

City of Abbotsford **SPORT FIELD & SPORT COURT STRATEGY**

ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY REPORT

April 2025







The background of the slide is a photograph of an outdoor tennis court. The court has blue playing surfaces and grey non-volley zones. White lines mark the boundaries and service areas. Several tennis nets are visible, stretching across the court. In the background, there is a parking lot with several cars, a chain-link fence, and some residential buildings under a clear sky. A semi-transparent green rectangular overlay covers the upper portion of the image, providing a background for the title text.

Key Engagement Findings & Highlights



Outdoor sport facilities and the opportunities they provide are highly valued. A clear theme across all engagement activities was the importance of sport fields, outdoor courts, and other types of outdoor sport facilities and spaces. The activities these spaces provide improve wellbeing and quality of life for residents of all ages and there is a high level of support for continued and (and potentially increased) investment.



A significant proportion of outdoor sport facility use in Abbotsford occurs in casual and unstructured ways. 62% of Resident Survey respondents indicated that they participate in unscheduled “pick-up” games and activities.



Household demographics impact levels and types of use as well as overall perspectives on outdoor sport facilities in Abbotsford.

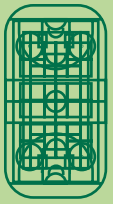
The Resident Survey findings suggest that households with children are more prevalent users of ball diamonds and sports fields, with households without children use some types of courts more (specifically pickleball). Findings from the Resident Survey also indicate that households with children have higher levels of dissatisfaction with the spaces they use.



Location is a driver of which fields residents use. The location of where an individuals league / team plays and proximity to home were the top two factors that influence outdoor sport facility use (followed closely by quality of the surface) amongst Resident Survey respondents.

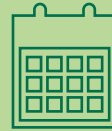


Support amenities are important functional and experiential aspects of using outdoor sport facilities. 70% of Resident Survey respondents expressed that there is a need for more washrooms at sites with outdoor sport and recreation amenities. The desire for more lighted fields, spectator seating, and covered areas (rain shelter) was also identified throughout many of the engagement activities.



There is a demand for higher quality and multi-surface sites.

Many residents and user groups expressed frustration over the lack of new outdoor sport and recreation amenity development in recent decades, especially as it pertains to sport fields and ball diamonds. In general, there is a desire for a focus on developing higher quality surfaces (over quantity) that are grouped together in multi-field or diamond ‘hubs’ that support tournament play and provide better experiences (e.g. as a result of more support amenities, consistent locations for groups, etc.).



Allocations and permitting practices need to balance the needs of existing and new / emerging groups. In alignment with the City’s relatively new allocations approach, many groups and residents expressed the importance of equitable and fair access to bookable outdoor sport facilities. As many organizations expressed that they are unable to access the amount of time need they need (or the most suitable times), it will be important for the City and its partners to make optimal use of the existing inventory



Improving existing field and court quality is important. While a desire for new development exists, many residents and groups also expressed the importance of reinvesting in existing fields, courts, and other outdoor sport facility surfaces and amenities.

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A group of five children are jumping towards a basketball hoop on an outdoor court. A basketball is suspended in the air above the hoop. The children are wearing various colored athletic wear: a yellow shirt and red shorts, a light blue shirt and yellow shorts, a dark blue shirt and red shorts, a red shirt and red shorts, and a red shirt and red shorts. The background is a dense green wall of trees. The court floor is reddish-brown. A green rectangular overlay is positioned behind the basketball hoop and the title text.

1. Introduction

1.1. Project Overview

The City of Abbotsford is developing a Sport Field and Sport Court Strategy that will guide how the City invests in and provides these valued assets over the next 15+ years. The Strategy additionally presents an opportunity to revisit and refresh sport field and sport court priorities identified in the City's Parks, Recreation & Culture Master Plan & Strategies (2018) and other subsequent planning.

Outdoor Sport Facilities Included in this Strategy:



Sport fields



Ball diamonds



Games courts



Pickleball courts



Tennis courts



Sand volleyball courts



Skate parks



Bike parks



Disc golf courses



Lawn bowling

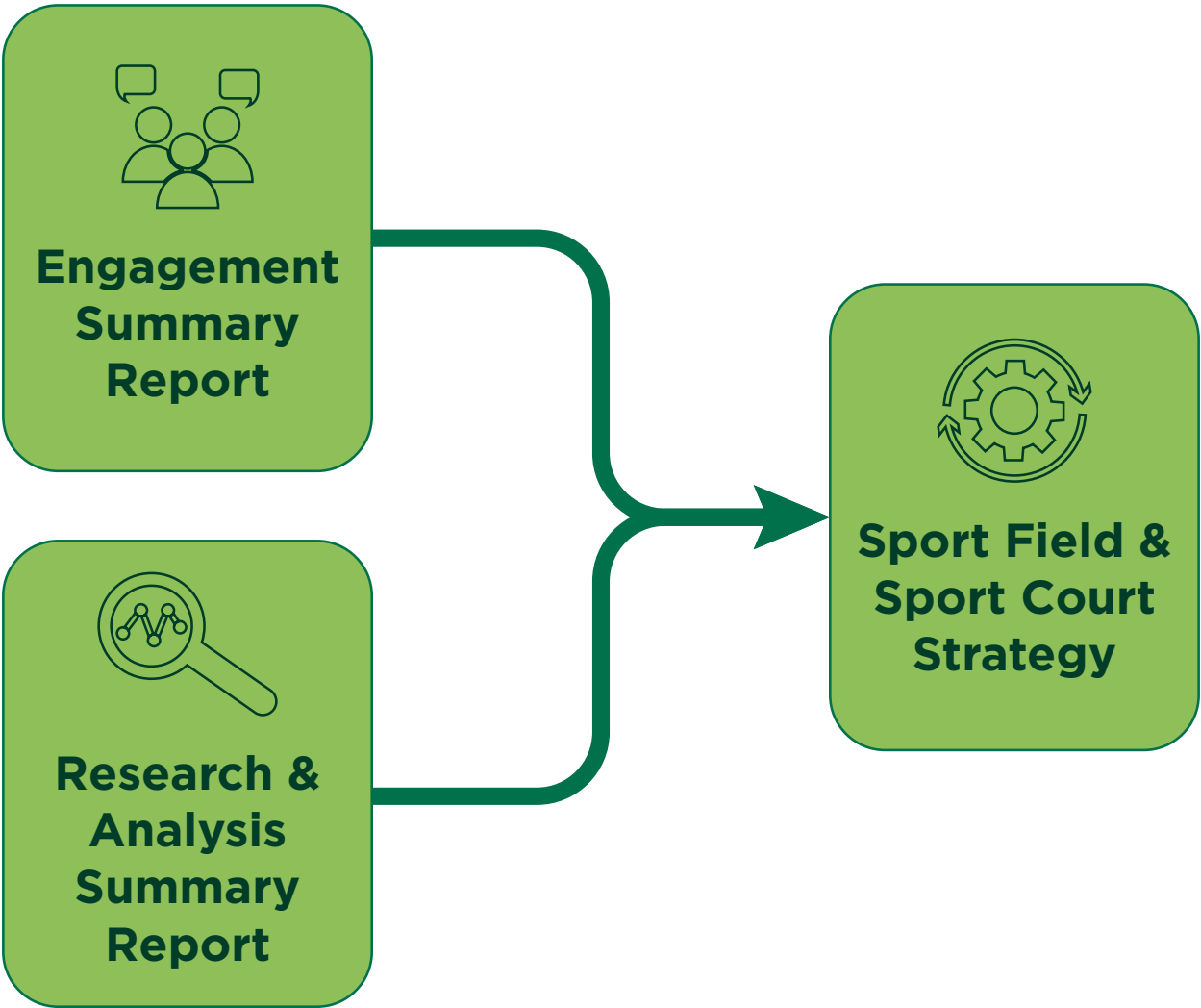


Horseshoes



The following graphic illustrates the process being used to develop the Strategy. As reflected in the graphic, research and engagement inputs provide a basis of information that informs the study. This background work includes an investigation of activity preferences and demands, trends and changes, current system use and capacity, satisfaction levels, and other key insights that are important for the Strategy to consider and provide direction on.

Figure 1. Overview of the Strategy Steps and Process



1.2. Overview and Purpose of this Report

This Engagement Summary Report contains the findings from the engagement conducted with user groups and residents. As reflected in Figure 1, the report document along with the Research and Analysis Summary Report (found under separate cover) contain the basis of information that underpin the direction provided by the Strategy.

Key topics explored through the engagement activities included:

- Outdoor recreation and sport activity preferences.
- Factors that determine which sites residents prefer to use / visit.
- Current satisfaction levels.
- Perspectives on future priorities and desired enhancements to outdoor sport and recreation infrastructure.

Hearing from a diverse array of individuals and stakeholders was a key objective of the engagement process. To achieve this objective, a number of different engagement methods and platforms were used in order to ensure as many input opportunities were given as possible.

Figure 2. Overview of Engagement Method and Tactics



Pop-Up Discussions

2 pop-up activities (Abbotsford Recreation Centre and Matsqui Recreation Centre)
285 comments



Resident Survey

809 responses



Group Survey

20 responses



User Group Discussions

8 user groups (58 groups were invited to participate)



Virtual Mapping Feedback

65 unique pinned comments regarding amenities at a specific site

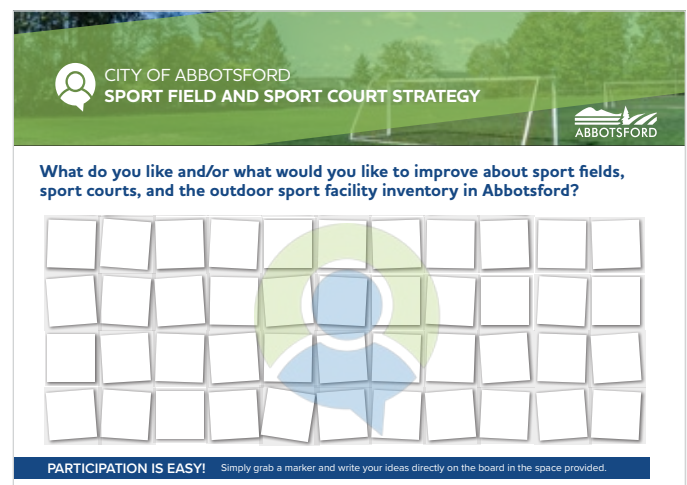
2. Pop-Up Discussions



2.1. Overview

City of Abbotsford staff and consultants set up a pop-up kiosk to inform the public about the Strategy and provide an opportunity for individuals to provide input directly to members of the project team. These pop-up activities took place at the Abbotsford Recreation Centre and the Matsqui Recreation Centre in November 2024.

The panels used for the pop-ups included information on the project and other opportunities to provide input. Space was also provided for individuals to provide on-the-spot comments.



2.2. Findings

Figure 3 identifies some common themes from the comments provided that relate to outdoor sport amenities and opportunities (note: a number of comments provided related more broadly to recreation services, aquatics, and other out of project scope topics).

Over
200
comments
were
provided!

Figure 3. Summary of Prevalent Themes from the Pop-Up Activities





3. Resident Survey

3.1. Overview

A survey was fielded with households in Abbotsford to gather perspectives on outdoor sport facilities in the City. The survey was fielded online, via Let's Talk Abbotsford and paper copy versions were also available for pick up at Matsqui Recreation Centre (3106 Clearbrook Rd), the Abbotsford Recreation Centre (2499 McMillan Rd), and Abbotsford City Hall (32315 South Fraser Way). Responses were gathered from November to early December. 809 total responses were provided to the survey.

A variety of tactics were utilized to promote the survey:

- Promotion on the City's website,
- Promotion on the City's Social Media
- Feature in the local newspaper ([The Abbotsford News](#))
- Posters in the Matsqui Recreation Centre (3106 Clearbrook Rd), and the Abbotsford Recreation Centre (2499 McMillan Rd).
- Promoted on T.V.'s in the Matsqui Recreation Centre (3106 Clearbrook Rd), and the Abbotsford Recreation Centre (2499 McMillan Rd).

Sub-segment analysis was conducted to provide further insights into how participation and perspectives may differ based on respondent characteristics such as age, and household composition. Notable findings from the sub-segment analysis are highlighted throughout Section 3.2.

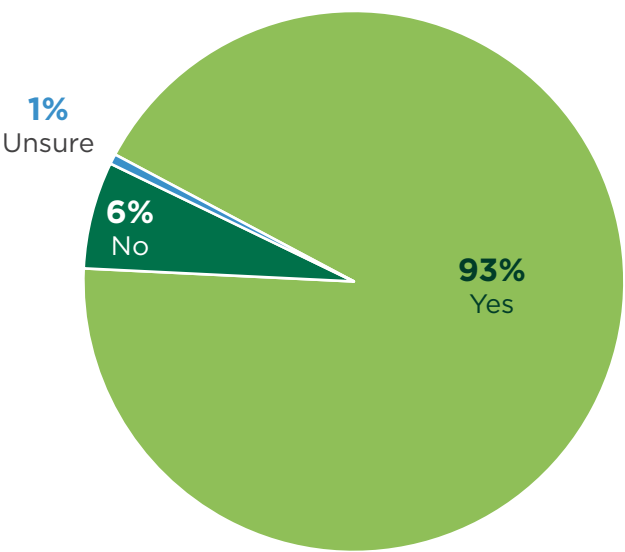


3.2. Findings

Current Utilization

To begin the survey, respondents were asked if they use outdoor sport facilities in Abbotsford. Almost all (93%) indicated they do use outdoor sport facilities in the City.

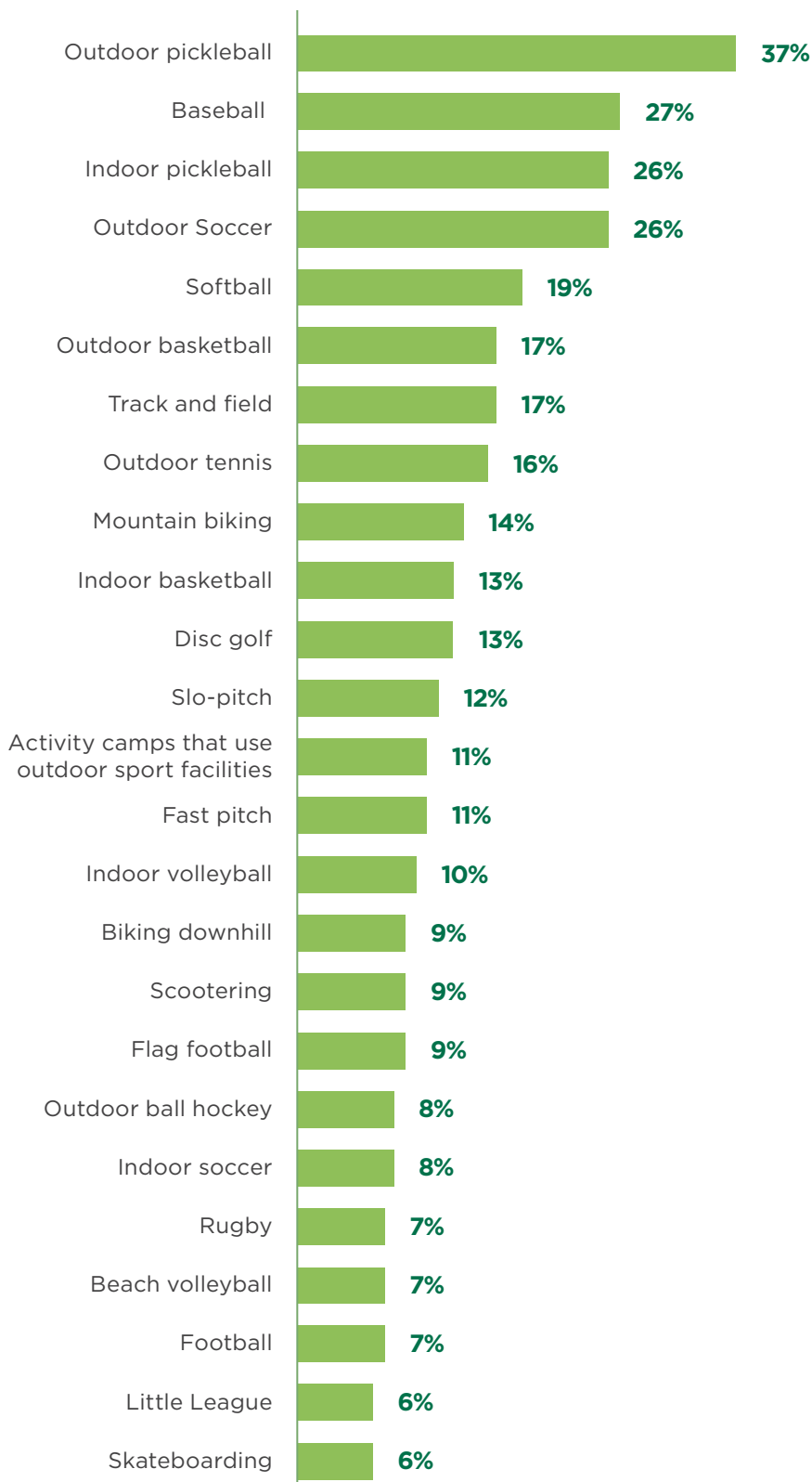
Figure 4. Respondent Use of Outdoor Sport Facilities



The following **three** graphs reflect responses from **ONLY** those who use outdoor sport facilities in Abbotsford.

Respondents were then asked to identify activities that household members participate in on a regular basis. Over one-third (37%) indicated they participate in outdoor pickleball on a regular basis. Approximately one-quarter indicated that they participate in baseball (27%), indoor pickleball (26%) and outdoor soccer (26%) on a regular basis.

