



PUBLIC INFORMATION UPDATE

Information on TOL Recreation, Facility Use, and Floor Allocation

Recreation Use Increasing in the Township of Langley

The Township of Langley (TOL) is pleased and proud of the many diverse recreational activities we offer and facilitate in support of the active, healthy lifestyles of our 120,000 residents.

With a growing population base, demand for recreational activities, facilities, and facility time is high and increasing. As this demand grows, the TOL is faced with the increasingly complex challenge of allocating facility time among the many activities, user groups, and users.

The allocation process takes into consideration the many existing user groups, thousands of users in several different and changing activities, and new activities demanded by residents which also require facility time. It also considers the need to meet existing and rising operations/maintenance costs in a sustainable manner while attempting to minimize additional funding from taxpayers.

We are also proud to continue to support not-for-profit groups with reduced booking rates to allow their members to access affordable recreation. Supporting not-for-profit youth-based user groups with subsidized rates is in contrast to the private and commercial groups who are charged much higher rates. This brings different economic value to the Township, not only with the higher rates, but also in the benefits to the tourism and business community. A balanced economic contribution of commercial, private, and not-for-profit groups allows for TOL to continue to provide for the growing needs of residents that use our recreation facilities.

We will continue our strong relationships with all user groups and work to find a balance that provides facility time in support of active, healthy lifestyles.

2019 Ice and Dry Floor Facility Allocation Information

Ice time is in high and increasing demand by numerous user groups including minor hockey, figure skating, related camps, major league hockey, special events, and other needs. It is the most complex facility allocation challenge we face and it directly competes with dry floor facility time which requires the ice to be removed for part of the year for recreational activities, special events, and other needs.

Recent user presentations to Council, social media posts, and statements from various concerned groups and individuals have appeared regarding both the allocation of time to dry floor users groups by the TOL and the use of the George Preston Recreation Centre (GPRC) Sports Box. Staff are communicating with the public and user groups to ensure accurate information is being presented in their submissions and in their advocacy efforts to Council and the public.

Unfortunately, there is information circulating in the public domain that is incorrect and needs to be corrected that include: (1) the suggestions that there is a reduction in availability of dry floor time - in fact, there is an overall increase; (2) priority is not being given to non TOL residents. Booking priority is to TOL user groups.

We continue to communicate facts to stakeholders about the high and increasing demands we have for facilities, and the work by staff to enhance facilities to provide more ice and dry floor time for all needs including user groups. We continue to work with all groups on this challenging facility allocation process to find balance among all needs and users.

Below are more facts, questions and answers (QandAs), and background details on this topic.

Facts at a Glance – 2019 Ice and Dry Floor Facility Request and Allocation

These facts are provided for quick reference. Additional background information is provided below in the QandA section.

- The Township of Langley (TOL) is pleased and proud of the many diverse recreational activities we offer and facilitate in support of the active, healthy lifestyles of our 120,000 residents. As population increases so does the demand for recreational activities, facilities, and facility time.
- The allocation process takes into consideration the many existing and new user groups, thousands of users in several different and changing activities, and new activities demanded by residents which also require facility time. It also considers the need to meet existing and rising operations/maintenance costs in a sustainable manner while attempting to minimize additional funding from taxpayers.
- Users groups are met, consulted, and communicated with on facility allocations and schedules.
- Non TOL residents are NOT given priority for space allocation. TOL based groups are given booking priority. Non TOL groups may also book space when not booked by TOL groups.
- TOL is proud to be able to continue to support not-for-profit groups with reduced booking rates to allow their members to access affordable recreation.
- There are significant increases in demand for ice time by several groups and for several needs including minor hockey, figure skating, related camps, major league hockey, special events, and other needs. Ice time has been extended to May 27 to meet these increased demands. Various factors were considered in extending the ice season as outline in the Q and A section.
- The two main groups temporarily affected by the extended ice season are Valley Ball Hockey Association (VBHA) and Langley Minor Lacrosse Association (LMLA).
- Dry floor allocation hours for 2019 on game play surfaces at TOL operated facilities are the same as previous years with opportunities for potential increases after May 27. With the addition of the Sport Box and use of GPRC after May 27 overall additional hours will be available that will allow for expansion of the sport and the accommodation of additional players.
- Dry floor facilities are also being enhanced with additional amenities to provide for use including the George Preston Recreation Centre (GPRC) Sports Box, a covered metal roof facility, located directly beside the GPRC main arena. These facilities will meet or exceed the dry floor user group's needs.
- TOL staff continue to communicate facts to stakeholders about the high and increasing demands for facilities, and the work by staff to enhance facilities to provide more ice and dry floor time for all needs including user groups.
- TOL staff continue to work with all user groups on this challenging facility allocation process to find balance among all needs and user groups.

Background QandAs – 2019 Ice and Dry Floor Facility Request and Allocation

How did the TOL communicate with user groups on dry floor time requests and allocations for 2019?

