



Joint Use Agreement Public Consultation Summary Findings



Prepared for the Joint Use Partners

by:

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Table of Contents

1.0 Introduction..... 2

2.0 Public Discussion Forum Themes 4

 Access Challenges..... 4

 Funding Challenges..... 6

 Other Challenges..... 7

3.0 Survey Findings 8

 Knowledge of Agreement 9

 Access 10

 Funding 11

 Subsidization..... 12

4.0 General Observations..... 13

Appendix 1 – Survey Questions 14

Appendix 2 – Survey Open Ended Responses..... 16

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Background

The Joint Use Agreement (JUA) is a legal agreement between the City of Edmonton, Edmonton Public Schools, and Edmonton Catholic Schools, that describes how the partners work together to plan, develop, and share school and park facilities. The Agreement outlines how school gymnasiums and other parts of school buildings are made available to community groups during after-school hours and how swimming pools, arenas, tennis courts and picnic sites are made available to school children during school hours. The current Joint Use Agreement term ends in 2006.

The stakeholder consultation process to provide input to the new JUA consisted of two phases. The first phase was an internal review from the perspective of each of the three partner organizations, while this second phase incorporated findings from the three internal partner perspectives and expanded the consultation to a broader audience that included input from both user organizations and members of the general public.

This report is the summary of Phase Two broad public consultation conducted on behalf of the JUA Partners.

1.2 Process

The public consultation process took the form of three public forums and an on-line survey.

Public Forums

As part of the second phase of the Joint Use Agreement public consultation process, the Convergence Consulting Group facilitated three public forums held in Edmonton on April 26, 27 and May 1, 2006. The forums were open to the public and were advertised in local newspapers.

Forty-five participants, representing the city, public and separate school boards, sports groups, community leagues and individuals, took part in the three meetings.

Participants were presented with key findings from the Phase One consultations and asked to provide recommendations for themes that were

identified during the first phase of consultations. Participants were also asked for their recommendations on any other issues.

1.3 Caveats

It must be acknowledged that this consultation was subject to the following limitations:

Low Participation

Participation in both public discussion forums and the on-line survey was lower than expected. While the general themes are consistent with internal consultations conducted by the three partners, caution should be observed in generalizing these findings to the broader population. Additional testing of summary findings may be required to increase the confidence level in recommendation for changes to the agreement.

Participant Perspective

The information collected and presented in this report is based on participants' opinions, feelings, and perceptions reported. The consultants made no judgment on the validity or accuracy of reported events and acted primarily as a medium to hear out participant perspectives, aggregate information, and identify common themes.

Aggregated Information

It should be noted that the information presented in this summary is not an exhaustive and detailed listing of all input, but rather an aggregation of all comments with a reporting of key themes and recommendations that were consistently provided. Aggregated data while useful in providing recurring or consistent themes is inherently limited in representing the variability in responses. Detailed graphs are provided in the Survey Findings section to provide an indication of the variability in responses.

2.0 Public Discussion Forum Themes

The following general recommendations were developed to address identified themes.

Recommendations were developed by aggregating all discussion forum comments and identifying recurring suggestions:

Access Challenges

Being Able to Get the Time That You Need

- Set guidelines for age of user and time of day; older users get access later in the day
- Have a 'host' available so that single custodian schools may be opened in the evening
- Do not exclude smaller programs when considering the demands of the majority
- Establish interim agreements to create and develop field playing space not being used by school on a pay as you go basis
- Include community controlled facilities as available for joint use e.g. soccer centers
- Ensure the JUA is clear on what each facility can and cannot be used for
- Examine joint use agreements in other localities
- Design schools with separate access to gyms via pass cards
- Educate user groups through an orientation program
- Re-evaluate priority booking system

Getting the Appropriate Facility For Your Activity

- Give preference to specific groups for specific facilities
- Match space to activity
- Set-up facilities with appropriate sports equipment and allow access to that equipment
- Provide explanation when facility is not available
- Establish policy on how damages are handled
- Implement alternate methods of paying for additional custodial staff
- Have up to date inventory and appropriate use information for each facility

Booking System

- Establish a central booking system
- Provide on-line access for booking and canceling in real time
- Have more flexible options for booking i.e. less than full year chunks
- Establish a clear and fair process for bumping and providing alternate facility
- A reasonable and consistent advance notice period for booking times should be established
- Treat Public and Catholic facilities the same
- Groups with good history should be given priority
- Obtain input from Principals in evaluating users

Accessing Local Facilities

- Tighten restrictions on out of town users
- Younger participants should have priority for local facilities
- Principals should not play a role in determining whether a school will be used for joint use

Consistency and Fairness

- There should be consistency between school boards i.e. fees / booking / hours of operation / allowed uses
- Need for more frequent community consultation regarding allocation to re-examine historic priorities
- There needs to be a better system of notification if a facility will not be available – contact user by phone
- JUA should be followed city wide and Principals should adhere to the agreement
- Need for a centralized booking system
- Must be a balance between educational needs and community needs

Funding Challenges

Funding Issues Can Limit Access

- Allow user groups to pay the costs of extra or extended custodial or host coverage
- Schools shouldn't pay anything for the use of city facilities
- Transportation costs can limit access, Edmonton Transit should be part of the JUA
- Get additional funding to keep facilities open
- Fix budgeting process to allow money to be transferred around
- Get more big business involved as sponsors and partners
- JUA partners to lobby Province for funds
- Should / can gaming funds be used?
- Equity between community users and outside external users
- Open more elementary schools rather than build new facilities

Lack of Knowledge of Actual Costs

- Education needed to ensure groups know and understand the full costs
- Full costs need to be measured and communicated
- Where do the fees paid by users go?
- Improve the consistency and transparency of the fee structure
- We need to know the actual costs and who is paying what right now – carry out a study to find out

Increasing User Fees Can Disadvantage Some Users

- Consider subsidy for lower income families
- Potential rebates for low income users
- Investigate if Community Facility Enhancement Program (CFEP) funding could be used
- Use data from Statistics Canada on socioeconomic group by postal code to determine high need areas
- Have a sliding scale of rates based on user groups, least for youth, more for adults and for-profit groups
- All fees need to be consistent between school boards

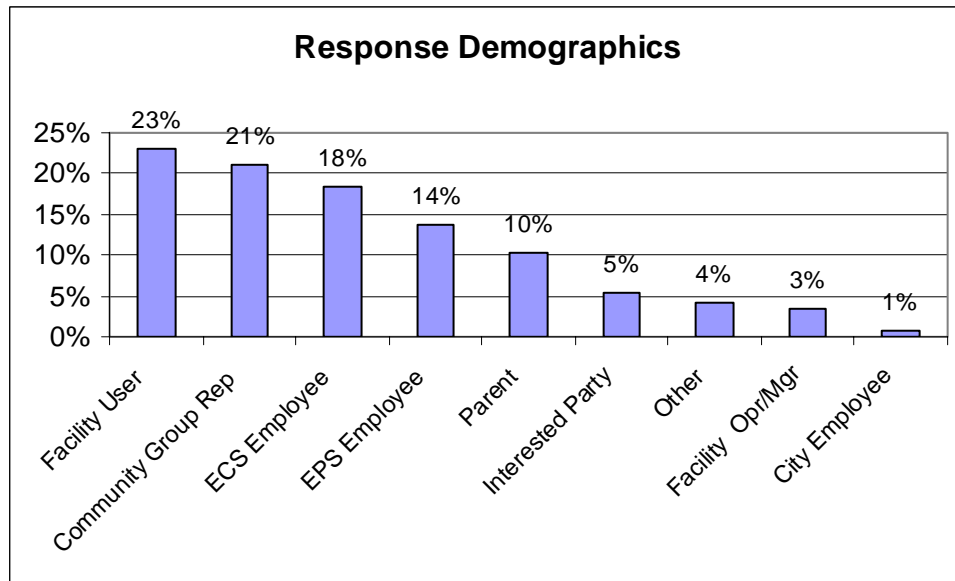
Other Challenges

- Sports fields do not get the same attention / repair as do gym floors
- How are we addressing the issue of aging infrastructure?
- Use of school facilities during the summer
- How to manage schools sites that are closing
- Need user groups at the steering committee level

3.0 Survey Findings

An on-line survey was conducted from April 26th to May 15th, 2006 to invite public opinion on key questions related to the Joint Use Agreement. The link to the survey was publicized in local newspaper advertising and also at the three public discussion forums. It is expected that some participants at the discussion forums also participated in the JUA Survey.

