

WELLESLEY ATHLETIC FIELDS & OUTDOOR COURTS UTILIZATION STUDY



Town of Wellesley,
Massachusetts

TEAM FIELD USE SUMMARY

May 18, 2023

Weston & SampsonSM

AGENDA

Introductions
Basic Project Goals
Project Process Overview
Field Inventory
Stakeholder Data & Use Analysis
Community Survey Summary
Conclusions
Next Steps



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ATHLETIC FIELD & COURT UTILIZATION STUDY

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BASIC PROJECT GOALS



Hunnewell Courts

- Complete an **inventory** and **analysis** of specific athletic fields and outdoor courts
- Complete a **public outreach** and **needs assessment** process to identify and prioritize community needs
- Develop a **strategic plan** for improving existing facilities and/or constructing new facilities to meet community needs, safety, accessibility, and gender equity
- Outline a potential **implementation process** to include funding and phasing strategies
- Compare Wellesley's current **fee and permitting structure** against a curated selection of surrounding communities



PROJECT PROCESS OVERVIEW

- Kick-off Meeting (complete)
- Inventory (complete)
- Analysis | Physical Conditions (complete)
- Team Meetings (on-going)
- Stakeholder Meetings + Field Use (complete)
- Current Field Capacity (complete)
- Fee Structure Analysis (on-going)
- Needs Assessment (next steps)
- Recommendations | Phasing | Capital Planning Process (next steps)



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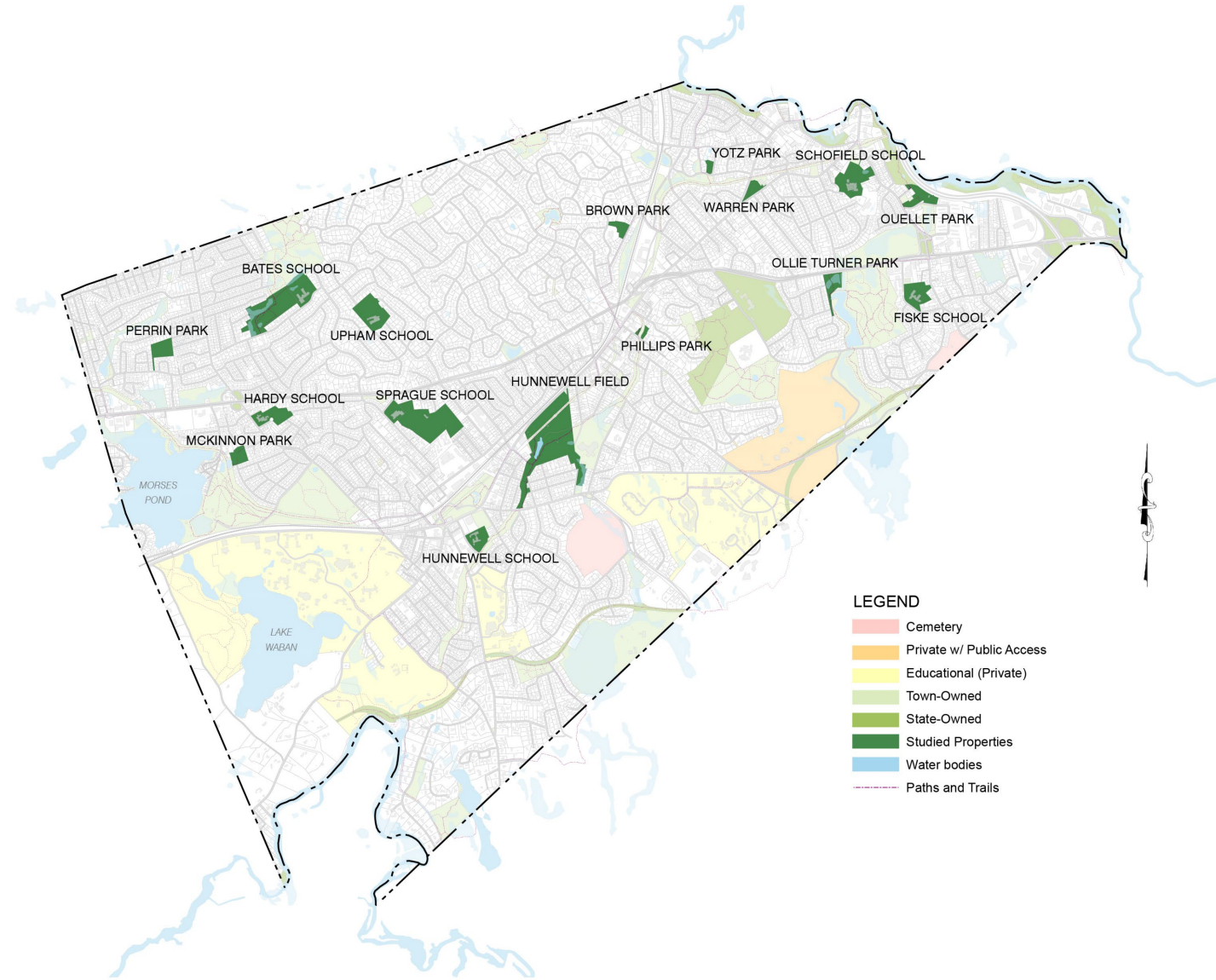
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FIELD INVENTORY

16 Sites Total

13 Sites with Active Field Use

- Bates School
- Brown Park
- Fiske School
- Hardy School
- Hunnewell School
- Hunnewell Fields
- Ouellet Playground
- Perrin Park
- Phillips Park
- Schofield School
- Sprague School
- Upham School
- Warren Park



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FIELD INVENTORY - Physical Conditions Analysis

Turf Conditions

Overall, in good condition

- Great maintenance practices
 - Test soil every 2 years
 - Most fields are irrigated

Drainage issues present at

- ★ • Hunnewell (Field 1 & Lee Field)
- ★ • Sprague (HS Baseball Field & Courts)
- Hardy LL Field
- Upham LL Field

Grading issues present at

- Fiske School
- Upham (Soccer Field)
- Perrin Park

★ Also reflected in public survey results

Amenities

Overall, the amenities at most sites are in fair condition. Improvements are needed across all sites including,

- Fencing
- ★ • Netting
- ★ • Basketball Hoops
- Benches

Lighting

Only 2 fields in town currently have lights: Reidy LL Field and Warren MU Field at Hunnewell Field Complex.

