



Administrative Policies & Procedures

Policy No. CORP-10 - Sports Field and Park Use Policy

Topic:	Sports Field and Park Use Policy	Affects:	Town staff, individuals and user groups that permit Town facilities.
Section:	CORP	Replaces:	Sports Field and Park Use Policy 2017
Original Policy Date:	March 2010	Revision Date:	February 25, 2020
Effective Date:	February 25, 2020	Proposed Revision Date:	February, 2024
Prepared By:	Community Services, Business Support	Approval Authority:	Council

1.0 Policy Statement

To provide transparency and structure for user groups and individuals pertaining to the fair allotment and use of Town owned and/or operated sports fields, parks and other outdoor facilities.

2.0 Purpose

To ensure consistency in the programming and ongoing use of the Town’s sports fields and parks inventory; both municipally owned and/or managed facilities.

To ensure that the highest quality and safest parks and sports fields are maintained and available for all permitted user groups.

To provide a framework and consistent approach to the ongoing and seasonal use of our parks and sports field facilities in a fair and equitable manner.

To ensure that the Town’s investment in parks and sports field facilities is managed in the best interest of all users and the citizens of Aurora.

To establish clear guidelines and communication between the Business Support Division, the Parks Operations Division, and the user group contact.

To accommodate the needs of a growing municipality and the increased demands on our sports field facilities.

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To clearly define the rules of use and the departmental procedures in maintaining compliance.

3.0 Scope

This policy applies to all facility permit holders and all individual and/or user groups requesting use of Town owned and/or operated parks, sports fields, and other outdoor facilities, as well as Town staff responsible for the use and/or operation of these facilities.

The Town of Aurora is fortunate to have a substantial inventory of parks and sports fields within the municipal boundaries of the Town. These facilities primarily consist of rectangular fields and ball diamonds; however there are a number of other facilities including, but not limited to tennis courts, basketball courts, etc.

Common uses include soccer, baseball, softball, football, rugby, lacrosse, tennis, and pickle ball, but may include any sport or activity for which the playing surface is suitable.

4.0 Definitions

Adult Organization: A group that does not meet the requirements to be classified as a “Youth” organization, and demonstrate a minimum of 50% participation from Aurora residents, or ratepayers in the Town of Aurora, to be deemed “Aurora Based”.

Aurora Based: A group that demonstrates that it meets the minimum requirements for its age category (Adult or Youth), of participation from Aurora residents or ratepayers in the Town of Aurora.

Class A, B, C, D and E Sports Fields: Identifies facility classification and schedule of use.

Director: The Director of Community Services or his/her designate or successor.

Facility: Any Town owned and/or operated park or outdoor sports field, playing surface or other outdoor space.

Permit Holder: Refers to the organization, group or individual to which a facility rental permit has been issued, including any and all participants, volunteers, guests and invitees of the permit holder and their participants, volunteers, guests and invitees.

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Representative Organization: An organization that does not meet the minimum participation required to be deemed Aurora Based, but is the only organization that offers a particular program to Aurora residents.

Sports Field: Includes all ball diamonds, rectangular fields (soccer, football, etc.) and any other outdoor sports playing surface owned and/or operated by the Town of Aurora.

Youth Organization: An organization that demonstrates that it has a minimum of 80% participation of youth aged 17 or younger, with a minimum of 70% participation from Aurora residents or ratepayers in the Town of Aurora, to be Aurora Based.

5.0 Allocation Procedures

5.1 Submission of Seasonal Requests

All seasonal sports field requests shall be submitted in the format prescribed by the Facility Bookings Administrator, no later than October 15th of each year.

5.2 Grandfathering

Grandfathering applies to seasonal permit holders only.

All seasonal sports field permit holders will maintain their existing field times on an annual basis, until such time as the permit holder surrenders that time. The following allocation procedures apply only to new requests, time surrendered by an existing permit holder, or in the event that new facilities are made available.

Exceptions may be made at the mutual agreement of an existing permit holder and the Director for the release of permitted time on a one-time basis to accommodate the needs of another organization or for fields re-allocated at the discretion of the Director.

5.3 Allocation Priority

The following allocation priority will be utilized for all seasonal requests submitted in accordance with seasonal permitting request procedures. In all other cases, field permits will be issued on a first come first serve basis with the established priority ranking applied when deemed necessary by the Director.

