Comox Valley Regional District

Sports Field Strategy

Final - April 2023

Comox Valley REGIONAL DISTRICT

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We respectfully acknowledge that the land we gather on is on the Unceded traditional territory of the K'ómoks First Nation, the traditional keepers of this land.

Executive Summary

Study Purpose

The Comox Valley Regional District (CVRD) has developed a new Sports Field Strategy in collaboration with its partners - the City of Courtney, Town of Comox, the Village of the Cumberland and School District 71. The Strategy was undertaken to:

- Assess the current state of sports fields within the CVRD;
- Identify key focus areas and priorities for capital investment; and
- Identify opportunities to optimize how the sport field inventory is managed.

Research and Engagement Overview and Key Findings

The project team undertook a program of research to identify trends, gaps, opportunities and desired future priorities. Key research inputs included:

- Discussion sessions with stakeholders
- A public field user survey
- Analysis of available sport field utilization data
- Review of regional, provincial and national trends and leading practices
- Identification of key population and growth characteristics
- Spatial analysis of the sport field inventory

Summarized as follows are key findings from the project research:

- User satisfaction levels with the sport field inventory and associated amenities differ significantly between the summer ("dry") and winter ("wet") months.
- Utilization analysis suggests that sufficient overall capacity exists within the sport field inventory, however a relatively small number of fields accommodate the majority of program based bookings.
- User groups have specific desires for enhanced fields and support amenities. Overall, there is a strong support focusing on improvements that can enhance field functionality, increase useability (especially during winter months), and improve user experiences.
- Opportunities exist to improve data collection, management, and analysis capabilities. Having this information available in a more consistent manner can help better inform future capital and operational planning.
- Trends and population growth forecasts suggest that participation numbers will continue to increase.

Strategy Outcomes

Summarized as follows are the Strategy Outcomes provided in Section 8 of the Strategy. These Strategy Outcomes address the opportunities, gaps and needs identified through the project research as well as provide guidance on the key sport field topics identified in the Strategy project terms of reference.

- Enhance and standardize data collection methods (Strategy Outcome #1).
- Utilize the refreshed sport field classifications as guideline for operational and capital investment in the sport field inventory (Strategy Outcome #2).
- Target capital investment in sport field infrastructure towards a focus on maximizing the quality of sport field infrastructure and adding functional capacity (Strategy Outcome #3). Included under this Strategy Outcome are the following identified projects:
  - » Consider adding a second artificial turf surface (3 candidate sites have been identified and guidance is provided on suggested next steps).
  - » Develop a new baseball hub site (test fits have been developed for 2 potential candidate sites).
  - » Add lighting and washrooms / changerooms at 2-4 sites over the next 10 years if capacity benefits can be sufficiently demonstrated.
  - » To meet potential long-term needs, begin planning for a new multi-field site.
- Develop a new approach for sport field bookings and allocations based around clear standards of play (Strategy Outcome #4).
- Advance efforts to actively promote spontaneous and unstructured sport field play (Strategy Outcome #5).
- Create a more streamlined and cohesive sport field system in the region through aligning planning and policy, shifting bookings responsibility to a single entity, and inviting the Village of Cumberland into the sport field service (Strategy Outcome #6).

Table of Contents

Section 1.0

Introduction

Included in this section:

- Strategy purpose and objectives.
- Strategy process overview.

The Comox Valley Regional District (CVRD) undertook the development of this document, the Sports Field Strategy, in collaboration with its partners - the City of Courtney, Town of Comox, the Village of the Cumberland and School District 71. The Strategy provides the CVRD and its partners with an important point of reference that will inform future decision making and resource allocation. More specifically, the Strategy will:

- Guide Council and staff decision making (e.g. project priorities, budgeting and resource allocation, etc.);
- Identify opportunities to enhance the sport field inventory; and
- Provide guidance on key topics and issues (future artificial turf needs, allocations, user fees, etc.).

The Strategy was initiated in the Spring of 2022 and completed in early 2023. The following graphic illustrates the overall process used to develop the Strategy.

Important questions explored during the research and engagement included:

- How well are the available sport fields being utilized?
- What is the functional condition of the sport field inventory relative to best practice?
- Are there enough sport fields?
- Do all residents living within the CVRD have equitable and sufficient access to sport field opportunities?
- What opportunities exist to enhance how the sport field inventory is managed?
- What are the best approaches to addressing future sport field needs?

Findings from the research, engagement and analysis are contained in Sections 2 – 7 of this Strategy document. Section 8 provides recommendations (Strategy Outcomes) aimed at optimizing future investment and actions related to sport field provision in the CVRD.

Overview of the Research and Engagement Inputs

- **Analysis of utilization data**
- **Inventory and assessment**
- **Spatial analysis of the sport field inventory**
- **Review of key population characteristics**
- **Trends and leading practices review**
- **Engagement with the public and sport field user groups**

Section 2.0

Inventory and Assessment

Included in this section:

- Overview of the current sport field inventory and key spatial characteristics.
- Findings from the assessments of the sport field inventory.

Overview of the Sport Field Inventory

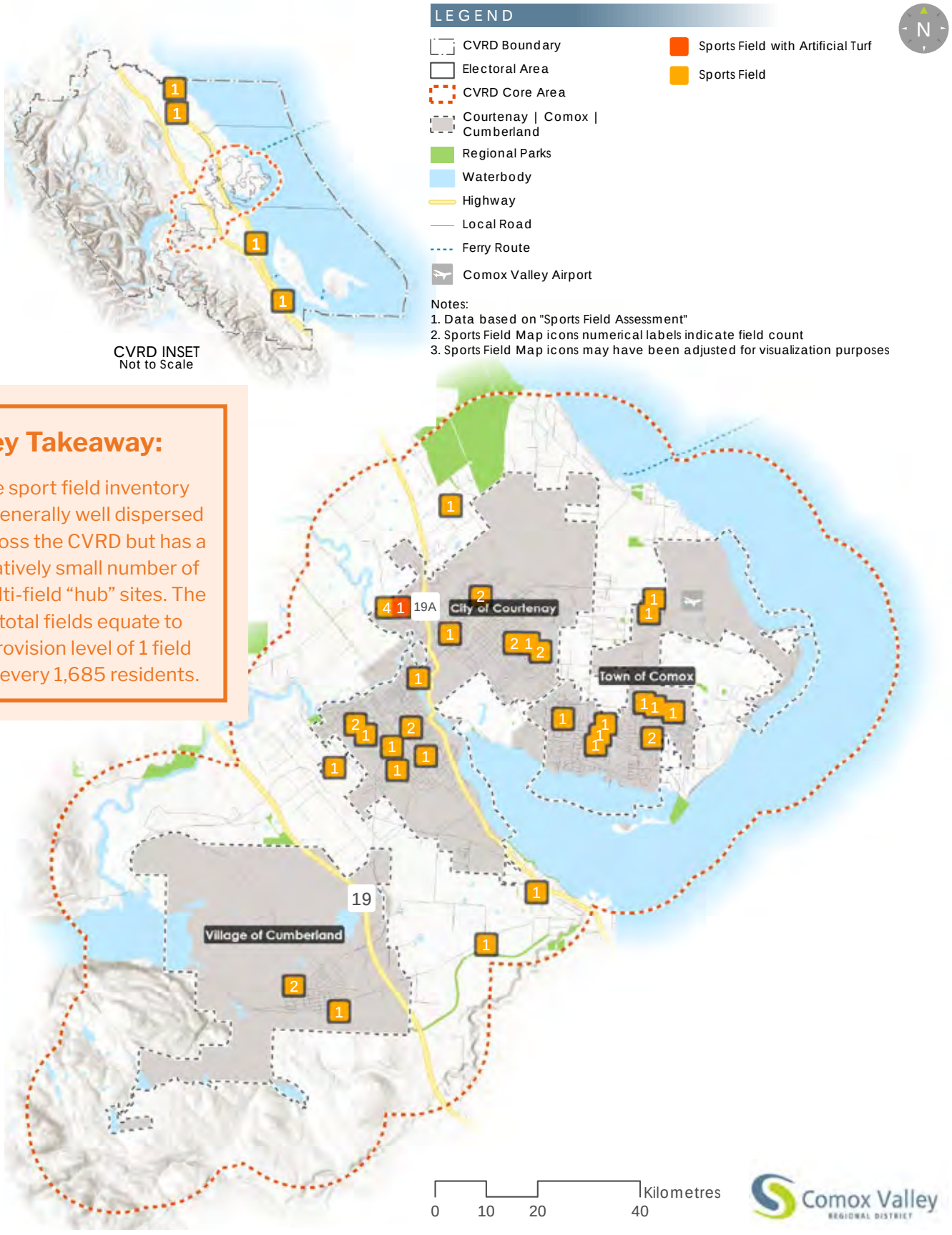
The following table summarizes the current sport field inventory in the CVRD. **The inventory reflected in the table includes school fields within the bookable inventory.*

Table 1: Sport Field Inventory Overview

Location	Rectangular Field - Natural Surface	Rectangular Field – Artificial Surface	Ball Diamonds
Courtenay	22	1	18
Comox	11	0	13
Cumberland	3	0	1
CVRD Electoral Areas	7	0	5
Total	**43**	**1**	**37**

The maps on the following pages reflect additional spatial and service level characteristics of the current sport field inventory in the CVRD.

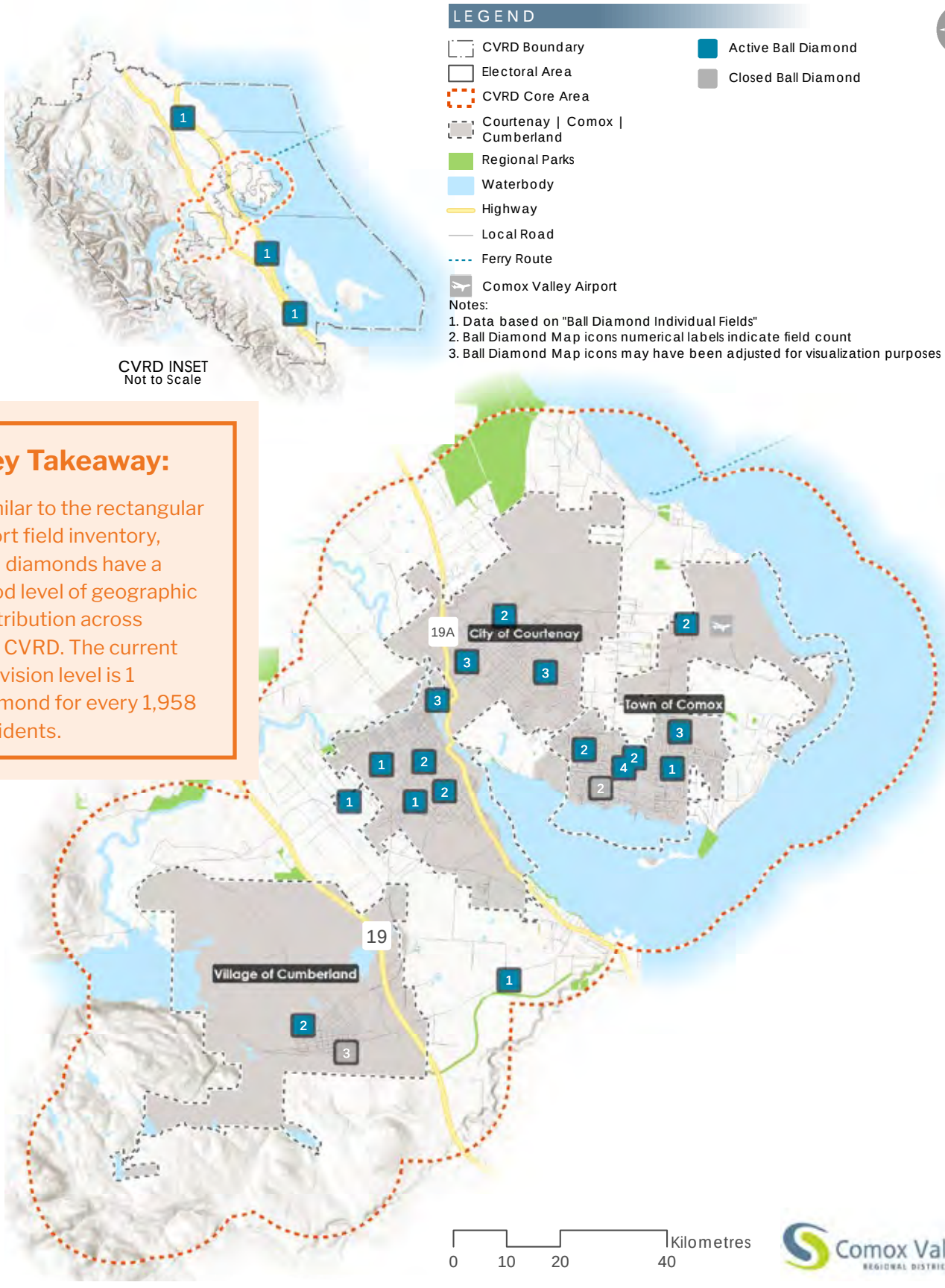
Rectangular Sports Fields – Overview



Key Takeaway:

The sport field inventory is generally well dispersed across the CVRD but has a relatively small number of multi-field “hub” sites. The 43 total fields equate to a provision level of 1 field for every 1,685 residents.

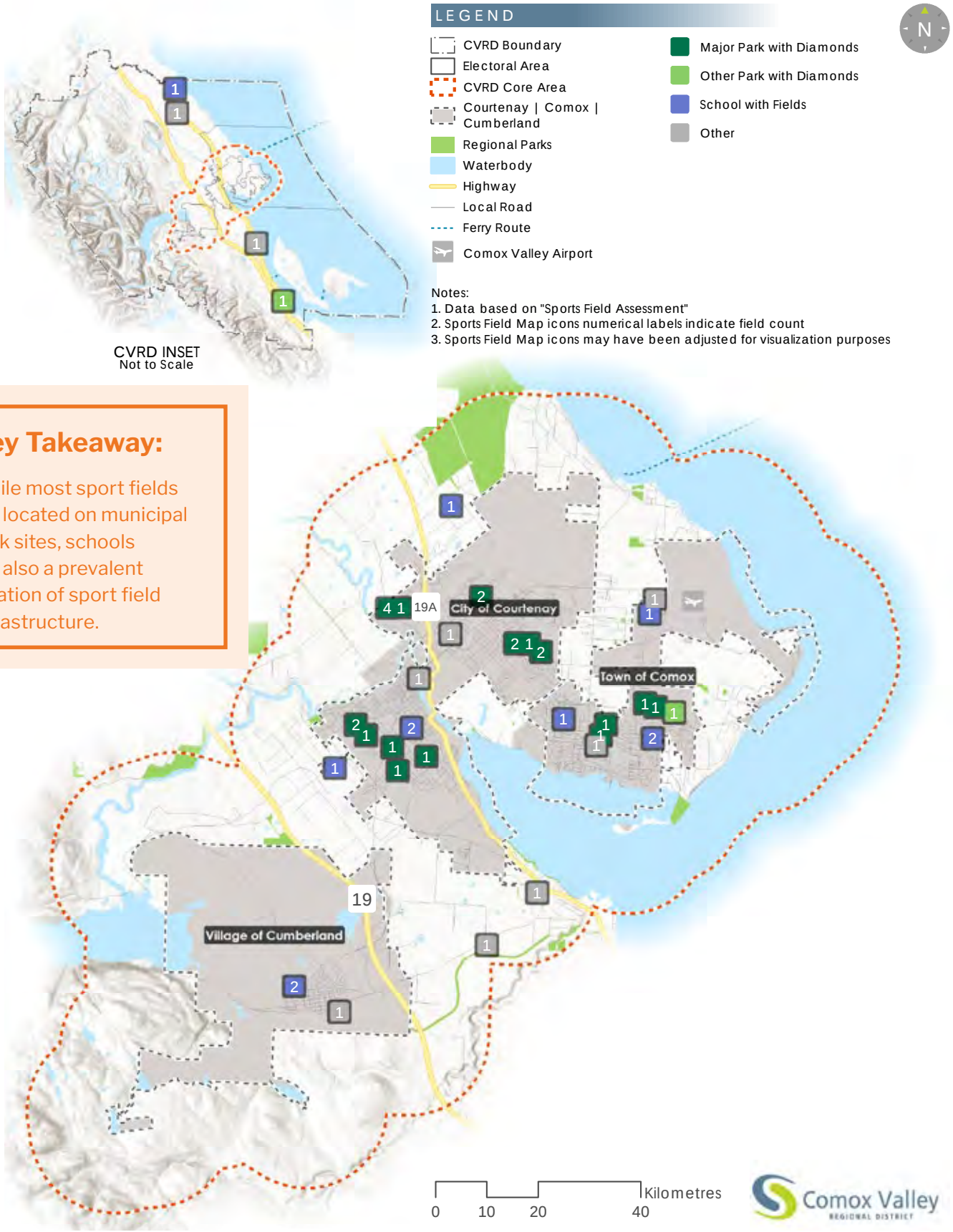
Ball Diamonds – Overview



Key Takeaway:

Similar to the rectangular sport field inventory, ball diamonds have a good level of geographic distribution across the CVRD. The current provision level is 1 diamond for every 1,958 residents.

