



CITY OF HAMILTON

**COMMUNITY AND EMERGENCY SERVICES DEPARTMENT
Recreation Division**

TO: Chair and Members Emergency & Community Services Committee	WARD(S) AFFECTED: CITY WIDE
COMMITTEE DATE: September 9, 2013	
SUBJECT/REPORT NO: Hamilton Ice User Rates & Allocation Principles (CS13040) (City Wide)	
SUBMITTED BY: Joe-Anne Priel General Manager Community and Emergency Services Department	PREPARED BY: Steve Sevor (905) 546-2424 ext. 4645 Brad Walker (905) 546-2424 ext. 4610
SIGNATURE:	

RECOMMENDATION

That the recommended amendments to the “*Ice Allocation Principles*” policy (attached as Appendix A to Report CS13040) be approved.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In recent years, the City has experienced a steady decrease in the number of hours being utilized in the City of Hamilton operated municipal arenas. For example, there has been a reduction of 2,826 hours utilized since 2008, representing a 7.4% decrease.

The reduction in hours being utilized in arenas correlates with a decrease in membership being experienced by many ice user clubs and associations, including minor hockey, ringette and figure skating. For example, the Hamilton Minor Hockey Council has experienced a reduction of 766 registrants since 2006-07, representing a 16% decrease.

Affordability and competition from neighbouring municipalities has also contributed to reduced ice rentals in Hamilton arenas. Ice user groups have indicated that the cost of ice is also becoming a factor in maintaining program sustainability.

City policies related to ice allocation and related operational aspects have not been updated or clarified in some time. Both City staff and ice users have recognized the need to update these policies so that they are more relevant to current program, economic and operational realities.

Given these challenges, Recreation staff engaged ice users to identify how the City and stakeholders could work together to identify potential solutions that would benefit both parties. Participants were tasked with examining various issues that impact on ice use, including the existing fee structure and other barriers that negatively impact on growing participation in ice sports. Particular attention was also given to examining the existing *“Ice Allocation Principles”*, approved by Council in 2002 (attached as Appendix B to Report CS13040). It provides the operational and policy framework for how ice is allocated in municipal arenas.

As a result of these discussions, a number of recommendations were made to proactively address the challenges being faced by both user groups and the City. The recommendations covered a wide range of issues, ranging from suggested amendments to the *“Ice Allocation Principles”* to changes in how the City communicates the availability of vacant rental ice. The following recommendations have been vetted by Recreation staff and are being recommended for Council approval:

That the existing *“Ice Allocation Principles”* document be amended to achieve the following:

- Allow the City to offer the subsidized rate to affiliated groups for ice rentals during the ice season that are outside of a group’s block ice allocation);
- Define more precisely when all ice rental rates will apply; and,
- Clarify existing practice, policy and/or expand on existing definitions (e.g. definition of an affiliated user, ice return policy).

The amended *“Ice Allocation Principles”* document being recommended is attached as Appendix A to Report CS13040.

It is estimated that approval of the recommendation to expand the offering of ice rentals at the subsidized rate will result in a net revenue loss of approximately \$25,718 in the 2013/2014 ice season based on 2013/2014 rates. However, it is anticipated that this deficit will be reversed in future years as ice users rent more ice in City arenas at the more competitive subsidized rate.

Recreation staff have committed to working with the ice user groups to deal with other issues that could not be resolved in this round of consultations (e.g. appropriate amount of time allocated for tournaments in specific arenas).

Extending the use of the subsidized ice rental rate is just one of many initiatives that recreation staff is working on to encourage greater use of City arenas and other recreational facilities. These include efforts to increase participation in sport by reducing barriers (e.g. Skate the Dream), improving the quality of programs offered by sport groups and working with sport governing bodies to strengthen how programs are delivered at the local level. Ultimately, these efforts are intended to grow amateur sport in Hamilton by providing more opportunities to participate in quality programs. Success in these areas should result in a greater utilization of the City's recreational facilities and, as a consequence, contribute to greater revenue generation.