As part of the allocation process, dry floor user groups submitted their floor time requests to TOL staff by the deadline of December 31, 2018. On January 11, 2019, all dry floor user groups were notified by staff that use of the main arena at GPRC would not be available until May 27, 2019 due to an extended spring ice season.

Did the TOL meet with user groups?

Yes. On January 31, 2019 at the annual dry floor user meeting staff presented and reviewed options to dry floor user groups to be able to maintain previous year's levels of membership.

- Identified game play surfaces included the Aldergrove Credit Union Community Centre (ACUCC), the GPRC Sports Box, and GPRC main arena (after May 27).
- Hours of allocation presented for 2019 on game play surfaces at TOL operated facilities were the same as previous years.
- Staff set the goal with all dry floor user groups to allocate fair and proportional use at all sites.
- Concern was raised during the allocation meeting about outside user groups having floor time booked at McLeod Athletic Park sports box (MAP), and times were adjusted allowing TOL dry floor groups' priority over outside groups.

What is the ice schedule at the George Preston Recreation Centre (GPRC)?

Spring ice at GPRC is scheduled to be complete on May 19, allowing staff three days to remove the ice before the Home Show on May 23-26, (which has also traditionally been at GPRC). All dry floor user groups are scheduled to have access to the GPRC main arena from May 27 forward.

What were the factors considered in extending ice time?

Ice time is in high and increasing demand by numerous user groups including minor hockey, figure skating, related camps, major league hockey, special events, and other needs. It is the most complex facility allocation challenge we face and it directly competes with dry floor facility time which requires the ice to be removed for part of the year. Various factors have been considered in extending the ice season, including:

- Increased demand for TOL ice programs.
- Numerous inquiries from a variety of groups for spring ice.
- The opportunity for Langley to host spring events at GPRC.
- One of the groups using the ice during the spring are teams affiliated with the Langley Rivermen.
 - Some featured events and programs they are running in the Spring include: The Langley Rivermen and BCHL co-hosting an identification camp; practice and play of 8 teams from the Jr. Rivermen Spring League (ages 7-14); Hosting of two Showcase Events.
 - The Rivermen are both tenants at GPRC and also sport-tourism affiliates within the Township of Langley.
 - The Langley Rivermen are valued community partners with the Township.

Is the TOL allowing users from outside Langley priority on TOL facilities?

Contrary to suggestions made by some, priority is not being given to non TOL residents. During the year, staff work to maximize use of facilities in order to responsibly oversee TOL resources.

Which groups are temporarily affected by an extended ice season?

The two main groups temporarily affected by the extended ice season are Valley Ball Hockey Association and Langley Minor Lacrosse Association.

1. **Valley Ball Hockey Association (VBHA)** submitted a letter to Mayor and Council and appeared as a delegation to Council on February 11, 2019. VBHA asked for Council to reverse the decision to extend the ice season at GPRC, stating this would impact their registration. They indicated that that the space being provided at the GPRC Sports Box was not a game playable surface. Concerns raised at Council around the GPRC Sports Box included:
 - Combination of rink board and chain link upper system is not game playable
 - Lack of proper game quality score clock with penalty minutes
 - Lack of seating

- Staff have confirmed that while VBHA may play at other facilities that lack such amenities prior to the season:
 - A new glass/stanchion system is to be installed that is fully compatible with the arena quality board system already present.
 - A new game quality score clock is to be installed prior to the start of the season. Included in this clock are 12" main digits and multiple line penalty time.
 - Seating for 180-200 will be installed prior to the start of the season.
- Additional features of this building include:
 - Dedicated change rooms and bathrooms that are attached to the Sports Box are under construction.
 - The GPRC Sports Box floor is a high quality polished concrete surface and is the same quality as the main GPRC arena.
 - The GPRC Sports Box facility is directly beside the GPRC main arena, and is a covered metal roof facility.
 - The facility walls are metal cladding top to bottom on approximately 1/3 of the building and also have retractable curtains as well as chain link on the remaining 2/3 of the walls.
- VBHA also stated that TOL has reduced dry floor time for them in 2019.
 - Based on allocation in 2018, VBHA had an average of 71 hours per week at GPRC and the previous Aldergrove Community Arena. For the 2019 season LMLA has also been allocated an average of 71 hours per week at GPRC Sports Box and ACUCC. In addition, additional time will be available in the main GPRC arena after May 27. Staff have ensured the weekly allocation of time and number of facilities for use by LMLA in 2019 is the same or increased over 2018.
 - Further, with the addition of the Sport Box and use of GPRC after May 27 overall additional hours will be available that will allow for expansion of the sport and the accommodation of additional players.

2. **Langley Minor Lacrosse Association (LMLA)** submitted a letter and delegation request to Mayor and Council for February 25, 2019, and also made a presentation to the Recreation, Culture and Parks Advisory Committee on February 13, 2019.

