

User Fee Policy

Adopted	November 2012
Revisions	N/A
Lead Department	Parks, Recreation & Culture



1.0 Policy

The Township of King Parks, Recreation & Culture Department User Fee Policy is intended as a general mechanism for effectively allocating public funds for recreational services and facilities. It will help provide a consistent approach to setting user fees and to ensure reasonable and equitable proportion of the costs to deliver recreation programs and services are recovered through user fees.

This document, based on consultation with user groups and research, clearly outlines the guiding principles, relates the principles to recreation programs, facilities, and clients and recommends a three level subsidization process. The policy recommends that the department will aim to recover all its direct costs for each level of services and set reasonable targets for the recovery of indirect costs for specified services through its user fees. It also recommends that these targets be reviewed annually.

2.0 Purpose

The Township of King Parks, Recreation & Culture Department is committed to providing residents with a range of recreation opportunities to improve health, well-being and quality of life. People of all ages and abilities can access a variety of physical and non-physical programs and activities at the Township's indoor and outdoor facilities.

An essential purpose of the User Fee Policy is to provide a distinction between different types of recreation activity as related to the principles of funding and subsidization. The guiding principles outlined in this document are the foundation for establishing a fair, objective, and equitable means to distinguish between activities and clients when setting recreation user fees.

It is the intent that the Parks, Recreation & Culture Department User Fee Policy be adopted as a permanent policy subject to review at a minimum every five years. To allow for better resource planning for the Township and users of its recreation services, the department shall strive to maintain an annual fee schedule for all its programs, services and facilities.

3.0 Governing Principles

The Parks, Recreation & Culture User Fee and Pricing Policy is based on a number of guiding principles that were developed in consultation with user groups of the Township's recreation programs, services and facilities. These principles relate to healthy living and diversity, affordability and accessibility and the environment and sustainability. All future decision making involving the pricing of recreation services should reflect the following principles:

Healthy Living

- Parks, Recreation & Culture will provide a range of recreation facilities, programs and services, for residents of all ages and abilities, to help foster healthy lifestyle choices and active living
- Parks, Recreation & Culture will aim to be the provider of the first resort for recreation facilities and services that are not generally provided at an affordable rate by the private sector or for those services not provided at all by the private sectors e.g. parks, arenas, pools.
- Parks, Recreation & Culture will provide programs for youth and adults that teach essential life and safety skills e.g. CPR, First Aid, swimming and babysitting.

Quality and Diversity

- Parks, Recreation & Culture will strive to provide a range of integrated, accessible services to the entire community that are responsive to current needs and trends.
- Parks, Recreation & Culture will aim to provide services that reflect the highest reasonable level of customer service and facility maintenance, including proactive communication on programs and services.
- Parks, Recreation & Culture recreational facilities, programs and services will strive to provide a range of services that reflect the diversity of interest and culture in our community.
- Parks, Recreation & Culture will continue to encourage, cross-cultural participation and seek to expand its programs to include activities of interest to the Township.

Affordability and Accessibility

- Parks, Recreation & Culture will seek to remove physical, financial, gender, social and cultural barriers that may prevent King residents from participating in recreation.
- Parks, Recreation & Culture will strive to allocate its limited resources and municipal subsidies to those users most in need e.g. low income households, children and youth, seniors, and special populations.
- Parks, Recreation & Culture will aim to ensure that user fees are set fairly and equitably in all areas of recreation. The process will be open and transparent for all fees and costs associated with the provision of recreation facilities, programs and services.
- Parks, Recreation & Culture will encourage and promote the long term participation of residents by supporting discounts for multiple enrollments.
- Parks, Recreation & Culture will strive to ensure programs and services are provided in safe and comfortable environments.
- Parks, Recreation & Culture will actively develop flexible programs and services to meet the changing needs, recreational trends and interests in the community.
- Parks, Recreation & Culture recognizes the importance of partnerships and the importance of facilitating new product development, particularly in the area of sports and recreational tourism.
- Parks, Recreation & Culture will strive to ensure the most effective use of the Townships resources to maximize all opportunities for partnership development, sponsorship and grant development and fiscal responsibility.
- Parks, Recreation & Culture will strive to ensure that pricing of its recreational services does not preclude or diminish participation.

Environment and Sustainability

- Parks, Recreation & Culture will continue to protect and expand its green space to provide accessible parkland within neighbourhoods.
- Parks, Recreation & Culture will maintain the highest reasonable standards of environmental stewardship.
- Parks, Recreation & Culture will strive to provide healthy and quality parkland facilities for all interests and ages of people to encourage active living in a sustainable environment.

4.0 Categorization of Recreation Services

The Township of King currently offers residents a wide range of recreation services, including:

- Programs and Lessons
- Admissions and Memberships
- Facility and Equipment Rental

The Township of King must prioritize the funding, and subsidy, of recreation services in order to provide the greatest number of people with quality recreation services at an affordable price.