Figure 5. Respondent Activity Participation

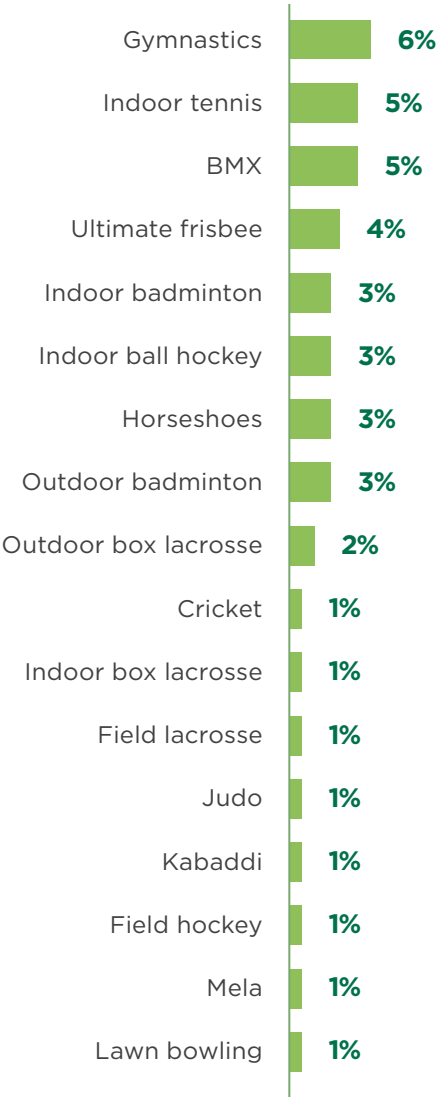


Graph continues on following page

Subsegment Analysis

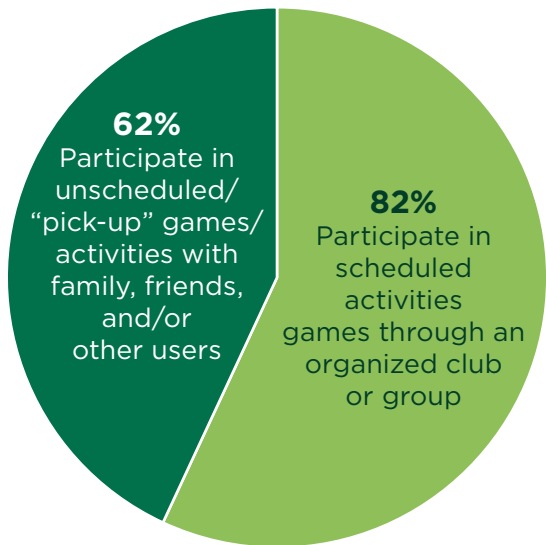
- Households with children under the age of 18 are more likely to say they participate in baseball on a regular basis (44%) than households with no children (8%).
- Households with no children (61%) are more likely to say that they participate in outdoor pickleball on a regular basis than households with children under the age of 18 (26%). Indoor pickleball saw similar responses (52% vs 14%).
- Households with children under the age of 18 are more likely to say that they participate in outdoor soccer (30%) than households with no children (15%).

Figure 5 (Continued) Respondent Activity Participation



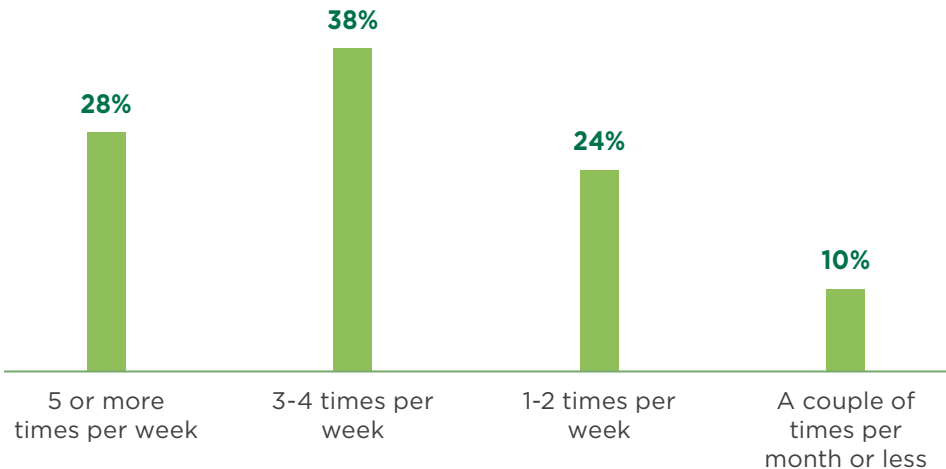
Respondents were asked to identify the nature of their outdoor sport facility use as being structured (program based) and/or unstructured (casual, non-program based). As illustrated by the graph, both forms of outdoor sport facility usage are prevalent in Abbotsford with many respondents indicating that they use these spaces both as part of an organized group and in more casual ways.

Figure 6. Outdoor Sport Participation Characteristics (Nature of Facility Use)



Approximately one-third (38%) indicated they use outdoor sport facilities 3-4 times per week. In lower proportions, approximately one-quarter (28%) use outdoor sport facilities 5 or more times (28%) per week or 1-2 times per week (24%).

Figure 7. Respondent Frequency of Use



Subsegment Analysis

- Households with children under the age of 18 are more likely to say they visit an outdoor sport facility 5 or more times per week (39%) than households with no children (19%).

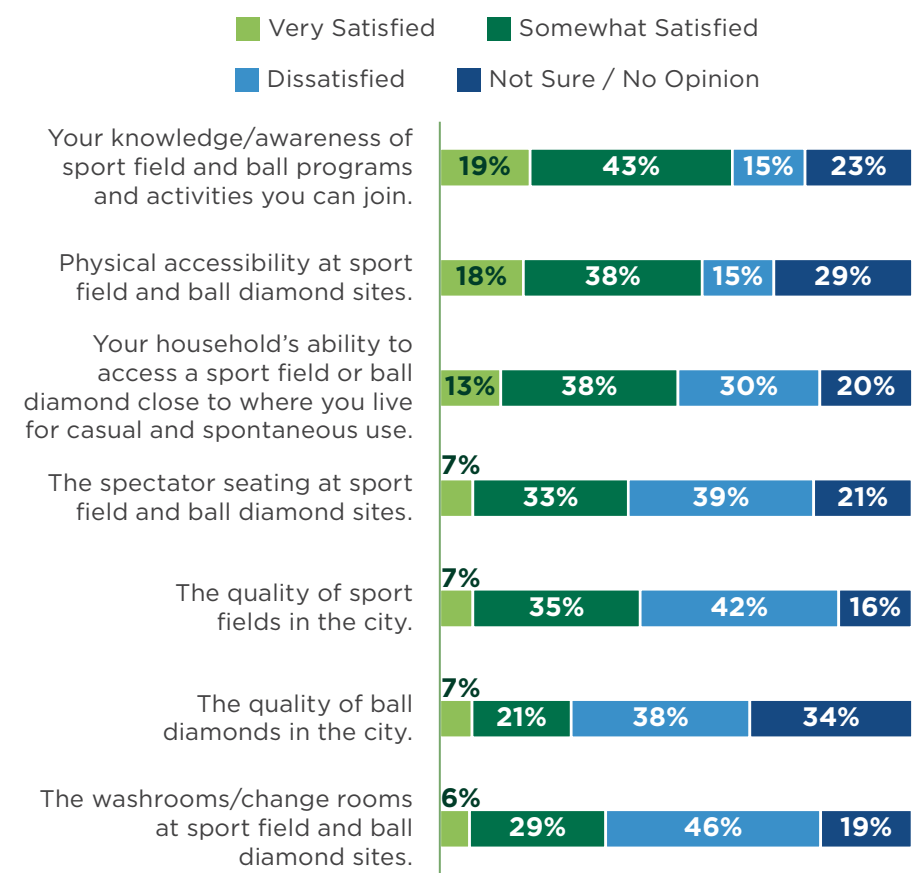
Current Assessment

Respondents were asked to indicate their level of satisfaction with various aspects of sport fields and ball diamonds. Approximately two-thirds (62%) expressed satisfaction (either “very satisfied” or “somewhat satisfied”) with their awareness of available sport field and ball diamond activities. Similarly, 56% reported being satisfied with their physical ability to access these sites. However nearly half (46%) of respondents expressed dissatisfaction with the washrooms and change rooms at sport fields and ball diamonds in the City.

Subsegment Analysis

- Households with children under the age of 18 are more likely to say they are dissatisfied with the quality of sport fields (54%) than households with no children (25%). Similar proportions are more likely to say that they are dissatisfied with the quality of ball diamonds (54% vs 14%) and the washrooms/change rooms (58% vs 25%).

Figure 8. Respondent Satisfaction Levels (Sport Fields)

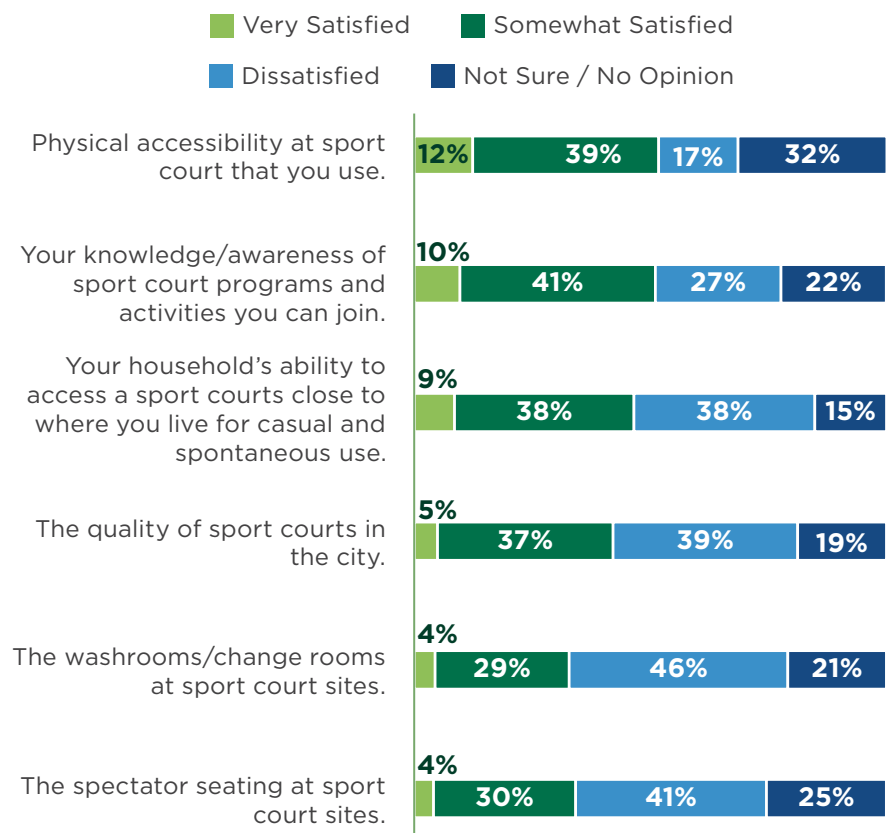


**The percentages in the above graph do not add to 100% as a result of decimal values <0.5%.*



Considering sport courts, respondents were presented with different aspects of sport courts and were asked to indicate their level of satisfaction for each. Approximately half are satisfied with the physical accessibility of sport courts (51%) and their knowledge and awareness of sport court programs in Abbotsford (51%).

Figure 9. Respondent Satisfaction Levels (Sport Courts)

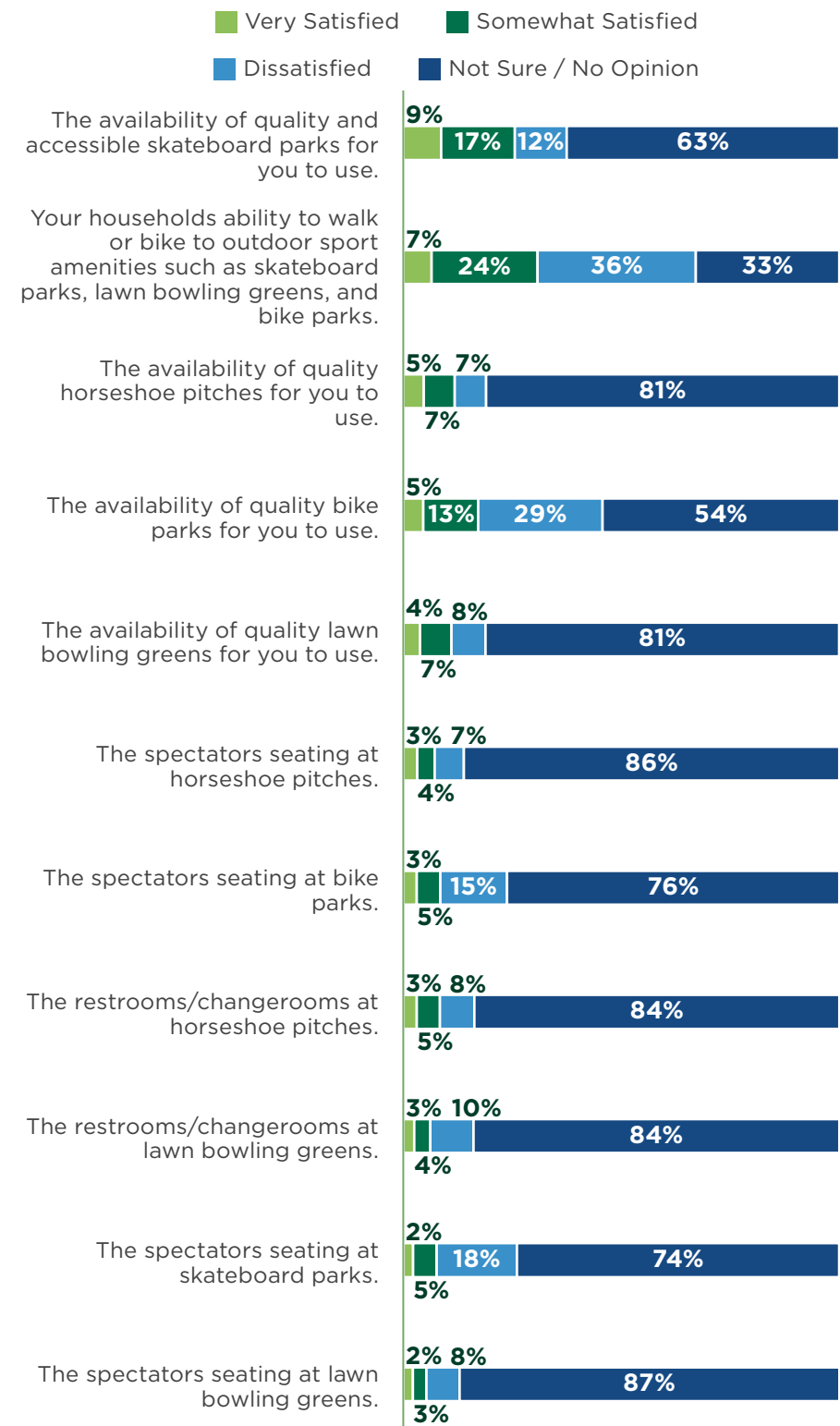


**The percentages in the above graph do not add to 100% as a result of decimal values <0.5%.*



Respondents were also asked to indicate their level of satisfaction with other aspects of outdoor sport facilities. The adjacent graph presents the responses based on “very satisfied” responses (most to least). Notably, the ability of household’s to walk or bike to skateboard parks, lawn bowling or bike parks had amongst the highest levels of satisfaction (31% of respondents indicated a level of satisfaction) and dissatisfaction (36% of respondents indicated that they were dissatisfied). The availability of quality bike parks also had relatively higher levels of dissatisfaction (29%).

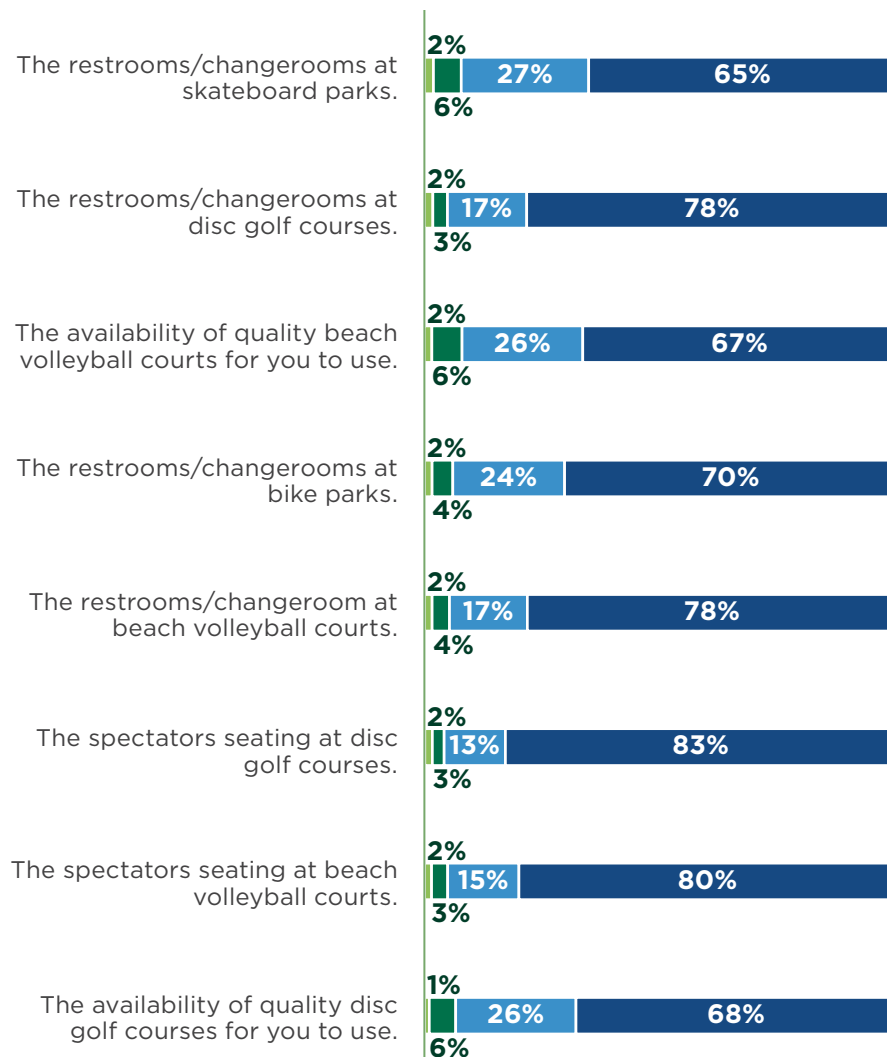
Figure 10. Respondent Satisfaction Levels (Other Outdoor Sport Facility Aspects)



*The percentages in the above graph do not add to 100% as a result of decimal values <0.5%.



