

ICE ALLOCATION **Anne Robinson & Associates**

With a fixed asset such as an ice arena, there is sometimes more demand for ice, especially prime time ice, than there is availability. In the last decade many communities have re-visited 'traditional' allocation times, to ensure that there is both efficient use and equitable access for all members of a community. With so many municipal amalgamations, ice allocation has become even more challenging as the historical legacy usage patterns are rarely in harmony. The following is a general overview of the fears of ice users when amalgamation occurs, suggestions on ways to proceed when faced with this change; and important elements in developing a new Ice Allocation Policy. By way of example, charts comparing policies in both the former municipalities of Ottawa-Carleton and other Canadian cities are documented, along with the recently amalgamated City of Ottawa Facility Allocation discussion and their report to Council.

Understanding the Community's Fears and Concerns Regarding Facility Allocation

Faced with change due to amalgamation, ice facility users are generally worried about:

- **Loss of Time and Use** – 'outside groups', or those outside of the previous jurisdiction, may usurp historic allocations
- **Loss of Control** – community groups that once allocated facilities may no longer have this responsibility; old relationships not recognized
- **Loss of a 'Sense of Community'** – new processes may erode the pillars that created and supported a sense of community amongst citizens; 'volunteer' spirit may be reduced in the web of policy and process
- **Concerns Regarding the Process** – facility users want a simple, transparent, "people" process - not bigger, larger, bureaucracy
- **New Programs Will Affect Existing Programs** – under a 'new' and larger structure, new programs are sometimes promised; existing users fear the effect of new initiatives on existing ice allocations
- **Speed of Change** – user groups are very concerned about the speed of change; community groups need adequate time to both understand and implement any changes especially fees or time adjustments.



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To facilitate the development of a new Ice Allocation Policy, consider the following:

- **Understand the “historic” community-specific allocation traditions** – the newly amalgamated municipality must understand and acknowledge the importance of ‘historic’ patterns and the contributions of traditional ice users, many of whom feel that they have given significantly to their communities
- **Know Your Community** – staff should meet regularly with groups, get to know the leaders, understand the unique needs of the different user groups and the subtle geographic differences of the legacy municipalities
- **Work with the User Groups to maximize the use of facilities** – groups can often suggest a variety of ways to be more efficient in the allocation of ice and operation of the arena; working with the groups also builds an appreciation amongst users of each others’ needs and creates a synergy to work toward ‘win/win’ solutions
- **Avoid duplication of programs** – with the limited availability of ice time, ensure that there is not a duplication of efforts between groups and/or between City programs and groups
- **Build the new Policy with the Users** – meaningfully engage the users in the change process and the development of a new policy; with involvement comes understanding and commitment and in the end, a better policy and one that all will respect
- **Keep the Policy Simple** – it’s not the Canadian Constitution!! The Policy should be clear, comprehensive but simple
- **Consider the fact that ‘One Size May Not Fit All’** – while ‘harmonizing’ may be the ultimate goal, consider how vast the differences are and the need for ‘neighbourhood/ community-specific’ solutions; evaluate the ultimate policy purpose and consider phasing the implementation of changes especially with respect to fees and significant allocation changes
- **Resolve Conflicts Quickly** – there needs to be an appropriate, expeditious process to resolve conflicts amongst users and face-to-face resolution is preferred by user groups
- **Keep Score!!** - Monitor Usage and Satisfaction levels; engage ice users in the development of the monitoring process and in the monitoring; and keep the monitoring process ‘Simple’!



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Allocation Policies – An Example of the Diversity

With respect to Ice Allocation Policies in the former legacy municipalities of Ottawa-Carleton, now the City of Ottawa, considerable differences existed between the eleven urban, suburban and rural entities, as illustrated in the summary chart that follows.

- Gloucester, Ottawa, Nepean, West Carleton and Rideau had ice allocation policies
- Goulbourn, Ottawa, Gloucester and West Carleton worked with a formula for ice
- Prime time varied, rates varied, priority criteria varied, type of facility varied, jurisdiction and type of user varied
- The legacy policies included some or all of the following components: objectives, definitions, procedures, priorities for distribution, formula/ guideline.