The following criteria were used to determine which Township services should be given higher levels of subsidy, and which services and user fees should cover a higher portion of actual costs:

- The principles of the Department pertaining to health and wellness, quality and diversity, access and affordability and the environment and sustainability;
- The needs and priorities of Township residents;
- Varying benefits to the public of different recreation pursuits; and
- The total participant costs associated with various recreation activities and the relationship to the level of access provided and participation achieved.

A brief description of the three service levels is provided below. The Parks, Recreation & Culture Department will classify all new and existing recreation series as per the following:

Level 1 Service: Programs, activities or facilities for which higher levels of subsidization should be tolerated (in relation to Level 2 and Level 3 services) given these recreation services:

- Can be accessed by the widest cross section of the population and therefore have the potential for broad base participation (e.g. community public events free of charge, fitness centres, public swimming, and public skating);
- Teach essential life and safety skills to persons of all ages (e.g. learn to swim, CPR, self-defense classes)
- Provide an introduction to physical and non-physical activities to children and youth and encourage active living (e.g. rental of sport facilities, introductory level programs and camps);

- Provide an introduction to physical activities and encourage active living for adults and seniors (e.g. AquaFit, fitness programs and badminton);
- Allow for participation of persons or groups with special needs (e.g. persons with disabilities, new or emerging user groups);
- Involve the use of Township owned facilities by persons of all ages that have minimal maintenance costs (e.g. fitness centres, outdoor tennis courts, picnic tables); and
- Involve the use of Township owned facilities by youth/senior sports teams or groups on a seasonal or multi-timeslot basis (e.g. community groups, gymnasiums, ice rinks).

Level 2 Service: Progressively, more advanced programs, activities and facilities should not be subsidized to the same degree as Level 1 services. These services should have a higher degree of cost recovery to be established on an individual basis and at the discretion of the Township.

- Are accessed by a smaller subset of the population;
- Offer specialized activities or special events to all ages
- Promote healthy living for adults, but are non-physical (e.g. Bridge and Euchre, Art Classes, Cake Decorating);
- Involve the use of Township owned facilities by adult sports teams or groups on a seasonal or multi-timeslot basis (e.g. Community Rooms, Gymnasiums, Ice Rinks).

Level 3 Service: Advanced level or specialty programs, activities or facilities for which subsidization should be less than that applied to Level 1 or Level 2 services. These services should be subject to greater cost recovery than Level 2 or Level 1.

- By comparison to Level 2 services, are likely to be accessed by a smaller subset of the population;
- Offer advanced or specialized non-physical instruction to adults (e.g. events that profit, wine tours);
- Are offered on a private basis (e.g. 1 on 1 swimming lessons);
- Involve the use of premium Township owned facilities used by adults on a casual basis and therefore have less potential to promote long-term or broad based participation (e.g. sports fields, baseball diamonds); and
- Involve the use of Township facilities or services for profit-events or private businesses

Figure 1. Categorization of King Township Recreation Programs, Services and Facilities



Most Subsidized

Least Subsidized

Category 1 25-30% Subsidy	Category 2 5-25% Subsidy	Category 3 0% Subsidy
Learn to Swim (all ages)	Aquatics Leadership Programs	Adult Aquatics Courses – Specialized
Public Swim/Swim Passes	Youth Aquatic Courses – Specialized	Private Swimming Lessons
Pre-School and Children's Programs - Intro	Community/Volunteer Group Hall Rentals	Adult Non-Physical Activity – Specialized, Advanced, Workshops
Youth Programs – Intro	Youth Programs – Specialized, Advanced, Workshops	Prime Time Hall Rentals
Children and Youth Camps – General	Recreation Leadership Programs	Equipment Rentals Profit/Non – Resident
Adult Programs – Physical Activity – Intro	Youth Special Events	Park and Picnic Rentals for Profit/Commercial/ Private Use
Children and Youth/Seniors Sports Facility Rental	Youth Camps – Advanced/ Specialized	Festivals and Special Events For Profit
Children/Youth/Seniors Community Space Rental	Adult Programs – Non-Physical activity - intro	Prime Time Ice Rentals Non-Resident
Public Skating (all ages)	Adult Physical Activity Programs – Advanced/Specialized	
Fitness Memberships (all ages)	Adult Sports Facility Rental	
Fitness Pass (all ages)	Adult Community Space Rental	
Special Needs, New emerging programs and Services	Festivals – Non-Profit	
	Equipment Rentals – Community Groups/Non-Profit	

*** A 0%-100% subsidy is evaluated on a case by case basis (e.g. 100% of proceeds are put back into the community/municipality, volunteer, user group or executive planning meetings)**

**** User groups cannot combine multiple subsidy opportunities (e.g. Requesting the season rental discount rate in addition to their User Fee Policy subsidy)**

Definitions:

User Fee: A fee paid directly by a user to gain access to a specific service (e.g. program registration fee, admission or membership fee, facility or equipment rental charges, special service charges)

Direct Costs: Costs directly attributable to a specific program or service (e.g. equipment or program supplies and wages of instructors)

Indirect Costs: Costs that are not directly attributable to one particular activity (e.g. facility operations and maintenance, administration, amortization)

Subsidy: The amount of direct and/or indirect costs not paid by the consumer of the program, service or facility, but paid for the by the Township, principally from the tax base.

