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<b>SECTION:</b>	PARKS AND OPEN SPACES
<b>DEPARTMENT/DIVISION:</b>	INFRASTRUCTURE, DEVELOPMENT AND OPERATIONS
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>OUTDOOR RINK POLICY</b>

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## **POLICY STATEMENT**

It is the policy of The Corporation of the City of Thunder Bay to promote outdoor ice skating and provide maintained outdoor rink facilities to meet the needs of the community while optimizing utilization.

## **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this policy is to define the components of the outdoor rink program including operating responsibilities, rink site categories, target utilization rates, usage monitoring, and processes for optimizing service levels.

## **DEFINITIONS**

“Boarded Rink” refers to a rink surface that includes hockey boards, dedicated rink lighting, two hockey nets, and outdoor benches.

“City” refers to the Corporation of The City of Thunder Bay.

“Community Association” refers to governing body operating the community center where a rink site is located.

“Posted” refers to notifying the public that a rink is at risk of being downgraded or eliminated. Notification will include a physical sign posted at the rink site, letters delivered to all residents within 100m of the rink site, and on the City’s web site.

“Unboarded Rink” (commonly referred to as a “Pond”) refers to a rink surface that includes outdoor benches but does not include hockey boards, dedicated rink lighting, or hockey nets.

## ***RINK SITE CATEGORIES***

The outdoor rink program includes five (5) types of rink site categories which are defined by different types of rink facilities, ice maintenance priorities, supervision, and target utilization rates. The rink site categories, including their physical and operating characteristics, are as follows:

### City Supervised

#### Type 1

- Supervised by Park Operations Staff seven (7) days a week.
- Minimum two (2) Boarded Rink surfaces.
- Provides heated change facilities through an adjacent community center building or approved heated shelter during supervised hours of operation.
- Can be booked for organized use.

#### Type 2

- Supervised by Park Operations staff five (5) days a week.
- Minimum two (2) rink surfaces, one of which must be a Boarded Rink.
- Provides heated change facilities through an adjacent community center building or approved heated shelter during supervised hours of operation.

### Community Supervised

- Supervised by Community Group personnel; schedule varies by site.
- Minimum one (1) Boarded Rink surface.
- Provides heated change facilities through an adjacent community center building during supervised hours of operation.
- May be booked for organized use through the Community Association.

### Boarded Unsupervised

- Provides one (1) Boarded Rink surface.

### Unboarded Unsupervised (Pond)

- Provides one (1) Unboarded Rink surface.

### Specialty/Destination

- Open to a variety of supervision levels and rink surface types including refrigerated ice surfaces, skating trails, natural pond features, or other custom skating surfaces that compliment or leverage existing Parks, City facilities, or winter programming.

### **OUTDOOR RINK SITE LOCATIONS**

The outdoor rink program sites are defined in “Schedule A – Outdoor Rink Sites”.

### **PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION, RINK INSTALLATION AND MAINTENANCE**

Parks & Open Spaces is responsible for installing and maintaining all physical assets required for the outdoor rink sites (excluding Community Association Facility assets) including rink surface pads, rink boards, lighting systems, and supporting amenities.

Parks & Open Spaces is responsible for flooding and ice maintenance for all rink sites except for Community Supervised sites where a Community Association has received an outdoor rink grant.

Parks & Open Spaces will support Community Supervised Sites with initial start of year flooding, removing snow after major snow events, and with ice maintenance where the grant for the Community Supervised site has been waived and the funds have been directed to Parks & Open Spaces operations to deploy Parks relief staff to perform ice maintenance.

Parks & Open Spaces will coordinate ice bookings and events at rink sites except for Community Supervised sites where a Community Association has received an outdoor rink grant.

Parks & Open Spaces will receive and assess all requests related to outdoor rink program service levels changes including proposals related to establishment of new sites.

Community Services – Recreation & Culture Division will administer the Community Association Grant Program for the Community Supervised rink sites and will be the main liaison between the City and the Community Associations.

Community Services will administer heated change room facility supervision and programming related to the Prince Arthurs Landing skating pad.

Community Associations that have received rink operating grants will be responsible for ice flooding/maintenance and for coordinating access and supervision of the heated change facilities at the Community Supervised site.

Parks & Opens Spaces operations crews will prioritize daily ice maintenance work as follows:

Priority 1 – City Supervised, Specialty/Destination

Priority 2 – Boarded Unsupervised

Priority 3 – Unboarded Unsupervised

These priorities will result in the rink sites with the most infrastructure and program supervision investment having quality ice surfaces available as much as possible.

