



City of Richmond

Report to Committee

To: Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Committee
From: Keith Miller
Director, Recreation and Sport Services
Date: June 2, 2025
File: 11-7000-01/2025-Vol 01
Re: Parks, Recreation and Culture Allocation Policy

Staff Recommendation

That the development of a Parks, Recreation and Culture Allocation Policy as outlined in the staff report titled "Parks, Recreation and Culture Allocation Policy", dated June 2, 2025, from the Director, Recreation and Sport Services, be approved.

Keith Miller
Director, Recreation and Sport Services
(604-247-4475)
Att. 2

REPORT CONCURRENCE		
ROUTED TO:	CONCURRENCE	CONCURRENCE OF GENERAL MANAGER
Parks Services Arts, Culture and Heritage Services	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
SENIOR STAFF REPORT REVIEW	INITIALS: 	APPROVED BY CAO

Staff Report

Origin

The purpose of this report is to seek Council's approval to develop a Parks, Recreation and Culture Allocation Policy (PRC Allocation Policy).

This report supports Council's Strategic Plan 2022–2026 Focus Area #1 Proactive in Stakeholder and Civic Engagement:

Proactive stakeholder and civic engagement to foster understanding and involvement and advance Richmond's interests.

1.3 Increase the reach of communication and engagement efforts to connect with Richmond's diverse community.

This report supports Council's Strategic Plan 2022–2026 Focus Area #6 A Vibrant, Resilient and Active Community:

Vibrant, resilient and active communities supported by a wide variety of opportunities to get involved, build relationships and access resources.

6.1 Advance a variety of program, services, and community amenities to support diverse needs and interests and activate the community.

This report also supports a variety of City of Richmond strategies, including: Community Wellness Strategy 2018–2023, Recreation and Sport Strategy 2019–2024, and the Arts Strategy 2019-2024.

Analysis

Background

Richmond is home to a wide array of parks, recreation, and cultural amenities and facilities that support diverse programs, activities and services. Through a variety of operating and service delivery models and agreements, the Parks, Recreation and Culture Division (the Division) works closely with a variety of community organizations to provide a range of services to the community including registered programs, drop-in activities, events, rental and casual use opportunities that provide both community and personal benefit.

Guidance on allocating spaces and facilities (such as pools, fields, gymnasiums and multi-purpose rooms) for these purposes are set out in allocation policies.

These policies include:

- Policy No. 8011 – Aquatics Program;
- Policy No. 8300 – City Facilities: Provisions to Groups;
- Policy No. 8501 – Outdoor Sport Facilities and Amenities Allocation;

- Administrative Directive No. 8501.01 – Outdoor Sport Facilities and Amenities Allocation; and
- Policy No. 8701 – Parks and Leisure Services: Community Involvement.

As highlighted in Attachment 1, these policies vary considerably in terms of when they were developed, with older policies either remaining unchanged since their original adoption or updated some time ago. Some existing policies are specialized and apply only to specific Parks, Recreation and Culture (PRC) spaces. As a result, gaps exist across the broader PRC facility spectrum, where spaces without an applicable allocation policy do not benefit from the structure, consistency, and guidance such a policy provides.

This context presents an opportunity to develop a comprehensive PRC Allocation Policy that addresses gaps, promotes equitable access, optimizes PRC infrastructure use, and enhances clarity and consistency to decision-making across the system.

An overarching policy will establish foundational principles and provide direction for the allocation of all PRC spaces and facilities. The process of developing an overarching policy will include a review and assessment of existing allocation policies, which are specific to certain PRC spaces, to determine whether they should be integrated into the overarching policy or remain separate but aligned with its principles and structure. Specialized areas—such as aquatics—may continue to benefit from tailored guidance provided by facility-specific policies that respond to unique aspects of the facility and its use.

Policy 8501 Outdoor Sport Facilities and Amenities Allocation, the most recent of the City's allocation policies, is an example of a facility-specific policy. It remains current, works well and may serve as a model for other specialized areas such as aquatics that may require a more tailored policy to align with the overarching policy.

