

Richmond Field Sport Strategy

Everyone Can Play!

2006-2011



“Through sport, young athletes can develop ideas of justice, truth, duty, personal integrity, self discipline, sportsmanship and cooperation.”(1)

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

RICHMOND FIELD SPORT STRATEGY 2006-2011

Field sport is an integral part of life in Richmond. There are approximately 10,000 citizens participating in 29 organized sport groups plus 2,500 volunteers including coaches, managers, coordinators, and 17,500 spectators and supporters including parents, family and friends. This is roughly 18% of the Richmond population. There are over one million hours of participation in organized sport each year. These numbers do not include the heavy school use of community field sport facilities or the tremendous amount of casual field sport activity that takes place on the many parks in our active community.

Field sport provides opportunities for Richmond residents to "Live, Connect and Grow," all desired outcomes of the Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services Master Plan. Field Sport provides opportunities for participants to engage in healthy physical activity, connect and socialize with other community members and grow new skills, experiences, friendships and memories.

Strategy Development

Since the Fall of 2004, staff have been working closely with Richmond's field sport community in the preparation of an outdoor field sport strategy. As part of the Council endorsed Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services Master Plan it recommends that staff working with the field sport community:

*"Develop, adopt and advance the 2005-2015 Sports Field Strategy to ensure the broadest possible public awareness, development and access to the City's sports fields by all segments of Richmond's community and to ensure equitable allocation of City-owned sports fields.
(PRCS Master Plan 2006)."*

In October 2005, Richmond City Council approved the draft Field Strategy - Strategic Goals, Objectives-Our Playbook for Action and framework for the development of a 2005-2015 Outdoor Field Sport Strategy.

It starts with a vision.

In order to create an environment that encourages participation for Richmond residents in outdoor sport activities, an inclusive vision is required. In October 2005 City Council endorsed the vision for field sport in Richmond which is to create an environment where:

"Everyone can play."

The mission of the Field Sport Strategy is to:

- Ensure public awareness of the City's outdoor sport facilities for all citizens.
- Ensure access to the City's outdoor sport facilities for all citizens.
- Provide high quality sports surfaces for field sport user groups in the community.
- Encourage outdoor field sport participation opportunities for all Richmond residents.
- Ensure guidelines are developed that promote and support field sport in Richmond.
- Encourage and facilitate innovative and cooperative partnerships for the delivery of outdoor field sports programs in the community.
- Ensure field sport development in Richmond is integrated with the City's economic, tourism and official community plans.
- Encourage and facilitate field sport tourism in Richmond.

- Provide opportunities for community field sport groups to provide input into future field sport strategies, policies, procedures and budget priorities.
- Recognize and celebrate the accomplishments of Richmond's athletes, coaches, officials, sports builders and corporate supporters.

The development of the Field Sport Strategy identifies the City of Richmond's role in field sport delivery, which is threefold:

1. To provide outdoor sport facilities such as sports fields, ball diamonds, running tracks, and other facilities for the use of outdoor field sport participants;
2. To collaborate with outdoor field sport groups to facilitate the growth and development of a variety of affordable sport activity choices for people of all ages in the community; and
3. To maintain and manage the use of School District and City owned school and park outdoor sport facilities.

A Field Sport Strategy Steering Committee, representing a broad spectrum of community field sport interests and Richmond Sport Council, was established to provide input into the 2005-2015 Field Sport Strategy's Playbook for Action goals, objectives and actions. The consultation process also included a survey of Richmond's 29 field sport associations.

The following strategic goals were identified from input from members of the field sport community, City staff, members of the Richmond Sport Council and the Field Sport Strategy Steering Committee:

- To promote increased participation in field sports in Richmond.
- To improve the quantity and quality of Richmond's outdoor field sport facilities for all field sport user groups in the community.
- To ensure guidelines are developed that effectively manage the use of field sport facilities in Richmond.
- To encourage and facilitate innovative and cooperative partnerships for the delivery of outdoor field sports programs in the community.
- To ensure field sport development in Richmond is integrated with the City's economic, tourism and official community plans.
- To encourage and facilitate field sport tourism in Richmond.
- To provide opportunities for community field sport groups to provide input into future field sport strategies, policies, procedures and budget priorities.
- To monitor, evaluate and report back on the Field Sport Playbook for Action.

Field sport plays an essential role in the development of the social, physical, economic and environmental health of our city, greatly improves the quality of life for residents, unites the community and contributes greatly to community pride.

The fundamental challenge in field sport service delivery for the next 5 years and beyond is : "How to meet the ever increasing demand for high quality sports fields, so that everyone who wants to play, can play." The goals, objectives and actions outlined in the Field Sport Strategy 2006-2011 provide a strong foundation for making significant improvements to the delivery of field sport facilities and service delivery in Richmond for the next 5 years and beyond. *The Sports Field Strategy also contributes directly to the City of Richmond's vision of becoming the most appealing, livable and well-managed community in Canada.*

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Field Sport Strategy Steering Committee Members

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1.0 OUTDOOR FIELD SPORTS IN RICHMOND

Sport is an activity from which all Canadians can benefit. It brings out and celebrates essential human qualities like honesty, team spirit, determination, dedication, commitment and self-realization. It promotes physical health, psychological, emotional and spiritual well-being. It helps develop self confidence, self-discipline and perseverance. It provide pleasure and joy to participants and spectators, and provides opportunities for social interaction.

Outdoor field sports are one component of the City of Richmond's sport service delivery system. Other sport opportunities provided for the citizens of Richmond include aquatics, arenas and indoor sport activities.

Outdoor field sports include sports such as soccer, rugby, football, field hockey, cricket, softball, baseball, lawn bowling, field lacrosse, touch football, flag football, track and field and ultimate frisbee .

Field sports are typically organized and provided by groups of community volunteers. Schools and colleges also provide field sport activities as part of their physical education classes and/or school athletic programs.

The City of Richmond's role in field sport delivery is threefold:

1. To provide outdoor sport facilities such as sports fields, ball diamonds, running tracks, etc. for the use of outdoor field sport participants;
2. To collaborate with outdoor field sport groups to facilitate the growth and development of a variety of affordable sport activity choices for people of all ages in the community; and
3. To maintain and manage the use of School District and City owned school and park outdoor sport facilities.