The Town currently recognizes the following Aurora based and representative group community sports organizations:

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Aurora Based Youth Organizations

Aurora Barbarians Rugby
Aurora Diggers Girls Softball
Aurora King Baseball Association
Aurora Youth Soccer Club
Total Tennis

Aurora Based Adult Organizations

Aurora Ladies Soft Ball Association
Aurora Men's Slo-Pitch
Aurora Mixed Slo-Pitch
Aurora Rovers Soccer Club
Aurora Soccer Club
Aurora Community Tennis Club

Representative Groups - Youth

Extreme Goalkeepers
Redbirds Lacrosse
York Region Football Association

Representative Groups – Adult

Valhalla Mixed Slo-Pitch
Yonge Aurora Mixed Slo-Pitch

Sports fields will be allocated in the following priority order:

1. Town of Aurora special events and recreation programming, including programming/events operated by third parties on behalf of the Town of Aurora
2. Recognized Aurora based youth organizations
3. Recognized representative youth organizations
4. Recognized Aurora based adult organizations
5. Recognized representative adult organizations
6. School groups
7. Other groups and private individuals

Any organization requesting new field time and claiming either "Youth" or "Aurora Based" status shall be required to submit a participant list for the organization along with the request. The participant list shall be in the form of a letter signed

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by the president of the sports organization and submitted to the attention of the Facilities Booking Administrator outlining the total number of registered participants/members, including name, municipality of residency, and age (if requesting “Youth” status).

5.4 Artificial Turf Fields

As the St. Maximillian Kolbe and Stewart Burnett artificial turf fields have been designed, in part, to support specific community programming, the following additional allocation priority will be applied:

St. Maximillian Kolbe artificial turf field:

First priority shall be given to all sports other than soccer, in accordance with seasonal booking procedures, and in accordance with the allocation priority listed in 5.3 of this policy.

Once all non-soccer related sports have been accommodated, soccer requests will then be considered, in accordance with seasonal booking procedures, and in accordance with the allocation priority listed in 5.3 of this policy.

Stewart Burnett Park artificial turf field:

First priority shall be given to the Aurora Youth Soccer Club’s League 1 and Ontario Player Development League programming, in accordance with seasonal booking procedures, and in accordance with the allocation priority listed in 5.3 of this policy.

Second priority shall be given to all other soccer requests, in accordance with seasonal booking procedures, and in accordance with the allocation priority listed in 5.3 of this policy.

Once all soccer related requests have been accommodated, non-soccer requests will then be considered, in accordance with seasonal booking procedures, and in accordance with the allocation priority listed in 5.2 of this policy.

Sheppard’s Bush artificial turf field:

Allocation of the Sheppard’s Bush artificial turf field shall be in accordance with 5.3 of this policy.

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5.5 Special Circumstances

Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services staff reserves the right to alter field allocation permits to accommodate play-off requirements, tournaments, and for other special circumstances as may be required. Any such alterations will be done on a one-time basis and the grandfathering rules shall apply. In the event that the re-allocation of field time is necessary, Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services staff will work with the affected permit holder to re-allocate field time in as fair a manner as possible and in an effort to minimize any impact.

6.0 Fees and Charges

- 6.1 User fees shall be applied in accordance with the current Town of Aurora Fees and Charges By-Law applicable at the time of booking.
- 6.2 User fees reflect the hourly rates charged and include the costs associated with facility lighting, ongoing facility maintenance and repair, including various supplies required to operate the facility. User fees do not include additional services required by user groups as outlined in 6.6 of this policy.
- 6.3 Prior to the issuance of a permit, individuals and user groups must provide to the Facility Bookings Administrator, the name, address, telephone number and email contact information of the individual to be named on the permit. This individual is responsible for all obligations of the Permit Holder in accordance with this policy.
- 6.4 Prior to the issuance of a permit the user group shall provide to the Facility Bookings Administrator, the name, address and telephone contact numbers of the primary contact person responsible for field bookings for the organization. This contact information will be used by the Town to notify the organization of all pertinent facility information concerning short term weather related field closings or other facility related information.
- 6.5 Changes or deletions and additions to any permit must be received by the person to whom the contract was issued, unless written authorization has been received by the Facility Bookings Administrator including a list of persons authorized to do so.
- 6.6 Weather related cancellations or facility closures due to unacceptable field condition in the opinion of the Manager of Parks Operations will not constitute cause for a refund of user fees for lost time experience by the permit holder.

