

Athletic Field Study: Research and Findings Report

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Executive Summary

Regional, statewide and local population trends indicate a quickly-growing population in and around Sammamish that will continue to strain the City's already limited number of athletic fields. In addition, the Sammamish community has a high percentage of residents who are children and are more likely than older generations to engage in high-calorie activity and participate in organized, team sports. Sammamish residents are more likely to spend money on recreation, and considering national trends, would be more likely to spend money on their children's recreation.

While national trends suggest that overall team sports participation for children is declining, Sammamish continues to see an increasing number of children participating in organized sports within the community. However, this trend appears to be driven by large, regional leagues/organizations operating within Sammamish that serve both local residents and those outside the community. Many leagues/organizations that operate within the community are competitive and specialized, yet national studies and regional initiatives recommend that cities plan for multi-sport facilities and support recreational play in order to prevent local youth from dropping out of sports at an early age. Several recommendations include, but are not limited to:

- Support multi-sport opportunities, sport sampling, and companion sports
- Develop small fields to support casual play
- Partner with local school districts
- Renovate existing facilities for multi-use
- Improve overall playing conditions and field quality
- Emphasize youth sports
- Search for creative opportunities

Public feedback within the Sammamish community generally ranks athletic facility improvements in the middle of other priorities when asked about City park improvements. Topics such as expanding trails, open space, community gardens and off-leash dog parks are generally more popular than athletic fields. Major stakeholders and leagues/organizations that utilize sports facilities on a regular basis commonly report that increasing the number and quality of athletic fields are a high priority, with the majority citing artificial turf as the preferred playing surface (except for certain type sports, such as cricket). Overall, baseball and soccer are the predominant sports that operate within the community while most playing time occurs in the spring, summer and fall. Winter use is limited due to the poor field conditions for natural turf fields during the months of November, December, January and February. However, field use also decreases for artificial turf during these same months, suggesting that overall athletic play is not just limited by weather conditions but also due to school schedules and the seasonal cycle of certain sports.

Methodology

This report incorporated several methods of research and analysis to gain a large picture of the needs and demands of athletic fields within the City in order to guide the Parks, Recreation and Facilities Department (the Department) in prioritizing future improvements and construction to increase overall playing time while emphasizing cost saving measures. In order to conduct a thorough assessment, the report incorporated several methods of research including:

- Conducting general research of sports and population trends
- Researching local, regional, statewide, and national initiatives addressing athletic play
- Analyzing current field usage of City-owned fields
- Reviewing data and feedback from sports leagues that operate within the City
- Reviewing data and feedback from stakeholder assessments and public input

General research

The report aimed to anticipate future growth of community residents as well as shifting interest in sports. In order to maintain consistency with City long-term planning and future growth projections, the report leveraged population estimates and growth projections already being conducted through other City-wide projects (e.g. economic study) and ongoing data analytics. This information was then paired with data that was obtained through the feedback of league representatives, analysis during the department's recent PRO Plan, and reports/findings from the following agencies:

- National Recreation and Park Association
- WA State Recreation and Conservation Office: State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Planning
- King County Play Equity Coalition
- The Aspen Institute
- The Physical Activity Council

Current field usage

In order to research usage trends of City-owned fields, Department staff studied field reservation data from all athletic fields which were scheduled through the Department's online reservation system. Starting in 2018, the Department's Recreation Division began collecting field reservation data through its online reservation system which was upgraded in 2019 using a new system called PerfectMind. Reservation data was exported from the system into Excel which was analyzed using available business intelligence tools, such as Tableau Software and Microsoft Power BI. Field reservation data included information such as:

Information	Example
Park/sports complex	Beaver Lake Park, Eastlake Community Fields, etc.
Field/facility	Field #1, field #2, etc.
Reservation dates/times	November 10, 2018 at 10am
Length of reservation	10 hours
Rental number	9***
Fee amount	\$600 for 10 hours
Organization	Sammamish Little League, Lake WA Youth Soccer Association, etc.

Field reservation data was then joined with other data sources about the specific league and fields being reserved, such as:

Information	Example
League	
Organization	Sammamish Little League, Lake WA Youth Soccer Association, etc.
Sport type	Soccer, baseball, football, etc.
Age	Youth/adult
Field	
Park/sports complex	Beaver Lake Park, Eastlake Community Fields, etc.
Field/facility	Field #1, field #2, etc.
Type of field	Natural turf, artificial turf
Available daily play	11 hours (9am – 8pm), 12 hours (9am-9pm), etc.

Using this information, Department staff were able to join the data together and analyze trends to gain a picture of field usage across parks managed and scheduled by the City.

The primary metric and key performance indicator that was evaluated was “hours played”. This specific metric was utilized to help the Department evaluate side-by-side the amount of playing time per sport/facility in order to identify gaps and discover opportunities for improvement. Analysis included:

- Evaluating trends over time (e.g. seasonal trends, year-over-year)
- Breakout by individual groups/fields (e.g. youth vs adult leagues, natural vs. artificial turf)
- Percentage of total use (e.g. Are fields being used to their full capacity each day?)
- Mapping field usage by sports complex
- Evaluating field use trends by type of field (natural vs. artificial turf)
- Mapping field reservations by day/time

Survey of leagues/organizations

In order to collect information from leagues that serve athletes across the community, the City conducted the *2019 Athletic Field Study Survey* which asked league representative to respond to 29 questions ranging from demographics to ranking the quality of fields managed and scheduled by the Department. Questions were developed to solicit input and quantitative data from league representatives which the Department was able to then use for its analysis and findings. Survey questions were either open-ended, included multiple responses, or required single-responses depending on the question being asked. Questions 13-20 asked respondents to answer general statements (such as “*Synthetic turf fields maintained and scheduled by the City are in good condition*”) using a Likert scale with answers such as “Strongly Agree”, “Agree”, “Neutral”, “Disagree” and “Strongly Disagree”. The City used the responses “Agree” and “Strongly Agree” to develop a key performance indicator (KPI) in order to compare responses across questions and leagues/organizations using a standardized metric. In order to estimate league/organization size and residency, leagues/organizations had the ability to directly report their numbers or select from a range of responses. Using each league’s reported numbers or estimates, the City was able to extrapolate from each response the size and residency of each league in order to develop general estimates for the analysis.

Due to the nature of the research, the Department made the deliberate decision to survey league representatives rather than athletes themselves due to federal laws and ethical considerations when conducting research involving minors, which are the majority of athletes that participate in leagues

operating within the City. Due to this decision, strategies commonly found in traditional research studies such as randomization and other sampling techniques (random sampling, simple random sampling, probability sampling, systematic sampling, stratified sampling, cluster sampling, etc.) were not used because the population size, and therefore the sample size, would be considerably small. As a result, the Department would be unable to rely on traditional techniques to study and analyze statistically significant variation between subgroups (such as ANOVA testing and Independent Samples t-Tests) or estimate sampling error.

The survey was developed through SurveyMonkey and was open from October 23 – November 12, 2019. An email with a live link directing respondents to the survey was sent to 30 leagues that operated within the City, a sampling technique called “convenience sampling”. In order to obtain the highest participation rate possible Department staff extended the length of the survey and sent out notification reminders to leagues/organizations that have yet responded. Due to multiple representatives from each league receiving the email invitation to the survey the City received 23 total responses from the survey representing 16 leagues. To ensure no one league was overrepresented in the final statistics and guarantee consistency in the survey methodology, the City kept only those survey responses that were submitted by the highest-ranking representative of the league. For instance, if a coach and the President for the same league both responded to the survey, the City kept only the responses submitted by the President. In addition to the standard report provided by SurveyMonkey, the City utilized available business intelligence tools to further delve into the data in order to gain further insights into the survey findings.

Community activity profile

In September 2019 the City conducted a community profile study of potential park users and their level of activity in order to better assess community needs, habits and interests when developing strategies to improve parks and facilities. Leveraging its membership through the National Recreation and Park Association which utilized a third-party research firm to study publicly-available data, the City received two “Facility Market Reports”:

- Community Profile
- Health and Wellness

Using the Sammamish Commons as a center point for the analysis, the studies examined the needs, habits and interests of potential park users who reside within a 15-minute drive of the park. In efforts to ensure the entire Sammamish community was included, the analysis did oversample and included neighborhoods in Issaquah and unincorporated King County. While traditional statistics such as household size, income, race/ethnicity and other demographics may not entirely reflect U.S. Census data for only Sammamish residents, the study provides useful insights to other data and statistics related to individual habits and interests. Importantly, although the community profile extends beyond the City’s jurisdictional boundary, City parks and facilities are utilized by non-residents on a regular basis which should be taken into consideration as it reflects the demographics of all athletes who use City fields for athletic play.

Figure 1: Map of 5-, 10- and 15-Minute Drives from the Facility

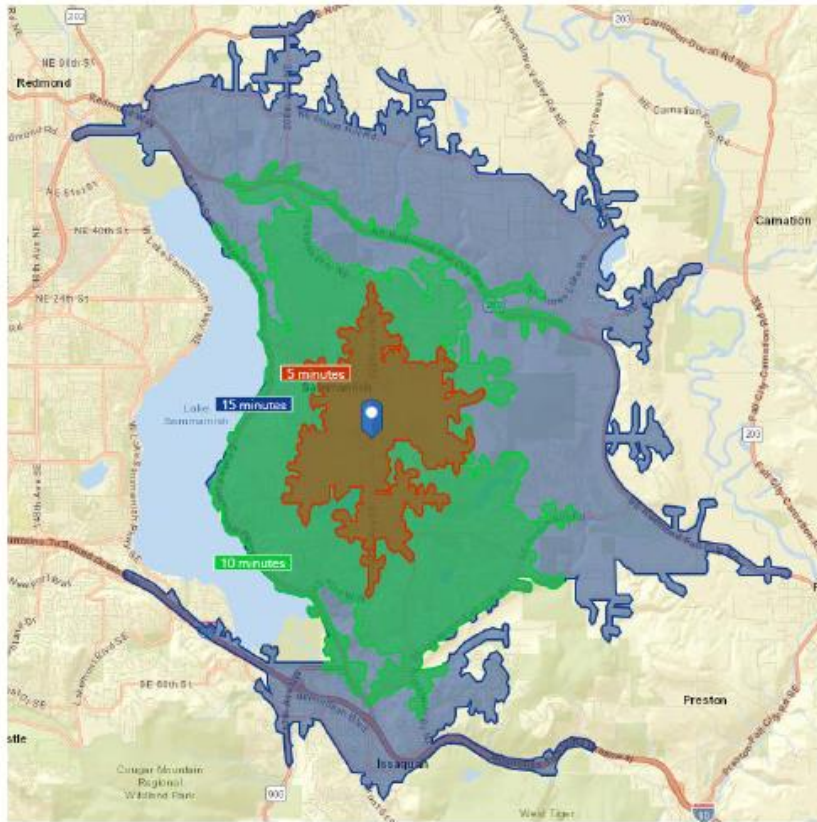


Figure A: 15-minute drive from Sammamish Commons, NRPA Facility Market Report: Community Profile, 2019

2018 Parks, Recreation & Open Space Plan

In 2017 the City commissioned the [2018 Parks, Recreation & Open Space Plan](#) designed to measure the public's level of satisfaction with existing parks and recreation opportunities in Sammamish and identify the priorities for future improvements and services. As describe in the report, the goals was to help guide the City in creating *"...a vision for an innovative, inclusive and interconnected system of parks, trails and open spaces that promotes recreation, health and environmental conservation as integral elements of a thriving, livable Sammamish."*¹ As part of the 2018 PRO Plan, the consultant provided findings and recommendations for the Department on a number of topics, including the expansion of athletic fields to meet the needs of sports leagues and the public through the use of surveys, workshops, open public meetings, opportunities for public input, and park condition assessments.

¹ City of Sammamish, *2018 Parks, Recreation & Open Space Plan*, 2018, pg. 1

Demographics

State

Based on population projections, estimates by the Washington State Recreation Office suggest that the state population will increase 26% by 2040 which will greatly increase the need for expanded sports facilities to meet future demand.²

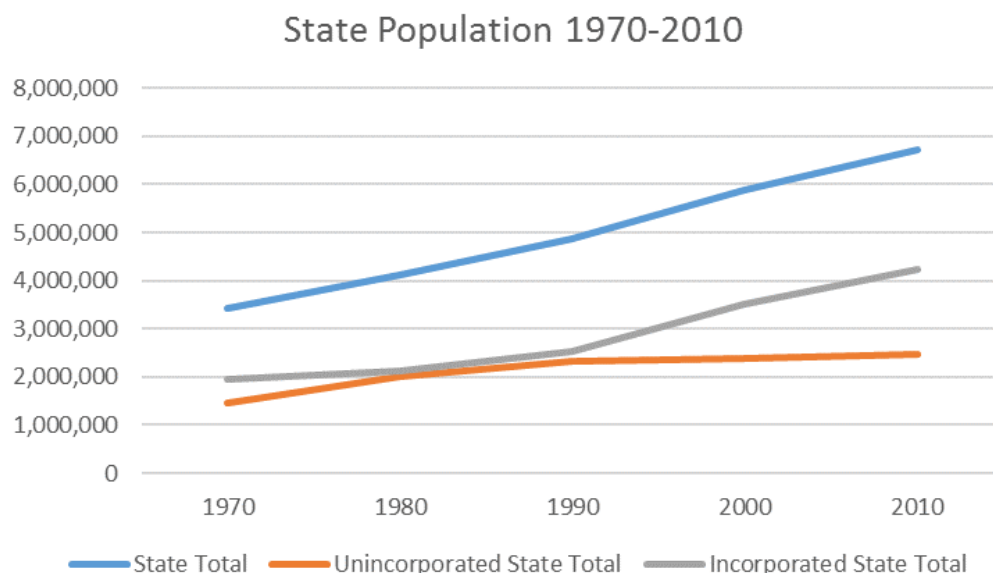


Figure B: State population projections, WA State Recreation and Conservation Office, 2018

Population projections by age suggest an inversion of past demographic trends where residents ages 5-17 will be fewer compared to those ages 65-84, indicating an increasing aging population within the state.³

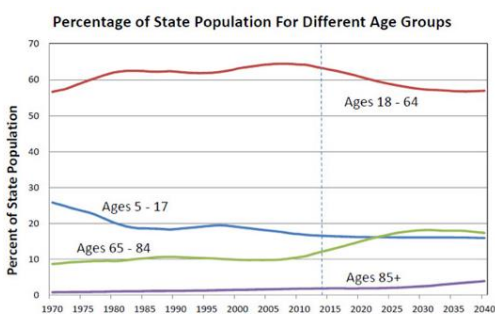


Figure C: State population projections, WA State Recreation and Conservation Office (age group), 2018

² Washington State Recreation and Conservation Office, "Research and Findings", 2018, <https://www.rco.wa.gov/StateRecPlans/scorp/research-and-findings/>

³ Washington State Recreation and Conservation Office, "Research and Findings", 2018, <https://www.rco.wa.gov/StateRecPlans/scorp/research-and-findings/>

Region

Regional growth projections (King, Pierce, Snohomish and Kitsap counties) indicate future growth by 1.8 million people between now and 2050 with an annual growth rate of approximately 1.1%.⁴

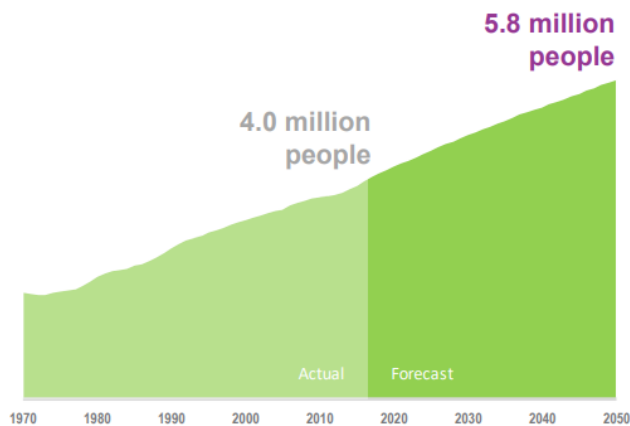


Figure D: 2050 population forecast, Puget Sound Regional Council, 2018

This includes shifting trends in the age of the population as Boomers will be retiring and the economy will continue to need new workers. By 2050 the senior population will grow 7% while youth will experience a slight decline⁵. Within only 10 years the population of seniors age 65+ will grow to 19% which is nearly twice as the percentage in 2000.⁶