In April 2003, Richmond City Council adopted six guiding principles for the future of Richmond's Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Delivery System that stated that the PRCS delivery system must:

- Ensure the City's ability to meet community needs.
- Ensure that Customer Service is Enhanced
- Values and Encourages Community Involvement
- Values Effective Partnerships
- Ensure Financial Sustainability
- Develop a Policy Framework for Decision Making

This plan has been developed to address community needs for sports fields and to provide the City of Richmond with a decision making



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framework for the delivery of outdoor sports field service delivery for the next five years. To achieve this goal in an environment where the population is growing rapidly and resources are limited, has required considerable research, analysis and discussion with stakeholders.

The results include:

- Development of a vision, mission and strategic goals as the basis for decision making.
- Preparation of a set of field sport facility use standards and sport field allocation guidelines which outline the desired level of service.
- Creation of a Richmond Sports Field Playbook For Action which outlines the goals, objectives, timelines and expected outcomes for future sport field delivery services for 2006-2011.

1.1 The Vision

The City of Richmond has a vision of being *the most appealing, livable and well-managed community in Canada*. Many citizens of Richmond support this vision with their commitment to sport and recreation as a vital part of their lives.

The recently completed Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services Master Plan for the years 2005 – 2015 presents the following community vision to build on the City’s vision:

“Richmond! Striving for a connected, healthy city where we cooperate to create and enjoy.”

In order to create an environment that encourages participation for Richmond residents in outdoor sport activities, an inclusive vision is required. The vision for field sport in Richmond is: to create an environment where *“Everyone can play.”*

1.2 The Value of Sport

Sport provides opportunities for individuals and communities to **“Live, Connect and Grow”**, all desired outcomes of the Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services Master Plan.

Sport can shape individuals and it can shape a nation; it has impact on the lives of many and can teach values including fair play and respect for self and for others. Skills learned while participating in sport are valuable life tools. To appreciate the value sport brings to Richmond, imagine our community without it.

Field sports provide many social benefits to a community. It provides an opportunity for participants and their families to meet and socialize with others in the community. Children, youth and adults meet people of other races and cultures and



“Richmond! Striving for a connected, healthy city where we cooperate to create and enjoy.”

develop friendships through a shared interest in sport. Adults participating in sport socialize and make friends while improving their fitness level. Spectator events such as junior hockey, senior lacrosse or professional soccer, baseball and football games provide opportunities for youth to interact with adults and socialize with other youth in a safe, controlled environment. Seniors participating in sport stay active, improve their health, meet new people and socialize with friends

"When we get it right, sport can bring joy; making our spirits soar and bring us together." (3)

1.3 "To Live"

Field sport participation provides significant health benefits to the community. Sport provides a variety of activities in which participation enables people of all ages to have fun while improving their level of fitness.

In light of the alarming increase in childhood inactivity and obesity throughout North America, participation in sport gets kids off the couch, away from the television and video games and having fun while exercising their bodies. A 2002 study cited in the International Journal of Obesity reported that from 1981-1996, the number of overweight children in Canada had increased from 11% to 33% in boys and 13% to 27% in girls. Also, during the same time period, the number of obese children in Canada has increased from 2% to 10% of boys and from 2% to 9% of girls. (2)

Canadian children are becoming progressively more obese, weaker and less flexible and that 63% of children ages 5 to 17 are not active enough to achieve optimal growth.(3) Through participation in a field sport activity, our youth will enhance their health during critical years of growth and development, lower the risk of chronic diseases in adulthood and help to develop a lifelong fitness lifestyle.

"Only 27% of British Columbians are physically active enough to achieve health benefits. In terms of impact on the population's health, improving the numbers that are physically active is as important as reducing smoking." (4)

Adult participation in sport is preventative health care. Regular participation in physical activity is effective in achieving physical, mental and social health, increases productivity and lowers health care costs. A report by the BC Healthy Living Alliance estimates the cost of physical inactivity in BC is conservatively \$422 million and that 39% of adults in BC are not active enough to achieve the health benefits associated with an active lifestyle. Physical inactivity is a major risk factor for coronary heart artery disease, stroke, hypertension, type 2 diabetes, colon cancer, breast cancer and

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For older adults, regular participation in sport activities greatly improves physical health, quality of life and longevity.

osteoporosis. (5) Initiatives such as new sport and fitness facilities that facilitate adults of all ages in Richmond to be active are a positive investment in the health and productivity of community residents.

For older adults, regular participation in sport activities greatly improves physical health, quality of life and longevity. “Regular activity may reduce the severity of chronic disease and perhaps extend the lifespan by a few years. The benefits are a reduction in demands for acute and chronic medical services, lower indirect costs of illness, and less costly dependence during retirement.” (The International Conference on Exercise, Fitness and Health 1988). (6)

“You don’t stop playing because you grow old, you grow old because you stop playing.” ∞ George Bernard Shaw

1.4 “To Connect”

Field sports are inclusive and contribute to a sense of community. They engender a strong community spirit, shared pride and social interaction.

Field sports are inclusive and contribute to a sense of community. They engender a strong community spirit, shared pride and social interaction. Richmond has participants in field sport from four year olds to seniors. There are females and males. Participation covers all levels of ability from recreational to elite to special needs and is representing a growing cross section of Richmond’s many cultures. Statistics Canada reported in 1998 that 55% of active Canadians belonged to a local club, community league or other local amateur sport organization. This was an increase of 20% since 1992. (7)

Sport also helps develop a sense of belonging to new immigrants. When Canada’s elite athletes achieve international success, (such as our men’s and ladies hockey teams at the 2002 Winter Olympics) it can unify the country, when local amateur sports teams win provincial, national or international championships, it can unify communities. Richmond has a long history of producing top caliber school and community sports teams and Olympic and professional athletes. These athletes serve as positive ambassadors for the community and role models and mentors for youth in the community.

“Sport is one way in which social exclusion can be tackled. Important evidence suggest that participating in sporting activities increases people’s sense of integration into their local community in both urban and rural areas.”(6)

Sport engenders volunteerism, a vital part of our vibrant community. Richmond’s field sport associations are primarily operated by volunteer boards most of which are affiliated with provincial and national sport organizations. The volunteer base of our community sport programs makes sport cost efficient. The involvement of the City is primarily in supply and servicing of facilities.



Volunteering with community sport organizations is a good way for parents to meet new people, learn new job skills and contribute their time, effort and skills to provide positive youth activities in their community.

