Attachment 4

Review of Community Service Organization and Facility Allocation Policies

Project Overview and Recommendation Summary

May 24th, 2022

Review of Community Service Organization and Facility Allocation Policies

→ Project Overview and Recommendations Summary

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Project Overview

Project Mission, Approach, and Methodology

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Mission and Success

Project Mission

- To conduct a comprehensive review of the current Community Service Organization (CSO) and Facilities Allocation (FA) policies of the City of Vaughan to identify recommendations that reflect the changing recreation and facility needs of the municipality in an equitable manner. The policies will be reviewed and approved in time for 2022 summer allocations.

Project Success

- Refreshed CSO and FA policies that align with leading practices and the needs of Vaughan.
- Clear direction forward to remain consistent with user policy fees and fiscal responsibility.
- Engagement of key stakeholders to ensure that critical perspectives are considered and factor into future state policies.
- Sustainable recommendations and direction to position the City to respond to the changing recreation and facility needs of its user or community groups and citizens, as well as creating policy to promote equity seeking groups and visible minorities.
- Confidence and buy-in that the future state policies will support clear decision-making, will be based on leading practices, and will improve operations within Vaughan.

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Project Approach

Optimus worked closely with the City's team throughout each of the project steps:

1. Project Setup & Discovery

- Project Setup & Planning
- Kick-off Meeting
- Discovery
- Discovery Update

2. Current State Assessment

- Jurisdictional Research and Stakeholder Engagement Plan Development
- Data and Document Review
- Stakeholder Engagement

3. Jurisdictional Review

- Research and Online Scan
- Jurisdictional Interviews
- Analysis of Findings & Benchmarking

4. Policy Recommendations and Final Report

- Updated Policy Recommendations
- Implementation, Financial and Legal Impacts
- Validate & Finalize Recommendations
- Presentation of Final Report to Council

5. Project Closeout & Knowledge Transfer

- Project Closeout
- Knowledge Transfer

Deliverables

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Review Methodology

The following methodology was used to gather insights from the general public, Council, the Diversity Equity and Inclusion Task Force, community service organizations (CSOs), prospective CSOs, ratepayer groups, and other facility users.

Data & Document Review

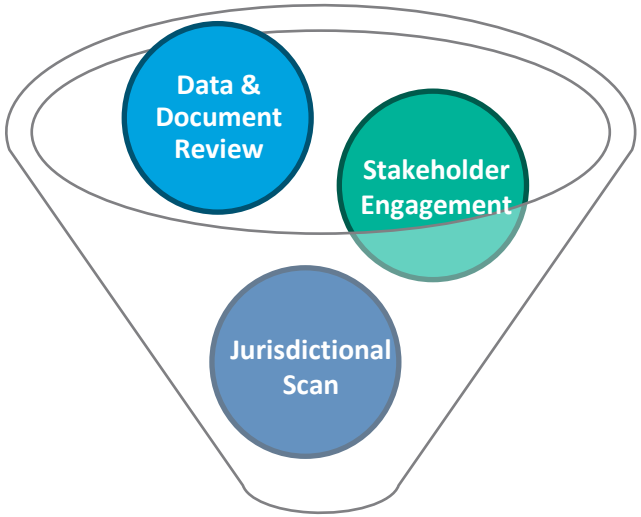
- Thoroughly reviewing data and documents, including:
  - CSO and FA Policy Brochures
  - CSO and FA Policy Manuals
  - CSO Annual requalification requirements
  - Registered Ratepayer Group and Community Association Policy and associated Reviews
  - Bookings per facility
  - Annual event lists
  - Recreation services organizational charts
  - City of Vaughan's Active Together Master Plan
  - 2016 Recreation Services User Fee Study Final Report

Stakeholder Engagement

- Engaging with stakeholders through a variety of methods:
  - Individual interviews
  - Focus Groups
  - Public Survey (Online)
  - Public Drop-In Sessions
  - Engagement of the Diversity Equity and Inclusion Task Force

Jurisdictional Scan

- Conducting research and interviews on the following comparator municipalities:
  - City of Richmond Hill
  - Town of Milton
  - City of Brampton
  - City of Mississauga
  - City of Markham



Current State Findings

Future State Recommendations

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Stakeholder Engagement

Approximately 160 individuals have been engaged as part of the review to date.