Approval of the recommendations will achieve the following:

- Contribute to increased utilization of City of Hamilton arenas.
- Reduce ice rental costs for ice users during the ice season so that they can make their programs more affordable for their members.
- Further contribute to the work the City is doing with ice user organizations to increase registrations and get more children and youth participating in ice sports.
- Clarify the *"Ice Allocation Principles"* for ice user groups.

Staff will report back to committee in early 2014 with information on overall ice rental trends and some of the strategies staff are adopting to mitigate the relative decline in revenues associated with declining use of arenas.

Alternatives for Consideration – Not Applicable

FINANCIAL / STAFFING / LEGAL IMPLICATIONS
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Financial:

It is estimated that approval of the recommendation to expand the offering of ice rentals at the subsidized rate will result in a net revenue loss of approximately \$25,718 based on 2013/2014 rates and a detailed analysis of historical ice rental and revenue data. Total ice revenues were \$4,598,572 in 2012.

In 2012/2013, the City sold 333 hours of ice to affiliated ice users at the non-subsidized rate (2012/13 = \$231.79) during the ice season ("Plan G" period from Oct 1st to March 31st) over and above their block allocations which they purchased at the subsidized rate. Total revenues from the sale of this ice equalled \$77,186.

Staff estimates that the City can increase the number of hours sold by 20% in 2013/14 if sold at the cheaper subsidized rate, from 333 hours to 400 hours sold. Total revenues from the sale of 400 hours of ice at the subsidized rate in 2013/14 (\$128.67) will equal \$51,468 which will somewhat mitigate the revenue loss that will be experienced by going to the cheaper subsidized rate.

The estimate of 400 hours sold is based on information and feedback that staff have received from ice users. Ice users have indicated a willingness to purchase additional ice in Hamilton arenas if it was more affordable during the ice season.

Staffing:

There are no staffing implications associated with Report CS13040.

Legal:

There are no legal implications associated with Report CS13040.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Prior to amalgamation, each of the former municipalities had applied different ice rental rates for their respective arenas. This resulted in inconsistent ice rental fees being applied after amalgamation took place. These inconsistencies were later addressed when Council approved the “*Sport Organization Affiliation Policy*” and “*Ice Allocation Principles*” in 2002 (COW Report 02-029). The adoption of these policy instruments allowed for the establishment of a consolidated City-Wide ice allocation framework and uniform ice rental rates. The “*Ice Allocation Principles*” document was updated by staff in consultation with ice users in 2006 to provide a clearer working version of what was approved by Council in 2002 and is attached as Appendix C to Report CS13040. However, Council has not formally approved an amended version of the document since 2002.

Some of the principles in determining ice allocation and ice rates flowing from the framework included:

- The priority for ice allocation would be directed to affiliated minor (youth) ice organizations that met all the requirements of the City’s Affiliation Policy;
- Ice rental rates would be identical throughout City arenas; and,

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- The subsidized rate would represent a 50% subsidy of the total per hour ice rental rate. This rate has since been changed to represent 50% of total arena operating costs.

To qualify for the subsidized rate the sport organization or club applying for the rate must comply with certain criteria, including:

- Must serve children and youth (adult leagues and clubs are not eligible).
- Membership base must be comprised of 95% Hamilton residents.

Organizations and clubs applying for the subsidized rate must also provide supporting documentation, including membership lists, proof of insurance, governance, and financial information.

Hourly ice rental rates charged by the City are approved by Council and vary depending on the season of the year, the time ice is being booked in an arena (prime time or non-prime time) and the status of the organization doing the booking (affiliated or non-affiliated).

The rates for 2013/2014 are as follows:

- Prime-Time non subsidized - \$238.05
- Prime-Time subsidized - \$128.67
- Non-Prime-Time - \$178.53
- Tournaments (subsidized/affiliated groups only) - \$178.53
- Summer Ice non subsidized - \$257.34
- Summer Ice subsidized - \$151.54
- Last minute ice - \$128.67

The prime-time subsidized ice rate is offered to affiliated ice user groups as follows:

- Within the “Plan G” block allocation period which extends from October 1st to March 31st of the following year (the “ice season”), ice user groups book ice in blocks so that they can run their programs throughout the season. They guarantee payment of their total block. In return, the City charges the subsidized rate for the entire block purchase. Any additional ice rentals booked within the ice season beyond a group’s Plan G block allocation must be purchased at the applicable non-subsidized rate (City sold 333 of these hours at full rate in 2012/13).