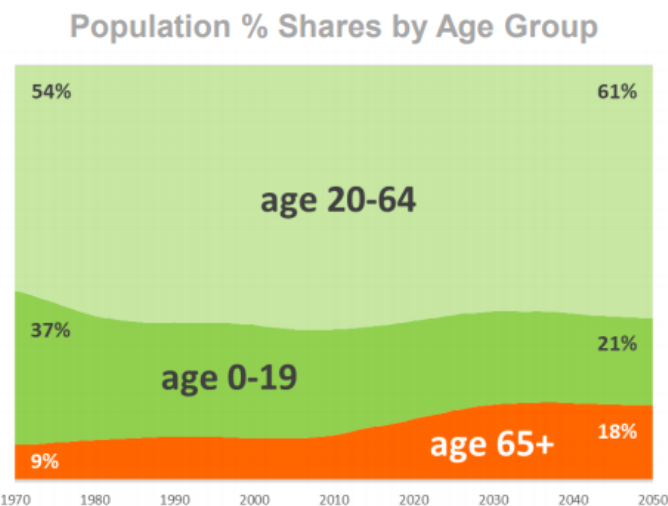


Figure E: 2050 population forecast, Puget Sound Regional Council (Age Group), 2018

⁴ Puget Sound Regional Council, *Draft 2050 Forecast of People and Jobs*, March 1, 2018, https://www.psrc.org/sites/default/files/2050_macro_forecast_web.pdf

⁵ Puget Sound Regional Council, *Draft 2050 Forecast of People and Jobs*

⁶ Puget Sound Regional Council, *Background for VISION 2050: Trends Shaping the Region*, March 1, 2018, https://www.psrc.org/sites/default/files/v50_trends_final.pdf

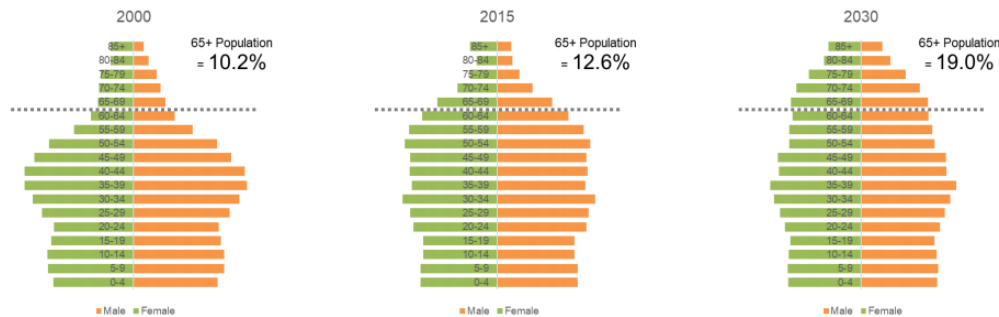


Figure F: 2050 population forecast, Puget Sound Regional Council (Age Group, Gender), 2019

Sammamish

The U.S. Census Bureau estimated the population of Sammamish in 2018 was 65,733 residents.⁷ This estimate represents a 5.6% increase from the 2018 PRO Plan's independent findings which estimated there were 62,240 Sammamish residents in 2017, including the recent annexation of Klahanie. Based on findings from the 2018 PRO Plan, the City's population is expected to continue to grow with an additional 13,000 residents in the coming years, consistent with future growth projections in the 2015 Sammamish Comprehensive Plan.⁸ Sammamish is becoming more diverse and maintains a large youth population compared to the rest of King County and the state. Importantly, the City has a substantially higher percent of households with children (54.5%) compared to King County and statewide trends.

Figure 3. Population Characteristics: Sammamish, King County, Washington

Demographics	Sammamish	King County	Washington
Population Characteristics			
Population (2017)	62,240	2,153,700	7,310,300
Population (2010)	45,780	1,931,249	7,183,700
Population (2000)	35,995	1,737,034	5,894,121
Percent Change (2000-16)	72.9%	24.0%	24.0%
Persons w/ Disabilities under age 65	3.1%	5.7%	7.7%
Household Characteristics (2011-15)			
Households	16,201	819,651	2,668,912
Percent with children	54.5%	29.2%	31.2%
Median Household Income	\$147,349	\$75,302	\$61,062
Average Household Size	3.09	2.45	2.56
Average Family Size	3.30	3.09	3.13
Owner Occupancy Rate	87.1%	57.4%	62.5%
Age Groups (2010)			
Median Age	38.1	37.2	37.4
Population < 5 years of age	6.8%	6.2%	6.4%
Population < 18 years of age	32.2%	21.0%	22.9%
Population 18 - 64 years of age	60.9%	67.2%	63.5%
Population > 65 years of age	6.9%	11.8%	13.6%

Sources: Washington Office of Financial Management Population Estimates, 2017
U.S. Census, 2010 Census, 2000 Census, 2011-2015 American Community Survey

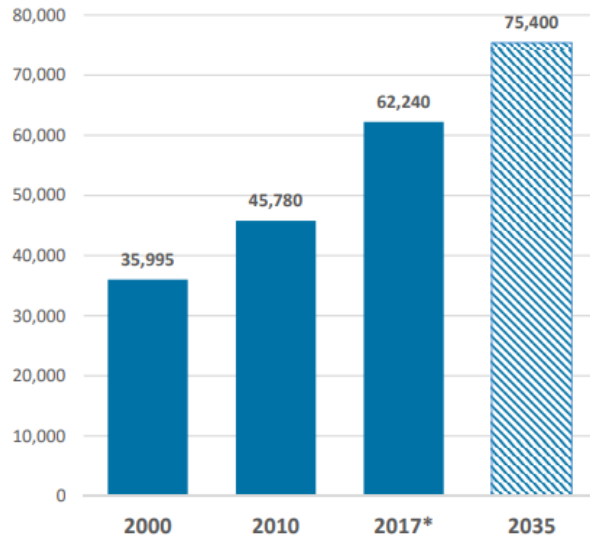
Figure G: Population demographics of Sammamish, City of Sammamish PRO Plan, 2018

⁷ U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division, "Annual Estimates of the Resident Population, 2018 Population Estimates: Sammamish, WA", released May 2019.

⁸ City of Sammamish, 2018 Parks, Recreation & Open Space Plan, 2018, pg. 12

Growth projections for the City suggest an increase of 21% (75,400 residents) by 2035 as a result of workers moving into the region for new jobs.⁹

Figure 4. Population Change - 2000 - 2017, plus Projected for 2035, City of Sammamish



* NOTE: The Klahanie annexation is estimated to have contributed 10,939 residents of the 11,270 population increase from 2015 to 2016.

Figure H: Population projections of Sammamish, City of Sammamish PRO Plan, 2018

As described in the recommendations in the 2018 PRO Plan, the distribution of age groups has remained relatively constant even with the growth in population and should be taken into consideration when planning for parks and recreation services in the future.¹⁰

Figure 5. Age Group Distributions: 2000 & 2010 Census

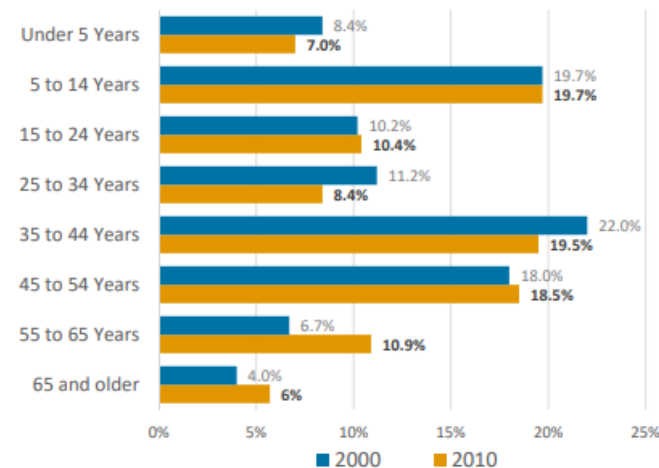


Figure I: Population demographics of Sammamish, City of Sammamish PRO Plan, 2018

⁹ City of Sammamish, 2018 Parks, Recreation & Open Space Plan, 2018, pg. 113

¹⁰ City of Sammamish, 2018 Parks, Recreation & Open Space Plan, 2018, pg. 114

National Studies

Data and trends

Regular team sport participation rates for children ages 6 to 12 has been slowly decreasing over the last decade. Current analysis estimates that 37% of youth across the nation play team sports on a regular basis¹¹, down from approximately 45% in 2008¹².

TOTAL SPORT PARTICIPATION RATES

Percentage of children ages 6 to 12 who played at least one day during the year

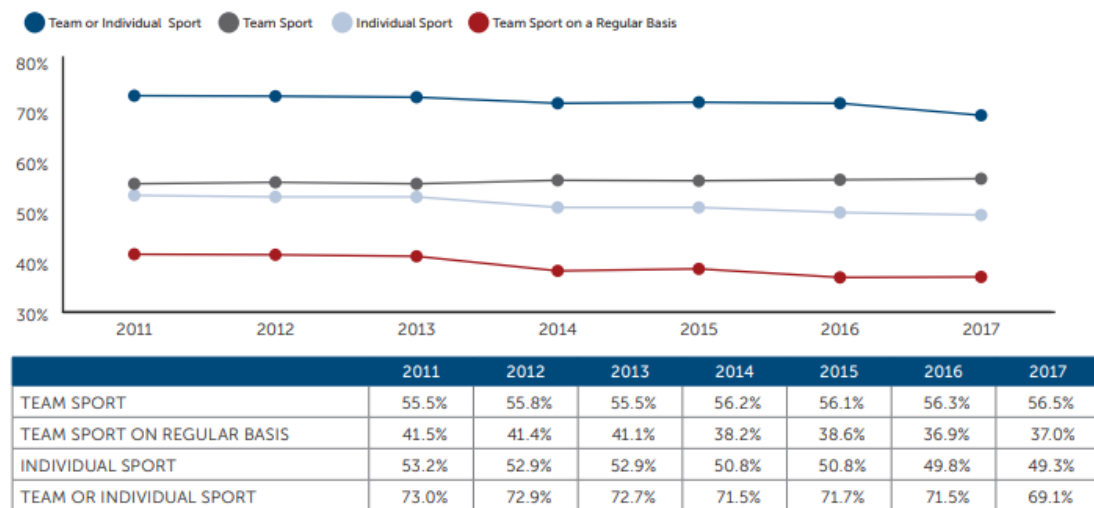


Figure J: Sport participation rates, The Aspen Institute, 2018

While more kids are physically active (17% of children engaged in no physical activities in 2017, compared to 19.5% in 2014) and more children report playing a team sport in some form at least one time during the year¹³, the average child today spends less than three years playing a sport before quitting by age 11.¹⁴ This trend is increasingly becoming connected to the rise in early sport specialization¹⁵ in which children who engage in casual sports play leave while a smaller cohort of their peers continue to compete at high levels of play.

The decrease in participation rates is also driven by the decline in kids playing an individual sport¹⁶ as well as a decline in core youth sports such as baseball (-4.3%), basketball (-6.8%), tackle football (-17.9%), soccer (-8.4%) and volleyball (-21.6%).¹⁷ Despite gains in alternative sports (ice hockey, lacrosse, gymnastics, rugby, fast-pitch softball) the net change has been a slow decline in overall team sport participation on a regular basis.

¹¹ The Aspen Institute: Project Play, [State of Play 2018: Trends and Developments](#), 2018, pg. 5

¹² The Aspen Institute: Project Play, [“Survey: Kids Quite Most Sports by Age 11”](#)

¹³ The Aspen Institute: Project Play, [State of Play 2018: Trends and Developments](#), pg. 2

¹⁴ The Aspen Institute: Project Play, [“Survey: Kids Quite Most Sports by Age 11”](#)

¹⁵ The Aspen Institute: Project Play, [State of Play 2018: Trends and Developments](#), pg. 2

¹⁶ The Aspen Institute: Project Play, [State of Play 2018: Trends and Developments](#), pg. 2

¹⁷ Engage Sports Blog: Youth Sports Matter, [“Youth Sports Participation Statistics and Trends”](#), citing Sports and Fitness Industry Association research from 2009-2014, 2016

“Sport sampling”, where children play multiple sports, has also declined over the last eight years (children played an average of 1.85 team sports in 2017, vs. 2.11 in 2011) but is slowly making a comeback.¹⁸

SPORT SAMPLING

Average number of sports played by kids ages 6 to 12

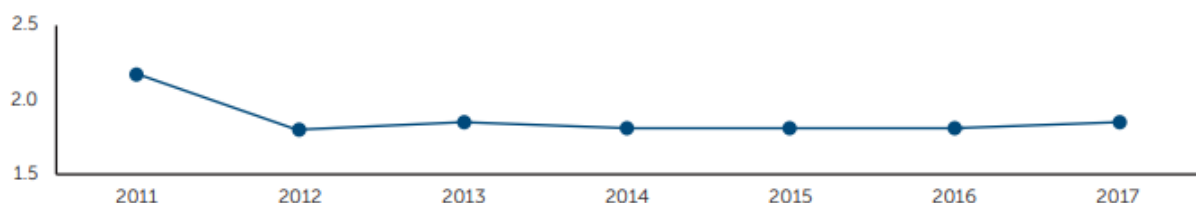


Figure K: Sport sampling, The Aspen Institute, 2018

One statistic that is used to evaluate retention in youth sports is called “churn rate”, otherwise known as participants who stopped playing a sport versus children who returned (not including continuous play) or started playing (new participants). Team sports with low retention rates include traditionally core sports such as outdoor soccer, tackle football, and volleyball.¹⁹ For example, soccer experienced the highest churn rate in 2017 with 19.2% of youth returning to soccer or started playing, but 25.2% who used to play soccer left the game (-7.7% net change).²⁰

CHURN RATE IN YOUTH SPORTS

Children ages 6 to 12 who stopped playing a sport (churn rate) vs. children who returned or started playing

SPORT	CHURN RATE	NEWCOMERS/RETURNERS	NET
CHEERLEADING	-44.7%	61.3%	16.6%
BASEBALL	-18.4%	33.5%	15.1%
FLAG FOOTBALL	-37.8%	49.2%	11.4%
BASKETBALL	-25.0%	31.0%	6.0%
INDOOR SOCCER	-39.6%	44.4%	4.8%
VOLLEYBALL (COURT)	-50.7%	54.4%	3.7%
GYMNASTICS	-24.8%	28.0%	3.2%
TACKLE FOOTBALL	-38.9%	39.4%	0.5%
OUTDOOR SOCCER	-27.5%	19.8%	-7.7%

Figure L: Churn rate in youth sports, The Aspen Institute, 2018.

Despite the gradual decline in continuous team play, overall 56.5% of children played a team sport in some form at least once during the year.²¹ While this is positive, over half of children played some form of sports in the last year, the trend suggests that many kids playing in sports are casual participants which has the risk of declining with the increasing trend of early sport specialization where kids play one sport year-round. To understand the risks, and to develop strategies to mitigate these risks, The Aspen Institute’s *Project Play Initiative* conducted a survey to understand the root cause of the decline in

¹⁸ The Aspen Institute: Project Play, *State of Play 2018: Trends and Developments*, pg. 2

¹⁹ The Aspen Institute: Project Play, *State of Play 2018: Trends and Developments*, pg. 5

²⁰ The Aspen Institute: Project Play, *State of Play 2018: Trends and Developments*, pg. 7

²¹ The Aspen Institute: Project Play, *State of Play 2018: Trends and Developments*, pg. 2

regular sport participation. Overall findings show that “...the sport is just not fun anymore” while the primary driver is parents looking for “extrinsic rewards” from their children’s experience, such as admissions advantages to colleges, athletic scholarships and career opportunities through professional sports opportunities. While parents recognize their children experience stress from the sports, they continue to spend more money in order to keep them engaged.²²

Participation is influenced by age, with 70% of Gen Z engaged in high calories activity compared to Millennials (63%), Gen X (55%) and Boomers (41%). While Millennials report lower rates, this group tend to participate in more diverse activities. While Boomers report higher rates of inactivity (34%), they also rate highest in low calorie exercise while correspond with low impact activities such as walking and golf.