Discovery Interview Participants

- 9 discovery interviews with internal City staff

Individual Interview Participants

- 6 comparator municipality interviews
- 4 individual interviews with CSOs and DEI Officer
- 8 Council member interviews

Focus Groups Participants

- 6 focus groups, representing sport, religious, and social CSOs, and the City's DEI Task Force members

Drop-In Session Participants

- 2 drop-in sessions representing sport, religious, and social CSOs, and prospective CSOs

Public Survey (Online) Participants

- Open for 3 weeks and promoted through City social media channels/website

Future State Session Participants

- 4 future state recommendation sessions with internal City staff

Key Findings

Focus Areas, Strengths, Opportunities for Improvement, and Comparator Findings

Focus Areas Identified for the Review

The topics and themes below were identified during the discovery phase as focus areas for further review. The engagement methods used to review these areas are also listed.

Topic:	Discovery Themes:	Engagement Approach:
Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion	• Policies need to be updated to incorporate an "DEI lens" that aligns to the overarching City guidelines and policies for DEI	• Focused questions in interviews, focus groups, and survey • DEI Task Force engagement
Permitted Non-Use	• Fields are being permitted, but not used, which is posing not only a fairness concern, but also negatively impacts planning for recreation and facility needs	• Focused questions in interviews, focus groups, and drop-in sessions
Enforcement	• There is currently a lack of clear guidance around enforcement of the policies (i.e., who is responsible, what penalties or consequences are available) • There is ambiguity within the policies (e.g., unclear or missing definitions)	• Focused questions in interviews, focus groups, and drop-in sessions
CSO Classification and Tiering	• There is a need for a consistent approach to how CSOs are classified • There is some willingness to consider tiering CSOs • There is some debate regarding whether "large revenue-generating" CSOs and "grassroots" CSOs should be charged different rates	• Focused questions in interviews, focus groups, and drop-in sessions

Pricing of services was also originally identified as a topic area for the review, but was later determined that rates and pricing would be reviewed separately in the future.

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Areas of Strength

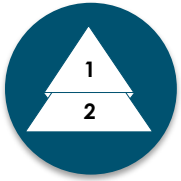
Based on our interviews and focus groups, as well as our data and document review, we consolidated our findings. High-level areas of strength were categorized by the following three themes:

1 City Staff Support

Stakeholders repeatedly commented that the support received from the City's Recreation department is helpful, and the responsiveness of staff was noted as a particular strength.

2 Application and Requalification Process

A sizeable majority of stakeholders noted that the application and requalification process is clearly articulated in the policies and is easy to follow. However, there may be an opportunity to simplify and streamline the process for existing CSOs.



3 Prioritization Direction

Most stakeholders agreed that the City's focus on prioritizing youth and seniors groups is appropriate and should be maintained. However, some stakeholders noted that young adults (those aged 19-32) should be considered as a focus going forward, although this change would be difficult to implement given current facility capacity constraints and impacts this change might have on existing prioritized groups.

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Opportunities for Improvement

Based on our engagement of stakeholders, as well as our data and document review, we consolidated our findings. High-level areas of improvement were categorized by the following five themes:

1. **Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion**

While there has been organic growth in the programs and initiatives offered to improve diversity among CSOs, the CSO and FA policies should be updated to align to the City's overarching DEI Strategy and principles.

2. **Permitted Non-Use**

Permitted non-use was noted as an issue that is particularly prevalent for outdoor sports and facilities, and affects smaller CSOs with less perceived authority over preferred times.

3. **Enforcement**

The City's policies articulate the potential ramifications of permitted non-use and other policy violations, however, additional measures or processes could be added to improve adherence to the stated policies.

4. **Process Improvements**

While there are no major concerns regarding the current classifications that are used, stakeholders noted areas where improvements could be made to requalification and permitting processes.

5. **CSO Eligibility for Subsidized Rates**

A wide range of stakeholders expressed concern that large-scale, revenue generating CSOs are receiving access to subsidized rates andbenefits, despite the fact that a majority of funds generated may not be for charitable or community purposes.

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Overview of Comparators

A total of six comparator municipalities were examined during the review, through both online research and individual interviews. The high-level findings have been summarized below.