- Both are natural grass fields

Accessibility

Overall, needs improvement especially at the following sites,

- Ouellet Park (BB court)
- Scofield (tennis courts)
- Warren Park (BB Court)
- Brown Park (entire site)



FIELD INVENTORY

How many fields does Wellesley have?

GRASS DIAMOND FIELDS

- 4 Large Diamonds
- 15 Small Diamonds
(excludes diamonds at Hardy)

19

GRASS RECTANGULAR FIELDS

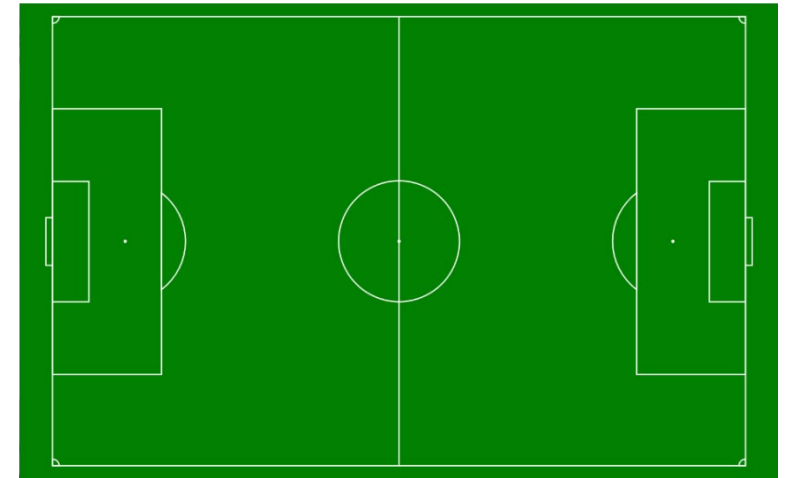
- 8 Large Rectangular Fields
- 2 Medium Rectangular Fields
- 6 Small Rectangular Fields
- 4 X-Small Rectangular Fields

20

SYNTHETIC TURF FIELDS

- 3 Large Rectangular Fields

3



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FIELD INVENTORY | ANALYSIS - Field Overlay

How many fields does Wellesley ACTUALLY have when considering field overlays?

GRASS DIAMOND FIELDS

- 2 Large Diamonds
- 8 Small Diamonds

19

10

GRASS RECTANGULAR FIELDS

- 4.5 Large Rectangular Fields
- 1.5 Medium Rectangular Fields
- 4 Small Rectangular Fields
- 3 X-Small Rectangular Fields

20

13

SYNTHETIC TURF FIELDS

- 3 Large Rectangular Fields

3

3



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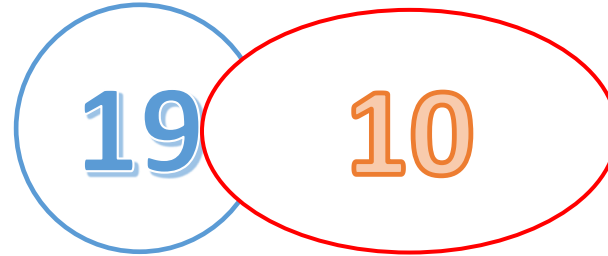
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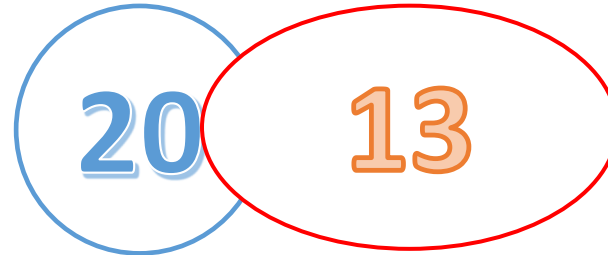
FIELD INVENTORY | ANALYSIS

Why is there a reduction in numbers?

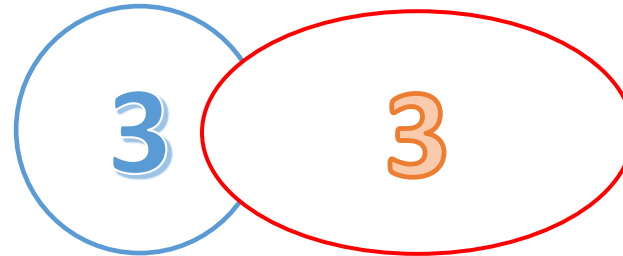
GRASS DIAMOND FIELDS



GRASS RECTANGULAR
FIELDS



SYNTHETIC TURF FIELDS



- Concurrent use of the two field types is not recommended as it would compromise player safety.
- “Field inventory” numbers to the left indicate the number of fields quantified on an individual basis.
- The numbers on the right account for rectangle field overlay of diamond outfields.
- For initial analysis purposes 50% of availability was allocated to each field type.