#### **COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION RINK GRANT PROGRAM**

The Community Services Department shall provide a grant to qualifying Community Associations for the operation of a Community Supervised rink site. The Community Association will ensure that the rink and the warming facility are available for safe usage and will be responsible for the removal of all snow and regular flooding of the rink.

The Community Association shall submit a final report to the City by April 30<sup>th</sup> of each year that includes (1) number of users (2) dates and hours of operations (3) dates and hours of supervision (4) a financial statement (detailing disbursement of wages) with any unused funds to be returned at that time (5) names and addresses of the staff hired including hours worked each month.

Eligible applicants must be able to demonstrate they can meet the conditions of this Policy. Community Associations that received a grant the previous year must be able to demonstrate that they properly maintained the rink site the previous season and have submitted their year-end report.

Parks & Open Spaces will periodically conduct on site monitoring of the Community Supervised sites as part of normal operations to review site and ice maintenance conditions, including conducting user counts through the monitoring program. If a rink does not meet the outdoor rink policy standards a letter will be forwarded to the Community Association indicating what concerns have been identified and requesting resolution of the items in a timely manner. Failure to respond adequately to these notices may result in discontinuation of the rink grant for that location.

#### **ESTABLISHMENT OF NEW SITES**

Proposals for establishment of new rink sites will be evaluated against the following criteria:

- Proximity to existing rink sites
- Utilization rates and Posted status of existing rinks in the same rink site category
- Current operational capacity for rink maintenance
- Physical site conditions
- Existing supporting infrastructure

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**UTILIZATION TARGETS AND MONITORING**

Average participants per hour utilization rate targets for each rink site category are as follows:

City Supervised (Type 1)	10
City Supervised (Type 2)	5
Community Supervised	5
Boarded Unsupervised	3
Unboarded Unsupervised	1
Specialty/Destination	Varies - See Schedule A

User counts shall be conducted annually from February 1<sup>st</sup> to February 28<sup>th</sup>, including Family Day. Counts will be completed on seven (7) separate days, with weekend counts between 1pm - 7pm, and weekday counts between 3pm – 9pm. Observations will be made hourly at each site over a 6-hour period and will include skaters, people in change rooms, and spectators. Data will not be collected if temperatures are below -15 degrees Celsius, if the rinks are snow covered, or if flooding is in progress. Count data will follow the same method and schedule each year to provide reliable and consistent data sets for rink utilization analysis.

Target utilization rates will be based on a 5-year average for the rink site. If a rink sites 5-year average falls below the target rate, and each of the yearly averages over the 5-year period also falls below the target utilization rate, the rink will be Posted the following season indicating that the site is at risk of being downgraded or eliminated if target utilization rates are not achieved. If the utilization rate is not achieved in the season it is Posted, the site will be downgraded in accordance with the Policy. Recommendations on site eliminations will be brought to Council for decision.

**Schedule A – Outdoor Rink Sites**

<b>Rink Site</b>	<b>Target Utilization Rate (5-year average users per hour)</b>
<b>Specialty/Destination</b>	
Friendship Gardens Pond	1
Vickers Park Skating Trail	5
Prince Arthurs Landing Skating Pad	20
<b>City Supervised - Type 1</b>	
Carrick Park	10
James Street Playfield	10
North End Rec Center	10
West End Park	10
West Thunder Community Center	10
<b>City Supervised – Type 2</b>	
Brent Park	5
Tarbutt Park	5
Wayland Park	5
<b>Community Supervised</b>	
Castlegreen Park	5
North McIntyre Community Center	5
South Neebing Community Center	5
Vickers Heights Community Center	5
<b>Boarded Unsupervised</b>	
Charry Park	3
County Park	3
Dease Park	3
John / Jumbo Community Center	3
John Kuszniek Park	3
Minnesota Park	3
N. Neebing	3
Oliver Road Community Center	3
Parkdale Park	3
River Terrace Park	3
Stanley Parkette	3
Volunteer Pool Community Center	3
Waddington Park	3
West Arthur*	3
<b>Unboarded Unsupervised</b>	
Green Acres Park	1
Thornloe Parkette	1

\* Site also provides limited access to heated change facilities.

<b>APPROVED BY:</b>	City Council	<b>Date:</b>	09/23/2024
<b>Replacing/Amending:</b>			
<b>Originating Department:</b>	Infrastructure, Development & Operations - Parks and Open Spaces		
<b>Contact:</b>	Manager, Parks and Open Spaces		
<b>Departmental Procedural Manual:</b>	Yes		
<b>Affected Departments:</b>			