COMPARATIVE ICE ALLOCATION POLICIES LEGACY MUNICIPALITIES of OTTAWA-CARLETON

LEGACY MUNICIPALITY Date of Policy	# of Arenas	Definitions	Priority for Distribution	Formula	Prime Time
Goulbourn Pop.~ 18,000	3	none	Public Skating Local Minor [minor hockey, figure skating, ringette, titans] Local Adult Township groups Local Schools Out of Township groups Carnival Ice	Minor hockey 1.5 hours per week per teams at subsidized rates	Mon-Fri. 4pm- mid Wkds 7 am-midnight
Gloucester Pop.~ 110,000	7	None Extensive Procedures	Prime Time Priority Users: 1. Public Skating City Teams 2. Cumberland Twp. Per agreement Gloucester Hockey Association Gloucester Skating Club Gloucester Ringette Gloucester Girls Hockey Gloucester Speed Skating 3. Adult Groups	Based on population, registration, utilization and participation patterns for prime time and non-prime time hours Have Guidelines for special events with priority to: 1. Gloucester Rec. & Culture 2. Minor sports 3. Adult 4. Carnivals	Mon-Fri, 5pm-10 pm Wkds. 7 am-10 pm
Kanata Pop.~45,000	4	Definition for preferred, shared and discounted hours, minor (17 and under) and adult	No Priority Distribution	No formula	Mlacak: Mon.-Fri 4-10 p.m Wkds. 7am – 10 p.m KRC (2) Mon.-Fri 5 and 5:30 p.m.-9:30 and 10 p.m Wkds. 7/7:30 am-9:30 10 pm
Nepean Pop.~120,000	7		Priority for Distribution Priority A. Municipally Operated Programs Public Skating Tournaments and Special events	No formula	Weeknights 4-11 pm Weekends 6 am 1 12 am



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			<p>Priority B: Community Youth Groups Nepean Girls Hockey Nepean Junior A Raiders Nepean Minor Hockey Nepean Ringette Nepean Skating Club Sledge Hockey Priority C Existing private Rentals Nepean Adult Hockey Schools Priority D: New Community Groups New Private Rentals Priority E: Non-resident groups Spring and Summer Priorities also listed</p>		
Osgoode Pop.~16,000	2	No Allocation Policy – Pricing Guidelines			Weeknights 5-10 pm Weekends 6 am- 12 am
Ottawa Pop.~360,000	11		<p>Priority in Regular Season</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Municipally operated or sponsored ice programmes • Junior A or B league and play-off games/ minor ice sports programmes • Ottawa 67's team practices, when Civic Centre ice is pre-empted • School board/ college programmes under reciprocal agreement <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Adult Organized 3. Other ice users, including casual users and newly formed leagues 4. Tournaments/ special events 5. Practice or development requests 6. Non-resident groups <p>Spring to Labour Day Priority also outlined</p>	<p>Minor Team sports: 1 period of ice time per week per team Competitive minor B – 2 periods of ice per team per week Competitive AA, A, Midget B and Juvenile B – 2.5 periods per team per week All other non-hockey organizations – 1 period per week Adult teams – 1 period per week per 2 teams All other allocations based on registration Jr. A and B – 4 periods per week per team + play-off and practice time Tournaments based on availability</p>	<p>Week nights 4-11 pm Weekends 7 am – 11 pm</p>
Rideau Pop.~13,000	1	Has Objective and definitions for organized group Adult, organized group youth, organized group new, other rental, existing private rental and prime time	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Public Skating 2. Organized Group – Youth 3. Organized Group- Adult 4. Existing Private 5. Organized Group – new 6. Schools 7. New Private Rental 	<p>A minimum of 3.5 hours and maximum of 5 hours prime time for public skating per week</p> <p>Organized youth collectively a maximum of 52 hours prime time per week</p> <p>Other rentals: maximum of 1 hour prime time per week Historical precedent should be considered, but not the exclusive factor</p>	<p>Weekdays 4-midnight Wkds: 6 am-midnight</p>
West Carleton Pop.~18,000	1		<p>Arena Policy Committee resolves disputes,</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 3 periods of municipal events e.g. public skating 2. Township youth groups under 18 3. Youth groups 	<p>[Taken from the CAHA and CFSA as a guideline] Hockey Travelling: 2 hours per team per wk. Hockey House League 1 hr. per team per wk. Hockey Development:</p>	All Hours