THREE MODELS FOR ESTIMATING ANNUAL FIELD USE HOURS

RECOMMENDED FIELD USE HOURS

Recommended hours that fields should be used based on the sports fields industry standards. The recommended hours of use account for the following:

- Resting the fields
- Regulating foot traffic to prevent compaction and overuse
- Daylight hours (related to synthetic turf fields only)

NEEDED FIELD USE HOURS*

Estimated hours of use needed per sports organization based on number of practices, games, teams, and age groups (assumes 1 team per field).

PERMITTED FIELD HOURS

Hours of field use based on approved permits during Spring 2022 and Fall 2022 and WPS priority field time (2:45 pm-5:45 pm, Monday- Friday)

North Carolina State University				
Expected Field Condition Based on Hours of Field Use				
Condition	Hrs Per Year		Hrs Per Week	
	Min	Max	Min	Max
Sustained Good Field Conditions	0	200	0	8
Good Field Conditions with some Thinning of Turf and Localized Wear Areas	400	600	15	23
Fair Field Conditions; Expect Significant Thinning and Wear	800	1000	31	38
Poor Field Conditions with Significant Turf Loss, Field Surface Damage, and Increased Potential for Athlete Injury	1000		38	

*Needed field use hours were provided by all stakeholder groups in written form in the charts provided by Weston & Sampson except WPS. WPS needed field use hours were verbally communicated to Weston & Sampson to be interpreted and recorded.



FIELD INVENTORY | ANALYSIS

How do we get the recommended field hours?

LIVING GRASS DIAMOND FIELDS

- 2 Large Diamonds
- 8 Small Diamonds

10



Recommended
Annual Hours of Use

800



Total Recommended
Field Hours

8,000

LIVING GRASS RECTANGLE FIELDS

- 4.5 Large Rectangular Fields
- 1.5 Medium Rectangular Fields
- 4 Small Rectangles
- 3 X-Small Rectangular Fields

13



500



6,500

SYNTHETIC TURF FIELDS

- 3 Large Rectangular Fields

3



1215

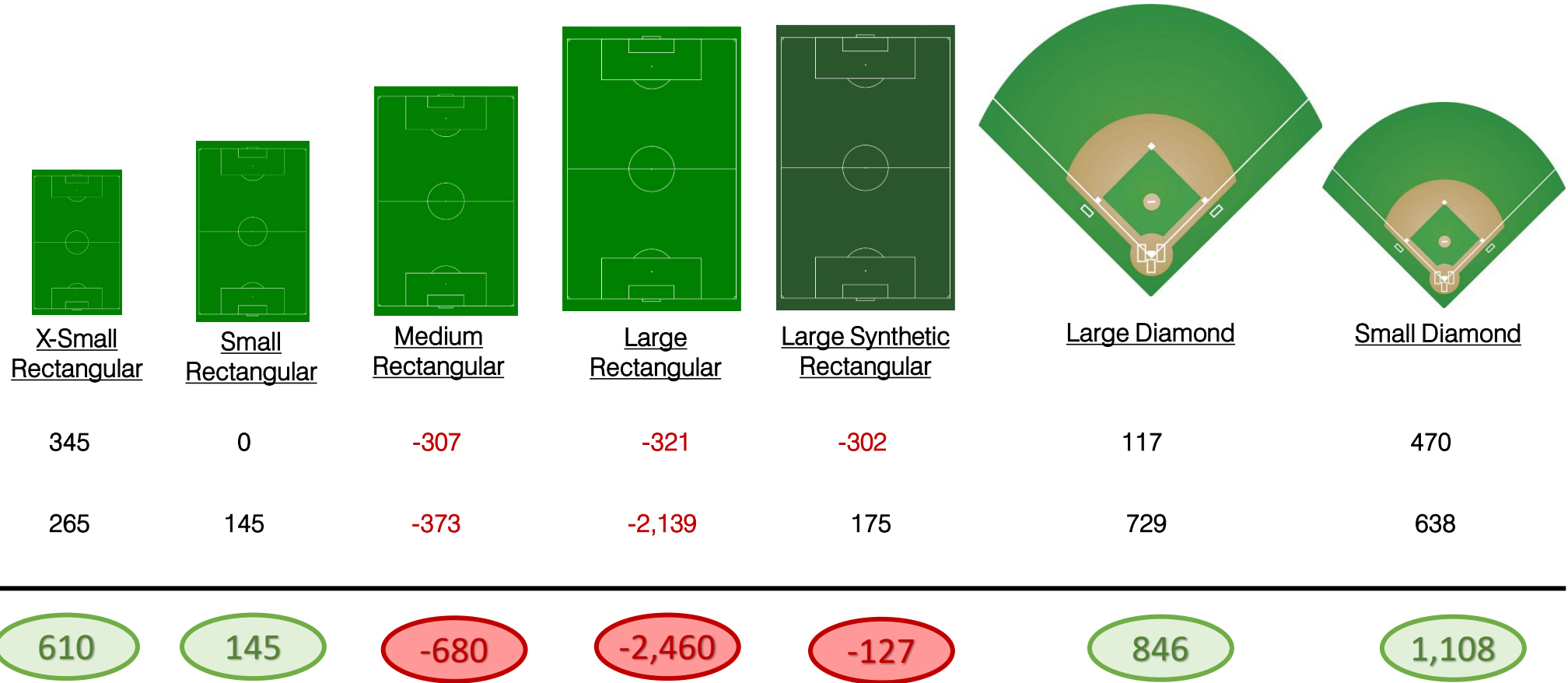


3,645



SURPLUS/DEFICIT OF FIELD USE HOURS - By Field Type

Needed field use hours compared to recommended field use hours by season



There is a deficiency in available rectangular field hours and a surplus of available diamond field hours