- Ice rentals that are outside the Plan G ice season, not including summer, are rentals in the months of April, May and September. Groups will typically rent ice in these months for try-outs, events or clinics.

The summer ice affiliated (subsidized) rate is charged to affiliated groups in the summer months, although this period has never been precisely defined.

A number of significant changes have taken place within the ice user landscape since the current ice allocation principles were approved by Council in 2002 (COW Report 02-029). These include:

- A significant reduction in ice user group registrations in the last five years;
- A significant reduction in the amount of ice being utilized in municipal arenas;
- Increasing financial challenges being experienced by ice users that impact on their ability to purchase ice within the existing allocation framework; and,
- An oversupply of ice that the City is having difficulty selling within the existing allocation framework (competitiveness with neighbouring municipalities also becoming an issue).

The existing ice allocation principles were designed at a time when there was an over demand for ice in municipal arenas. Given the challenges noted above the timing was right to review the framework to identify where the City could work together with the ice users to identify potential adjustments that could be made for the benefit of both parties.

In February 2013, staff within the Recreation Division's Sport Development Unit initiated an engagement process with sport clubs and associations who rent ice in arenas which are owned and operated by the City of Hamilton. The objective of the process was to obtain feedback from ice users on current allocation practices and principles so improvements could be made where possible, benefitting both user groups and the City.

The review process was initiated on the understanding that any recommendations being made would have to be reviewed by City staff to determine their overall feasibility from an operational and budgetary perspective. It was further understood that City Council would ultimately have to approve any recommendations related to ice allocation principles and policies.

Discussions with ice users ultimately led to the development of recommendations intended to help the City and ice users meet current challenges. These relate primarily to the wider application of the subsidized rate for affiliated ice users and changes to the existing "*Ice Allocation Principles*". These changes are intended to formalize current practice, lend more clarity to the policy, and/or reduce ambiguity. They include:

- a) Extending the availability of the subsidized ice rates to ice user groups that are affiliated with the City as per the City's "Sport Organization Affiliation Policy".
- b) Refining the definition of "Affiliated Programs" and including examples of such programs.
- c) Greater emphasis on the City's commitment to providing public programs as a priority.
- d) Clarity on ice fees and when they will be charged.
- e) Clarity on scheduling priorities for unscheduled ice.
- f) Clarity on the allocation process and residency requirements.
- g) Addition of arena closure dates (for holidays).
- h) A reference to the City's commitment to supporting tournaments and special events in municipal arenas.

Other operational changes that were suggested either by staff or by user groups (e.g. amendments to the cancellation policy, ice scheduling in facilities) will be considered at the staff level and changed where deemed appropriate.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS/LEGISLATED REQUIREMENTS

There are no policy implications associated with this report.

RELEVANT CONSULTATION

Staff consulted with over 30 representatives from various ice user groups across the City of Hamilton, including boys and girls minor hockey, sledge hockey, figure skating, speed skating, Junior hockey franchises and adult hockey. Staff presented material and information to these groups on February 7, 2013. Participants were asked to sign up for subcommittees with a specific focus on examining issues related to maximizing ice times, ice allocation, payments/cancellations and ice ratios.

The subcommittees met throughout February and March 2013 and presented staff with recommendations in April 2013. City staff reviewed the subcommittee recommendations for financial, operational and policy impacts. These recommendations were also compared with other municipal benchmarks.

Staff finalized a set of recommendations for the mutual benefit of the City and ice users that were feasible in terms of asking for Council consideration. A follow up meeting with ice users took place on July 4, 2013 to review and discuss the recommendations that City staff proposed moving forward.

The Hamilton Ice User Council and the wider group of ice user groups who participated in the review process are supportive of the recommendations being proposed. It would not be accurate to suggest unanimous approval on every recommendation. However, there was a mutual understanding that approval of the recommendations being proposed would be an improvement on the status quo and form a good basis for working together in the future.

The recommendations being made represent what City staff consider feasible in the current environment of declining ice use and what staff believe can be supported by the user groups.