1.5 "To Grow"

Richmond City Council recently adopted the vision for Richmond to be the best place in North America to raise children and youth. Field Sports provide many benefits for youth. Through participation in field sports, Richmond youth have fun, socialize, get exercise, and channel their energy into positive, socially acceptable and beneficial activities. Sport participation builds healthy individuals by developing self-discipline, self-motivation, self-esteem, determination, dedication, commitment, leadership, responsibility, creativity and physical fitness. Sport can also play a key role in teaching lessons on the value and importance of team work, cooperation, group synergy, mutual respect and fair play.

Participation in field sports provide positive lifestyle choices and alternatives to destructive behavior such as drug abuse and crime. Most youth feel a strong desire to be associated with a group of their peers. Team sports fulfill this need in a positive way, youth gangs fulfill this need in a negative and destructive way. "It costs more than 100 times more to incarcerate a child than it does to provide recreation programs".(8)

Learning is also positively influenced by participation in sport. A 1989 study conducted by the California National Parks Service concluded that youth involved in athletics stay in school longer, complete their education, are less likely to start smoking and develop a more positive self-image.(8)

For many youth, field sport provides the opportunity to be influenced in a positive way by an adult role model. For some youth, their coach is the only positive adult role model that they know. Coaches teach sports skills, life skills and serve as mentors for youth in the community.

Field sport also provides youth with opportunities for volunteer work experience and part-time work in jobs such as refereeing, umpiring and working in concessions.

"Children who participate in activities outside of school such as sports, music, the arts or clubs tend to have higher self-esteem, interact better with friends and perform better in school." (9)

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1.6 Sport and the Economy

Sport is an economic magnet which draws thousands of visitors to Richmond every year. Tournament visitors spend money on accommodation, meals, entertainment and shopping. Sport tourist spending is a huge benefit to local businesses, especially youth tournaments where entire families attend. For example, the economic impact to the local economy of the annual Thanksgiving Weekend Youth Soccer Tournament hosted by Richmond Youth Soccer and Richmond Girls Soccer Club is estimated at \$575,000. In 2004, 211 teams participated, of which 128 teams were from outside Richmond. This tournament is just one of hundreds of sport tournaments, meets, games and events that attract out-of-town visitors to Richmond each year.

...the economic impact to the local economy of the annual Thanksgiving Weekend Youth Soccer Tournament hosted by Richmond Youth Soccer and Richmond Girls Soccer Club is estimated at \$575,000...

Sport can bring economic wealth to the community in many other ways. Sport participants need sporting goods, which may create spin-off manufacturing businesses as well as retail outlets in the community. In 1996, the average Canadian household spent \$644 on sporting goods and services.⁽⁷⁾ There may be a resultant increase in employment when sport participation increases or if new spectator sports are established in a community.

There can be major savings in health care costs when sport is valued, supported and promoted. Employee productivity has been shown to increase when people are active and involved in sport. “If just 10% fewer British Columbians were physically inactive, the province could save an estimated \$16.1 million every year in avoided hospital, drug, physician and other direct costs. Added to an estimated \$19.9 million in productivity gains, total economic savings to BC from a 10% reduction in physical inactivity amount to \$36 million per year.”⁽¹⁰⁾

1.7 Field Sport in Richmond

Field sport is an integral part of life in Richmond. There are approximately 10,000 citizens involved as participants in 29 organized sport groups plus 2,500 volunteers (coaches, managers, coordinators) and 17,500 spectators and supporters (parents, family, friends). This is roughly 18% of the Richmond population. There are over 1 million hours of participation in organized sport each year. These numbers do not reflect casual usage of sport facilities or the school use of City facilities for sport practices and games.

A lifetime of healthy recreation activities are available to residents 4 years old to seniors. There is also a wide variety of ability choices, from recreational participation through elite level competition, and opportunities for people with special needs.

For the past 25 years, field sport in Richmond has been operated through a partnership between the Richmond Sports Council (a coordinated voice of organized sport groups) and the City



There are approximately 10,000 citizens involved as participants in 29 organized sport groups plus 2,500 volunteers (coaches, managers, coordinators) and 17,500 spectators and supporters (parents, family, friends).

of Richmond. Richmond Sports Council's member groups of dedicated volunteers recruit players coaches and officials, coordinate player registration and league scheduling, train players, coaches, officials and volunteers and organize activities, events and tournaments that bring out-of-town visitors to the community. The City of Richmond builds and maintains fields, provides land on which fields are built and allocates the use of park and school playing fields. This partnership has kept the cost of providing field sport services to the community quite cost-efficient for the City and affordable to participants.

Participation in field sports in Richmond has undergone considerable changes over the past decade. Some historically popular sports such as youth baseball and football and adult fast pitch softball have experienced considerable decline in participation. Other sports such as girls soccer, ladies recreational soccer and masters age soccer and slow pitch softball have ballooned in popularity. Some newer sports such as ultimate Frisbee are increasing in popularity and demanding access to an already overused supply of sports fields.

The changing ethnic make-up of the Lower Mainland is spurring growth in sports that are popular amongst some ethnic groups. Cricket, field hockey and kabaddi are growing in participation in neighboring communities, and may soon be demanding field space in Richmond as well.

The fundamental challenge in field sport delivery in Richmond for the next decade and beyond will be: *"How to meet the ever increasing demand for high quality sports fields, so that everyone who wants to play, can play."*

.....

Some historically popular sports such as youth baseball and football and adult fast pitch softball have experienced considerable decline in participation. Other sports such as girls soccer, ladies recreational soccer and masters age soccer and slow pitch softball have ballooned in popularity..



1.8 Mission for Outdoor Field Sport in Richmond

The Mission for outdoor field sport in Richmond is to:

- Ensure public awareness of the City’s outdoor sport facilities for all citizens.
- Ensure access to the City’s outdoor sport facilities for all citizens.
- Provide high quality sports surfaces for field sport user groups in the community.
- Encourage outdoor field sport participation opportunities for all Richmond residents.
- Ensure guidelines are developed that promote and support field sport in Richmond.
- Encourage and facilitate innovative and cooperative partnerships for the delivery of outdoor field sports programs in the community.
- Ensure field sport development in Richmond is integrated with the City’s economic, tourism and official community plans.
- Encourage and facilitate field sport tourism in Richmond.
- Provide opportunities for community field sport groups to provide input into future field sport strategies, policies, procedures and budget priorities.
- Recognize and celebrate the accomplishments of Richmond’s athletes, coaches, officials, sports builders and corporate supporters.

