

# SPRUCE GROVE RECREATION & ALLOCATION FRAMEWORK – OVERVIEW

August, 2025



Allocation Principles and Framework are proposed based on community engagement and analysis of community values and contexts:

- **Activity Alignment** - Where applicable, the Allocation Framework will use standards based on best practices to ensure groups receive the right amount of time in spaces suited to their activity needs.
- **Equity** - Public recreation and culture services are intended to be accessible to everyone—regardless of income, gender, ability, or age.
- **Accessibility** - City programs are inclusive and aim to welcome and support participation from all individuals.
- **Clarity and Transparency** - The Allocation Policy will clearly and transparently outline how space is assigned.
- **Collaboration** - Because recreation and culture facilities offer public value, the City and community groups share responsibility for making the best use of these spaces.
- **Adaptability** - As recreation and culture needs evolve, the Allocation Policy must remain flexible to respond to changing trends and space demands.

(Re)Confirming User Definitions and User Types was required to ensure alignment with consultation and to integrate into the Allocation Framework.

## DEFINITIONS:

- **Adult Non-Profit** - (19 year+) with a current not-for-profit status.
- **Adult Local** - (19 year+) Local (*see Local definition*)
- **Allocation Priority Ranking** - Each facility/amenity has a list of Allocation Priorities identified (see each below). In addition, Allocation Priority may also be based on the specific Operational Considerations for any facility or amenity.
- **City Program** - Structured services or activities provided directly by The City of Spruce Grove that benefits community needs, improves quality of life and supports local participation.
- **Commercial/For Profit** - Users that's do not affiliate with a specific non-profit-user group; and/or exists as part of a business or corporation.
- **Existing Agreements** - formalized arrangements between the City and user groups that outline priority access and booking rights for specific facilities.
- **Fundraiser** - Bookings that are directly related to Fundraising activities for a specific cause or group. Proof of charity (must be registered under the Charitable Fundraising Act) or a Non-Profit status that is specific to fundraising activities may be required.
- **Good Standing** - An individual or organization who has no outstanding financial commitments and/or other reporting requirements with the City of Spruce Grove.
- **Junior League** - Amateur Junior aged (16-21) programs, which includes both youth and adult players.
- **Junior Profit** - Youth/Junior Program that does not have a not-for-profit status.

- **Local** – Refers to any user group that either:°
  - Is a City of Spruce Grove user group that serves a combined minimum of (75%) of Spruce Grove and/or Parkland County users; or
  - ° Is mandated to serve the Tri-Municipal area (Parkland County, Spruce Grove, Stony Plain) – Example – Parkland Minor Ball Association; or
  - ° A User group that provides programming in the Tri-Municipal area that does not have a city of Spruce Grove equivalent. (Stony Plain Potters Guild).
- **Not-For-Profit** – Independent organizations that operate for community benefit rather than to generate profit for its owners. These organizations must be registered, in good standing within the province of Alberta, be able to supply a non-for-profit number, comply with the Alberta Societies Act and Regulations, and they have their own constitution and bylaws.
- **Non-Prime Time** - Is used to encourage users to book during under-utilized/lower demand times and days. It includes all available booking time outside of Prime Time. The City may change the additional investment rate applied and/or Non-Prime Time hours/days based on facility use and demands and to maximize usage of the facility/amenity.
- **Prime Time** – Prime time bookings are made available during peak demand times throughout the year. These times may vary as they are established for each specific facility/amenity type by the City. The regular fee for a particular amenity/facility and user type is considered the Prime-Time rate.
- **Season** – Is the defined period used to describe the time required for a specific activity to occur. Often defined by an organizing parent organization or standard of play. There may be different Seasons defined for the same activity (E.g. Pre-and Regular Season Hockey).
- **Sport Academy** – A specialized organization, team, program that is focused on development of skills for young, high-performance participants and includes a combination of structured training, coaching, and academic education. May refer to both an educational institution/program, or a commercial business model. Often a higher ‘user-pay’ rate than non-academy programs.
  - ° **Note:** For an Academy to be considered as a part of the Joint Use Agreement, there must be a demonstration of control by the School District over the program through booking requests, oversight and accountability.
- **Sub-Letting** - When a booking contract holder sells/offers any, or all, of their contracted time to another group. Sub-Letting of Allocated space/time is not permitted.
- **Standards of Play and Long-Term Participant Development Model (LTPD)** – Are national standards and policies related to the delivery of sport programs across all disciplines and age groups. - The LTPD emphasizes developmentally appropriate training, competition, and recovery to support the physical, mental, and emotional growth of participants.
  - ° **Note:** Arts and Culture activities do not have the same type of reference policy, and so may rely on other factors such as youth over adult, accessibility, diversity of activities, etc.