Recreation staff have committed to working with the ice user groups to deal with other issues that could not be resolved in this round of consultations (e.g. appropriate amount of time allocated for tournaments in specific arenas) and to review the wider "*Affiliation Policy for Hamilton Minor Sports Organizations*" with other summer sport organizations.

Finance and Administration staff has been consulted on the financial aspects of the recommendations. Their feedback related to financial data analysis and revenue impacts have been incorporated into the report where required.

ANALYSIS / RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

The recommendations being proposed are intended to adapt the current application of ice rental fees to the existing environment and clarify City policies related to the allocation of ice in municipal arenas.

Approval of the recommendations will achieve the following:

- Increase utilization of City of Hamilton arenas;
- Reduce ice rental costs for ice users during the ice season so that they can make their programs more affordable for their members;
- Further contribute to the work the City is doing with ice user organizations to increase registrations and get more children and youth participating in ice sports;
- Provide clear direction on ice rental rates to be charged to existing and future affiliated ice users in the City of Hamilton; and,
- Clarify the "*Ice Allocation Principles*" for ice user groups.

ALTERNATIVES FOR CONSIDERATION

None

ALIGNMENT TO THE 2012 – 2015 STRATEGIC PLAN:

Strategic Priority #1

A Prosperous & Healthy Community

WE enhance our image, economy and well-being by demonstrating that Hamilton is a great place to live, work, play and learn.

Strategic Objective

- 1.5 Support the development and implementation of neighbourhood and City wide strategies that will improve the health and well-being of residents.
- 1.6 Enhance Overall Sustainability (financial, economic, social and environmental).

Strategic Priority #2

Valued & Sustainable Services

WE deliver high quality services that meet citizen needs and expectations, in a cost effective and responsible manner.

Strategic Objective

- 2.2 Improve the City's approach to engaging and informing citizens and stakeholders.
- 2.3 Enhance customer service satisfaction.

Strategic Priority #3

Leadership & Governance

WE work together to ensure we are a government that is respectful towards each other and that the community has confidence and trust in.

Strategic Objective

- 3.4 Enhance opportunities for administrative and operational efficiencies.

APPENDICES / SCHEDULES

Appendix "A" - Proposed "*Ice Allocation Principles*" being recommended

Appendix "B" – 2002 Council approved version of "*Ice Allocation Principles*"

Appendix "C" – 2006 staff updated version of "*Ice Allocation Principles*"

**CITY OF HAMILTON
RECREATION DIVISION
ICE ALLOCATION PRINCIPLES**

Affiliated Programs:

Affiliated programs are those programs offered by organizations that are formally affiliated with the City of Hamilton as per the City's "*Affiliation Policy for Hamilton Minor Sports Organizations*" and that offer residents programs for youth (18 years of age and under).

Affiliated programs are given top priority for ice allocation.

Affiliated Programs include but not limited to:

- Minor Hockey Programs within the City of Hamilton (affiliated with Hockey Canada)
- Girls Hockey Programs within the City of Hamilton (affiliated with Hockey Canada)
- Figure Skating Programs within the City of Hamilton (affiliated with Skate Canada)
- Ringette Programs within the City of Hamilton (affiliated with Ringette Canada)
- Various Community Ice Programs within the City of Hamilton (i.e. Ancaster Skating Club, Inch Park Skating Club, Optimist Club of Carlisle, etc.)
- Sledge Hockey Programs within the City of Hamilton (affiliated with Hockey Canada)
- Speed Skating Programs within the City of Hamilton (affiliated with Speed Skating Canada)
- Junior Hockey teams within the City of Hamilton that meet Council approved residency requirements for affiliated ice rates (affiliated with Ontario Hockey Association (OHA))

Guiding Principles for Public Programming:

The City of Hamilton is committed to providing 'prime-time' public programming in municipal arenas. Standard will be:

- Weekdays - one skate every day of the week - at different locations and at different times
- Weekends - every facility has one session

All facilities offer daytime public programming to include:

- Family skates, pre-school skates, senior skates, adult and youth shinny, and additional holiday programming during Christmas and March Break, Family Day and various P.A. days.

When 'prime-time' ice slots become available, the City of Hamilton will evaluate the need to use these hours for public programming versus need from affiliated ice user programs.