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			4. Adult Local Leagues 5. Recreational Adult Local 6. Tournaments and Special Events	1 hr. per 20 participants per wk. Ringette Travelling 2 hr. per team per wk. Figure Skating: A range from 2.4 min. per skater to 30 min. per skater per wk Adult Teams: .5 hour per team per week	
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Comparative Canadian Ice Allocation Policies

Municipality	Definitions	Priority	Formula	Other
Port Coquitlam, British Columbia 1996	Definitions for Users, Uses, and Examples Policy includes: Introduction Users Uses Some Examples Ice Availability Priority for Ice Allocation Ice Allocation Procedure Impact of the Policy Guidelines for Ice Allocation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. All municipally sponsored activities 2. School activities during regular school hours 3. Major special events up to 10% of time (5% prime time, %% non-prime time) 4. Local minor sport group 5. Local adult sport group 6. Local independent group 7. Local minor special events 8. Local group fundraising events 9. Local group casual 10. Local commercial 11. Non-local groups 	Public Skating not to exceed 15% of available capacity Additional Factors: Age – minors will have higher priority during prime time than adults before 10:00 p.m. Density of Usage: Those with the greater number of users will have higher priority New users will be minimally accommodated Groups using mainly non-prime time ice will be considered a higher priority Groups with a long standing reputation of responsible use will be given a higher priority	Includes Procedure Requests in by May Ice Users meeting in late May/ June If consensus isn't reached, then the Department makes the decision, based on priorities and guidelines set in the policy If the a group is not satisfied they can take their dispute to the department, then to the Committee and Council
Town of Bracebridge	Definitions for: Minor Use Resident Use Competitive Use Board of Education	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Minor use – Minor Hockey, Figure Skating and Precision 2. Public Use – public skate, adult skate, parent and tot, 	Formula based on consultation with the local skating club and the C.F.S.A. 1 hr. per team per week to Sr. 75 min. per team	Policy includes: Objective Definitions Ice Rate Structure General Terms Minor Use Groups Priority of Use

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	Non-Resident/ Commercial Use Public Use	<p>adult shinny</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Competitive Use – Junior A, specific individuals 4. Board of Education 5. Board of Education (out of town) 6. Non-resident/ Commercial 	per week Rep Teams – 150 to 180 min per team per week	Prime Time 4 pm- 1 am Mon-Fri Wkds 6 a.m. to 1 am.
Strathcona County	Defines users	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Special Events 2. Public Skating 3. Department Programs 4. Minor Ice Users 5. Junior Hockey 6. Adult Ice Users (commercial) 7. School Programs 8. Other 	Standards of Play – based on the current situation, historical practices and requirements of each sport. 1 game and 1 practise at all levels – emphasizing player development	Includes: Priority Eligibility Allocation Authority Service Level to Minor Ice Users Length of Winter Season Time Available Price Schedule Advertising/ Timeline/ Contracts Rules and Regulations Cancellation Facility Closure Date Payment/ Failure to Pay Special Events Monitoring Process Appendices
London, Ontario	<p>Defines: Non-profit New Organizations</p> <p>City Rep Intra-City House League Hockey Development Skating – Instructional Competitive Precision Power Skating</p>	<p>Specifies Minor Ice Time Mon-Fri 5-10 or 10:30 Wkds. 6:30-10 p.m. Sun. noon to 10:30 p.m.</p> <p>Priority for Minor time Department programs Community programs</p>	Calculated on each organization's base ice allocation – from the previous season's registration data	<p>Discusses "home Arenas" – specifies an allocation at a specific arena Department allocates a minimum of 75% at the designated home arena</p> <p>Policy includes: Minor Ice Time Eligibility for Minor Ice Home Arenas City Wide organizations Historical Precedent Tournaments Allocation Formulae Ice Distribution Returning Ice Time Priority Additional Ice Ice Shortages Allocation Schedule Booking Procedures</p>



