

# **Public Recreational Spaces Allocation Policy**

City of Burlington

Parks & Recreation Department

April 10, 2007

## **1.0 Policy Statement**

The City of Burlington (City) is committed to a fair and balanced allocation of public recreational spaces (facilities). The Public Recreational Spaces Allocation Policy (Allocation Policy) and the Parks and Recreation Department (Department) approved Facility-Allocation Procedures (Allocation Procedures) Will be guided by the principles and practices set out in the Allocation Policy Allocations will ensure the fair and balanced distribution of the City's facilities in compliance with the City's Leisure Services Policy, Community Development Policy, Gender Equity in the Allocation of Public Recreational Spaces Policy (Gender Equity Policy) and related policy requirements, strategic priorities and operational procedures. The allocation of Public Recreational Spaces will maximize the utilization of facilities and be approached in a consistent manner while being responsive to community need.

### **1.1 Authority:**

The authority for the Allocation Policy is gained through the City of Burlington Council and the Department (Report PR 05/07).

## 2.0 Contextual Definitions

The Allocation Policy applies to the Department and Users. The following contextual definitions will provide respective clarification in the application of this Policy.

**Users** - Any permit holder of public recreational spaces, organizations entering into a Joint Venture Agreement with the City, leaseholders of public recreational spaces and directly-delivered Departmental programs.

**Permit** - Refers to the document containing Terms & Conditions for exclusive use of public recreational spaces. Such Terms & Conditions include duration, requirements, cost, etc.

**Public Recreational Spaces (Facilities)** - Includes any facility or green space that is owned, operated, held by joint venture or offered for lease by the City. These spaces may include but not be limited to parks, sports fields, ice surfaces, pools, gymnasias and multi-use community meeting

**Recreation & Leisure Programs/Services (Programs)** - Refers to regularly scheduled activities (minimum of once per week and 4 repetitions) of a recreational, sport, leadership development, art and cultural nature as defined by the Department's Leisure Services Policy (e.g. structured programs, community leagues, camps).

**Program Development Framework** — A framework to develop, facilitate or directly deliver programs in facilities subject to the Council approved Allocation Policy.

**Allocation** - Refers to the (Department's sole right to issue permits to Users for access to facilities subject to the Allocation Policy and Allocation Procedures.

**New/Emerging Organizations** - Refers to organizations requesting access to facilities, meeting some or all of the criteria set out in Section 2.4 of the Allocation Policy. Programs/Services delivered must be new and unique to the City and are not currently being delivered. The status of new and emerging will apply for a maximum of 3 years.

**Burlington-Based** - Refers to an organization, group or individual primarily serving the Burlington community and meeting the criteria set out in Section 2.4 of this Policy.

## **2.1 Guiding Principles:**

Principles speak to "the rules of play" or the basic values, which the Department and Users will embrace in adhering to the Allocation Policy, to the extent that facilities are available:

### ***Benefits Focussed:***

- To actively support benefits of participation in recreation and leisure activities related to the health, wellness, social interaction and skill development of residents and economic benefits for the Burlington community.
- To encourage and maximize participation of Burlington residents in a diverse range of recreational and leisure activities within their community.

### ***Fair and balanced***

- To allocate facilities in a fair and balanced manner in order to sustain and enhance the availability of a range of accessible recreation and leisure participation opportunities for all Burlington residents.

### ***Flexible and Responsive***

- To apply and continually update the Allocation Policy and the Allocation Procedures to effectively respond to community need.
- To use a range of approaches, solutions and actions in the implementation of the Allocation Policy and Allocation Procedures.
- To facilitate and support flexibility, collegiality and consensus amongst Users and participants in the ongoing development and application of the Allocation Policy

### ***Reasonable and Achievable***

- To work with Users towards outcomes and solutions that are reasonable and achievable in ensuring the maximum utilization of facilities.

## **2.2 Scope and Linkages:**

### **Scope**

The Allocation Policy applies to facilities permitted through the Department.

### **Linkages**

The following Council-approved Policies and Departmentally approved Procedures have linkages to the Allocation Policy. Users are subject to all terms and conditions of these and other related and approved Policies and Procedures.