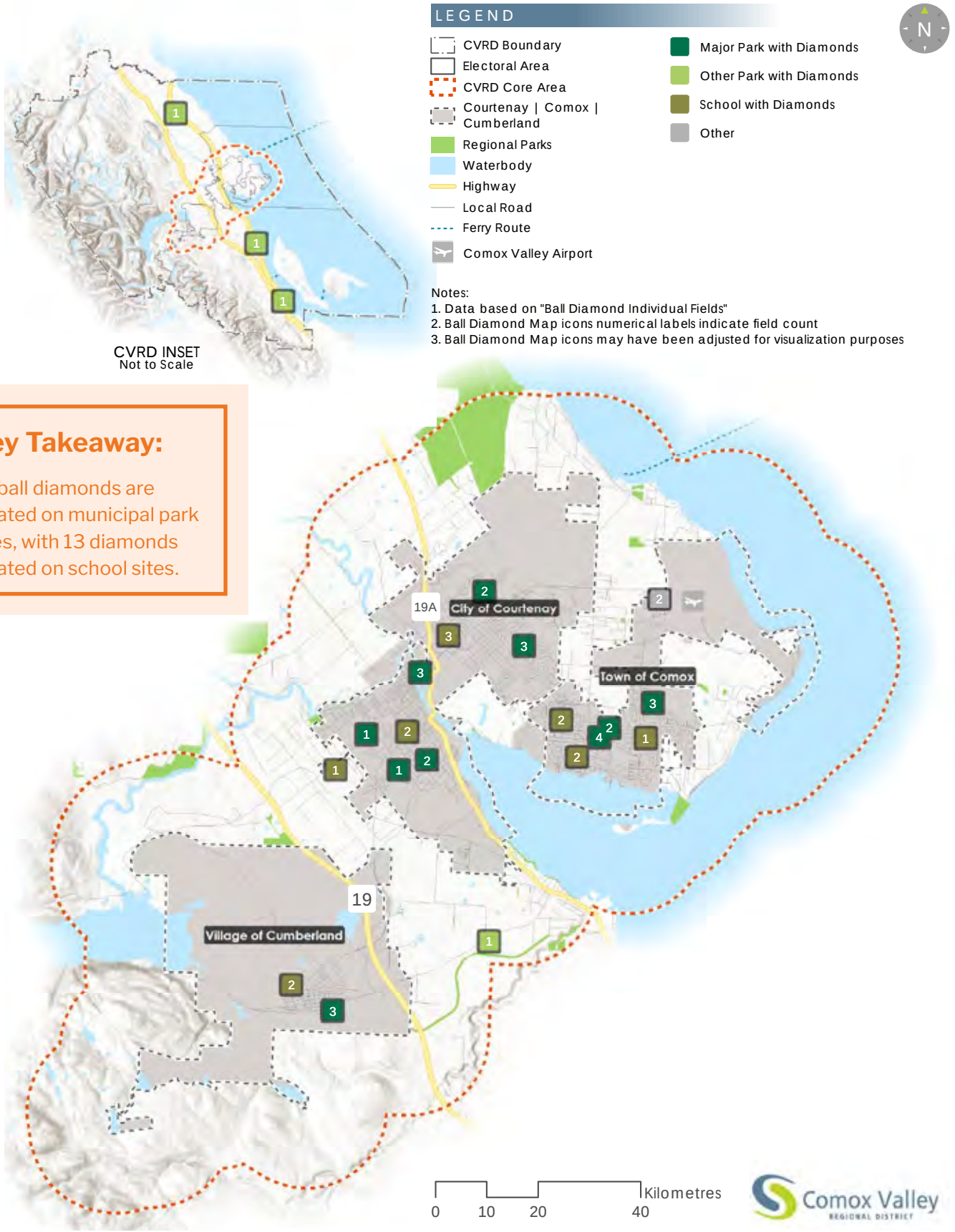
Rectangular Sports Fields by Location Type



Key Takeaway:

While most sport fields are located on municipal park sites, schools are also a prevalent location of sport field infrastructure.

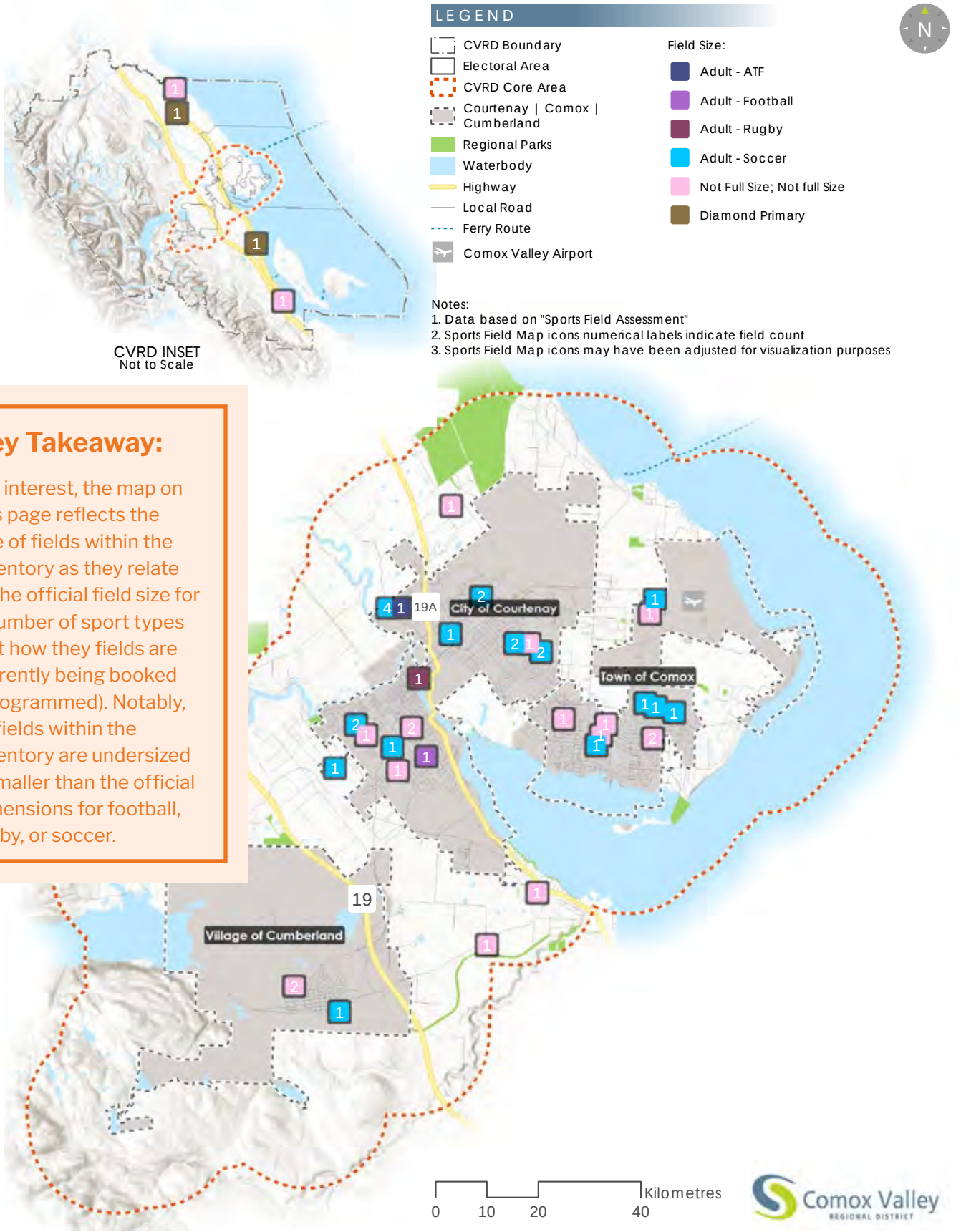
Ball Diamonds by Location Type



Key Takeaway:

24 ball diamonds are located on municipal park sites, with 13 diamonds located on school sites.

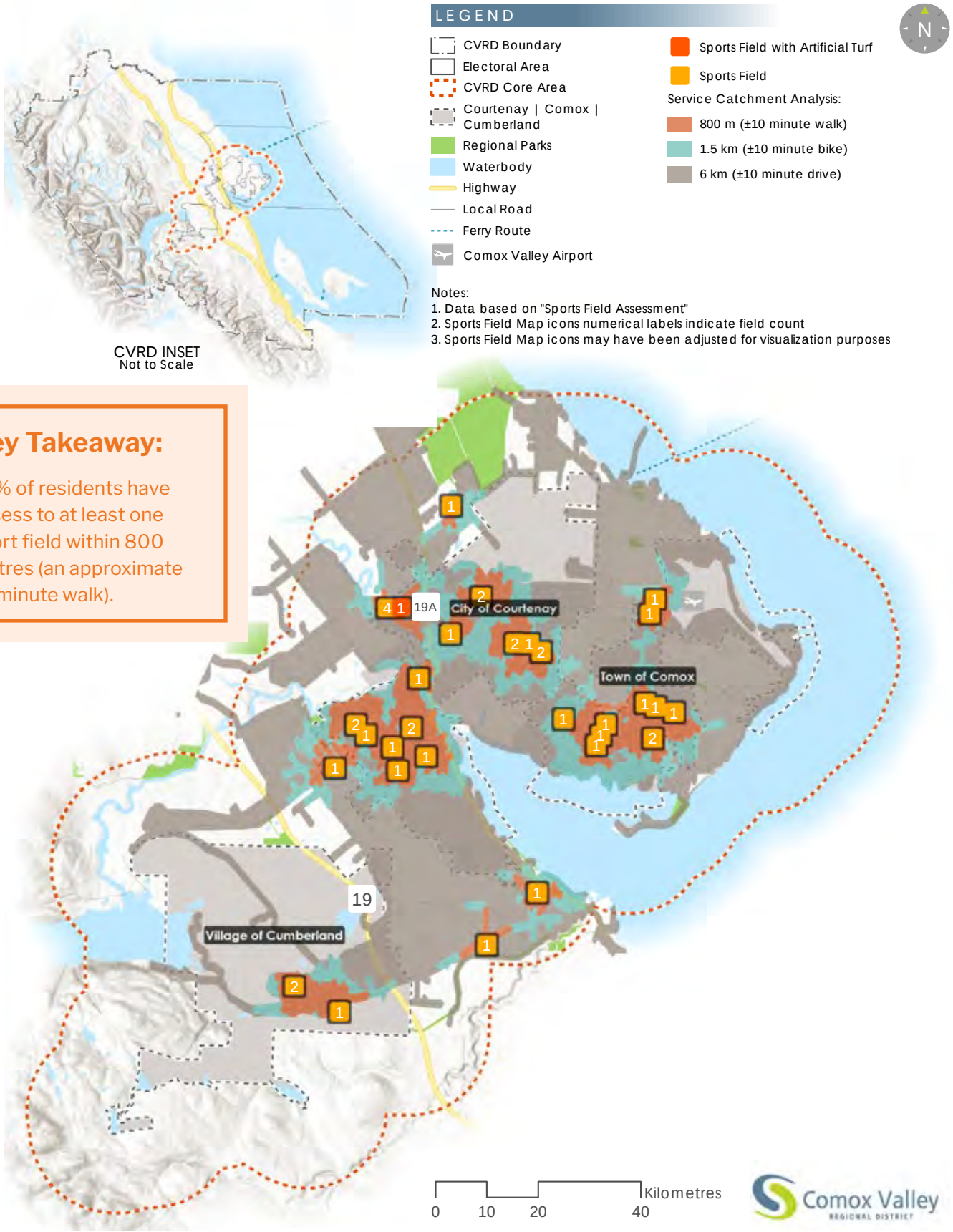
Rectangular Sports Fields by Dimension Opportunity



Key Takeaway:

For interest, the map on this page reflects the size of fields within the inventory as they relate to the official field size for a number of sport types (not how they fields are currently being booked / programmed). Notably, 14 fields within the inventory are undersized – smaller than the official dimensions for football, rugby, or soccer.