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The Town will accept requests from the permit holder that have been impacted by a field closure to reschedule lost playing time at no additional cost to the affected group(s).

For individual bookings that cannot be reasonably rescheduled due to the nature of the activity or availability of suitable facilities, refunds may be provided at the discretion of the director.

6.7 The Facility Bookings Administrator must be notified in writing at least 14 days in advance of any facility use cancellations to be entitled to a 100% refund of the permit fees. Seasonal permits do not allow for individual date cancellations. No refunds shall be issued for cancellations with less than 14 days written notice.

6.8 Additional fees and/or security deposits will be applicable for special events, tournaments, and other special circumstances as determined the Director. Fees will be charged for the delivery and removal of picnic tables, waste containers, other equipment and additional park maintenance requirements associated with maintenance, restoration, garbage collection, and increased washroom maintenance during and after the special event/activity.

The amount of these fees shall be based on the actual cost incurred by the Town, and in accordance with the Fees and Charges By-law existing at the time of the special event/activity.

6.8 Park use fees and/or security deposits will also apply to any organized event occurring in a park where, in the opinion of the Manager of Parks Operations, the nature of the event poses a risk of damage to the park or facility or where the Town will incur additional expense associated with restoration and cleanup.

6.9 Additional fees may be applied where required in accordance with this policy.

6.10 All fees applied in accordance with this policy shall be in accordance with the current Fees and Charges By-law, and based on the actual cost incurred by the Town where applicable.

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7.0 Facility Use Regulations

- 7.1 The season of play for all class A, B, C and D sports field facilities, as classified in Section 8.0 of this policy, shall commence on or about the 15th of May and continue through to September 30th, pending weather and field conditions. In order to conduct seasonal field maintenance operations, no facility permits will be issued prior to or after this period unless approved in writing by the Manager of Parks Operations.
- 7.2 The season of play for class E artificial turf fields, as classified in Section 8.0 of this policy, shall commence on or about April 1st and continue through to November 30th each year pending field conditions. Permits for class E fields will only be issued on a day to day basis for the periods of April 1st to April 15th and November 15th to 30th.
- 7.3 Permits may be issued for class E artificial turf fields, as classified in Section 8.0 of this policy, at other times, subject to the approval of the Manager of Parks Operations pending field conditions.
- 7.4 Should it be determined that there is unauthorized use of facilities during the off season or at any time without a permit the Town reserves the right to suspend or refuse renewal of the permit holder's permits indefinitely. Upon confirmation of the unauthorized use of the facility the associate user group may be fined a financial penalty based on 10 times the normal hourly rental rate of the facility. The penalty shall be paid in full prior to the issuance of any further facility use permits or any resumption of use by the affected user group.
- 7.5 All recognized organizations in accordance with Section 5.3 of this policy will be issued a permit for the full amount of time that has been booked for the entire season of play. Payments are due not later than the 15th of June. Selected permit holders may be issued monthly statements on the 1st of each month to each group and payments are due within 30 days of the issuance of each statement. Failure to remit payments on time may result in the cancellation of facility permits and or reallocation of facilities to other user groups at the discretion of the Director.
- 7.6 All permits must be signed and returned to the Facility Bookings Administrator prior to any facility usage. Failure to submit signed permit(s) will result in the group not being permitted to use the field.