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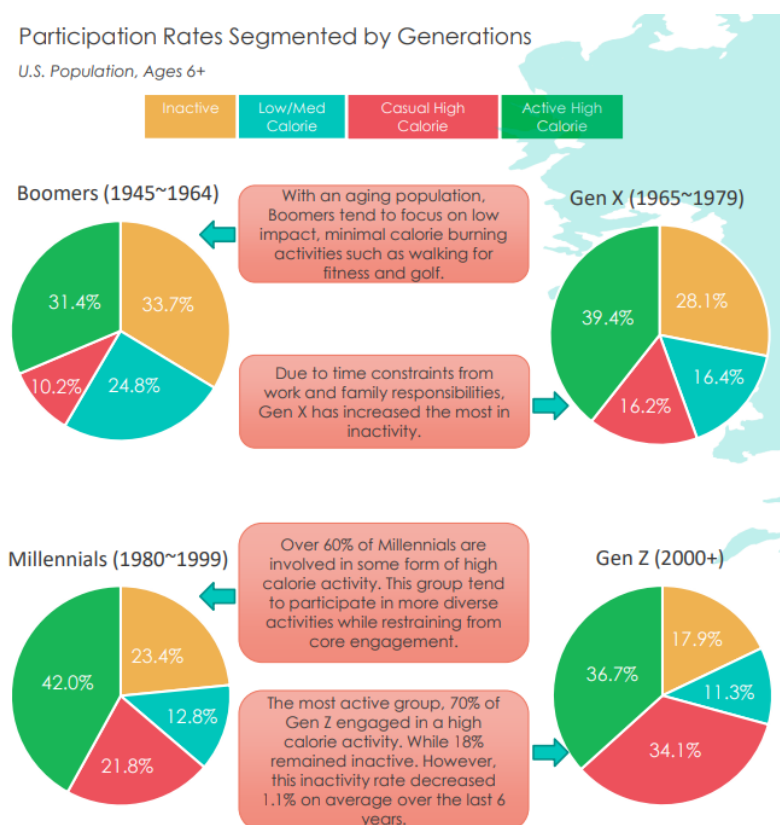


Figure M: Sport participation rates by generation, Physical Activity Council, 2019.

When focused specifically on team sports, Gen Z is by far the most active (55%) compared to Millennials (17%), Gen X (10%) and Boomers (4%).²⁴ This is evident when ranking interest level of different types of activities by age group. For example, respondents ages 6-12 reported team sports like soccer, swimming, basketball and football in their top 10 while those aged 25-34 reported no team sports in their top 10.²⁵

²² The Aspen Institute: Project Play, “Survey: Kids Quite Most Sports by Age 11”

²³ Physical Activity Council, [2019 Physical Activity Council’s Overview Report on U.S. Participation](#), 2019, pg. 8

²⁴ Physical Activity Council, [2019 Physical Activity Council’s Overview Report on U.S. Participation](#), pg. 9

²⁵ Physical Activity Council, [2019 Physical Activity Council’s Overview Report on U.S. Participation](#), pg. 9

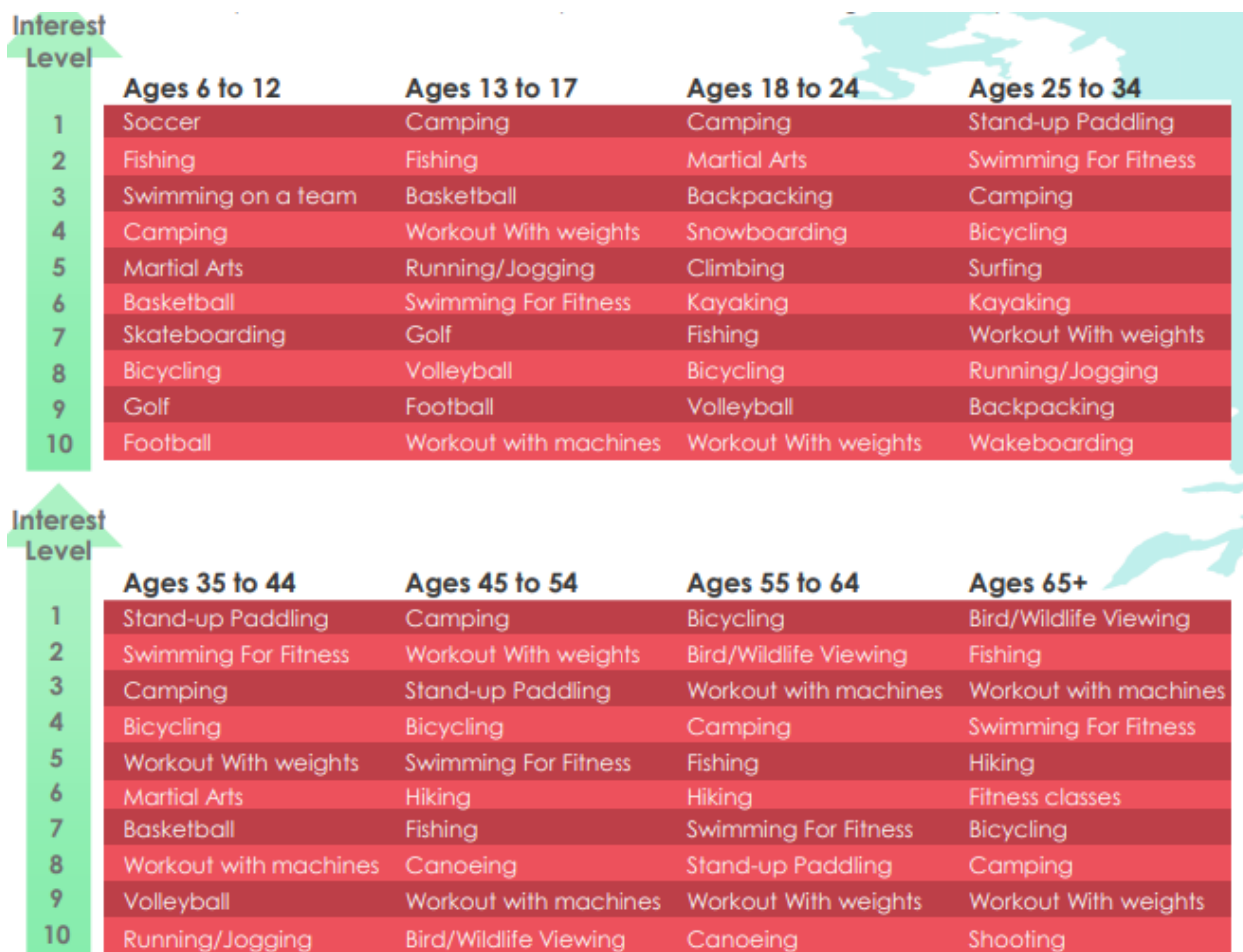


Figure N: Activity interest level by age group, Physical Activity Council, 2019.

In respect to team sports play, the evidence shows that participation is much higher in early years compared to adults as they age. Findings also indicate that participation on sports teams is also influenced by race and gender, as participation among females (and especially females of color) is significantly lower than among males.²⁶

Sports viewership also provides trends which are useful to identify patterns in the public's interest of sports over time. The annual Gallup Poll on sports viewership identifies several trends in several "core" sports since the mid 1930's, including²⁷:

- Football viewership (37%) has been gradually increasing over time, however the sport experienced a large decrease (-6%) in the last 10 years.
- Baseball (9%) has experienced a significant decline over time.
- Soccer has seen an increase over the last 10 years (7%).

²⁶ National Physical Activity Plan Alliance, [The 2014 United States Report Card on Physical Activity for Children & Youth](#), 2014

²⁷ Gallup, [Sports](#)

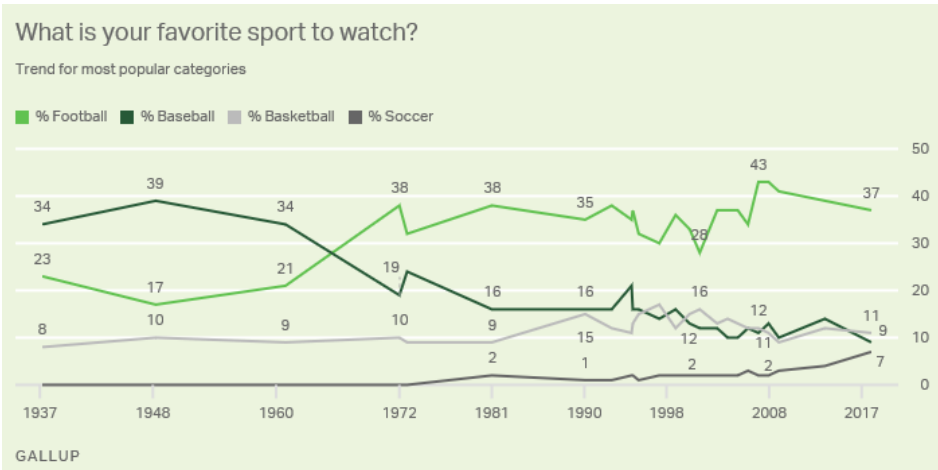


Figure O: Favorite sport to watch, Gallup, 2017

Recommendations

Recommendations from national research and studies on expanding and meeting youth sports includes²⁸:

- Build programs, and respond to, the interests of kids
- Support multi-sport opportunities and sport sampling
- Support companion sports (example below)
- Build community leagues for casual sports play to capture kids who will not continue to specialization
- Develop small fields and spaces to encourage casual sports play. Examples include:
 - Small fields similar to “pocket-playgrounds” found in new housing developments and HOAs (e.g. “pint-sized” field lined for lacrosse, include netting or some type of opportunity to practice shooting on goals)
- Be creative in identifying opportunities (e.g. build amenities for parents to enjoy themselves at youth sports complexes)
- Connect athletic fields with schools. Schools are ideal partners for developing space for physical activity because there is a positive correlation with academics.

²⁸ The Aspen Institute: Project Play, *State of Play 2018: Trends and Developments*, pgs. 7-12

PRIMARY SPORT	TOP 5 COMPANION SPORTS
BOYS BASKETBALL (Kobe Bryant, NBA legend)	1. SOCCER 2. BASEBALL 3. TENNIS 4. TRACK AND FIELD 5. FOOTBALL
GIRLS BASKETBALL (Kobe Bryant, NBA legend)	1. SOCCER 2. VOLLEYBALL 3. SOFTBALL 4. TENNIS 5. TRACK AND FIELD
BASEBALL (USA Baseball)	1. TENNIS 2. LACROSSE 3. SWIMMING 4. BASKETBALL 5. FOOTBALL
BOYS SOCCER (US Youth Soccer)	1. BASKETBALL 2. LACROSSE 3. TENNIS 4. TRACK AND FIELD 5. FOOTBALL
GIRLS SOCCER (US Youth Soccer)	1. BASKETBALL 2. LACROSSE 3. VOLLEYBALL 4. TENNIS 5. TRACK AND FIELD
FOOTBALL (Oliver Luck, XFL commissioner)	1. BASKETBALL 2. WRESTLING 3. SOCCER 4. LACROSSE 5. TRACK AND FIELD
BOYS TENNIS (U.S. Tennis Association)	1. BASKETBALL 2. SOCCER 3. TRACK AND FIELD 4. CROSS COUNTRY 5. LACROSSE
GIRLS TENNIS (U.S. Tennis Association)	1. BASKETBALL 2. SOCCER 3. TRACK AND FIELD 4. VOLLEYBALL 5. CROSS COUNTRY

Figure P: Companion sports, The Aspen Institute, 2018

Regional/Statewide Research, Plans and Initiatives

Washington Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Planning

In 2018 the Washington State Recreation and Conservation Office drafted a 4-year Washington Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Planning (SCORP) document to help guide policy decisions using data on current trends in recreation participation and demand in Washington with the intent to assist in the development of park and recreation strategies. SCORP identified five priority areas

and recommendations to address current needs and plan for future demands of Washington State residents²⁹:

Sustain and Grow the Legacy of Parks, Trails and Conservation Lands

- Renovate facilities to meet today's recreation needs
- Pursue regional solutions to recreation and conservation
- Build partnerships to leverage better results
- Coordinate recreation needs with planning for growth
- Maintain residents' level of satisfaction in recreation opportunities

Meet the Needs of Youth

- Provide a variety of activities for youth
- Build and renovate athletic facilities for youth
- Support programs for youth

Washington State Community Outdoor Athletic Facilities Plan

In 2018 the Washington State Recreation and Conservation Office developed its 2018 Washington State Community Outdoor Athletic Facilities Plan to help guide decisions and determine how to invest limited funding on the most important athletic facility needs with the goal to ensure adequate supply of athletic facilities for competition and casual play.³⁰ As a supplement to SCORP, this plan recommended:

- Provide for multi-age facilities
- Support a variety of athletic facilities
- Maintain and improve mapped inventory of athletic facilities
- Assess facilities usage
- Support regional planning and collaboration

King County Play Equity Coalition

Modeled after The Aspen Institute's *Project Play Initiative*, King County began developing a strategic plan to increase healthy activity and improve access to sport and outdoor recreation for children within the region.³¹ Beginning in 2017, King County initiated *Project Play* which focused on community engagement efforts and evaluating resources that can be leveraged by community partners within the region. In 2019 King County partnered with the University of Washington and The Aspen Institute to release the [State of Play: Seattle-King County](#) report to evaluate how well adults are serving youth through sports, play and outdoor recreation. Following the recommendations of the study, King County developed the Play Equity Coalition with the aim to organize community stakeholders, develop workgroups, develop a common agenda, share strategies, and begin the next steps in policy development and implementation.

Findings from the *State of Play: Seattle-King County* report included³²:

- Access to organized sports is exclusive by socioeconomic level, race, language and ability
- Only 19% of youth meet the recommended 60 minutes of physical activity per day
- Physical activity declines as youth get older
- Current infrastructure cannot meet demands to support youth physical activity

²⁹ City of Sammamish, *2018 Parks, Recreation & Open Space Plan*, 2018, pg. 62

³⁰ Washington State Recreation and Conservation Office, "[State Athletic Facilities Plan](#)", 2018

³¹ King County, *Play Equity Coalition* presentation, 2019, slide 2

³² The Aspen Institute, *State of Play: Seattle-King County*, 2019, pg. 2-3

- Non-mainstream sports, such as Ultimate frisbee, offer models for positive youth development.
- Ultimate frisbee is the third most-played organized sport behind soccer and basketball
- Lacrosse is becoming a more popular outdoor team sport that youth want to try
- More youth play organized flag football than tackle (and are more likely to try flag than tackle)

Recommendations related to this study's research include³³:

- Strengthen joint-use agreements to make schools a gathering place for youth and community physical activity
- Be open to non-traditional sports
- Work with apartment and townhome developers to carve out play spaces

Overall, the Play Equity Coalition recommends the following calls to action to improve play for youth within the region³⁴:

- Empower schools to be a physical activity hub
- Develop transportation solutions providing youth access to parks and facilities
- Develop an information quality rating portal for youth sports and recreation
- Develop an equity toolkit for programs and policymakers
- Create a public campaign on the important of physical activity

In addition, the Play Equity Coalition lists several strategies specific to parks departments that can achieve these goals, including³⁵:

- Policies and practices:
 - Leverage Joint Use Agreements
 - Evaluate historic use policies
 - Reduce fees
- Infrastructure and services:
 - Focus on transportation, facility distribution and access
 - Pilot transportation solutions and partnerships
 - Evaluate facility use
 - Conduct facility assets evaluations
- Identify and leverage available resources:
 - Grants. King County youth sports grants are available that increase priority youth access to, and participation in, physical activity. Grant categories include:
 - Capital projects (\$25,000 - \$250,000)
 - Programs (\$20,000 – 75,000)
 - Unincorporated area projects/programs (\$20,000 - \$300,000)
 - Activation (\$5,000 – \$15,000)
 - Scholarships
 - Stipends
- Evaluate current relationships with partners in order to:
 - Generate greater community engagement to revise policies
 - Make investments to align with regional strategic planning
 - Further develop partnerships and coalitions

³³ The Aspen Institute, *State of Play: Seattle-King County*, 2019, pg. 39-41

³⁴ King County, *Play Equity Coalition* presentation, 2019, 10

³⁵ King County, *Play Equity Coalition* presentation, 2019,14

Community Needs and Feedback

Survey of priorities

In 2017 the City commissioned a survey as part of the 2018 PRO Plan designed to measure the level of satisfaction with existing parks and recreation opportunities in Sammamish and identify the priorities for future improvements and services. When asked what active use or recreation increases are desired, the top three desired increases in active use/recreation infrastructure are playgrounds (58%), athletic fields (57%) and waterfront recreation (55%).³⁶

The survey also asked residents about the top priorities for future park and recreation services with walking/hiking trails, restrooms in parks, off-leash dog parks, community gardens, and gymnasiums for indoor sports ranking at the top. Options such as rectangular sports fields (No. 9), indoor soccer field (No. 12), fields for baseball/software (No. 15) and fields for cricket (No. 17) ranked substantially lower compared to other alternatives.³⁷ Importantly, a large percentage of respondents reported cricket and indoor soccer fields “not a priority” suggesting a strong opinion against those two options.