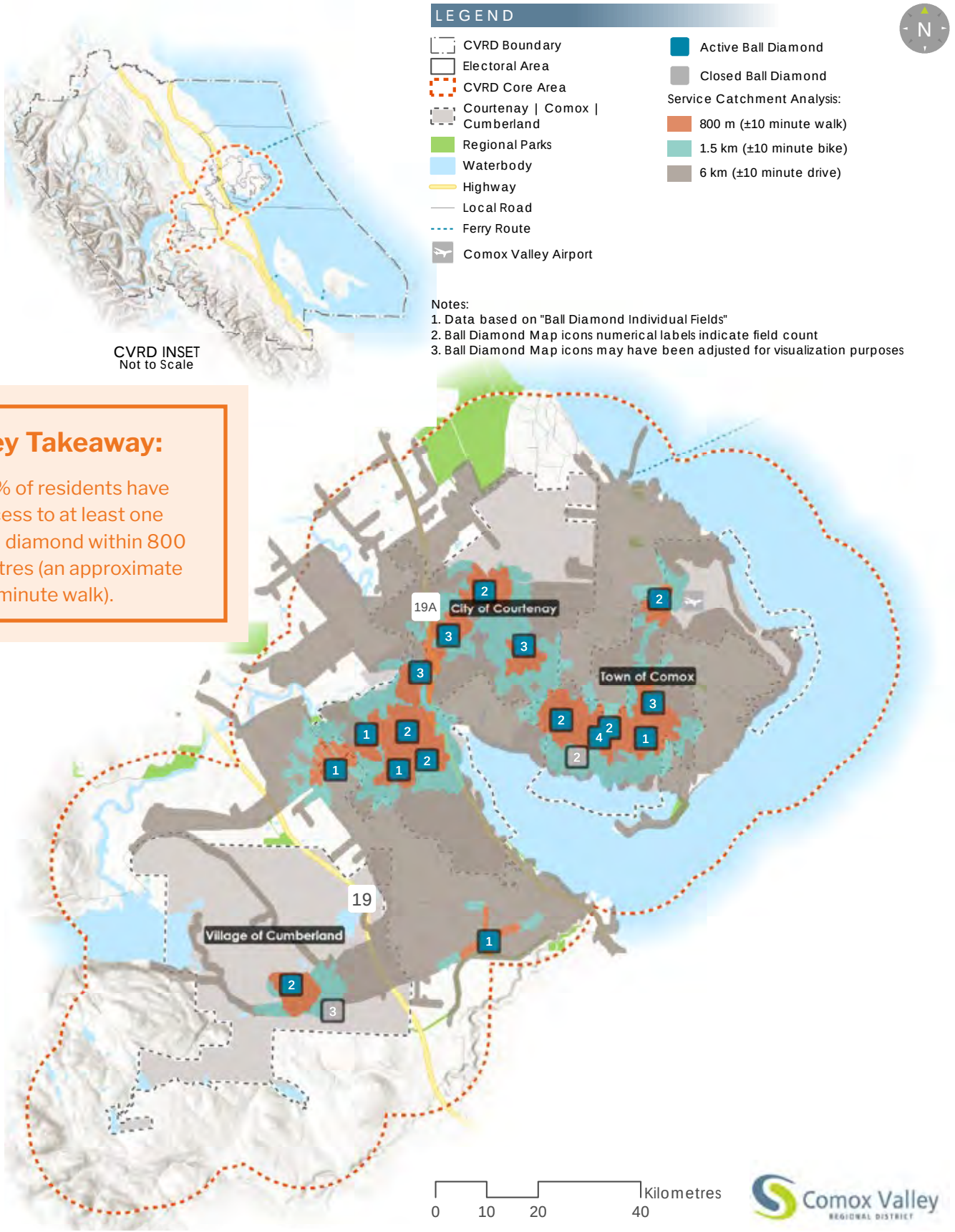
Sports Field Catchments and Access



Key Takeaway:

82% of residents have access to at least one sport field within 800 metres (an approximate 10 minute walk).

Ball Diamonds Catchment and Access



Key Takeaway:

73% of residents have access to at least one ball diamond within 800 metres (an approximate 10 minute walk).

Sport Field Assessments Summary

Technical experts from the consulting team conducted on-site assessments on the sport field inventory within the CVRD. The objectives of this assessment were to:

- Analyze and update the previous (2008) classification of fields.
- Identify system wide opportunities for enhancement.
- Assess sites that may be good candidates for capital investment (e.g. artificial turf field development).
- Confirm key attributes and characteristics of the inventory (e.g. on-site support amenities).

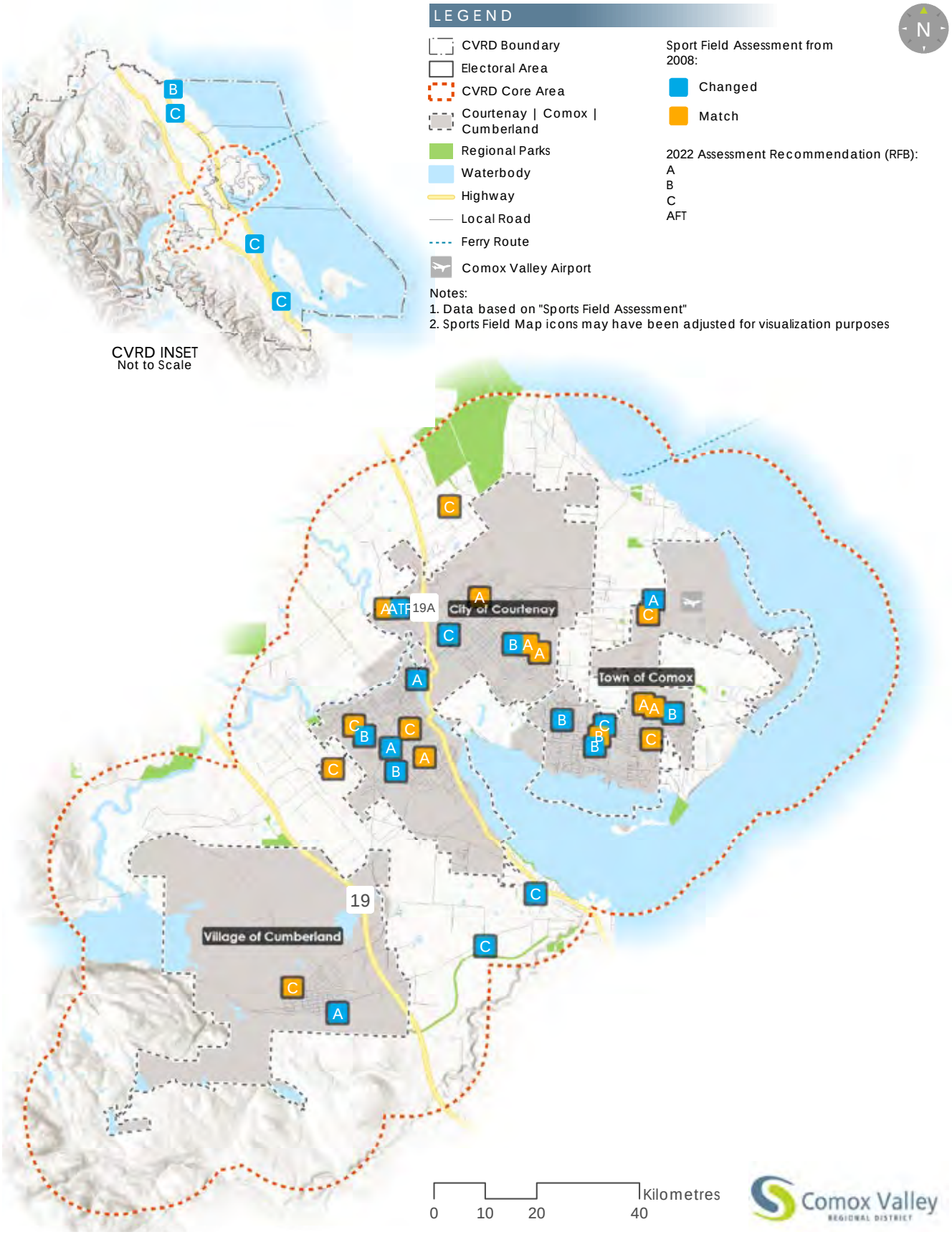
The review of field classifications used Sports Turf Canada guidelines – a best practice used across the recreation and sport sector. The following table summarizes how the current sport field inventory, as assessed during the summer of 2022, aligns with the previous 2008 assessment and classification.

**Note: ball diamonds were visited to get a general sense of condition and characteristics are not included in this table.*

Table 2: Classification and Condition Summary

Class	2008 Assessed Inventory Count	2022 Assessed Inventory Count	Change (+/-)	Average Condition Score
ATF	0	1	+1	N/A
A	12	16	+4	12.56
B	6	9	+3	11.89
C	13	18	+5	7.94
C+	3	0	-3	N/A
No Rating 2008	2	N/A	N/A	N/A

Summary Map: Comparison to 2008 Inventory and Assessment



Recommended actions pertaining to specific fields (where applicable) are provided in Section 8 and the detailed scoring values for each field are provided in the Appendices.

Provided are general, system wide observations form the on-site inventory and assessments.

General Maintenance and Field Grading

- Municipal parks were generally well maintained. Most are at an "A" level field, providing a good surface for most typical activities.
- School fields were often in worse shape than adjacent parks. There is also appears to be a wider variance in the maintenance levels and quality of fields at school sites.
- Irrigation was consistent throughout the sport field inventory (estimated that 60% of fields have irrigation). This characteristic will help the inventory be resilient through climate change.
- Drainage characteristics impact the ability of some fields to provide winter usability. For example, Lewis Park is located in a flood catchment area which retains water during the rainy months.

Amenities & Experiential Features

- Available washrooms are not commonly found at sport field sites (only 10 sites had dedicated washrooms; 9 including Black Creek Community Hall is not included) and, when in existence, often requires groups to request them to be opened. This finding is not in alignment with trends and leading practices.
- Dedicated parking is rare at sport field sites and, perceptually, fields can be located a fair distance from parking. This factor likely results in significant parking challenges and frustrations during peak times and seasons of use.
- Signage or mapping could be improved at many sport field sites. Courtenay has schematic maps available at most sites, which are very helpful.
- A relatively small number of field sites (4) have lighting. This characteristics limits capacity during spring, fall and winter months.

Section 3.0

Engagement Findings

Included in this section:

- Key findings and themes from the stakeholder and rights holder discussions.
- Key findings from the Field Use Survey.

Stakeholder Discussions

Seven discussion sessions were convened with sport field user groups in order to better understand their perspectives on the current inventory, future needs, and opportunities to optimize the sport field situation in the CVRD. The following table summarizes the groups that participated in each session.

Table 3: Participating User Groups

Session	Participating Groups
Session #1	• Comox Valley Minor Baseball
Session #2	• Comox Valley Raider Football • Comox Valley Kickers Rugby
Session #3	• Comox Valley United Soccer
Session #4	• Comox Valley Sports & Social Club
Session #5	• Komox Men's Real Baseball League • Parksville Royal Baseball
Session #6	• Comox Valley Field Hockey
Session #7	• Comox Valley Road Runners • Cougars Track Club • Comox Valley Pickleball Club

While wide ranging viewpoints were shared during the discussions, a number of consistent themes and points of interest emerged and are summarized as follows.

Overall Perspectives on Field Quality and Needs

- Groups indicated that there is a shortage of field space and this situation impacts groups' ability to grow. In general, there is a belief that more fields and diamonds are needed.
- For groups interested in having more access to artificial turf field surfaces, uniform condition (always available with the same surface condition), and not weather concerns were the primary driver of this demand.
- Condition and maintenance of fields / diamonds is not uniform throughout the CVRD – different entities manage the field inventory and there is a need for greater consistency and quality.
- Some fields have poor drainage which limits their use for large portions of the year.
- Groups reflected a clear preference for sport field "hubs" (multiple fields/diamonds on the same site). The benefits of these hubs expressed by groups include a better ability to facilitate tournament play, atmosphere, and minimizing driving for parents, participants and volunteers.
- Several groups mentioned a willingness to contribute resources (financial and non) to help realize the development of a second artificial turf surface if there organization could be guaranteed sufficient and suitable time access.

Perspectives on Allocations and Bookings

- Some groups expressed challenges dealing with separate entities for bookings and allocations, noting that there are multiple contacts and different processes.
- Concerns about the enforcement of rules / processes were expressed.
- There is a perspective among some stakeholders that large groups dominate sport field discussions and receive priority allocations over smaller groups.
- It was suggested that the CVRD and its partners re-examine or develop a model based around standards of play – these may limit use (e.g. how much field time should younger children really have?).
- Differing thoughts exist about whether larger financial contributions to facility development should align with greater allocation (quantity and priority).

Desired Amenity Improvements

- There is a desire for greater access to washroom facilities at outdoor fields / diamonds.
- Additional group storage is also strongly desired.
- The benefits of added lighting to more sites to extend play and add capacity to the system was expressed by some stakeholders.

Field Use Survey

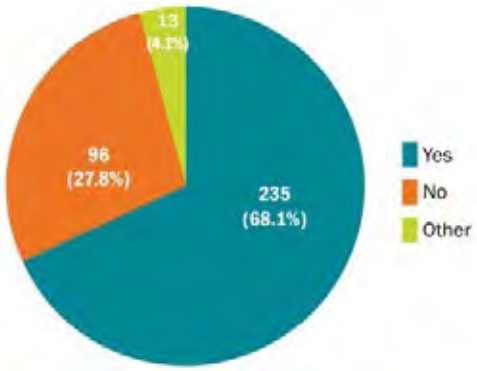
At the outset of the Strategy, the CVRD conducted a Field Use Survey in order to gauge broader perspective from the public on their use of sport fields and desired future improvements to the inventory.

The survey garnered 486 responses from residents across the CVRD.

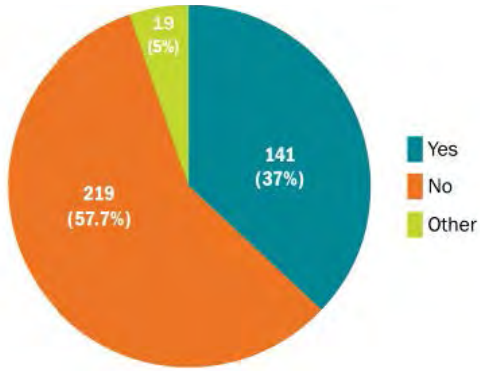
Key findings from the survey Summary Report are presented as follows. Please refer to Appendix A for the complete Summary Report document.

Key Finding: The majority of respondents generally felt that the sport field inventory meets their summer needs, but not their winter season needs. Commonly identified reasons why the sport field inventory is perceived as lacking during the winter months were field conditions and amenities (don't have enough artificial turf or lighted fields), a general lack of field time, and deficient support amenities (e.g. washrooms).

Meeting Summer Needs



Meeting Winter Needs



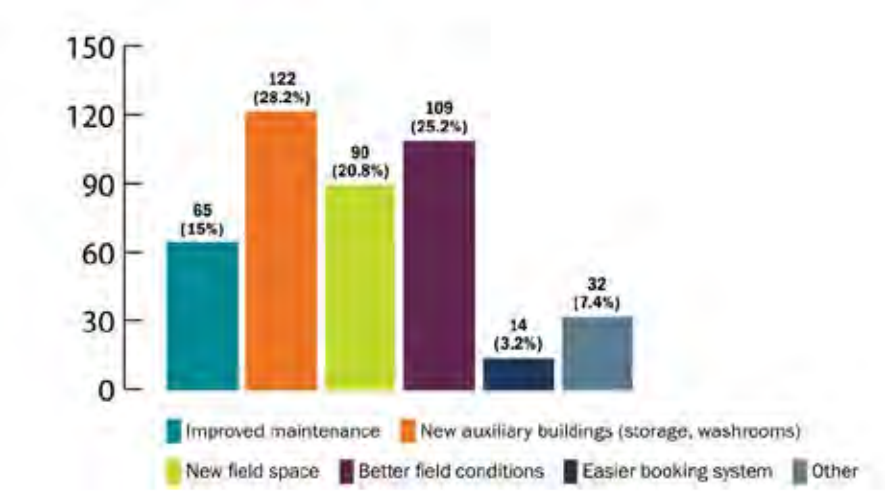
Overview of the Survey Respondents

- 63% directed to the survey by social media.
- 47% indicated that children in their households use sports fields.
- 45% indicated that adults in their household use sports fields.
- Responses by location of residency generally aligned with the population distribution of the CVRD.