- a) Rates and Fees Document
- b) Gender Equity Policy
- c) Leisure Services Policy
- d) Permits - Terms and Conditions
- e) Ice Allocation Procedures
- f) Zero Tolerance Policy
- g) Special Events Application Procedures

## **2.3 Policy Deliverables:**

The effective allocation of facilities is an integral component of the City's Leisure Services Policy. The Allocation Policy therefore requires the Department to use consistent processes in its administration of facility allocation, to maximize the utilization of facilities, to work collaboratively with Users to ensure an appropriate range of program opportunities and to proactively plan for future facility needs.

**Consistent Processes:** The Department will implement the Council-approved Allocation Policy and Department approved Allocation Procedures in a consistent and transparent manner. Criteria to access facilities will be articulated through the Allocation Policy and communicated to Users. The Allocation Policy and Allocation Procedures guide staff's decisions, providing the tools necessary to manage community need in a fair and balanced manner, to the extent that facilities are available.

**Maximize Facility Utilization:** The Allocation Policy and Allocation Procedures streamline the process for submissions and response times for permit issuance, enabling Users to plan, develop and market their programs and enabling the Department to market underutilized space.

**Range of Program Opportunities and Pro-active Planning:** The Allocation Policy requires Users to submit information as set out in Section 2.5 of this Policy. Registration and Wait List information will assist the Department in completing each annual allocation cycle and over time, will inform the City's Community Leisure Facilities Plan document as well as current program delivery priorities.

## **2.4 Allocation Process:**

Users of Public Recreational Spaces are categorized as either being program providers or renters of facilities. The following sets out the specific category

definitions, User submission requirements and priorities and considerations the Department will use in determining its facility allocations:

### **2.4.1 Categorization of Users**

Requests for facilities from program providers and renters who provide programs, which are Burlington-Based, as defined in section 2.0 of this Policy will receive priority consideration.

#### ***Program Providers:***

- **Directly-Delivered Program:** A Program delivered directly by the Department
- **Contracted Service Provider:** Refers to an organization, nonprofit or profit, delivering programs on behalf of the Department with a Contracted Program Provider Agreement
- **Facilitated Service Provider:** Refers to an organization, nonprofit or profit, delivering programs in cooperation with the Department with a Service Provider Agreement.
- **Festival and Event Provider:** Refers to an organization, nonprofit or profit, planning and delivering community festival and events, subject to an approved Special Events Application.

#### ***Renters:***

- **Community Service Organization (CSO)** - Refers to a non-profit organization serving youth or adults and renting facilities for the purposes of delivering programs. The designation of a CSO will apply to those organizations meeting the following criteria:
  - a. Burlington-based;
  - b. Does not duplicate an existing program;
  - c. A CSO serving youth, has participants primarily under 19 years of age and maintains a minimum of 90% Burlington residency for all programs/leagues;

- d. A CSO serving adults, has participants primarily over 19 years of age and maintains a minimum of 80% Burlington residency for participants for all programs/leagues.
- **Other User:** Refers to an organization, non-profit or profit, renting facilities for the purposes of delivering programs and meeting the following criteria:
  - a. Burlington-based;
  - b. Maintains a minimum 75% Burlington residency.
- **Private Renter:** Refers to any other organization, group or individual requesting access to facilities. These opportunities could be either open or closed to the community.

#### **2.4.2 Allocation Request Submission Dates:**

Submission processes and deadlines will be communicated to Users in advance. Requests for facilities not received within stated deadlines and/or without the required documentation will only be considered after all other requests have been processed by the Department.

#### **2.4.3 Users Information Submission Requirements:**

The following documentation is required from Users requesting facilities for the purposes of delivering programs. Excluded from the requirements of section 2.4.3 are Private Rental requests. All other Users must submit the following as required and in a form that is acceptable to the Department:

- Insurance - proof of insurance with a minimum of \$2M in liability and general comprehension and have identified the City of Burlington as an additional named insured (annually);
- Articles of Incorporation confirming the organizations status as nonprofit or profit (as updated) (as applicable);

- Participation data including the previous year's registration by age, gender, level, residency, wait list, registration projections (as is specified by the Allocation Procedure);
- Name and positions of the Board of Directors (as updated) (as applicable);
- Annual Financial Statements (annually) (as applicable);
- Letters of Agreements/documents confirming the right to operate the program from a Provincial or National Governing Body (as updated) (as applicable);
- Confirmation that the organization's Constitution, By-laws and operating and risk management procedures are reviewed annually (as applicable).
- Other information as required by the Department.