Figure 21. Top Priorities for Future Park and Recreation Services

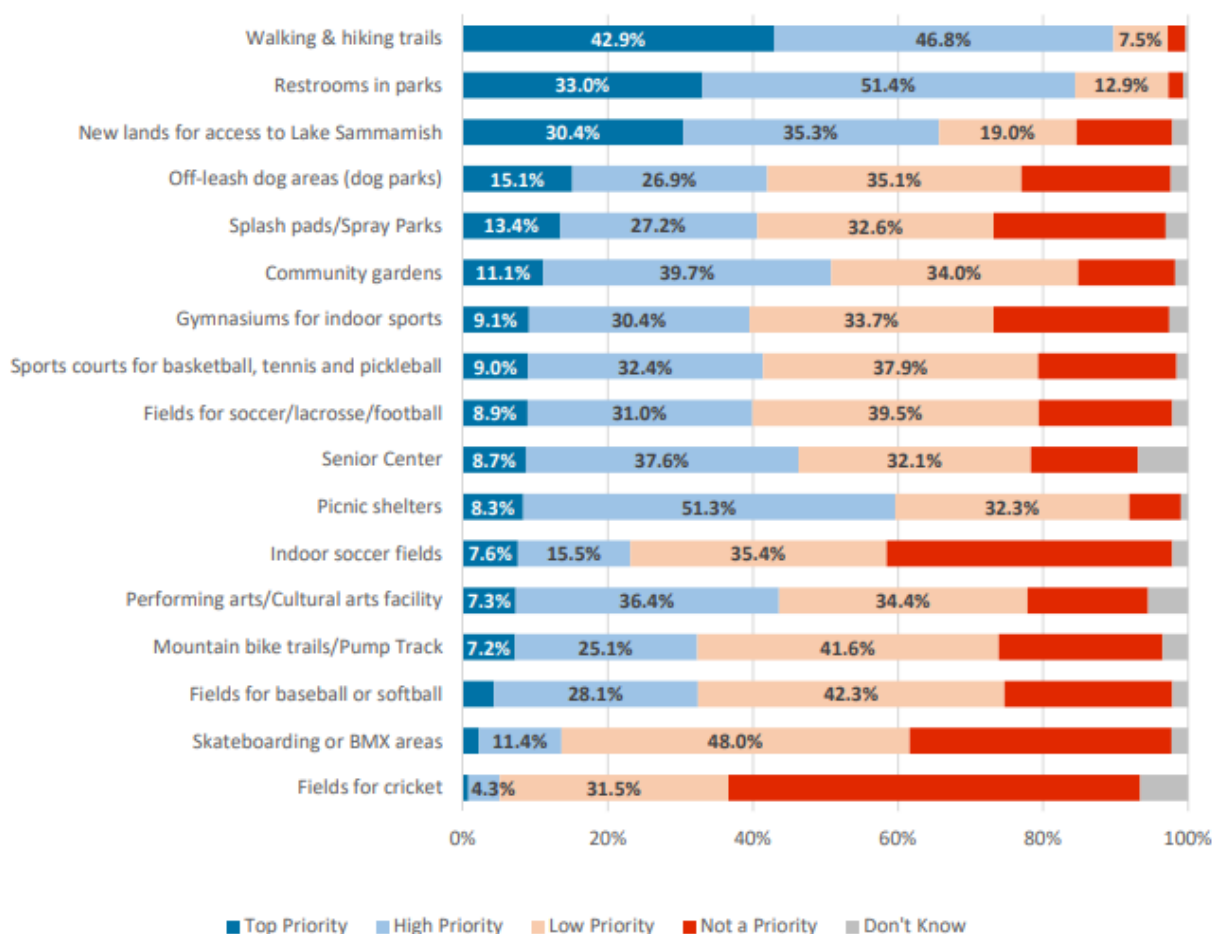


Figure Q: Top priorities for future park and recreation services, City of Sammamish PRO Plan, 2018

³⁶ City of Sammamish, 2018 Parks, Recreation & Open Space Plan, 2018, pg. 64

³⁷ City of Sammamish, 2018 Parks, Recreation & Open Space Plan, 2018, pg. 66

Stakeholder assessment

Later in the year, the City commissioned a stakeholder meeting representing park and recreation interest groups (ranging from environmental, athletic and programming) and conducted focused discussions with each group. A summary of the general feedback found that interest groups felt there was a shortage of sports fields, field conditions needed to improve, positive feedback on the City's efforts at maintaining and building partnerships, the need to offset early sports specialization, and converting natural grass fields to artificial turf.³⁸

Public input

Input from a Virtual Town Hall, an online forum for civic engagement for the PRO Plan update, found that athletic fields ranked No. 4 on a list of 12 opportunities for prioritizing improvements.³⁹ Feedback from two public open houses identified athletic fields as a priority, but not as high as other items⁴⁰:

May 2017 Public Open House

1. Trail connectivity
2. Land acquisition
3. Sports fields
4. Nature play
5. Tree canopy

September 2017 Public Open House

Figure 25. Ranking Results from Open House Park & Recreation Future Priorities

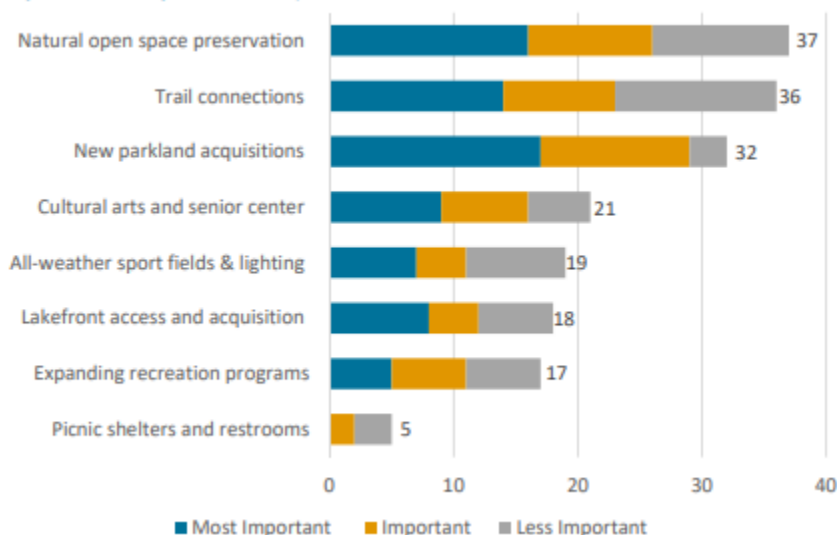


Figure R: Priority rankings from parks and recreation open house, City of Sammamish PRO Plan, 2018

³⁸ City of Sammamish, 2018 Parks, Recreation & Open Space Plan, 2018, pg. 67

³⁹ City of Sammamish, 2018 Parks, Recreation & Open Space Plan, 2018, pg. 68

⁴⁰ City of Sammamish, 2018 Parks, Recreation & Open Space Plan, 2018, pg. 68-69

Community Activity Profile

Exercise and activity

Overall, approximately one-quarter (23%) of potential park users within a 15-minute drive of Sammamish Commons exercise at least seven hours per week.⁴¹ On average, potential users are more likely than the U.S. population (Market Potential Index over 100) to exercise on a weekly basis and participate in activities such as soccer.⁴²

Figure 5: Weekly Exercise Habits of People Residing Within a 15-Minute Drive of the Facility

	Expected Number of Adults	Percent	MPI
Spends 7+ hours exercising per week	16,977	22.9%	112
Spends 4-6 hours exercising per week	19,204	25.9%	133
Spends 1-3 hours exercising per week	18,162	24.5%	105
Exercise at home 2+ times per week	25,988	35.1%	128
Exercise at club 2+ times per week	16,352	22.1%	154

Figure S: Weekly exercise habits of residents, NRPA Facility Market Report: Health and Wellness, 2019

Figure 6: Participation Rates of Select Recreation Activities of People Residing Within a 15-Minute Drive of the Facility

	Expected Number of Adults	Percent	MPI
Participated in aerobics in last 12 months	7,181	9.7%	127
Participated in basketball in last 12 months	6,613	8.9%	112
Participated in yoga in last 12 months	8,791	11.9%	147
Participated in weight lifting in last 12 months	12,694	17.1%	165
Participated in tennis in last 12 months	4,028	5.4%	158
Participated in soccer in last 12 months	3,952	5.3%	133

Figure T: Participation rates of select activities, NRPA Facility Market Report: Community Profile, 2019

⁴¹ National Recreation and Park Association, "NRPA Facility Market Report: Health and Wellness", 2019, pg. 1

⁴² National Recreation and Park Association, "NRPA Facility Market Report: Community Profile", 2019, pg. 5

Figure 7: Participation Rates of Select Recreation Activities of People Residing Within a 15-Minute Drive of the Facility

	Expected Number of Adults	Percent	MPI
Participated in aerobics in last 12 months	7,181	9.7%	127
Participated in bicycling (mountain) in last 12 months	4,270	5.8%	138
Participated in bicycling (road) in last 12 months	10,257	13.8%	143
Participated in hiking in last 12 months	13,283	17.9%	146
Participated in jogging/running in last 12 months	14,978	20.2%	158
Participated in swimming in last 12 months	15,899	21.5%	132
Participated in walking for exercise in last 12 months	23,798	32.1%	131

Figure U: Participation rates of select activities, NRPA Facility Market Report: Health and Wellness, 2019

Spending habits on recreation

Potential park users are also more likely to spend money (Spending Potential Index over 100) on recreational activities than the national average, including fees for participant sports, recreational lessons, memberships and admissions to sporting events.⁴³

Figure 8: Spending Habits on Recreation Activities of People Residing Within a 15-Minute Drive of the Facility

	Spending Potential Index	Average Annual Amount Spent	Total
Total Spent on Entertainment/Recreation Fees and Admissions	240	\$1,714.05	\$62,569,730
- Tickets to Theatre/Operas/Concerts	228	\$171.68	\$6,267,047
- Tickets to Parks or Museums	221	\$71.37	\$2,605,347
- Admission to Sporting Events	233	\$147.20	\$5,373,237
- Fees for Participant Sports	244	\$262.13	\$9,568,782
- Fees for Recreational Lessons	260	\$372.74	\$13,606,521
- Membership Fees for Social/Recreation/Civic Clubs	238	\$562.69	\$20,540,575

Figure V: Spending habits of select activities, NRPA Facility Market Report: Community Profile, 2019

Health and wellness

Compared to the national average (MPI), potential park users overall are less likely to use prescription drugs for health-related issues and more likely to visit a doctor.⁴⁴

⁴³ National Recreation and Park Association, "NRPA Facility Market Report: Community Profile", 2019, pg. 6

⁴⁴ National Recreation and Park Association, "NRPA Facility Market Report: Health and Wellness", 2019, pg. 6

**Figure 8: Prescription Drug Usage of People Residing
Within a 15-Minute Drive of the Facility**

Used prescription drug for:	Expected Number of Adults	Percent	MPI
Anxiety/Panic	3,651	4.9%	88
Arthritis/Osteoarthritis	1,705	2.3%	72
Depression	3,577	4.8%	84
Diabetes (insulin dependent)	1,165	1.6%	65
Diabetes (non-insulin dependent)	2,165	2.9%	66
Heartburn/acid reflux	2,839	3.8%	68
High blood pressure	7,521	10.2%	77
High cholesterol	5,838	7.9%	93
Migraine headache	2,008	2.7%	93

Figure W: Prescription drug usage, NRPA Facility Market Report: Health and Wellness, 2019

**Figure 9: Doctor Visitation Levels of People Residing
Within a 15-Minute Drive of the Facility**

	Expected Number of Adults	Percent	MPI
Visited doctor in last 12 months	60,777	82.0%	107
Visited doctor in last 12 months: 6+ times	24,739	33.4%	114

Figure X: Doctor visitation, NRPA Facility Market Report: Health and Wellness, 2019

In addition to higher levels of doctor visits and lower rates of prescription drug use, potential parks users are more likely to engage in diet control habits to maintain weight, improve physical fitness, and purchase food that is labeled more health conscious. The only unhealthy trend that appears to be worse than the national average is going to, and spending money on, fast food and drive-in restaurants.⁴⁵

**Figure 10: Dietary Control Habits of People Residing
Within a 15-Minute Drive of the Facility**

	Expected Number of Adults	Percent	MPI
Diet control to maintain weight	9,325	12.6%	126
Diet control for physical fitness	10,458	14.1%	131

Figure Y: Diet control habits, NRPA Facility Market Report: Health and Wellness, 2019

⁴⁵ National Recreation and Park Association, "NRPA Facility Market Report: Health and Wellness", 2019, pg. 7

Figure 11: Dietary Habits of People Residing Within a 15-Minute Drive of the Facility

	Expected Number of Adults	Percent	MPI
Buy foods specifically labeled as fat-free	6,766	9.1%	105
Buy foods specifically labeled as low-calorie	6,457	8.7%	117
Buy foods specifically labeled as sugar-free	6,697	9.0%	100
Went to fast food/drive-in restaurant in last 6 months	68,481	92.4%	102
Went to fast food/drive-in restaurant 9+ times per month	29,922	40.4%	103
Spent at fast food/drive-in last 6 months: \$201+	3,461	4.7%	152

Figure Z: Dietary habits, NRPA Facility Market Report: Health and Wellness, 2019

Current Field Usage

Trends in overall use of facilities

The majority of time reserved for sports on City-administered fields is baseball/fastpitch (44%) and soccer (23%). 94% of all time reserved is for youth play and the major months of play during the year is between March through July (baseball/fastpitch) and August through October (soccer). The City experienced a slight decline in overall play in 2019 with less sports played in the summer months, but a slightly higher level of play in October.

