a complete overhaul of the allocation process could be onerous for many groups that rely on volunteers and part-time staff that have become accustomed to current processes and requirements. A number of positive comments were also provided during the discussions on changes that have been made by the City in recent years, including the format of user group meetings and the reduction in paperwork.
- **Residency should be a key priority consideration, but some flexibility is required.** Stakeholders generally agreed with the notion that Abbotsford residents should receive priority access to City operated spaces. However, a handful of stakeholders also expressed that the City needs to apply some level of flexibility to this requirement and cited a number of examples of situations that may be outliers or hard to measure. It was also mentioned that some new and emerging groups require participants / members from other areas to make their programs functional and sustainable. As such, having too stringent of an approach could negatively impact some of these organizations that help contribute to the diversity of parks, recreation and culture programming in the city.

- Perspectives on other priority setting criteria.** Consistent with the Public Survey and User Group Survey findings, stakeholders generally expressed that youth and local not for profit organizations should receive allocation priority. The need for, and level of benefit provided by, the program should also be considered but varying perspectives existed on how to measure these factors (e.g. the degree to which participant numbers should matter , the nature of the program type, etc.). One other similar priority setting viewpoint held by most stakeholders was with regards to the importance of affordability and inclusion as a key consideration in how space is allocated. Stakeholders also did not want to see space allocation prioritized based on the financial means (or lack thereof) of groups.
- It is reasonable for the City to identify methods and approaches that can help make better use of existing space.** A handful of adult sports field and ball diamond stakeholders expressed frustration over time that is booked but not used. Recognizing that it is difficult for the City to fully monitor spaces that do not have onsite staff, some stakeholders would like to see the City find ways to better identify fields that are not being used when booked and potentially consider penalties as appropriate. A number of stakeholders also wondered if the City could investigate more effective ways for groups to return unused time. Opportunities to integrate more web based and mobile technologies was referenced during a number of discussions. Examples provided included a website or app that could allow groups to see available space and/or easily return space to the inventory. Since these stakeholders meetings, and as a direct result of this input, field availability was made viewable on-line in January 2021.
- Perspectives on balancing the needs of spontaneous and structured recreation.** Seeing unused or underutilized time is an understandable frustration for organized user groups; especially when they feel their programming is at or nearing space capacity. While acknowledging that the City needs to make available sufficient time for spontaneous recreation and leisure, a number of stakeholders believe that the City needs to ensure maximum use of available space and strike an appropriate balance between allocating time for “drop-in” use and providing sufficient time for user groups.

3. JURISDICTIONAL SCAN

A jurisdictional scan of other selected municipalities in the Fraser Valley and Metro Vancouver was undertaken to identify current space allocation practices across the region.

Municipality	Allocation Policies	Overview of Key Space Allocation Practices
City of Chilliwack	N/A	Agreements with fee for service operators outlines some public and user group community access requirements. The City's Bylaw No. 3290 (A bylaw to regulate the use of Parks and Recreational Facilities) also identifies some procedural requirements pertaining to bookings.
Township of Langley	N/A	The Township does not have a formal allocation policy but does have a series of procedural documents. The Township announced in 2019 that it was going to explore potential changes to facility allocation processes in collaboration with user groups in response to a number of challenges. ¹
District of Mission	N/A	The recently finalized Parks, Recreation, Arts, and Culture Master Plan provides a recommendation that the District should "Review Field Allocation Policies every two years to ensure that they remain current and relevant". <i>*A copy of a standing sports field policy or other allocation specific policies could not be found.</i>
		<p>The Ice Allocation Policy identifies the following prioritization hierarchy:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Surrey youth user groups during prime time hours (4:30 a.m. – 10 p.m.) seven days a week 2. Surrey adult user groups during non-prime hours (10 p.m. – 4:30 a.m.) seven days a week 3. Non-Surrey groups
City of Surrey	Ice Allocation Policy Outdoor Facility Allocation and Management Policy	<p>The Outdoor Facility Allocation and Management Policy identifies the following level of priority:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. City program and events 2. Special events and tournaments hosted by Surrey based sport associations, organizations and leagues that are deemed to provide significant economic benefit to the community. 3. Surrey based community, non-profit, sports associations, organizations, clubs, and leagues. 4. School District #36 programs and events 5. Casual use/games for Surrey residents 6. For profit sports, training, and clinics 7. Other <p>"Local" is defined as 60% Surrey residency.</p>