A total of 147 individuals responded to the survey. Response demographics are shown in the graph below.



Open ended questions were also asked and a high percentage of respondents took the time to provide specific recommendations. The chart below shows the percentage of respondents that provided responses to the questions posed.

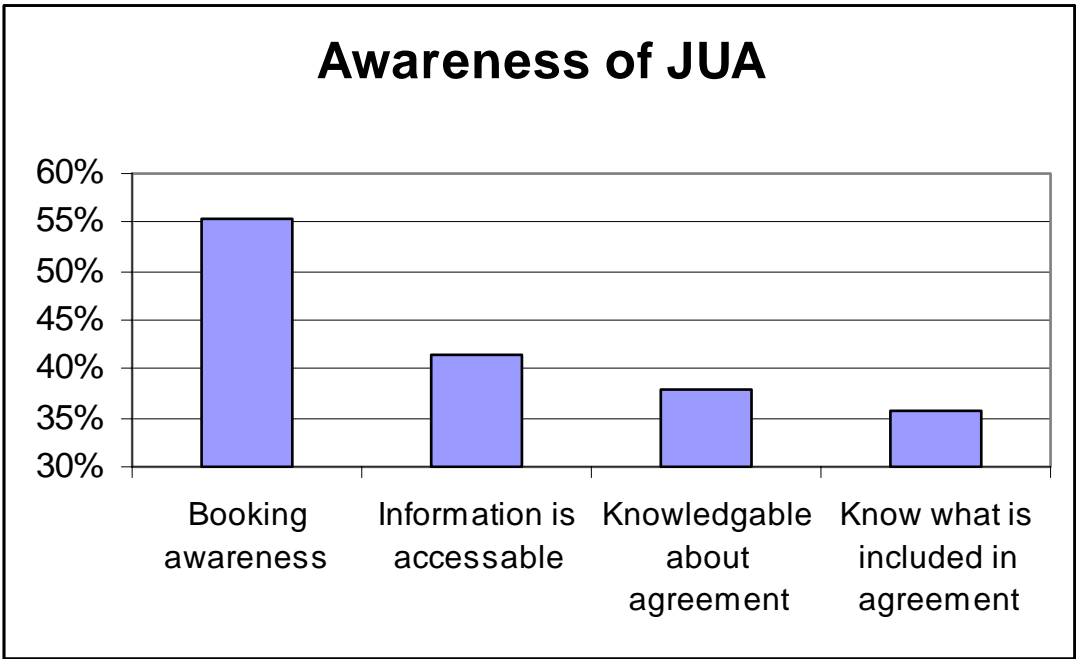
Question	Open Ended Responses
Q16: In what ways could we improve access to school facilities?	50%
Q27: In what ways could we improve access to city facilities?	22%
Q38: In what ways could we improve access to sport fields?	23%
Q48: What suggestions do you have for alternate funding?	30%
Q49: Please enter any other comments you may have below.	35%

Verbatim survey responses are included in Appendix 2.

All agreement scores are based on the percentage of respondents that either “agreed” or “strongly agreed” with survey statements. Respondent who said that they “didn’t know” were not included in the calculation of the percentage of agreement. A listing of survey questions is included in Appendix 1.

Knowledge of Agreement

Respondents were asked to report on their knowledge of various aspects of the Joint Use Agreement. The chart below reflects their responses.

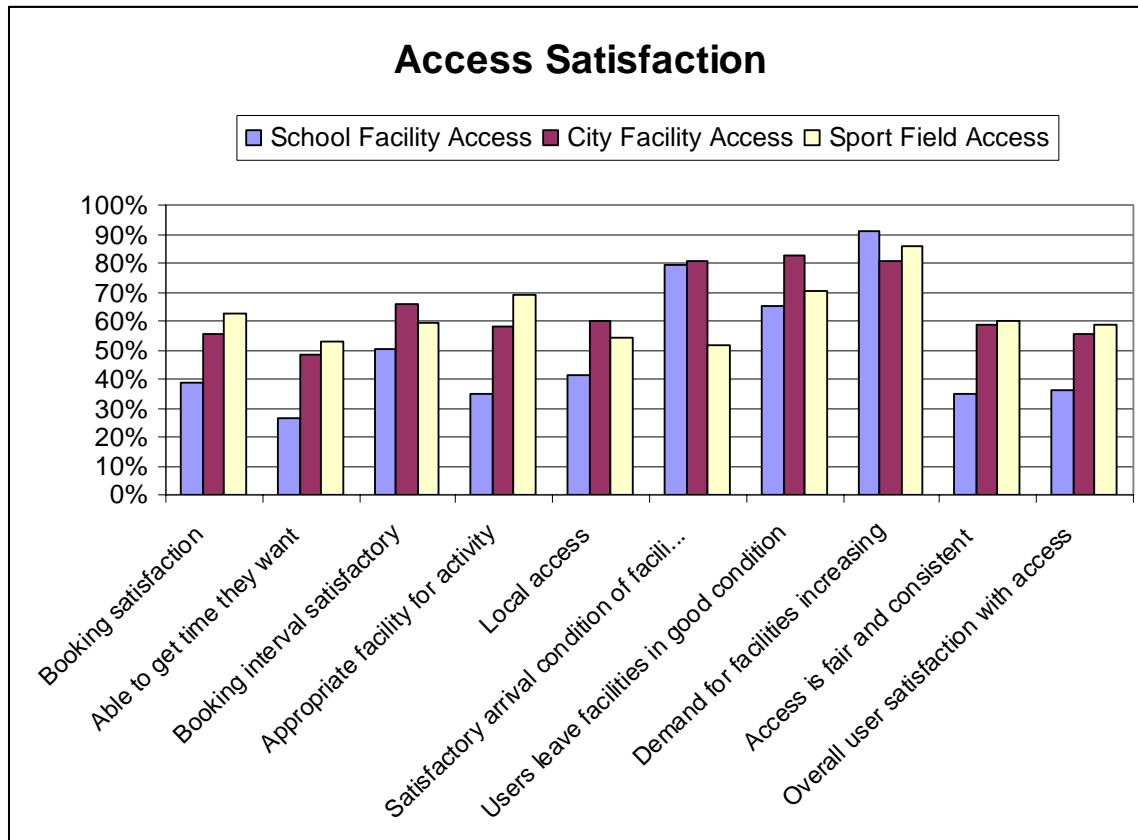


Access

The survey asked questions in the major theme areas of **Access** and **Funding**. In the *Access* category the same set of ten questions were used for 1) After hours access to schools, 2) School access to City facilities, and 3) Access to sports fields. The questions, and scores were as follows:

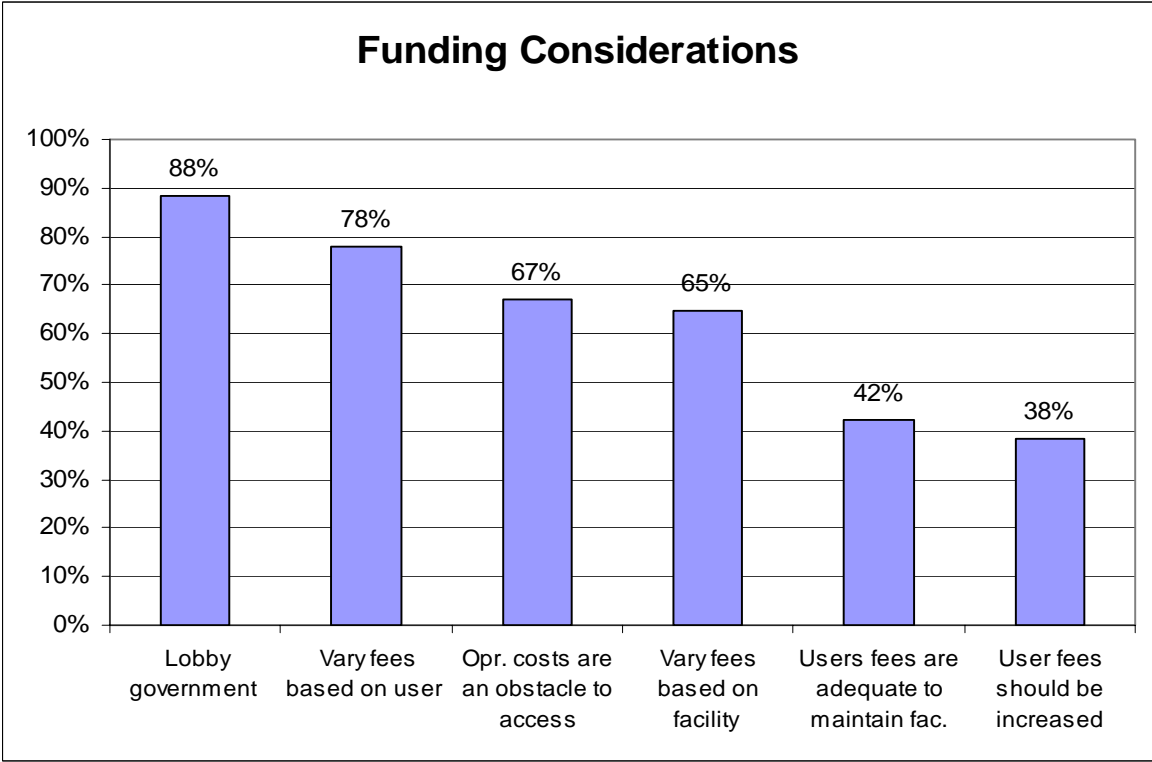
Access Summary	School Facility Access	City Facility Access	Sport Field Access
Booking satisfaction	39%	55%	63%
Able to get time they want	27%	48%	53%
Booking interval satisfactory	50%	66%	60%
Appropriate facility for activity	35%	58%	69%
Local access	42%	60%	54%
Satisfactory arrival condition of facilities	80%	80%	52%
Users leave facilities in good condition	65%	83%	70%
Demand for facilities increasing	91%	80%	86%
Access is fair and consistent	35%	59%	60%
Overall user satisfaction with access	36%	56%	59%

The chart below shows this data in graphical form:

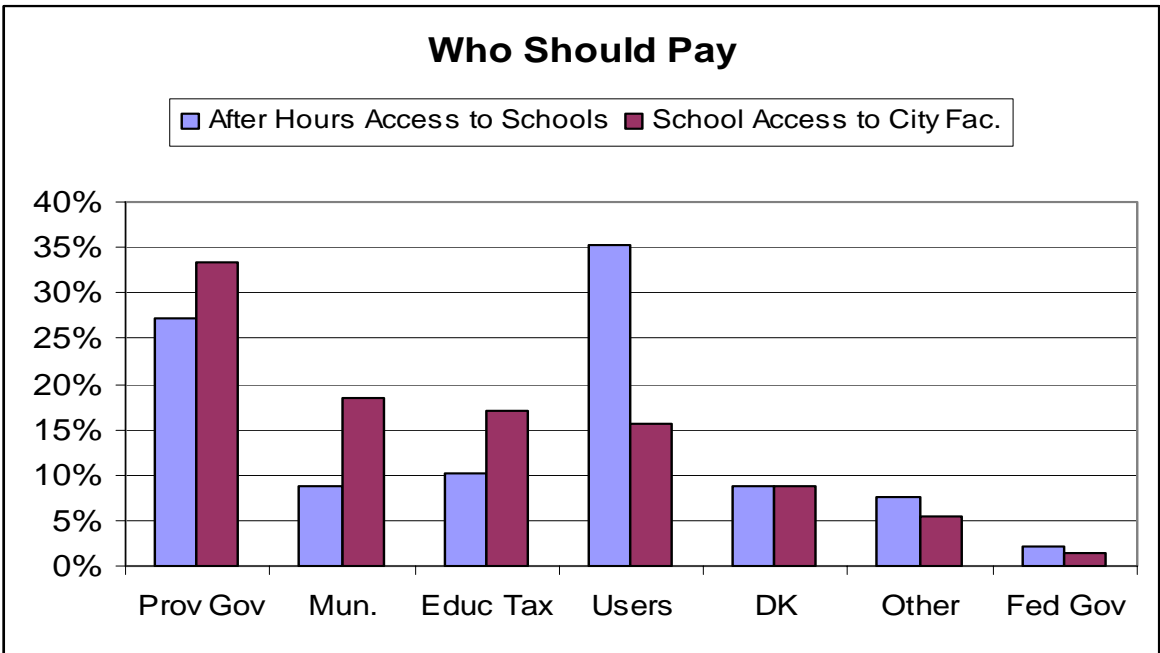


Funding

Questions about funding issues were responded to as follows:

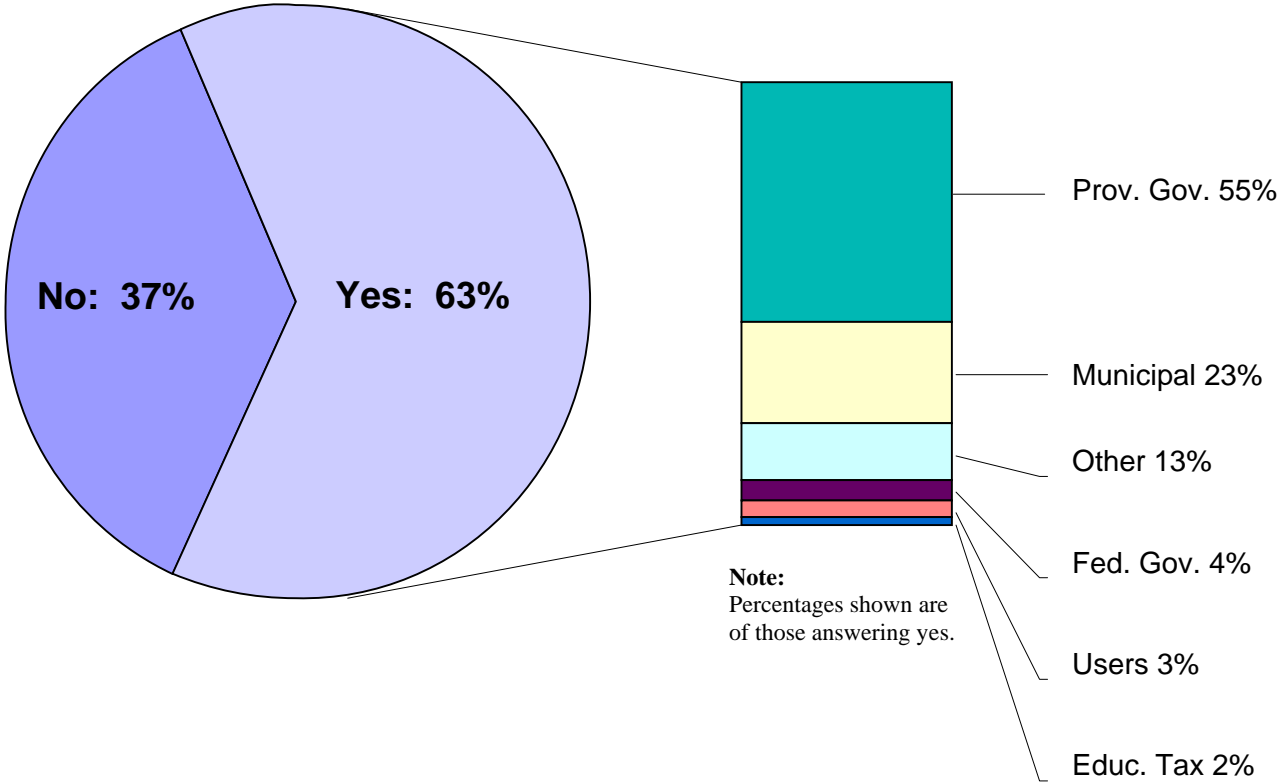


In the funding section, respondents were also asked whom they thought should be paying the majority of costs related to 1) After hours access to schools and 2) School access to city facilities.