“Sport is at the heart of Canadian life. It’s an activity that has benefits for each and every Canadian, for our communities and our country. Sport puts front and centre the qualities we value as Canadians – fairness, team spirit, hard work, dedication and commitment. And our hard working, dedicated and committed high performance athletes are unquestionably role models for our children. Sport promotes physical, mental, emotional and spiritual health and well-being. Sport develops character and teaches the rewards of discipline and perseverance. It is also a way for Canadians to get to know each other.” 🌀 Honourable Denis Coderre, former Secretary of State (Amateur Sport)



2.0 Context of the Field Strategy

The focus of the Outdoor Sport Field Strategy is on outdoor field sports. A wide range of outdoor sports opportunities exist in Richmond. Outdoor sports include activities involving physical exertion and skills that are governed by a set of rules or customs and often undertaken competitively, as an active pastime, or recreationally. Sports included in this study include soccer, football, rugby, field hockey, field lacrosse, baseball, softball, cricket, athletics (track and field) and lawn bowling.

Sports included in this study include soccer, football, rugby, field hockey, field lacrosse, baseball, softball, cricket, athletics (track and field) and lawn bowling.

2.1 Current Reality

Richmond is a vibrant growing city with a diverse population - many of whom frequently participate in field sport activities.

2.1.1 Field Sport Participation

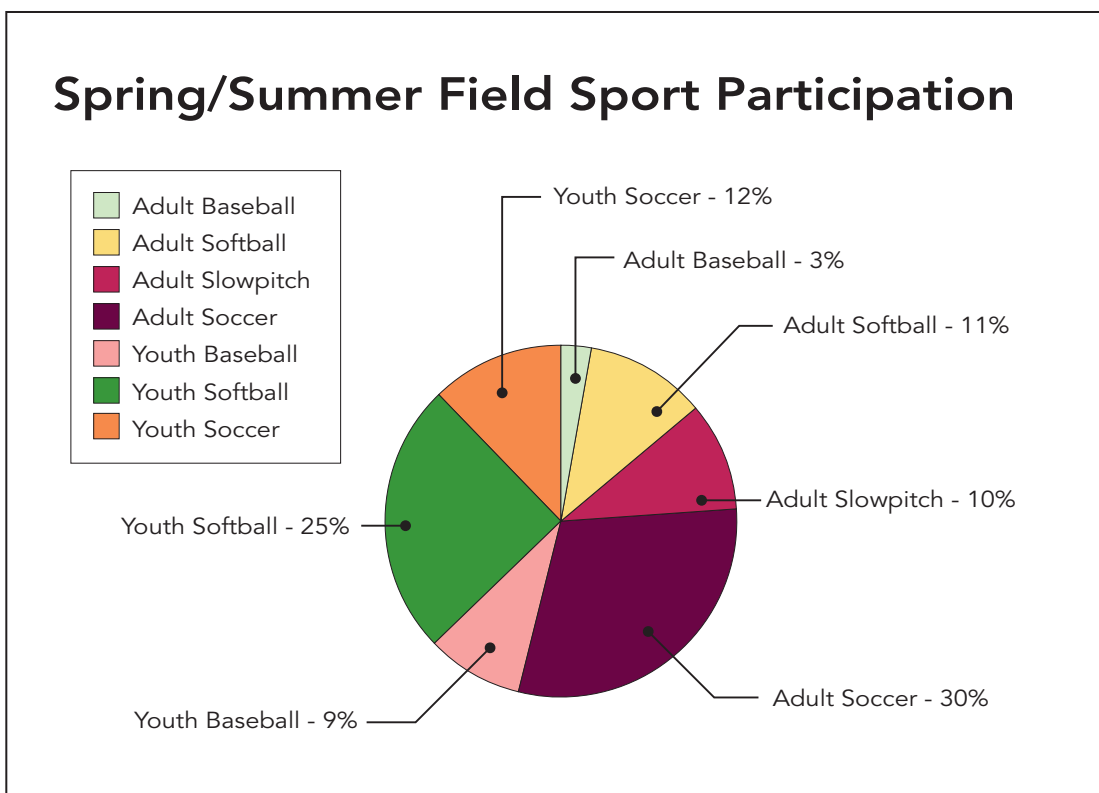
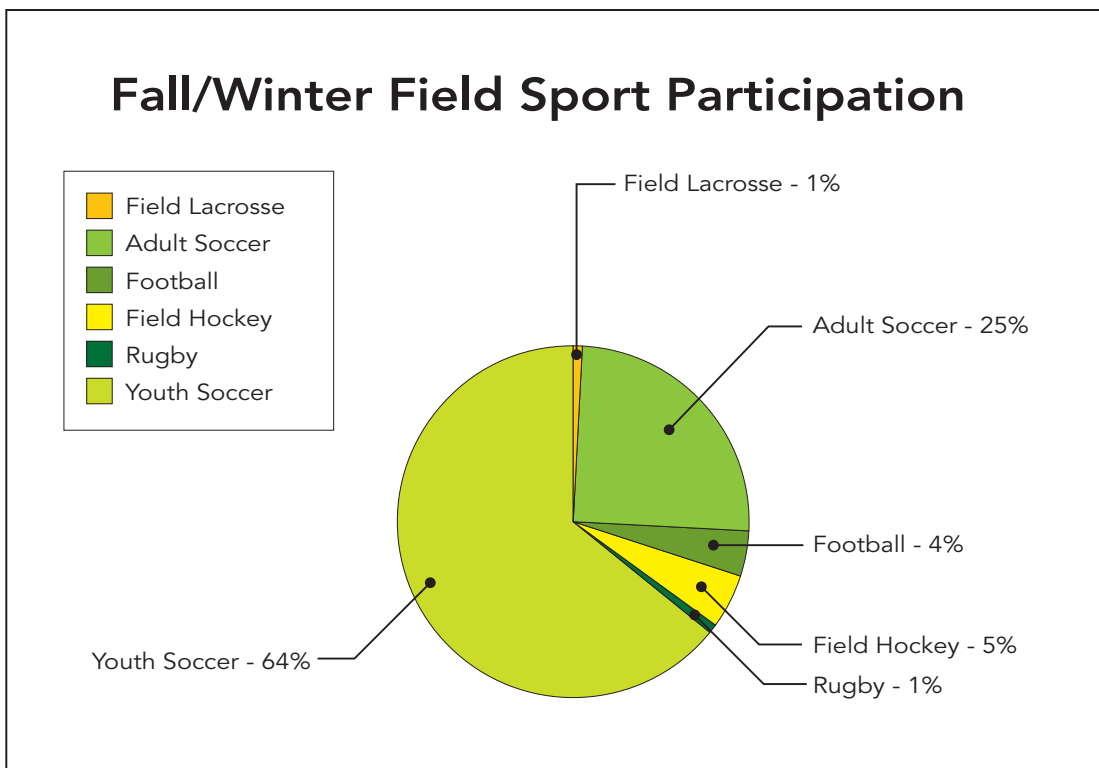
Richmond is home to 29 field sport user groups which are comprised of an estimated 10,000 participants, 2,500 volunteers (coaches, officials, league executive members, etc.) and 17,500 supporters (parents, grandparents, family members and friends). The total number of citizens involved in field sport in Richmond is estimated at 30,000 people, or 18% of the current population.