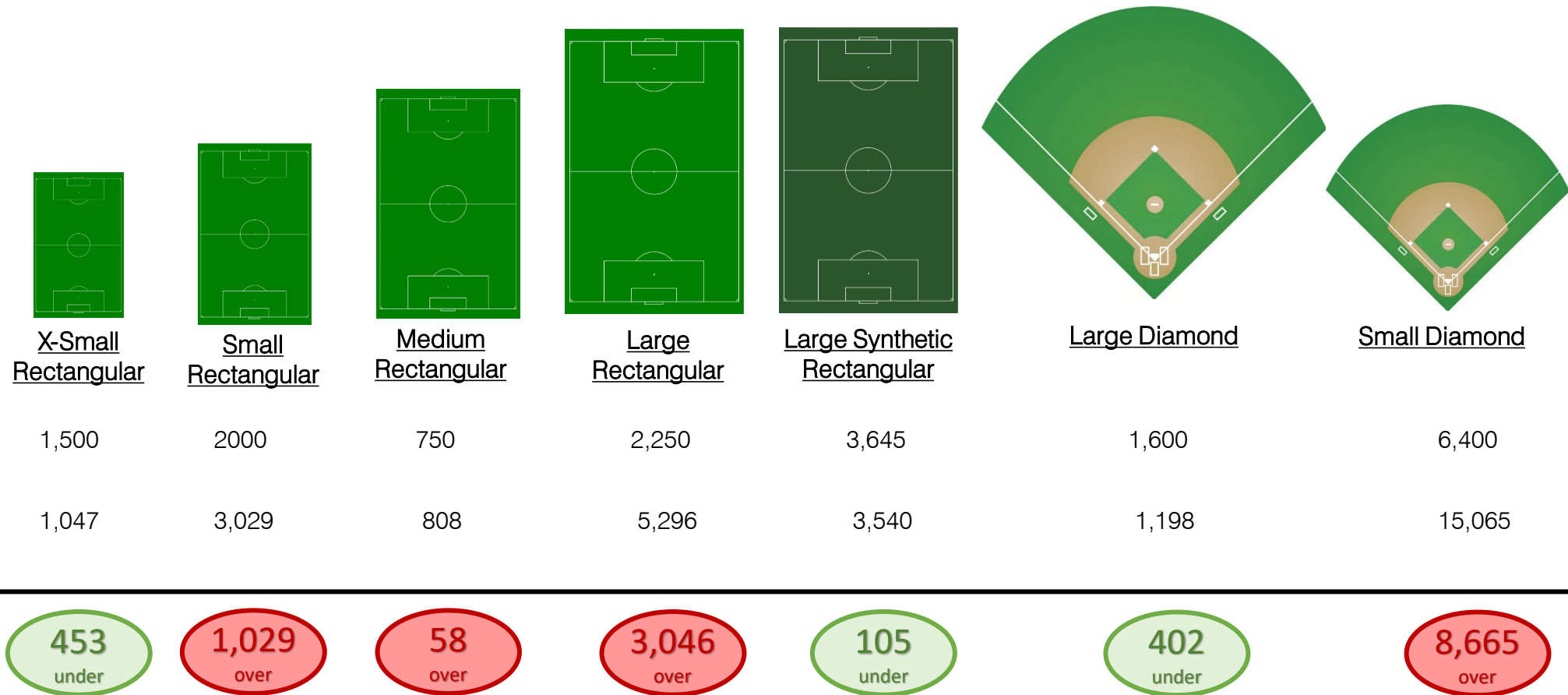
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PERMITTED VS. FIELD USE HOURS - By Field Type

Recommended field use hours compared to permitted field hours on an annual basis.



The number of permitted hours exceeds recommended available field use hours on all fields except the synthetic turf, large diamonds, and x-small rectangular fields



FIELD USE NEEDS VS. PERMITTED USE BY SPORT - Spring 2022

Spring Field Use Hours Per Sport

Sport		Foot Traffic Hours Needed	Flex Time	*Permitted Use	Permitted Daylight Hours	Surplus/Deficit	Permitted Use of Private Fields	Total Cost of Private Field Use
Soccer	Youth Soccer	2,905		4,551	4,141	1,237	136.5	\$23,000
	HS & MS Soccer- Girls	0		0	0	0	0	
	HS & MS Soccer- Boys	0		84	84	84	0	
Lacrosse	Youth Lacrosse- Girls	477		151	139	(338)	33	\$0
	Youth Lacrosse- Boys	314		956	753	438	70	\$17,500
	HS & MS Lacrosse- Girls	480	41.25	281	281	(200)	0	
	HS & MS Lacrosse- Boys	466	41.25	400	400	(66)	0	
Field Hockey	Youth Field Hockey	48		48	48	0	0	
	HS & MS Field Hockey	0		0	0	0	0	
Football	Youth Football	0		0	0	0	0	
	HS & MS Football	0		0	0	0	0	
	Youth Flag Football	21		0	0	(21)	0	
Softball	HS & MS Softball	468		408	408	(60)	0	
	Adult Softball	60		74	72	12	0	
Wellesley Little League	Youth Softball	1,070		9,060	8,621	6,091	0	
	Youth Baseball	1,460					0	
Baseball	HS & MS Baseball	624		630	630	6	0	
Track	HS Track, Javelin & Discus	889		382	382	(507)	0	
	X-Country	0		0	0	0	0	
Misc.	Terriers	64		154	154	90	0	
	AM Baseball			0	0	0	0	
	Other			20	20	20	0	
Clubs	Little League - Beantown Bombers			49	49	49	0	
	Youth Soccer - James Bede Club			28	28	28	0	
	Gorilla Lacrosse			0	0	0	0	
	Primetime Lacrosse			65	65	65	0	
Total		9,345	82.50	17,338	16,273			

Over permitting of fields beyond a user groups' needs is limiting other user groups' ability to permit field space to meet their demand.