Subsidization

Respondents were asked if they supported the subsidization of remaining user fees (given that the majority of fees are publicly funded). The majority (63%) reported that they did support subsidization. The graph below shows the percentage in favour, and also a breakdown of who they think should be doing the subsidizing.



4.0 General Observations

Awareness

Respondents to the survey do not appear to have a high awareness of the JUA. Scores for knowledge on what is included in the agreement is particularly low at 36%.

Access

Key themes from public discussion forums and survey results identify dissatisfaction with access, particularly with after-hours access to schools. There is near universal agreement of an increased demand which creates more stress on the existing facilities. However, other key factors such as incompatible facilities with user needs, and booking inefficiencies were also cited as problem areas leading to low satisfaction levels with after hours access to schools. The survey findings support the discussion forum input where respondents reported a lack of consistency in access to school facilities with no uniform or well communicated set of principles.

Funding

Respondents acknowledge that funding constraints have a direct impact on access. While there was relatively low support for increasing user fees, there was strong support for lobbying the provincial government for funding support.

Subsidization

Even though the majority of user fees are publicly funded, respondents overwhelmingly supported the subsidization of user fees. When asked who should fund the subsidization the majority of respondents suggested the provincial government.

Appendix 1 – Survey Questions

JUA Survey Questions

- Q1: Which of the following best describes your involvement with Joint Use Facilities?
Q2: Users have a good knowledge of the existing agreement and its policies for Joint Use
Q3: Information about how the Joint Use Agreement works is easily accessible
Q4: Users are aware of the process to book facilities
Q5: Users know which facilities are included in the Joint Use Agreement
Q6: The current booking process for schools works well
Q7: Users are able to get the time period that they want at school facilities
Q8: The advance booking interval for schools is acceptable
Q9: Users are able to get the school facility that is appropriate for their activity
Q10: Users are able to access school facilities in their geographic area
Q11: The condition of school facilities upon arrival of users is satisfactory
Q12: Users leave the school facilities in good condition
Q13: The demand for school facilities is increasing
Q14: Access to school facilities is fair and consistent
Q15: Overall, users are satisfied with after hours access to school facilities
Q16: In what ways could we improve access to school facilities?
Q17: The current booking process for city facilities works well
Q18: School users are able to get the time period that they want at city facilities
Q19: The advance booking interval for city facilities is acceptable
Q20: School users are able to get the city facility that is appropriate for their activity
Q21: School users are able to access city facilities in their geographic area
Q22: The condition of city facilities upon arrival of users is satisfactory
Q23: School users leave the city facilities in good condition
Q24: The demand for school use of city facilities is increasing
Q26: Overall, school users are satisfied with access to city facilities during school hours
Q27: In what ways could we improve access to city facilities?
Q28: The current booking process for sports fields works well
Q29: Users are able to get the time period that they want at sports fields
Q30: The advance booking interval for sports fields is acceptable
Q31: Users are able to get the sport field that is appropriate for their activity
Q32: Users are able to access sports fields in their geographic area
Q33: The condition of sports fields upon arrival is satisfactory
Q34: Users leave the sports fields in good condition
Q35: The demand for sports fields is increasing
Q36: Access to sports fields is fair and consistent
Q37: Overall, users are satisfied with access to sports fields
Q38: In what ways could we improve access to sport fields?
Q39: User fees should be increased (or implemented) to support additional staffing of facilities to increase access
Q40: User fees should vary based on facility size and features
Q41: User fees should vary based on types of groups (e.g. discounted rates for youth groups)
Q42: User fees are adequate to maintain facilities
Q43: Increasing costs of operating facilities has become an obstacle to access
Q44: The provincial or federal government should be lobbied for funding
Q45: Who do you think should pay the majority of costs relating to after hours access to schools?
Q46: Who do you think should pay the majority of costs for schools to access city facilities?
Q47: Considering that in many cases the majority of operating costs are publicly funded, do you feel that remaining user fees should be subsidized?
Q47a: Who do you feel should subsidize user fees?
Q48: What suggestions do you have for alternate funding?
Q49: Please enter any other comments you may have below:

Appendix 2 – Survey Open Ended Responses

Q16: In what ways could we improve access to school facilities?

- Better parking
- If there is a history of use, like before JUA, we would just renew the times & dates we had for the next year. It seems to be that everyone starts over each year. This is like reinventing the wheel. In our community there were 3 schools within walking distance for our children to use. But now the schools are not even available to us. Before joint use, if we understood if we had 8 teams involved & they were only allowed 1 1/2 hours each per week, then that was it. We had built up times in our community schools - renewed yearly & could plan on having enough practice time. We had to see what was available & last year only had 2 practice times in one of our local schools. Was it fair to take all the times away and start over again & again – NO.
- Have some way to book the facilities on a casual use basis, not just for programs. If there are times available, make it know to the community.
- Common booking system for all schools, access to all schools. Individual schools should not be allowed to "opt out" of the agreement.
- One centralized booking process that allows users to see available spaces in real time. If it were financially feasible, it would be an advantage for communities if more schools could be accessed. (Currently some schools are unavailable due to budgetary constraints and custodial issues.).
- Holding dialogue with community groups to inform them of the process, challenges, and parameters around utilizing the facilities.
- Depending on which principal you either do or do not have access to their school
- By allowing children, youths and adults to access school gymnasiums for indoor soccer practices.
- Better communication of what is involved in booking of space. Many users have expectations for a level of service that is impossible to meet at no cost. Schools only receive tax dollars to provide education for grades K-12. NO ONE is funding after-hours access.
- I think users need to be more accountable for the use of a facility so that schools wouldn't be as reluctant to allow their facility to be used. People disregard requests to help keep the school clean - they bring beverages into gymnasiums and don't remove their footwear. Perhaps if they had to pay for the cleaning that needs to be done after using the facility they would be more careful.
- The staff at Edmonton Public Schools is awesome and makes the process easy.
- More schools available on the weekends in my area of the city.
- Open schools on weekends. Hire more workers to accommodate community needs.
- Provide funding to allow schools to be open longer hours and on the weekends.
- Allow activities, perhaps with damage deposits, that can only be held in these facilities (adult indoor soccer practices are no more damaging than minor team practices)
- All the leaders of the group users could be supplied with a copy of their responsibilities towards the facility
- Allow local groups to use their local schools first. Then allow groups from outside the area in. Remind the schools and the school boards that the schools are not "owned" by them - they are the communities and taxpayers property. The use of schools should go beyond just allowing games and sports in the schools - they should return to being the centre of the community where everyone is welcome and it is the education centre for each community.
- Provide staffing to keep buildings open for longer hours with \$ not coming out of the education budget.
- We get locked out occasionally. We have been cancelled without notice. We have been cancelled on short notice.
- One booking system, after-hours custodial staff paid from central agency not each individual school
- More Schools should participate in the JUA.
- Open up more schools for use. In our area of town 3 good schools are closed to user groups and sit empty. Have groups that don't require gymnasiums use other community buildings - churches, halls etc.