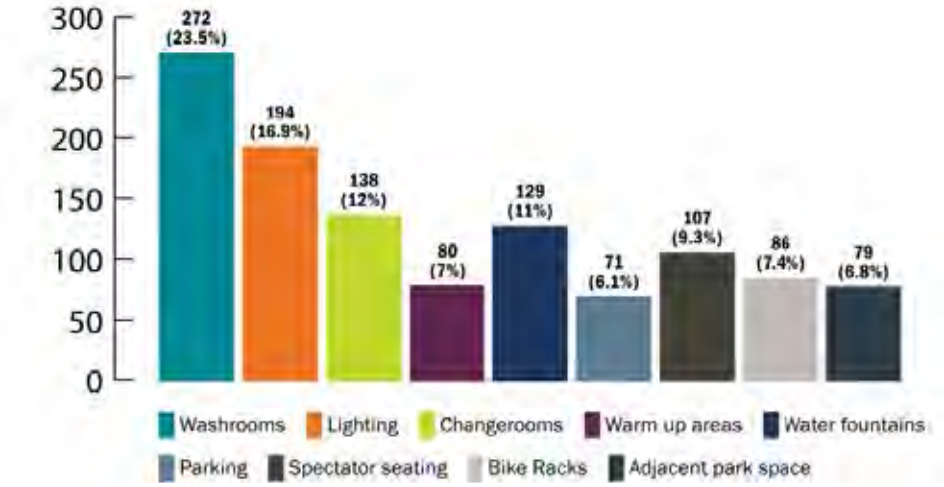
Key Finding: Most sport field sites in the CVRD are accessed by personal motor vehicle. Over two-thirds (67%) access sport field sites by car / motorized vehicle, followed by walking (17%) and cycling / scooter (14%).

Key Finding: Reflecting the previous finding, there is a strong demand for improved support amenities at sport field sites.

Desired improvements to the sport field inventory...



Would like these offered in greater supply...



Section 4.0

Utilization Data Analysis

Included in this section:

- Analysis of available utilization data.

Context on the Utilization Analysis

Sport field booking data was provided by City of Courtney, Village of Cumberland and the Town of Comox. While the data provides valuable insights into utilization of the available sport field inventory, some limitations and challenges exist which are important to note.

- Courtenay, Comox and Cumberland have different bookings and data management practices which impacts the ability to analyze the data in a completely uniform manner.
- Changes in bookings systems and the COVID-19 pandemic required some different years to be used when analyzing the data. (e.g. the City of Courtney provided booking data from 2021, while the Village of Cumberland and Town of Comox provided data from 2022.

For the purposes of this analysis, the term “sports fields” describes both rectangular fields (fields used for soccer, rugby, etc.) and ball diamonds (used for softball, slow-pitch and baseball).

Sport Field User Groups

The table below depicts the number of user groups, and the total hours booked in each community.

Table 4: Overview of User Groups and Hours Booked

Jurisdiction	# of User Groups in Each Community	Total Hours Booked
City of Courtney	18	5,625
Town of Comox	20	1,431
Village of Cumberland	3	146
Grand Total:	41*	7,202

**This is a total of the user groups in each community, but it does not mean unique groups to the area.*

Some of the user groups book sport fields in more than one community, therefore the grand total of user groups in the table above does not represent unique user groups to the area. There are 36 unique user groups in the area, which means that 5 user groups book fields in more than one community. The table below describes these user groups as Cross Community User Groups. The Cross Community User Group table indicates that those 5 user groups account for 60% of the booked hours across the three communities.

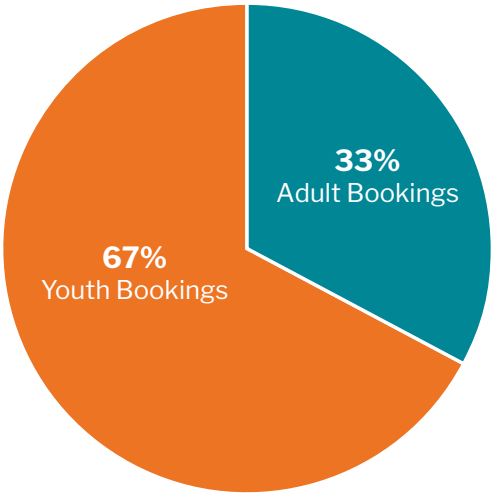
Table 5: Cross Community User Groups (groups that book fields across multiple jurisdictions within the CVRD)

Cross Community User Groups	
Total Number of User Groups	36
Number of Cross Community User Groups	5
Hours Booked by Cross Community User Groups	4,350
% of Bookings made by Cross Community User Groups	60%

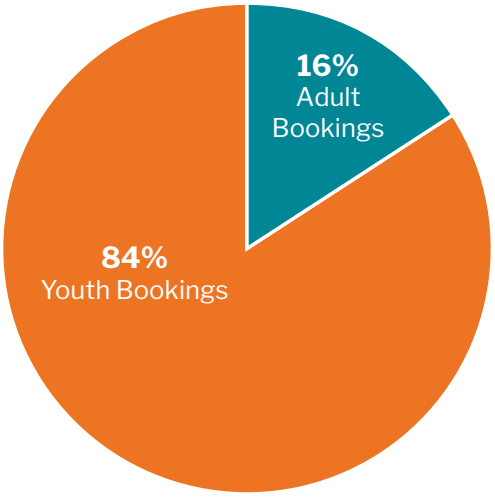
Sport Fields User Groups Age Demographics

Across all three community's user groups that typically use rectangular fields (84%) and ball diamonds (67%) are most prevalent youth serving groups.

Ball Diamonds Bookings



Rectangular Field Bookings



Utilization of Available Capacity

When trying to project forward sport field needs, it is important to estimate total use of available capacity. The table below describes the annual capacity assumption for use on each field type.

Table 6: Field Capacity Assumptions

Field Type	Annual Capacity (hrs)	Assumption
Artificial Turf	2,024	Unlike natural surface fields, capacity for artificial turf is not limited by field condition. The total annual capacity was calculated by estimating the annual weeks that play could occur on the field (46 weeks) by the number of prime hours available each week (44 hours). **Prime time hours are 4:00 PM – 8:00 PM on weekdays and 8:00 AM - 8:00 PM on weekends.*
Natural Surface Rectangular Field	600	600 hours of capacity represents an industry standard for the intensity of use a natural surface field can typically accommodate before field surface deterioration and damage is likely. **Note: a number of other factors may impact this assumption (+ of -), including the field specs (e.g. sand based fields can typically accommodate a higher level of use, drainage, level of maintenance input, etc.).*
Ball Diamond	600	600 hours of capacity represents an industry standard for the intensity of use a natural surface field can typically accommodate before field surface deterioration and damage is likely. **Note: a number of other factors may impact this assumption (+ of -), including the field specs (e.g. sand based fields can typically accommodate a higher level of use, drainage, level of maintenance input, etc.).*
Cross Over Field	900	Approximate capacity could be 1.5 x the capacity of a natural surface sport field or diamond.

The assumptions used in Table 6 were applied to the utilization data provided by the three communities. As reflected in the following tables, there generally appears to be sufficient supply within the current available inventory. **However, it is important to note that there is a large discrepancy in the intensity of bookings on a field-by-field basis and time of year. Booked hours reflected in the table do not include daytime school use of the fields (e.g. physical education programming, recess play, etc.).**

Table 7: Hours Booked at Courtney Fields in 2022 by Field Type and Month

Type of Field	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Trend Line
Artificial Turf Field	83	172	140	140	158	140	12	68	144	133	130	134	
Natural Grass Field	18	47	53	383	532	395	254	201	373	357	202	25	
Ball Diamond	0	0	13	262	446	556	743	512	263	0	0	0	
Grand Total	**101**	**219**	**206**	**784**	**1,135**	**1,090**	**1,009**	**781**	**779**	**490**	**332**	**159**	

Table 7.1: Courtney Utilization of Capacity by Quarter

	Artificial Turf Fields				Natural Grass Fields				Ball Diamonds			
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Booked Hours	394	437	224	397	118	1,309	827	585	13	1,263	1,517	0
Number of Fields	1	1	1	1	22	22	22	22	9	9	9	9
Hours Available	506	506	506	506	3,300	3,300	3,300	3,300	1,350	1,350	1,350	1,350
% Booked of Available Hours	78%	86%	44%	78%	4%	40%	25%	18%	1%	94%	112%	0%

**The booked hours represent the total hours booked, the available hours for artificial turf represents the amount of hours that are available at the times that are preferred and necessary for most user groups (e.g. youth sport organizations can't play late into the evening or during school hours).*

A small number of fields and diamonds during relatively small windows of time make up the majority of bookings, below are two tables that reflect the natural grass use of each field in each quarter and the use of each ball diamond in each quarter.

7.2: Courtney Utilization of Individual Fields Capacity: Natural Grass

Field Name	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Grand Total	% Booked of Annual Utilization
Arden Elementary - Soccer Field 1	0	2	0	0	2	0%
Arden Elementary - Soccer Field 2	0	2	0	0	2	0%
Arden Elementary - Soccer Fields	0	0	35	2	37	6%
Bill Moore Park - Full Field	0	0	208	282	490	82%
Courtenay Elementary - Soccer Field 1	0	2	0	0	2	0%
Courtenay Elementary - Soccer Field 2	0	2	0	0	2	0%
Courtenay Elementary - Soccer Fields	0	0	0	2	2	0%
Huband Park Elementary - Soccer Field	0	2	0	0	2	0%
Isfeld Secondary - Soccer Field Lower 2	0	158	44	4	206	34%
Isfeld Secondary - Soccer Field Upper 1	0	163	51	19	233	39%
Lake Trail Middle - Soccer Field Lower 2	0	4	0	0	4	1%
Lake Trail Middle - Soccer Field Lower 3	0	4	0	0	4	1%
Lake Trail Middle - Soccer Field Upper 1	0	0	0	2	2	0%
Lewis Park - Soccer Field 1	12	44	43	43	142	24%
Lewis Park - Soccer Field 2	4	19	15	37	75	13%
Martin Park - Soccer Field	43	30	12	4	88	15%
Puntledge Elementary - Soccer Field 1	0	4	0	2	6	1%
Puntledge Elementary - Soccer Field 2	0	4	0	2	6	1%
Queneesh Elementary - Soccer Field 1	0	106	141	0	247	41%
Queneesh Elementary - Soccer Field 2	0	104	57	0	161	27%
Valley View - Soccer Field 1	12	65	19	45	140	23%
Valley View - Soccer Field 2	12	108	42	77	238	40%
Valley View - Soccer Field 3	0	103	6	6	115	19%
Vanier - Rugby Field	4	0	15	2	21	4%
Vanier - Soccer Field 1	6	70	36	12	123	20%
Vanier - Soccer Field 2	16	46	36	12	110	18%
Woodcote Park - Full Field	10	272	69	35	386	64%
Grand Total	**118**	**1,309**	**827**	**585**	**2,838**	**22%**

7.2: Courtney Utilization of Individual Fields Capacity: Natural Grass

Ball Diamonds	Q1	Q2	Q3	Grand Total	% Booked of Annual Utilization
Bill Moore Park - Ball Diamond 1	4	237	105	346	58%
Bill Moore Park - Ball Diamond 2	0	397	116	513	86%
Lewis Park - Ball Diamond 1	2	107	317	425	71%
Lewis Park - Ball Diamond 2	5	188	300	492	82%
Lewis Park - Ball Diamond 3	0	46	241	287	48%
Martin Park - Baseball Diamond	0	112	188	300	50%
Valley View - Ball Diamond 1	0	28	73	101	17%
Valley View - Ball Diamond 2	0	78	85	162	27%
Valley View - Ball Diamond 3	2	72	94	168	28%
Grand Total	**13**	**1,263**	**1,517**	**2,794**	**52%**

Overall field utilization indicators for Comox and Cumberland are summarized by the following tables.

Table 8: Comox Utilization of Capacity

2022	Natural Grass Rectangular Fields	Ball Diamonds
Hours Booked	412	1,018
Number of Fields	9	5
Hours Available	5,400	3,000
% Booked of Available Hours	8%	34%

Table 9: Cumberland Utilization of Capacity

2022	Natural Grass Rectangular Fields	Ball Diamonds
Total Hours Booked	403	32
Number of Fields	1	1
Total Hours Available	600	600
% Booked of Available Hours	67%	5%

Table 10 summarizes overall field utilization across the three communities.

Table 10: Summary of Overall Utilization of Available Capacity

Field Type	Total Hours Booked	Percentage Booked of Capacity
Natural Grass Rectangular Field	3,340	21%
Artificial Turf Field (Rectangular)	1,085	54%
Ball Diamonds	2,280	27%

**An assumption was made that the City of Courtney Sport Field 2021 bookings are similar enough to their 2022 bookings to be compiled for a cross community analysis.*

Key Take-Away's – Utilization Analysis

- The user groups that are consuming the most total hours are booking fields across multiple communities.
- While field time may be limited during some very specific peak times and seasons, available data indicates that a fair amount of capacity exists within the overall inventory.
- A relatively small number of fields within the inventory receive the concentration of bookings.
- Opportunities exist to enhance utilization data collection, management, and consistency across the three communities.

Section 5.0

Key Population Characteristics and Growth Indicators

Included in this section:

- Overview of key population and demographics indicators.
- Potential impacts of future growth on sport field needs.

Key Population Characteristics and Attributes

Provided as follows are pertinent population characteristics and attributes that are important to consider when planning for future sport and recreation infrastructure – including sports fields and related amenities.

Overview

In 2022, the total population of the Comox Valley is estimated to be about 73,000. The most recent census results, summarized in Table 11, show that the three urban areas and the K'ómoks First Nation reserve constitute about 66% of the total regional population, while the three Electoral Areas make up the remaining 34%.