¹ <https://www.tol.ca/connect/news-events-media/for-the-record/2019-03-05-information-on-tol-recreation-facility-use-and-flo/>

Municipality	Allocation Policies	Overview of Key Space Allocation Practices
City of Burnaby	Allocation Policy	<p>The Policy outlines the following priority:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. City of Burnaby Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Department programs, events, and services 2. City of Burnaby programs, events, and services 3. School division activities during the day 4. Community events and/or tournaments hosted by City of Burnaby organizations and/or clubs that require a facility commitment longer than 1 year ahead of time 5. Non-profit community groups or informal community groups with a membership of 60% or more Burnaby residents or employees/employers of a Burnaby based company 6. Non-profit community groups or informal community groups with a membership of less than 60% Burnaby residents or employees/employers of a Burnaby based company 7. Appropriate commercial or private groups
City of Richmond	Outdoor Sports Fields and Amenities Allocation Policy	<p>Priority is set based on the following hierarchy:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. City of Richmond’s sponsored programs, events and services. 2. Richmond School District No. 38 programs and events during school hours. 3. Special events and tournaments hosted by or in partnership with Richmond-based not-for-profit sport associations, organizations, and leagues that may provide significant economic benefit to the community. 4. Richmond-based, not-for-profit youth sport associations. 5. Richmond-based, not-for profit adult programs, teams, organizations and leagues. 6. Richmond-based companies wanting to use outdoor sports facilities for its employees for company recreational use. 7. Non-resident or commercial renters (for profit). <p>“Local” is defined as 70% Richmond residency</p>
City of Coquitlam	Facility Allocation Policy	<p>The City has an overarching Facility Allocation Policy as well as individual allocation procedures for outdoor sports facilities, indoor sports facilities, ice facilities, aquatics facilities, and indoor multi-purpose spaces. The Guiding Principles identify alignment with City strategic planning and Long Term Athlete Development model.</p> <p>Priority is identified as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. City programs, services, and events 2. Sanctioned Coquitlam groups focusing on children and youth 3. Sanctioned Coquitlam groups focusing on adults and seniors 4. Casual Coquitlam groups and new groups 5. Regular groups above the base allocation provided 6. Private and commercial user

Example of how the City of Edmonton Applies the Standards of Play to Sports Fields

Demand

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

- "Standard of Play" X "Number of Teams" = "Groups Demand"
- "Sum of All Groups Demand" + "School Use" = "Total Demand"

Supply

Two major factors determine the supply of fields:

1. current inventory
2. field requirements of users

Allotment

The allotment of field time for a group is equal to that group's demand compared to the total demand, i.e. if a group is 5 percent of the total demand, their allotment only identifies the number of hours of field time. The day, time, and field location is determined by the allocation committees. A group's allotment may fluctuate from year to year, as its allotment is directly proportional to its increase or decrease in participants when compared to the overall demand for all groups.

For additional context, a number of case studies are provided on the following pages. It is important to note that these case studies are not intended to suggest examples of best practices or recommended approaches, but rather profile how a variety of municipalities have approached various aspects of facility and space allocation.

CASE STUDY: CITY OF EDMONTON – GYMNASIUM AND SPORTS FIELD ALLOCATIONS

The City of Edmonton has developed a model for allocating gymnasiums and sports fields based on standards of play that are developed collaboratively with user groups. A committee structure is established consisting of representatives from the City, school board (due to the joint use nature of most sites), and "core" user groups. The committee collaboratively reviews and establishes standards of play based on user group needs and available supply. The standards of play are then inputted into a model that provides an allocation of time.

Example Gymnasium Standards of Play

Example of Standards	Gym games	Gym Practice	# of Games	# of Practices	Practice Length	Game Length
Basketball - Adult Competitive	AA, A	B, C	27	27	1.5 hrs.	1.5 hrs
Volleyball - Youth Recreation	A, B	C, D	1/wk per Team	1/wk per Team	1.5 hrs.	1.5 hrs

Pros of this Allocation Approach:

- Collaborative.
- Outlines a clear and equitable process for allocating space to existing user groups (LTAD can easily be integrated into the standards of play).