Rates

- Only Affiliated organizations are provided with subsidized rates. Exception provided for:
 - Non-affiliated groups or organizations that run programs deemed to be in the public\ community interest (e.g. promote barrier free access - Skate the Dream). Director of Recreation will make a determination on a case-by-case basis.
- Non-affiliated renters and adult organizations pay full rate.
 - Non-affiliated groups include but are not limited to adult renters, birthday party rentals, single ice rentals, family ice rentals, private school ice rentals, non-resident rentals.
- Affiliated organizations hosting a tournament or special event (e.g. hockey tournament, figure skating carnival, on-ice festival, etc.) will pay the "Tournament" rate.
- Only those individuals designated by an affiliated organization (no more than 2 per organization) can book ice time at the subsidized rate for that organization.
- The subsidized ice rate offered to affiliated ice users will be extended beyond the Plan G block allocation purchase to include incidental purchases of additional ice within the Plan G period, and during the months of April, May, from opening date of the first seasonal arena (approximately mid-August), and September.
- The Summer subsidized rate will be charged to affiliated ice users in the months of June, July, and from August 1 to opening date of the first seasonal arena (approximately mid-August).
- Any group, affiliated or non-affiliated, is eligible for "last minute ice" rate (rate charged for booking on 48 hours or less notice. Equals prime time subsidized rate).

Hours Reserved for Affiliated Users (standard)

- Weekdays 5 p.m. – 11 p.m.
- Weekends 7 a.m. – 10 p.m.

- Current Junior & Senior Hockey Programs are eligible for affiliated hours.
- When hours reserved for affiliated users are not being used, they may be booked by non-affiliated or adult groups.
- The hours of 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. hours are dedicated as Board of Education hours.

Ice Allocation and Distribution

On an annual basis, the City of Hamilton Recreation Division will review the initial Plan G ice matrix for the upcoming season, cross reference requests with the final Plan G after the ice returns are completed on September 20. Staff will also cross-reference membership numbers with Plan G ice requests as part of the approved affiliation process.

The Recreation Division will only allocate ice in blocks. It is up to ice user organizations to allocate specific hours to meet their program needs.

All ice users having received a block allocation in the previous season are given first right of refusal for that same block for the next season provided that the City can accommodate “Scheduling Priorities” as indicated below.

Ice purchases will be for a minimum of one-hour periods (50 minutes of ice time, 10 minutes for flood).

Returns of Plan G ice allocations (October 1 – March 31) are not permitted after the September 20 deadline (OHA Junior teams excepted, can cancel ice after February 15 as long as in compliance with cancelation policy).

Prior to the September 20 deadline Plan G ice (pending opening and closing dates) can only be returned in blocks for the full season or on the selected holiday and special dates listed below.

Holiday and Special Dates

- Thanksgiving Sunday
- Thanksgiving Monday
- Halloween
- Christmas Period – December 24 through January 1
- Family Day

- March Break (Saturday – Sunday)
- Good Friday (when falling in the month of March)
- Easter Sunday (when falling in the month of March)
- Easter Monday (when falling in the month of March)

Scheduling Priorities

Unscheduled ice time will be allocated utilizing the following priority groups:

1. City of Hamilton Recreation Ice Programs including but not limited to: Public Skating, Senior Skates, Senior Shinny, Family Skates, Parent & Tot, Adult Shinny, Adult Skates, Parent & Tot Mini Skills, etc.
2. Returning Tournaments & Special Events (primarily hosted by Affiliated Ice Users)
3. Affiliated Ice Users standard allocation
4. Hamilton Wentworth District School Board & Hamilton Wentworth Catholic District School Board
5. Returning adult user groups
6. New requests for affiliated ice users
7. New requests for Tournaments / Special events
8. New requests for Adult / commercial ice users
9. New requests from occasional users

Scheduling Time Definitions

Prime-Time Hours:

- Weekdays from 5:00p.m. – 11:00p.m.
- Weekends from 7:00a.m. – 10:00p.m.

Non Prime-Time Hours:

- Weekdays from facility opening time until 5:00p.m. and from 11p.m. until midnight
- Weekends from 6:00a.m. until 7:00a.m. and 10:00p.m. until midnight.