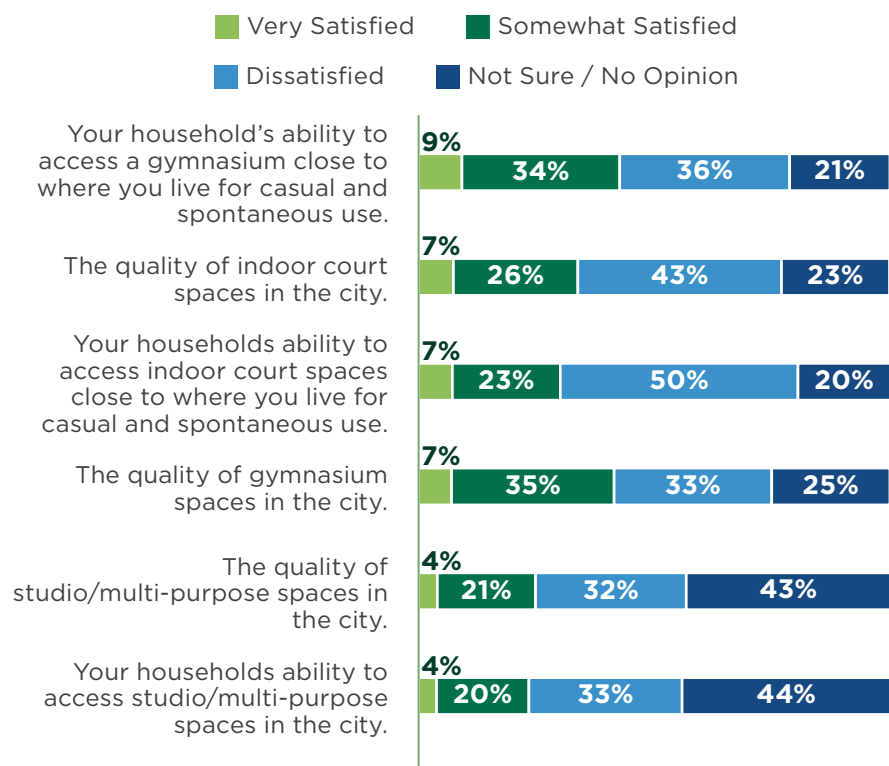
Figure 10. (Continued) Respondent Satisfaction Levels (Other Outdoor Sport Facility Aspects)



**The percentages in the above graph do not add to 100% as a result of decimal values <0.5%.*

To gather insights on indoor facilities, respondents were asked about various aspects of indoor spaces in Abbotsford. Approximately 43% of respondents expressed satisfaction (either “very satisfied” or “somewhat satisfied”) with their household’s ability to access gymnasiums for spontaneous use. Similarly, 41% indicated satisfaction with the quality of gymnasium spaces available in the city.

Figure 11. Respondent Satisfaction Levels (Selected / Related Indoor Facilities)



**The percentages in the above graph do not add to 100% as a result of decimal values <0.5%.*



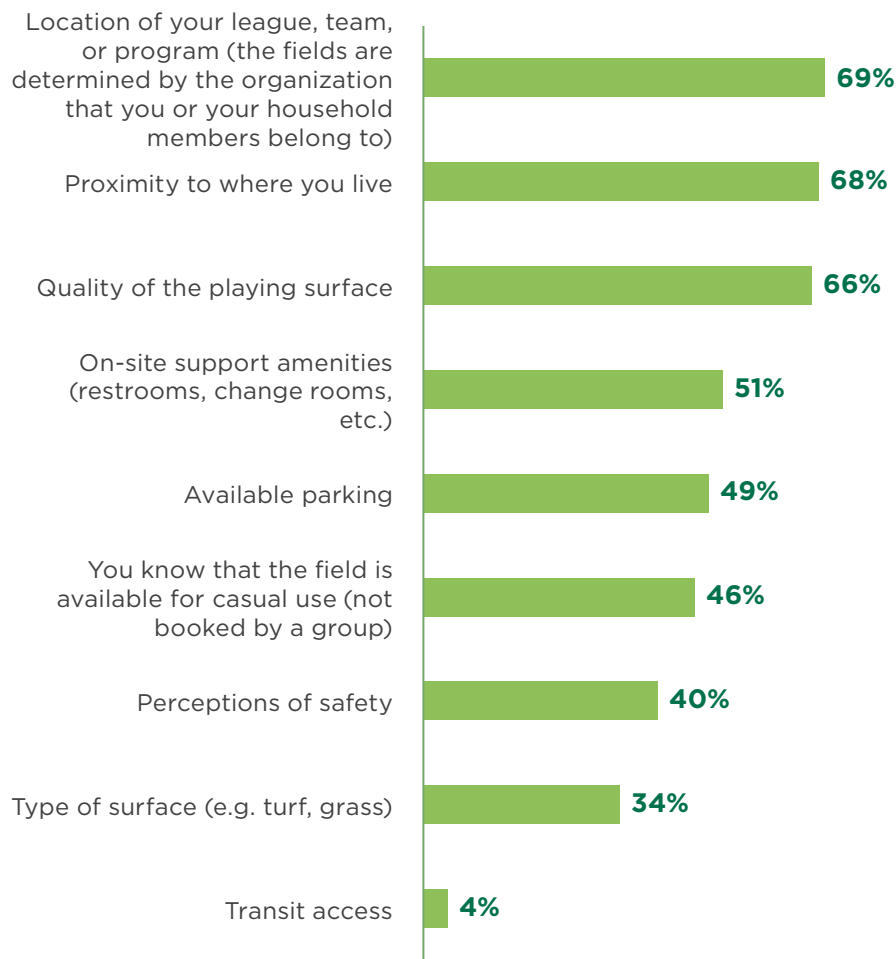
Motivators and Barriers to Use

Respondents were asked to indicate the key factors that impact which outdoor sport facilities they use/visit. Location / proximity were identified as drivers followed closely by quality of playing surface (over two-thirds of respondents identified these reasons). Approximately half of respondents also identified on-site support amenities (51%) and available parking (49%).

Subsegment Analysis

- Households with children under the age of 18 (82%) are more likely to say that the location of a league, team or program influence the outdoor sport facilities they use than households with no children (52%)

Figure 12. Factors that Influence Outdoor Sport Facility Use



Respondents were able to share additional factors that influence the outdoor sport facilities they use. The responses are synthesized by themes:

General Lack of Facilities and Investment

- There was mention of a shortage of outdoor sport facilities, including soccer fields, ball diamonds, and tennis courts. Respondents expressed a lack of public courts in West Abbotsford and some outdoor courts have closed without replacements. Respondents also mentioned that court spaces in Abbotsford are generally overcrowded.
- There is a perceived lack of investment in recreation infrastructure. Respondents compared Abbotsford to other surrounding municipalities.
- The availability of lighting was expressed as an important factor for outdoor facility use and the lack of lighting was attributed to why facilities may not be optimally used.

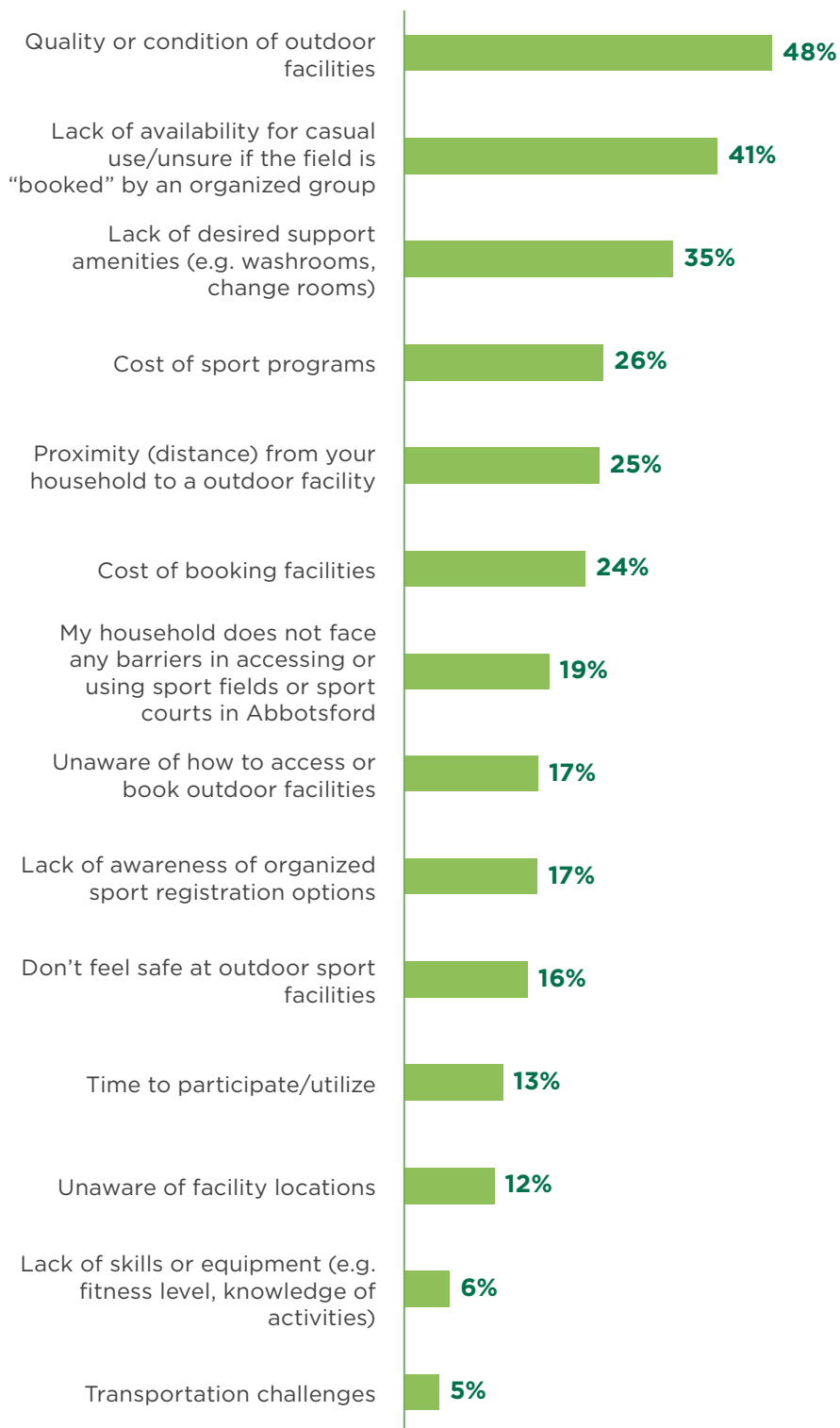
Quality, Safety and Accessibility Concerns

- Respondents mentioned that soccer fields are poorly maintained and inadequate. There was also mention of concerns about the design of pickleball courts as they have a bit of slope that some perceive unsafe.
- Respondents' expressed concerns about safety, particularly regarding the presence of the un-homed near facilities. Additionally, the need for accessible amenities, such as washrooms and water stations were mentioned.



Respondents were next asked to identify barriers that prevent household members from accessing outdoor sport facilities in Abbotsford. As illustrated in the accompanying graph, the top barriers that households in Abbotsford face include: quality or condition of outdoor facilities (48%), lack of availability for casual use or being unsure if the space is booked (41%), lack of desired support amenities such as washrooms and change rooms (35%), the cost of sport programs (26%) and proximity (distance) to an outdoor facility (25%). Notably, only 12% identified being unaware of the location of facilities.

Figure 13. Barriers to Accessing / Using Outdoor Sport Facilities



Respondents were able to share other barriers they may face when trying to access outdoor sport facilities in Abbotsford. The responses are synthesized and presented as themes:

Lack of Facilities to Accommodate Growing Demand

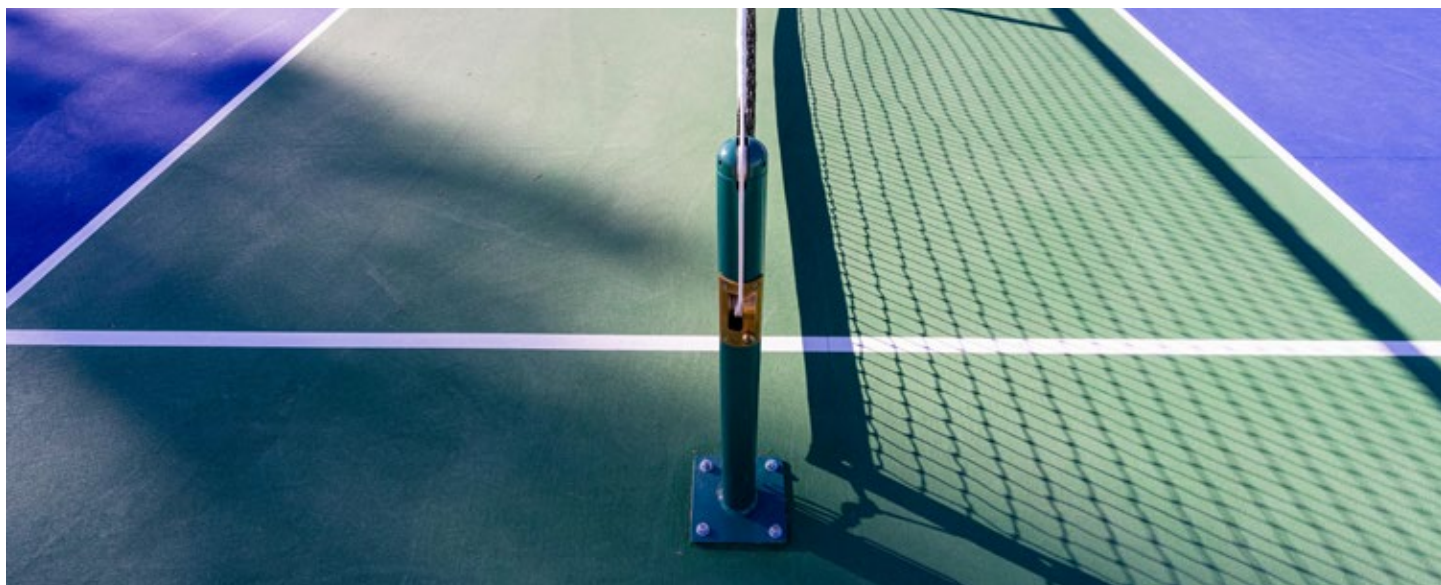
- General shortage of sport fields and courts for casual and organized use.
- Indoor spaces for training during the rainy season are limited.
- The rise of sports like pickleball and disc golf has created demand for more spaces and better infrastructure to accommodate more players.
- Existing courts, fields, and facilities are often overcrowded or unavailable due to high demand.
- Booking conflicts between youth and adult sports and lack of fair-use guidelines were mentioned.
- Desire for purpose-built facilities rather than shared, poorly adapted spaces.

Safety and Cleanliness of Facilities

- Poor maintenance of playing surfaces, including slippery floors, uneven surfaces, and lack of proper surfacing.
- Concerns about safety issues, including hazardous surfaces and debris left behind after prior bookings.
- The un-homed in park spaces affect safety and usability.

Accessibility

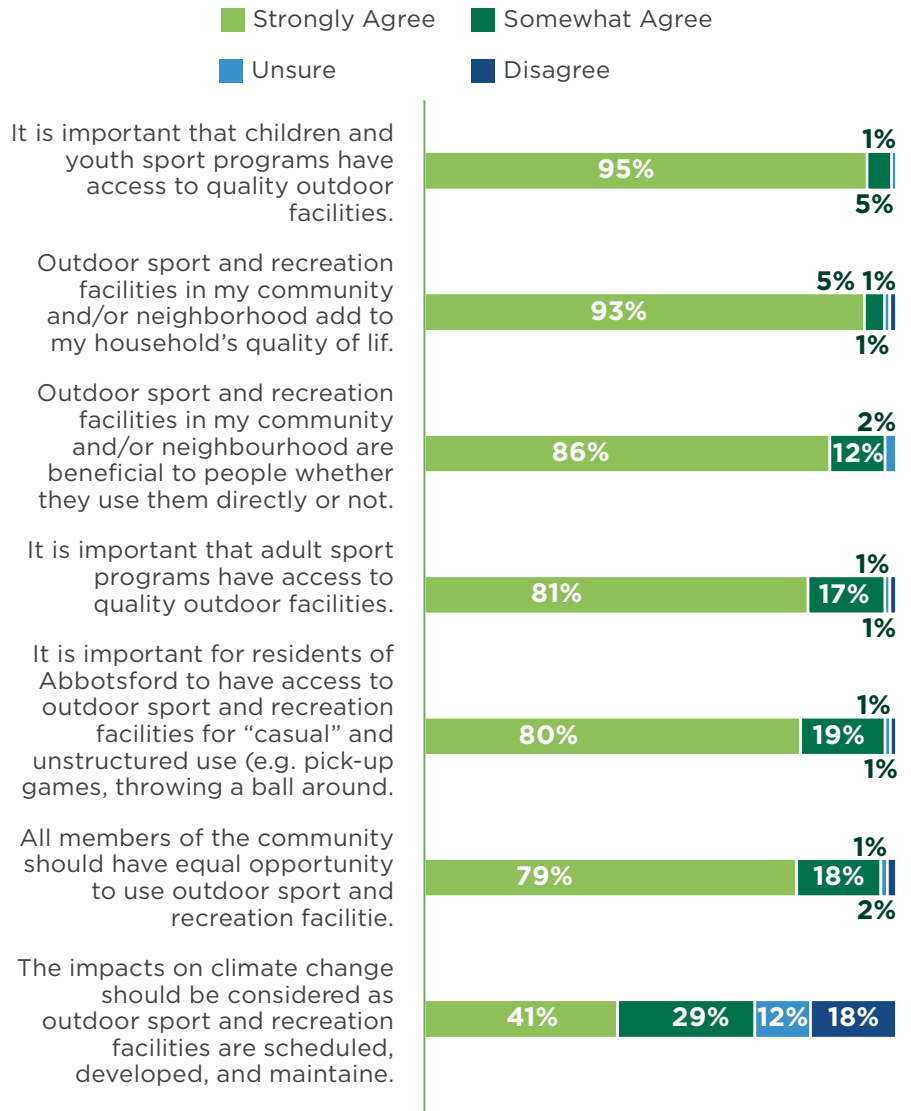
- Transportation issues with bus routes not reaching sport fields and limited service on specific days of the week.
- Lack of geographic balance in the City.
- Lack of washrooms, water access, shade, and spectator seating at many locations.