* Does not include private field use

Wellesley Public Schools has priority use of fields from 2:45 pm-5:45 pm. Monday-Friday. This was used , in addition to their scheduled weekend games, to produce their permitted hours.



FIELD USE NEEDS VS. PERMITTED USE BY SPORT - Fall 2022

Fall Field Use Hours Per Sport

Sport		Foot Traffic Hours Needed	Flex Time	* Permitted Use	Permitted Daylight Hours	Surplus/ Deficit	Permitted Use of Private Fields	Total Cost of Private Field Use
Soccer	Youth Soccer	2,977		6,300	3,857	880	136.5	23,000
	HS & MS Soccer- Girls	565	49.50	449	449	(117)	0	
	HS & MS Soccer- Boys	547	49.50	382	382	(166)	0	
Lacrosse	Youth Lacrosse- Girls	53		76	76	24	0	
	Youth Lacrosse- Boys	14		0	0	(14)	0	
	HS & MS Lacrosse- Girls	0	0.00	0	0	0	0	
	HS & MS Lacrosse- Boys	0	0.00	0	0	0	0	
Field Hockey	Youth Field Hockey	158		192	87	(71)	13.5	2,025
	HS & MS Field Hockey	584		336	336	(248)	0	
Football	Youth Football	400		304	304	(96)	0	
	HS & MS Football	946		406	406	(540)	0	
	Youth Flag Football	28		0	0	(28)	0	
Softball	HS & MS Softball	0		0	0	0	0	
	Adult Softball	0		0	0	0	0	
Wellesley Little League	Youth Softball	263		4,130	2,827	2,178	0	
	Youth Baseball	386					0	
Baseball	HS & MS Baseball	0		0	0	0	0	
Track	HS Track, Javelin & Discus	0		0	0	0	0	
	X-Country	540		0	0	(540)	0	
Misc.	Terriers	1		19	19	18	0	
	AM Baseball			0	0	0	0	
	Other			0	0	0	0	
Clubs	Little League - Beantown Bombers			0	0	0	0	
	Youth Soccer - James Bede Club			0	0	0	0	
	Gorilla Lacrosse			52	52	52	0	
	Primetime Lacrosse			0	0	0	0	
	Total	7,460	99.00	12,644	8,793			

Over permitting of fields beyond a user groups' needs is limiting other user groups' ability to permit field space to meet their demand.

* Does not include private field use

Wellesley Public Schools has priority use of fields from 2:45 pm-5:45 pm. Monday-Friday. This was used , in addition to their scheduled weekend games, to produce their permitted hours.



FIELD USE NEEDS VS. PERMITTED USE BY SPORT - Fall/Spring

Fall & Spring Field Use Hours Per Sport

Sport		Foot Traffic Hours Needed	Flex Time	Permitted Use of Town Fields	Permitted Daylight Hours	Surplus/Deficit	Permitted Use of Private Fields	Total Cost of Private Field Use
Soccer	Youth Soccer	5,882		10,851	7,998	2,117	475.5 (202.5 are in winter)	\$86,500
	HS & MS Soccer- Girls	565	49.50	449	449	(117)	0	
	HS & MS Soccer- Boys	547	49.50	466	466	(82)	0	
Lacrosse	Youth Lacrosse- Girls	529		227	215	(314)	33	\$0
	Youth Lacrosse- Boys	328		956	753	425	140 (70 are in winter)	\$42,000
	HS & MS Lacrosse- Girls	480	41.25	281	281	(200)	0	
	HS & MS Lacrosse- Boys	466	41.25	400	400	(66)	0	
Field Hockey	Youth Field Hockey	206		240	135	(71)	29.5 (16 are in winter)	\$4,425
	HS & MS Field Hockey	584		336	336	(248)	0	
Football	Youth Football	400		304	304	(96)	0	
	HS & MS Football	946		406	406	(540)	0	
	Youth Flag Football	49		0	0	(49)	24 (winter only)	\$8,400
Softball	HS & MS Softball	468		408	408	(60)	0	
	Adult Softball	60		74	72	12	0	
Wellesley Little League	Youth Softball	1,333		13,189	11,448	8,269	0	
	Youth Baseball	1,846					0	
Baseball	HS & MS Baseball	624		630	630	6	0	
Track	HS Track, Javelin & Discus	889		382	382	(507)	0	
	X-Country	540		0	0	(540)	0	
Misc.	Terriers	65		173	173	108	0	
	AM Baseball (Summer)	0		0	0	0	0	
	Other	0		20	20	20	0	
Clubs	Little League - Beantown Bombers	0		49	49	49	0	
	Youth Soccer - James Bede Club	0		28	28	28	0	
	Gorilla Lacrosse	0		52	52	52	0	
	Primetime Lacrosse	0		65	65	65	0	
	Total	16,805	181.50	29,982	25,066			

Over permitting of fields beyond a user groups' needs is limiting other user groups' ability to permit field space to meet their demand.