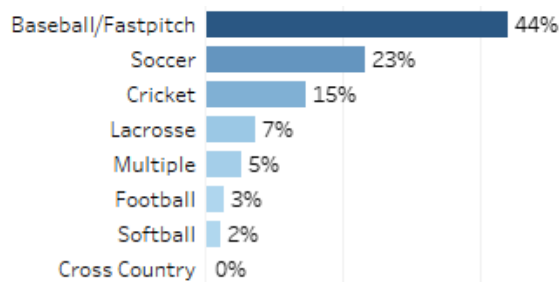


Figure AA: City of Sammamish field reservations (2018-2019)

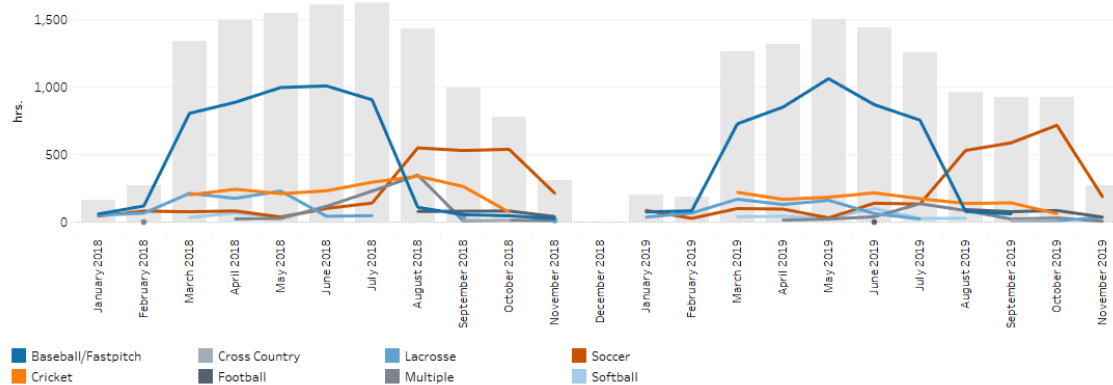


Figure BB: City of Sammamish field reservations by sport (2018-2019)

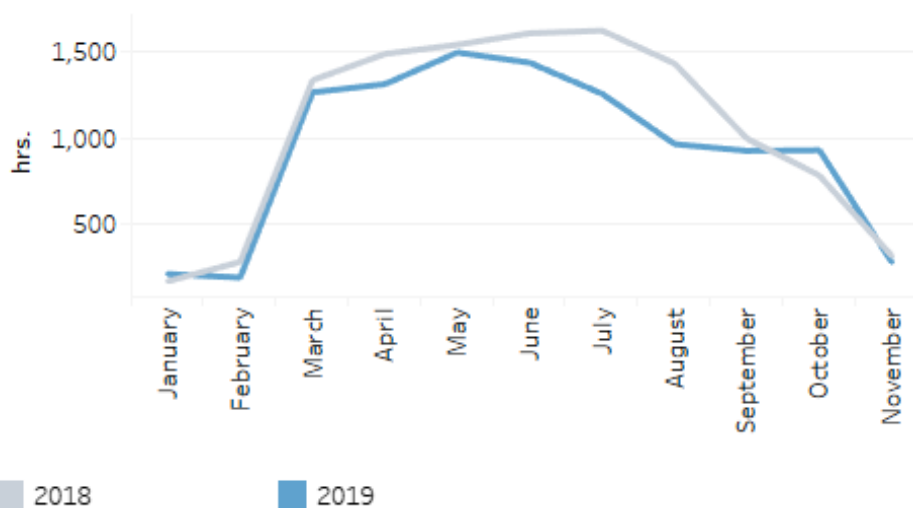


Figure CC: City of Sammamish year-over-year field reservations, 2018-2019

Type of field

The majority of athletic play is scheduled on natural turf despite zero play during the winter months (November, December, January, February). Some play on artificial turf is scheduled during this slow time, with most play scheduled in November with some hours in January and February.

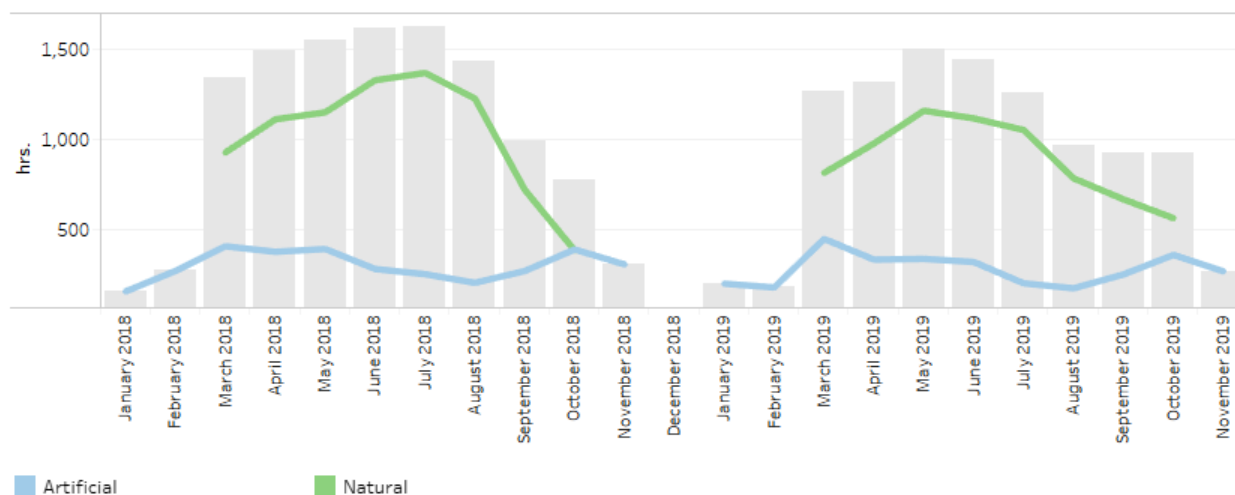


Figure DD: City of Sammamish field reservations by type of field, 2018-2019

The type of turf is primarily driven by the type of sport using particular fields. For instance, 75% of all time reserved for the most popular sport (baseball/fastpitch) is scheduled on natural turf (62% for soccer) versus football and lacrosse which primary uses artificial turf (100% and 81% respectively).

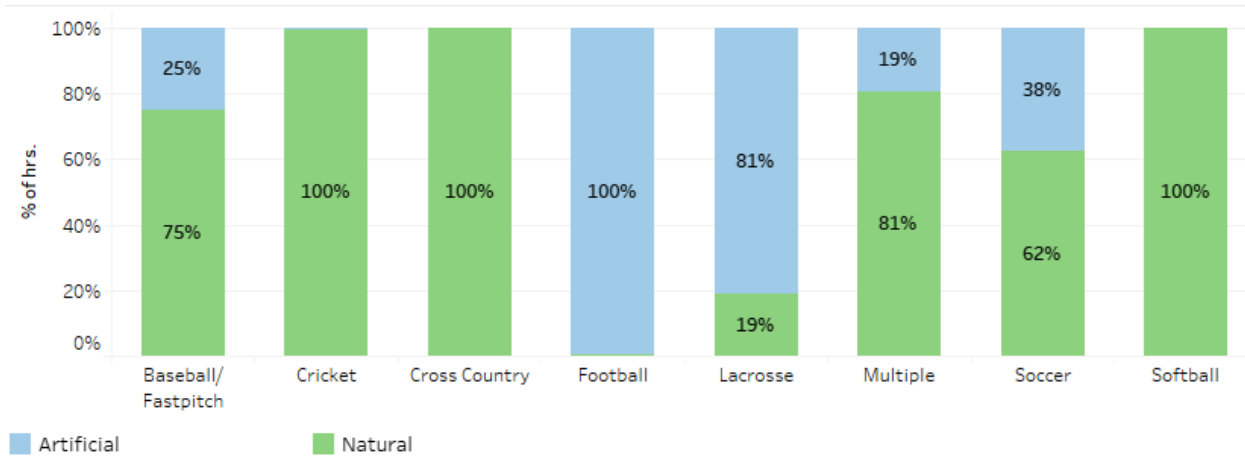


Figure EE: City of Sammamish field reservation % by sport, 2018-2019

Findings show that the field with the highest amount of play (by sport) in 2019 was baseball/fastpitch on Eastlake Community Field #3 (artificial turf). Overall, Eastlake Community Fields #3 and #1 (both artificial turf) were most used with Klahanie Field #1 (natural turf) ranked No. 3.

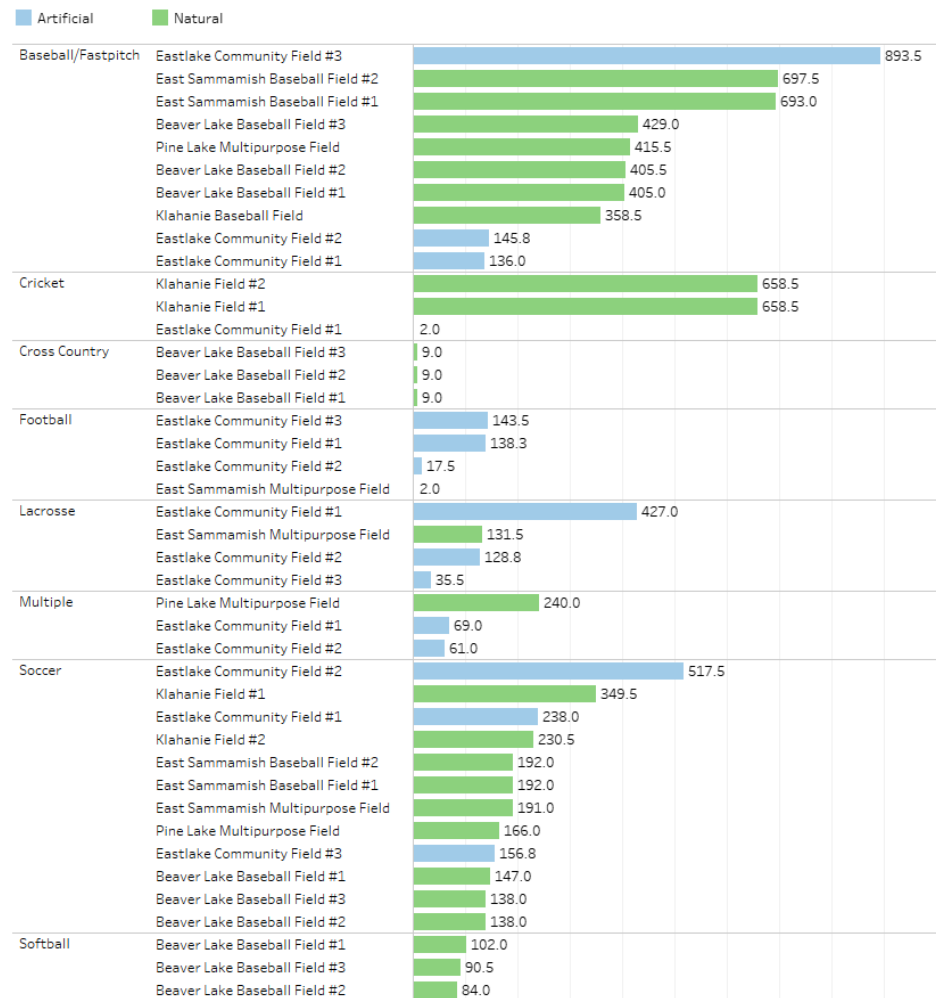


Figure FF: City of Sammamish field reservation by sport/field, 2019

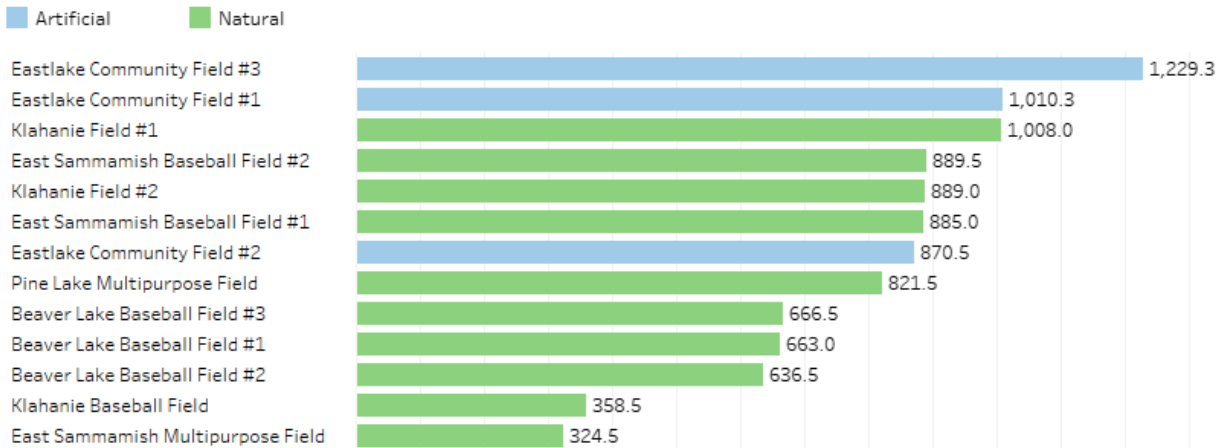


Figure GG: City of Sammamish field reservations by field, 2019

Maximizing capacity

In order to maximize capacity for overall field use, the goal is to schedule a field for 100% of all available hours in a given day. Below are trends for two fields (Klahanie Field #1 and Eastlake Community Field #1) over the last two years broken out by the different sport seasons (March-May, June- August, September-November, December-February):

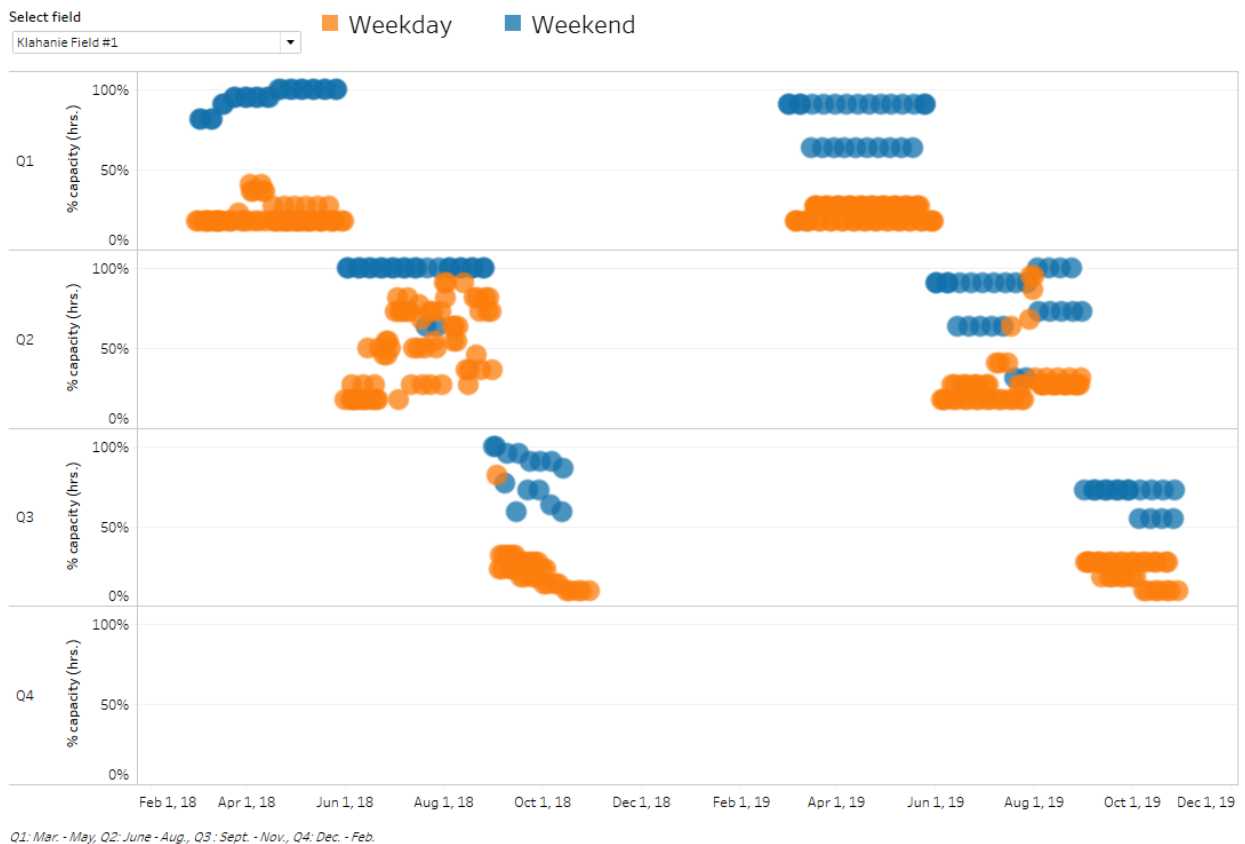


Figure HH: City of Sammamish field capacity analysis, Klahanie Field #1, 2018-2019

