
RESOURCE B

Components of a Tennis Strategy

Several municipalities across Canada have developed Tennis Strategies to guide their provision of tennis facilities and services to their residents. Tennis strategies typically examine the trends in tennis participation, the demographics of local tennis players, and the inventory and quality of existing tennis courts. By doing so a Tennis Strategy is able to provide short-term and long-term recommendations regarding the development of tennis services and facilities by a municipality or a third-party. Key stakeholders engaged in the strategy development process include: community tennis clubs, provincial tennis associations, and grassroots organizations that provide recreational programs in underserved neighbourhoods. Online surveys and public consultations are also conducted to ensure adequate feedback is collected from residents across the municipality. Provided below is a summary of the key components of a Tennis Strategy:

Tennis Participation and Demand

This section of the Strategy looks at the trends in participation at the national and local level. The frequency of tennis participation and behaviour of participants (seasonal, spontaneous, competitive etc.) are both examined. Local community tennis clubs will be able to provide detailed participation statistics that will help accurately estimate the size of the local tennis playing community. In addition, Provincial Tennis Associations may be consulted to identify emerging trends in tennis such as Progressive Tennis, Cardio Tennis, Touch Tennis etc.

Inventory of Courts and Needs Assessment

This section of the Strategy completes a comprehensive review of the availability of tennis facilities across the municipality. The total number of tennis courts are tabulated and the ratio of residents per tennis courts is calculated. This ratio is typically compared to a municipality's service delivery standard and level of service provided by nearby or similar in population municipalities. This data can also help assess the needs for courts, types of programs and types of usage. A municipality should also examine the quality of tennis courts (surface conditions, lights, and fencing) and the amenities (hitting walls, parking, and washrooms) provided to their residents. Lastly, the geographical distribution of public and private tennis facilities is examined to identify any underserved or overserved neighbourhoods.



Consultations

Consultations will typically begin with community tennis clubs to determine the needs of the local tennis playing community. Local community tennis clubs will provide insights on operations and capital improvements the municipality can undergo. Local clubs will also provide recommendations on how municipalities can work with clubs to grow the sport of tennis across all ages and abilities. Based on the comments and suggestions made by local clubs, municipal staff can develop an online survey for residents and/or conduct in-person public consultations at local community centres for residents. This will provide valuable input on the frequency of participation, participation behaviour, programming needs, facility needs, and evaluate the current level of service provided by the municipality. The consultation input can also be used to evaluate the consumer behaviour of residents – municipalities can propose a range of fees for covered courts and a range of travel distance to a covered court facility to examine what residents are willing to commit to for a covered court facility. This will enable municipalities to evaluate the market demand for covered courts. The consultation results can also be assessed alongside the community's demographic data, to review population growth data and other community composition data.

Recommendations

Based on the information collected through research, surveys, and consultations, municipalities will be able to identify key operational and capital improvements that will enhance their delivery of tennis services and facilities. Operational improvements will typically cover areas of tennis programming and partnerships with local community clubs, organizations and schools. Capital improvements will identify courts that need to be resurfaced, and may include capital investments such as lights, parking and a covered court facility. The operational and capital recommendations identified could then be divided into short -term and long-term priorities and actioned according to the municipality's specific policies and processes.

This overview was developed using the following Canadian Municipal Tennis Strategies:

1. Town of Milton Tennis Strategy – October 2009
2. The City of Coquitlam - Tennis and Pickleball Services and Facilities Strategy 2017 - 2037
3. City of Niagara Falls – Tennis and Basketball Service Delivery Review – November 2017