* Does not include private field use

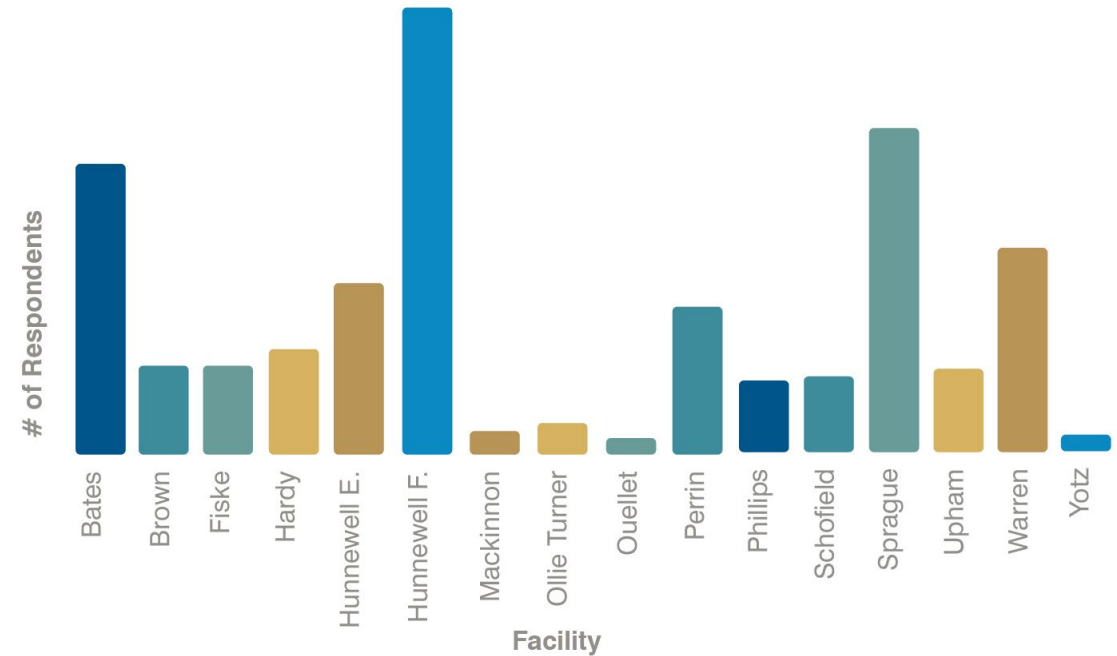
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COMMUNITY SURVEY SUMMARY



Demographics

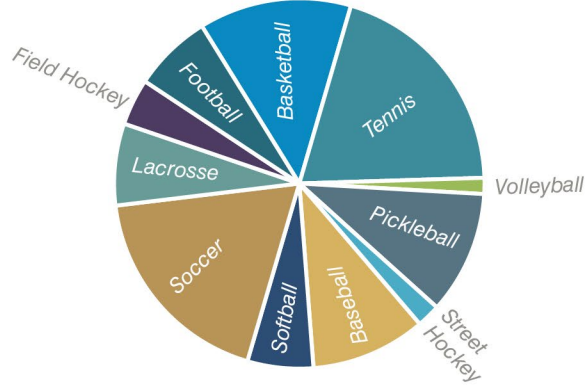


Respondents' Closest Facility

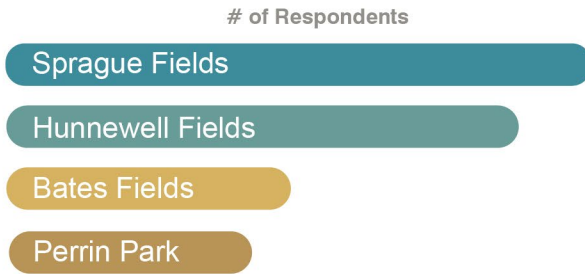


COMMUNITY SURVEY SUMMARY - Fields

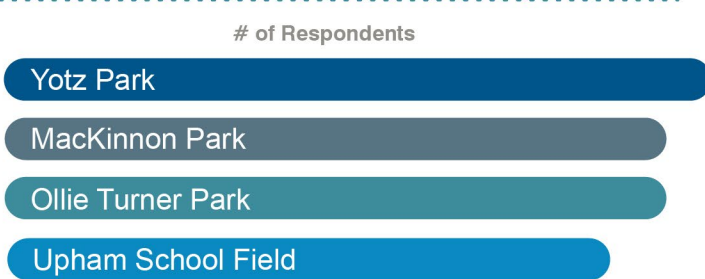
Sports usage - Number of respondents by sport



Most used fields - weekly basis



Least used fields - never used



What people love

- ♥ The fields are **very well-used**, particularly Sprague and Hunnewell Fields
- ♥ The fields are **well-maintained**, especially Sprague Fields
- ♥ The **turf field** is a fantastic asset.
- ♥ The **lighting** at Reidy Field is working well.
- ♥ Sprague fields are in **great condition**.

Desired improvements

- ✓ Many fields could use **improved drainage**.
- ✓ Amenities such as **formal restroom facilities, shade, waste receptacles and water fountains** would be a huge asset.
- ✓ **Handicap accessibility** at fields.
- ✓ Expanded **lighting** and more **artificial turf fields**.
- ✓ **Signage** indicating field names would be beneficial.

"I do like when younger age groups get to play sports (team or recreational) at fields that are at our local elementary schools."

"Love seeing kids tournaments and weekly soccer games on Sprague soccer fields. Sounds like a healthy neighborhood."

In your words...

"We need lights, bathrooms and team rooms at Darcey Field and more support generally of programs that support our kids.."

"Consider replacing some grass fields with turf fields to allow practice to happen on rainy days."

