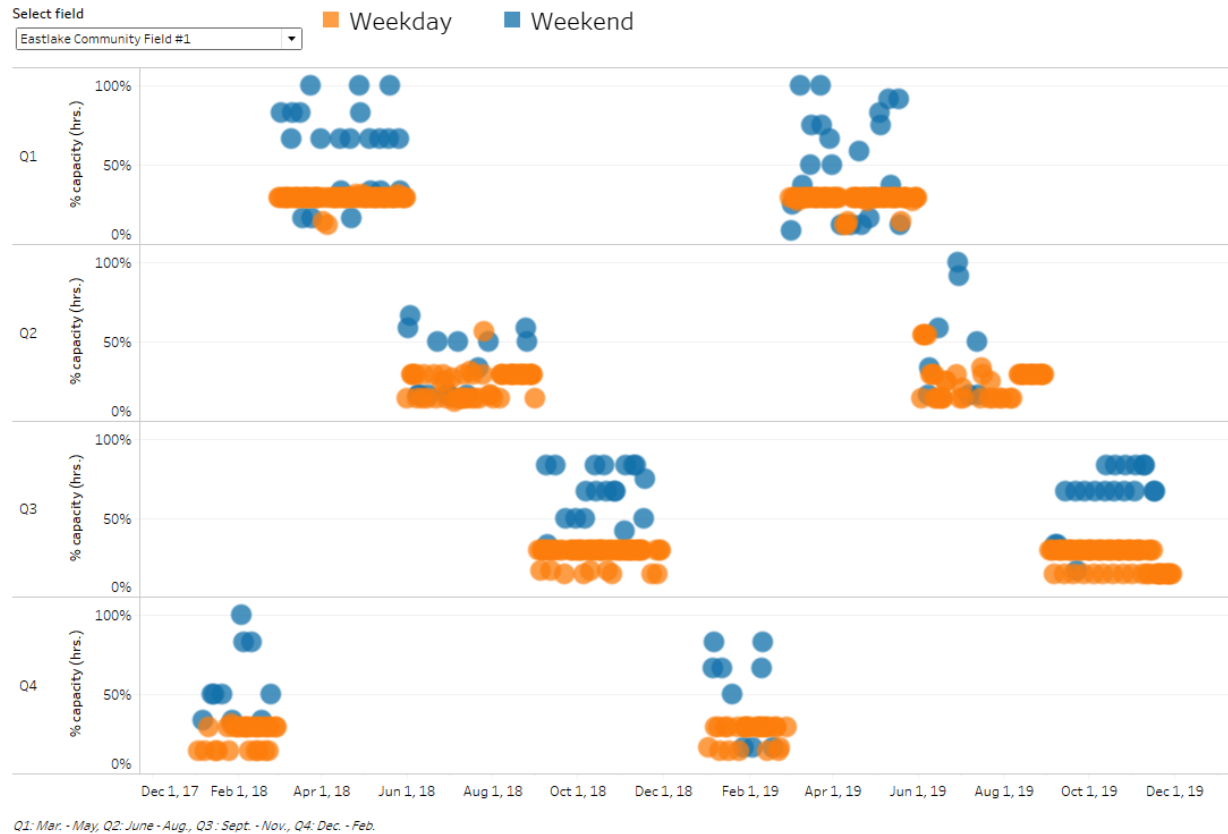


Figure II: City of Sammamish field capacity analysis, Eastlake Community Field #1, 2018-2019

Another way to view these trends can be seen below:

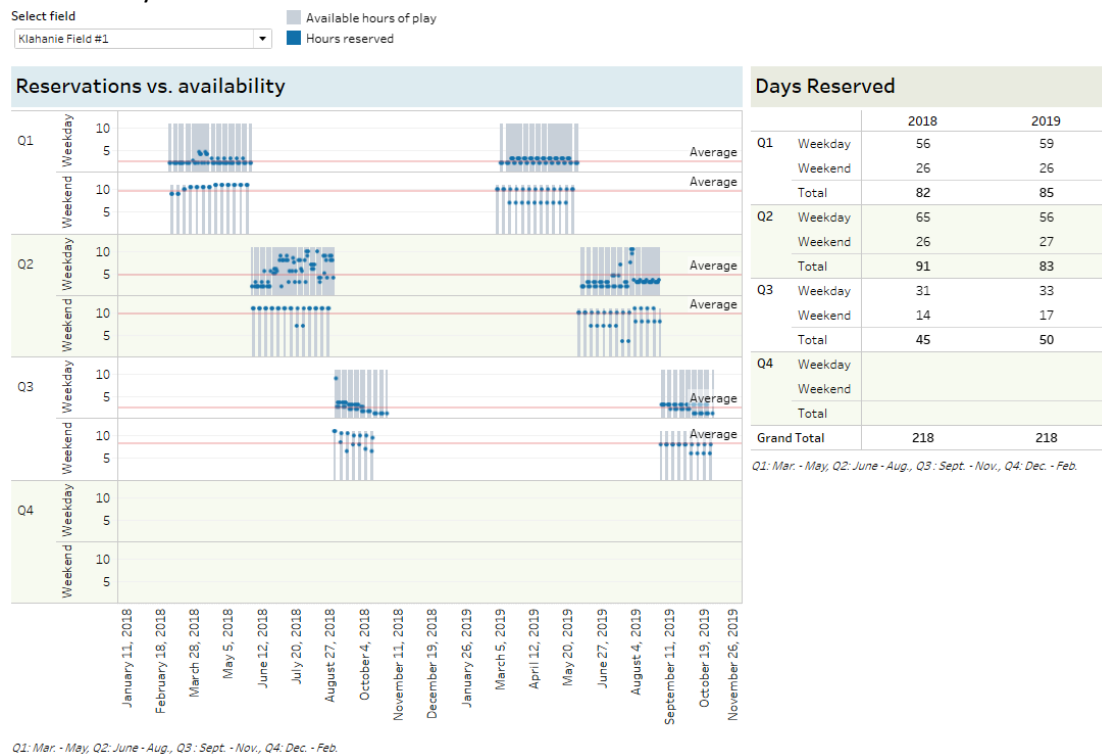


Figure JJ: City of Sammamish field reservations vs. availability, Klahanie Field #1, 2018-2019

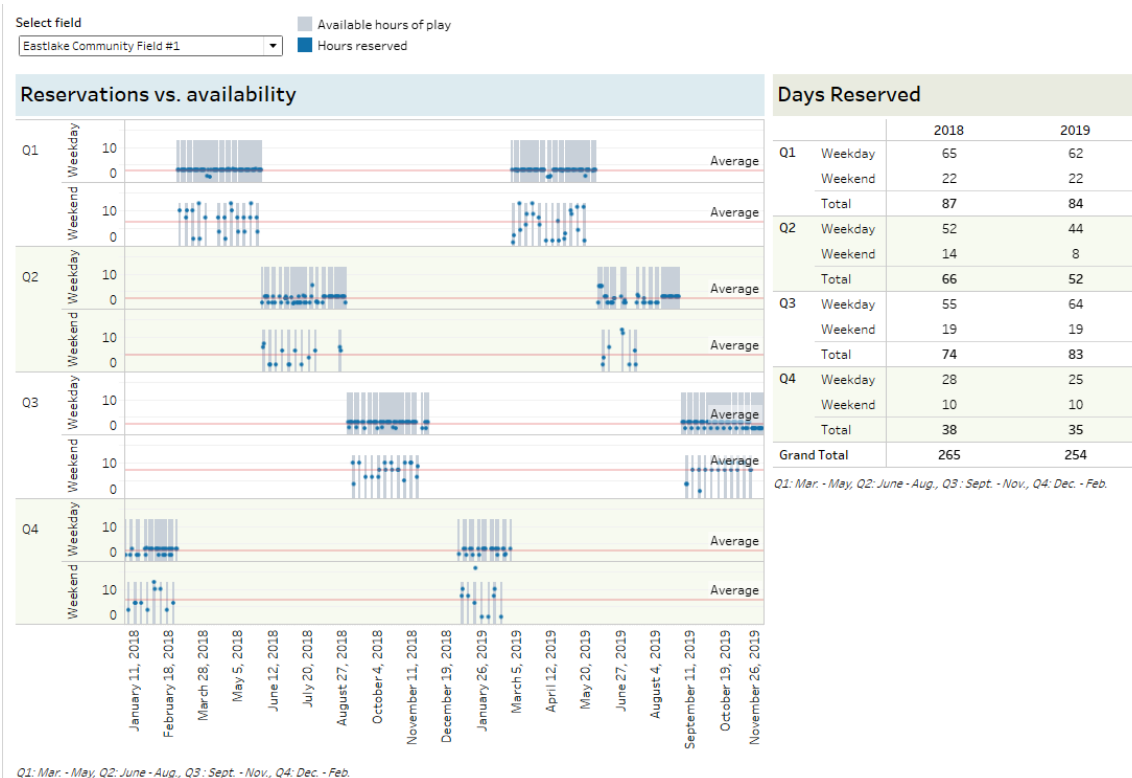


Figure KK: City of Sammamish field reservations vs. availability, Eastlake Community Field #1, 2018-2019

Scheduling

Most sports are being reserved between the times of 4 to 6pm on weekdays, while most weekend reservations start at 9am and last through the entire day.

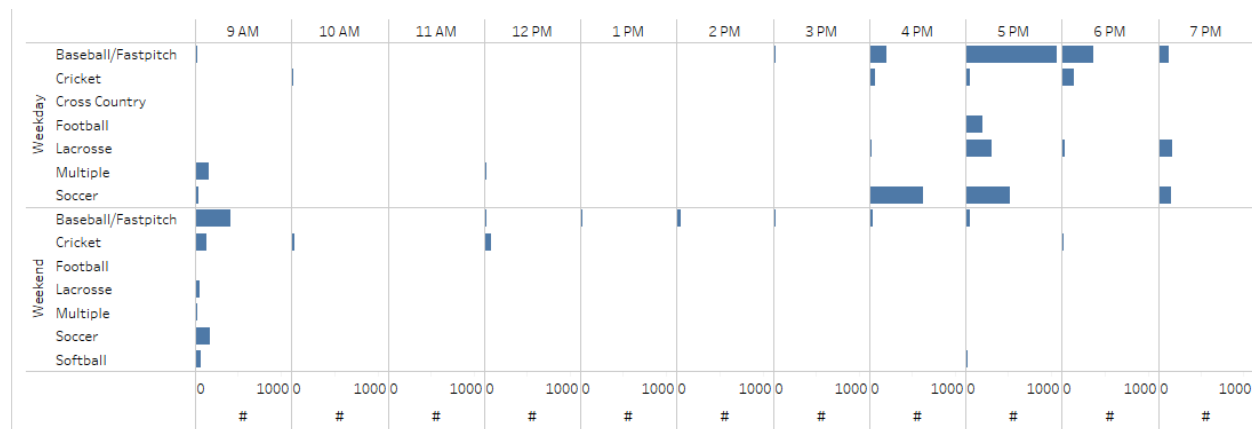
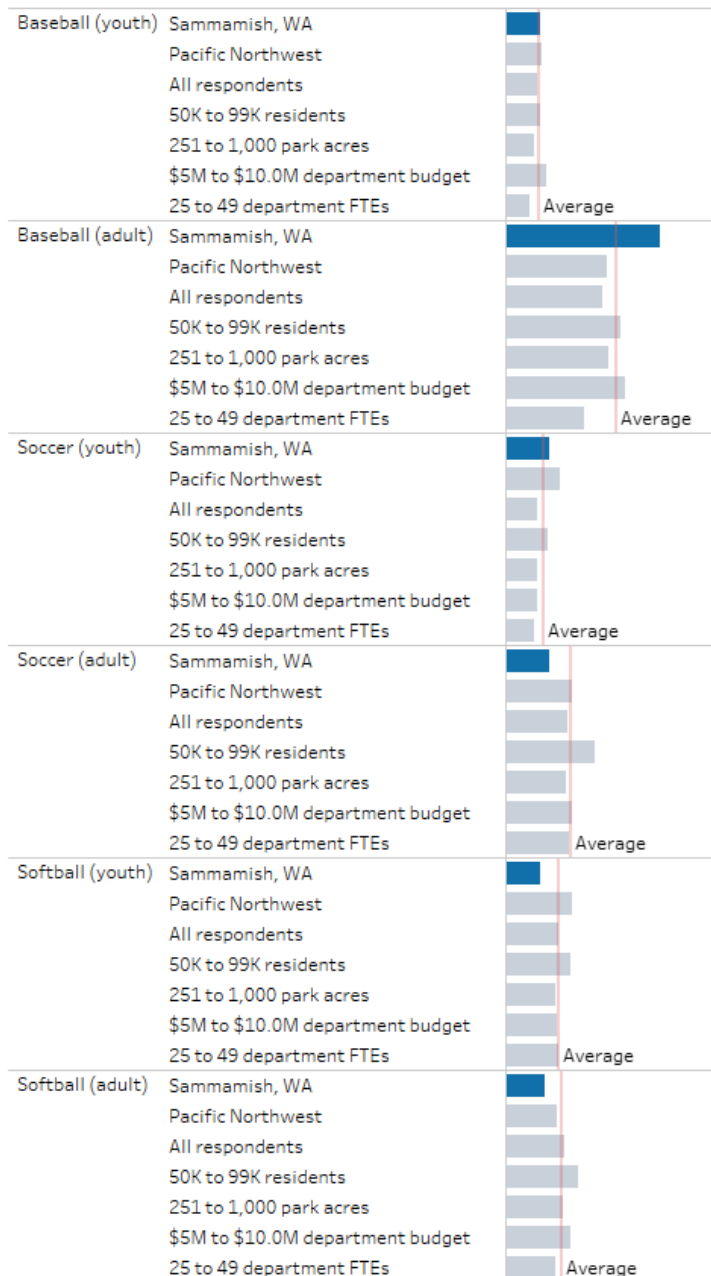


Figure LL: City of Sammamish field reservations by start time, 2018-2019

Level of service

Measuring level of service requires the creation of a ratio which measures the City's population versus the number of fields for a particular sport. For instance, the City's ratio of youth baseball fields is 1:7,303 (one field for every 7,303 residents). Using this metric, the City can compare itself to peer jurisdictions across the U.S. by determining if it has a higher level of service (lower ratio) based on certain criteria. Findings show that for most peer-to-peer comparisons, the City of Sammamish is at or above the service levels of most other jurisdiction types across the U.S.

Field to Population Ratio



Field to Population Ratio

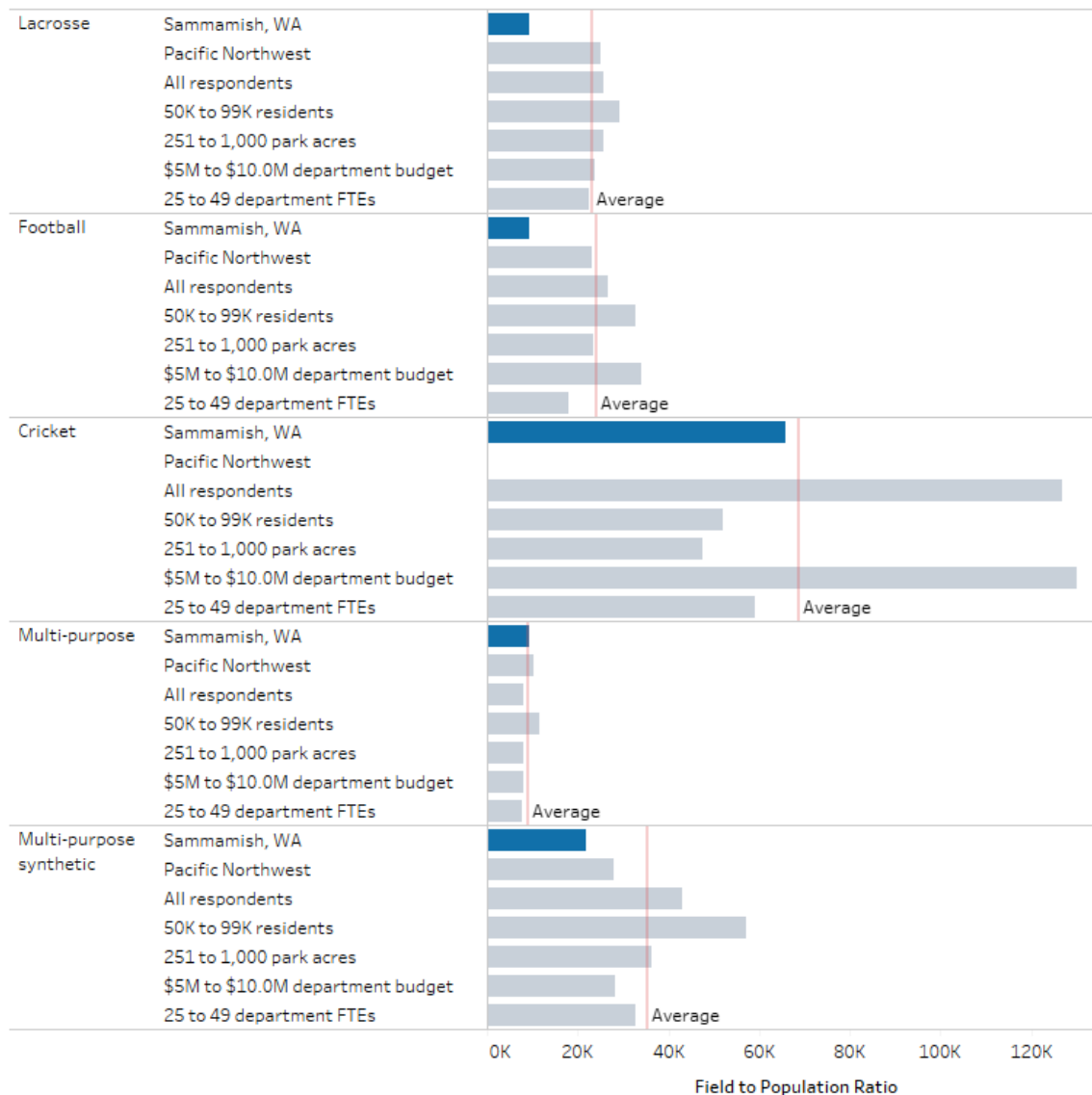


Figure MM: Field to population ratios, data from City of Sammamish and 2019 NRPA Agency Performance Review - Park Facilities, 2019

Survey of Leagues/Organizations

Survey Response

The 2019 Athletic Field Study Survey (Exhibit A) received a 53% response rate where 16 of 30 leagues/organizations responded to the survey that was sent out by City staff. 25% of the leagues/organizations represented baseball/fastpitch (some leagues offer separate youth programs for baseball and fastpitch), 25% represented soccer, 25% represented lacrosse, 12.5% represented football, 6.25% represented cricket and 6.25% represented softball (adult softball, separate from youth fastpitch).