Cons of this Allocation Approach:

- Favors larger user groups that are historically embedded in this allocation system.
- Does not measure or assess the qualitative attributes of user groups that are booking space (e.g. public benefit provided by the program or activity, quality of the program, etc.).

CASE STUDY: TOWN OF OAKVILLE ALLOCATION POLICIES

Separate but aligned policies exist for indoor ice, sportsfields, and pool time. The procedure for allocation generally occurs using the following steps (some slight variations exist between the three policies):

1. Standards of play – Based on a combination of national/provincial guidelines and local history. The standards of play identify the amount of time needed for quality programming based on the number of participants per time block, time requirements per participant, and the relative age and skill level of the participant.
2. Calculation of supply – Based on facility operating hours; broken down into prime, non-prime, and shoulder season time.
3. Calculation of demand – Calculated by considering actual demand (based on previous season registrations), plus substantiated future demand (demonstrated by registration numbers and waiting lists), and the application of the standards of play.
4. Annual registration process – Request from the user group for facility time.
5. Priority status identification – Municipal programs receive first priority followed by youth and adult program providers that are members of CORE. *See description of the CORE membership program.
6. New user group assessment – New user groups can apply to be part of the allocation process and will be considered if they have sufficient participant numbers. However, allocation to new user groups will only be considered in cases where a program provides a service to previously un-served segments of the population or where a new program is being introduced that is not available through existing organizations.
7. Calculation of supply-demand ratio - The total number of prime time and shoulder time periods of ice within the Town's inventory represents total supply. The supply-demand ratio is calculated by dividing total ice supply by the total demand.
8. Calculation of ice allocation – Allotment is calculated by multiplying the percentage of total demand that a group represents by the supply-demand ratio; proportionally split between prime and shoulder seasons. Organizations are responsible for allocations within their sub-groups (ages, teams, levels, etc.).

The CORE (Community Organizations in Recreation and Education) membership program is a unique aspect of the Town's allocations process. CORE member organizations receive priority within the allocations process along with preferred user fees. To be a CORE member, an organization must be not for profit, volunteer based, and comprised of over 85% Oakville residents.



Schedule A – Standards of Play

		Skaters / Session	Standard of Play Hours/Week
Skating Club			
CAN-SKATE/LEARN TO SKATE	50	1	
TEST	20	4	

		Skaters / Session	Standard of Play Hours/Week
Hornets			
HOUSE LEAGUE	16	1.2	
REP			
Tyke/Novice	17	2.5	
Atom/Pee wee	17	2.5	
Bantam	17	2.5	
Midget	17	2.5	

		Skaters / Session	Standard of Play Hours/Week
Minor Oaks Hockey			
HOUSE LEAGUE	16	1.2	
REP			
Tyke/Novice	17	2.5	
Atom/Pee wee	17	2.5	
Bantam	17	2.5	
Midget	17	2.5	

		Skaters / Session	Standard of Play Hours/Week
Speed Skating			
SKATERS IN ALL CATEGORIES	15	2.1	

		Skaters / Session	Standard of Play Hours/Week
Adults			
SKATERS IN ALL CATEGORIES	25	1	

Pros of this Allocation Approach:

- Standards of play are clear and specific to age groups and levels of play. The policy also identifies that the standards will consider provincial and national best practices guidelines.
- The CORE membership program provides a way to adjudicate the local composition and mandates of user groups.

Cons of this Allocation Approach:

- Historical groups are highly embedded within the allocation process.
- Demand is not fully reconciled with need (other than the standards of play calculations).

CASE STUDY: CITY OF WHITEHORSE INDOOR ALLOCATION POLICY

The City of Whitehorse recently (2019) updated its Indoor Allocation Policy based on increasing demands and competition among user groups for available space. The refreshed Policy outlined the following process for undertaking allocations:

1. Qualification

- » User groups are required to:
 - Demonstrate alignment with standards set forth by territorial and provincial sport organizations such as LTAD.
 - Demonstrate alignment with appropriate coaching / instructor and volunteer management practices.
 - Confirm insurance.