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- 7.7 All user groups shall submit a list of executives, if any, including contact information, on an annual basis, within seven days following the election/appointment of the executives follow the organization's Annual General Meeting, or upon request of the Director.
- 7.8 Sub-leasing or booking of facilities by the permit holder to a third party will not be permitted under any circumstances. Any and all agreements to permanently or temporarily release permitted time to another user group shall be administered by the Facility Bookings Administrator, subject to the approval of the Director. No user group shall be permitted to use any facility without a permit being issued in that user groups name.
- 7.9 All permit holders shall remove from their permitted facility all garbage, refuse or debris from the immediate area of the sports fields. This includes but is not limited to; sidelines, dugouts, player areas and spectator areas. Failure to do so may result in the permit holder being invoiced for the Towns costs to clean up the affected area. No further permits will be issued to the offending permit holder until payment has been received by the Town.
- 7.10 Damages to the playing surface and/or other areas of the facility and restoration expenses incurred by the Town resulting from unauthorized use of the facility at any time will be assessed to the associated permit holder or to the affiliated organization of the permit holder. The amount of damages will be based on the time and materials required to repair the damages and any lost facility rental revenue resulting from the closing of the facility for repairs. All payments in relation to the above shall be paid in full prior to the permit holder's further use of the facility or the re-issuance of facility use permits.
- 7.11 Each permit holder shall be responsible for shutting off of the facility lighting system immediately following use of the facility. Should the permit holder fail to ensure the system is shut off following the use of the facility the Town will issue a formal notice of warning to the permit holder. Following a second occurrence the permit holder will be assessed a penalty of \$250.00 based on electrical consumption and the Town's administrative costs associated with attending the facility and shutting down the lighting system on behalf of the permit holder.
- 7.12 All required field maintenance will be provided in accordance with the Town's service level maintenance standards, excluding the provision of labour and equipment required to prepare the playing surface of softball/baseball

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diamonds, e.g. infield lining, lining equipment, bases, and equipment storage box padlocks.

7.13 For softball/baseball diamonds, the Town will provide one (1) storage box with pad lock and one (1) key for the containment of line marking chalk and a sufficient supply of line marking chalk will be provided in each location required by the permit holder upon notification to the Facility Bookings Administrator. Extra keys may be obtained at the Parks Operations office.

7.14 Should the permit holder require equipment storage on site at any softball/baseball diamond, the permit holder will be required to purchase an equipment storage box from the Town. The Town will permit one (1) storage box per permit holder to be located at the facility of its choice. To order storage boxes, please contact the Parks Operations office.

To ensure consistency, storage boxes must be purchased from the Town and the box must be fitted with a pad lock provided by the permit holder and remained locked at all times. Storage boxes found to be unlocked will be locked by the Town and the permit holder will be billed a minimum of \$175.00 for the time required to secure the box and for the provision of a Town lock. Contact the Parks Operations office for further information and pricing of equipment storage boxes.

7.15 Tennis court permitting is prohibited at all locations, with the exception of Fleury Park.

7.16 Pickle ball court permitting is prohibited at all locations, with the exception of Thomas Coates Park.

7.17 The following exemptions apply to sections 7.15, 7.16 and 8.3:

- Programs operated by or on behalf of the Town of Aurora
- Aurora Community Tennis Club
- Schools in Aurora

7.18 Permits shall be limited to a maximum of two (2) tennis courts and one (1) pickle ball court at any given time.

7.19 Drop-in play at all tennis and/or pickle ball courts shall be on a first-come-first-serve basis, with a mandatory requirement that the court(s) be vacated every hour, on the hour to allow the next person(s) in line to play.

8.0 Facility Classification and Schedule of Usage

8.1 Rectangular Fields

Class “A” Senior Soccer

Description: Full sized (11 v 11) Town owned and/or managed senior soccer pitch with lighting and irrigation.

Locations: Fleury Park, Highland Park, Optimist Park
Total: 3

Schedule: Permitted for use not more than five (5) days in a seven (7) day period with two (2) consecutive days of rest in a seven (7) day period throughout the playing season.

Permitted for use for regularly scheduled games only and not more than two (2) games in a 24 hour period. Practise play is not permitted on any class “A” facility.

Class “B” Senior Soccer

Description: Full sized (11 v 11) Town owned and/or managed senior soccer pitch without lights.

Locations: Summit Park, Craddock Park, Lambert Willson Park (Legion), Norm Weller Park, Machell Park, Confederation Park, Magna(2)
Total: 8

Schedule: Permitted for use not more than six (6) days in a seven (7) day period with one (1) day of rest in a seven (7) day period throughout the playing season.

Permitted for use for not more than one (1) game during a 24 hour period.

Class “C” Mini Soccer

Description: Medium sized (9 v 9 and 7 v 7) Town owned and/or managed soccer pitches.

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Locations (9 v 9): Sheppard's Bush (3), Hamilton Park, Magna (2)
Total: 6

Locations (7 v 7): Sheppard's Bush (6), Harmon Park, Queen's Diamond
Jubilee Park, Hickson Park, Ada Johnson Park, Magna (2)
Total: 12

Schedule: Permitted for seven (7) days per week for not more than two (2)
games in a 24 hour period.