Municipal Review

Staff conducted a review of allocation policies for parks, recreation and cultural facilities from seven (7) Canadian municipalities including Burnaby, Coquitlam, Surrey, Vancouver, Calgary, Regina and Saskatoon. This review revealed a number of common themes and promising practices that could be considered within the City's context.

While the structure and detail of policies vary, many include:

- Strong emphasis on alignment with broader strategic goals;
- Principles of equity and inclusion;
- Transparency in decision-making;
- Roles and responsibilities for staff;
- Expectations and requirements for users;
- Defined types of user groups;
- Defined types of use;
- Time-based allocation principles;
- Optimization of facility use supporting economic sustainability; and

- Prioritization frameworks.

These insights present an opportunity for Richmond to strengthen its policy framework, and to establish a more unified and responsive approach to facility allocation—one that optimizes the use of PRC infrastructure, reflects operational realities, community values and evolving needs.

Allocation Policy – Objectives and Scope

An overarching policy would enable consistency across all facility types for the allocation of PRC spaces to optimize the use of infrastructure, and offer clear guidance regarding allocation priorities. It would also enhance transparency for the public and user groups by clearly outlining how allocation decisions are made and articulating the expectations and requirements for users.

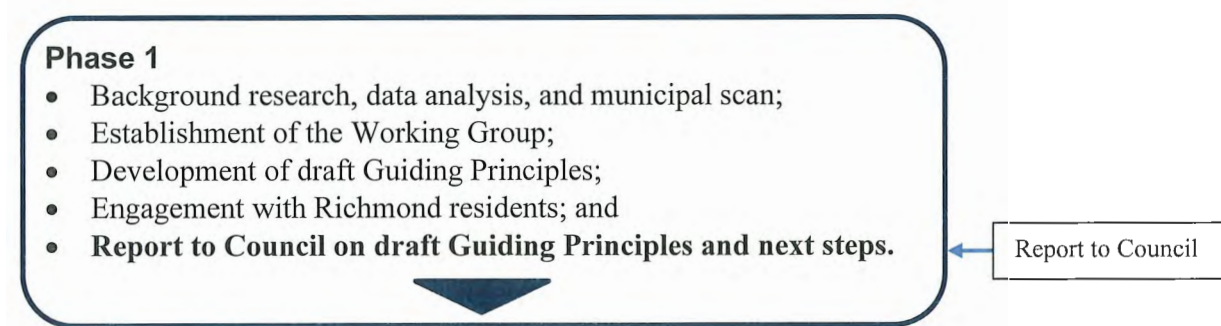
The scope of the policy will include:

- Providing guidance for space allocation in alignment with Council priorities;
- Establishing equitable, transparent, and consistent processes for facility space allocation;
- Defining types of user groups and establishing a framework for assigning priority within and across these categories;
- Defining types of use and outlining how priority is determined within and across categories;
- Outlining roles and responsibilities of City staff, as well as users and additional relevant groups such as Associations and Advisory Boards;
- Outlining clear expectations and requirements for all groups utilizing PRC spaces;
- Accommodating emerging and evolving community needs as well as future growth; and
- Supporting equitable and inclusive opportunities for all Richmond residents to engage in play and recreation.

Policy Development Process

Should Council support the development of a PRC Allocation Policy, staff will initiate a policy development process that will progress through three phases as outlined in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Policy Development Process



Phase 2

- Develop draft PRC Allocation Policy and consider revisions to existing allocation policies to ensure alignment; and
- Re-engage with Richmond residents.

**Phase 3**

- **Report to Council for PRC Allocation Policy endorsement;** and
- Undertake revisions to existing policies in alignment with endorsed PRC Allocation Policy.

Report to Council

A number of factors will need to be considered as part of overarching policy development and existing policy review, including, but not limited to:

- Evolving best practices in facility and service allocation policies and procedures;
- Population and demographic shifts;
- Space utilization trends; and
- Shifts in user group needs and participation trends.

The policy development process will prioritize interested party involvement and public engagement throughout. Engagement with community organizations that work closely with the Division will play a central role in shaping the policy and reflecting community perspectives.