Municipality:	High-Level Overview:
Mississauga	• Introduced "developing group status", for groups that do not yet meet all CSO eligibility criteria • Produced multiple facility policies to differentiate specific activity requirements, including emerging sports requirements
Markham	• Field audits by City staff are successfully conducted on a random basis • Previously focused on tennis and cricket policies, and plan on focusing on pickleball moving forward
Brampton	• Seek to promote "mechanisms" for enhancing DEI principles within affiliated groups in updated policy • Use an in-house data analytics teams to understand field and facility usage, instead of application data, to drive facility allocation decision-making
Milton	• Provide exemptions for residency requirement for groups providing new/emerging services, serving population with special needs, etc. • Recognize the importance of protected facilities for emerging sports/growing population
Oakville	• For next review, leaning towards using the Sport for Life long-term model to tie allocation into standards of play, aligning with community benefits • Developed reciprocal agreements with school boards to maximize facility use
Richmond Hill	• For "social service organizations", residency requirements differ from usual 75% • Developed a public-facing Indoor & Outdoor Facility Booking Guide to reduce the need for staff engagement or intervention

CSO and FA Policies Review

Recommendations

Overview of Recommendations and Implementation Planning

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Overview of Recommendations

Based on the findings from the Current State Review, supplemented by the key findings and leading practices identified from the Jurisdictional Scan, a set of recommendations for updating both the CSO and FA Policies were developed. The table below outlines the recommendations under each policy, supplemented by additional information on the following slides.

CSO Policy

1. **Introduce an "emerging group" status**
2. **Formally implement bi-annual requalification for established CSO groups**
3. **Deploy an *online* portal for groups to submit their applications and re-qualifications**
4. **Include a DEI statement that aligns to the City's overarching DEI Strategy, which CSOs must agree to align or adhere to**
5. **Place additional financial controls on CSO eligibility for rate subsidies**
6. **Include a 'Frequently Asked Questions' section in the CSO Policy or online**

FA Policy

1. **Review and refresh the enforcement policies and procedures, including:**
   - Implementing a mechanism for CSOs and Ratepayer groups to self-report instances of permitted non-use
   - Implementing seasonal signage at each City facility, outlining when the facilities are permitted, and contact information for reporting instances of permitted non-use
   - Refreshing the policies to outline increasing penalties for permitted non-use
2. **Include a 'Frequently Asked Questions' section in the FA Policy or online**

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Supporting Recommendations

A number of additional opportunities and challenges were identified during the stakeholder engagement process, which did not necessitate direct changes to the FA and CSO Policies or their supporting processes:

1. **Additional Resources**

The implementation of the recommendations provided above may exacerbate resource capacity constraints. To maintain the high-level of service and responsiveness, additional resources may be required to support the implementation of these recommendations.

2. **Facility Storage Policy**

There is an opportunity to develop a 'Facility Storage Policy', in coordination with Facilities Management, to govern how CSOs and ratepayer groups could qualify for on-site storage, as well as the associated processes and costs.

3. **Services-In-Kind Policy**

There is an opportunity to develop a 'Services-In-Kind Policy' that would clearly outline the potential services or facilities that could be provided for special events and tournaments, and the processes for obtaining those services.

4. **Supporting Procedures Documents**

There may also be a need for supporting procedures documents to support the implementation and sustainment of the updated policies, to ensure that activities are conducted in a thorough and consistent, equitable, and fair manner.

CSO and FA Policies Review

Appendix

Detailed Recommendations and Implementation Considerations

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CSO Recommendation #1

Introduce an "Emerging Group" status: *This recommendation is intended to provide prospective CSO groups with a pathway to achieving full CSO status, while providing these groups with the appropriate benefits that would allow these groups to grow their service offering or membership.*

Rationale

- Stakeholders from prospective CSO groups and past unsuccessful applicants have noted that their groups have not been afforded the opportunity to access facilities and services that would allow them to grow their service or membership.
- Stakeholders feel that their groups are servicing a need not already provided by existing CSOs, but that they are not able to "prove" a need for their services due to a lack of facility access and/or City support.
- By providing these groups with some of the benefits and priority of full CSO status, these groups would be provided an opportunity by which they can seek to grow their operations and prove to the City that they are servicing a unique need in the community, to achieve full CSO status in the future.

Expected Benefits

- Facilitating the delivery of a service that is addressing a community need not currently met by existing CSOs
- Additional information by which the City could determine whether there is a demand or a need for a prospective CSO's service
- Provide an opportunity to build relationships with new groups, and combat potential perceptions of bias towards known/existing CSOs

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CSO Recommendation #2

Formally implement bi-annual requalification for established CSO groups: *This recommendation allows CSOs to focus on their operations and streamline the process of engaging with the City. This recommendation is therefore to update the policies to formally outline this reporting frequency.*

Rationale

- During stakeholder consultations, existing CSO groups noted that current reporting requirements are administratively burdensome. As most of these groups are run by volunteers, this can be particularly challenging for smaller or less established CSO groups, which may not possess the same resources and reporting capabilities as larger CSO groups.
- Additionally, as the Covid-19 pandemic has negatively affected membership for many CSO groups, stakeholders noted that this has exacerbated their volunteer shortages and negatively impacted their capacity to submit their application requirements for the current and upcoming years.