Class "D" Micro Soccer

Description: Small sized (5 v 5 and 3 v 3) Town owned and/or managed soccer
pitches.

Locations (5 v 5): Magna (10), other locations as may be temporarily approved
Total: 10

Locations (3 v 3): McMahon Park (2), Town Park (2), Magna (3), other
locations as may be temporarily approved
Total: 7

Schedule: Permitted for seven (7) days per week for not more than two (2)
games in a 24 hour period.

Class "E" Senior Field

Description: Full sized Town owned and/or managed artificial turf sports field
with lighting.

Locations: Sheppard's Bush, St. Maximillian Kolbe CHS, Stewart Burnett Park
Total: 3

Schedule: Permitted for use seven (7) days per week between the hours of
7:00am to 11:00pm.

8.2 Softball/Baseball Diamonds

Class "A" Baseball

Description: Town owned and/or managed senior baseball facility with lighting
and irrigation.

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Locations: Lambert Willson Park, Stewart Burnett Park
Total: 2

Schedule: Permitted for use seven (7) days per week between the hours of 9:00am to 11:00pm.

Class “A” Softball

Description: Town owned and/or managed senior softball facility with lighting and irrigation.

Locations: Town Park, Norm Weller Park, Fleury Park, Lambert Willson Park(3), James Lloyd Park, Optimist Park
Total: 8

Schedule: Permitted for use seven (7) days per week between the hours of 9:00am to 11:00pm.

Class “B” Softball

Description: Town owned and/or managed senior softball facility without lights.

Locations: Copland Park
Total: 1

Schedule: Permitted for use seven (7) days per week between the hours of 3:30pm to sundown.

Class “C” Softball

Description: Town owned and/or managed junior softball facility without lights.

Locations: Confederation Park (2), Machell Park (2), Elizabeth Hader Park, Summit Park
Total: 6

Schedule: Permitted for use seven (7) days per week between the hours of 3:30pm to sundown.

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8.3 Tennis and Pickle Ball Courts

Tennis Courts

Description: Town owned and/or managed tennis courts lined for tennis only.

Locations: David English Park (2), Fleury Park (4), Summit Park (2), Thomas Coates Park(2)

Total: 10

Schedule: Fleury Park only, permitted for use seven (7) days per week between the hours of 9:00am to dusk, up to a maximum of two (2) courts.

Tennis/Pickle Ball Courts

Description: Town owned and/or managed tennis courts lined for both tennis and pickle ball.

Locations: McMahan Park (3), Norm Weller Park (2)

Total: 5

Schedule: McMahan Park only, permitted under separate agreement to the Aurora Community Tennis Club.

Pickle Ball Courts

Description: Town owned and/or managed pickle ball courts lined for pickle ball only.

Locations: Thomas Coates Park (2), Trent Park (2)

Total: 4

Schedule: Thomas Coates Park only, permitted for use seven (7) days per week between the hours of 9:00am to dusk, to a maximum of one (1) court.

8.4 For tournaments and special events that have been approved by the Manager of Parks Operations field use limitations outlined in 8.1 and 8.2 may be waived.

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- 8.5 All Class “A” and “E” sports fields are subject to an 11:00pm curfew. Continued play beyond 11:00pm and/or use of the facility lighting system beyond 11:15pm will not be permitted without approval from the Director.
- 8.6 Notwithstanding 8.1 and 8.2, permit holders are advised that regularly scheduled maintenance is conducted on a routine basis, and such routine maintenance may be cancelled or delayed should the facility be in use at the time of scheduled maintenance.
- 8.7 All classes of facilities will be scheduled for organized use by the Town of Aurora’s Facility Bookings Administrators based on the Town’s facility allocation criteria and upon receipt of the user groups written facility permit request.

9.0 Regulatory/References/Codes/Standards

Other regulations, policies and procedures applicable to sports fields and park permits, include but are not limited to:

- Parks By-law
- Fees and Charges By-law
- Municipal Alcohol Policy
- Third Party Events in Outdoor Town Facilities Policy
- Health Protection and Promotion Act
- Liquor Licence Act
- Liquor Control Act
- Gaming Control Act