2. Space Allocation

- » Space allocation occurs using the following formula:

$$\begin{array}{r}
 \text{Actual time} \\
 \text{consumed} \\
 \text{during the} \\
 \text{previous} \\
 \text{year /} \\
 \text{season of} \\
 \text{play}
 \end{array}
 +
 \begin{array}{r}
 \text{Up to} \\
 \text{a 3\%} \\
 \text{buffer to} \\
 \text{account} \\
 \text{for} \\
 \text{growth}
 \end{array}
 =
 \begin{array}{r}
 \text{Base} \\
 \text{allocation} \\
 \text{of facility} \\
 \text{space}
 \end{array}$$

3. Change Requests and Conflict Resolution

- » User groups are permitted to submit a request for additional space only if capacity exists and the request is supported by LTAD, demonstrated growth above level considered normal, and a track record of making effective use of existing facility time.
- » The refreshed policy contains a scoring metric to prioritize groups and resolve space conflicts.

The policy also outlines priority by considering suitability for types of user groups with categories of time as outlined by the following chart.

	Prime Time Facility Hours	Non-Prime Time Facility Hours
Priority #1	Special Events, Tournament and Championships	
Priority #2	Youth Organizations within the City	Department of Education Schools as per the Joint Use Agreement
Priority #3	Adult Organizations within the City	
Priority #4	Department of Education Schools (outside of the Joint Use Agreement parameters)	Youth Organizations within the City
Priority #5	Other (including non-resident user groups and commercial users)	

Pros of this Allocation Approach:

- Qualification for space includes consideration of LTAD and other pre-requisites that help ensure public facility time is consumed by groups that provide quality and appropriate programming.
- A clear prioritization process is provided (scoring metric) to adjudicate space conflicts and assign priority where necessary.
- The policy outlines priority based on prime and non-prime hours of capacity.

Cons of this Allocation Approach:

- While the policy does articulate the need to ensure time is available for new and emerging groups, there is not a formal tactic to ensure these needs are met and accounted for within the space allocation process.

CASE STUDY: CITY OF TORONTO ICE ALLOCATION POLICY

The City of Toronto's Ice Allocations Policy was originally developed in 2001 and is unique case study for a number of reasons:

- The policy was an attempt to harmonize indoor ice allocation across city operated facilities that had historically been operated by independent municipalities (prior to municipal amalgamation).
- The policy specifically references that special policy allowances were needed to support the growth and unique dynamics of girl's hockey and adult pick-up hockey.

The policy outlined that a user group residency requirement of 80% must be demonstrated in order to receive ice allocation priority. However, this residency requirement was dropped to 70% for girl's hockey groups for a period of 5 seasons to support growth (a number of girl's hockey programs required participants from outside jurisdictions to ensure sufficient critical mass that can help build a participant base).

Pros of this Allocation Approach:

- Identified the unique needs of a user group and identified a measure to support success and growth.

Cons of this Allocation Approach:

- Ice allocations in Toronto are complex; the existing policy has not been updated or adapted formally in nearly 20 years.



4. TRENDS AND LEADING PRACTICES

Summarized in this section are a number of pertinent trends and leading practices that may warrant consideration as the Policy is being developed.

Sport for Life and Long Term Athlete Development

The Long Term Athlete Development Framework (LTAD) is a nationally accepted eight stage framework that identifies an appropriate pathway for developing physical literacy across all ages and athletic goals.

the Eight Stages of LTAD

Awareness and First Involvement

To engage in sport and physical activity, individuals must be aware of what opportunities exist for them, and when they try an activity for the first time, it is critical that the experience is positive. That is why Sport for Life emphasizes the two stages of Awareness and First Involvement.



Train to Train

Athletes enter the Train to Train stage when they have developed proficiency in the athlete development performance components (physical, technical-tactical, mental, and emotional). Rapid physical growth, the development of sporting capability, and commitment occurs in this stage. Athletes will generally specialize in one sport towards the end of the stage. A progression from local to provincial competition occurs over the course of the stage.



Active Start

From 0-6 years, boys and girls need to be engaged in daily active play. Through play and movement, they develop the fundamental movement skills and learn how to link them together. At this stage developmentally appropriate activities will help participants feel competent and comfortable participating in a variety of fun and challenging activities and games.



Train to Compete

Athletes enter the Train to Compete stage when they are proficient in sport-specific Train to Train athlete development components (physical, technical-tactical, mental, and emotional). Athletes are training nearly full-time and competing at the national level while being introduced to international competition.