Plan G Season Timeframes (Oct 1 to March 31)

Season is based on a 26 week program (Recreation Division budget and work force availability is based on 26 weeks). This takes into account season interruptions/holidays. Traditionally the season has commenced after Thanksgiving but with season interruptions and holidays taken into account, the season may commence Oct 1.

The process for allocating shoulder season ice differs from the Plan G allocation process and handled on a case-by-case basis by the Recreation Division.

Tournaments are considered outside the season timeframes as they are not considered part of the program for many groups and act as fundraisers.

Season Definitions

The City of Hamilton defines the ice seasons as follows:

- Plan G ice season – October 1 to March 31
- Shoulder season – the months of April, May, from opening date of first seasonal arena (approximately mid-August) to August 31, and September
- Summer season - June, July, and from August 1 up to opening date of first seasonal arena (approximately mid-August)

Residency and Out of Town Residents

Under the terms of the Affiliation Agreement, all affiliated organizations must have 95% Hamilton residents (as per City of Hamilton's "*Affiliation Policy for Hamilton Minor Sports Organizations*").

Registration for out of town residents should only occur after the last resident registration has taken place. Registration is limited to available openings only.

Monitoring of Ice

Facility staff identifies vacant ice.

Responsibility of Allocation

Ice allocation remains the responsibility of the Recreation Division.

Tournaments and Special Events

The City of Hamilton supports special programs like tournaments and special events. These programs provide revenue generation to both the organizers and the City of Hamilton as well as the economic spin-off to the community at large. Generally, tournaments and special events are competitions and shows hosted by recognized City of Hamilton Affiliated Groups.

Facility Closures

The City of Hamilton facilities are closed on the following dates:

- Thanksgiving Monday
- Christmas Eve – December 24 – after 3:00p.m.p.m.
- Christmas Day – December 25
- Boxing Day – December 26th

- New Year's Eve – December 31 – after 3:00p.m.p.m.
- New Year's Day – January 1
- Family Day
- Good Friday
- Easter Sunday
- Easter Monday

*Exceptions may be made for Public Programming, Tournaments/Special Events, OHA Junior Hockey Games, Councilor Skates, etc. All inquiries regarding programming will have to be approved by Arena Supervisors.

Ice Allocation Principles

Culture & Recreation Division

The Ice Allocation Committee unanimously supported that the core program be principally for youth following specific criteria which included:

Youth, (18 years of age and under)

Residency, 95% or greater should be Hamilton residents

Community based – ice for recreational programming should be allocated on the basis of local geography and that the philosophy of community based programming should be inherent within the ice allocation policy.

That program is best served as a non-profit legal entity co-ordinated through an executive of volunteers and supported through a network of local volunteer's. I.e. coaches

That local sport's programs that are affiliated to provincial and national sport organizations be given priority over non-sanctioned sport organisations offering similar programs. (i.e. Canskate)

That adult programming, in particular leagues are given priority status after the core program requirements of youth programming needs are met. Adult leagues and rentals have been scheduled after 10pm on weeknights and following youth program on weekends. Generally the principle of youth program first applies but once these core requirements are met adult programs are scheduled accordingly.

Core programs should include:

- Boy's & Girl's Minor Hockey, (All associated levels, AE, B, C, AA, AAA (OMHA, Alliance) Figure Skating, (CFSA Clubs)
- Ringette
- Sledge Hockey
- Special Olympics
- Junior/Senior A Hockey
- Board of Education – (restricted 4 pm) Public Skating (prime & non-prime)

Adult leagues were to be accommodated after the ice time required for youth core program had been accommodated.

Non-Core program

Non-sanctioned Skating Programs

Adult Rentals

Private Rentals

Ice time and the distribution thereof is the responsibility of the Culture & Recreation Division, Community Services but should continue as a consultation process involving community users and key volunteer members.

Core program for youth are to receive subsidized ice based on the above noted criteria and principles of affiliation. That these principles form the basis of a formal allocation policy and through public education through the Hamilton Sports Council that an affiliation agreement between communities sport and the city of Hamilton.

