

development of shared use agreements with school boards will also contribute to better use of available fields and potentially delay the need for new fields.

While there is much that can be done to improve the use of the current field inventory to meet the needs of sports organizations in Waterloo today, consideration must also be given to future needs.

To project future field need, field demand projections (based on current booking trends and projected population growth in the City) were developed and then compared to the capacity of the anticipated field inventory at five year intervals between 2011 and 2031. There were several key factors involved in developing the projections. First, the projections were based on the assumption that usage of all of the existing fields could be improved before building any additional fields. It also assumed that maintenance standards would remain the same in the future as they are today. However, additional resources (human and financial) to improve maintenance may add new capacity to the field inventory. The projection also takes into account the removal of fields from the current inventory. For example, there are plans to redevelop land currently occupied by sports fields in two local parks. The loss of these fields had to be taken into account

in the projections. Finally, the projection methodology assumed that the demand for sports fields would grow at the same rate as the population.

Comparing projected demand to the anticipated field inventory capacity at five year intervals between 2011 and 2031 revealed when additional fields will be needed and the type of fields required. Based on this analysis, recommendations have been made on how many additional facilities of each type are needed over the next 20 years.

Even after meeting the target of using the fields to 80% capacity, results show there will be a need for additional multi-purpose rectangular fields over the next 20 years. By 2031, more artificial turf fields, 3 – 4 more high capacity rectangular fields and nine more medium capacity rectangular fields will be needed across the City.

The projections suggest that between 2011 and 2031 there will be a need for four more high capacity diamonds, although this need can largely be attributed to loss of diamonds within city parks to redevelopment. There will also be a need for another 1 – 2 cricket pitches within the City to accommodate redevelopment of one of the two existing cricket pitches and projected population growth.

The strategy identifies not only a need for additional fields, but also a need

to consider how the quality of existing fields can be maintained over the long term. Strategies identified include a long term plan for upgrades and renovations to existing fields in the inventory to improve facility quality, as well as development of a long term capital investment plan for infrastructure such as benches, backstops and goal posts. There will also be opportunities to change operating budgets and maintenance practices to improve turf quality and to better align with user expectations and industry best practices.

These are some of the highlights of the City of Waterloo's Outdoor Sports Field Strategy. Development of the strategy is just the first step. The upcoming implementation process will lead to improvements and take the City of Waterloo on its path towards the envisioned future.

The Outdoor Sports Field Strategy document can be found in its entirety at www.waterloo.ca/outdoorsport. Questions about the strategy and the planning process and methodology can be directed to beth.rajnovich@waterloo.ca.

Editor's Note: Beth Rajnovich will be speaking at the Ontario Turfgrass Symposium, Thursday, February 21, 2013. For complete details visit www.turfsymposium.ca.



Ontario Soccer Association Board of Directors Approves Mandated Changes for U12 & Below in 2014

The Ontario Soccer Association (OSA) Board of Directors met on the weekend of September 14 to 16, 2012 and strongly endorsed the ongoing phased-in implementation of Long-Term Player Development across the Province. In particular, the OSA Board formally approved the LTPD Recreation and Development Matrices for the 2014 season.

Highlights of the mandatory implementation for the 2014 season include the following:

- No promotion and relegation from U12 and below

- No league tables from U12 and below
- Small-sided games with fewer players on the field (5v5 at U7 and U8, 7v7 at U9 and U10 and 9v9 at U11 and U12)

Ranges for field width and length have been provided at each development stage, together with goal sizes, in the Recreation Matrix.

Visit www.sportsturfassociation.com for a link to the entire news release and the Recreation Matrix.