Expected Benefits

- Alignment of the policies with common practice
- Reduce the administrative burden of submitting application requirements for CSO groups
- Continued streamlining of the process by which CSOs and others engage with the City, while still ensuring data fidelity and accuracy

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CSO Recommendation # 3

Deploy an *online* portal for groups to submit their applications and requalification requirements: *This recommendation would provide an alternative channel to submit application and reporting requirements to reduce administrative burden for CSOs and their volunteers*

Rationale

- Stakeholders expressed a desire to implement an online portal for submitting applications to the City for qualification and requalification. Information could be easier to provide via an online channel.
- Additionally, promoting the use of an online portal and submission of information in exported spreadsheets could provide the City with a greater or easier ability to manipulate and extract the data received for review and analysis purposes.
- Through the Jurisdictional Scan, it was also identified that multiple municipalities have recently implemented online portals for receiving applications and reporting information, and have noted that they have achieved the intended effect of reducing administrative burden on community groups and their volunteers.

Expected Benefits

- Reduced administrative burden for CSOs and their volunteers, particularly alleviating burden for smaller CSOs that may already have resource and capacity concerns,
- Increased amount of data and information being provided in easily manipulatable formats such as spreadsheets
- Alignment with broader "green" initiatives of the City, supporting a move to a reduction in paper/transition to paperless in the future

CSO Recommendation #4

Include a DEI statement that aligns to the City's overarching DEI Strategy, which CSOs must agree to align or adhere to: *City of Vaughan staff are currently working on connecting with the DEI Officer to align on timelines and messaging, as appropriate*

Rationale

- Through engaging stakeholders, including the City's DEI Task Force and Diversity and Inclusion Officer, it was determined that while many organizations are currently expanding service offerings and programs to marginalized or equity-deserving populations, there should be an additional focus on ensuring that services are equitable and that marginalized groups are provided accessible options.
- Furthermore, there should be a show of alignment with the City's broader DEI Strategy and its approach to supporting an environment that is Diverse, Equitable, and Inclusive. As such, a statement within the CSO and FA Policies that directly refers to and demonstrates expected alignment with DEI requirements is suggested.

Expected Benefits

- Fostering an inclusive and diverse community within the City of Vaughan;
- Clear and demonstrated alignment with the broader City direction on DEI requirements and activities
- Improved accessibility to services and facilities for marginalized, underserviced, or equity-deserving populations.

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CSO Recommendation #5

Place additional financial controls on CSO eligibility for rate subsidies: *It is recommended that the City request additional documentation related to revenue generation and fund disbursements, and retain the flexibility to deny access to the benefits of CSO status if the City is not satisfied.*

Rationale

- The review of the current CSO Policy found that certain CSO groups may be abusing their CSO status to receive access to subsidized rates and benefits (including to host large-scale events that are primarily intended to generate revenue).
- In many circumstances, this revenue is for charitable causes; however, for some organizations, only a minimal amount of funding is directed towards a charitable cause.
- By collecting additional information both before and after the event, and by providing itself the ability to request documentation, the City can perform the due diligence required to ensure that subsidized rates are only provided to organizations that truly deserve or require the subsidized rate.

Expected Benefits

- Additional revenue from organizations using the subsidized rates for large-scale, revenue generating events
- Improved stakeholder perceptions

CSO Recommendation #6

Include a 'Frequently Asked Questions' section in the CSO Policy: *It is recommended that the City place this section on their publicly facing website, to avoid duplication in the policies and to allow the City to be able to continually update the section based on questions that are received.*

Rationale

- The review of the current CSO Policy found that while the current policy is comprehensive in terms of content, certain aspects/responsibilities of CSOs are found in different sections of the document. This may make the document difficult for stakeholders to read and fully understand their responsibilities and activities they are required to abide by.
- The Jurisdictional Scan found that other comparator municipalities have included 'Frequently Asked Questions' sections at the top of their policies, to quickly provide the most relevant information to stakeholders, without the reader having to sift through various sections of the Policy to gather the information.