- Create hosts to make single custodial schools available
- Have more schools open to community use. Especially downtown.
- Why is it when our school is too small to accommodate large events (such as Xmas Concerts) we are forced to book our sister school in the community for a fee? To add to the frustration, the booking process was a nightmare!
- Access to the schools is getting harder. The schools say there is no funding to provide an attendant but the schools board representative says that the schools are funded for this type of activity. Being able to find out if and how the schools are funded so that we can address the issues of more and more schools closing their doors to us would be nice.
- Allow more schools to be used by groups. I know EBA has a difficult time finding gym space to use. They are often playing starting at 10:00pm. It would be beneficial if groups could access more Elementary schools for use, either after school or evenings. It's such a shame to see facilities sit when there are groups that would love to use them. I understand that there is a cost to have a custodian to monitor but most schools seem to have a custodian there at night anyway.
- Provide information to schools for their newsletters
- If there is more than one group in the evening allow time for cleaning from the 1st group and last group.
- I would like to have access to schools within the community or at least if two west end teams are playing they should have access to a west end gym
- Don't close off the gym usage for the whole month of Dec when the school has a Christmas concert for only 1 night in Dec. Why can't the school gyms be used in the summer months for activities for the summer for kids?
- If schools would allow use it would improve immensely. Currently it is always a chore to book a function within the school or property.
- For Community use not having a community building and having an agreement with Edmonton public in the 70's that they would share the facility and now we can't get access on weekends or days there is no custodian working.
- Allow variety of users in to facilities. Do not "block" out certain users.
- Seriously look at the schools where principals "opt out" and determine if that should be a total opting out or if at least a couple hours a day on Tues., Wed and Thur could or should be provided.
- Gain access to schools not currently participating in the JUA.
- Book later in the evening - until 11:00 - get both school districts on the same booking system
- It is very difficult because of after school teams.
- Treat all users groups equal - Sports should not be last for booking gyms. Home Community Sports Programs should have priority to using their school gym. If a Community League has an available Community Hall - Dance, Scouting etc. programs should be placed in those locations or in a different area of the school - empty class room, open area if available, art room if acceptable. Also Principals should not have the right to pick and choose what activities occur in the school gyms. When a family attends a school their taxes go towards that respective school system, and they sit on the Parents Boards however their kids cannot use the gym, because the Principal does not allow that activity in the school. If needed charge the user groups a small sum to cover some of the extra admin cost associated with having a school open after hour.
- Alberta Government needs to provide more funding to school districts that is directed for after hours; community users; schools do not have the funds to open schools without custodial time.
- Gov't provide \$ to support custodian staff for after hours use or let users help with facility clean up where possible. School cannot opt out because of lack of a custodian for the hours requested!
- Restrict access to the fields from none field use i.e. students crossing the fields to get to school and making a path. This makes the field unsafe
- The attitude of school principals is one of ownership; we have found that for every principal that takes an interest in the community, there are two that are not interested in working with anyone outside the school/parent council. It's all about attitude.

- By covering the cost of having a night janitor on so youth groups are not forced to fundraise to cover this cost or are forced to look for other facilities in which to hold their weekly meetings.
- Just 'access' would be an improvement. We have two schools in our community and we are unable to access one of them.
- Abolish your organization!!!!
- Use schools in the areas where the groups operate. Do not have two teams from Edmonton playing in Beaumont because that is the only school available. There should be playing in one of the two teams areas. Do not allow the school to invoke last minute cancellations of gyms. This plays havoc with the league schedules and in turn people's lives and their scheduling.
- Improve the access to school facilities
- Schools have to stop charging fees - the booking process is cumbersome, and for many immigrant/refugee communities frustrating. Make it simple and friendly.
- Subsidize schools for use, to pay for custodial time, encourage use of hosts if CBAs will permit it.
- 1) The current agreement states that all bookings must go through the JUA. This is currently not always the case and in some instances we, as renters, have lost a rental night to an in school group that was not booked through the JUA, we weren't even informed of it ahead of time, and it could have been booked on another night when the facility was empty. If the JUA is going to help make access to the school fair and consistent then this needs to be addressed and perhaps enforced with school principals and custodians. 2) There are many youth groups who could and would make use of schools on weekends if allowed and practical. I can understand the need to have a school representative on site during such an activity, but to require it be a paid person at that time and not even allow a volunteer "chaperone" do the job is unreasonable. Our schools exist to serve and educate our youth. Let's make it work for them.
- Better promote that school facilities are available to community and sports groups.
- Between Late Sept and end of April we only had 14 dates available. In the past we usually have had 20. On the last date the school gym had other equipment set up so it was virtually unusable.
- Ensure all facilities are being used consistently and appropriately. Not all facilities are being used--especially schools. Before building new facilities--for sports--these schools must be utilized first.
- If user fees help offset the costs of using the school facilities, most organizations would probably be willing to pay in exchange for better access.
- We have a number of single custodian schools not being used because of overtime pay issues. There is available space but it is under utilized because we dispute who will pay.
- ALL schools need to understand how the JUA works and then open up their facilities so that the same schools are not 'hit' all of the time, even when they ask not to have a certain user group in their school due to lack of equipment, a history of misuse, etc.
- My school is very well used.
- Provide information to new community members related to joint use.
- More schools available
- Ensuring that users follow the rules and respect the space, leaving it as they found it would make schools more open to making space accessible.
- Why are so many schools (catholic that I am aware of) not usable? I have heard many excuses from principals in our area that there is no insurance, that no caretaker is on site at the time...
- Schools should have to make their gym facilities available to community users as they are public buildings and should be able to be used by the public. Too many schools sit empty and idle because the Principal will not authorize their after hours use.
- It would be great if there was an on-line way to show which schools were available and when. We could work our activity times around availability hours. Confirmation before the end of June would be ideal too, to help us communicate with the kids when and where the Fall training would take place. Transparency about WHO actually decides which groups can have access to the schools or not. Is it the school or the JUA booking officers. Both have blamed

each other for not accepting our bookings. Ideally, where a school / the city decides not to allow access to a given group, and subsequently allows access to another group for the same time slot, a written explanation should be required to address any concerns of potential discrimination on the basis of the group's activity. Weekend availability is also a concern. We used to have access on weekends to our community school for a decade that are now totally unavailable to us (this drives up competition for weekday evenings too). Why are weekends unavailable? This eliminates about 50% of available time during the week for community access to schools. Raise the rates if you need to. We'd pay increased costs. And the excuse that a host is needed for the school is silly. There could be a community member post a bond or be a guarantor to ensure school access. Most of our students in our program are community members whose parents are PEngs, Phds, physicians, etc.

- Make sure the school is clean before use
- City should compensate schools for any costs associated with their custodial staff. Users should post a deposit with schools to pay for damage and/or mess left by users so that the schools are not paying the cost out of their budgets.
- Provide some mechanism for schools (individ school admin) themselves to consider certain requests.
- It appears that some groups have better access to schools if they know someone who works in that particular school.... How can you make the booking system fair to everyone?
- When schools have custodial staff, they are usually willing to let groups use the school for safe, non wear-and tear activities. Unfortunately, user groups add extra wear and tear to a school- room used/hallways/ washrooms/ etc. With limited dollars for custodial staff, there are fewer hours after school that schools can afford to have staff working. With fewer dollars and less repairs to schools, we sometimes do not want additional wear and tear at the building. Perhaps if schools received dollars to re-surface gym floors, clean up hallways and washrooms, schools would be more open to user groups!
- Available hours are not being utilized in that school use hours booked are not necessarily used and therefore go without having any activity in those time periods. Maybe some consideration should be given to short notice for available times that are cancelled by users or school use.
- By allowing the not for profit community groups (who offer youth programs) primary access over the adult groups. Providing additional incentives to schools who offer access to the not for profit community groups.

Q27: In what ways could we improve access to city facilities?

- Maps
- I don't even know what we can use as part of the JUA. Make it known.
- Special programs like the hockey academies are good, but they should pay the same rate as other minor hockey programs. Other sports should adopt this model to use under utilized daytime hours and reduce the demand for new facilities – swimming
- As more and more schools seek to access facilities, an historical use agreement may be necessary. There should also be a process in place to determine if groups that meet curricular requirements are accessing facilities. As a further advantage for school use, and ultimately for student education, it would be valuable for schools if Edmonton Transit were part of the joint use agreement.
- From my viewpoint the city rec facilities are used extensively from Sept - June by the Phys Ed dept. This is good for the students to get a good education in arenas and pools. However the facilities are taking on the operating costs within the operational budget with no source of revenue to accompany this facility usage. Only when the schools book lessons do we get to charge for the instructor wages. Lifeguard wages are not accounted for. The programmers spend a large amount of time on school bookings again with no compensation. The few times I have booked the schools I have been billed for the labor for the janitorial staff as it was on weekends and nights.