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COMMUNITY SURVEY SUMMARY – Sprague Fields

Sprague fields desired improvements

FIELD	CATEGORY	FIELD	CATEGORY
SOFTBALL FIELD:	   	FIELD #2 - SYNTHETIC:	  
HIGH SCHOOL BASEBALL FIELD:	      	FIELD #3 - SYNTHETIC:	  
MIDDLE SCHOOL BASEBALL FIELD:	   	FIELD #4 - GRASS:	  
FIELD #1 - GRASS:	  	FIELD #5 - GRASS:	  

 **Improve Field Condition**
(Surface Condition, Drainage)
 **Add Lighting**
 **Improve Parking** (Safe, Convenient,
Sufficient Number of Spaces)
 **Improve Maintenance & Cleanliness** (Trash and Recycling)
 **Add Amenities** (Seating,
Shade, Water Fountains)
 **Convert to Artificial Turf**
 **Improve Safety**
(Temporary Fence)
 **Add or Improve Equipment**
(Scoreboard & Bleachers)



COMMUNITY SURVEY SUMMARY – Hunnewell Fields

Hunnewell fields desired improvements

FIELD

CATEGORY

REIDY LITTLE
LEAGUE FIELD:



DIANE WARREN FIELD:



LEE SOFTBALL FIELD:



JV BASEBALL FIELD:



FRESHMAN
BASEBALL FIELD:



FIELD

CATEGORY

FIELD #1 - GRASS:



FIELD #2 - GRASS:



FIELD #3 - GRASS:



FIELD #4 - GRASS:



HIGH SCHOOL
TRACK & FIELD:



Ballfield Multi-Purpose (Grass) Multi-Purpose (Synthetic)



Improve Field Condition
(Surface Condition, Drainage)



Add Lighting



Improve Parking (Safe, Convenient,
Sufficient Number of Spaces)



Improve Maintenance &
Cleanliness (Trash and Recycling)



Add Amenities (Seating,
Shade, Water Fountains)



Convert to Artificial Turf



Improve Safety (Uneven Surface)



Add or Improve Equipment
(Scoreboard & Spectator Seating)



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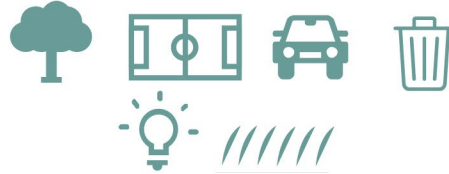
COMMUNITY SURVEY SUMMARY – Bates & Perrin

FIELD

CATEGORY

SUMMARY

BATES ELEMENTARY SCHOOL FIELDS:



PERRIN PARK FIELDS:



 Ballfield with Multi-Purpose

 Multi-Purpose (Grass)



Improve Field Condition
(Surface Condition, Drainage, Ballfield Infrastructure)



Add Amenities (Seating, Shade, Water Fountains, Paths)



Improve Parking (Safe, Convenient, Sufficient Number of Spaces)



Improve Maintenance & Cleanliness (Trash and Recycling, Dog Waste, Snow Clearing)



Add Lighting



Convert to Artificial Turf



- 8 locations at Sprague
- 10 locations at Hunnewell
- Bates
- Perrin



- 2 locations at Sprague
- 4 locations at Hunnewell
- Bates
- Perrin



- 5 locations at Sprague
- 9 locations at Hunnewell
- Bates
- Perrin



- 2 locations at Sprague
- 6 locations at Hunnewell
- Bates



- 5 locations at Sprague
- 10 locations at Hunnewell
- Bates
- Perrin



- 1 location at Sprague
- 1 location at Hunnewell



- 5 locations at Sprague
- 4 locations at Hunnewell
- Bates
- Perrin



- 1 location at Sprague
- 2 locations at Hunnewell

Bates & Perrin desired improvements

Sprague, Hunnewell, Bates, Perrin

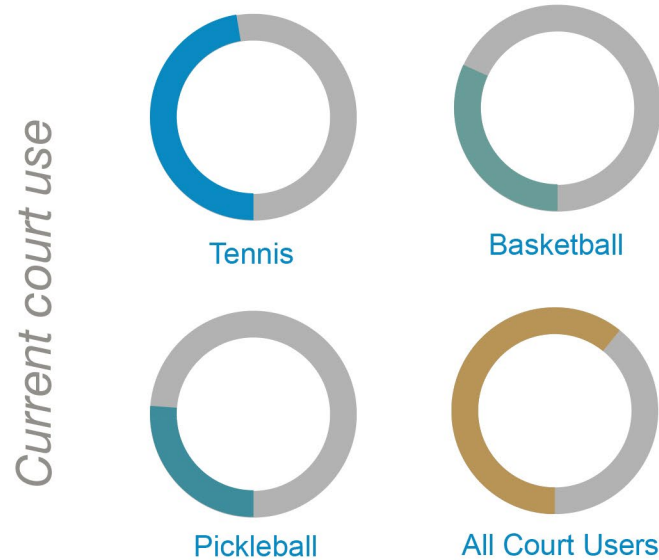


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COMMUNITY SURVEY SUMMARY - Courts



What people love

- ♥ The courts are **very well-used**.
- ♥ The courts bring people together.
- ♥ The **online reservation system** is a great addition.
- ♥ The addition of **pickleball courts**.
- ♥ **Lighting** at Hunnewell courts.
- ♥ The **classes and leagues** at Hunnewell courts are great.

"I'd like to see dedicated Pickleball courts with permanent nets."

"Let's improve the outdoor high school basketball courts to make them a gathering spot. Good quality court, lights, seating, water fountains."

Most used courts - weekly basis

of Respondents



Desired improvements

- ✓ Many courts could use **repairs** to nets and surfacing.
- ✓ Amenities such as **formal restroom facilities, shade, waste receptacles and water fountains** would be a huge asset.
- ✓ Basketball courts could benefit from **standardization of hoop heights**.
- ✓ Desire for more **pickleball courts** and **tennis courts**.
- ✓ Signage explaining the **reservation system**.

In your words...

"More pickleball and tennis would be awesome!"