The total number of citizens involved in field sport in Richmond is estimated at 30,000 people, or 18% of the current population.

- Field sport activities are available for people ages 4 years old to seniors, beginner through advanced levels of competition and for people with disabilities.
- Estimated field sport player participation hours is over one million hours per year.
- Soccer is the most popular field sport activity in Richmond with over 3,700 Fall/Winter participants and 1,300 Spring/Summer participants.
- Girls and women's soccer participation is increasing by approximately 10% /year
- There has been tremendous growth in Masters category soccer as many Baby Boomers are choosing to continue playing soccer as their preferred fitness activity.
- Soccer is the most popular field sport activity amongst new immigrants to the community.
- Participation in Fall/Winter sports increased 21% from 1995 to 2002. The largest increase was in girls and ladies soccer, field lacrosse and football.
- Participation in Spring/Summer sports has increased 43% from 1995 to 2002. The largest increase was in all ages of summer soccer and adult softball.



The following charts shows the 2005 Fall/Winter and Spring /Summer participation percentages of the various field sport activities in Richmond:



2.1.2 Field Sport Inventory

The City of Richmond Parks Department maintains and allocates 71 softball diamonds, 21 baseball diamonds, 48 mini soccer fields, 53 senior soccer fields, 4 outdoor lacrosse boxes, 2 field hockey fields, 2 lawn bowling greens, 1 cricket pitch and 1 competition standard track and field facility.

Of the 101 rectangular sports fields, 19 are sand based fields, 2 are artificial turf fields and 80 are clay fields.

There are field lights on 12 soccer fields, 3 softball diamonds and 2 baseball diamonds.

2.1.3 Positive Action In The Past 5 Years:

- Minoru and Richmond High School lit artificial turf field projects completed.
- Hugh Boyd field lighting and upgrading field #4 from clay to sand based field.
- Construction of 2 full-sized and two 8-a-side artificial turf soccer fields at Hugh Boyd Park are currently under construction (due playable by October 2006).
- Construction of baseball diamonds at Blundell park and Manoah Steves is underway.
- Mobile changerooms provided at some sites.
- Significant consultation with user groups
- Drainage upgrades at several sites.
- Significant contributions made by community field user groups in field and diamond development and maintenance.

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Construction of 2 full-sized and two 8-a-side artificial turf soccer fields at Hugh Boyd Park are currently under construction (due playable by Oct. '06).



2.1.4 Field User Feedback

In the Fall of 2003, the City of Richmond Parks Department conducted a survey of field users to get feedback regarding outdoor field sport facilities in Richmond. The following is a summary of the survey results:

- All field users indicated that their needs were not being met and that they are dissatisfied with inconsistent field conditions.
- Soccer groups expressed concern about the poor quality of playing conditions for much of their season.
- Spring Summer sports groups are dissatisfied at having to play on poor quality playing surfaces that have been badly damaged by Fall/Winter field sports.
- 50% of groups indicated a desire for program growth – more teams, practices, games and tournaments.
- 50% of users indicated that they have had facility and group conflicts.

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Spring Summer sports groups are dissatisfied at having to play on poor quality playing surfaces that have been badly damaged by Fall/Winter field sports.

- 80% indicated a need for more field maintenance.
- 80% indicated a need for more quality sport field facilities.
- 90+% indicated a willingness to contribute to improving facilities.
- 25% indicated a need for a tournament centre

In Appendix #1 are some survey response comments from Richmond field user groups regarding the condition of playing fields in the community. The following chart shows the fields and diamonds that are rated as good quality and fair quality.

Field/Diamond Playing Conditions

Type	Good Quality	Fair Quality
Fields	19 Sand base and 2 Artificial	All other 80 clay soil fields
Diamonds	London –Steveston Quad Complex (4 diamonds)	All other 88 diamonds

An assessment of Richmond's field use indicated that the existing soccer fields have more than double the number of hours of use than would be considered acceptable for a turf playing field in this climate.

An assessment of Richmond's field use indicated that the existing soccer fields have more than double the number of hours of use than would be considered acceptable for a turf playing field in this climate. The result is that the playing conditions of the fields deteriorate throughout the season, and by mid season, many community fields are unplayable.



The following chart comparing the bench mark standard for a typical soil, sand or artificial turf field versus what is actually being booked onto Richmond's playing fields.

Field Booking Hours Per Week

Type	Actual Bookings Richmond - hrs/week	Recommended Benchmark - hrs/week
Sand Grass	21	10
Clay	17	6
Artificial	50	50

It is evident by this comparison that Richmond's natural grass playing fields are highly overused which results in poor playing conditions by late Fall of each year.

The following are some comments about Richmond field sport facilities from field user meetings:

2.1.5 Rectangular Field Users:

- The status quo is not acceptable.
- Need for more hours of field time for games and practices on good quality playing fields.
- There are several clay soil fields that are rarely used due to poor quality playing surfaces. Most clay soil fields are unplayable by the end of October of each year.

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- The good quality sand fields and especially those with lights are being overused, which results in poor playing conditions by early December of each year.
- All groups are limiting their registration, tournaments and programs such as player/coach development camps due to insufficient game and practice time available on good quality playing fields.
- More lit artificial turf fields are needed for hosting practices and games.
- Some groups showed a willingness to fundraise for new field sport amenities eg. fieldhouse at Hugh Boyd Park.
- Considerable interest was shown in building one large multi field tournament complex, possibly at Garden City, if it becomes available.
- Concern was expressed about the number of casual field user groups that just show up on community fields without allotments and play regardless of weather conditions.
- Considerable interest in building a championship soccer, rugby, football, field lacrosse, track and field multi-sport "stadium" at Garden City, if the sites becomes available.

