



NEWS RELEASE

City and School Board sign new agreement on turf field management

ABBOTSFORD – April 17, 2024 – The City of Abbotsford and Abbotsford Board of Education have reestablished a new 30-year joint-use agreement for the operations and maintenance of the four synthetic turf fields on the school district's property.

In addition to a new cost-sharing structure for field maintenance, the operating and licence agreement includes an annual assessment of each field to guide planning for end-of-life replacement and maintenance. With a new agreement in place, the field at Abbotsford Senior Secondary will be reopened to use by community sports groups and funds will be allocated for turf replacement on one of the synthetic fields at W.J. Mouat Secondary School, which has been closed since September 2021.

“As a Council, we value recreation and support facilities, amenities and activities that connect us. Ensuring proper maintenance and enhancement of these fields not only supports our local school athletes, but also the many community sports organizations in need of a space to train and play,” said Abbotsford Mayor, Ross Siemens. “We are very happy to have renewed this partnership with the Abbotsford Board of Education and to extend the use of these artificial turf fields for the future.”

“Our Board has a longstanding history of working with the City to benefit not only our students, but the entire community,” said Shirley Wilson, Chair of the Abbotsford Board of Education. “Our Board has always supported community access to our educational and recreational facilities, fostering a vibrant and active community. This renewed agreement highlights our ongoing commitment to this vision. Together, we are ensuring that these fields will continue to serve as a valuable resource for our students and the broader community for years to come.”

The agreement entered into by the Board and the City gives the City overall responsibility for the management, administration, booking, operation, custodial services, maintenance and repairs of all four fields, overseeing access to the fields during evenings and weekends throughout the school year and full time during the summer. Annual maintenance costs are estimated at \$40,000 per field, which will be split equally between the City of Abbotsford and the Abbotsford School District. Any capital improvements or end-of-life field replacements will be funded at 65 per cent by the City and 35 per cent by the School District, which aligns with each organization's respective level of use and access to the four fields.

In early 2023, City and School Board staff renewed discussions to undertake replacement of the synthetic turf and supporting amenities at the fields on Abbotsford School District lands, three of which are situated between W.J. Mouat Senior Secondary and Colleen and Gordie Howe Middle school, with the fourth on the grounds of Abbotsford Senior Secondary.

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