Demographics Served

69% of leagues/organizations served youth only while 25% served both youth and adults. Adult-only leagues was limited to adult softball, while 100% of cricket and 75% of soccer leagues served both youth and adults. 69% of leagues/organizations served male and female athletes while 25% served men only (2 baseball leagues, 1 football league and 1 lacrosse league reported serving men only). One lacrosse league reporting serving women only. Over half (56%) reported that their leagues are competitive which was primarily driven by football, lacrosse, and some soccer and baseball/fastpitch.

Participation Trends

50% of leagues/organizations reported their overall participation numbers, or size of organization, to be within 1-999 athletes while 19% reported league participation over 1,000 athletes. Large leagues were primarily driven by soccer and baseball/fastpitch while small leagues are mostly lacrosse, softball, football and some baseball/fastpitch. The majority of leagues (63%) reported that registration numbers have been increasing over the last 5 years while the two football leagues and one baseball/fastpitch league reporting registration numbers decreasing. 25% of soccer leagues and 50% of lacrosse leagues reported their participation remained the same. Overall, 44% reported that participation numbers are limited due to a lack of suitable fields.

Overall, 31% of leagues reported that Sammamish residents made up less than half of all athletes while 31% of leagues reported that all athletes (100%) are residents. Based on league numbers and residency estimates provided by each league, the City estimated that approximately one-third of all athletes represented by the leagues are Sammamish residents. Residency participation rates were primary driven by large leagues such as soccer and cricket where less than half of all athletes are residents of Sammamish. Leagues such as lacrosse, football and baseball/fastpitch had higher residency rates and five leagues reported that all athletes are residents of Sammamish.

Scheduling

38% of leagues/organizations schedule practices 5 days/week with 50% reporting practices being held 3-4 times per week. 25% schedule games once per week while 57% schedule 2-3 times per week. 69% report experiencing some level of scheduling conflicts and 69% report having to schedule games and practices outside Sammamish to support athletic play. Fields scheduled outside Sammamish include Marymoor Park, Central Park, Redmond Ridge, Tibetts Valley, Lake Sammamish Park, Magnusson Park, and others located in nearby cities (Redmond, Kirkland, Preston, Issaquah).

When asked which fields within Sammamish are reserved for practices and games, leagues/organizations listed (top 14 fields):

- All Eastlake High School Community Fields (fields #1-3)
- Both Skyline High School multipurpose fields #1-2
- All Klahanie Park fields
- Beaver Lake Park Baseball Field #1
- Beaver Lake Middle School Multipurpose Field
- Pine Lake Middle School Multipurpose Field (Artificial Turf)
- Eastlake High School Stadium
- Beaver Lake Park Baseball Fields #1-2

Field quality

Overall, 50% of leagues/organizations reported that natural turf fields maintained by the City are in good condition while 88% believe synthetic turf fields are reported in good condition. Of the ten natural turf fields maintained by the City, the top 5 rated fields (by quality) were:

1. Beaver Lake Park Baseball Field #1
2. East Sammamish Park Baseball Field #1
3. Beaver Lake Park Baseball Field #2
4. East Sammamish Park Baseball Field #2
5. Beaver Lake Park Baseball Field #3

The lowest-rated fields were Pine Lake Park Multipurpose Field (ranked No. 10) and East Sammamish Park Multipurpose Field (ranked No. 9). All Klahanie Park fields ranked near the bottom in overall field quality. When asked which fields required improvements, and the type of improvements required, fields in Beaver Lake Park and Klahanie Park were most often mentioned.

Field preferences and feedback

Only 13% of leagues/organizations feel there are enough athletic fields in Sammamish to meet current needs while 19% believe there are enough fields to meet future needs. Of the leagues that responded, only those serving softball and football leagues reported there being enough fields for current and future use. 81% reported that synthetic fields are preferred playing surfaces over natural turf and 88% reported that field lights will provide opportunities schedule more practices and games in the evenings. When asked specifically which fields leagues/organizations would like lights at, the most common comments were:

- “Any” or “all”
- “Beaver Lake Park”
- “East Sammamish Park”
- “Klahanie Park”
- “Inglewood Middle School”

Conclusions

Overall, sports leagues and organizations do not feel there are enough athletic fields in Sammamish to support current and future needs. While natural turf fields currently maintained and managed by the City are considered to be in good condition, leagues and organizations believe that synthetic turf fields and lights can expand field playing time while improving the overall quality of playing conditions in order to meet their needs. Leagues generally report that local weather conditions and seasonal trends shorten athletic seasons and cancellations are common due to deteriorated field conditions, even when it is no longer raining. In order to continue to fully operate, many leagues need to schedule fields outside Sammamish which includes fields in nearby cities such as Redmond, Issaquah and Preston. The need for field reservations are more likely due to holding practices (3-5 practices per week) compared to coordinating games and competitions (1-2 games per week). The most commonly used fields in Sammamish are located in facilities that are synthetic turf (Eastlake High School Community Fields and Skyline High School), except for Klahanie Park and Beaver Lake Park which are natural. Of the natural turf fields maintained by the City, Pine Lake Park is rated very low in quality while Beaver Lake Park and East Sammamish Park fields are rated high.

The majority of leagues serve youth and are co-ed (serving both men and women), while a little over half the leagues are competitive. Several leagues, specifically soccer, are quite large and continue to grow while the majority of those athletes are non-Sammamish residents. The reverse is also true, where many small leagues are mostly made up of residents of Sammamish. Youth tackle football in Sammamish is declining while sports with large numbers (such as soccer, baseball/fastpitch, and cricket) continue to increase along with smaller sports such as lacrosse and softball. Leagues do not fully agree that participation numbers are influenced by a lack of fields, indicating other factors may be contributing to current participation trends.

Park Condition Assessment

During the spring and summer of 2017, each individual park facility was assessed by a consultant landscape architect to determine its current conditions and identify any significant maintenance or amenity needs. These evaluations were high-level, objective, visual assessments of overall physical facilities that looked for obvious conditions and improvements that can be made to park properties in conjunction with feedback from the public and affected stakeholders. These assessments were part of the inventory for the entire park system and served as a general guide for prioritizing future improvements. Based on the assessment of five park facilities and their fields (soccer, baseball, softball) most rated in good condition in which fields had thick grass with few bare spots, few depressions, no noticeable drainage issues, proper slope and layout, functional fencing (if present), free of protrusions, and free of holes. Fields at Klahanie Park were the only fields which were evaluated as having lower conditions, such as⁴⁶:

- Grass with bare turf areas in high-use locations
- Drainage issues in overuse areas
- Slope is within one percent of proper field slope
- Infields have grading problems (bump) at transition to grass and have no additive
- May not have proper layout and/or orientation
- Fencing (if present) has minor protrusions
- Contains holes/passages that do not affect game play

Park Condition Assessment	Condition	
Park	Soccer Fields	Baseball/softball fields
Beaver Lake Park		Good
East Sammamish Park	Good	Good
Eastlake High School Community Fields	Good	Good
Ebright Creek Park	Good	
Klahanie Park	Fair	Fair
Pine Lake Park	Good	Good

Figure NN: Park condition assessment, City of Sammamish PRO Plan, 2018

General findings

Several needs and challenges were identified from this assessment, including⁴⁷:

- Existing and popular sport programs often exceed the capacity of current fields
- Future growth projections will increase future participation in team sports

⁴⁶ City of Sammamish, 2018 Parks, Recreation & Open Space Plan, 2018, pg. 71, 73, 75

⁴⁷ City of Sammamish, 2018 Parks, Recreation & Open Space Plan, 2018, pg. 77-78, 259

- There has been a steady increase in the hours of use of existing athletic fields over the last five years.
 - Steady growth has occurred in the hours of use of natural field fields (due to youth soccer, lacrosse and cricket)
 - Use of artificial turf has been more inconsistent but slightly increasing (due to youth soccer and lacrosse)
- Few parks in the Pacific Northwest offer cricket fields. While appreciated by the community, Klahanie Park's cricket field has minimal supportive amenities.
- Local sport leagues have benefited from the cooperative relationships formed between the City and both the Lake Washington School District and the Issaquah School District.

Recommendations from PRO Plan

General Recommendations

The PRO plan provided a number of recommendations for consideration by Park & Recreation staff, including several related to sport fields improvements. General recommendations include⁴⁸:

- Use existing sites more effectively
- Acquire and develop additional field space to meet demands
- Continue partnerships between the City, school districts, sports organizations, and other recreation providers
- Conversion to all-weather turf play surfaces will meet growing need for expanded field inventory
- New parkland acquisition should consider developable areas that could support sports fields
- Work closely with school districts to actively explore opportunities for greater joint use and development of facilities
- Periodically meet with leagues and field providers to assist in field planning.
- Continue monitoring field conditions, usage, fees
- Continue with the multi-use concept for field use
- Convert as many existing fields to artificial turf and add lighting
- Move away from block scheduling. Instead, schedule fields on a per use basis to maximize field utilization.
- Pay attention to emerging sports such as cricket, lacrosse, rugby and others

Specific Recommendations

Specific recommendations from the PRO Plan include⁴⁹:

- Build two (2) additional baseball fields to meet current and future demand
- Build three (3) additional soccer fields to meet current and future demand
- Consider building a sports complex to meet current and future demand:
 - Four (4) ball fields and/or
 - Four (4) soccer fields
- Add more cricket fields through park acquisitions to create unique recreational identity
- Add field lighting to extend hours of play for the following parks:
 - Beaver Lake Park
 - Pine Lake Park

⁴⁸ City of Sammamish, *2018 Parks, Recreation & Open Space Plan*, 2018, pg. 77-78, 271

⁴⁹ City of Sammamish, *2018 Parks, Recreation & Open Space Plan*, 2018, pg. 77-78

- East Sammamish Park
 - Klahanie Park
- Plan for the development of two (2) more facilities using the Eastlake Community Fields as a model. Include:
 - Multi-use capabilities
 - Artificial turf
 - Lights

Final Conclusions

National findings on youth participation in sports is sobering: the average child spends less than three years playing a sport before quitting by age 11. To reverse this trend, all signs point towards working collaboratively with school districts to improve existing athletic fields. Several reasons drive home this conclusion:

- Athletic fields at local schools have a high rate of use because students are using the facilities during school hours, such as PE and other district-sponsored activities. This is how the Department can maximize its investments when making decisions to improve athletic facilities within the community.
- The City should prioritize athletic play that serves local residents.
- The City has the ability to build a closer connection between academics and athletics.
- Sport-sampling at an early age is important to get children engaged in athletics for the long term.
- Early sports specialization creates inequities in youth athletics. Although Sammamish is the nation's wealthiest city with a median household income of \$183,000⁵⁰, not all families within the community can afford to spend money on their children to participate in specialized and expensive athletic leagues. Spending resources to improve athletic fields at local schools, which can be utilized by all children regardless of socioeconomic status, is the best solution to ensure the City remains committed to equity, diversity and inclusion.
- Leveraging resources and available funding from community partners results in cost-saving measures that allow limited City resources to have a greater impact across the community.

The Department has already taken the first step by renegotiating its Joint Use Agreement with the Lake Washington School District to coordinate the scheduling of district-owned athletic fields while allowing the school district priority scheduling for district and district-sponsored activities. In addition, the Department is currently in talks with the school district in making improvements to athletic fields at Inglewood Middle School which may include new artificial turf, lights, and multiple sport options to improve and expand the use of the facility. These activities are in perfect alignment with the findings in this report and the Department is encouraged to use this model in future decisions when making investments in athletic facilities around the community.

⁵⁰ Seattle Times, [Think Seattle's rich? This Eastside city tops census list of richest U.S. cities](#), October 7, 2019.

Exhibit A: Athletic Field Study Survey Results

Q4. Select sport	
Baseball/Fastpitch	4
Soccer	4
Lacrosse	4
Football	2
Cricket	1
Softball	1
Total:	16

Q5. What age group does your league/organization serve?	
Youth	69%
Adult	6%
Youth/Adult	25%

Q6 . What gender does your league/organization serve?	
Male only	25%
Female only	6%
Male/Female	69%

Q7. How many total players are registered, enrolled, or participate in your league/organization?	
1 - 199	50%
200 – 399	6%
400 – 599	6%
600 – 799	6%
800 – 999	13%
1,000+	19%

Q8. Over the last 5 years, has your registration numbers per year:	
Increased	63%
Stayed the same	19%
Decreased	19%

Comments:

- Football numbers are slowly declining.
- Our board is focused on increasing registrations this year.
- We grew by 20% this year. The past few years we have been stagnant
- This was our first time organizing a league.
- We've seen a steady increase of 5% per year over the last 4 years.
- We have over 400 players tryout every year and are still looking to grow

Q9. What percentage of players are residents of Sammamish?	
0-24%	6%
25-49%	25%
50-74%	6%
75-99%	25%
100%	31%
Not reported	6%

Q10. How would you describe your league/organization?	
Competitive	56%
Recreational	44%

Q11. How many days a week are practices scheduled (max)?	
One	6%
Two	6%
Three	25%
Four	25%
Five	38%

Q12. How many days a week are games scheduled (max)?	
One	25%
Two	44%
Three	13%
Four	0%
Five	13%
No response	6%

Q13. Do you agree or disagree with the following statement: Natural turf fields (grass, dirt, etc.) are preferred playing surfaces for your league/organization.	
Strongly Agree	6%
Agree	13%
Neutral	19%
Disagree	38%
Strongly Disagree	25%

Q14. Do you agree or disagree with the following statement: Synthetic turf fields are preferred playing surfaces for your league/organization.	
Strongly Agree	50%
Agree	31%
Neutral	6%
Disagree	13%
Strongly Disagree	0%

Q15. Do you agree or disagree with the following statement: Field lights will provide opportunities to schedule more practices and games in the evenings.

Strongly Agree	69%
Agree	19%
Neutral	13%
Disagree	0%
Strongly Disagree	0%

Q16. Do you agree or disagree with the following statement: There are enough athletic fields in Sammamish for your league/organization to meet current needs.

Strongly Agree	0%
Agree	13%
Neutral	6%
Disagree	63%
Strongly Disagree	19%

Q17. Do you agree or disagree with the following statement: There are enough athletic fields in Sammamish for your league/organization to meet future needs.