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Groups are limiting their registration, tournaments and programs such as player/coach development camps due to insufficient game and practice time available on good quality playing fields.

2.1.6 Ball Diamond Users

- The number of diamonds is not an issue. The problem is that most diamond outfields are shared with soccer, and by the time soccer season ends, most outfields are badly damaged.
- Baseball wants its own dedicated diamonds for their older age players (Bantams and older) so that the players can begin practicing before the soccer season ends, and that the playing surface is in good shape for the start of the season.
- Baseball and softball are experiencing ongoing problems trying to access ball diamonds early enough due to soccer teams post season play.
- Baseball has expressed a need for a multi diamond tournament centre.
- Need for more funds spent on field and building maintenance
- Field lights at Latrace and Brighthouse require higher level of illumination.
- Softball expressed concern that many diamonds allotted to softball were not designed as softball diamonds.
- Some diamond user groups already have a "home field" field maintenance partnership with the City e.g. at Palmer/Garden City Park.

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Baseball and softball are experiencing ongoing problems trying to access ball diamonds early enough due to soccer teams post season play.

- Concern that youth summer soccer, fieldhockey and lacrosse are all trying to recruit the same pool of kids as softball and baseball.
- Both baseball and softball expressed a need for an indoor practice space in the winter.

2.1.7 Other Field Sports:

- Richmond Kajaks Track and Field Club are experiencing frequent conflicts with casual walkers on the Minoru track. Strong consideration should be given to building a new track and field training and competition facilities at another site such as the Garden City lands, should they become available.
- Richmond Lawn Bowling Club would like to have expanded clubhouse facilities.

Richmond Kajaks Track and Field Club are experiencing frequent conflicts with casual walkers on the Minoru track.

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2.2 Trends

Several trends, both local and global affect outdoor field sports in Richmond:

As recently as 15 years ago, the use of sports fields were generally confined to children and younger adults (30 and under) and most participants were male. Since then, female participation rates have averaging 10 % growth a year, so that today, the number of male and female field sport participants is approaching equal numbers. One of the fastest growing field sport participation groups in Richmond today is women re-entering sports after many years of not participating. Once the child rearing years are over and women get more free time, many are choosing to join team sports such as soccer and softball for fitness and camaraderie.

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In North America, the Baby Boom generation grew up with jogging and aerobics classes. This large sector of the population is comprised of a large group of active adults, many of which want to keep playing field sports as long as they feel healthy enough to do so. New masters age level leagues are being developed to accommodate this demand. For example, in Richmond, there are men's and ladies Over 30, 40 and 50 year old soccer and softball teams regularly playing field sports. This passion to keep competing in sport has led to a proliferation of masters sport competitions (30 years and over) throughout North America and many other parts of the world.

The population of Richmond is ageing. The post-war baby boomers are now turning 50. The impacts of this trend on society effect many sectors of the community. The impact on field sports will result in a decreased demand for sport fields in Richmond by adult groups around the year 2010.



The changing ethnic composition of Richmond effects sport field participation levels. About half of Richmond residents are Canadian by birth and half are immigrants. Cultural differences lead to demands for different sports. Sports such as racquet sports, soccer, baseball, field hockey and track and field continue to attract participants of Asian descent. Very few visible minorities participate in football or ice sports.

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Registration in Spring/Summer soccer is on the rise. Most of this increase is by children and adults who want to play soccer year round, but a growing number are kids whose parents want a shorter time commitment than the September to April Fall/Winter soccer season.

Artificial turf fields are quickly becoming the preferred sport surfacing choice for many communities throughout the west coast of North America. Fresh water shortages, decreasing land resources, increasing user demands and improved playing surface quality have made artificial turf the best choice of playing surface for many field sport applications.



Artificial turf fields are the ideal playing surface for a wet weather playing season.

Artificial turf fields are the ideal playing surface for a wet weather playing season. The ability of artificial turf to be played on in wet conditions means that games and practices don't have to be rescheduled.

2.3 Challenges

The following are some of the challenges associated with providing field sport service delivery in Richmond.:

2.3.1 Dissatisfied Field Users

Many field users are dissatisfied with the conditions of Richmond playing fields.

2.3.2 Shortage Of High Quality Fields And Other Amenities

There is a shortage of high quality full sized soccer/rugby/football fields to meet the current user demands for games and practices.

There is a shortage of high quality full sized soccer/rugby/football fields to meet the current user demands...

The demand for high quality fields exceeds the supply in the following sports:

- Youth and Adult Fall/Winter and Spring/Summer soccer
- Youth football field lighting (for games and practice)
- Youth and adult rugby (for games and practices)
- Adult softball

Baseball and softball field users have adequate diamonds, but are experiencing problems accessing diamonds for pre-season and post season training due to overlap with soccer. At some parks, they lack amenities such as washrooms, irrigation, proper field drainage and a water supply to wet the infields. Adult softball players are playing on many undersized poor quality diamonds.

There are problems accessing diamonds for pre-season and post season training due to overlap with soccer.

Two thirds of Richmond's sports fields are poor quality clay based fields that are typically unusable from the end of November to early April each year.



2.3.3 Overuse Of Fields

Overused turf fields result in poor playing conditions (soil fields by the end of October and sand fields by mid December)

Two thirds of Richmond's sports fields are poor quality clay based fields that are typically unusable from the end of November to early April each year.

Ten of the City's 19 sand based high quality soccer fields have lights and are being used for both games and practices, which is resulting in overuse of these fields. The lit sand fields are typically badly damaged by mid December of each year due to overuse.

Turf fields are closed on average 30% of the time due to inclement weather and reurfing work.

Casual groups are playing field sports on Richmond fields without allotments, irregardless of the weather conditions... These unauthorized groups can do substantial damage to fields that do not have caretakers.



Casual groups are playing field sports on Richmond fields without allotments, irregardless of the weather conditions. Richmond does not have a Parks Patrol to control and monitor field use activities on weekends and evenings. These unauthorized groups can do substantial damage to fields that do not have caretakers.

Increased level of the quality of playing surface is expected by field users and they expect to have grass underfoot all season long.



