



**March 28, 2025**

## **City Council Committee Report**

**To: Kyle Attanasio, CAO**

**Fr: Andrew Smith, General Manager of Recreation and Culture**

**Re: RC Policy Amendment – Ice Allocation Policy**

### **Recommendation:**

That Council hereby approves an amendment to the Ice Allocation Policy #CS-1-1; and further

That the amended Policy forms part of the City's Comprehensive Policy Manual; and further

That three readings be given to an amending by-law for this purpose; and further

That bylaw number 161-2023 be hereby repealed.

### **Background:**

In December 2023, Council approved the new Ice Allocation Policy based on recommendations from the 2022 Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

In September 2024, Council supported a notice of motion that staff be directed to undertake a comprehensive review of the ice allocation policy with legal review for the 2025 season, to include the following considerations:

- a. Principles of equity and a clear process for staff application of same;
- b. Removal of Podium Pathway both as a reference and a priority level;
- c. Requirement of user groups who are governed by regional, provincial, and/or national bodies to demonstrate adherence to guidelines including half ice programming;
- d. An increased call for efficiency in ice time requests in the form of a declaration or agreement that groups or organizations will require teams to share ice for practices by default with a special request process for single team use of a full ice sheet;
- e. Review of the Ice Allocation user priority ranking;
- f. Language that speaks to each group equitably and proportionately sharing in less desirable time slots such as 6 am, 7 am and 4 pm on weekdays for all groups, and later than 9:00 pm for adult groups.

- g. Enhancing overall readability of policy to ensure all current and future user groups can accurately interpret and understand how to apply it to their needs / programming. In addition to reviewing best practices and industry standards, RC Strategies hosted engagement sessions with user groups to gather feedback and address concerns from the first year of implementation.

## **Notable Changes:**

### **1. Expanded Definitions**

To promote clarity and inclusiveness, additional definitions were added, including:

- Gender Equity: The fair allocation of resources, programs, and decision-making processes across all genders, addressing access and benefits for all.
- Equity Deserving Groups: Communities facing systemic barriers to participation, including Indigenous peoples, newcomers, and low-income families.
- Underserved Populations: Groups with limited access to recreational opportunities due to financial, social, or geographic barriers.
- Underserved Opportunities: Programs or time slots that address service gaps for marginalized or equity-deserving populations.

### **2. Simplified User Priority Rankings**

The Ice Allocation user priority rankings were streamlined to improve administrative clarity and public understanding.

#### a) Podium Pathway Removal

The Podium Pathway reference was removed from the policy and restructured as part of a broader Long-Term Development Framework.

#### b) Ice Allocation Request Limitations

Limitations on ice allocation requests were introduced to reduce unnecessary bookings, specifically addressing turn backs.

- Large groups that previously over-requested ice to accommodate potential growth will now face stricter limitations.
- This change aims to maximize ice utilization and prevent underused time slots.

#### c) Seasonal Allocation Compliance

Clear guidelines were added to specify that groups must be in good standing with the City to participate in the seasonal ice allocation process.

#### d) Ice Allocation Procedure

A detailed ice allocation procedure was introduced to outline the administrative process, ensuring:

- Transparency in decision-making.
- Clear, consistent application of the policy.
- Improved user understanding of how ice is allocated.

#### e) Conflict Resolution Process

The conflict resolution process was refined to:

- Provide greater autonomy to user groups in resolving disputes.
- Ensure that equitable decisions are made when groups cannot reach a consensus independently.

#### f) Black Ice and Usage Tracking

To promote accountability, black ice (unused but booked ice time) tracking was introduced. This ensures:

- User groups are utilizing their allocated ice time effectively.
- Underused ice time can be reallocated to other groups or programs.

### **3. Decision Points**

#### a) Distribution Percentages

To address community concerns over weekday ice distribution, Council could define Monday to Friday ice distribution percentages. This would allow for the increase or decrease of user group ice times during the week.

During the 2024/2025 season, the actual prime ice time allocation was:

- Municipal Programs: 1%
- Youth: 96%
- Adult: 3%
- Other: 0%

The proposed distribution percentages moving forward are:

- Municipal Programs: 3%
- Youth (Local Non-Profit): 85%
- Adult (Local Non-Profit): 11%
- Casual Users: 0.5%
- Non-Resident / Commercial Users: 0.5%

For 80 hours of available prime ice per week, this distribution would represent:

- Municipal Programs: 2 hours
- Youth: 68 hours
- Adult: 9 hours
- Casual / Non-Resident: 0–1 hour

By increasing the adult and municipal programming percentages, weekday ice time would:

- Provide 5.5 additional hours per week for adult programming.
- Add one additional prime ice slot for public programming.

This reallocation would result in reduced weekday ice time for youth groups.

- During tournaments, youth groups that primarily participate on weekends could experience greater impacts, as weekday allocations will fall below the Long-Term Development (LTD) framework guidelines.

**Council Options:**

- Option #1 - Adopt the proposed distribution percentages to create a more diverse offering for all residents.
- Option #2 - Modify the distribution percentages at their discretion to reflect different priorities.
- Option #3 - Remove distribution percentages entirely, allowing for a more flexible, demand-driven allocation.

## b) Historical Status

As part of the policy review, RC Strategies recommended that historical status be incorporated into the evaluation matrix.

- Recognizing historical status can benefit long-standing users, providing stability for established programs.
- However, this practice may also limit opportunities for new and growing programs.

The proposed historical standing matrix assigns the following weights:

- Greater than 10 years: 5 points
- 6 – 9 years: 4 points
- 2 – 5 years: 3 points
- 1 year or less: 2 points

**Council Options:**

- Option #4 - Adopt the proposed matrix, maintaining a moderate weight for historical standing.
- Option #5 - Reduce or increase the weight of historical status criteria.
- Option #6 - Remove historical standing entirely from the evaluation matrix to promote greater flexibility and equity for emerging groups.

**Conclusion:**

The Ice Allocation Policy review has resulted in clearer and more transparent procedures.

The refinements include:

- Strengthen equity and accessibility;
- Promote efficient and accountable ice usage;
- Enhance public understanding of the allocation process.

These changes will optimize facility usage and meet the evolving needs of Kenora's recreational community.

**Budget:** N/A

**Risk Analysis:** Ice allocation is contentious and all organizations will not agree with all changes made to this policy.

**Communication Plan/Notice By-law Requirements:** By-law required; ice allocation to be attached to user group request forms.

**Strategic Plan or another Guiding Document:**

2022 Parks and Recreation Master Plan

LTD Hockey Canada Long Term Player Development Document(2013)

Long Term Development – Skate Canada