Future Needs

A series of statements regarding the provision of outdoor sport facilities, amenities and programs in Abbotsford were presented to respondents. For each statement they were asked to identify the extent to which they agree. Almost all respondents strongly agree that it is important that children and youth sport programs have access to quality outdoor facilities (95%) and that outdoor sport and recreation facilities in my community and or neighborhood add to my household's quality of life (93%). Notably, at least 70% of respondents agree (strongly agree and somewhat agree) with all statements.

Figure 14. Key Values and Considerations



**The percentages in the above graph do not add to 100% as a result of decimal values <0.5%.*

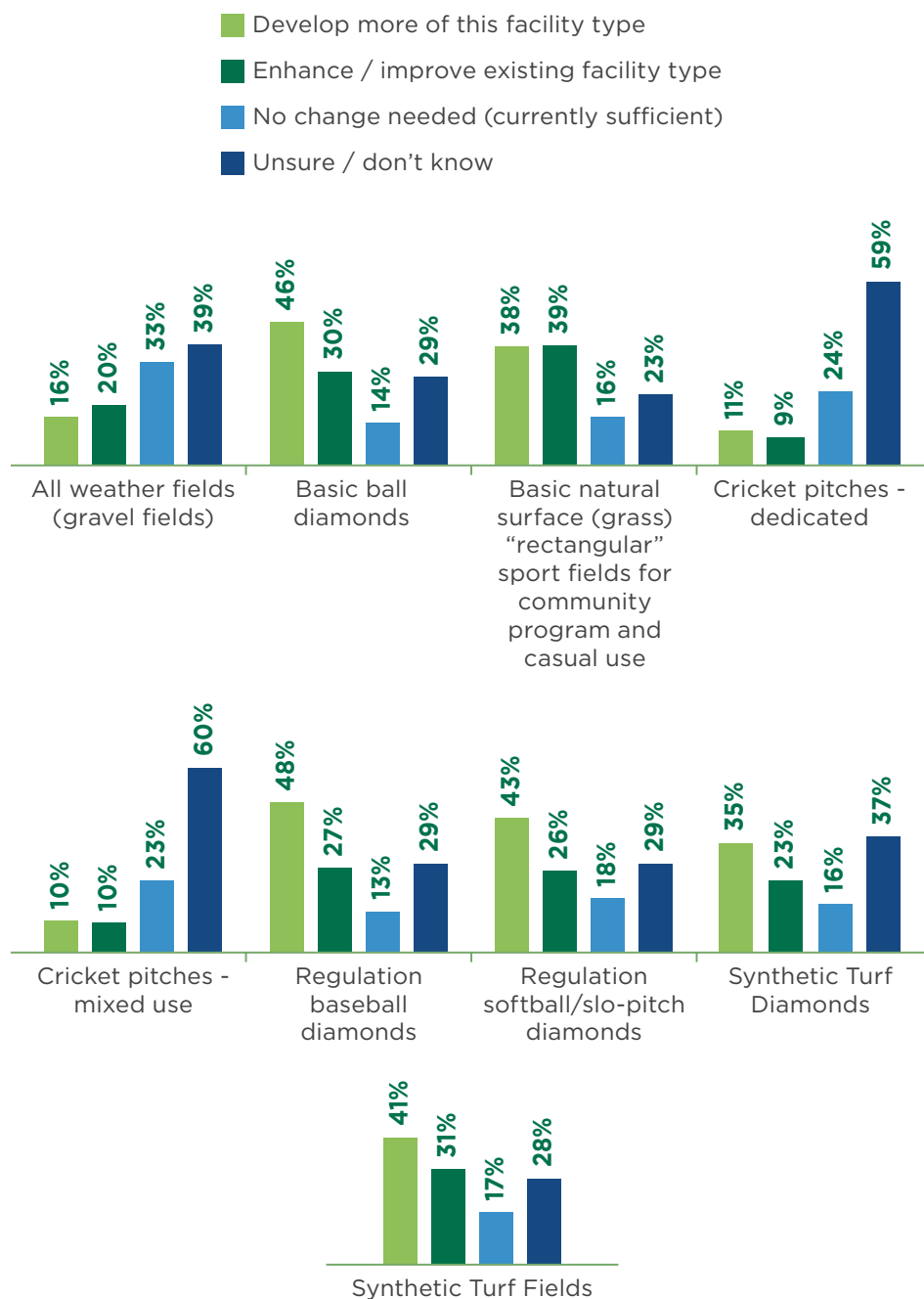
Next, respondents were presented with a list of facilities and amenities and were asked to indicate whether more should be developed, the facility or amenity should be enhanced or improved, no change needed or if they were unsure. Respondents could select multiple responses.

As illustrated in the accompanying graph, approximately half of respondents believe that baseball diamonds (46%), regulation baseball diamonds (48%) and regulation softball/slo-pitch diamonds (43%) should be a priority for development. Over one-third (39%) believe that basic natural rectangular sport fields should be enhanced. Refer to the graph for additional findings.

Subsegment Analysis

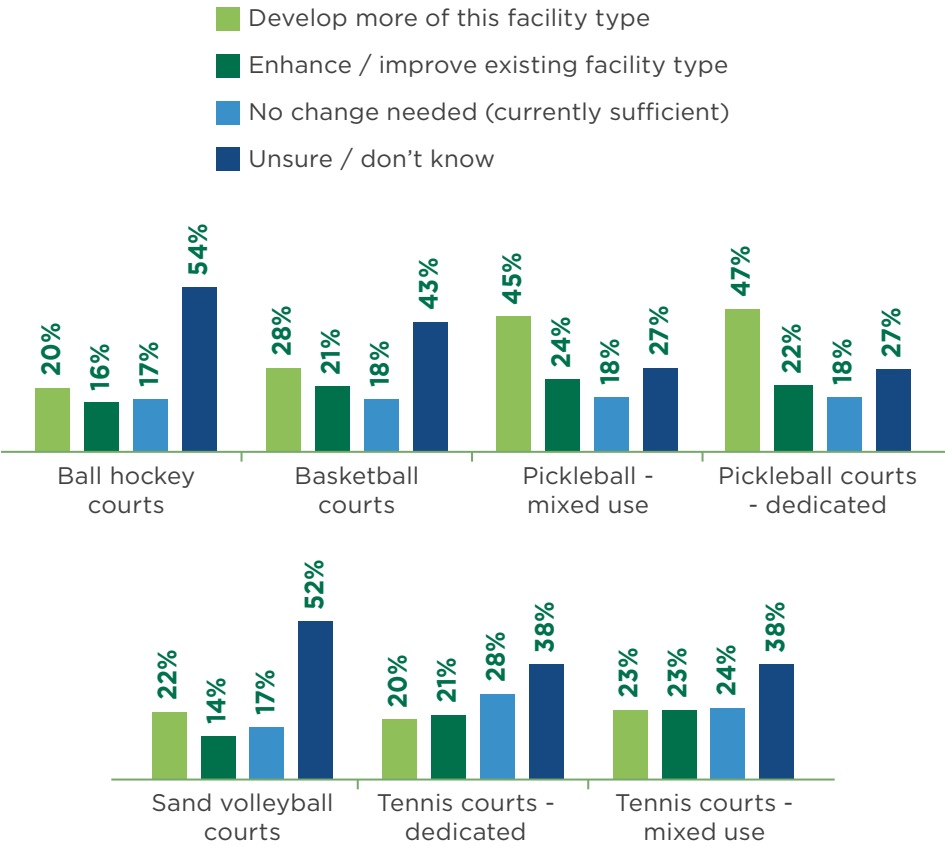
- Households with children under the age of 18 are more likely to say that the City should develop synthetic turf diamonds (48%) than households with no children (17%).

Figure 15. Respondent Priority Actions for Sport Fields



Considering courts, approximately half of respondents believe that more dedicated pickleball courts (47%) and mixed use pickleball courts (45%) need to be developed. Approximately one quarter (24% and 22% respectively) also believe that these facilities should be enhanced.

Figure 16. Respondent Priority Actions for Sport Courts



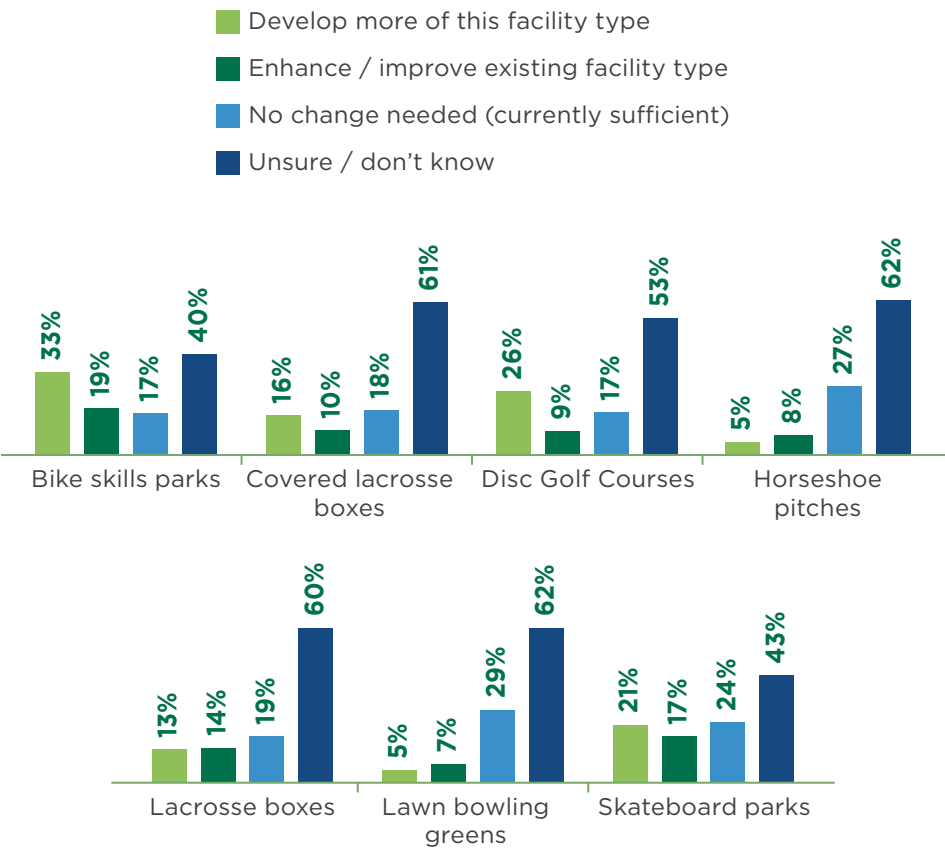
Subsegment Analysis

- Households with no children are more likely to say that dedicated pickleball courts should be developed (62%) than households with children under the age of 18 (37%).



Considering other outdoor sport facilities in Abbotsford, approximately one-third (33%) believe that a bike skills park should be developed. Notably, approximately one-quarter (26%) indicated that more disc golf courses are needed.

Figure 17. Respondent Priority Actions for Other Outdoor Amenities / Facilities



Respondents were able to explain their response to the previous question on priorities for facility development and enhancement. Themes from the comments provided are presented below:

Explanations related to **outdoor sport fields and courts facilities**:

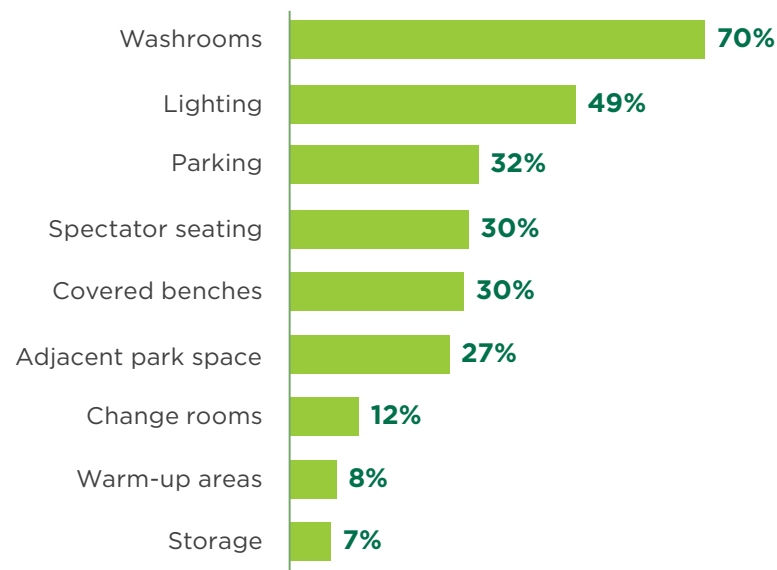
- Numerous comments reiterated the need for additional baseball and softball fields, particularly multi-diamond complexes that can host tournaments. The existing facilities are often in poor condition and do not meet the needs of the growing number of players.
- Mentions that existing fields require better maintenance and upgrades, including proper drainage and facilities like washrooms and concessions. The current state of many fields is seen as inadequate for hosting events.
- Respondents indicated that there is a growing interest in disc golf, with requests for dedicated courses in Abbotsford. The lack of local options forces residents to travel to other cities.
- Enhancements to ensure safe access to facilities, including better lighting and maintenance of trails and parks.
- A proposal for a centralized outdoor sports complex that can accommodate various sports and host regional tournaments has been suggested.
- Respondents expressed a desire for more bike parks, pump tracks, and skills parks to support youth biking activities.

Explanations related to **other types of recreation and sport facilities**:

- Mention of a need for more swimming pools and aquatic facilities, including water slides and parks similar to those in neighbouring communities.
- There is a demand for more indoor basketball courts, volleyball spaces, and dedicated pickleball facilities.

Respondents were then asked which support amenities should be provided in greater supply or improved. The majority (70%) highlighted the need for more or enhanced washrooms. Other amenities identified, included improved lighting (49%), parking (32%), spectator seating (30%), and covered benches (30%).

Figure 18. Respondent Perspectives on Priority Support Amenities



Respondents were able to share additional support amenities that are needed at outdoor sport facilities in Abbotsford. The responses are summarized and presented according to themes:

Covered Areas and Shade

- Windbreakers at Jubilee pickleball courts.
- Covered training areas and facilities.
- Covered domes.
- Covered outdoor pickleball courts.
- Covered seating.
- Shade trees in parks (BMX track especially).

Washrooms and Accessibility

- Accessibility features: ramps, curb cutouts, and wide spaces for strollers and wheelchairs.
- Buttons to open washroom doors.
- Washrooms that aren’t port-a-potties.
- Improve washroom maintenance.
- Fully accessible, high-quality drinking fountains (bottle fillers and pet bowls).

Concessions and Food Services

- Canteens and concessions.
- Food trucks.
- Garbage, compost, and recycling bins near food service areas.

Athlete and Spectator Experience

- Fenced-in seating/storage for players at Jubilee Park pickleball courts.
- Improved athlete seating.
- Seating in the shade.
- Enhance participants’ experience (prioritized over spectators).

Respondents were provided space to explain why they chose the support amenities that they did. The responses are summarized and presented according to themes:

Support Amenity and Parking

Considerations

- Increased seating and shaded areas for spectators were frequently mentioned as necessary improvements to enhance the viewing experience. Comfortable and covered seating are seen as essential for families and friends attending events.
- Respondents highlighted the importance of clean and properly equipped washrooms at all facilities.
- Respondents expressed concerns about limited parking at many sport facilities, emphasizing the need for expansion to accommodate both teams and spectators without causing logistical challenges.

Maintenance and Upgrades

- Many existing sport facilities were described as in need of significant upgrades and maintenance. Respondents pointed out issues such as outdated equipment and poor conditions.
- Many respondents expressed dissatisfaction with the quality of existing amenities, such as benches and seating, and emphasized the need for significant improvements to provide a better overall experience comparable to other regions.
- Respondents emphasized the need for adequate lighting on multiple sport fields to extend usage during darker months, allowing for greater flexibility in scheduling games and practices.
- Concerns about safety were raised, with respondents mentioning the importance of maintaining clean and safe facilities to protect children and families.

Multi-Use Facility Design

- Respondents highlighted the benefits of integrating multiple amenities in close proximity to allow families to utilize various resources, encouraging attendance and participation in diverse recreational activities (ex. playgrounds and spray parks).