2.3.4 Increased User Expectations

Increased level of the quality of playing surface is expected by field users and they expect to have grass underfoot all season long. Many field users play away games at other municipal fields and are able to compare the quality of their home fields against those of other teams. There is a lot of community pride that comes with hosting visiting teams on high quality fields.

2.3.5 Increasing Population

The population of Richmond is approximately 180,000 people and is expected to reach 212,000 by 2010. Currently there are approximately 10,000 residents (or 5.56% of the population) participating in field sports in the community. Using the 5.56% participation level to project how many more field users there will be by the year 2010, then there will be another 1,780 more field users to be accommodated than are presently using Richmond facilities. The ethnic make-up of these new residents will have a large effect on whether the actual participation numbers are greater or less. This increase will cause even greater demands upon Richmond's existing field capacity.

2.3.6 Increasing Levels Of Participation

Participation levels are increasing in "rectangular field sports" such as Fall/Winter and Spring/Summer soccer. Soccer has become a year round commitment for youth players and continues to grow rapidly in amongst girls and women.

2.3.7 Lack Of Budget And Land Resources

The current field maintenance budget is inadequate to provide the high level of maintenance needed to keep the existing turf fields in



their best possible playing condition (i.e. more frequent aeration, top dressing, reseeding, returving, fertilization and grass cutting). The budget is being stretched by the need to also maintain school district fields, many of which are not used for community sport activities.

Lack of amenities such as washrooms and adequate parking are causing complaints from residents living adjacent to some sports fields.

Lack of amenities such as washrooms and adequate parking are causing complaints from residents living adjacent to some sports fields.

Shortage of funding for new field construction projects.

Lack of suitable available park land (located outside of residential neighborhoods) on which to build lit sports fields and a multi-sport tournament complex.

High cost of purchasing land in Richmond for sport field development.

Artificial turf fields are expensive to build, and therefore it is likely that to build all that are required to meet current playing field shortages may require that they be phased over several years. The overuse of current fields will therefore likely continue for several more years before there is enough field capacity to start reducing play on sand fields and phasing out poor quality and undersized soil fields.

Artificial turf fields are expensive to build... to meet current playing field shortages may require that they be phased over several years.

There are insufficient facilities on which to play games during inclement weather. Richmond does not have lit all-weather gravel fields or enough lit artificial turf fields on which to shift games and practices during periods of wet weather. Consequently many games and practices are taking place on fields that are in a very vulnerable condition.

There is a lack of resources to provide “parks patrol” to monitor the use of Richmond park and deal with field allotment issues and Code of Conduct violations.

2.3.8 Organized Sport Activities on Neighborhood Parks

Richmond has several small neighborhood parks that contain active sports fields. There are many examples of organized field sport activities causing conflict with neighbors when they take place on small neighborhood parks, especially when these facilities are allotted to adult groups. Adjacent property owners complain about such issues as noise, traffic congestion, lack of washrooms and balls hitting their homes. For this reason, future new field development will be restricted to larger neighborhood athletic parks, community parks or city-wide parks where amenities such as washrooms and adequate parking are available.

Richmond has several small neighborhood parks that contain active sports fields... Adjacent property owners complain about such issues as noise, traffic congestion, lack of washrooms and balls hitting their homes.

2.3.9 Climate

Wet climate results in Richmond turf fields are closed about 30% of the time.

Many Richmond fields are at or beyond their life expectancy and need to be rebuilt.

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2.3.10 Aging Infrastructure
Many Richmond fields are at or beyond their life expectancy and need to be rebuilt.

2.3.11 Construction Challenges

Drainage challenges exist due to high water table at several sites

Many fields lack proper irrigation which causes them to burn out during periods of hot dry weather.

2.3.12 Field Booking Balance

Some groups such as rugby and football have expressed concern about inequity of allocation of quality fields.

2.3.13 Public Attitudes

Public attitudes are demanding better water conservation practices.

Public attitudes have resulted in the loss of the use of herbicides to control weeds. The result is that many fields are now infested with weeds to a point that they adversely effect playing conditions.

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Public attitudes have resulted in the loss of the use of herbicides to control weeds. The result is that many fields are now infested with weeds to a point that they adversely effect playing conditions. Large broadleaf weeds can be slippery and be trip hazards for field users.

Public attitudes can be detrimental towards initiatives to locate sports activities and field lighting into neighborhood parks. This “not in my back yard” attitude can prevent the development of sports fields in what would otherwise be the most viable and cost effective sites.

2.3.14 Problem Groups

Some groups are not abiding by the park use Code of Conduct, which causes complaints from neighbors of sports fields.

Some groups are hoarding fields by booking more time than they need and therefore many valuable field times are being unused.

Some groups are playing on fields without allotments, and when allotment holders show up, they are refusing to leave

2.3.15 User Fees And Funding Contributions

Richmond user groups are currently charged user fees for use of artificial turf fields. Fee for use of natural turf playing fields was recently approved by Council and will go into effect in 2007.

Richmond does not have a requirement for how much field user groups must contribute towards the development of new sports field developments. Some communities insist that their sports groups contribute to facility developments.

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Richmond does not have a requirement for how much field user groups must contribute towards the development of new sports field developments. Some communities insist that their sports groups contribute a third or more towards the capital costs of their facility developments.

2.3.16 Lack of Social Gathering Facilities

Richmond field users do not have social gathering clubhouses in which to host their after game celebrations. Such facilities would help eliminate some of the problems being experienced with post game consumption of alcoholic beverages on parks.

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... facilities would help eliminate some of the problems being experienced with post game consumption of alcoholic beverages on parks.

3.0 Strategic Goals, Objectives and Outcomes, Our Playbook for Action

The following goals and objectives were identified with input from members of the field sport users groups, city staff and the Richmond Sports Council. The goals form eight categories with supporting objectives.

3.1 Increased Participation

To promote increased participation in field sports in Richmond by 20% by 2010.

In June 2005, the City of Richmond officially accepted the provincial challenge to increase physical activity levels of its citizens by 20% by 2010.

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In June 2005, the City of Richmond officially accepted the provincial challenge to increase physical activity levels of its citizens by 20% by 2010. Participation in field sport activities is one of many ways that Richmond residents can become more physically active. To get involved in field sport activities, residents must be made aware of the value of field sport participation, how to join teams, how to book fields and what facilities are available for them to use.