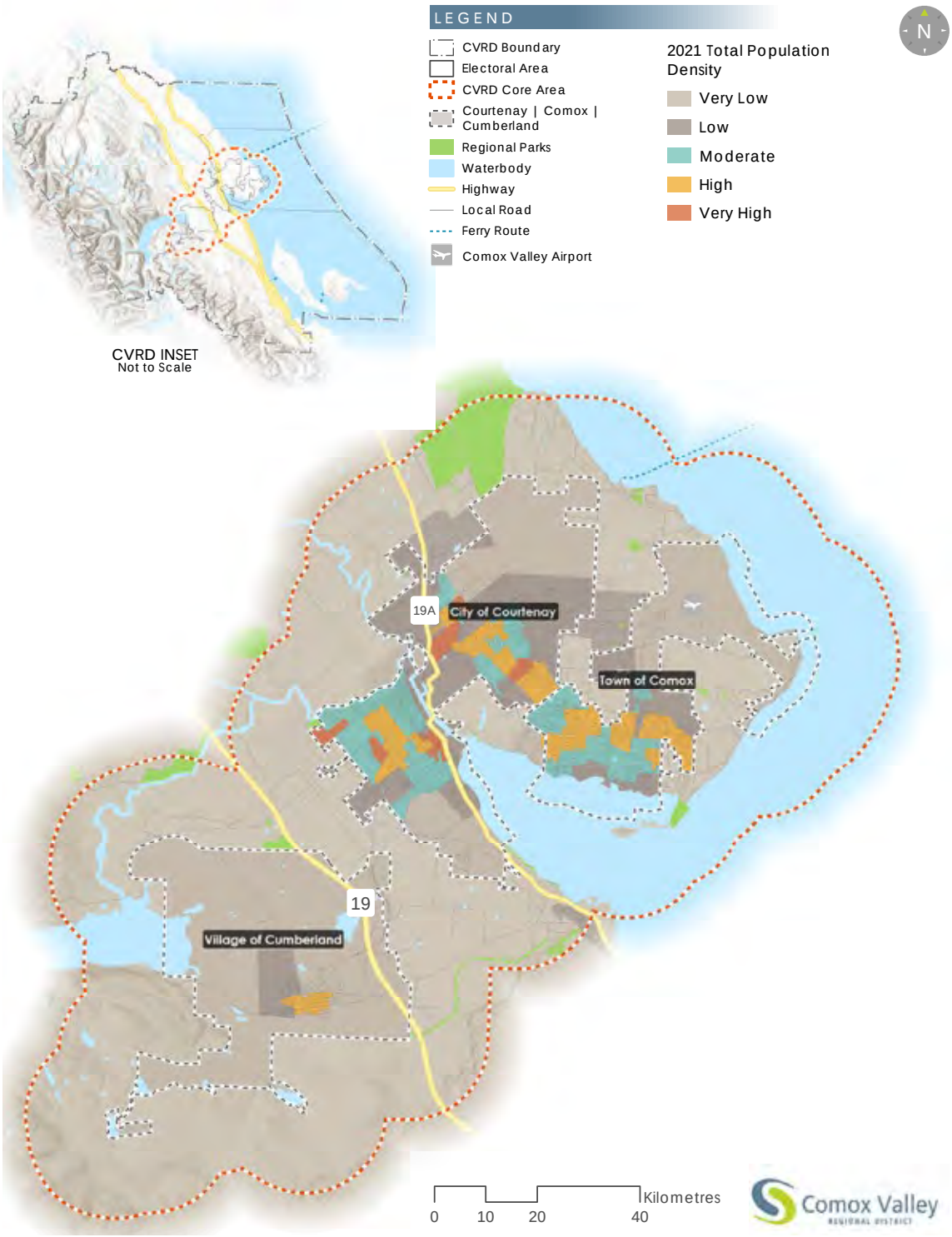
Table 11: Population Summary in 2021 Census

Jurisdiction	Population in 2016	Population in 2021	Increase
Courtenay	25,639	28,420	10.8%
Comox	14,028	14,806	5.5%
Cumberland	3753	4447	18.5%
K'ómoks First Nation	222	291	31.1%
Electoral Area A	7,213	7,926	9.9%
Electoral Area B	7,095	7,392	4.2%
Electoral Area C	8,617	9,158	6.8%
Totals	66,567	72,440	8.9%

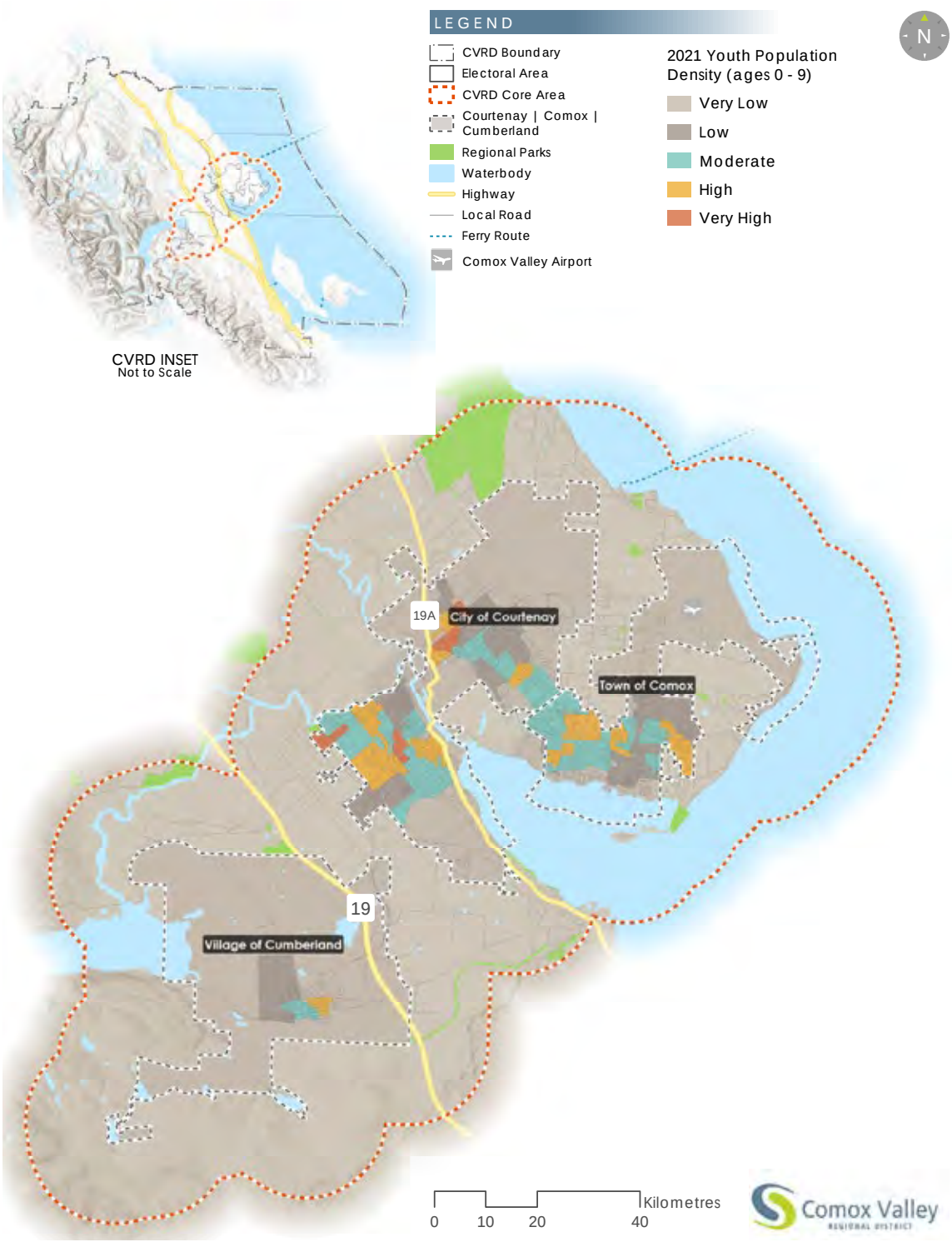
As reflected in Table 11, the Courtenay, K'ómoks First Nation and Electoral Area A are growing faster than the average while Electoral Areas B and C and Comox are growing more slowly.

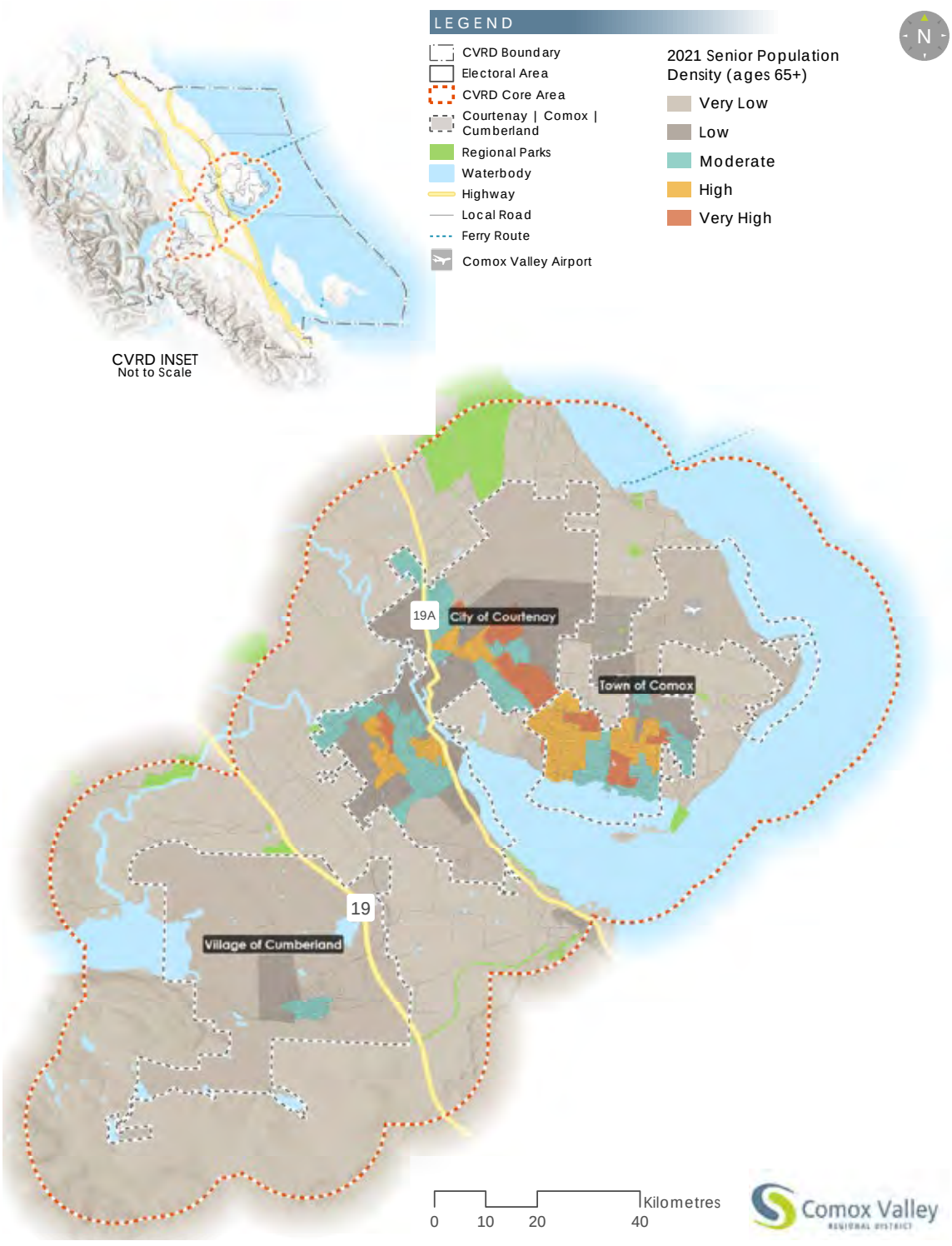
Key Characteristics

As with most regional districts on Vancouver Island, population density varies significantly with some emerging higher density development, suburban residential areas, and rural or “country residential” style development. As previously noted, the current sport field inventory is generally well dispersed throughout the CVRD.

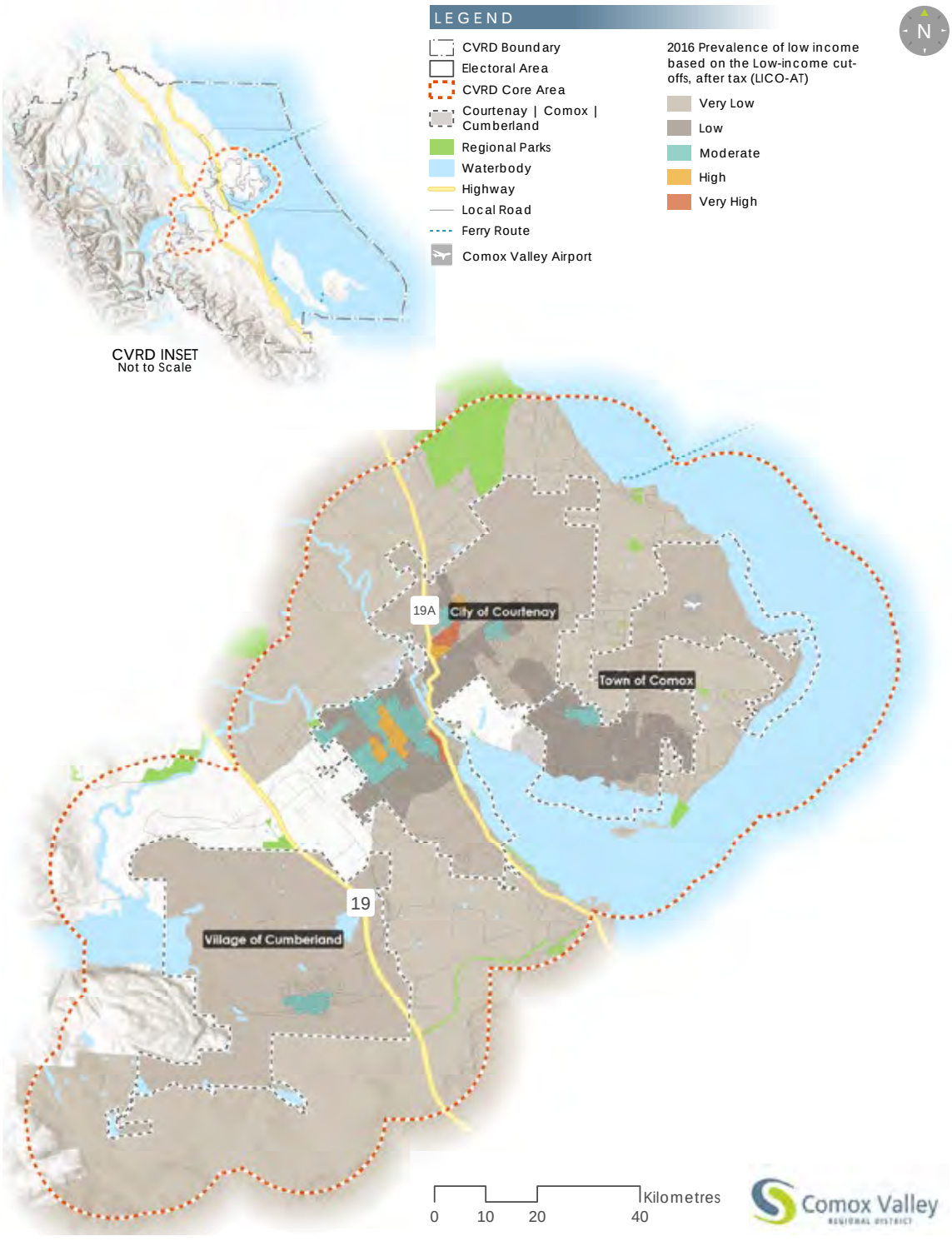


As reflected by the following two maps, youth population density is concentrated in a handful of neighbourhoods while older adults populations tend to be more dispersed throughout the study area.




LEGEND
CVRD Boundary
Electoral Area
CVRD Core Area
Courtenay | Comox | Cumberland
Regional Parks
Waterbody
Highway
Local Road
Ferry Route
Comox Valley Airport
2021 Senior Population Density (ages 65+)
Very Low
Low
Moderate
High
Very High
N
CVRD INSET
Not to Scale
19A
City of Courtenay
Town of Comox
19
Village of Cumberland
0
10
20
40
Kilometres
Comox Valley

The following map reflects areas within the CVRD that have a higher prevalence of residents that meet the Low Income Cut-Offs After Tax (LICO - AT) – a Statistics Canada designation for individuals living in very low income conditions. Notably, there is some overlap between areas with high concentrations of youth and a higher prevalence of residents that meet LICO-AT.



Projecting the Impacts of Growth

As reflected by Table 12, the population of the CVRD is anticipated to grow to between 85,000 – 90,000 residents over the next decade and exceed 95,000 residents by 2040.