Expected Benefits

- Improved communication with stakeholders
- Possible reduction in staff time required to support stakeholders in navigating the facility allocation process, or with simple questions that could be answered directly in the document
- Decreased CSO/stakeholder time navigating the policy, and an increased ability to effectively and efficiently abide by its requirements

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FA Recommendation #1

Review and refresh the enforcement policies and procedures: *This recommendation is intended to combat instances of permitted non-use, as well as some instances of non-permitted use.*

Rationale

- Stakeholders expressed mixed views on punishing CSOs and Ratepayer groups for instances of permitted non-use.
- From the City's perspective, it is operationally difficult and infeasible to monitor all of its facilities for instances of permitted non-use.
- By implementing a system of graduated and clearly defined penalties for permitted non-use, the City is able to achieve a "middle of the road" solution.
- To satisfy the larger CSOs, their volunteers are not penalized, but rather the organization is punished. To satisfy smaller CSOs, they are given a clear method by which they can report repeat offenders.

Expected Benefits

- Decrease in the instances of permitted non-use and non-permitted use, thereby alleviating concerns from smaller CSOs and prospective CSOs of other user groups booking facilities in excess of their needs
- Avoid unnecessary penalties for individuals/volunteers, while providing effective incentives to correct the activities of the organizations as a whole
- Facilitate easier follow-ups on instances of permitted non-use for City staff
- Increase revenue generation through charging the full regular facility rates for repeated instances of permitted non-use

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FA Recommendation # 2

Include a 'Frequently Asked Questions' section in the FA Policy or website: *It is recommended that the City place this section on their publicly facing website, to avoid duplication in the policies and to allow the City to be able to continually update the section based on questions that are received.*

Rationale

- While the current policy is comprehensive in terms of content, the relevant information for stakeholders is found in different sections of the document. This may make the document difficult for stakeholders to read and gather the information they are looking for.
- The Jurisdictional Scan found that other comparator municipalities have included 'Frequently Asked Questions' sections at the top of their policies, to quickly provide the most relevant information to stakeholders, without the reader having to sift through various sections of the Policy to gather the information.

Expected Benefits

- Improved communication with stakeholders
- Possible reduction in staff time required to support stakeholders in navigating the facility allocation process, or with simple questions that could be answered directly in the document.
- Decreased CSO/stakeholder time navigating the policy, and increased ability to effectively and efficiently abide by its requirements

Implementation and Change Management Considerations

Specific change management considerations will be important to ensure success for the Recreation department moving forward. Specific to each individual recommendation, some change management considerations include:

#	Recommendation	Key Considerations
CSO 1	**Introduce an "emerging group" status**	Communicate outward with its stakeholders the meaning of the "Emerging Group" status, and should have a structured communication plan developed prior to launch
CSO 2	**Formally implement bi-annual requalification for established CSO groups**	This recommendation can and should be framed to all stakeholder groups as a clear benefit that will support their operations in the future
CSO 3	**Deploy an *online* portal for groups to submit their applications and requalification requirements**	This recommendation will require additional time to deploy, as it will require the Recreation department to undertake a technology development process
CSO 4	**Include a DEI statement that aligns to the City's overarching DEI Strategy, which CSOs must agree to align or adhere to**	This process can be relatively quick, but will require the Recreation department to work closely with the DEI Officer for the City to ensure any language or content developed and included is aligned to DEI Strategy/Policy language.
CSO 5	**Place additional financial controls on CSO eligibility for rate subsidies**	This recommendation would go into effect once the updated CSO Policy approved. However, the City would need to develop processes and procedures related to how it would go about requesting and reviewing documentation prior to enforcing the policy.

Implementation and Change Management Considerations

Specific change management considerations will be important to ensure success for the Recreation department moving forward. Specific to each individual recommendation, some change management considerations include:

#	Recommendation	Key Considerations
CSO 6	**Include a 'Frequently Asked Questions' section in the CSO Policy**	This recommendation can happen relatively quickly, and can be used to help build momentum for other more challenging recommendations. There should be a periodic review process to determine if information will need to be refreshed or added.

Implementation and Change Management Considerations

Specific change management considerations will be important to ensure success for the Recreation department moving forward. Specific to each individual recommendation, some change management considerations include:

#	Recommendation	Key Considerations
FA 1	**Review and refresh the enforcement policies and procedures**	When implementing a self-reporting tool, the City will need to ensure it has identified and classified the various possible reasons for which a facility may be permitted for a time, but not used. As a community reporting process is developed, the City will need to make sure it has a system/process developed and publicized so that groups provide information in a standardized and effective manner to support decision-making.
FA 2	**Include a 'Frequently Asked Questions' section in the FA Policy or website**	This recommendation can happen relatively quickly, and can be used to help build momentum for other more challenging recommendations. There should be a periodic review process to determine if information will need to be refreshed or added.