

# Demographics for Sports Fields

CONTINUED FROM THE FRONT COVER

projected youth you then know whether or not there will be more youth playing or fewer youth playing soccer in that community.

By knowing the capture rates for various sports and plotting them over time one can also gain further insight into whether or not there will be an increase in the number of adults or females playing any particular sport in the future. For example, the trend over the past ten years of having more and more youth involved in soccer is having an influence on not only a shortage of fields for youth but also on the size and quality of the fields because more young adults having been introduced to the sport and now want to be able to continue to play. If the capture rate for adults playing soccer increases from a current 2.2% to 5%, the impact is enormous as the number of adult quality pitches then also needs to double. When one considers the fact that females are also now playing the game, you automatically double the population base to draw potential players from and therefore again know that there will be an increased demand for the number of playing fields required.

Techniques being applied to help cope with increased demands for playing fields include monitoring fields to ensure they

are actually being used when they are booked, increasing the use of school facilities and trying to increase the quality of school fields, rotating fields to ensure proper rest periods, designating some fields for just casual play, increasing the soccer schedule from a historic four day to a seven day schedule, establishing "adopt-a-field" or home field approach, moving away from allocation based on past allocation to allocation based on actual needs, and last but not most important – greater attention to turf management in order to protect this limited resource.

Examples were given of case studies in Waterloo and Mississauga of how demographics were applied community by community to predict soccer field requirements, quality of fields required and location of areas where opportunities existed to redevelop existing fields to other uses such as ball diamonds to soccer pitches or playing fields to shuffleboard/bocci courts or sprypad facilities to reflect the needs of specific areas.

From this brief summary, it is apparent that there is a need not only to concentrate on present demographics but also on future predicted trends. Hiring the proper expertise will help to anticipate and plan for the best possible use of sports fields. ♦

## Industry News

### CGSA Executive Director to Retire

Vince Gillis, National Executive Director for the Canadian Golf Superintendents Association (CGSA) since November 1989, announced recently that he plans to retire in early 2002.

Mr. Gillis said that as of November 1, 2001, he will have completed 12 years as the Association's Executive Director. He felt that it was time to give up full-time employment and pursue his personal interests.

Mr. Gillis expressed his satisfaction with things that have been accomplished over the years he has served CGSA and said that he considered it a privilege for

him to serve the members of such a dedicated and professional group of people including superintendents, industry affiliates, educators, students, etc.



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