When considering public investment in outdoor sport facilities there are limited resources available and priorities must be determined. Respondents were presented with six (6) criteria that could be used to set priorities and asked to rank them from one (1) being most important to six (6) being the least important. The survey tools ranking system assigned points based on the ranking of each response (6 pts - #1 rank, 5 pts - #2 rank, 4 pts - #3 rank, 3 pts - #4 rank, 2 pts - #5 rank and 1 pt - #6 rank). As reflected in the graphic below, prioritizing outdoor sport fields that can be used year-round in all-weather garnered the most ranking points amongst the six criteria presented.

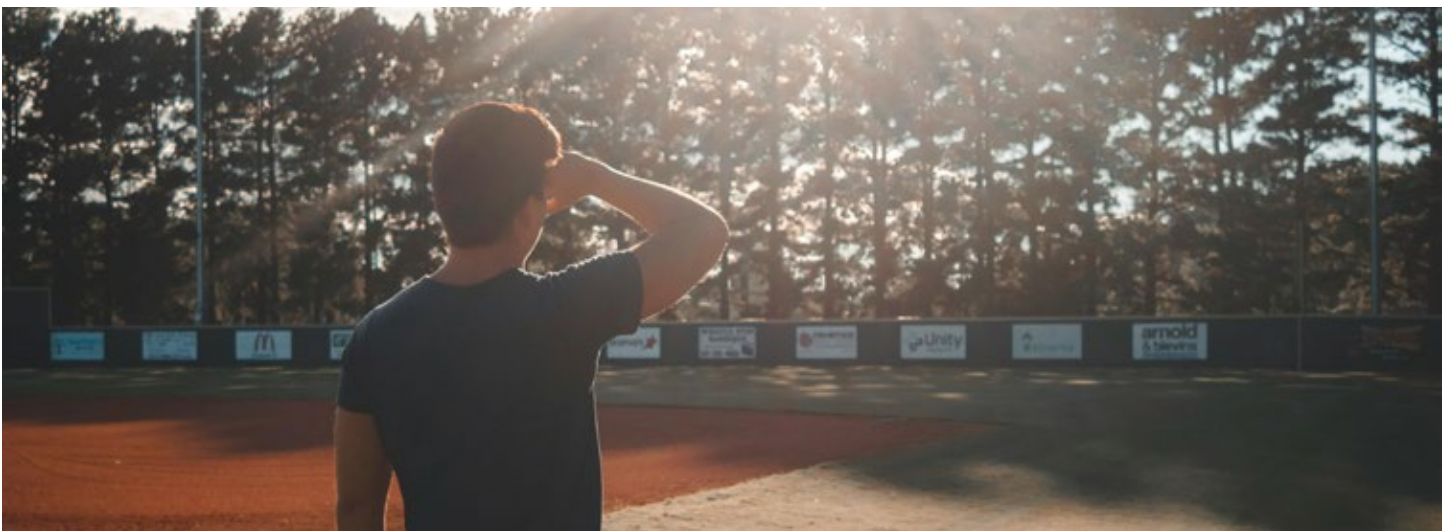
Figure 19. Potential Priority Setting Criteria



Other Comments

Respondents were then able to share any additional comments they had regarding outdoor sport facilities in Abbotsford. The following bullets summarize themes from the additional comments provided:

- Respondents expressed a demand for a broad range of sport facilities, including baseball and softball diamonds, volleyball courts, and all-weather fields for access during different seasons. There were also calls for specific improvements to cater to sports like field hockey.
- Many comments highlight the inadequate quality of existing sport fields, mentioning issues such as weed infestations, poor grass quality, and malfunctioning sprinkler systems. Respondents mentioned that that these conditions are not suitable environments for sport activities.
- The need for inclusive pickleball courts is frequently noted, with mentions of negative behaviour from competitive players discouraging recreation participation.
- Many respondents mentioned that Abbotsford is falling behind comparable cities regarding the quality and number of sport amenities. There were calls for city decision-makers to assess and improve facilities to match or exceed those offered by neighbouring communities.
- Several comments suggest that the city should partner with local schools to optimize the use of existing green spaces for organized sports.



About Your Household

Lastly, respondents were asked a variety of questions about their household. The findings are presented in the accompanying chart. **The %'s in (green) in the respondent age proportion column reflects actual Abbotsford age composition for comparison purposes (as per Statistics Canada, 2021 Census of the Population).*

Figure 20. Overview of Key Respondent Characteristics

Respondent Age Proportions*	
0-4 years	4% (5%)
5-9 years	10% (6%)
10-14 years	16% (6%)
15-19 years	10% (6%)
20 -29 years	7% (14%)
30-39 years	12% (14%)
40-49 years	20% (13%)
50-59 years	8% (12%)
60-69 years	9% (12%)
70-79 years	4% (8%)
80 years and older	1% (5%)

**The percentages in the above table do not add to 100% as a result of decimal values <0.5%.*

Do you have children under the age of 18?	
Yes	61%
No	39%

Household Composition	
Single without children	7%
Single with children	3%
Couple without children	20%
Couple with children	54%
Multi-generational family	11%
Multi-family without children	2%
Multi-family with children	3%
Roommates (two or more adults)	1%

**The percentages in the above table do not add to 100% as a result of decimal values <0.5%.*

Does someone in your household identify as having a disability?	
Yes, someone in my household has disability/disabilities that impacts their mobility	5%
Yes, someone in my household has a disability/disabilities that does not impact their mobility	7%
No, I don't have a disability nor does anyone in my household	82%
Prefer not to say	5%

**The percentages in the above table do not add to 100% as a result of decimal values <0.5%.*

Household Nationality	
Prefer not to say	18%
Indigenous (First Nations, Metis, Inuit)	9%
European (e.g. British Isles, French, Greek, etc.)	60%
Asian (e.g. Chinese, Filipino, Korean, etc.)	6%
South Asian (e.g. Punjabi, Indian, Pakistani, etc.)	7%
Central/South American (e.g. Mexican, Salvadorian, Argentinian, etc.)	3%
African (e.g. Moroccan, Ghanaian, South African, etc.)	2%
Middle Eastern (e.g. Lebanese, Iranian, Syrian, etc.)	1%
Caribbean (e.g. Cuban, Jamaican, Bajan, etc.)	1%
Oceanian (e.g. Australian, New Zealander, etc.)	1%
None of the above. I identify as:	11%

Respondents were able to select more than one option.



A full-page background image of a soccer player in a red and white striped jersey and red shorts, dribbling a soccer ball around orange cones on a grass field. The player is wearing a yellow training vest and red socks. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent teal rectangle containing the section header.

4. Group Survey

4.1. Overview

A survey was fielded with a variety of organizations in Abbotsford. The organizations included sport and recreation groups who use outdoor sport facilities and amenities to deliver their programs.

The City sent an email introducing the project and inviting participation in the survey to the main contact of each organization (70 groups were invited to participate). Each group was asked to provide one response. If multiple members from the organization wanted to provide feedback, they were encouraged to complete the resident survey.

Responses were gathered throughout November and December 2024. In total 20 groups provided a response. While these findings are not representative of all groups in Abbotsford, they do provide valuable insights into the perspectives of organized outdoor sport user groups in the city.



4.2. Findings

About Your Group / Historical and Future Growth

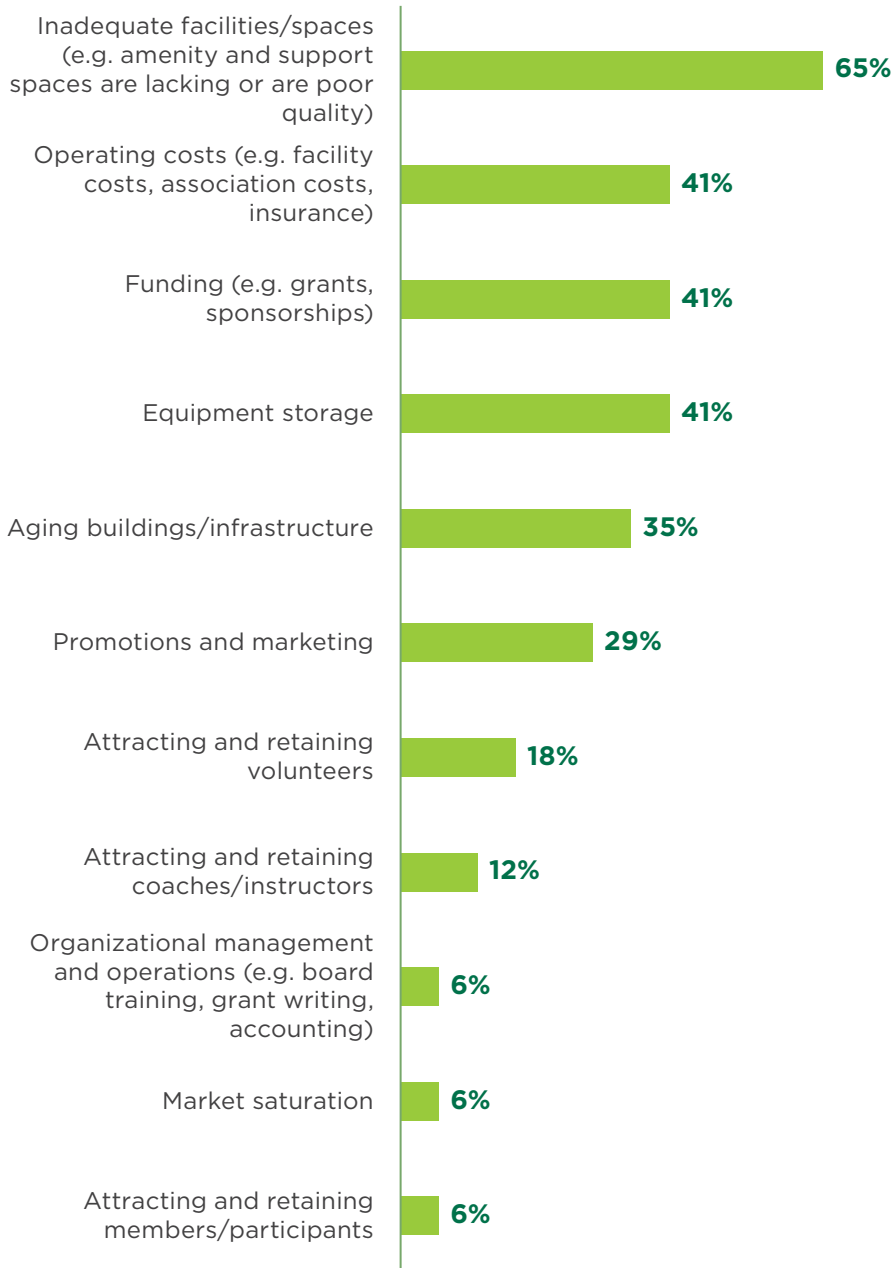
The survey began by gathering information about the responding organizations, including the types of programming / activities offered, group composition, and other key characteristics. The following graphic provided a synopsis of the groups that responded to the survey. **Please refer to Appendix A for a detailed list of the responding groups.*

Figure 21. Responding Organization Characteristics Summary



Considering the challenges organizations are facing, having inadequate facilities and spaces (65%), operating costs (41%), funding (41%) and equipment storage (41%) were the most cited.

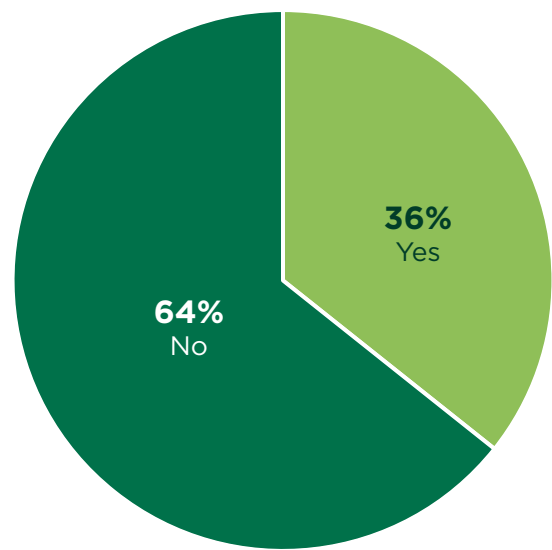
Figure 22. Overall Challenges Being Experienced by Groups



Facility and Access

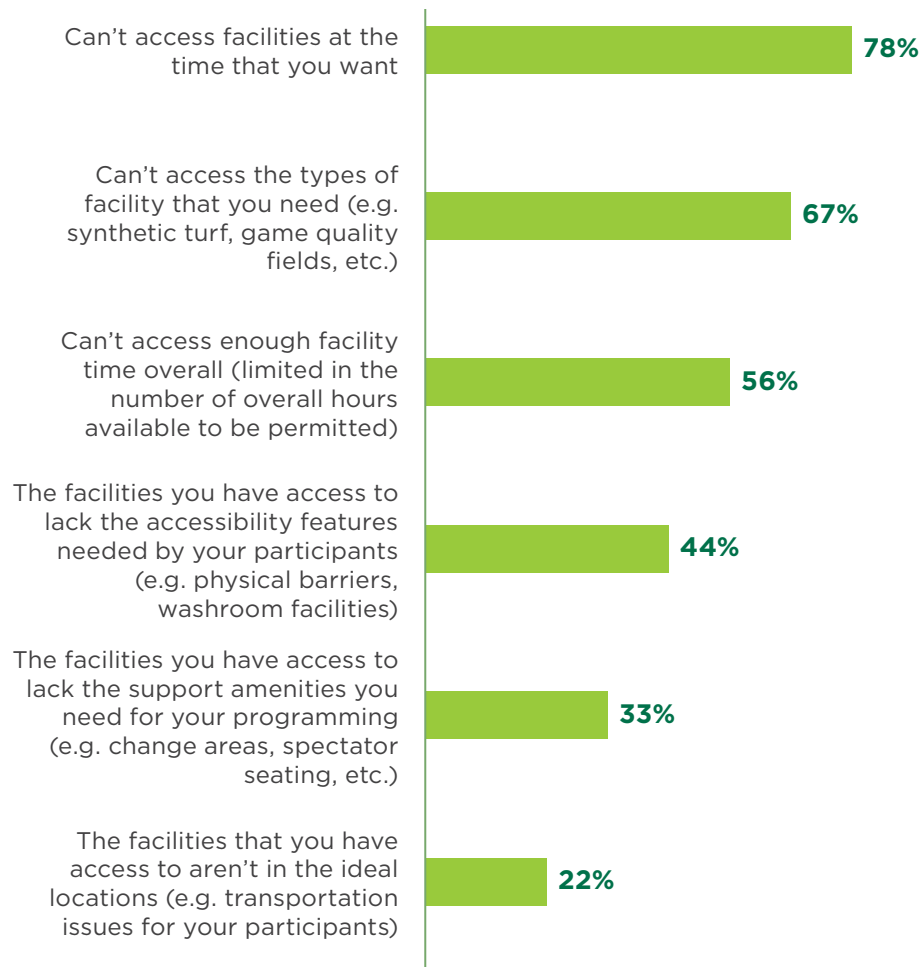
Next, group representatives were asked if their organization has sufficient access to facility time. As illustrated in the accompanying graph, approximately two-thirds (64%) indicated they do not have sufficient access to facilities for their programming.

Figure 23. Group Perspectives on Facility Time / Access



Group representatives who indicated they have insufficient access to facilities were asked to identify the challenges they face in securing adequate facility time. The most commonly cited challenge was the inability to access facilities at their preferred times (78%). Other challenges include not being able to access the types of facilities they need (67%), insufficient facility time overall (56%), and a lack of accessibility features in the facilities (44%).

Figure 24. Challenges in Securing Sufficient Facility Time

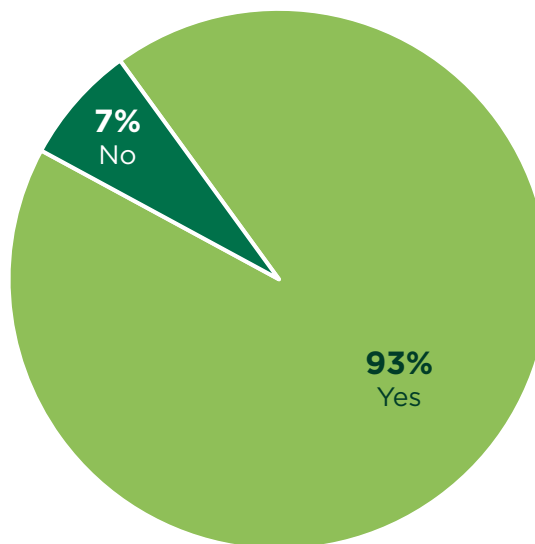


Shifting focus to facility allocations, group representatives were asked whether their organization fully utilizes its allocated hours. Nearly all (93%) indicated that they use all of their allotted hours.

Only one group representative indicated that they do not use all their allocated hours. Reasoning provided by the group representative included:

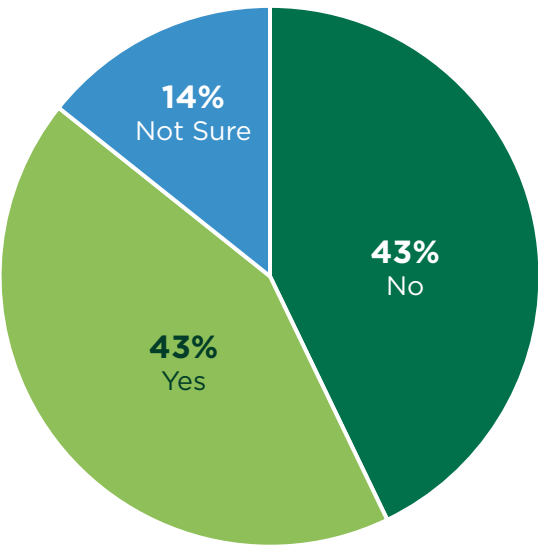
- Unsure of participant numbers
- Turning away hours may lead to losing them next season
- It makes sense to book more time than is needed in case of disruptions.
- Bookings are required before game schedules are set.