Table 12: Population Projections

Source	Project Population Growth
Comox Valley Regional Growth Strategy (2010)	88,500 (by 2030)
Province of British Columbia - BC Stats, Population Estimates & Projections (2022)	85,404 (by 2030) 95,748 (by 2040)

Based on the current and projected population, it is reasonable to assume that the CVRD and its partners will need to provide sport field infrastructure for up to approximately 15,000 additional residents over the next 10-15 years. The most logical way to project the future field infrastructure needs of organized user groups is to extrapolate growth into the number of teams that will need to be accommodated by the sport field inventory. It is important to note that this methodology assumes that while specific sport field interests may change, overall participation levels will stay relatively similar (a reasonable assumption based on historical data). The following table reflects some basic assumptions that are used to undertake this calculation.

Table 13: Future Field Need Assumptions

Participation rate in organized field sport activities	10%*
Number of new residents participating in organized field sports **Based on 15,000 new residents and the above noted participation rate*	1,500
Average number of participants per team **Not all program participants attend every practice or game*	15
Number of new teams based on population growth	125
Hours required per team, per week **Reflects 1.5 hour for practice unique to the team, and 2 hours minus a 50% reduction for game time shared with another team*	2.5
Average weeks in a season per program (2.5 months)	10

**Provincial and national data on participation rates in organized field sports vary significantly. 10% is used as a conservative assumption that reflects a general middle point between the various sources of participation data.*

Based on the assumption in Table 13, the sport field inventory in the CVRD may need to accommodate up to 2,500 incremental hours within the next 10-15 years. It is important to reiterate that this analysis is high level and may require revisiting once better local and regional participation rates data is available. For additional context, 2,500 hours is generally equivalent to 1 artificial turf field or 4 natural surface fields.

Table 14: Potential Sport Field Supply Needs to Accommodate Growth

Current Hours Booked (based on available data)	6,705 hrs
Estimated Incremental Hours Required (based on assumptions)	2,500 hrs
Total Estimated Hours Required to Accommodate 15,000 Population Growth	9,205 hrs

It is important to note that the previous calculations do not account for spontaneous / unstructured participation or programs during school hours. Section 8 provides additional guidance on how the sport field inventory in the CVRD can accommodate future growth.

Future, long-term participation trends are challenging to predict and may also impact future capacity needs. Unlike other programs, sport field activity participation at a provincial and national level has remained relatively consistent in lockstep with population growth, possibly due to factors like relative affordability and the diversity of field sports that can use rectangular sport field infrastructure.

Section 6.0

Trends and Leading Practices

Included in this section:

- Summary of key trends and leading practices.

Recreation and sport activities, preferences and community needs are dynamic and require public service providers of these opportunities to remain current on trends and leading practices. Summarized in the following table are key sport field trends and leading practices.

Table 15: Trends and Leading Practices Summary

Trend / Leading Practices	
Shifting allocations away from historically based practices to those that consider equity and development best practices (e.g. Sport for Life and Long Term Development).	• Recognition that historical allocations and bookings practices embed inequality. • Requirement for sport groups to align with their National Sport Organization's (NSO) Long Term Development model. • Movement in sport towards physical literacy and fundamental skill development.
Increasing provision of artificial turf.	• Need to make efficient use of scarce land supply (artificial turf fields can accommodate 3-5 times the level of use intensity as natural surfaces). • Increasing user and user group expectations for surface quality. • Climate change considerations (preserving water supply, variable weather patterns, etc.).
Emergence and growth of activities like cricket, ultimate, and Kabaddi in communities of all sizes.	• Increasing diversification and transient nature of society. • Diversifying sport and recreation interests. • Increased societal willingness to try new activities.
Spontaneous and unstructured recreation and sport demand.	• Increasing desire for low commitment activity options. • Cost of organized sport.
Demand for multi-field sites and preference for this infrastructure over stand-alone fields.	• User expectations for support amenities like washrooms, seating areas, and concessions. • Perceptions over enhanced convenience and user experience. • Effective use of limited land resources.

Section 7.0

Benchmarking

Included in this section:

- Comparative analysis of sport field provision in the CVRD with other jurisdictions.

Table 14 provides an overview of sport field provision within the CVRD relative to other comparator communities. The comparator communities were selected to reflect a range of different jurisdictions, including regional districts and small to medium sized urban centres. This benchmarking comparison suggests that the provision of rectangular natural surface sports fields and ball diamonds in the CVRD is better than the comparators, while the provision of artificial surface sports fields is lower.

The Importance of Considering the Benchmarking Data in the Right Context

While infrastructure provision benchmarking provides interesting insights that are worthwhile to consider along with the other research and engagement inputs, it is also important to note a number of limitations with benchmarking:

- The benchmarking data is simply a count of the infrastructure unit and does not take into account the quality and functionality of the inventory in the various comparator communities.
- Municipalities and regional districts count their inventory in different ways. The inventory reflected in the table for the comparator communities are those fields that are considered within the booking system for each jurisdiction. ***In some of the jurisdictions this includes all school fields, while in others it does not.***
- Further to the above bullet, the collection of benchmarking data is a secondary research exercise that relies on municipal and regional district websites, master plan and study documents, and use of the consulting team's files and contacts. While the communities selected for the benchmarking reflect those for which relatively accurate data is available, some margin of error likely exists (especially for a high volume amenity type like sport fields).

Table 16: Benchmarking Summary

Community / Region	Rectangular Sports Field - Natural Surface	Artificial Surface Sports Fields	Ball Diamonds
Chilliwack	1: 4,660 (20 fields)	1: 31,068 (3 fields)	1: 2,589 (36 diamonds)
Cowichan Valley Reginal District	1: 7,418 (12 fields)	1: 29,671 (3 fields)	1: 2,782 (32 diamonds)
Langley (Township)	1: 2,174 (61 fields)	1: 18,943 (7 fields)	1:1,768 (75 diamonds)
Mission	1: 2,966 (14 fields)	1: 41,519 (1 field)	1: 3,194 (13 diamonds)
Nanaimo	1: 4,755 (21 fields)	1: 33,288 (3 fields)	1: 3,329 (30 diamonds)
Port Coquitlam	1: 3,844 (16 fields)	1: 30,749 (2 fields)	1: 2,674 (23 diamonds)
Port Moody	1: 3,726 (9 fields)	1: 16,768 (2 fields)	1: 2,395 (14 diamonds)
Prince George	1: 3,653 (21 fields)	1: 25,569 (3 fields)	1: 4,794 (16 diamonds)
Regional District of Nanaimo	1: 8,113 (21 fields)	-	1: 8,518 (20 diamonds)
AVERAGE	**1: 4,590 (22 fields)**	**1: 28,447 (3 fields)**	**1: 3,560 (29 diamonds)**
CVRD Total	*1: 1,685 (43 fields)*	*1: 72,445 (1 field)*	*1: 1,958 (37 diamonds)*

Section 8.0

Strategy Outcomes

Recommended future guidance is provided in this section under six overarching Strategy Outcomes. The strategic guidance provided under each Strategy Outcome is intended to optimize the sport field system, guide future projects, and help plan for projected growth.

Strategy Outcome #1: Enhance and Standardize Data Collection.

Rationale for this Direction:

- The partners involved in sport field bookings have differing practices for bookings and data management, which presents a challenge when trying to comprehensively understand regional use, participation levels, trends, and long-term needs.
- Having comprehensive and consistent utilization data can help inform future decision capital planning and operational decision making.
- A number of groups use fields across the multiple jurisdictions. Collaborative tracking of utilization will help ensure these groups are using appropriate volumes of field time.

Recognizing that sport fields are just one of a number of amenity types that have some level of multi-jurisdictional provision in the CVRD, it may be prudent for the CVRD and its partners to establish a working group that can discuss more broadly how utilization data can be collaboratively tracked and managed. This suggested action may could also be paired up with a collaborative approach to allocations (as further discussed in Strategy Outcome #4).

Strategy Outcome #2: Utilize the Refreshed Sport Field Classifications as Guideline for Operational and Capital Investment in the Sport Field Inventory.

As summarized in Section 2, the project team undertook an inventory and assessment of the sport field inventory that included a refreshed classification of the inventory using the previous 2008 assessments – *please refer to the Appendices for the detailed assessment findings.*

Based on the field assessments and evaluation of the inventory versus the previous classification, it was suggested that the development of a refreshed classification system would be helpful to provide a point of reference for both capital planning and ongoing operations. The refreshed classification system outlined in Table 17 identifies suggested, high-level field and amenity standards, maintenance input levels, and targeted use characteristics. Use of this classification system by all sport field partners in the CVRD will also help ensure consistency across the inventory and guide field enhancement and new development projects.

Table 17: Recommended Classification System

Class	Maintenance Input	Field Type and Characteristics	Amenities	Maximum Level of Permitted Use	Target Uses
Artificial Turf	As required	• Drainage system required	• Washrooms • On-site change areas • Lighting • Storage • Spectator seating	N/A (no limits to use potential)	All
A	High	• Sand based, natural surface field • Drainage and irrigation required • Full sized regulation surface	• Washrooms • On-site change areas • Lighting optional if rationalized by type of use and characteristics • Storage • Spectator seating • Diamonds are fenced	600 hours	Game play
B	Moderate	• Sand or soil based • Drainage and irrigation optimal	• *Selected Class A amenities where deemed appropriate.*	300 hours	Practices and recreational sport game play
C	Low	• Soil based • Drainage and irrigation optional	• Not required	300 hours	Practices and spontaneous / unstructured use

Strategy Outcome #3: Target Capital Investment in Sport Field Infrastructure Towards a Focus on Maximizing the Quality of Sport Field Infrastructure and Adding Functional Capacity.

As per the analysis in Section 5, it is reasonable to anticipate based on expected population growth that the CVRD and its partners may need to accommodate approximately 2,500 incremental hours of sport field demand over the next 10-15 years. While sport field user groups and public survey respondents expressed concerns over a lack of available capacity, the analysis of utilization data suggests that there is sufficient capacity within the system to accommodate growth. **These divergent findings from the research and analysis suggest that available resources should be focused primarily on improving the quality, functionality and experiential aspects of current sport field sites.**

Provided as follows are suggested priorities for sport field investment over the next 10-15 years. **It is important to note that the majority of sites identified for future investment are owned by School District 71 and future capital works on these sites would require District input, approval and potential partnership.**

Focus Area: Artificial Turf

Providing a second artificial turf surface through the retrofit of an existing natural surface field is the most efficient and effective approach to addressing user group needs, meeting future growth, and optimizing use of available sport field land resources. While the current artificial turf field is not being used to capacity, benchmarking and trends provide additional justification for developing a second artificial turf surface based on the following rationale:

- Multi-use capability / functionality
- Ability to provide increased shoulder and winter season capacity
- Maintenance and operational efficiencies

Site assessments were conducted on existing sport field sites across the CVRD to determine artificial turf suitability. This analysis aimed at identifying sites that are most suitable based on a number of key attributes, including:

- Existing site infrastructure (e.g. lighting infrastructure, support amenities and complementary indoor spaces / facilities)
- Site adjacencies (e.g. surrounding neighbourhood characteristics)
- Access and parking
- Other observed characteristics (e.g. drainage and surfacing)

Three sites were identified as being most suitable with each site having advantages and disadvantages. Table 18 provides a high level overview of the key characteristics and future considerations for the three sites.

Table 18: Summary of Potential Artificial Turf Sites

Site	Considerations
Bill Moore Park	• The site has a large footprint to work with which will support amenity provision and provide flexibility. • Lighting infrastructure exists, however it is configured for ball and would need to be adapted. • Observed site conditions suggest this option may incur additional costs to improve drainage and grading.
G.P. Vanier Secondary School	• 2 fields on the site are deemed viable – Field #1 (NE field) and Field #2 (field with the existing track) • Field #1 (NE field) is the suggested option as retrofitting Field #2 would impact the track and require relocation of the athletics amenities. • Developing a second artificial turf surface on the site presents the opportunity to create a multi-synthetic field hub that will support tournament and event hosting. • Pre-existing amenities provide an opportunity for some cost savings.
Highland Park	• Opportunity to provide a synthetic turf field in a different geographic area. • There is not currently lighting on the site. • Additional site improvements for parking/drop off may be required because the field site is relatively far from the school lot and Torrence Road.

Mark R. Isfeld Secondary has previously been identified as a desired location for a second artificial turf surface. While this site and a number of other sites in the community could technically be retrofitted to artificial turf, a number of challenges were noted that resulted in it not being identified as a highly suitable location.

- The location of field has numerous access point and flow challenges.
- The field is tucked away behind the school with minimal viewing and vantage points, presenting a high level of amenity vandalism risks.
- Lighting infrastructure does not exist and would need to be added.

Potential Capital Cost Impacts

$4,000,000 - $5,000,000 is a typical cost range for an artificial turf retrofit project, which generally includes:

- A regulation field size
- Standard field shockpad, surface, and infill
- Lighting
- Basic complement of support infrastructure (washrooms)

Before proceeding with the development of any site, further technical analysis should be undertaken as a number of factors can significantly impact cost, including:

- Geotechnical condition
- Atypical lighting requirements (e.g. location of existing power source, upgrades required, site limitations, mitigation of light pollution, etc.).
- Water run-off mitigation requirement

Conceptual Test Fit: Highland Park

Conceptual Test Fit: Bill Moore Park (Option 1)

Conceptual Test Fit: Bill Moore Park (Option 2)

Conceptual Test Fit: G.P. Vanier Park

Recommended Next Steps

The CVRD and its partners should undertake feasibility analysis to further explore:

- Technical condition of the suggested candidate site(s)
- Detailed capital cost analysis on a preferred site(s)
- Partnership and operating approaches
- Site program options – including the type of field surface required and support amenity requirements

It is also suggested that any future investment in a synthetic turf field be undertaken with access equity as a primary consideration. While large user groups may have fundraising and resource capacity to contribute, these considerations should not be deemed more important than providing an artificial turf surface that can provide broad based community benefits.

Feasibility analysis should also explore potential reasons why utilization of the existing artificial turf field has not been maximized and whether this factor is due to how time is currently allocated or other factors (e.g. market characteristics, user group barriers to use, etc.).