- Booking system is clunky way too wordy not user friendly at all would like to see more use of pools for fitness classes for students
- Coordination of city facilities hours with school hours. Right now a school has trouble booking swim time in a pool because the start and end times do not match school class times. You either have to book an entire afternoon to do the activity or pass on the opportunity. Transportation for elementary students to city facilities is another problem due to increasing costs for busses. Free buss passes or special charter rates would work wonders.
- I think some schools may have problems with transportation costs to use a city facility. As well, some of the students may not have the equipment needed (such as skates) to make use of city facilities. For schools in these situations, there is no benefit to make their school available for community use.
- Rapid transit
- Again, local schools get first access to local facilities before groups from outside their area. Specialized facilities are different and should be handled differently - unless they are the local facility for feeder schools, then they should be allowed first access for common facilities. They would then compete for specialized facilities same as anyone else.
- Absolutely no cost to schools for ice flooding and what have you!!!!!!!
- Have more schools open to access. The difficulty is one of supervision for those schools that do not have an evening custodian.
- Don't let one school book huge blocks of time; make a max so other schools can use the same facility in the same time period. High schools tend to get all the best times.
- Provide information about access in the local community papers
- Allow schools use to ALL city facilities, and perhaps priority use of Shaw Conference Center for graduating classes.
- Don't cancel all sports bookings during the month of Dec just because the school has a Christmas concert on 1 night in Dec. Why can't the school gyms be used in the summer months for kids activities...if parents pay for custodial services as part of the program fees paid for the activity?
- I think school would feel different about the joint use if they were utilizing the city facilities more.
- Paying customers get first booking rights.
- Just "access" would be nice. We have two schools in our community but are unable to use one of them and as a result we have had to cut back on the number of programs we offer.
- More info to the general public
- Allow all users to easily view (online) which facilities are available for booking and when.
- Swimming continues to be a problem in that schools are asked to pay for extra staff. This is punitive to smaller, lower funded schools.
- With the increase in sport academy schools, it is getting more difficult to access time during the day. In addition, the larger problem is some high schools bulk booking full days and/or weeks to ensure they get access to rinks and pools and then they do not even access them. They are booking them in the spring for the following school year, based on the number of classes projected for the upcoming school year, but that puts the smaller schools like Jr. Highs & Elementary at a huge disadvantage.
- A more equitable way of distributing ice time to elementary schools would be appreciated.
- Be sure that new programming and events are distributed to schools and community members
- City facilities booking should be easier and on line to be more efficient.
- We have not booked city facilities; therefore have no comment on this section.
- Clean them up
- When a user group gets access to a school, the user group should follow the agreed contract--- I have had groups leave later than arranged and then custodial assistant does not get away from work on time (e.g. user group until 7:00/ custodial assistant completes shift at 7:15 pm. Courtesy from the user group would be appreciated and I might consider having the user group return for the next contract period requested.

Q38: In what ways could we improve access to sport fields?

- Better roads
- Have younger users share small spaces.
- Seemingly to hard to book practice time, appears most teams/ coaches don't
- By identifying directly, with numbers, the various sports fields on any complex rather than having to rely on a map. Sports field should be checked for dangerous materials i.e. glass, needles etc.
- The demand for sports fields is not increasing in the same manner as for gyms. I feel that there is an increased demand for premium fields and enhanced sites.
- Improve conditions at all community fields to free up the 'good' ones. \$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$!!
- Portable washrooms at Confederation Park would be great. It's a long ways for little ones to run to Confederation Pool.
- The only experience I have with sports fields is through Millwoods soccer. But I question why both of my kids Lakewood team have home fields on the other side of Mill woods. Velma Baker is nowhere near Lakewood so why would this be their home field. Having home fields in the community of the team would be nice.
- Difficult to maintain soccer fields in good condition with our weather but some are in terrible shape...
- Aerate sports fields. Better marking of soccer fields (i.e. white paint, not dark blue). Water fields when extremely dry.
- Better utilization and management of current fields. Fields need to be looked after. A plan for maintenance might be a good start.
- A lot of positive work has gone into facilitating sports fields. We appreciate that. The problem is that in new areas where there are no schools, the sports fields are severely limited. Perhaps the city could fast track fields in new communities.
- Both school districts need to be on the same booking system
- Scrap the 100% roll over, cut back to 75% retainment. Have the roll over field meeting the first week of April instead of March. I don't understand why entries to the system were so late this year. The city had the information March 23, and new requests were not processed till end of April first part of May. Today is May 6th and I still do not know if I have received any of my new requests for the season, and yes I have asked for them.
- In certain sections of the city, there seems to be priority given to adult groups over children's. I think children's use of ball diamonds and soccer pitches should be given priority over adult users.
- More fields
- Make the booking process simple & friendly.
- Remember that sports fields are an integral part of student access to open space for active and passive play, be it curriculum driven, DPA use or informal play such as at recess.
- Better promote that sports fields could be available for booking by parent groups (e.g. a group of parents could take shifts (John gets Monday night 6-8pm, Sue gets Tuesday night...) in watching the neighborhood kids play
- Fields are not maintained, they are in very poor condition (rough, unfinished) and some are poorly designed (overlapping soccer fields for example. The worst problem is maintenance and quality of the field itself.
- Schools need to take better care of the sports fields during the day for example obeying field conditions like when they are too wet to be played on for things like soccer, rugby...are they too wet for PE classes who are doing the exact same activities? Perhaps it is not with the same intensity, however, with the greater number of classes throughout a day accessing the same fields, wear & tear would be comparable.
- Inspection of city fields prior to seasonal usage should be done. We have found 2 large sand filled pits in the middle of center field on one of our diamonds. I have requested a different field. This is a danger to our players.
- Provide garbage cans at all sports fields, schools and facilities to discourage littering. Provide new community members with location of information related to booking fields.
- We have not had to book sports fields, therefore no comment.

- Watering and reseeding in goal post areas.
- The process perhaps needs to be revisited however the booking staff do an excellent job at assisting as best as possible.
- Hire more staff during the 'crunch' time so that inquiries can be handled...I waited for 2 weeks to get a response to a question. Improve the field inventory so that there are more fields available...perhaps reconfiguring some smaller fields so that they would be appropriate for adult groups.
- Do not book city sports fields.

Q47a: Who do you feel should subsidize user fees? [Other]

- Users should, not other users
- Alberta Gaming
- Municipal and provincial govt. subsidy
- All/any level of government
- Education & municipal taxes
- Combination of all of the above
- If it is a sports use group using the facility - various forms of gov't should help subsidize the cost the big push is physical activity so help make it affordable. If it is a non-sports user groups that may want to be considered to have different funding.
- City & Province
- A formula probably needs to be looked at

Q48: What suggestions do you have for alternate funding?

- The Province should pay for the school use, as it is part of the curriculum. They should also increase either the subsidy to the municipality to operate so cost can remain reasonable or they should direct more funding directly to minor sport to help cover costs.
- Could some efficiency be gained by having custodial staff work for both the city and the school board? For example, could a user group subsidize (at the school level), the cost of custodial staff? If this were the case, more administrators may look at user groups as a benefit rather than a potential liability. Could some efficiency be gained by having some school staff able to do supervision, or maintenance of community facilities? For example, could school staff act as lifeguards if they are properly certified, or clean ice surfaces if properly certified?
- Other than gaming funds the burden of user groups should not be shouldered on the general public.
- Possibly corporations that can add value back to the community. Policy driven muni, fed, prov to utilize all facilities to the maximum potential. All these facilities belong to the citizens. open access no extra costs or taxes or transferring of money back and forth Not
- Allow sport and cultural organizations to assess provincial grants or lottery funds to pay for access to facilities. Or allow school districts to apply for the same funds for after-hours access.
- There needs to be funding at a Provincial level for low income children. Otherwise, users should pay.
- I don't. The society needs to underwrite the activities improving the health and well-being of all its citizens - at all ages, not just its children
- Funding of both schools and city facilities should be based on the total user time periods and not just the specific time period (i.e. school hours).
- The school cleaning staff is working until 10PM, which is the end of booked activities. What are we talking about? A class going to the Space Science Center or a class using a sports

field. If our badminton club has to raise its fees to pay the rent we will probably lose players. This year we had a low turnout as it was.