Figure 25. Group's Use of Allocated Time



Regarding how the City allocates and permits facilities to user groups, group representatives were asked to indicate their level of satisfaction with the process. Approximately 43% expressed satisfaction, while an equal percentage reported dissatisfaction.

Figure 26. Responding Groups Satisfaction with Allocations / Permits



Group representatives were able to explain their response to the previous question. The responses are summarized and presented according to themes:

Allocation and Policy Issues

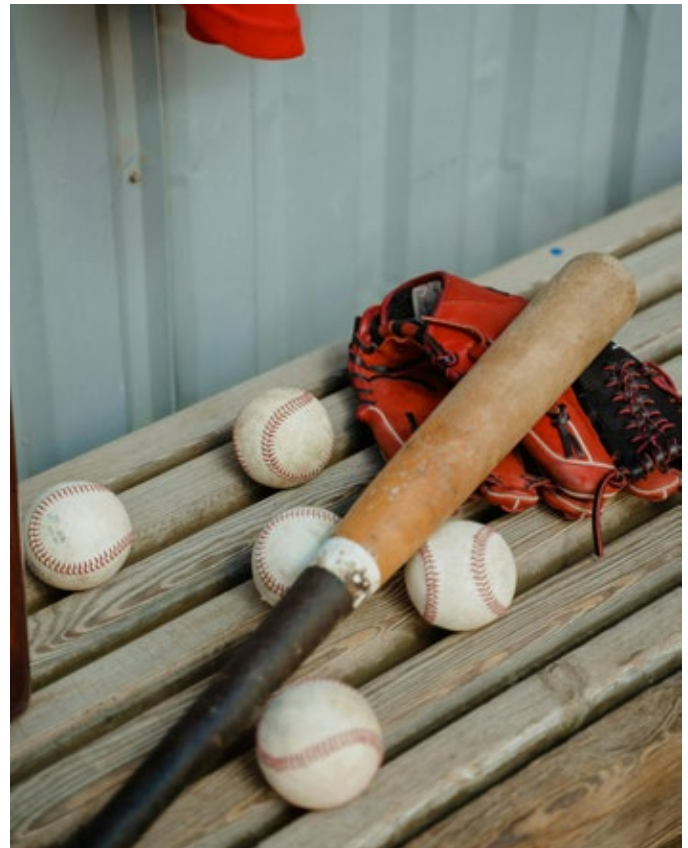
- Some group representatives expressed concerns about limited permits and inconsistent field allocation. There was mention that policies that prioritize children over adults are not being implemented. A lack of consideration for organizations projecting growth or that are newly established / emerging was also mentioned.
- The complexity of booking and payment processes was mentioned.

Facility Access and Quality

- Group representatives mentioned there is sometimes restricted access during peak seasons, particularly due to special events at facilities like Rotary Stadium. Mention that some programs struggle with limited access to necessary equipment when facilities are used for events.
- Rising costs for field, court, and facility rentals were highlighted, with mention of deterioration of facilities despite the high rental fees. Respondents called for improvements in facility conditions.

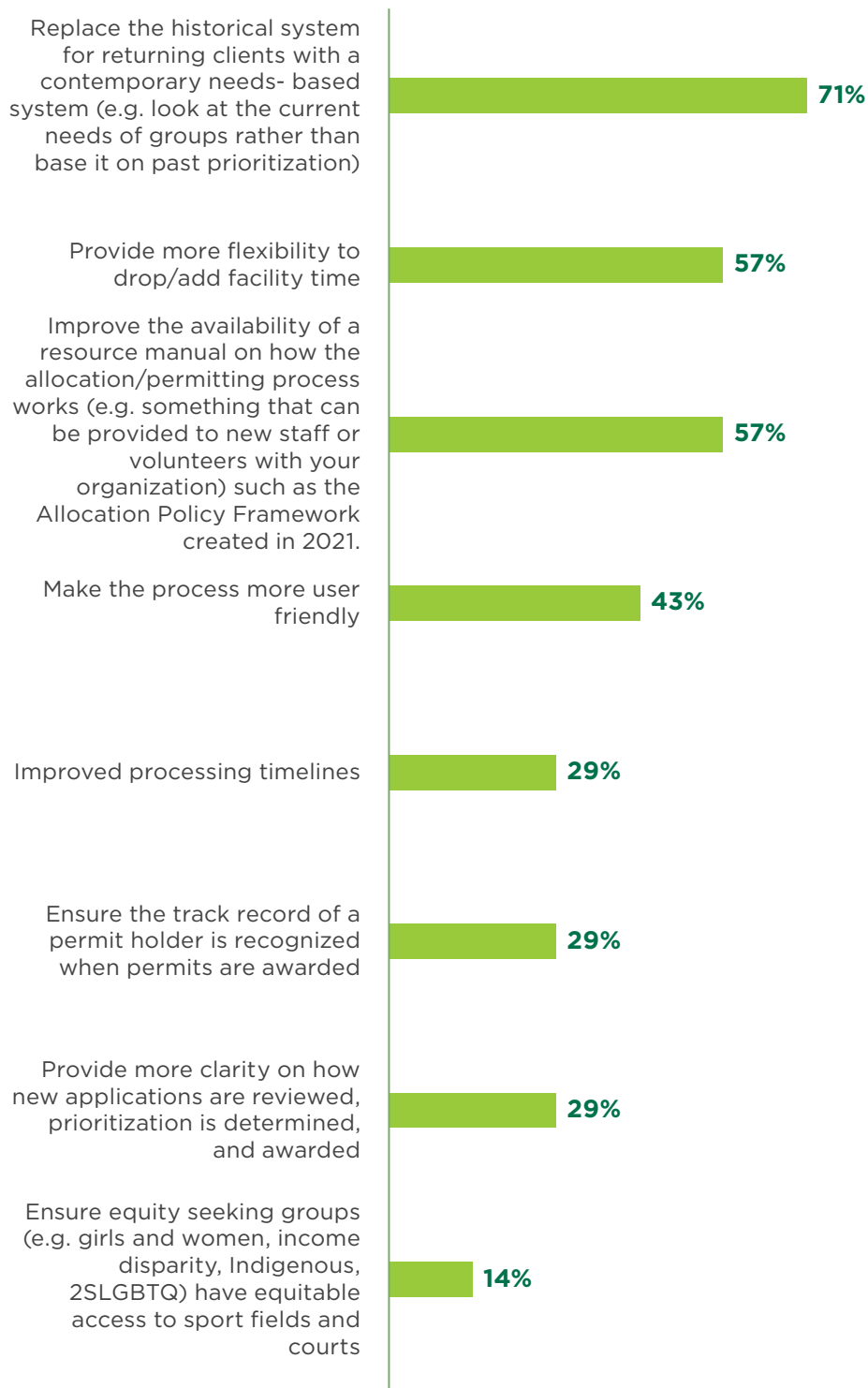
Growing Demand and Collaboration

- Many group representatives recognize the growing challenges faced by the City in managing the increasing demand for fields and facilities. Group representatives emphasized the need for long-term planning and collaboration to address the space limitations and growing needs across all sports. Despite the challenges, respondents acknowledged the efforts of City staff in managing limited resources and expressed a willingness to collaborate with other sport programs to share facility space.

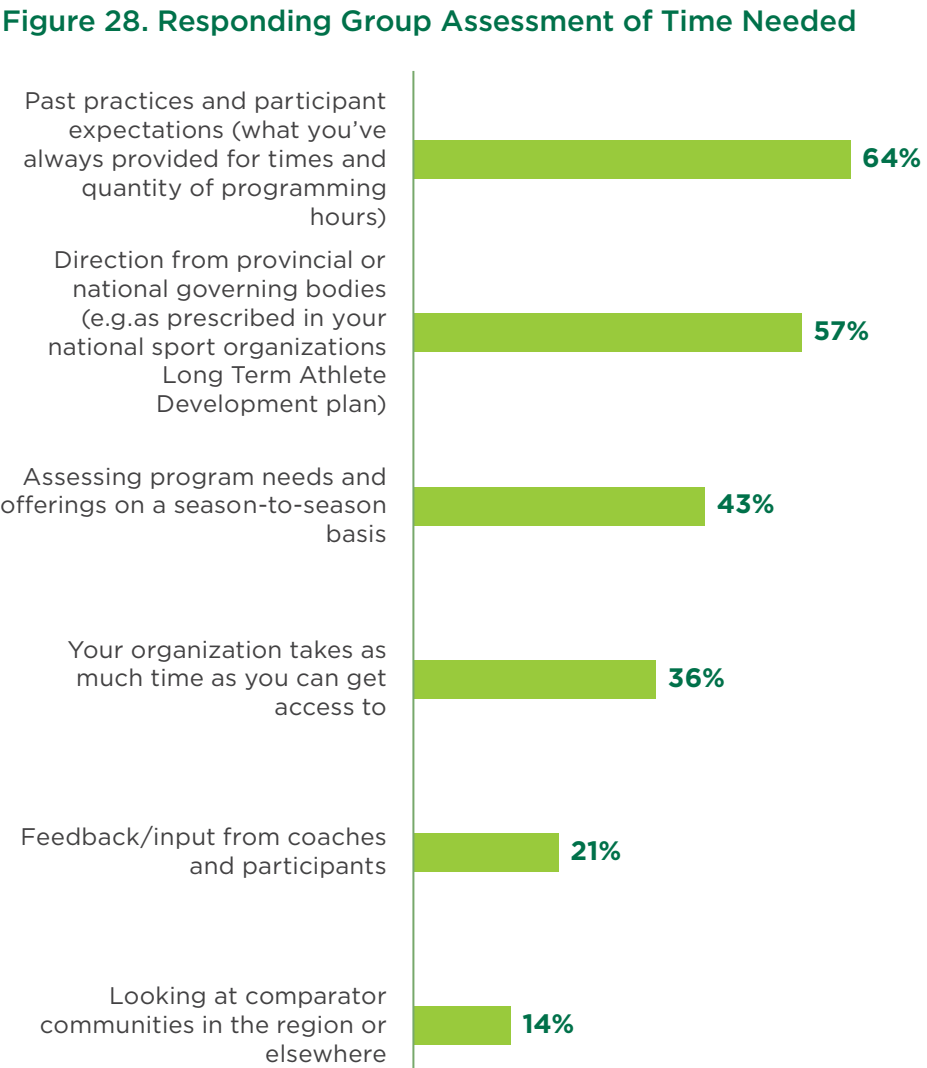


Next, group representatives were asked to indicate ways to improve the allocations and permitting process. Around three-quarters (71%) felt that replacing the existing system with a contemporary, needs-based approach would be an improvement. Additionally, 57% of respondents highlighted the need for a clearer, more detailed resource manual outlining the process, while the same proportion called for greater flexibility in modifying facility bookings.

Figure 27. Responding Groups Perspectives on Potential Allocations / Permitting Improvement Opportunities



Group representatives were next asked how their organizations determine the amount of facility time they need during a typical season of play. Approximately two-thirds (64%) indicated that past practices and expectations drive the amount of time they need. Similar proportions (57%) indicated that direction from provincial or national governing bodies determine the amount of facility time they need.



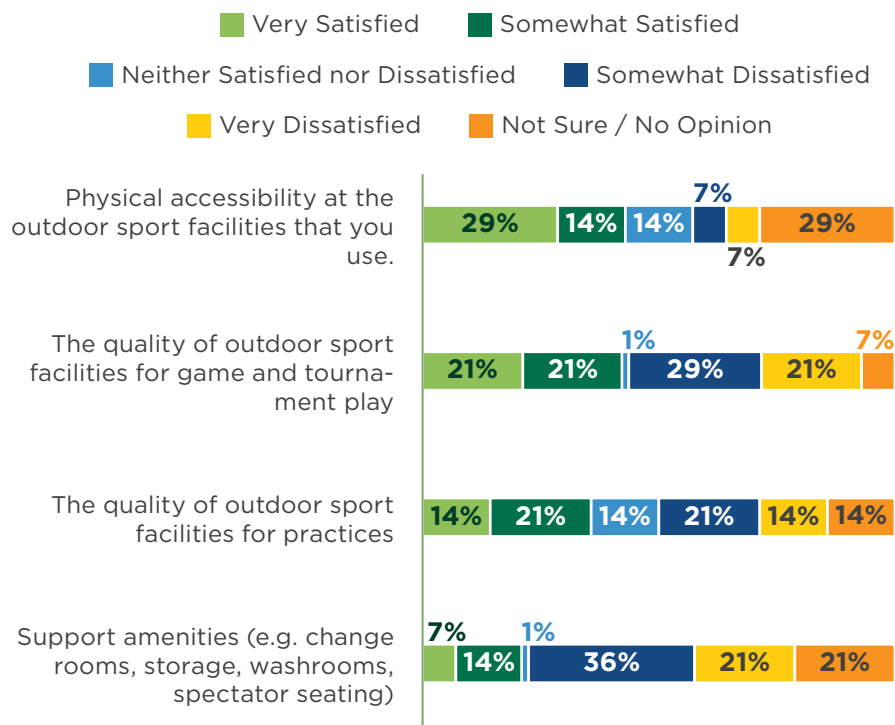
Group representatives were next asked to share the outdoor sport facilities they use and how often they use them on a weekly, monthly and annual basis. Listed below are the sites identified by the group representatives. Hours of use by each group varied from a few hours to thousands per season.

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ellwood Park • Abbotsford Exhibition Park • Clearbrook Park • Ag Rec Dirt Barn • Ag Rec Show Barn • McMillan Park • Crossley Park | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Berry Park • Lions Park • Rotary Stadium • Yale Secondary / Fraser Middle Track • BMX Track • MRC 2 & 4 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eugene Reimer Elementary • Rick Hansen Secondary • Rotary Stadium • ARC Youth Park • Delair Park • Mouat Secondary |
|---|--|---|

Group representatives were then asked to rate their level of satisfaction with different aspects of outdoor sport facilities in Abbotsford. Approximately half (43%) are satisfied (very satisfied and somewhat satisfied) with the physical accessibility at outdoor sport facilities and with the quality of outdoor sport facilities for game and tournament play (42%). Over half (57%) indicated they are dissatisfied (somewhat dissatisfied and very dissatisfied) with the support amenities available at outdoor sport facilities in the City.

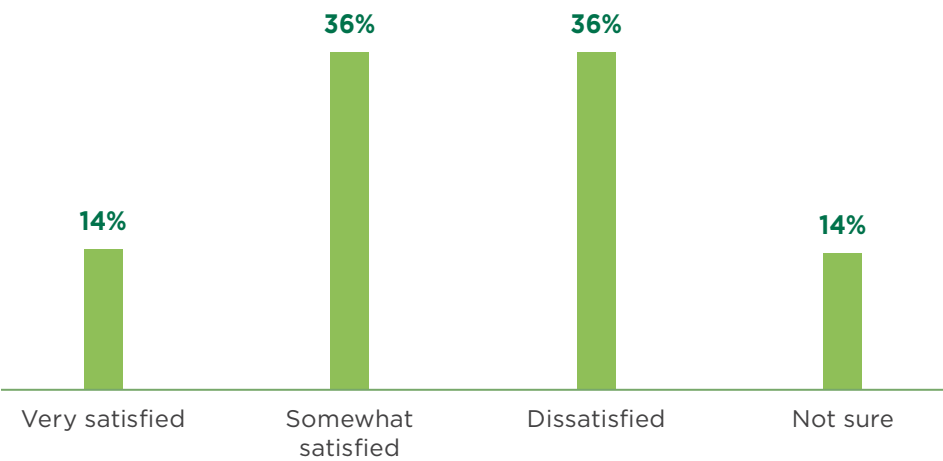
Next, group representatives were asked to rate their level of satisfaction with the outdoor sport facilities they currently have access to. Half (50%) of respondents are satisfied (very satisfied and somewhat satisfied) with the outdoor sport facilities they have access too. Approximately one-third (36%) indicated they are dissatisfied.

Figure 29. Responding Group Satisfaction Levels (Key Aspects)



**The percentages in the above graph do not add to 100% as a result of decimal values <0.5%.*

Figure 30. Responding Groups Satisfaction with Facilities They Use / Access



Space was provided for group representatives to expand on the satisfaction ratings they provided for each aspect of the spaces they use and the overall system. Summarized below are notable themes from the comments provided.

Need for More Sport Fields and Infrastructure

- Respondents mentioned a need for additional sport fields in Abbotsford to match the growing population and sports demand.
- Respondents mentioned that groups are relying on aging fields, with no upgrades made to improve them.

Poor Quality of Existing Fields

- Concerns were raised about the lack of care and maintenance of existing fields, with issues such as non-functional sprinkler systems, brown grass in the summer, and inadequate care for baseball fields.
- Respondents mentioned that Rotary Stadium, while offering great potential, requires major upgrades to meet current standards and be suitable for hosting national-level events.
- Respondents mentioned maintenance issues at facilities like Delair Park, where poorly maintained grass, divots, sand pits, and broken soccer net clips pose injury risks. Additionally, there was mention of insufficient parking and safety issues around the washroom facility due to a lack of lighting.

Insufficient and Inadequate Specialized Facilities

- Respondents mention that the courts at Jubilee Park and Bradner are insufficient. They have issues such as wind interference and are not graded.
- Respondents mentioned there is a lack of indoor court facilities in the city. There were calls for the development of an indoor court facility in Abbotsford.
- Respondents mention of the need for basic amenities such as washrooms and water access at the BMX track.