Strongly Agree	0%
Agree	19%
Neutral	6%
Disagree	38%
Strongly Disagree	38%

Q18. Do you agree or disagree with the following statement: Natural turf fields maintained and scheduled by the City (Beaver Lake Park, Klahanie Park, Pine Lake Park, East Sammamish Park) are in good condition.

Strongly Agree	6%
Agree	44%
Neutral	38%
Disagree	13%
Strongly Disagree	0%

Q19. Do you agree or disagree with the following statement: Synthetic turf fields maintained and scheduled by the City (Eastlake High School Community Fields) are in good condition.

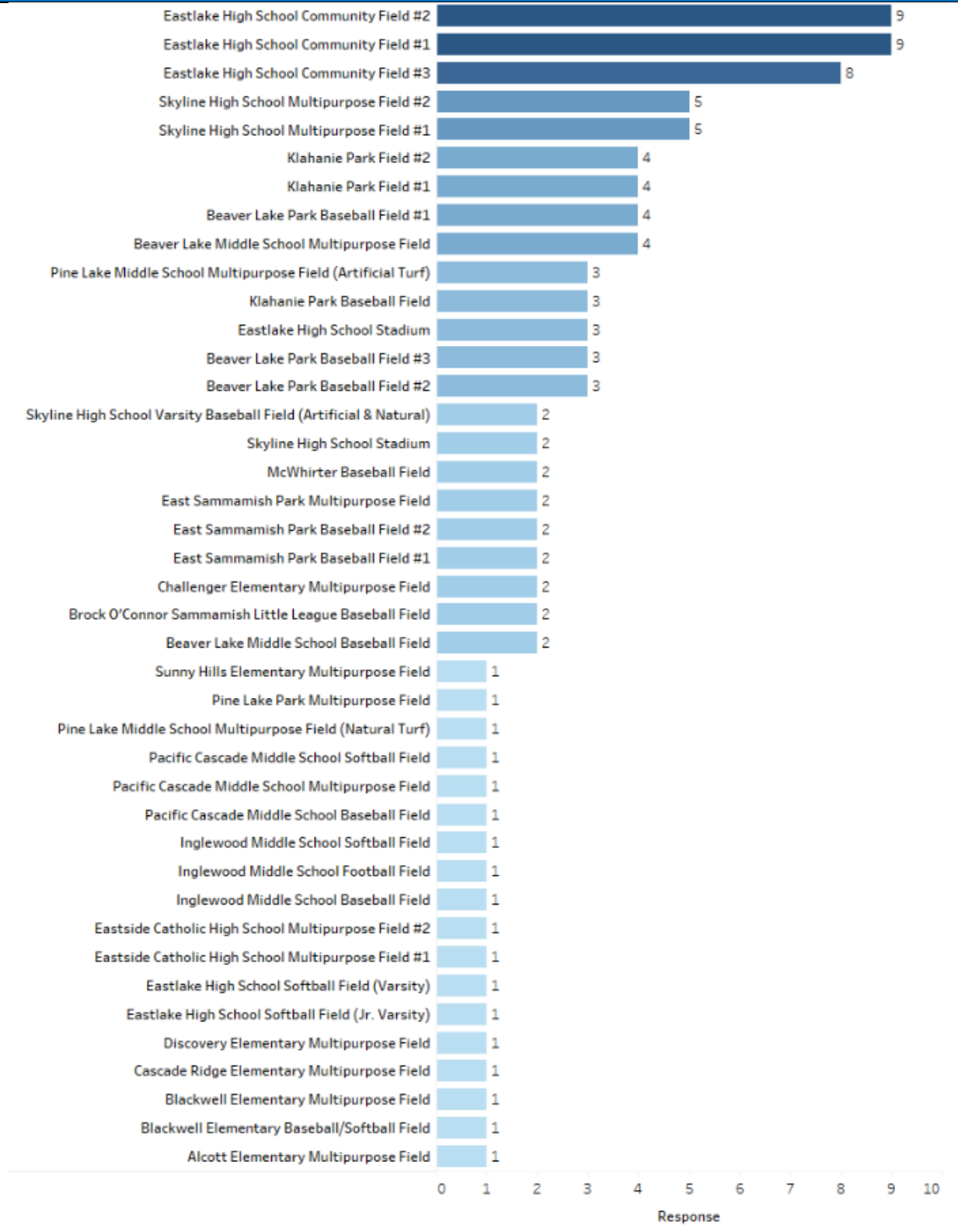
Strongly Agree	50%
Agree	38%
Neutral	6%
Disagree	6%
Strongly Disagree	0%

Q20. Do you agree or disagree with the following statement: League/organization participation is limited due to a lack of suitable fields.	
Strongly Agree	25%
Agree	19%
Neutral	31%
Disagree	25%
Strongly Disagree	0%

Q21. Our league/organization needs to schedule games and practices outside Sammamish to support athletic play.	
All of the time	25%
Most of the time	19%
Half the time	25%
Rarely	19%
Never	13%

Q22. Our league/organization experiences scheduling conflicts with other leagues/organizations.	
All of the time	19%
Most of the time	25%
Half the time	25%
Rarely	31%
Never	0%

Q23. Which fields within Sammamish does your league/organization reserve for practices and games?



Q24. Please rank, in order, the quality of natural turf fields maintained by the City:	
Beaver Lake Park Baseball Field #1	8.60
East Sammamish Park Baseball Field #1	8.25
Beaver Lake Park Baseball Field #2	8.20
East Sammamish Park Baseball Field #2	7.25
Beaver Lake Park Baseball Field #3	7.20
Klahanie Park Field #1	7.17
Klahanie Park Baseball Field	6.20
Klahanie Park Field #2	6.20
East Sammamish Park Multipurpose Field	4.50
Pine Lake Park Multipurpose Field	3.75

**Ranking system: 1= lowest quality, 10 = highest quality. Scores are based on calculations generated by SurveyMonkey*

Q25. Which fields, if any, require improvements? What type of improvements are required?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Beaver Lake Park has a mole problem. ➤ Beaver Lake Park has some divots in the turf outfield and some bumps/rocks on the infield. ➤ Beaver Lake Park gets too dusty ➤ Beaver Lake Park baseball fields needs to be upgraded to synthetic turf for year-round play and avoid rain-outs ➤ Eastlake Community Fields #1 and #2 had some lights burned out ➤ East Sammamish Park baseball fields require better fencing ➤ East Sammamish Park requires updates to light and multi-purpose turf ➤ “Baseball” turf infield and grass outfield at East Sammamish Park ➤ Inglewood Middle School requires update to lights and multi-purpose turf ➤ Fences at Klahanie Park are too low and dugouts are not covered. ➤ Klahanie Fields 1 & 2 need better drainage ➤ Klahanie Park requires updates to lights and multi-purpose turf ➤ Klahanie Park baseball field needs to be upgraded to synthetic turf for year-round play and avoid rain-outs. The park does not necessarily need lights but having all turf would be a real significant upgrade to run multiple sports year-round. ➤ Pine Lake Park requires updates to lights and multi-purpose turf 	
Park	Frequency (#)
Beaver Lake Park	4
Klahanie Park	4
East Sammamish Park	3
Pine Lake Park	1
Eastlake High School Community Fields	1
Inglewood Middle School	1

Q26. If your league/organization experiences scheduling conflicts with other leagues/organizations, what contributes to the scheduling conflicts? What would improve scheduling and coordinating athletic play in the future?

- We get the fields that we need.
- Everyone has same time restrictions with school schedules.
- Lack of cricket fields.
- Klahanie is the only cricket field and is shared with Soccer, Lacrosse and many other activities including community activities.
- Weekends are fine, but weekdays are a scramble to find practice options with games.
- Not enough availability of turf field space.
- It is a huge problem that we cannot schedule more than 60 days out. This past year we had to sign people up for a league, and we did not have assurance that we would actually have a place to play. Field reservation needs to be at least 90 days out.
- Issues with other organizations not knowing which fields are which
- People squatting on fields in hopes that no one is using them
- Games going over scheduled time.
- Games being scheduled on fields not lined for the purpose
- We usually do not run into issues for City fields.
- We rarely ever get turf from the school district for any of the multi-purpose fields due to prioritization of soccer and lacrosse.
- Fields are not being utilized/scheduled properly due to groups/schools reserving fields when they do not actually need the field. Though this is primarily a school district issue.
- Quantity of teams in the area with limited fields for high school-age players
- Issaquah School District is unable to allocate the fields that they have control over
- Cannot get access to the High School fields for our JV and Varsity High School team.

Q27 Which fields, if any, does your league/organization reserve outside City limits? (e.g. Marymoor Park, Lake Sammamish State Park, etc.)

- We just play away games at different football stadiums.
- Lake Sammamish State Park and Central Park
- Marymoor Park, Magnusson Park, St. Edwards State Park, Ron Regis Park
- Interleague games at Redmond Ridge baseball fields and Big Rock Sports Field (Duvall). Other leagues reserve the fields, we provide the umpires.
- Central Park, Issaquah Middle School, Tibbets Valley and Issaquah Valley Elementary
- We planned to rent Tibbets Valley.
- Marymoor Park, Perigo, Central Park (Issaquah)
- Marymoor Park, fields in Issaquah for 13+ age kids
- Marymoor Park, Tibbets Valley, Central Park
- Marymoor Park, Bannerwood, Lee Johnson, Veterans Memorial, Tibbets Valley, Newport
- All within Issaquah School District.
- Preston Park is our home field.
- Marymoor Park, City of Redmond fields, City of Kirkland fields, Redmond Ridge, Big Finn Hill

Park	Frequency (#)
Marymoor Park	6
Central Park	4
Redmond Ridge	2
Tibbets Valley	2

Lake Sammamish State Park	1
Magnusson Park	1
St. Edwards State Park	1
Ron Regis Park	1
Big Rock Sports Field (Duvall)	1
Issaquah Middle School	1
Issaquah Valley Elementary	1
Perigo	1
Bannerwood	1
Lee Johnson	1
Veterans Memorial	1
Newport	1
Preston Park	1
City of Redmond	1
City of Kirkland	1
Big Finn Hill	1

Q28 Which fields, if any, would you like to have lights at?

- Eastlake Community Fields #1, #2 & #3
- Any would be great
- Klahanie Park
- East Sammamish Park and Inglewood baseball fields.
- Klahanie Park
- Beaver Lake Park
- Inglewood Middle School, East Sammamish Park, Pine Lake Park
- Beaver Lake Park
- Beaver Lake Middle School and Pacific Cascade Middle School.
- Beaver Lake Park
- Skyline High School Varsity Baseball
- All fields
- All fields
- East Sammamish Park Field #3

Park	Frequency (#)
Any/all	3
Beaver Lake Park	3
East Sammamish Park	3
Klahanie Park	2
Inglewood Middle School	2
Eastlake High School Community Fields	1
Pine Lake Park	1
Beaver Lake Middle School	1
Pacific Cascade Middle School	1
Skyline High School	1

Q29 What other feedback would you like to provide for increasing or improving athletic fields within Sammamish?

- More synthetic fields instead of natural turf fields for baseball
- Thank you for all your hard work and supporting athletics in the community
- Cricket needs more fields. The grass needs to be mowed lower for the true nature of the game to be enjoyed
- Rain out cancellations. Baseball has a short season and games\practices are cancelled even when it is not raining because the fields are too wet. An infield turf would enable us to decrease cancellations and increase activity.
- Thank you so much for all the work you do at East Sammamish Park and the partnership on foul ball netting and fencing. We really appreciate it.
- Please offer scheduling more than 60 days out
- Given the weather in our region, as well as sunset occurring as early in the day as it does in the winter months, there is a gross under-supply of athletic facilities to support the ever-growing population in Sammamish.
- We would just ask for equal care of the fields. East Sammamish Park is definitely maintained better (new fences, netting to ensure no stray foul balls, etc.).
- Covered dugouts at Klahanie Park.
- Budget for a person to visit and check field reservations from time to time.
- Issaquah Parks and Rec. takes over Klahanie Park fields frequently and even without reservations.
- Cricket takes over a lot of space for long periods of time, creating a hardship for other users of Klahanie Park fields.
- Priority field scheduling for teams/organizations supporting taxpayers and residents of Sammamish and Issaquah. Too much competition with team that are not residents.
- Would love to see turf fields and lights in Klahanie!
- City of Sammamish fields are used by the recreational league the majority of the time and we get most of the fields we need to support recreation programs in the fall.
- Additional turf fields on the Lake Washington School District side of Sammamish could be used for competitive programs.
- We can't use the Skyline fields due to being in the Issaquah School District side of Sammamish.

Q5. What age group does your league/organization serve?	Overall	Baseball/ Fastpitch	Cricket	Football	Lacrosse	Soccer	Softball
Youth	69%	100%	0%	100%	100%	25%	0%
Adult	6%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%
Youth/Adult	25%	0%	100%	0%	0%	75%	0%

Q6. What gender does your league/organization serve?	Overall	Baseball/ Fastpitch	Cricket	Football	Lacrosse	Soccer	Softball
Male only	25%	50%	0%	50%	25%	0%	0%
Female only	6%	0%	0%	0%	25%	0%	0%
Male/Female	69%	50%	100%	50%	50%	100%	100%

Q7. How many total players are registered, enrolled, or participate in your league/organization	Overall	Baseball/ Fastpitch	Cricket	Football	Lacrosse	Soccer	Softball
1 – 199	50%	50%	0%	100%	75%	0%	100%
200 – 399	6%	0%	0%	0%	25%	0%	0%
400 – 599	6%	25%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
600 – 799	6%	0%	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%
800 – 999	13%	25%	0%	0%	0%	25%	0%
1,000+	19%	0%	0%	0%	0%	75%	0%

Q8. Over the last 5 years, has your registration numbers per year:	Overall	Baseball/ Fastpitch	Cricket	Football	Lacrosse	Soccer	Softball
Increased	63%	75%	100%	0%	50%	75%	100%
Stayed the same	19%	0%	0%	0%	50%	25%	0%
Decreased	19%	25%	0%	100%	0%	0%	0%

Q9. What percentage of players are residents of Sammamish?	Overall	Baseball/ Fastpitch	Cricket	Football	Lacrosse	Soccer	Softball
0-24%	6%	0%	0%	0%	0%	25%	0%
25-49%	25%	0%	100%	0%	0%	50%	100%
50-74%	6%	25%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
75-99%	25%	25%	0%	50%	50%	0%	0%
100%	31%	50%	0%	50%	50%	0%	0%
Not reported	6%	0%	0%	0%	0%	25%	0%

Q10. How would you describe your league/organization?	Overall	Baseball/ Fastpitch	Cricket	Football	Lacrosse	Soccer	Softball
Competitive	56%	50%	0%	100%	75%	50%	0%
Recreational	44%	50%	100%	0%	25%	50%	100%

Q13-20. Agree/strongly agree with the following statements:	Overall	Baseball/ Fastpitch	Cricket	Football	Lacrosse	Soccer	Softball
Q13. Natural turf fields (grass, dirt, etc.) are preferred playing surfaces for your league/organization.	19%	25%	100%	0%	0%	0%	100%
Q14. Synthetic turf fields are preferred playing surfaces for your league/organization.	81%	100%	0%	100%	75%	100%	0%
Q15. Field lights will provide opportunities to schedule more practices and games in the evenings.	88%	75%	100%	100%	75%	100%	100%
Q16. There are enough athletic fields in Sammamish for your league/organization to meet <u>current</u> needs.	13%	0%	0%	50%	0%	0%	100%
Q17. There are enough athletic fields in Sammamish for your league/organization to meet <u>future</u> needs.	19%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%
Q18. Natural turf fields maintained and scheduled by the City are in good condition.	50%	50%	0%	0%	50%	75%	100%
Q19. Synthetic turf fields maintained and scheduled by the City are in good condition.	88%	100%	100%	50%	100%	100%	0%
Q20. League/organization participation is limited due to a lack of suitable fields.	44%	0%	100%	50%	75%	50%	0%

Q21-22. All of the time, most of the time, half the time:	Overall	Baseball/ Fastpitch	Cricket	Football	Lacrosse	Soccer	Softball
Q21. Our league/organization needs to schedule games and practices outside Sammamish to support athletic play.	69%	50%	100%	0%	100%	100%	0%
Q22. Our league/organization experiences scheduling conflicts with other leagues/organizations.	69%	75%	100%	0%	100%	75%	0%