- Private Business and gaming funds
- Provincial and municipal governments
- Provincial funding, increase in user fees, increase funding for education as the provincial gov't changed the phys ed curriculum.
- I think as the government is pushing for daily physical activity it should be funding access to public school gyms
- Approach the Municipality; Provincial & Federal governments with a proposal about having the students do community work in exchange for opportunities. IE Have students pick up garbage on a public area the garbage turned in would be exchanged for swim lessons, skating time etc. Or working with the senior population/disabled population. This way the children are being taught to give back to the community and they are responsible for the contribution vs. the parents having to go work bingos or do casinos....
- Joint fundraising between schools and community leagues. If some leagues are small possibly join up with other leagues.
- User pay. If I wanted to book a city or school facility I should pay for the costs associated.
- Ask Premier Ralph to put his next \$400 rebate into sports and fitness - and the facilities they need - instead of the pockets of Christmas shoppers.
- With funding it is important that youth have access for next to no charge and have the adult groups make up the difference. (Our group is an adult group)
- Personal Tax deductions for purchasing city access cards to use city facilities. Personal tax deductions for booking and using city facilities. This way an individual would have a vested interest in maintaining a facility and keeping it upgraded and operating, as they would receive something back for having to pay a fee to use a facility that was built using their taxes to begin with.
- Provincial budget surplus Lottery grant money
- The government wants to promote fitness to reduce medical cost in the province and the only way to do this is to keep out facilities and fields in good and safe condition
- Provincial Grant money that is currently restricted to capital expenditures.
- Force facilities to look at cutting their operating costs such as labour. Some staff are too well paid.
- Cut the expenditure, there is just one taxpayer!!!!!!
- Funds rising, organize by the community people.
- The federal and provincial governments should support access and use of school/City facilities and sports fields.
- Corporate sponsorship for youth groups.
- Where youth groups are concerned I don't think there should be any user fees involved. Particularly volunteer run groups. Our schools exist to serve and educate youth, why make it inaccessible to youth groups. User fees for schools would end many youth programs. Increased user fees for many camps have put an end to those camps. Let's make it work for our youth.
- Continue to lobby the federal and provincial governments. (It is extremely unfair for Canada's major cities to bare the costs of these recreation facilities, as these facilities are a major part of the solution to Canada's child obesity and youth crime /
- We have too much fund raising already just to run the program; we can't continue if we have to raise funds to use available community space.
- Alternate funding has to be found to end the excuses for schools not being accessible to the community and to provide a small incentive (without trade-offs to education) for schools to play active roles in the communities. Volunteer groups should be used to help manage access to schools and we should lobby for some funding to support community use of schools.
- Currently most sports groups do their own fund raising to help with their costs, I believe this should remain as is
- Grants, lotteries etc.

- Lobby for money, have interested stakeholders donate, require users pay a portion of the costs
- Youth should be free and this should be subsidized by the city with the costs of staffing going to the city and the city or the groups using should also cover repairs of facilities.
- Maintain access for youth groups and user fees for recreation and adult groups.
- How come funding is such an issue? The school is built, presumably the heat is not turned down after school until the next day, and lighting costs should be minimal. If there are custodial costs or hosting costs, then this could be subsidized by the city or province, with an increase in user fees. Is it funding or simply unwillingness by school principals for a small extra bit of administration??
- Try to access some provincial gov't grants for improving/upgrading fields...leading to more activity and an overall healthier population.
- The rich province of Alberta should be able to allocate funds to provide opportunities for all interested children's groups to access all activities they choose supporting healthy active living and healthy nutrition/ avoid obesity. Children in poor families should have equal opportunity to children in higher income families.
- The majority of costs for after-hours coverage seem to be with having janitors at the facilities to provide necessary coverage. Because of demand for facilities it may be advisable to schedule shifts so that no overtime is required or hire extra staff to provide coverage at the facilities that coverage is required. By this I mean having a small pool of janitors that do now work at any particular school that can provide coverage where needed.
- Provincial and federal governments. Fees from adult after hours usage could be increased to subsidize the usage fees for the not for profit youth segments.

Q49: Please enter any other comments you may have below:

- Let's get the JUA revised and operational by July
- There has been much talk about getting our youth active. The facilities in the community should 1st be used by any community youth activity. Once those times are established, then access to these facilities can be handed out. The biggest problem is that not all the schools allow after hour access. The schools always talk about how important it is to work with the community they are in, but in many cases these schools are not even offered.
- If schools have to pay to use city facilities and then community groups have to pay to use schools, then it just becomes an administrative accounting exercise to swap the money around. In the end it all comes out of taxpayers' pocket, whether it's through education taxes, municipal taxes, or through other levels of gov't.
- Thank you for allowing comments and input in this process.
- Given the lack of information available to me it is very hard to make constructive comments that could help to improve the situation.
- I have been told there is more to the JUA than pools arena schools and sports fields. I am unclear on who is maintaining the sports fields. I have not the information to see the larger picture to see if there is a balance on the schools and COE in terms of costs and time spent on JUA. From my limited view I see COE taking on costs and effort that exceed what the schools are putting into this agreement. However I do see the service value of providing the Phys Ed. depts. with an extended Phys. Ed program. Without JUA some students may never have the opportunities afforded under the JUA agreement.
- Why are indoor soccer practices for children, youths and adults in school gymnasiums not allowed, especially, considering the number of people who play the game and need access to indoor practice facilities
- I believe in the JUA and that the main concerns are around how to best serve the public with limited tax dollars that are currently available. Solve the funding issues and everyone would be happier.
- Please remember that for schools to be an active part of the community, they need some access to their own building to promote programs that build that bridge.

- Good usable spaces should not sit underused. It is imperative that we don't allow our citizens to become couch potatoes!
- Remember - schools are the centre of the community and should belong to the community and not the principal or school board. Many user groups use City facilities, but availability for youth is the most important to me! They should have first access at all times!
- I recommend that gym rents remain close to what they are now. I have no opinion on other facilities.
- Money needs to be invested in allowing residents to access gyms/students to access city facilities in order to promote healthy and diverse lifestyles within our own local communities (without a huge drive)--preferably within walking or biking distance! It is unfair, I believe, to expect schools to pay for the "after hours" upkeep costs of gyms and/or meeting rooms out of their operating budgets, which are already stretched to meet classroom needs. This is why I think the provincial govt. needs to be more involved with funding this (if desired by the community and IF health/wellness is truly a priority). EASE of ACCESS (financially and geographically) makes a big difference to sitting on the couch or getting out and involved in the community programs.
- I like the web based survey approach as I couldn't make it to the public meetings
- With a province that has this much money at this time I think that user groups shouldn't have to pay anything. Community groups are already volunteering to keep people busy and involved in activities.
- The track and field pits in most school fields are a mess. They need to be cleaned up and maintained.
- The school boards should clearly identify funding for after hours community use of schools. The dispute between the schools, who claim they get no funding, and the school board, who claims they fund after hours activities, should not exist. Properly booked and organized there should be no need to pay overtime to staff (another obstacle cited by the schools) so that there is attendance on site. For that matter a security company could be hired to open and monitor the facility at a much lower cost.
- We have such great facilities in our city. If we really value our kids and want to encourage them to be active we need to allow them access to our gyms. I would love to see more "fun" sports. I think participation is really what it's all about. Kids unfortunately must become so sport specific these days if they want to compete they are being shortchanged. They need to be able to go to a gym and learn basketball, volleyball, floor hockey, etc. It doesn't have to be set up as a "competitive" environment that must see 100% commitment or they can't compete. We seem to wonder why our kids are becoming burnt out, overweight and depressed. Let them play, have fun and enjoy themselves!!!!!!
- As a school, access to swimming pools and arenas is very important and joint use agreement works very well...
- Education is SEVERELY UNDERFUNDED. When money changes hands, it becomes a business. All users and facilities should be on 100% cost recovery basis. Tax dollars built schools for education use, not after hour's recreation.
- I think it is a shame that children have to practice late at night 8:30 to 10:00 to get available gym time or that two west end teams have to play a Saturday basketball game in North east Edmonton because there are no available gyms in the West end.
- Some of your questions (or all) are asked I am assuming thinking that the person completing the survey knows what the JUA says now. That is not the case. I also think that some of the questions are ambiguous in that it is not clear if the questions are directed to the school or the city facilities. In that case the results would not be accurate. I am not clear either about how the payment is fair between City facilities and the school usage.
- I don't think it should be up to individual principals to choose if their gym is used somewhat or a lot by sports groups. There should be a standard criterion of usage put in place and principals have to comply with the standards. My son has had his soccer practices cancelled on many occasions at very short notice and no replacement times were given. In my past experience on Parent Councils it seems some principals just don't like evening bookings by sports groups and try everything to cancel the bookings for no apparent good reason. Why is

the access to school gyms not a standard usage? We have these facilities and should use them!