FUNDamentals

In the FUNDamentals stage, participants develop fundamental movement skills in structured and unstructured environments for play. The focus is on providing fun, inclusive, multisport, and developmentally appropriate sport and physical activity. These experiences will result in the participant developing a wide range of movement skill along with the confidence and desire to participate.



Train to Win

Athletes in the Train to Win stage are world class competitors who are competing at the highest level of competition in the world (e.g. Olympics, Paralympics, World Championships, World Cups).



Learn to Train

Once a wide range of fundamental movement skills have been acquired, participants progress into the Learn to Train stage leading to understanding basic rules, tactics, and strategy in games and refinement of sport specific skills. There are opportunities to participate in multiple sports with competitions focused on skill development and retention. Games and activities are inclusive, fun, and skill based. At the end of the Learn to Train stage, participants grow (or progress) towards sport excellence in the Train to Train stage or being Active for Life, either by being Competitive for Life or Fit for Life.



Active for Life

Individuals who have a desire to be physically active are in the Active for Life stage. A participant may choose to be Competitive for Life or Fit for Life and, if inclined, give back as a sport or physical activity leader. Competitive for Life includes those who compete in any organized sport recreation leagues to Master Games. Fit for Life includes active people who participate in non-competitive physical activity.



National Sport Organizations (NSO's) are required to demonstrate alignment with LTAD by developing a Sport Framework. Fifty-five NSO's currently have a Sport Framework (or multiple sport Frameworks depending on the nature of the sport) which vary in specificity and format, but generally outline an appropriate duration, frequency, and intensity of participation for each stage of LTAD. **Sport Frameworks can provide municipalities and other public sector providers of facility space with a reference point from which to identify standards of play and allocation guidelines.**

Sport Framework Example: Baseball Canada

TRAINING

- Warm-up and cool-down
- hydration
- Bat/gear safety
- Basics rules and understanding of the game

Children in this stage should participate in a wide range of sporting activities each week with no more than two sessions per sport per week unless involved in early specialization sports such as gymnastics and swimming. The optimal window of trainability for speed (first of two) and flexibility occur during this stage for both boys and girls.

* Others sports recommended at this stage are gymnastics, swimming, hockey, and all other eye-hand coordination dominance sports. Training sessions should be station focused and stimulating, including simulated games.

EQUIPMENT Required

- Shoes
- Glove
- Hat
- Protective cup

RATIO

Train 80%

Game 20%

One hour per week for 8 - 12 weeks total

Parents act as umpires.
No scorekeepers.

1 coach for every 3 players
(2 per team minimum)

PITCH LIMITATION: Coach / machine pitch only

ABOUT FUNDamentals

PLAYERS PER TEAM

6 players by team

COMPETITION FORMAT

RALLY CAP FORMAT: 3 team rotation (1 practicing, 2 playing)

SPECIAL RULES

No bunt, strike out, walk, steal. No players cut from teams. All players hit every inning. Points awarded in offense and in defense. Throw at any base for recording an out.

GAME FORMAT

6 vs 6. All players hit every inning. Rotate batting order each inning. No league standings. Jamboree format.

SPECIALIZATION

All players should play equal time and try all team positions, including catching, and equal time should be allowed to both practices and games.

BASEBALL LTAD STAGE DESCRIPTIONS

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Source: www.baseball.ca/files/ltad.pdf

Proposed Long Term Player Development (LTPD) Seasonal Chart – Novice

Novice	Number of Practices	Start date for Practices	Development Season	Start date for Games	Development & regular Season	Playoff Season	Tournaments	Number of Games total
Ideal	40 - 45	Sept 15	10 weeks 20 practices 2 ex games	Dec 1	14 weeks 28 practices 16 games	N / A	3 tournaments 12 games	30 - 35

Coach Development Programs - Coach Certification/Continuing Education Program (CEP)

Age	Coach	Description	Clinic	Manual Resource	Video Resource
Novice	Intro Coach Coach Level Specialty Clinics	On-Line On-Line CEP	Classroom /On Ice Classroom /On Ice Classroom /On Ice	HC Skills Manual – Initiation HC Skills Manual - Novice Specialty Clinic Drill Package	Skills of Gold 1-4 Skills of Gold 1-4