- **Tournament/Special Events –**

- **Tournaments** - Groups may request City spaces to host tournaments, year-end performances, or competitions that require additional planning lead time by the groups and is directly related to regular activities in the specific facilities/amenities. Fees may include additional a la carte fees and charges based on event needs.

- **Special Events** – Larger, one-off events that create opportunity for the larger community to benefit. These events likely require additional resources, spaces and facility modifications, permitting and approvals, and planning time. Coordination between multiple City departments or partners is often required. Long planning lead times are often involved. May include additional a la carte fees and charges based on event needs.

- **Youth Non-Profit** – (0-18 years) minor organizations with a Not-For-Profit status recognized as a local sport organization.

## **ALLOCATION FRAMEWORK CONSIDERATIONS**

The City's Recreation and Culture Allocation Framework is based on the following factors and considerations.

**Note:** Historical use is not a key consideration in allocations from year to year.

- **Determine Supply** of time, facilities and/or amenities. This may be impacted by:
  - Operational limitations (maintenance, staffing levels, etc.),
  - User groups' seasons using similar spaces (arena ice VS arena dry space).
  - Weather
- **Determine Need** for time, space, facilities and/or amenities. User groups are expected to submit requests on a set cycle and timeline, and they are to provide evidence of their need for their request for time based on:
  - Number of participants
  - Types of programming and related standards of play/best practice (rep VS rec leagues, age groups, standards set by governing bodies.
  - Ancillary spaces or equipment needs. (e.g., half-boards, netting, storage, seating, technical support requirements)
  - Tournament/Performance needs, included in annual request (maximum number of tournaments/performance events allowed per user group, per season, may be applied to ensure equitable access to weekend booking time.)
  - Other rationale to support specific requests for allocation.

- **Prioritize Requests** are based on the following criteria:  
(**NOTE:** the list below may be different based on the facility or amenity type.)
  - City Delivered or supported programming/ use
    - Public Access (public skating, drop In)
    - City programming
    - Existing Tenant and Partner Agreements (excluding Joint Use)
  - User Categories
    - Local Not-For-Profit Youth (0-18 years)
    - Local Not-For-Profit Adult (19+ years)
    - Junior/Junior For-Profit
    - School use (Joint Use)
    - Non-local, Not-For-Profit groups
    - For Profit groups or Commercial entities.
  - New/Emerging activities or programming
- **Complete Allocation and Scheduling** by integrating all the factors and considerations above.
  - Allocation and Scheduling cycles are pre-determined for each facility/amenity and activity Season.
  - Regular users who have historically booked spaces with the City, receive information related to the process and timing submit booking requests.
    - **Note:** Users in not in 'good standing' with the City may not be able to participate in Allocation and Scheduling cycles.
  - Once initial allocation is completed, **remaining time** will be allocated considering:
    - Available remaining timeslots (location, time) and user groups' ability to use the space remaining (e.g., after 10 pm may not be suitable to youth programming)
    - Requests from groups with smaller % of time allocated during initial allocation.
    - Ratio/percentage of available time allocated during initial allocation; ratio applied to remaining time.
    - Apply previously used Initial Prioritization criteria.
  - When **excess demand** for youth/adult non-profit occurs then the following is considered or applied to allocation:
    - Receive equal ratio of prime and non-prime allocation
  - When all else is **equal** to assess prioritization, consideration could be given to:
    - Requests that demonstrate alignment with Long Term Participant Development (LTPD) standards (where available), social development/industry best practices.
    - Requests / users that demonstrate alignment with governing bodies.
    - Requests / users that are open to sharing space and being cooperative.
    - Requests / users that have demonstrated consistent alignment to City rules and regulations.
    - Requests / users that are in good standing.
    - Requests / users that support physical, cognitive or sensory accessibility accommodations.



- ° Allocation amounts and times in the previous year are not considered precedent setting for future year allocations.
  - When possible, and in alignment with the Allocation Framework, allocation times and locations from previous years will be considered.
- ° Where there are requests for the extension of a regular a set Season (e.g., extend ice longer into the spring), the City may consider:
  - Minimum total hours of bookings to cover operating costs.
  - Increased restrictions/penalties to cancellations.
  - Impacts to other bookings, user types and their seasons (i.e., ice vs dry space, events).
  - Operational/Maintenance requirements.
- ° Event Hosting (Large Tournament/Special Event)
  - Special Events will be considered outside of normal allocation process and will be approved using rationale related to the alignment with the set allocation principles and/or benefits to the community.
  - Example considerations (further outlined in the City’s Event Hosting Strategy):
    - » How many other events are occurring during the regular season that is displacing regular use.
    - » Can the inventory of facilities/amenities and support services meet the needs of the events.
    - » Is this event significant in terms of economic benefit and/or cost to the community.
    - » Is this a historical event that is well established in the community.
    - » Is there a long lead-time (more than a season) for bidding/hosting process.