

CITY OF TRAVERSE CITY
Department of Public Services
Recreation Division

POLICY ON USER FEES, PROGRAMMING AND REGIONAL COOPERATION

GENERAL PHILOSOPHY

For many years the City of Traverse City has provided leisure and recreation opportunities for its residents, the surrounding townships and visitors to the Traverse City area. It has long been recognized that community recreational programming enhances the quality of life in our community and, as a service, has long provided innumerable benefits to the residents of Traverse City and the surrounding area.

The goals of Traverse City's community recreation program are:

- 1) To provide recreational opportunities for all residents of the community regardless of their social or economic status.
- 2) Promote wellness in the community and provide positive direction and opportunity for all the residents, with a special emphasis on youth.
- 3) To encourage volunteerism as a means of sharing the cost of programming and enhancing community spirit and pride.
- 4) To maintain a cooperative posture and encourage regional efforts among governmental units to meet the demand for recreational services in the area.
- 5) To encourage public/private cooperation as a means to meet the demand for local recreational services and recreational programming that attracts transient guests and enhances the economic wellbeing of the area.

USER FEES

User fees have been established to partly finance recreation and leisure services and to provide for self-supporting programs. Different resident and non-resident fees have been established to credit the City's tax contribution toward the administration and organization of these programs. It is also intended that area units of government and others will have an opportunity to contribute finances or in-kind services equivalent to the City's contributions to establish resident's status within their jurisdictions for the purpose of computing fees.

I. Definition of Resident and Non-resident

Residents will be defined as all property owners or persons residing within the corporate limits of the City of Traverse City, or within the boundaries or membership of a "participating unit of

government or organization” - meaning those units of government or others that contribute a pro-rata amount of money or in-kind services equivalent to the City’s net tax support of City run recreation programming. Non-residents will be defined as all others.

Non-resident fees will be equivalent to the total amount paid by the residents^①. Also, in cases where there are enrollment or facility limitations, residents will have priority over non-residents.

II. Definition of Self-Supporting

- A) Instructional classes or programs for adults will be offered on a self-supporting basis. Fees will be established to cover all direct cost^② of the program which include:
- 1) Salaries and wages of instructors.
 - 2) Materials and supplies.
 - 3) Rental fees for facility use, where applicable.
- B) Adult athletic leagues and programs will be operated on a self-supporting basis. Team and/or player fees will be collected to cover expenses which include, but are not limited to:
- 1) Payment for officials and scorekeepers.
 - 2) Materials and supplies.
 - 3) Overhead^③.
- C) Youth leagues, programs, and instructional classes will generally strive to breakeven where feasible and practical, but not to an extent that precludes the participation of children due to high fees. A minimum charge may be established for all participants to help defray expenses for officials, scorekeepers, instructors, and materials and supplies.
- D) Community events sponsored or organized by the City will be conducted on a self-supporting basis. Revenues to support such activities may come from registration fees, sponsors’ contributions or other non-city sources.

① - Total amount paid by residents includes their pro-rata tax contribution.

② - Direct costs do not include pro-rata administrative, supervisory, clerical or publicity costs.

③ - An overhead charge will be assessed to cover cost overruns, extraordinary administrative costs, facility maintenance related to the activity, and cost of facility use and/or damage. This will be based on actual cost to the City.

- E) Fees for the City's summer day camp program shall be established to cover direct cost of this program which includes:
 - 1) Salaries/wages of counselors or instructors.
 - 2) Cost of materials and supplies^④.
 - 3) Facility and transportation costs.

- F) Fees for the City's winter ski park at Hickory Hills will cover the cost of operating rope tows and maintaining ski slopes, and such cost shall include:
 - 1) Salaries/wages of tow operators.
 - 2) Cost of tow repair and maintenance.
 - 3) Equipment rental for grooming of the ski hills and trails.
 - 4) Utilities.

- G) Concession and lease arrangements which have proven beneficial to the City community, and the lessee in the past will be encouraged. The City shall strictly control all leased concessions at parks and recreation facilities to insure appropriate benefit to the community under these arrangements.

PROGRAMMING

- A) Recreation staff will develop clear goals and objectives for each program. Programs will be evaluated annually to insure that these goals are met.

- B) Formal and effective feedback mechanisms, such as participant surveys, will be established for each recreational program. Input should focus on determining program interest (both present and ongoing), effectiveness of the program and identifying problems and opportunities for improvements.

- C) New programming should be encouraged as interest and needs dictate. An amount of money should be appropriated each year for program development. This appropriation shall cover the cost of advertising, interest surveys, and initial startup cost.

Before programs are implemented or re-implemented, it shall be determined if there is sufficient interest to sustain the program, whether the program is readily available to area residents or is being duplicated by other units of government or private business, and if it meets the goals and objectives of the community's recreation program.

- D) New programs, once implemented, will be given a one-year trial. Programs that are continued will be expected to comply with applicable fee policy by the end of its fourth year.

^④ - Extra charges may also be levied to cover the cost of special events for this program.

REGIONAL COOPERATION

To minimize duplication of programming and resources, to maximize the use of all existing parks and recreational resources in the Grand Traverse area, and to achieve equitable financing of recreational opportunities, the City will provide representation on and actively participate in the Regional Recreational Council established by Traverse Bay Regional Planning as a community forum for long-range public recreation planning.