The proposed plan for involving interested parties includes two methods:

1. A Working Group that allows for in-depth involvement in identifying policy options and recommendations. Membership would include both staff and Community Association and Society board representatives from across Parks, Recreation and Culture (e.g., Richmond Sports Council, London Heritage Farm Society, Minoru Seniors Society, Richmond Arts Coalition, Nature Park Society, and members of the Richmond Council of Communities). Groups will be asked to appoint a representative to the working group.
2. Interested party meetings that invite representatives from all Association and Society boards to provide feedback on the work of the Working Group at key junctures in the process. (see Attachment 2)

An initial and foundational step for the Working Group, and policy development process, will be to establish a set of Guiding Principles. The Guiding Principles will state the values that are important in the development of the Allocation Policy, and will be key in shaping the direction of this initiative, supporting decision-making.

Next Steps

Pending Council approval of the development of a Parks, Recreation and Culture Allocation Policy, staff will proceed with Phase 1 of the policy development and bring forward draft Guiding Principles for Council endorsement in a future report.

Financial Impact

None.

Conclusion

A Parks, Recreation and Culture Allocation Policy will strengthen the City's ability to manage facility allocation in a consistent, transparent and equitable manner, optimize the use of PRC infrastructure, and ensure that community spaces deliver shared value to all Richmond residents.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bains", enclosed within a large, loopy circular stroke.

Mandeep Bains
Manager, Projects and Planning
(604-247-4479)

Att. 1: Current Allocation Policies Overview

Att. 2: Interested Parties List

Table 1: Current Allocation Policies Overview

Policy	Created	Last Updated	Overview
Policy No. 8300 – City Facilities: Provision to Groups	1978	n/a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emphasizes program delivery over rental access. • Provides limited guidance, applicable only to certain indoor spaces. • Prioritizes youth participation, including adult groups that supervise youth, over adult-only use. • Does not reflect the current scope of services or operational complexity.
Policy 8701 – Parks and Leisure Services – Community Involvement	1978	2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supports community involvement through volunteers and non-profit organizations in program delivery. • Allows assistance to be provided to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Richmond Community Associations and Societies whose primary objective is to provide community service programs. ◦ PRC and Community Social Development non-profit, non-sport organizations with at least 60% Richmond residency who develop and implement relevant programs. ◦ Richmond sport organizations with at least 70% Richmond resident membership. ◦ New or emerging sport organizations working toward a 70% Richmond residency threshold, eligible for assistance for up to three years. • Serves as a support and engagement policy rather than an allocation framework.

Policy	Created	Last Updated	Overview
Policy 8011 – Aquatics Program	1984	2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritizes allocation of aquatic spaces across various program areas. • Establishes minimum cost recovery target of 50% for facility operations. • Defines staffing and program delivery expectations, including training and qualifications. • Lacks allocation criteria, user classifications, and operational guidance for staff and users. • Does not clearly outline roles, responsibilities, or procedures for conflict resolution or policy updates. • Outdated in relation to program standards and facilities.
Policy 8501 – Outdoor Sport Facilities and Amenities Allocation	2021	n/a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishes clear allocation priorities: City programs, School District, in-season use, and games over practices. • Requires 70% Richmond residency for user groups to qualify as local. • Integrates equity, accessibility, and inclusion into decision-making. • Defines expectations for user compliance, including code of conduct and payment obligations. • Supported by an administrative procedure detailing allocation processes and responsibilities.
Administrative Procedure 8501.01	2021	n/a	Provides further detail as to the process and guidelines for the allocation of Outdoor Sport Facilities in alignment with the policy.

Representatives from the following groups will be invited to participate in the interested party meetings:

- Aquatic Advisory Board
- Britannia Society
- City Centre Community Association
- East Richmond Community Association
- Gateway Theatre Society
- Hamilton Community Association
- Richmond Arenas Community Association
- Richmond Arts Coalition
- Richmond Art Gallery Association
- Richmond Fitness & Wellness Association
- Sea Island Community Association
- South Arm Community Association
- Thompson Community Association
- West Richmond Community Association
- Britannia Shipyard National Historic Site Society
- London Heritage Farm Society
- Minoru Seniors Society
- Richmond Museum Society
- Richmond Nature Park Society
- Richmond Sports Council
- Steveston Community Society
- Steveston Historical Society