

RESOURCE C

Performing a Needs Analysis

Understanding the need for a proposed year-round tennis court facility to meet community recreational and competitive needs is an extremely important first step in determining the viability of the new tennis venue. The needs assessment involves examining key data about the community, as well as tennis-specific information applicable to the local jurisdiction. The following pertinent information is usually available through municipal planning departments:

- Historic and projected population numbers by age cohort
- Household income
- Education status of community residents
- Existing and projected ethnicity of the community

Examining this information provides a base level of understanding of the existing community and what it should look like in the future.

The analysis should also take into account leisure trends in general and the specific trends related to tennis. General leisure trends can usually be found in recreation planning documents and specific information about tennis should be available through either Tennis Canada or the Provincial and Territorial Tennis Association. In combination, this information provides a window into where recreation service delivery will be going in the future and how this future will affect tennis.

A high-quality needs analysis should include a certain degree of public consultation. For general public input regarding the proposed project, a survey could be circulated through the municipality's website. Full more specific input, a survey to tennis enthusiasts could be distributed through a community tennis club or a local sports council. The survey should request input regarding the proposed project, including the likelihood of supporting the project, the probability of utilizing the year-round tennis courts and user fees sensitivity. Frequently, survey results are complemented by face-to-face feedback received through public meetings, focus groups or stakeholder interviews. A combination of these consultation methods usually provides useful direction regarding the public's attitude towards the proposed facility and offers insight into the propensity for its use.

The needs assessment should also include an environmental scan of the existing supply of tennis facilities available through public, not-for-profit and private sector providers. Where possible, using profiles of these facilities is helpful in gauging local interest in tennis activity.

In combination, these examinations and consultations will be helpful in setting the stage for a more detailed analysis of market conditions.



Photo Credit: Tennis Edmonton