5.0 Policy Guidelines

It is the policy of King Township that all user fees for recreation programs, services and facilities be set in accordance with the principles and fee categories described above, and the following guidelines:

- The Parks, Recreation & Culture Department will aim to recover all of its direct operating costs for Level 1, 2 and 3 services through the collection of user fees, except for those activities that the Senior Staff Team deem appropriate to be subsidized at a greater level.
- The Parks, Recreation & Culture Department will set reasonable targets for the recovery of a portion of the indirect costs for Level 2 and 3 services through the collection of user fees. These targets will be reviewed annually with consideration to the operating budget impact.
- The pricing for all recreation programs, services and facilities will be reviewed annually and adjusted to accommodate the changes in operating and maintenance costs and market place.
- It is intended that a range of recreation services be available to all citizens and that no Township resident shall be excluded from participating in recreational activities because of an inability to pay. Parks, Recreation & Culture Department Senior Staff will refer to the Community Assistance Program guidelines specifically in regard to access to recreation programs and services on a case by case basis.

- The Township of King reserves the right to impose a surcharge on persons who do not pay property taxes to the Township of King (non-residents). The non-resident fee will be published in the Community Guide.
- It is the intent of the Parks, Recreation & Culture Department to eliminate subsidization of activities such as for-profit tournaments and special events.
- Families registering three (3) or more members of their immediate family are eligible to receive a discount on program fees. This discount will be determined by the Senior Staff Team, outlined in the annual fees and charges process presented to council and published in the Community Guide.
- Facility and equipment rental rates may be offered at a reduced rate in low priority times (e.g. non-prime time) to encourage greater participation rates and make use of existing facilities.
- It is the intent of the Parks, Recreation & Culture Department to ensure that fees remain competitive with other recreation and culture service providers in the Region. However, it is not the intention of the department to purposely undercut other service providers.
- The Parks, Recreation & Culture Department will continue to investigate potential new sources of revenue (e.g. grants, partnership and new programs) and support appropriate funding efforts of groups and organizations to help offset costs to the municipality in providing services and operating facilities.
- Community and user groups will be required to register their organization and meet the requirements of the Parks, Recreation & Culture Department as set out in Appendix 'A'.

6.0 Responsibility

The User Fee Policy for the Township of King will be subject to review at a minimum of every five years, based on the operational mandate of the Parks, Recreation & Culture Department, the broader fiscal environment of the Township, and otherwise at the discretion of the Township. This policy stands aside from any other policies, which exist regarding cost recovery of individual services of the Township of King. However, recreation user fees represent significant revenue to the Township and a more formalized approach to setting user fees, any increases over time, and levels of subsidization, should be established on this user fee policy.

7.0 Conclusion

The User Fee Policy is designed to promote access to and enjoyment of all of the Township's recreation services. This is achieved by recognizing those facilities, services and programs for which the private sector is not likely to provide an appropriate level of service at affordable costs and recognizing the role of the Township in providing access to reasonable costs. As such, the User Fee Policy establishes those services that should be subject to higher levels of subsidization, consistent with the mandate of the Parks, Recreation & Culture Department to provide recreation services with costs borne from the tax base. In meeting the challenge of allocating tax dollars effectively, the intent of the policy is to direct where subsidy should be most appropriately applied. This essential mandate requires that user fees are set according to principles of this policy.

APPENDIX A – REGISTERED ORGANIZATION GROUPS APPLICATION FORM

Registration Information

Official Name of Organization: _____

Contact Person: _____

Position: _____

Address: _____ Postal Code: _____

Phone #: _____ Fax: _____

Email: _____

Website: _____

Annual General Meeting Date: _____ First Year of Operation: _____

Are you a new applicant? Yes No

If no, has any of your information changed? Yes No

Organization Information

The Township of King will use the below data to help assist in the planning of future activities, services, and/or programs. Please check the age groups and indicate the number of participants.

Age Group:

- | | | |
|---|--|-------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Preschool 0-5 | Number of King Township resident participants: | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Children 6-12 | Number of non-resident participants*: | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Youth 13-17 | Total number of participants: | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Adult 18 + | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> All of the above | | |

Is Registration open to the public?

*Please provide a list of the number of non-resident participants by municipality of residence (not mailing address)

Required Submissions – Attach copies of all required documents

- A list of the organization's current board/executive including positions, name, addresses, and home/business phone numbers, emails, etc.
- Recent annual operating budget and/or current financial statement
- Current copy of the organization's constitution and by-laws or statement of purpose
- Does the organization have Directors/Executives liability insurance? If yes, please attach a copy

Declaration of Authenticity of Information Submitted on and with this Application

Please Print Name

Position on Executive/Board

Signature of Applicant

Date (YY/MM/DD)