Other Capital Projects to Optimize the Current Inventory

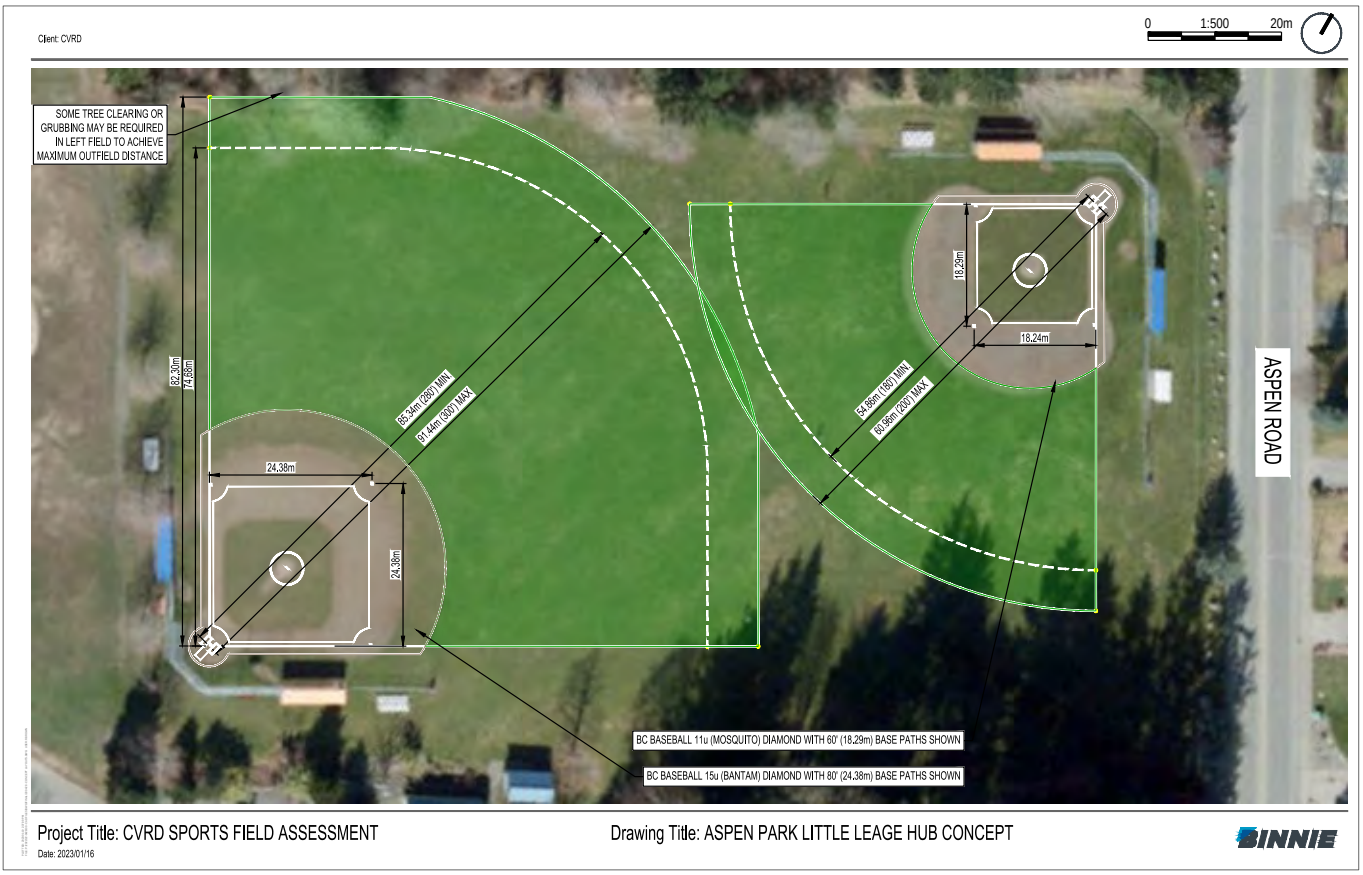
Based on the research and engagement, a number of other priorities for capital investment have been identified. These projects advance the overarching recommendation goal of optimizing the current sport field inventory through focused investment where it can be most beneficial.

Table 19: Summary of Other Recommended Capital Investment Focus Areas

Project	Rationale and Benefits	Next Steps	Potential Capital Cost Impacts*
Add washroom and/or changeroom structures to 2 – 4 field sites over the next 10 years	• Improves user experience. • Responds to key needs identified through the engagement.	• Identify project sites based on use (current use and opportunities to increase use). • Undertake the necessary design and cost analysis.	$150,000 - $750,000
Add lighting to 2 – 4 field sites over the next 10 years if capacity benefits can be sufficiently demonstrated.	• Increases evening capacity, making better use of existing assets. ***Before proceeding with the addition of lighting to a site, further analysis should be conducted to ensure that the capacity benefits warrant the capital expenditure, and, that additional capacity will not result in overuse of a grass surface field.***	• Identify project sites based on use (current use and opportunities to increase use). • Undertake the necessary design and cost analysis.	$60,000 - $80,000 per pole, plus servicing ($100,000 - $200,000)
Develop a baseball hub site	• Responds to a potential field type gap. • Provides baseball with enhanced infrastructure that can support growth and tournament hosting.	• Further evaluate the suitability of Aspen Park and Queenesh Park (these two sites have been preliminarily identified as potential locations for a baseball hub).	$500,000 (field only; not including amenities)

**High level cost estimates. These amenities have a high degree of variability.*

Conceptual Test Fit: Aspen Park



Conceptual Test Fit: Queenesh Elementary School

Initiate Planning for a Multi-Field Hub

The CVRD and its partners should begin the process of massing land for a major multi-sport hub site. While the development of this site is likely not needed for at least 10-15 years based on current demand and the need to focus available resources on enhancing existing sport field sites, initiating planning now is prudent and will help position the region to accommodate future growth.

The advantages of initiating planning in the near term for a future site are numerous and include:

- The potential to address potential tournaments hosting gaps.
- Aligning with identified user needs and preferences for multi-field venues with a high provision of support amenities.
- The flexibility to potentially consolidate the sport field inventory (e.g. repurposing underutilized, stand-alone fields for higher value recreation and leisure uses).
- The flexibility to meet future, unknown (or unclear) needs for new and emerging types of sport field activities that may be challenging to accommodate at existing sites.

While amassing land for this site through the development process and/or purchase should begin in the short term, feasibility analysis and business planning is not required for at least 5-10 years.

Establish a Clear Process and Pre-Requisites for Investment in New Types of Field Infrastructure

Providing infrastructure to support emerging activities is important and reflects a commitment towards providing diverse and inclusive infrastructure. However, investment in infrastructure to support these activities needs to be rationalized and make prudent use of public resources. Outlined as follows is a recommended process for the CVRD and its partners to follow when community demand comes forward for investment in new types of sport field infrastructure.

Step 1: Needs Assessment

- CVRD and/or municipal staff to develop a report that identifies:
  - Local, regional and provincial trends
  - Indicators of demand for recent engagement
  - Overview of current efforts undertaken to support the activity
- Community group to provide an overview of current participation numbers and preliminary rationale for why incremental facility investment is needed.

Step 2: Feasibility Analysis

If indication of need is sufficiently demonstrated in Step 1

- CVRD and/or municipalities to support a feasibility study (using internal or external expertise) that identified:
  - Potential site options and capital costs
  - Operating impacts
  - Partnership and management options and considerations
  - Cost-benefit analysis
- CVRD and/or municipalities to work with the interested group to establish pre-requisites or targets that need to be achieved before investment moves forward. These pre-requisites / targets could include:
  - Participation numbers
  - Sustainability plan
  - Fundraising targets

Step 3: Development

If All Step 2 requirements are fulfilled

- This step would involve design, vendor procurement, further business planning (if necessary), partnership / lease / maintenance agreements (if necessary), and other aspects required to support development and operations.

Strategy Outcome #4: Develop a New Approach for Sport Field Bookings and Allocations Based Around Clear Standards of Play.

Allocating based on need and achieving public benefit reflects a commitment to equity and making the best use of available recreation infrastructure. Best practice guidance from Sport for Life recommends that publicly provided recreation assets be allocated based on clear rationale that supports physical literacy and Long Term Development (LTD) principles.

As a next step emanating from the Strategy, the CVRD and project partners should establish standards of play that are based around the following core principles.

1. Alignment with Sport for Life's Long Term Development Model (LTD). *Every sanctioned National Sport Organization in Canada is required to have an LTD plan that is followed at the provincial and local levels.
2. Commitment to appropriate and efficient use of field time (e.g. booking only the time that is needed, sharing time with other groups, etc.).
3. Using the right fields at the right times (aligning programs with the appropriate class of field).

It is also important to note that currently not all sport field user groups pay to access field time for practices and games. The refreshed allocation approach should also look at user fees and consider the following:

- Having a clear, transparent and equitable rationale for what groups pay to access field time.
- The impacts of fees on "field hoarding".
- The cost to provide fields and support amenities (including capital reserve and lifecycle needs for specialty and high value fields).

Example Standards of Play

National Sport Organizations (NSO's) in Canada are required to have Long Term Development (LTD) plans that provide provincial and local organizations with guidance on appropriate sport development. While the various NSO's have differing levels of detail within their LTD plans as it pertains to practice and game duration, these important documents can be used to develop local standards of play that can guide allocations

Example: Soccer Canada Grassroots LTD Standards

CANADA SOCCER GRASSROOTS STANDARDS

	ACTIVE START	FUNDAMENTALS		LEARN TO TRAIN	
CRITERIA	**U5-U6**	**U7**	**U8-U9**	**U10-U11**	**U12-U13**
Match format (maximum)	No formal matches	3v3	4v4 (no GK) or 5v5 (with GK)	7v7	9v9 (U12) 9v9 or 11v11 (U13)
Coaching qualification	Active Start + MED + RiS + Making Headway + EAP	Fundamentals + MED + RiS + Making Headway + EAP	Fundamentals + MED + RiS + Making Headway + EAP	Learn to Train + MED + RiS + Making Headway + EAP	Learn to Train + MED + RiS + Making Headway + EAP
Maximum match duration	Informal play	30 minutes	40 minutes	50 minutes	70 minutes (U12) 80 minutes (U13)
Maximum match time per player per day	N/A	60 minutes	60 minutes	80 minutes	100 minutes
Minimum rest time between matches	N/A	Duration of one (1) match	Duration of one (1) match	Duration of one (1) match	Duration of one (1) match
Maximum goal size	Pop-up goals 3ft (0.91m) x 5ft (1.52m)	Pop-up goals 3ft (0.91m) x 5ft (1.52m)	5ft (1.52m) x 8ft (2.44m)	6ft (1.83m) x 16ft (4.88m)	6ft (1.83m) x 18ft (5.49m)
Field size	N/A	**Width:** 18-22m **Length:** 25-30m	**Width:** 25-30m **Length:** 30-36m	**Width:** 30-36m **Length:** 40-55m	**9v9 Width:** 42-55m **Length:** 60-75m **11v11 Width:** 45-90m **Length:** 90-120m
Ball size	3	3	3 or 4 (or 4 super light)	4 (or 5 light)	9v9: 4 (or 5 light) 11v11: 5 (or 5 light)
Number of memorable events (maximum)	N/A	N/A	Two (2) per year	Two (2) per year	Four (4) per year **One (1) event may be overseas*
Referee or Game Leader	N/A	Game Leader	Game Leader or Referee	Game Leader or Referee	Referee
Restarts from Sidelines	N/A	Pass in or dribble in	Pass in or dribble in	Pass in or dribble in	Throw-in

CANADA SOCCER GRASSROOTS STANDARDS

	ACTIVE START	FUNDAMENTALS		LEARN TO TRAIN	
CRITERIA	**U5-U6**	**U7**	**U8-U9**	**U10-U11**	**U12-U13**
Offside	N/A	N/A	No	No	Yes
Retreat line	N/A	Yes (halfway line)	Yes (halfway line)	Yes (one third)	Optional (one third)
Substitutions	N/A	Unlimited (any stoppage or on the fly)	Unlimited (any stoppage or on the fly)	Unlimited (any stoppage)	Unlimited (any stoppage)
Season or block length (indoor/outdoor)	6-16 weeks	6-16 weeks	6-22 weeks	10-22 weeks	10-22 weeks
Team travel time	Within organization	Under 60 minutes each way	Under 60 minutes each way	Under 60 minutes each way	Under 60 minutes each way
Playing time (players encouraged to try all positions)	Players all play	Fair playing time for all players	Fair playing time for all players	Fair playing time for all players	Fair playing time for all players
Player-to-coach ratio	**Ideal:** 4:1 **Maximum:** 8:1	**Ideal:** 6:1 **Maximum:** 8:1	**Ideal:** 8:1 **Maximum:** 10:1 **(5v5)**	**Ideal:** 10:1 **Maximum:** 12:1	**9v9 Ideal:** 12:1 **Maximum:** 16:1 **11v11 Ideal:** 16:1 **Maximum:** 18:1
Practice-to-match ratio	N/A	1:1	1:1 or 2:1	2:1 or 3:1	2:1 or 3:1
Structured practice duration	30-45 minutes	30-45 minutes	45-60 minutes	60-75 minutes	60-75 minutes
Match day roster guidelines (game day only)	N/A	**Ideal:** 6 players	**Ideal:** 8 players	**Ideal:** 10 players	**9v9 Ideal:** 14 players **11v11 Ideal:** 16 players
Match day format	N/A	Festival format	Festival format	Festival format	Festival or league format
Number of match days (Festival or league play) per week	N/A	One (1)	One (1)	One (1)	One (1)

The following tables further reflect an example of how NSO standards of play can be translated into local standards of play for the purposes of field allocations. This example uses the Canada Soccer's Grassroots Standards as a guideline, however it is important to note that a significant amount of flexibility exists within these guidelines and therefore some assumptions need to be made for this example model (e.g. Canada Soccer's guidelines reflects duration ranges for the season of play, practice and game times and other key elements). It is recommended that the CVRD and its municipal partners work collaboratively with the sport groups to refine and test the various standard of play assumptions.

Potential Standards of Play Model Example – Grassroots Level Soccer

Table 20: Initial Calculation of Sport Field Time Needs by Age Groups

**This table utilizes Canada Soccer's LTD guidelines to generally identify hours of field time required on a per participant or per group/team basis.*

Age Group	Weeks in a Season	Average Practices per Week	Duration of Practice (minutes)	Matches per Week	Maximum Match Time per Player per Week (Minutes)	Minutes of Field Time Required per Participant (or grouping/ team of participants) per Week During the Season of Play	Minutes of Field Time Required per Participant (or grouping/ team of participants) per Season of Play	Hours of Field Time Required per Participant (or grouping/ team of participants) per Season of Play
U5-U6	10	1	45	0	0	45	450	8
U7	10	1	45	1	60	105	1,050	18
U8-U9	12	1.5	60	1	60	150	1,800	30
U10-U11	14	2	75	1	80	230	3,220	54
U12-U13	16	3	75	1.5	100	375	6,000	100

Table 21: Example Allocation Model

**This table reflects how field time needs can be extrapolated into how allocations can be determined.*

Age Group	Hours of Field Time Required per Participant (or grouping/team of participants) per Season of Play	# of Teams/ Program Groupings **Examples Purposes Only (not real #'s)*	Total Hours of Field Time Required per Age Group	Space Needs (Portion of a full size field required to meet programming needs)	Relative Allocation (hours of full size field time equivalent needed)
U5-U6	8	20	150	0.25	38
U7	18	10	175	0.25	44
U8-U9	30	10	300	0.5	150
U10-U11	54	5	268	0.5	134
U12-U13	100	5	500	1	500

Strategy Outcome #5: Advance Efforts to Actively Promote Spontaneous and Unstructured Sport Field Play.

While much attention is often given to organized, program based field use, it is important to remember that a significant proportion of sport field activity occurs in unstructured and spontaneous ways through pick-up games, individual practice, and informal small group play. The following strategies are recommended to support spontaneous and unstructured use.

- **Consider designating a handful of sport fields for non-bookable use.** These fields should be removed from the bookable inventory and promoted as always available for spontaneous use.
- **Develop messaging that encourages spontaneous play.** The CVRD and its partners can use their social media platforms and other communications channels to encourage non-program based activity on sports fields.
- **Ensure clarity around when fields are booked.** Post field bookings on municipal websites so individuals know when they can access fields.
- **Work with groups to reduce "blanket bookings".** When groups do not need field time, they should be clearly promoted and communicated as available for spontaneous use. While groups may be concerned with field quality and feel a sense of ownership of the facility, spontaneous use can be managed and in most cases is likely to have minimal impact on the field surface and amenities.