"Upgrades to Schofield Tennis Courts and Pickleball Courts is much needed and would be welcomed by the neighborhood."



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COMMUNITY SURVEY SUMMARY – Informal Use



What people love

- There is a **diverse mix of users**. Sprague serves many uses from sports to informal hang-outs.
- The **walking paths** adjacent to the fields are great, such as the ADA trails adjacent to Hunnewell Fields.
- That the fields are **dark at night**.
- The **high school track for walking**.
- The **bike path** around Perrin Park.
- Great **playgrounds**.

Desired improvements

- Expand and protect **walking trails**.
- Would like to see walking paths **plowed during winter months**.
- Additional **shade trees** at Perrin playground.
- Would like to see **passive recreational uses balanced** with formal sports.
- Would like to have a **dog park**.

I enjoy the mix of sports and recreational activities bringing people together - youth and HS sports, dog walkers, bikers etc... all in one place enjoying the public spaces.

"Would LOVE to see the paved path go all the way around Bates/Kelly Field so that my mom could walk to see the grandkids play in baseball games more easily and safely."

"Access to the trails in and around Hunnewell Fields is very important. The trails are a valuable town resource and are ADA friendly in a town that needs more such spaces."

"Use of Hunnewell Field has been for passive recreation activities and enjoyment of nature."

In your words...



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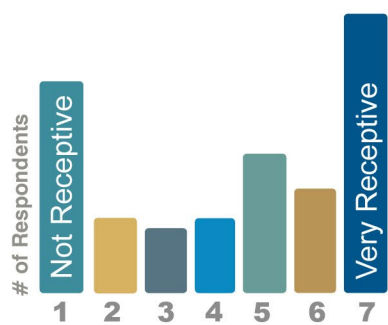
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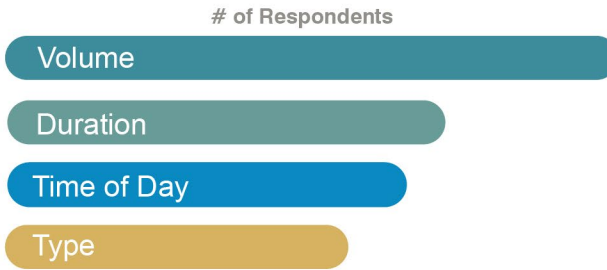
COMMUNITY SURVEY SUMMARY – Sound & Lights

AMPLIFIED SOUND

Receptiveness



Considerations



Identified Pros & Cons

- ✓ Music and cheering at sports events can be a pleasant sound.
- ✓ With proper guidelines (time of day, volume), announcers and music would add fun and excitement to youth sporting events.

"We need quiet to work from home, for our kids to do our homework, for little kids to go to bed early, to relax and read books in our backyards."

"Town needs a balanced sound policy for all playing fields providing both guidelines and opportunities for our community to enjoy the physical, social and emotional benefits of musically inspired active recreation."

- ✗ Potentially disruptive to neighboring residences.
- ✗ Potentially blocks out sounds of nature such as nearby brooks and birds.
- ✗ Not essential to sporting events.

COURT & FIELD LIGHTING

Identified Pros & Cons

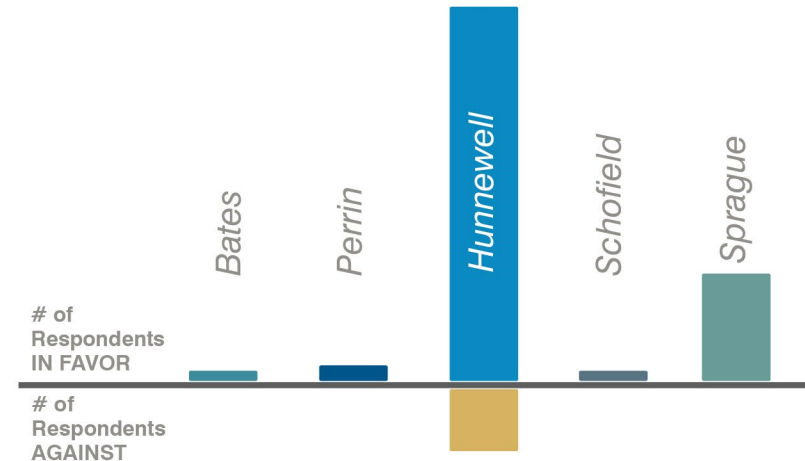
- ✓ Allows for after dark sports and passive recreation, especially around the winter months.
- ✓ Potential improvements to safety and visibility.

"I am against lights at night. Lights solve one problem by creating many others and is totally in conflict with our Climate Action Plan.."

"Modern lights are environmentally and neighbor-friendly. Kids and adults need the opportunity to use these resources."

- ✗ Potentially disruptive to neighboring residences.
- ✗ Nighttime light pollution. Potentially disruptive to wildlife.
- ✗ Concerns with additional resource consumption.

Locations



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CONCLUSIONS

- Additional availability of field use hours are needed in both Spring and Fall for **rectangular fields**.
- Available field use hours for **diamond fields** exceed the demand for Spring and Fall.
- Natural turf rectangular fields and small diamond fields are **over permitted**.
- **Over permitting** of fields beyond a user groups' needs is **limiting** other user groups' ability to permit field space to meet their demand.



NEXT STEPS

Where do we go from here?

- Develop a strategic plan for improving existing facilities and/or constructing new facilities to meet community needs, safety, accessibility, and gender equity
- Outline a potential implementation process to include funding and phasing strategies
- Compare Wellesley's current fee and permitting structure against a curated selection of surrounding communities
- Mandate, facilitate, or embed the culture among field users to track and report actual usage