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Key Elements of a Facility Allocation Policy

The following key elements should be considered when developing an Ice Allocation Policy:

Policy Objectives:

The Policy should clearly state its objectives e.g. support local community groups; support special events and celebrations; meet the needs of competitive sport; improve the health of residents in the community; establish prioritization of allocation etc.

Definitions:

The policy should include clear definitions for such terms as users, uses, community, and specific terms such as prime time, type of facility etc.

Balancing Historical Use and New Initiatives:

The policy should outline how the community will balance the needs of traditional facility uses with new initiatives, especially when facilities are at capacity. The goals of the agency will need to be clear and related guidelines/ criteria put in place

Priority for Allocation:

The priority for distribution should be within the policy; if user groups participate fully in the development of this 'prioritization', implementation will be facilitated

Conflict Resolution:

To avoid conflicts, the policy should address regular meetings with user groups; in the event of a conflict the policy should delineate a clear and speedy means of conflict resolution



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Monitoring Usage and Evaluation:

The policy should address what information needs to be tracked, how usage will be monitored, and user feedback on the policy and process

Procedure:

The Ice Allocation Policy should address 'procedure', especially the timing and notification of allocation. The process should be simple, transparent, and "people-friendly".

A CASE STUDY

FACILITY ALLOCATION in the City of Ottawa

The newly amalgamated City of Ottawa, composed of 12 former municipal authorities and having a population in 2002 of nearly 800,000 people, reported a recreation inventory of approximately:

- 850 park sites with more than 3,300 hectares of parks and open space, over 100 km of trails, 1,200 hectares of conservation/ natural environment lands;
- 375 play structures;
- 236 tennis courts, 360 ball diamonds;
- 300 sports fields (excluding school fields);
- 10 outdoor pools, 51 spray pads, 7 beaches, 13 indoor pools, 3 wave pools;
- 40 indoor ice pads, 239 outdoor ice surfaces;
- 98 community centres, 62 field houses, 27 cultural buildings;
- More than 500 agreements from the legacy municipalities;
- Over 1200 volunteer groups working with the new City to deliver recreation and cultural services.

In August, 2001, City of Ottawa Council endorsed a Mandate for Recreation and Culture Programs and Services and directed staff to draft a Facility and Equipment Allocation Policy, after consultation with the community. **Anne Robinson & Associates** was contracted to obtain the community's feedback on the Mandate and identify Facility Allocation issues that would need to be addressed in a new Facility Allocation Policy.



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To both understand the concerns of facility users and identify key components of a new policy, the following tasks were undertaken for the City of Ottawa project:

- Developed and distributed pre-packages to more than 500 groups
- Conducted 12 English, 3 French Focus Sessions at a variety of locations in the City
- Drafted and distributed follow-up "As Heard" reports to focus session participants
- Reviewed Allocation policies from other Canadian municipalities including London, Strathcona County, Town of Bracebridge and Guelph from Ontario; Victoria and Port Coquitlam from British Columbia and Saskatoon, Saskatchewan
- Tabulated Feedback Forms from 8 Open Houses, Focus Sessions and mailings

Based on the ground work and a Final Report submitted in January 2002 by Anne Robinson & Associates, staff prepared a Report regarding Facility Allocation that went forward to the City of Ottawa Council in spring 2002. Visit the City's web site for details on their recommendations: <http://ottawa.ca/calendar/ottawa/citycouncil/hrssc/2002/06-06/ASC2002-PEO-COM-009%20CommunityServicesBranchAllocationsPolicy.htm>

[Note: The Facility Allocation Report by Anne Robinson & Associates is the property of the City of Ottawa. This Report has not been released by the client and therefore cannot be available here.]



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