The objectives of this goal are to:

- Educate the community on the value of participating in outdoor field sports.
- Promote how residents can get involved in field sports in the community.
- Educate the community on the outdoor sports facilities that exist in Richmond.
- Eliminate barriers that prevent some residents from participating in field sport activities in the community.



3.2 Improved Facilities

To improve the quantity and quality of Richmond's outdoor field sport facilities for all field sport user groups in the community.

In order to achieve our vision of "Everyone Can Play", it is necessary to increase the City's quantity of outdoor field sport facilities.

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In order to achieve our vision of "Everyone Can Play", it is necessary to increase the City's quantity of outdoor field sport facilities. This increased capacity needs to address both the current demands that cannot be accommodated on existing facilities, and future demands caused by factors such as the growing popularity that is occurring in some field sport activities such as girls and women's soccer, a rapidly growing population and the emergence of new field sport activities.

It is also beneficial for a community to provide informal grass play areas where small groups of people can gather, have some fun and get some exercise throwing a ball around on a casual basis.

The expectation of Richmond field sport users is to have consistent high quality playing surfaces on which to train and compete. Playing surfaces that are damaged or poorly maintained provide inferior playing conditions and may be hazardous to participants. To provide consistent high quality playing conditions requires a program of regular monitoring, damage prevention and repair work. To achieve this goal will require increased funding for sport surface maintenance.

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Playing surfaces that are damaged or poorly maintained provide inferior playing conditions and may be hazardous to participants.

Alternative funding strategies should also be explored in order to build the capacity needed to accommodate field sport demands in a timely manner. The objectives of this goal are to:



Objectives:

- Increase capacity for accommodating residents wanting to play field sports.
- Provide safe, high quality playing surfaces for field sport users in the community.
- Provide playing fields that can be accessible to community field sport groups during periods of inclement weather.
- Provide informal natural turf areas where residents can play casual sport activities.
- Explore alternative funding strategies to help fund the costs of building and maintaining field sport facilities.

3.3 Field Sport Facility Management

To ensure guidelines are developed that effectively manage the use of field sport facilities in Richmond.

Participation in field sport activities can be a very healthy and enjoyable experience for players, volunteers and spectators. However, on some occasions, the behavior of some groups or individuals can cause problems that negatively effect other participants, park users and adjacent residents. Guidelines are required to control the conduct of field sport participants using school and park property.

Park use guidelines are also needed, that both maximize the use of these valuable community assets, and also protect these facilities from excessive damage caused by overuse.

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Park use guidelines are also needed, that both maximize the use of these valuable community assets, and also protect these facilities from excessive damage caused by overuse.

Sport field booking procedures must provide for fair and equitable allocation of field sport facilities amongst all residents.

The objectives of this goal are to:

- Develop guidelines that promote safe, responsible and respectful use of community field sport facilities
- Develop field use booking guidelines that prevent overuse of natural turf fields.



Richmond field user groups should be encouraged to take on a greater stewardship role of their allotted fields and diamonds.



- Promote information to field users about the Park Use Code of Conduct and the Richmond Parks web site.
- Develop sport field booking procedures to ensure that all residents get access to field sport facilities for games and practices , regardless of their sport, age, ability or gender.

3.4 Partnerships

To encourage and facilitate innovative and cooperative partnerships for the delivery of outdoor field sports programs in the community.

There are many stakeholders involved in field sports in Richmond. Partnerships with these stakeholders should be explored as a means of enhancing community field sport facilities and athlete, coaching and officiating development programs.

Richmond field user groups should also be encouraged to take on a greater stewardship role of their allotted fields and diamonds. The objectives of this goal are to:

- Encourage individuals, groups and businesses to contribute financially towards the development and maintenance of future field sport programs.
- Facilitate opportunities for training coaches, officials and field sport athletes.
- Encourage stewardship partnerships with Richmond sport field user groups.
- Facilitate partnerships with various agencies to develop sport activities for groups currently not being served by existing community field sport programming.

3.5 Advocacy for Future Field Sport Facilities

To ensure field sport development in Richmond is integrated with the City's economic, tourism and official community plans.

An active and engaged field sport community provides many social, economic and health benefits to the City. In order to accommodate future growth in field sport participation requires that field sport development is provided for in future land acquisition, economic development, tourism and official community plans.

The objectives of this goal are to:

- Acquire adequate park land to meet the future field sport demands.
- Include field sport initiatives in the City's economic, tourism and community development plans.



An active and engaged field sport community provides many social, economic and health benefits to the City.



3.6 Economic Benefits of Sport Tourism

To encourage and facilitate field sport tourism in Richmond.

Field sport events draw thousands of visitors to Richmond every year. These visitors spend money on accommodation, meals, entertainment and shopping. Sport tourism spending is a huge benefit for local businesses. It also draws people to the community who may return to live and work. In order for sport tourism to grow in Richmond, there is a need to add and strengthen the sport tournament hosting infrastructure, and to provide support and incentives to field user groups involved in hosting sport tourism events. The objectives of this goal are:

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Field sport events draw thousands of visitors to Richmond every year. These visitors spend money on accommodation, meals, entertainment and shopping. Sport tourism spending is a huge benefit for local businesses.

- Increase Richmond's capacity for hosting field sport tournaments.
- Support the development of a Richmond sport tourism policy.
- Provide incentives that encourage field users to host tournaments.
- Partner with groups and agencies to facilitate the growth of field sport tournaments.



3.7 Community Consultation

To provide opportunities for community field sport groups to provide input into future field sport strategies, policies, procedures and budget priorities.

One of the guiding principles endorsed by City Council is continuing community involvement in all aspects of the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services delivery system. Opportunities will be provided for Richmond field users to participate in public consultation and participation processes to ensure that their facility and program needs are sustained or enhanced. The objectives of this goal are to:

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One of the guiding principles endorsed by City Council is continuing community involvement in all aspects of the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services delivery system.

- Involve Richmond field sport groups in policy and procedure changes that will effect them.



3.8 Evaluation

To monitor, evaluate and report back on the Field Sport Playbook for Action.

Monitoring and evaluating the progress of Playbook for Action goals, objectives, actions and outcomes is a necessary component of implementation of the 2006-2011 Field Sport Strategy. City staff will report back to Richmond Sport Council and the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Committee annually on the status of the Playbook for Action. The objectives of this goal are:

- To monitor the progress made by City staff and various community partners in accomplishing Playbook For Action goals, objectives, actions and outcomes.