- At the Recreation, Culture and Parks Committee Advisory Meeting on February 13, LMLA advised that they could not use the GPRC Sports Box for games as they are mandated and they cannot play games outside. It was indicated that playing in the outdoor space did not fit the LMLA sanctioning body mandate.
 - Staff have reviewed this detail and have requested LMLA provide further information and clarity for this mandate in a rule or policy from the league or governing body. At this time, staff have not received a response to the inquiry.
 - In response to inquires and research staff has done, staff can confirm that outside games are being played in other municipalities.
 - This information is supported in recent news articles of covered outdoor box in Nanaimo and others in Maple Ridge
 - <https://www.nanaimobulletin.com/news/multi-purpose-sports-court-officially-opens-at-harewood-centennial-park/>
 - <https://www.mapleridgenews.com/sports/covered-lacrosse-box-needed-in-maple-ridge-say-burrards/>
 - Further, the BC Lacrosse Association website (<http://bclacrosse.com/faqs.php>) states: "Where is the game played? Box lacrosse is played in hockey arenas once the ice is removed and the floor dries. It is also played in outdoor lacrosse boxes. Field lacrosse is played outdoors on soccer type fields."
- At the February 25, 2019 TOL Council Meeting, LMLA came as a delegation and presented a request to council to reverse the decision to keep ice in at GPRC. LMLA presented that not enough time was allocated to their association to allow it to grow. Additionally, it was said that because the GPRC Sports Box had the penalty boxes on the same side as the benches that it could not be a sanctioned to play games on. In particular, Canadian Lacrosse Rule Book Rule 4 was referenced (https://lmmlc.ca/docs/CLA_Rules.pdf).
 - TOL staff have reviewed the referenced rule and note that there is a process within the rule book to allow for an Arena Condition Report to be submitted to the sanctioning body for approval.
 - It is noted that the old Aldergrove Arena, which all dry floor groups played in for decades up until the end of the summer of 2018, also had the penalty boxes on the same side as the benches. Other local municipal arenas where lacrosse is currently played with this style of penalty box such are also seen at North Surrey Recreation Centre and Port Coquitlam Arenas.
- Referenced in LMLA communication is a concern brought forward over the winter, that at times the floor in the GPRC Sports Box was wet. In instances where concerns are brought of puddles or moisture are noticed or brought forward to staff's attention, staff have been swift to investigate and ensure safe use of the facility. At times this has meant a temporary closure. All dry floor groups played on this same surface in the 2018 season

(April-July) without major issues. With extreme wet weather some issues of a wet floor arose during dry floor user groups off season times in the late fall of 2018, and more recently with both frigid weather. As this is a newer facility, staff continue to monitor and rectify issues should they present themselves.

- LMLA have stated that TOL has reduced dry floor time for them in 2019.
 - Based on allocation in 2018, LMLA had an average of 33.5 hours per week at GPRC and the previous Aldergrove Community Arena. For the 2019 season LMLA has also been allocated an average of 33.5 hours per week at GPRC Sports Box and ACUCC. In addition, additional time will be available in the main GPRC arena after May 27. Staff have ensured the weekly allocation of time and number of facilities for use by LMLA in 2019 is the same or increased over 2018.
 - Further, with the addition of the Sport Box and use of GPRC after May 27 overall additional hours will be available that will allow for expansion of the sport and the accommodation of additional players.

Are the rumours on social media true about floor time use by user groups from outside of Langley?

Scheduling for all dry floor facilities “in season” (April-July) is completed through the allocation process as outlined in the Council approved “Facility Allocation Policy”.

- Township staff conduct all facility allocations with the goal of ensuring that a balance of quality activities and opportunities are available to all Township residents.
- The process includes receiving requests for time from each group, reviewing TOL membership ratios of each association, meeting as a group to look at proposed times, allowing time for adjustments and finally sending all user groups finalized contracts for the season.
- During the “out of season” months (Sept-March) dry floor time is booked more intermittently by all dry floor users and more requests are filled on an as needed and available basis at the uncovered outdoor boxes, MAP covered box, as well as the newer GPRC Sports Box facility.
 - Langley groups are given priority to book time at all of these facilities in the out of season months, however, any available times not booked are also sold to other groups which includes user groups outside of Langley.
 - In the out of season all bookable time at TOL operated facilities is not exclusively reserved or put aside for Langley groups as they do not request or require every floor time.
 - If TOL did not sell the remaining time to other groups it would mean having a lot of wasted unused time at TOL facilities and this would not be a responsible use of TOL resources.
 - Where it is reasonably possible with sufficient lead time to notify outside groups, and depending on the type of booking (practice vs events), staff may bump outside users.
- TOL staff continue to balance the work of meeting the fluid needs of TOL based groups, with the goal of responsibly maximizing the use of TOL facilities and resources.
 - Suggestions that there is a reduction in availability of dry floor time are not accurate.
 - Decisions to reduce enrollment would be for other reasons than availability or priority.

What is happening now?

The TOL continues to communicate facts to stakeholders about the high and increasing demands we have for facilities, and the work by staff to enhance facilities to provide more ice and dry floor time for all needs including user groups. We continue to work with all user groups on this challenging facility allocation process to find balance among all needs and user groups.