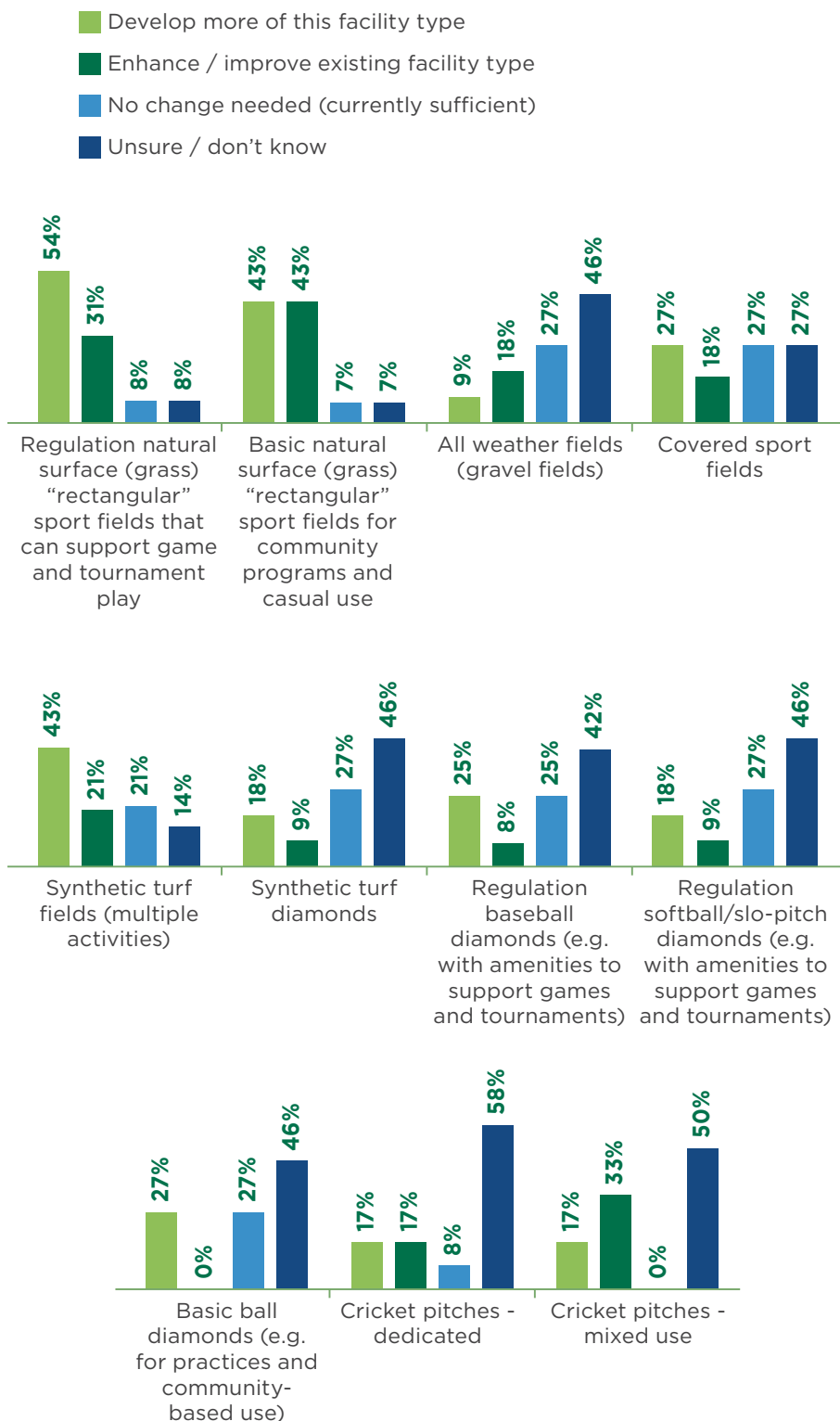


Investment Priorities

Group representatives were presented with a list of facilities and amenities and were asked to indicate whether more should be developed, the facility or amenity should be enhanced or improved, no change needed, or if they were unsure.

As illustrated in the accompanying graph, approximately half (54%) indicated that regulation natural surface rectangular sport fields, designed to support games and tournament play, should be developed. Additionally, 43% indicated basic natural surface rectangular fields for community programs and casual use, as well as synthetic turf fields should be developed. Similar proportions (43%) indicated that basic natural surface rectangular sport fields for community programs and casual use should be enhanced. Refer to the graph for additional findings.

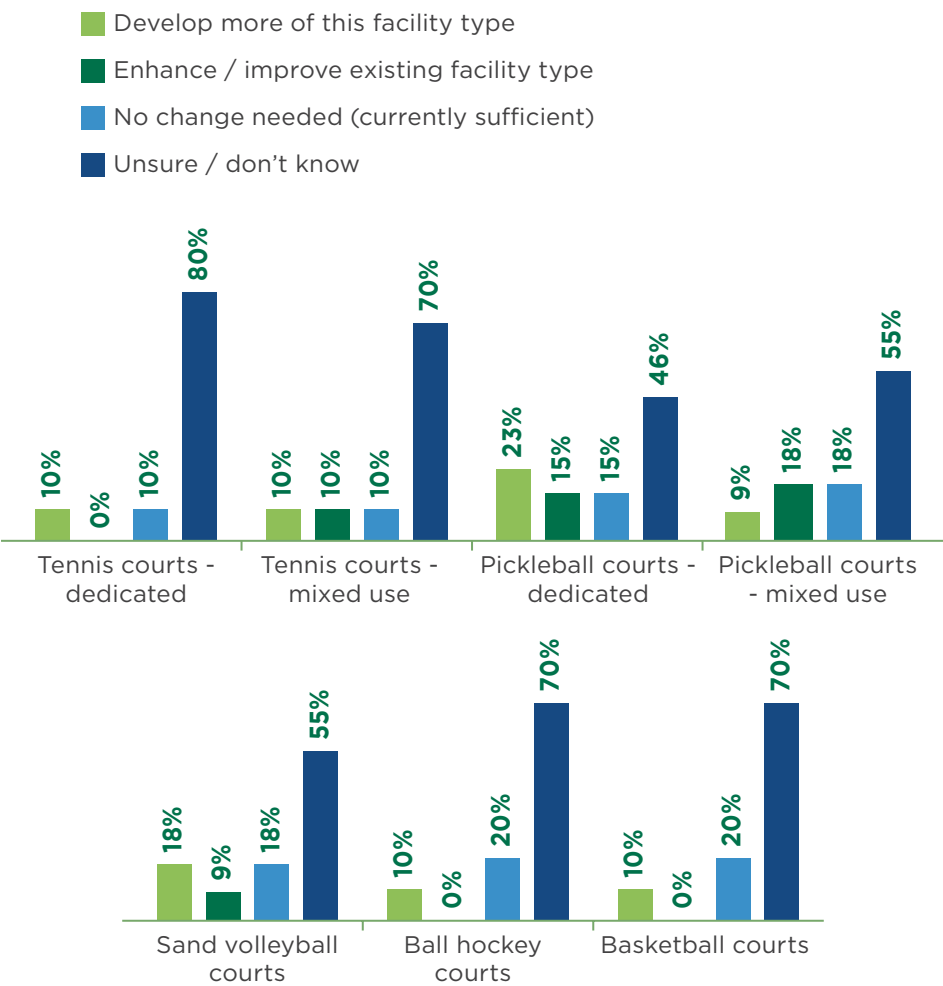
Figure 31. Responding Group Priority Actions for Sport Fields



**The percentages in the above graph do not add to 100% as a result of decimal values <0.5%.*

Considering courts, approximately one-quarter (23%) indicated that dedicated pickleball courts should be developed in Abbotsford.

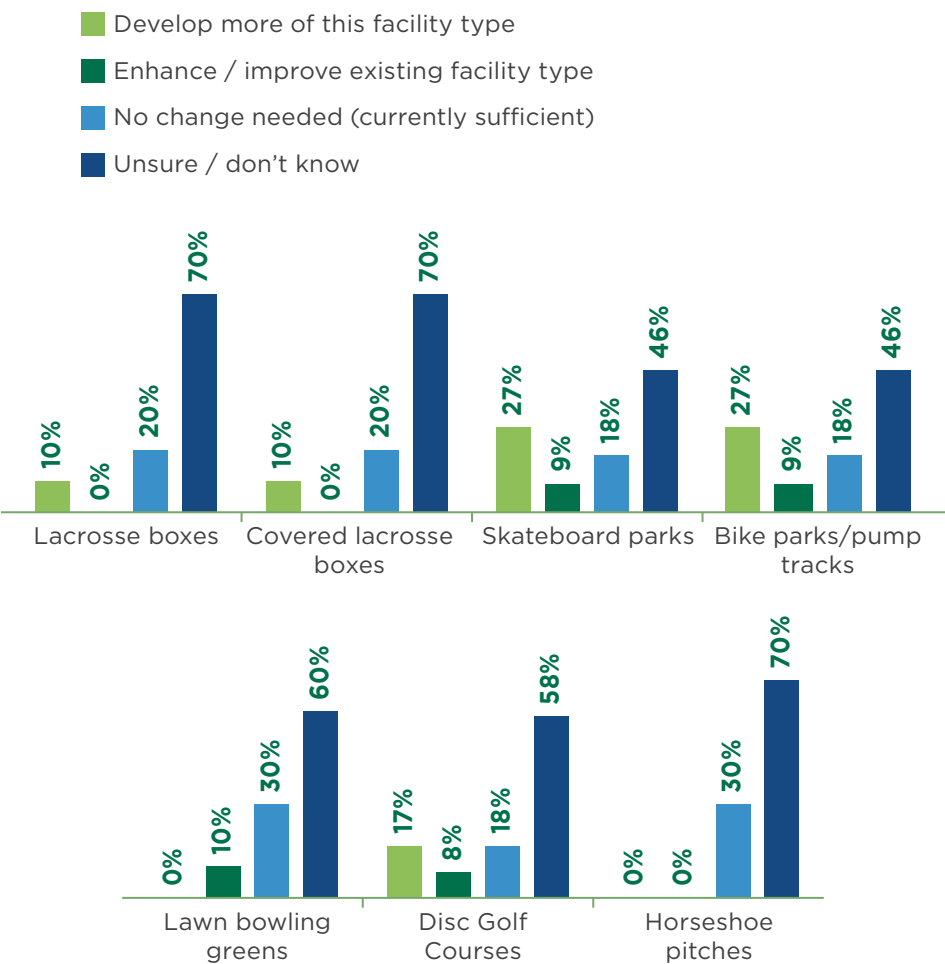
Figure 32. Responding Groups Priority Actions for Sport Courts



*The percentages in the above graph do not add to 100% as a result of decimal values <0.5%.

When considering other outdoor facilities, approximately one-third indicated that skateboard parks (27%) and bike parks / pump tracks (27%) should be developed.

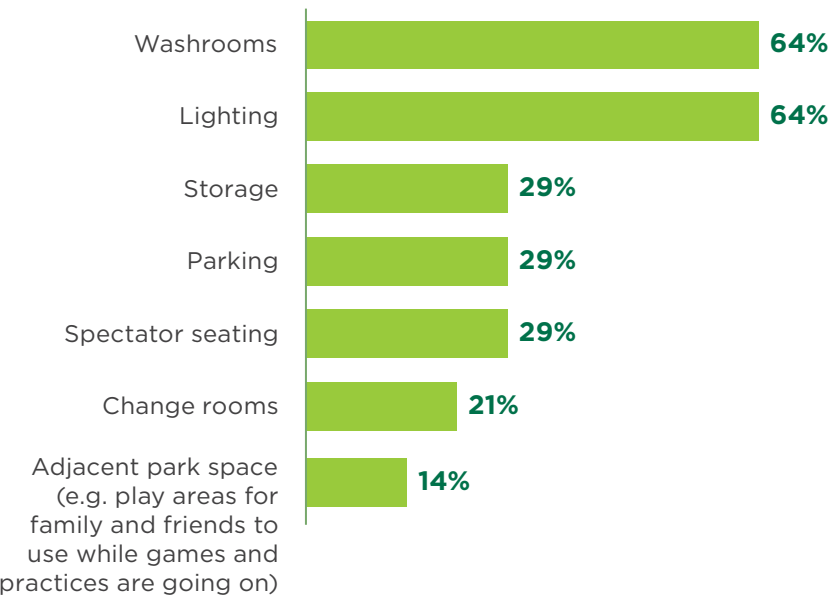
Figure 33. Responding Groups Priority Actions for Other Outdoor Amenity / Facility Types



**The percentages in the above graph do not add to 100% as a result of decimal values <0.5%.*

Considering specific amenities at outdoor sport facilities in Abbotsford, indicated that there is a need for enhanced or more washrooms (64%) and lighting (64%).

Figure 34. Responding Groups Perspectives on Priority Amenity Improvements



Group representatives were provided with space to offer additional comments on future priorities for outdoor sport facilities and support amenities.

Support Amenities

- **Seating:** Better seating at sport fields.
- **Washrooms:** Additional washrooms are needed at various fields, including Clearbrook Park fastball fields and BMX tracks.
- **Storage:** A demand for more storage options at fields like MRC for easier access to equipment.
- **Parking:** Improved parking, especially at Delair Park to accommodate increased demand and ease access.

Sports Hub and Facility Upgrades

- **Central Sports Hub:** A multi-sport hub that can service various field sports should be a priority, enabling Abbotsford to host Provincial and National tournaments.
- **Lit Fields:** Additional lit fields would help address the issue of limited space for games and practices.
- **Covered Facility:** A covered indoor/outdoor facility, similar to Mt. Vernon's approach, would provide year-round use and be cost-effective.

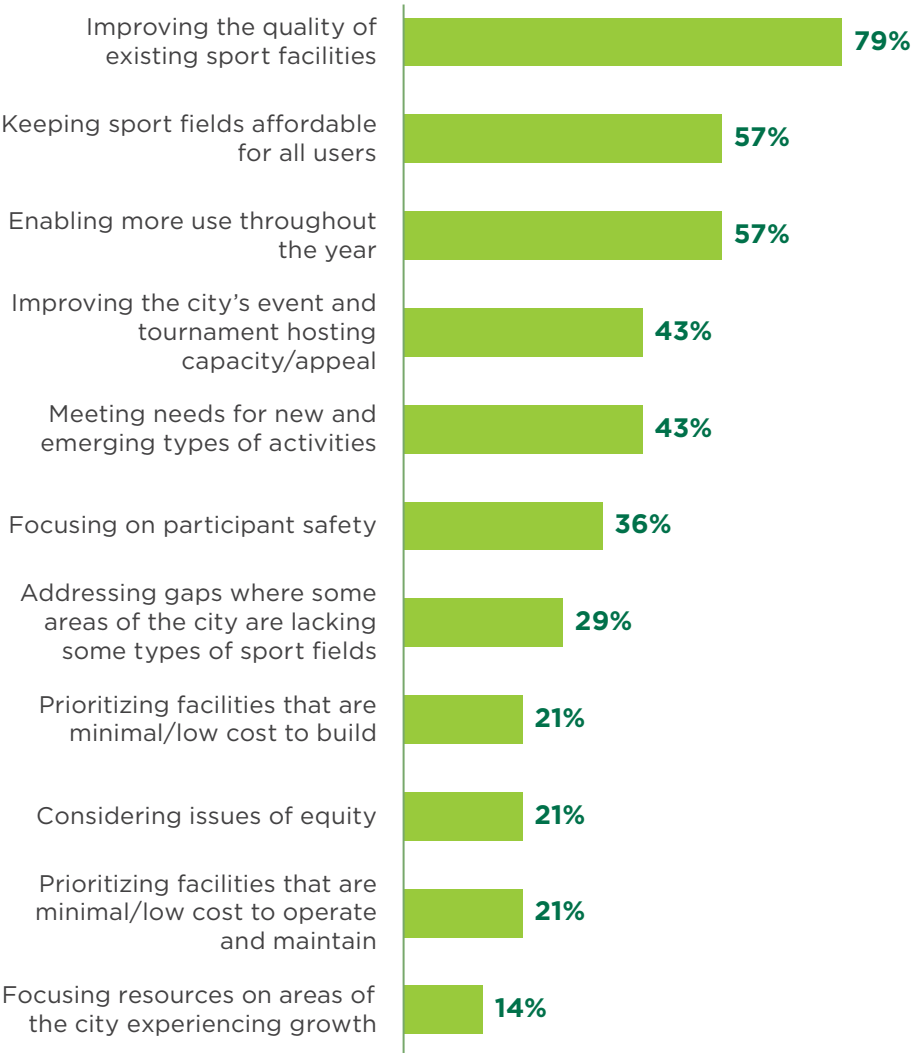
Facilities for Specific Sports

- **BMX:** Washrooms and lighting are needed to enhance the BMX track experience. There's also a call for more pump tracks.
- **Skateboarding:** Respondents suggest adding a pump track at Clearbrook Park or near the BMX track at Exhibition Park.



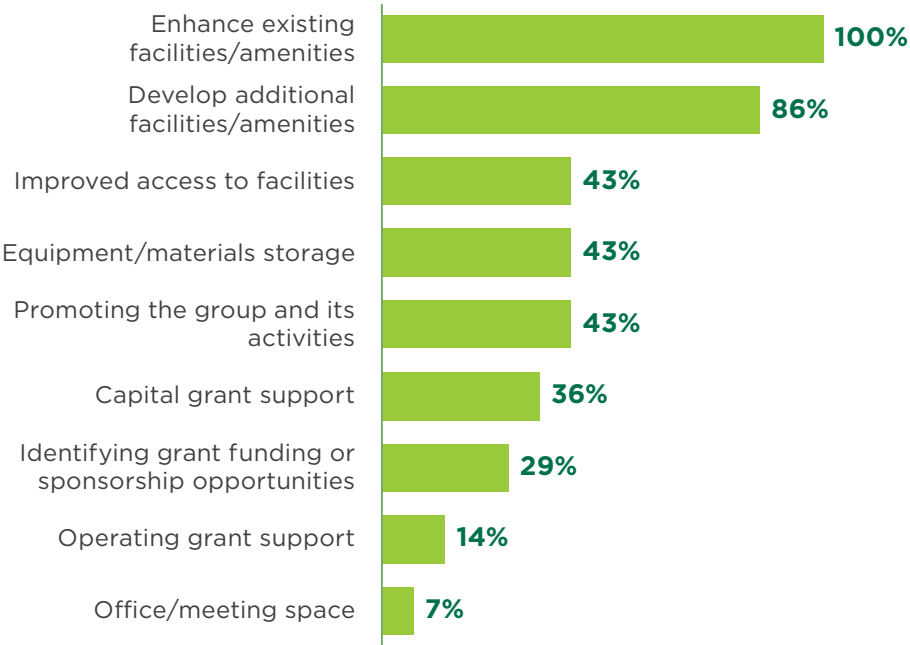
When considering public investment in recreation amenities and facilities there are limited resources available, therefore, priorities must be determined. Group representatives were provided with a list of factors that the City could use to prioritize investment in outdoor sport facilities in Abbotsford and were asked to select up to five (5) that should be considered. Over three-quarters indicated that improving the existing sport fields should be a top priority (79%). Approximately half (57%) indicated that sport fields should be affordable and that enabling more use year-round should also be priorities for the City. Refer to the graph for additional findings.