Hockey Canada Development Programs – Novice

Age Division	Player	Coach	On ice curriculum	Off-ice curriculum	Dev	Rec	Promo	In Development
Novice -NCCP (Intro Coach/Coach) -Chevy Safe and Fun -Esso Fun Days -HC Skills Camps -NSST -NCMP Specialty Clinics	X X X X	X X X X	X X X X	X X	X X X	X	X	-Skills Camps for Players (IP / Novice Curriculum Development) -Coach Mentorship -Coach component with Skills Camp -NSST Drills for improvement package

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Source: www.hockeyalberta.ca/uploads/source/HC_-_LTPD_Manual.pdf

Sport for Life (CS4L) has also developed a series of best practices and recommended principles for the allocation of facility time to user groups.

- Allocation practices are based on “standards of play” principles in terms of the time and space required by each group.
- Allocation policies are transparent and reviewed with the groups. Allocation is not done by tradition, but rather on actual requirements of all groups, including the needs of emerging sports.

- Seasonal allocation meetings are held with common users groups to review their requests and try to achieve consensus on sharing available spaces and times.
- As seasons progress, groups are encouraged to be flexible in the reallocation of spaces with other groups when no longer needed, either temporarily or for longer periods.
- User fees and subsidies need to reflect community taxpayer support, and the rationale should be shared with sport organizations.

Equality and Inclusion

There is an increasing cultural awareness as to the systemic nature of racism and the structural inequalities that exist within society. In Canada, the work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission was fundamental in highlighting and exposing historical and ongoing structural flaws within society that perpetuate racism and harm towards Indigenous populations. Global movements such as Black Lives Matter has resulted in a further level of awareness and discussion on issues of race, privilege, and inequality.

Like most other sectors, municipalities and other public entities that provide parks, recreation and culture services are in the midst of evaluating their own historical culpability in perpetuating historical inequalities and “move forward” solutions that can address these issues. Parks, recreation and culture services are uniquely positioned to lead societal change by fostering inclusiveness and providing a platform to help blunt racism, prejudice, and inequality. Identified as follows are a handful of ongoing initiatives that are being undertaken by leading organizations in the sector.

- **viaSport** has identified inclusion as a key focus area and has developed a number of free or low cost resources focused on fostering increased diversity and opportunity for women and girls, persons with disabilities, the LGBTQI2S Community, marginalized youth, Indigenous people, individuals that are socio-economically disadvantaged, newcomers to Canada, individuals from rural / remote / isolated regions, and older adults.²
- **The National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA)** in the United States has been a leader in fostering conversations on topics related to inclusion and inequality in parks and recreation. In 2018, NRPA published a Parks and Recreation Inclusion Report which outlined findings from a comprehensive review of inclusion practices across parks and recreation agencies (service providers) in the United States.³
- **Sparc BC (The Social Planning and Research Council of B.C.)** has published or co-developed a wealth of resources on inclusion and access. One of these documents, “Everybody’s Welcome: A Social Inclusion Approach to Program Planning and Development for Recreation and Parks Services,” was developed in conjunction with the British Columbia Recreation and Parks Association and provided the sector with a formative resource that helped generate a greater understanding of what inclusion means and how to undertake actions that can foster it within public facilities and spaces.⁴

² www.viasport.ca/inclusion

³ <https://www.nrpa.org/contentassets/e386270247644310b06960be9e9986a9/park-recreation-inclusion-report.pdf>

⁴ <https://www.sparc.bc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/booklet-everybodys-welcome.pdf>

SO HOW DOES EQUALITY, INCLUSION, AND SOCIAL JUSTICE RELATE TO RECREATION AND PARKS SPACE ALLOCATION?