RECREATION DEPARTMENT ICE ALLOCATION

Principles:

- Core programs are mainly our youth and community programs.
- Core programs are given first priority for ice allocation.

Core Programs include:

- Minor Hockey;
- Hamilton Girls' Hockey;
- Figure Skating Programs affiliated with the Canadian Figure Skating Association (CFSA);
- Ringette;
- Sledge Hockey; and,
- Junior/Senior Hockey.

The following identifies guiding principles for ice allocation:

- Department is committed to Public Programming;
- Public Skating;
 - Weekdays – one skate every day of the week, different locations, different times;
 - Weekends – every facility has one Public Skate; and,
 - Skating centre is the main facility offering the bulk of Public Skating.
- All facilities offer day time public programming to include:
 - Family skates, pre-school skates, senior skates, adult and youth shinny, holiday programming during Christmas and March Break.

Fees:

- Core programs provide subsidized rates. Rate of subsidy is based on a tiered system. House league being provided the greatest subsidy rate.
- Adult programming pay full cost – no provision allowed for subsidy.
- Department offers an affiliated rate, which is afforded to groups/teams which are department supported (i.e. figure skating/local association teams booking ice beyond the ice allocation plan).

Hours of Core Users:

- Youth programming only
- Weekday 5 p.m. – 10 p.m.
- Weekends 7 a.m. -10 p.m.
- Adult programming only available 10 p.m. - 12 midnight or prior to 6 p.m.
- When the 10 p.m. hours are not booked by Adult-users, they are available to Core program users. Core-user groups may not displace a 10 p.m. Adult-user group, and receive no priority over Adult-users during these hours.
- Adult groups are not afforded the 5 p.m. hours, but if not booked by a youth group, adult groups may book.
- 4 p.m. – 6 p.m. hours are denoted as Board of Education hours. Under our reciprocal agreement, they are entitled to hours within this time block.
- We seem to have no problem with ice allocation during weekends. All Core-users have their full complement of hours and many do not use the full scope of hours denoted as youth hours.
- Weekday hours – critical shortage – do not have enough hours available to meet demand. Difficult to adjust or add to weekday hours until the addition of new facilities.

Allocation Formulas:

- Presently, all hockey programs are allocated under self-imposed player development ratios:

- (Hours per week) House league 1.2
 - Hub 1.8 plus AE & AA
 - Rep 3.0 plus girls rep

Note: This self-imposed ratio is due to the lack of ice availability and not to create a negative impact on other ice programs.

- Canadian Hockey Association (CHA) recommended stand is the goal:
 - House league 1.5
 - Hub/Single A 2.5
 - Rep 4.5
- Each Association is allocated hours based on the self-imposed ratio.
- One player/one team within allocated ice, individual teams must book outside the allocated ice plan without subsidy.
- Ice allocation is based on the previous year's total number of teams and number of players.
- Department only provides allocated ice blocks; it is up to the Core-users to allocate the hours to meet their program needs.
- All groups from previous years are given first right of refusal on the ice for the next season.
- Within the current demand and little opportunity for change – Council approved “that ice time allocation be frozen at the 1999-2000 level for all minor groups and that this cap remain in effect until additional ice time is made available with the City of Hamilton”.

Season Timeframes (Oct 1st to Mar 31st):

- A Plan “G” ice season is based on a 24-week program. Additional two-weeks may be allowed to adjust for seasonal interruptions and/or statutory holidays. The season shall commence on the first day of October and end on the last day of March.
- September and April allocations differ and are handled individually, and allocated by the City of Hamilton at their discretion.
- Tournaments are considered outside the season timeframes as they are not considered part of the program, but act as fundraisers for affiliated groups.

- Department budget and manpower availability is based on 26-weeks.

Out of Town Residents:

- Under the terms of the Affiliation Agreement all groups must have 95% Hamilton residents.
- Out-of-town residents are not to register until all Hamilton residents have had the opportunity.
- Registration for out-of-town residents should only occur after the last Hamilton resident registration has taken place. Registration is limited to available openings only.

Monitoring of Ice:

- With the ice shortage – self-imposed monitoring seems to work.
- Facility staff identified vacant ice.

Responsibilities:

- Ice allocation remains the responsibility of the Department.