Figure 35. Responding Groups Perspectives on Key Priority Setting Criteria



Regarding City support or assistance, all group representatives agreed that enhancing existing facilities and amenities would benefit their organization. Additionally, 86% felt that the development of new facilities and amenities by the City would help them better address their challenges.

Figure 36. Desired Group Supports



Lastly, group representatives were able to share any additional comments they have about the provision of outdoor sport facilities in Abbotsford. The responses are presented according to themes:

Facility Development

- Group representatives urge the city to develop high-quality sport facilities to host major events and support elite athletes.
- There are calls for a multi-sport facility to serve as a hub for the Fraser Valley.
- The land south of Delair Park is suggested as a prime location for a multi-sport facility.
- There are calls for developing a cricket facility at Clearbrook Park.

Community Engagement and Support

- There is a strong sense of community pride and a desire for continued collaboration with the city, particularly regarding youth facilities.
- Many group representatives highlight the rapid growth of baseball and soccer and the need for the city to invest in facilities.

Improving Existing Facilities

- There are calls to improve existing facilities, such as adding lighting and washrooms.
- Many group representatives support expanding bike-related activities, including enhancing the BMX track and adding pump tracks.



5. User Group Discussions



5.1. Overview

Discussions were conducted with individuals representing 8 organization or activity interests in the community (58 organizations were invited). *Please refer to Appendix A for a list of organizations and community interests represented in these discussion sessions.*

The discussion sessions were conducted virtually and provided an opportunity for the project team to learn more about the specific organizations that deliver programming, events and community services in the area and explore their perspectives on current facilities/amenities, trends, and future needs. City staff were not in attendance.



5.2. Key Findings

While the discussions were wide-ranging and unique to every type of group, some common themes emerged. These themes and other notable points of interest are summarized as follows. These bullets are not intended to reflect the entirety of the conversations, but rather capture viewpoints expressed by multiple stakeholders and other notable points of interest from the wide-ranging discussions.

Concerns Over Sport Field and Ball Diamond Quality Relative to Other Communities

Stakeholders raised concerns that the quality of sport fields and ball diamonds in Abbotsford fall short compared to neighboring communities. These concerns include outdated facilities, inadequate maintenance, and a lack of investment in modernization. The condition of the fields impacts the ability to host tournaments and attract regional events, putting Abbotsford at a disadvantage.

Frustration Over Planning Not Leading to Capital Investment

There is frustration among community members and sports organizations over the lack of capital investment following extensive planning efforts. While strategic plans and needs assessments have been conducted, the anticipated funding and improvements have not materialized. This has led to skepticism about the effectiveness of planning processes and concerns over the prioritization of recreational infrastructure investments.

Expectations for Continued Growth

The community expects continued growth in population and sports participation, leading to increased demand for sport facilities. The growing popularity of various sports, including soccer, disc golf, cricket, lacrosse, and pickleball requires proactive planning and investment to accommodate future needs. This growth also highlights the importance of engaging diverse communities and ensuring accessibility for all participants.

Increase in Demand for Shoulder Season and Year-Round Training Facilities

There is a rising demand for facilities that can support training and activities during the shoulder season and year-round. This includes indoor fields and an increased availability of synthetic turf fields, which offer durability and usability regardless of weather conditions. Such facilities are essential for maintaining consistent training schedules and meeting the needs of athletes and sport organizations.

Re-Affirm the Need for Another Multi-Field ‘Hub’ Sport Field Site

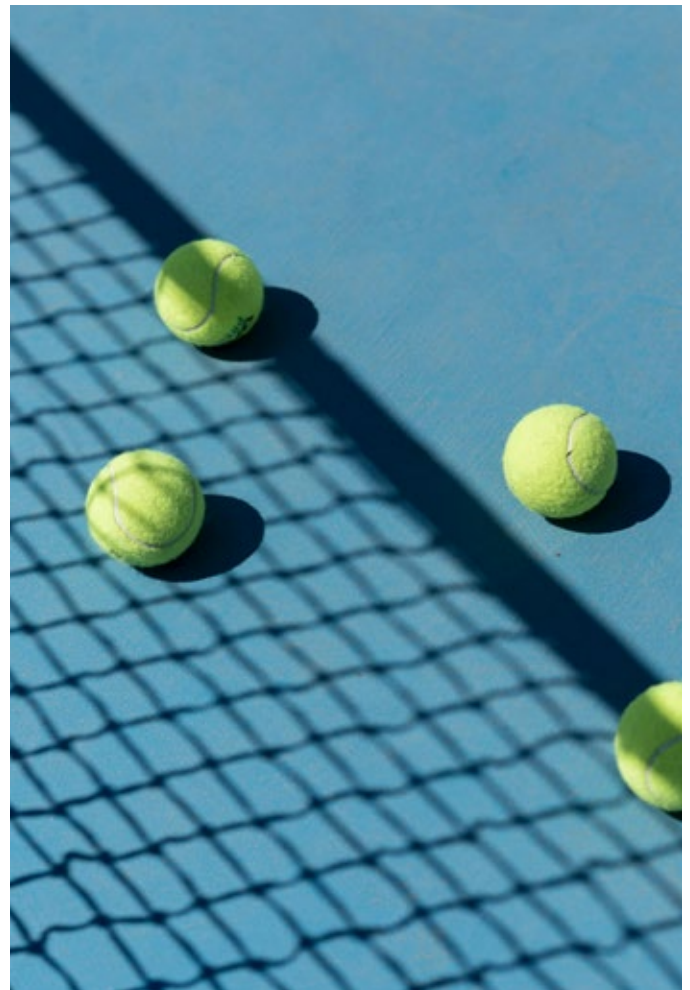
Groups hope that the Strategy will reaffirm the need for another multi-field hub to centralize sport activities. A hub would provide a dedicated space for tournaments, improve accessibility, and foster community engagement. It would also alleviate the pressures on existing fields and create opportunities for hosting larger events.

Recommend Increased Investment into Maintenance and Existing Field Renewal / Enhancement

Groups hope that the strategy will recommend increased investment in the maintenance and renewal of existing sport fields. Enhanced maintenance would address current issues with field conditions, such as inadequate washroom facilities, outdated infrastructure, and poorly maintained playing surfaces. Renewing and enhancing existing fields would ensure they meet the growing demand and provide a better experience for all users.

Desire for Clubhouse Facilities

Sports groups in Abbotsford emphasized the social value of sports, highlighting respect and camaraderie as key values. They see hosting tournaments as a chance to inspire youth by showcasing connections and community-building. The Rugby club specifically expressed the need for a versatile clubhouse—a welcoming space for events and gatherings. Located near active fields, they believe that such a facility could foster belonging and become a vibrant community hub.



6. Virtual Mapping Feedback



6.1. Overview

An interactive virtual map was used to gather feedback on outdoor sport facilities experiences, needs, and potential priority improvement locations. The virtual map was available on the Let's Talk Abbotsford website from October – December, 2024. Mapping tool users were instructed to drag their 'pin' to the appropriate place on the map and provide their comments/feedback.

In total 65 'pins' were collected. In addition to providing their comments, mapping tool users were required to select one of six categories pertaining to their feedback. Noted below are the number of 'pins' provided for each of these three categories.

- This place is great as it is! **(3 pins)**
- This place needs a new diamond **(3 pins)**
- This place needs a new field **(6 pins)**
- This place needs a new court **(11 pins)**
- This place needs a new outdoor sport facility **(14 pins)**
- This place needs improvement **(28 pins)**



6.2. Findings

The following table summarize the comments provided alongside the ‘pins’ provided on the map. The first table summarizes comments provided for Parks in the community and the second table summarizes comments related to development of specific facilities/ amenities not at an established park.

Figure 37. Park Specific Improvements/ Comments

Park Site	Number of Pins on the Map	Key Themes from Comments
Delair Park	10	• There is a strong desire for a basketball court at Delair Park; 9 comments were provided relating to this. • A handful of comments also indicated the desire for a dog park at Delair Park. • One comment suggested that the Little Delair Diamond needs improvement.
Crossley Park	7	• There is desire for an additional diamond at Crossley Park (replacing the mini soccer field). • There is desire for a basketball court and additional parking at Crossley Park. • Several comments noted poor field conditions and the desire for irrigation at the park as well as a higher fence surround the diamond. • One comment provided a suggestion to landscaping to separate the baseball field from the rest of the park. • A washroom or porta potty is desired. • More parking is desired.

Park Site	Number of Pins on the Map	Key Themes from Comments
McMillan Park	5	• There is desire for an additional ball diamond at McMillan Park where there is currently a grass field. Adding lighting was also suggested. • Another comment suggested removing the diamond at McMillan Park and adding in a new soccer field or court space. • A couple of comments requested that the City convert one field at McMillan to artificial turf.
Clearbrook Park	3	• Appreciation for the ball diamonds located at Clearbrook Park. More diamonds like these were requested. • Some comments suggested a washroom should be built and irrigation of the grass is needed.
Bakerview Park (Cricket)	3	• This Park was indicated as a potential place to create a multi-sport training center.
Lions Park	3	• The backstop, boards, and dirt mounds are in need of replacement. Additionally, general improvements to irrigation and quality of field were requested. • The desire for improvements to the washrooms and spectator seating was expressed.
Mill Lake Park	3	• A couple comments indicated that the ball diamond at Mill Lake Park is a bit run down and maintenance is lacking. • A suggestion to upgrade the diamond or remove it to allow for different land use such as a indoor multi-sport training centre was provided.
M.S.A. Arena Park	3	• A few comments noted that more could be done with the field at the park. • A couple of comments indicated that this could be an area for a multi-purpose facility.

Park Site	Number of Pins on the Map	Key Themes from Comments
Townline Hill Park	3	• Comments provided suggest that field drainage is an issue at this location. • The need for security, and the sense of being unsafe at this park was also noted.
Babich Park	2	• There is a desire for an additional diamond in the far corner of Babich Park where there is currently an overlapping diamond with sport field. The comments suggested removing the soccer field. • Another commented on the poor quality of the current diamond.
Berry Park	2	• A couple of commenters mentioned poor grass condition of the field and ineffective irrigation system. • Lighting the basketball court was suggested.
Mouat Park	2	• Comment suggested that the washrooms at this facility (not in the MRC) are not kept in good condition. • A desire for more shade and storage for user groups was indicated.
Yale Court Park	2	• Comments indicated that the lacrosse box at Yale Court Park is appreciated but floods during rainy weather. A suggestion for a roof to allow for more play year-round was provided.
Abbotsford Exhibition Park	1	• Appreciation for the diamonds at Abbotsford Exhibition Park.
Dunach Elementary School	1	• Request for pickleball courts where the field is currently located. The school is permanently closed.
Fairfield Park	1	• Suggestion to add basketball courts at this park.
Hughes Park	1	• Comment indicated the perception that this park is underutilized.
Mastqui Recreation Center	1	• Desire to store equipment in the Recreation Centre for outdoor field users was expressed.

Figure 38. New Sport Facilities Beyond Current Park Boundaries

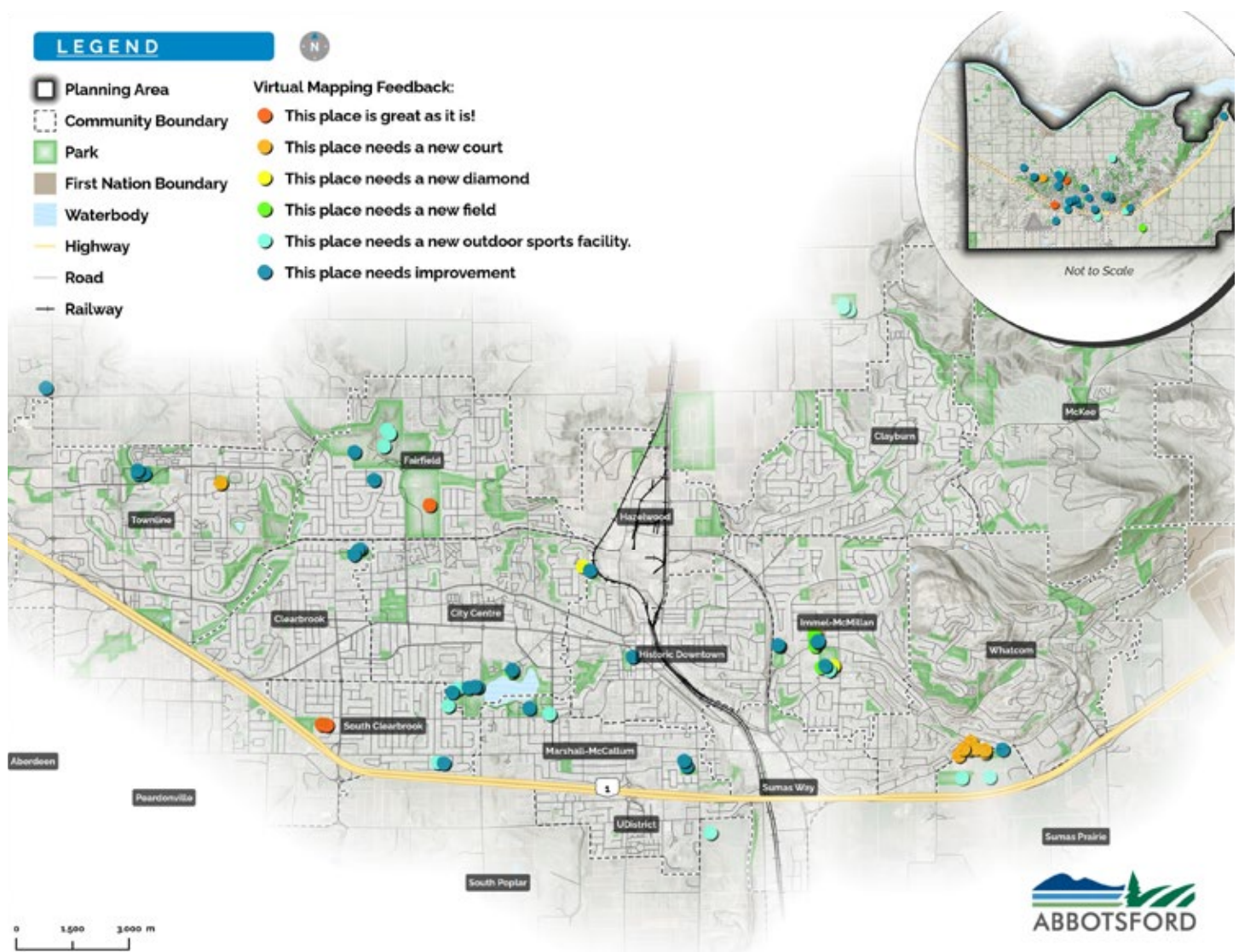
New Outdoor Sport Facility/ Amenity Desired	Number of Pins on the Map*	Key Themes from Comments
Disc Golf Course	5	• Two comments suggested a 9-hole disc golf course in the forest area east of Clayburn Park. • Two comments suggested a 18- hole disc golf course in the forested area north east of Clearbrook Park. • One comment suggested the grass area west of the Abbotsford Elementary would be a good location for a disc golf course.
Multi-sport Hub	2	• Two comments suggested that a multi-sport hub would be a good idea in an area currently designated for agricultural use. The fields south of Delair Park and the field located at the corner of Mackenzie and King Road were ‘pinned’ as possible spots.
Skate Park	1	• One comment suggested the grass area west of Abbotsford Elementary would be a good location for a skateboard park.



Spatial Distribution of ‘Pins’ Provided

The following map illustrates where comments/ pins were provided based on the category of pin selected.

Figure 39. Overview of ‘Pins’





Appendices

Appendix A: User Groups Engaged

Sport User Groups	Survey	Discussion
Abbotsford Angels Hardball Association (AAHA)	✓	✓
Abbotsford BMX	✓	
Abbotsford Cricket Club	✓	
Abbotsford Falcons Football Association	✓	
Abbotsford Men's Soccer	✓	
Abbotsford Minor Fastball Association (AMFA)	✓	
Abbotsford Mission Disc Golf Club	✓	✓
Abbotsford Pickleball Association	✓	✓
Abbotsford Rugby Club	✓	
Abbotsford Soccer Association	✓	✓
Abby Broncos Cricket Club	✓	✓
Fraser Valley Soccer Shots	✓	
Harjeet Talwar Kabaddi Club	✓	
Little Kickers	✓	
Mission Minor Lacrosse Club	✓	
REPLAY Boardshop Inc	✓	
Top spin Pickleball Club	✓	
Valley Royals Track and Field Club	✓	
Valley Sturgeon Lacrosse	✓	✓
Women's Christian Soccer League	✓	
Abbotsford Mixed Slo-Pitch		✓
Tourism Abbotsford		✓



