



January 15, 2020

MEMO TO : Park Board Commissioners

FROM : Malcolm Bromley
General Manager, Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation

SUBJECT : **Sport Fields Strategy – Board Briefing Memo**

Dear Commissioners,

The purpose of this memo is to provide an update and timeline for the Park Board's "Sport Fields Strategy" project. This strategy provides a city-wide lens on the provision of playing fields, including location of new synthetic turf fields and sports field lighting. Additionally the strategy will expand on the groundwork and direction provided through VanPlay.

As outlined in the [Playing Field Upgrades report](#) presented on April 15, 2019, public feedback received through the consultation process for the [Playing Field Upgrade project](#) highlighted the need for an additional level of engagement as part of planning significant changes to parks, such as installing synthetic turf. The development of a Sports Field Strategy responds to this need, as well as to the Board's direction provided through the [amended recommendations](#) on April 15, 2019, and the referral of the [Artificial Turf Assessment and Remediation motion](#) to staff on September 16, 2019. As part of a broadened scope of work and a more holistic system-wide approach, this strategy will include reviewing the California Environmental Protection Agency study and exploring more organic sustainable substrate options, storm water filtration, and catchment systems.

The Sport Fields Strategy will encompass rectangular fields, including both natural and synthetic turf, as well as ball diamonds. Work will include investigating current service levels, identifying gaps, and projecting future needs. The strategy will guide the prioritization and phasing of the replacement and renewal of sport field facilities in parks, including new facilities as required, and will recommend the capital and operating budgets needed. The project will also include developing a field use allocation policy and an environmental and human health assessment to support surface material selection.

The public engagement process for the Sport Fields Strategy will include engaging with user groups and residents, and establishing a city-wide advisory group with a mandate to provide input on field upgrade locations, as well as review potential impacts and mitigation options for existing and new surface materials, amenities, infrastructure, environmental aspects, and parking.

Staff anticipate initiating the strategy in early 2020, with a goal to achieve the following:

- form a Sport Fields Strategy city-wide advisory group to provide input on the strategy;
- complete an Environmental and Human Health Impact Assessment, identifying more organic and sustainable substrate options and storm water filtration;
- review the condition, effectiveness and performance of the Vancouver Park Board sport fields;



- explore and recommend new and innovative directions to meet city-wide sport field needs;
- propose a field allocation and management policy;
- offer a comprehensive and robust community and stakeholder engagement strategy, including a city-wide advisory group; and
- identify optimum city-wide service levels and delivery, including metrics that measure effectiveness of sport field provision (e.g. sport field use per capita, # of users/sport, unmet demand).

Staff will summarize sports field related public input from recent community engagements and expect to initiate project specific engagement in spring 2020, when many sports are active. Community engagement will continue throughout the project, with an aim to bring a report forward to the Board for decision by spring 2021.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Malcolm Bromley". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Malcolm Bromley
General Manager - Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation

/ele/clc

Copy to: PB Senior Leadership Team
Planning, Policy & Environment
PB Communications