- I believe that for sports fields that all user groups should pay for booking fields, including youth or minor sports programs. Albeit at a much lower cost to youth groups. The reason is that it places a sense of worth/value on the time and space; otherwise it is easy to monopolize time and waste time. I also think that it is somewhat difficult for a new group or program to access or get information regarding booking of facilities and fields. Lastly, I would like to see a section of the community services website strictly dedicated to the joint use agreement and school access. I think that a lot of schools decide on their own accord what if any hours are available for outside bookings. Setting an established priority of school space availability that is more consistent would be beneficial to all, ie. Priority #1: School Events & Teams Priority #2: Local Community League sponsored programs Priority #3: Minor sports groups Priority #4: All other groups
- Special consideration with regards to user fees should be given to user groups who serve persons with disabilities. I strongly feel that these groups whose members are all on, for the most part, very limited fixed incomes should not need to pay a user fee, and bookings need to be confirmed for the next season in April, May or June instead of much later as it is now.
- I am very pleased that this issue has been brought to the table. I am happy that it has the attention of The City of Edmonton Civics Committee, EPSB school board members and ECS School board members. Together, through thoughtful, intellectual discussions we should be able to develop a system that works and fulfills the needs of the communities and groups involved.
- I think it's paramount for the Province to step up and encourage active and healthy life styles for youth and providing facilities for this purpose would be a very positive move in that direction.
- The Joint Use Agreement is a great thing and must be maintained. Schools must continue to obtain free access to city facilities under the Joint Use
- The problem I see is that there aren't enough facilities. We always lag the construction of proper facilities for new neighborhoods cause we are poor fiscal planners. If we build facilities in these area's people would move there and their property taxes over time would pay for it. We're so afraid to take on reasonable debt that by the time we do build, the cost has more than tripled and other issues that would not have existed come up. The city doesn't do enough to encourage corporations, individuals and government to partner into building sport facilities. We don't offer incentives and tax breaks to individuals and corporations to create new facilities. How hard would that be if the city would create a charity who's mission is to improve our recreation infrastructure for our future, for everyone's health and city's image. We all pay taxes and many of us give to charities, what's the problem with an individual deciding they want to donate to a charity that builds playgrounds, soccer fields, ball diamonds. It would be like a fast-track program. Money raised would be used to fast track facilities that the city realizes it needs in some area before they thought they would (like that never happens!). AND don't follow the misguided logic that we're taking money from another charity. People support things they believe in. If an individual doesn't believe in donating to cancer, diabetes, whales, trees or whatever, they won't. It's likely what would have been spent on a DVD, a quick supper out or a movie would now go towards a donation the individual believe in. Don't fall for that illogical, emotional argument. We also don't shame our provincial and federal government in their lack of foresight and lack of money for building the big multiuse facilities or providing the land- FREE! Why are we so timid? We're a million votes! Why don't we complain? Why don't we make a public fuss? Its our money!, we are their constituents. Its either we say something or the money is going to continue to disappear to support registries that no-one wants, ad agencies that don't advertise or create a welfare state out of the farming community. i just think its been proven well enough that there are positive, far reaching ramifications, for having an active community with active citizens in a city.
- I mostly have experience with the Joint use Agreement with leisure centers. I have observed that the criteria of one year in advance for the schools to book the facility, has not been efficient. Often schools are not showing up for their scheduled times because they over book

- because of the need to book a year ahead of time. And facilities are left vacant because schools aren't showing up. Shorten the amount of time that schools need to book in advance.
- Maximize public use of infrastructure in communities to maintain healthy active neighborhoods!
 - Regarding school use, there are issues with not having evening access because of janitorial issues. Regarding remaining user fees for sports fields, it was hard to decide because I have no idea what the average fee was. If it was nominal yes keep it, if it was substantial then, reduce it and subsidize more.
 - Especially in low to middle class communities, facilities must be affordable.
 - We had a better access to the schools before you created more bureaucracy!!!!
 - Many schools have eliminated weekend access to gyms yet still use the city facilities as much or more than they did in the past. Their needs to be funding in place so the school can keep the gyms open on weekends. One of the reasons they close them is the extra cost of the custodian.
 - The introduction of user fees by Schools has hampered volunteer initiatives of many smaller community organizations in Edmonton. In my opinion this community based grass roots initiatives should have been encouraged and supported because they contribute to the overall mandate of the school boards and the quality of life in our City.
 - The user fee question did not separate out youth groups from adult groups. Adult groups could pay higher user fees to improve on school access. This use and access should have no bearing on how many hours are available or provided to youth groups, whose use should remain free or at the lowest rate, with priority to time earlier in the evening. The province should pay for youth access and use directly to school districts on an hourly rate, as it would support many desirable youth outcomes in the province, covering numerous Ministries. This would include reduction in youth crime and encouraging healthy and active lifestyles.
 - Young people deserve a place in our society. the more we take away their place in society the more damage we do to society. Youth groups are a big part of it and to make schools inaccessible to youth groups would do a lot of damage to society as a whole. If we can't find a way to keep it affordable then we all lose.
 - Certainly sports leagues and community groups require access to these facilities. However, I'm more concerned with less formalized groups. For example, the kids on my street getting together for a game of ball hockey. Would this group have easy (& free)
 - We had the opportunity to run a weekend scout program, but could not get access to schools for overnight use (i.e. sleepovers for out of town participants) This caused the activity to be moved out of town (Devon, Wetaskiwin, Leduc) where there were no such restrictions and a community centre was also available for use.
 - Excellent relations between community groups, schools and the city and 100% utilization of all public facilities will determine success. School boards must commit with their hearts and a little bit of budget too. Community access should be seen as a deliverable for school facilities.
 - The JUA is an important partnership between the schools & the city of Edmonton. It is great to see so many user groups wanting to access the gymnasiums after hours but if schools do not understand the JUA and therefore come on board completely, the JUA could be in jeopardy. Also, kids should definitely be given priority to early time slots, however, if more schools would be accessible that would alleviate some of the congestion & the ridiculous time slots for adults. Perhaps it is time the government steps up to help pay for things like custodial support at smaller schools which is the number one reason schools do not allow user groups in.
 - I would like to see every school used for community joint use every evening and Saturday as well.
 - Buildings that don't sit empty during off hours are less likely to be vandalized or damaged. As a community group, we look after our schoolyard and school, but having been denied access to this area, we are no longer involved in keeping the playgrounds clean and the school looked after. It is unfortunate; the principals have chosen not to embrace this community spirit. Please, please fix this situation, as we need our community citizens to feel like they belong to a community. It helps us build healthy, happy and safe environments for everyone.

- I really do not know what to tell you but something needs to change to make it easier for all parties involved
- Have not accessed city facilities and or schools very much since moving here 4 years ago.
- With increased importance being given to participation in sports and with current facilities not adequate, the provincial government must look at ways in which to better support amateur sport especially in the area of infrastructure.
- More quality soccer fields in the city that can be accessed by everyone. field irrigation to improve existing fields. Better overall field administration on the part of the city...despite efforts to improve the allocation process, there still are problems. It is nice that fields you had previously are pretty well guaranteed for the next year.
- It is sad to hear that our children are not active enough to be their healthiest- as children are our future, we should support any endeavors to have our children healthy and fit. When they are healthy and fit, they can feel good about themselves (good citizenship), believe they can learn all things, and have a good/great life. It is up to our rich province to make this happen for this generation of children or they may not be as healthy as adults of today.
- We are a very small user group however we continue to loose more and more time each year to the extent that we are booking more and more time outside the joint user group and in most cases at higher costs.
- Demand for school gyms for Edmonton Youth basketball community use is on the rise while the supply and availability of school gyms to access is dwindling rapidly. The current booking system is flawed and needs to go back to the old system of allowing Communities to book the gyms they need based on their needs. Communities offering youth programs need to be placed ahead of adult gym users in terms of booking priorities so that communities can ensure that they can book gyms in their area.