

Guelph Soccer would like to offer its support to the City of Guelph in their development of a Sports Field Strategy as part of the overall City of Guelph Parks and Recreation Master Plan. As the City assesses the needs of its community, the Committee of the Whole should be aware that the Parks and Recreation Needs Assessment, which has been provided as a supporting document to the Master Plan, includes historical data from the province and region but it does not include current data from its own community soccer organization, Guelph Soccer. Data available through Guelph Soccer would paint a much different, and more accurate, picture regarding the demand of soccer within Guelph.

Since the pandemic, the sport of soccer is thriving with record registration numbers being achieved by Guelph Soccer in the summer of 2022 (3,708), and once again in 2023 (4,411). This positive trend is continuing as the registration numbers for our Rep teams are at an all-time high for the upcoming 2023-24 season, and registration numbers for our Fall Indoor House League are setting records with waitlists developing in several age groups. Unfortunately, waitlists are a common occurrence and are magnified by the limited indoor artificial turf space that is available within the City. It is worth noting that, the one artificial turf field that is managed by the City, the Sports Dome, cannot accommodate a full-sized game of soccer (11 vs. 11).

Guelph Soccer has recently undertaken an independent Feasibility Study to better understand the facility demands currently facing Guelph residents who want to participate in soccer, the future needs of the community, and a comparison to similar municipalities. One theme that has emerged through this process is that there are non-resident user groups renting the fields during prime hours, which in turn is limiting the ability of local sport organizations to directly serve community members.

As a community stakeholder, we would welcome an opportunity to engage with the City on the recommendations outlined in the Needs Assessment, and the development of the Sports Field Strategy within the Parks and Recreation Master Plan. While we advocate directly for the sport of soccer and our participants, we share a common goal in ensuring that Guelph residents can access recreation in a variety of ways, and along the continuum of the Canadian Sport for Life Long Term Athlete Development pathway.

Sincerely,

Guelph Soccer – *“We strengthen the community of Guelph through the joy of soccer.”*

David Frizzell, Executive Director  
**Guelph Soccer**  
**Home of the Junior Gryphons**