While some shifts are occurring, the majority of municipalities and other public sector facility providers continue to allocate space based on historical precedent. In other words, a tenured user groups historical access to a space has favorably positioned that group within the priority ranking at the expense of groups that are new, emerging, smaller, or have less leverage within the allocation process. This dynamic has advantageously positioned some groups to grow and have success while other groups are not able to access sufficient space to reap the same level of benefit. Leading practices, including many of those presented in this section, would suggest that municipalities and other service providers need to consider the following questions as they ponder future approaches to the allocation of space:

- Are primary users of facility space truly inclusive and provide ample opportunities for all individuals, including those that are likely to face barriers to participation?
- Does the allocation process determine priority based on achieving the highest possible degree of public benefit?
- How can the allocation process help facilitate success for groups that focus on providing opportunities to individuals that face systemic barriers to participation? (e.g. individuals from the LGBTQI2S Community, new Canadians, marginalized populations, etc.).
- Is the administrative complexity of the allocation and booking process itself a barrier? If yes, how can the process be adapted for individuals and groups that may not be predisposed to navigating through systems or that face language barriers?
- Are the barriers to accessing space a product of the allocation policy itself, staff training and understanding of inclusivity, or both?

Other Notable Trends Impacting Space Use and Allocation

Summarized as follows are a number of broader trends in parks, recreation and culture participation that will also influence future space needs and the allocation of space.

- Increasing demands for spontaneous / unstructured recreation and leisure opportunities.
- The financial impact of COVID-19 on both user groups and facility providers.
- Diversifying activity preferences and interests.
- The evolving nature of volunteerism from longer term to shorter term commitments.
- The rising cost of participating in higher levels of sport.
- Increasing awareness of the need for physical and cultural literacy and the negative impacts of activity specialization.
- Continued shift in infrastructure typology from single purpose facilities to those that are multi-purpose and expected to accommodate a wide array of activities and functions.

5. KEY POPULATION AND GROWTH INDICATORS

The Parks, Recreation and Culture Master Plan (2018) and the State of Culture Report (2019) both identify a number of key population and growth characteristics that may have pertinence to current and future recreation and culture needs.⁵

- In 2016, the recorded population in Abbotsford was 141,397 residents. The total population of the Fraser Valley Regional District was 295,934 residents.
- 32% of residents speak a non-official language (not English or French) at home.
- Educational attainment by Abbotsford residents is similar to regional levels in the Fraser Valley but lower than provincial and national averages.
- Household income levels in Abbotsford are consistent with regional, provincial, and national averages.
- With a median age of 39, Abbotsford has a younger population compared to provincial and national averages. This difference is driven by a marginally higher proportion of children and youth (ages 0-14) and younger adults (ages 15-29).



⁵ Original source of the data from Statistics Canada, 2016 Census of the Population

APPENDICES

Appendix A: User Group and Stakeholder Engagement – Participating Organizations

Organization	User Group Survey Response	Stakeholder Discussion Session Participant
Abbotsford Angels Baseball Association (AMBA)	✓	
Abbotsford Ballet and Dance Studio	✓	
Abbotsford Basketball Association		✓
Abbotsford Cardinals Baseball Club		✓
Abbotsford Judo Club	✓	✓
Abbotsford Mens Soccer League		✓
Abbotsford Minor Fastball Association	✓	✓
Abbotsford Minor Hockey Association		✓
Abbotsford Mixed Slo-Pitch		✓
Abbotsford Olympians Swim Club	✓	✓
Abbotsford Peer Support For Seniors	✓	✓
Abbotsford Rugby Club		✓
Abbotsford Skating Club		✓
Abbotsford Slo- Pitch	✓	✓
Abbotsford Whalers Aquatic Club	✓	
Abbotsford Women’s Soccer		✓



Organization	User Group Survey Response	Stakeholder Discussion Session Participant
Dasmesh Punjabi School		✓
Fraser Valley Mixed Soccer League	✓	✓
Fraser Valley Symphony	✓	✓
Fraser Valley Water Ski Club		✓
RNF Drummers	✓	✓
Rock and Gem Show Committee	✓	
Royal Soccer Club	✓	
Saturday Morning Hockey		✓
Special Olympics Abbotsford		✓
Sport Abbotsford		✓
Sport Systems	✓	
Sunday Night Hockey		✓
Symmetry injury Rehabilitation		✓
The Abbotsford Tennis Club		✓
The Goddess Movement	✓	
The Valley Concert Society	✓	
Twisters Gym Club	✓	✓
Valley Ball Hockey Association		✓
Valley Royals Track & Field Club	✓	





**City of Abbotsford
Parks, Recreation & Culture**

**32315 South Fraser Way, 3rd Floor
Abbotsford, BC
V2T 1W7**

T 604.859.3134 abbotsford.ca