#### **2.4.4 Allocation Procedures:**

Allocation Procedures include the formulas, mechanics and guidelines for the allocation of specific facilities. Facility types (e.g. Ice, Fields, Community Centres) vary by their programmatic nature and require staff to use facility-specific procedures to guide allocation decisions. The principles, priorities and processes set out by this Policy will be applied consistently in any Allocation Procedure approved by the Department.

#### **2.4.5 Prioritizing Requests:**

The following are the priority considerations the Department will use in reviewing requests for facilities:

- That the needs of the Burlington community are served with an appropriate blend of opportunities and choices to meet expressed community need, local demographics including age, ability, gender, etc., either directly delivered or those program/services offered

through Contracted Service Providers, Facilitated Service Providers, or CSOs as defined in Section 2.4 of this Policy.\*

- That the time of day, day of week and facility requested is appropriate for the age of the participant and content of the program proposed. Allocation Procedures will set out prime program times for each age group (child, youth, adult), and the programmatic mandate of each facility (ice, sportsfield, multi-use community centre) \*
- That special consideration be given to existing Users as well as New and Emerging organizations as described in Section 2.4 of this Policy where such consideration helps the Department build capacity in the community by supporting programs which address newly-identified need and/or high growth activities. \*
- That special consideration be given to Users with inequitable allocations as defined in the Gender Equity Policy. \*
- That Users must be in good standing with the Department (e.g. invoices are paid in full and on-time, the terms and conditions of permits are adhered to etc),
- That the use of facilities is maximized and annually approved revenues established in the Department's current budget, are achieved.

*"To the extent that facilities are available*

#### **2.4.6 Demonstrating Need:**

Users will be required to submit data annually including the previous year's usage and the previous year's registration as stated in Section 2.4.3 of this Policy. Requests for additional space by the Department and external organizations for the purposes of delivering new, enhanced or additional programs will be assessed using the previous 2 years actual registration figures as well as wait list data. Where there are no statistics available for new programs, growth and demonstrated trends in the program area will be utilized.

## **2.5 User Demand Greater Than Facility Supply:**

When demand for facilities is greater than the supply available, the Department will apply the following principles and consider the following actions:

### **Principles and Actions:**

1. Reasonable and equitable solutions;
2. Consistency with the Allocation Process;
3. Special consideration stated in section 2.4.5 of this Policy.
  - a. Users with inequitable allocations
  - b. New/emerging organizations
  - c. High growth programs.

### **Based on circumstances, the following actions may be taken by the Department:**

1. Allocate non-traditional times of day/days of week;
2. Reduce hours for Users based on the priority and criteria set out in Section 2.4 of this Policy;
3. Explore partnerships/sourcing strategies to increase the availability of alternate space where need exists;
4. Modify formulas and program availability as identified in Allocation Procedures;
5. Review actual usage of permitted hours in the previous year and reduce allocations based on any regularly unused hours;
6. Other actions as deemed appropriate.

## **3.0 Implementation and Compliance**

The Department will work with Users to develop an implementation plan to support the Allocation Policy, monitor compliance and report on its outcomes annually.

### **3.1 Implementation:**

Implementation of this policy will be completed through the collective efforts of staff and the Users. Meetings with Users will include discussions on, but not be limited to, educating all Users with respect to the policy deliverables, information gathering, determining roles and responsibilities and problem solving.

### **3.2 Compliance:**

This policy and subsequent updates will be communicated to Users through the Department. Efforts will be made to ensure that all Users who utilize public recreational spaces have a full understanding of the importance of complying with the Allocation Policy and subsequent implementation plans. Non-compliance will be dealt with promptly, and efforts will be made to work with the User(s) to rectify the situation. Continued non-compliance respecting the Allocation Policy may result in a revocation of allocated public recreational spaces.

### **3.3 Monitoring:**

1. The City will undertake an evaluation of the Allocation Policy after the full implementation cycle in each of its first three years to assess its effectiveness with Users and staff and to identify amendments.
2. Any proposed substantive amendments will be submitted to Council for consideration and approval.
3. The City will regularly monitor the effectiveness of the Allocation Policy.

### **Approval Reference:**