Strategy Outcome #6: Create a More Streamlined and Cohesive Sport Field System in the Region.

The CVRD, City of Courtenay, Town of Comox, Village of Cumberland and School District 71 have successfully collaborated in various ways, informally and formally, across a number of service areas. Future opportunities exist to increase and optimize collaborations in order to provide the best possible user experiences and maximize efficiency across the sport field system.

Identified as follows are suggested actions to increase collaboration and enhance overall management practices.

Suggested Action	Rationale and Benefits
Bring the Village of Cumberland in the sport field service.	• Creates a more cohesive system and better overall consistency across. • Recognizes that many groups are using fields across jurisdictional boundaries.
Shift all field bookings towards a single point of contact.	• Improves user experience and convenience. • Enables more efficient and effective data collection, management and analysis.
Wherever possible, align policy and practices pertaining to key elements of sport field service delivery like allocations and user fees.	• Creates consistent practices. • Recognizes that many groups are using fields across jurisdictional boundaries.
Encourage and support school system partners with enhancing field maintenance practices at sites that receive (or have the potential to accommodate) higher intensities of bookings.	• Makes optimal use of existing infrastructure. • Opportunity to address identified needs for higher quality playing surfaces. • Improves user experiences.

As new or enhanced sport field infrastructure is developed in the future, it will also be important for the various partners in sport field provision to clearly understand and consider the impacts of capital investment. These future discussions should not only consider up front capital investment but also capital reserve and lifecycle. The lifespan of an artificial turf surface is approximately 10 – 12 years, requiring ongoing lifecycle budgeting to be undertaken. Other higher value sport field infrastructure (e.g. Class A fields with bleachers and permanent structures) will also require re-investment to ensure safe and functional use.

Making optimal use of existing infrastructure should continue to be a primary focus for all partners in the region. Using the recommended new classification system (as outlined in Strategy Outcome #2) across all jurisdictions will help create a level of sport field service that is consistent. In particular, increasing the level of maintenance input into selected school fields presents a significant opportunity to improve the function capacity of fields within the CVRD and provide better experiences to user groups and spontaneous users.

Section 9.0

Implementation Summary

The following table summarizes the six Strategy Outcomes and identifies the potential capital and operational resource requirements associated with each.

Strategy Outcome	Capital Resource Requirements	Operational Resource Requirements
1. Enhance and Standardize Data Collection.	• N/A	• Incremental staff time and potential systems investment.
2. Utilize the Refreshed Sport Field Classifications as Guideline for Operational and Capital Investment in the Sport Field Inventory.	• Use by staff on an ongoing basis to guide field improvement projects.	• Use by staff on an ongoing basis to guide operational planning and resource allocation.
3. Target Capital Investment in Sport Field Infrastructure Towards a Focus on Maximizing the Quality of Sport Field Infrastructure and Adding Functional Capacity.	• Further technical and feasibility analysis required for a second artificial turf field ($75,000 - $10,000) • Cost of developing a second artificial turf surface: $4 – 5 M (pending detailed site analysis) • Addition of washrooms and lighting to 2-4 field sites. Additional cost analysis required after sites have been identified. • Recommended baseball hub requires further site and cost analysis ($500,000 is a typical cost for a Class A level diamond). • Land cost for the recommended long-term new multi-sport field hub.	• Staff time to support further analysis.

Strategy Outcome	Capital Resource Requirements	Operational Resource Requirements
4. Develop a New Approach for Sport Field Bookings and Allocations Based Around Clear Standards of Play.	• N/A	• Staff time to support refining the standards of play and implementation.
5. Advance Efforts to Actively Promote Spontaneous and Unstructured Sport Field Play.	• N/A	• N/A
6. Create a More Streamlined and Cohesive Sport Field System in the Region.	• N/A	• Staff time to support the recommended focus areas / initiatives and sport field management changes.

Appendices

Appendix A: Field Use Survey Summary Report

Comox Valley Regional District
Field Use Survey

Summary Report
June 2022

Comox Valley
REGIONAL DISTRICT

comoxvalleyrd.ca

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1.0 Executive Summary

The Comox Valley Regional District's recreation team undertook a review of their sports fields in order to plan ahead for the community's growing needs. As part of the overall assessment, the CVRD invited the public's input on how they currently use fields, any challenges/barriers they face, and what they would like to see for field programming and what would improve their experiences.

To collect this input from the general public, a survey was created and promoted widely. Over 415 completed submissions were returned, providing insight for the CVRD team into how the community currently uses fields in the community.

Among the highlights were:

Of those who responded, fields are being used almost equally by children (under 18) and adults (19-64), with half saying they use the fields both formally and informally.

The majority felt that fields were meeting their needs in the summer time, while the majority felt their needs were not being met in the winter.

Over 50% said the programming is currently meeting their needs but that improvements to amenities/conditions would improve their overall experience: including new auxiliary buildings and improved field conditions.

This summary will be provided to the CVRD for consideration alongside a field assessment, underway now. Combined, they will support the recreation team's planning for future improvements and priorities.

2.0 Introduction

In order to plan for the future, the Comox Valley Regional District is reviewing the current conditions of fields in the community, and collecting information about how they are currently used by residents. In early 2022, the recreation staff undertook an engagement process to collect feedback from those using fields in the community.

2.1 PROJECT BRIEF & CONSULTATION OVERVIEW

The CVRD is working to update their 2008 Playing Fields Study, with assessment now underway to update inventory, identify field expansion locations and provide best management practices for allocation of fields based on current use, research and trends. In order to supplement that work, the CVRD wanted to collect information from the general public that includes how they use the fields, and what they would like to see moving forward.

In order to collect that feedback, a survey was created and distributed/promoted using a range of tools. The results of that survey are summarized in this report.

2.2 ENGAGEMENT OBJECTIVES

The objectives for this stage of engagement were laid out in a Public Engagement Plan created by the CVRD. These included:

- Increase awareness regarding the current needs, uses and trends regarding sports field requirements within the CVRD.
- Ensure that all residents have an opportunity to provide feedback.
- Find out current needs/uses within region. (CVRD Communications/Zinc)

2.3 ENGAGEMENT TOOLS AND PROMOTION

To achieve these objectives, a range of tools and materials were used to encourage as wide participation as possible, and generate constructive feedback from participants with a range of understanding and engagement in recreation.

- **SURVEY**: A (15 question) survey was drafted asking about current use, what fields are used and how fields are currently meeting community needs. The survey was live May 17 – June 3, 2022.
- **PRESS RELEASE**: A news release promoting the survey was distributed on May 17, 2022.
- **PRINT ADS:** Print ads were published in local papers during the survey window.
- **EMAIL:** An email invitation was distributed to the community via Perfect Mind.
- **SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS:** Three posts for Facebook and Twitter were posted and shared.

3.0 Consultation Results

CVRD staff hear regularly from the organizations that manage structured programming in the Comox Valley. In order to better understand their needs, and the community's wider needs while gauging interest in new programs and/or amenities, the survey was shared with the general public. Below is a summary of the results.

3.1 OVERVIEW RESULTS

WHERE DO YOU LIVE?

Courtenay: 41.7%
Comox: 33%
Cumberland: 3.6%
Electoral Area A: 5.8%
Electoral Area B: 5.5%
Electoral Area C: 7%
Campbell River/SRD: 1.7%

WHO USES FIELDS IN YOUR HOUSEHOLD?

Children (under 18): 46.6%
Adults (19-64): 45%
Seniors (65+): 6.1%
No one: 2.3%

Overall, there is an average or moderate degree of satisfaction with the current sport field programs available in the Comox Valley, and a moderate degree of satisfaction in the current sports field conditions/amenities.

Average rating for programming

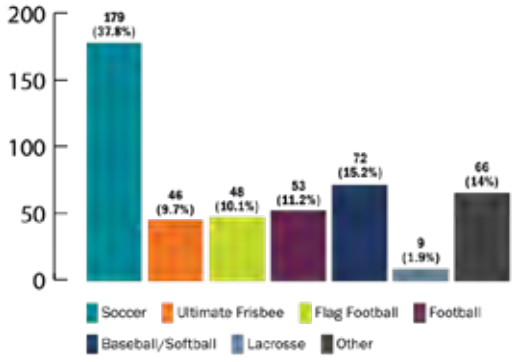
Average rating for conditions/amenities

3.2 CURRENT USE

HOW FIELDS ARE USED

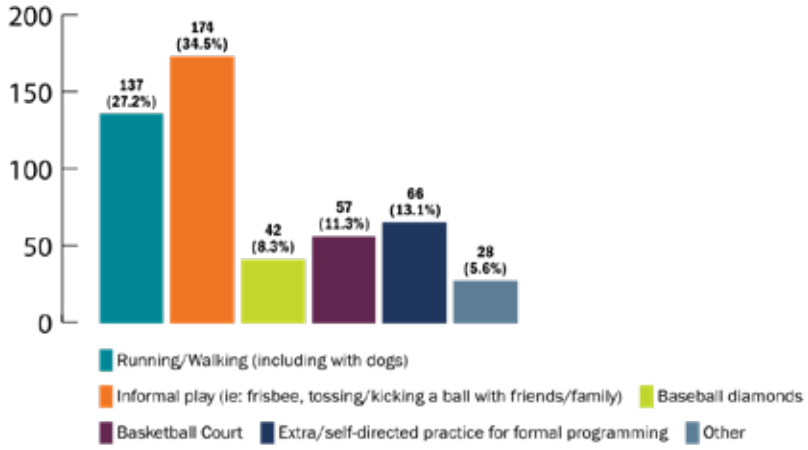
When asked to describe their current sports field usage, the **largest percentage indicated they use fields both formally and informally (47.2%).** Nearly 36% said they use fields only for formal programming and 13.3% said it was only for informal use.

A) Top formal activities included:



Responses for 'other' included significant representation for rugby, disc golf, volleyball, cricket, basketball and tennis.

B) Top Informal activities included:



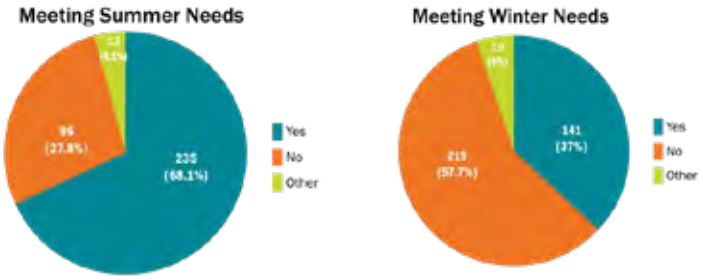
C) Field Use seemed to land in three general categories of usage, outlined in the table below:

Tier 1 (10-12%)	Vanier School grass fields
	Vanier School turf fields
	Valley View School grass fields (including ball diamonds)
	Mark R. Isfeld School grass fields
	Highland School grass fields (including ball diamonds)
Tier 2 (4-9%)	Lewis Park Grass fields (includes ball diamonds)
	Woodcote Park grass field
	Vanier all weather turf field
	Bill Moore grass field (includes ball diamonds)
	Queenesh School grass fields
Tier 3 (0.5-4 %)	Village Park frass field
	Martin Park field (includes lacrosse box)
	School fields in Electoral Area C
	Standard Park (volleyball/pickleball courts)
	School fields in Electoral Area A
	School fields in Electoral Area B
	CFB fields (includes ball diamonds)

D) Cars/motorized vehicles are the most common transportation method (67%), followed by walking (17%), cycling/scooter (14%)

MEETING COMMUNITY NEEDS

Survey respondents were asked whether the fields meet their needs during the summer, during longer daylight hours, and during the winter when days are shorter.



The primary reasons given that fields did not meet summer needs were:

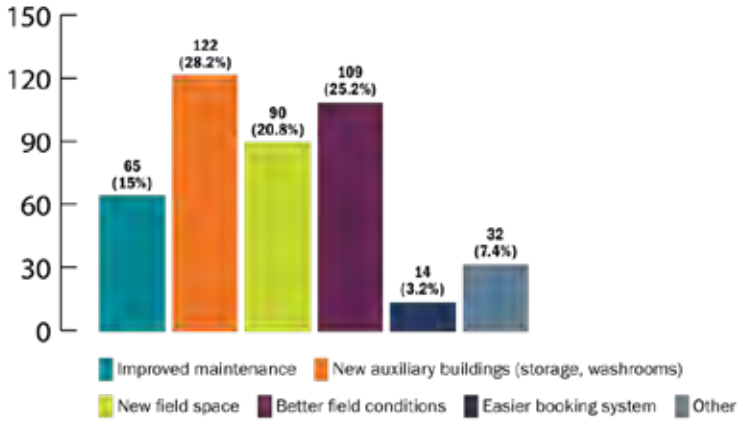
- Fields don't have conditions required (ie: turf for all weather play).
- Would like more field time.
- Field doesn't have facilities required.

The main reasons given that fields did not meet winter requirements were;

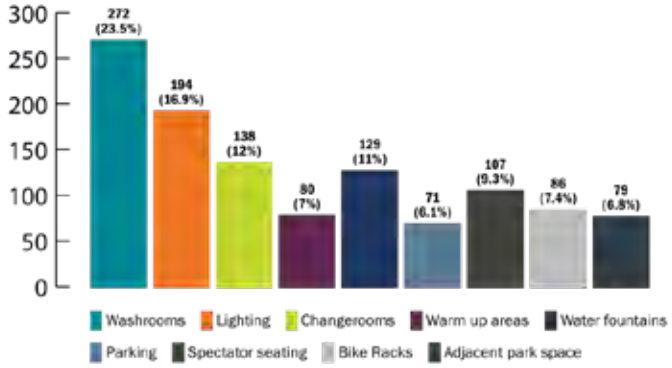
- Fields don't have conditions required (ie: lights)
- Field doesn't have facilities required
- More field time required

Overall, when asked how current field use meets their needs, 52.8% of respondents said existing programming/scheduling meets their needs, but changes to field conditions/amenities would improve their experience. About 17% said neither condition/amenities or programming/scheduling meets their needs.

Those who indicated conditions/amenities changes would improve their experience indicated these as the priorities. The top ranking for new field space, and better field conditions, were echoed in the results of those who said nether conditions/amenities or programming were sufficient.



When asked what amenities residents would like to see offered in greater supply at sports fields, residents indicated:



Most respondents indicated they were not sure what formal programming they would like to see that isn't currently an option (46%). Of the options given, frisbee golf, cricket and bocce were selected the most.

4.0 Conclusion

The CVRD's fields are used for a wide swath of activities that include both formal and informal programming by adults and children. They are well-used and in general the programming and services are meeting the needs of the community. There are recommendations for improvement that could offer opportunities for increased use and improved experiences.

Among the takeaways from these results are:

- Fields are meeting the community's summer needs better than their winter needs. Satisfaction with field conditions is moderate with an average score of 5.5.
- The majority indicated they were satisfied with programming but indicated improved amenities/conditions would improve their experience.
- The top recommended improvements to amenities/conditions were new auxiliary buildings (washrooms/storage) and better field conditions.

The feedback from the community will supplement the in-depth work underway to update the 2008 Playing Fields Study, providing insight into the interests and priorities of those in the general public.

APPENDICES

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