

GENERAL PURPOSE OF POLICY

87.1 It shall be the policy of Region of Queens Municipality to provide avenues and opportunities for all residents of Queens County to have reasonable and equitable access to recreational opportunities, infrastructure, and services with minimal barriers. The purpose of this policy is to outline the parameters around the role that the Municipality can play in this regard and where communities and residents can support these efforts to enable all people to access recreational services.

POLICY APPLICATION

87.2 This policy applies to all aspects of the Municipality's operations including all infrastructure used for recreational purposes, programs, and services whether under the direct control of the Recreation and Healthy Communities Department or another municipal department, including infrastructure, equipment or other operational aspects of recreational opportunities owned, managed, or under the exclusive control of the Municipality.

INTERPRETATION

87.3 In this policy:

- a. "#recreationforall" shall be the image and motto for promotion of this policy and shall be used at all times when promoting, advertising, or discussing this policy and its implementation.
- b. "accessibility" means the ability to access or benefit from products, services, devices, built environments, either directly or indirectly, by all residents in Queens County.
- c. "built environment" means streets, sidewalks, buildings, and other municipal infrastructure accessible to all.
- d. "services" includes the provision of services as well as the training of persons who provide such services and how all people access such services, including the use of assistive devices.

- e. "transportation" includes considering access to transportation and proximity to residents when considering where recreation programs, services, and infrastructure are to be located and offered.

PURPOSE

- 87.4 The strategic purpose of this policy is to provide clear direction for the future development, improvement, maintenance, and support for all residents to be able to access recreational opportunities with limited barriers to participation or access.

INFRASTRUCTURE / BUILT ENVIRONMENT

- 87.5 When planning takes place for new road construction by the Municipality, consideration shall be given to including wider travelled ways for bike lanes, delineated areas for safer walking without sidewalks, and the inclusion of sidewalks.
- 87.6 Future replacement of existing sidewalks, or the construction of new sidewalks should be done so considering the needs of all users including minimal inclines or declines, painting of splays and the placement of tactile surfaces at all intersections.
- 87.7 All new buildings being constructed by the Municipality shall comply with all provincial and federal accessibility building codes and regulations, and consultation shall take place with the Accessibility Coordinator when applicable and Director of Recreation and Healthy Communities concerning potential recreational opportunities or spaces within the building during the design phase.
- 87.8 When planning takes place for future municipal recreation infrastructure, the Director of Recreation and Healthy Communities shall evaluate plans for potential accessibility issues, including proposed location, locations without similar services, distance from expected users, future user fees and costs, selection of equipment and furnishings, and appropriate signage.
- 87.9 New recreation facilities, or current recreation facilities undergoing capital upgrades by community groups, shall be afforded the opportunity to apply for funding under the Municipality's Community Investment Fund program where the new facility or upgraded facility includes numerous opportunities for an inclusionary facility and programs and services within.

- 87.10 Director of Planning and Development shall undertake a review of all municipal recreation facilities under the guidance of a Queens Accessibility Advisory Committee to determine the current level of accessibility, recommend priorities for facilities that should be upgraded to meet appropriate accessibility standards, and work with the appropriate Municipal department in the planning and implementation of such improvements.
- 87.11 Council shall ensure that any future leases or agreements that the Municipality may enter into for recreational buildings and properties, or uses thereof, consider the accessible nature of such facilities for all users.
- 87.12 Council shall seek to improve accessibility incrementally for all existing municipal recreational properties with budget allocations each year.

PROGRAMS

- 87.13 All programs developed by the Recreation and Healthy Communities Department and other municipal departments shall give due consideration to accessibility of all residents related to facilities, locations, access to transportation routes, user fees, hours of operation, variety of program options, opportunities, information and communications, and times.
- 87.14 Programs developed by the Municipality where there are no direct costs to the Municipality for offering the program shall be provided free of charge to all users.
- 87.15 At no time shall any person be refused participation in any recreational activity offered by the Municipality where the only barrier to participation is the registration cost, excluding Queens Place Emera Centre in some instances. If possible, the participants may be asked to pay for out of pocket costs incurred by the Municipality to other agencies or organizations that are required for participation in the program.
- 87.16 In order to facilitate better access for all to Queens Place Emera Centre, the Municipality shall establish a community sponsorship program in conjunction with local businesses and residents to allow for sponsorship of registration fees for those wishing to utilize all or parts of the facility, but cannot do so because of financial constraints.

- 87.17 Recreation and Healthy Communities Department shall regularly look for opportunities to provide free activities for children and youth targeting swimming, biking, and skating.
- 87.18 Recreation and Healthy Communities Department will coordinate a sport, recreation, and cultural equipment exchange program on an as needed basis.
- 87.19 Recreation and Healthy Communities Department shall implement the strategic direction of Council to expand the equipment loan program to be more wide-reaching geographically and offer a loan program for year-round indoor and outdoor activities.

COMMUNITY

- 87.20 Recreation and Healthy Communities Department will work collaboratively with the KidSport program of Sport Nova Scotia and Canadian Tire JumpStart program, and its local representatives to promote and grow the programs, including co-brand facilities such as Queens Place – i.e. “Queens Place Emera Centre – a KidSport facility” if appropriate.
- 82.21 Recreation and Healthy Communities Department shall act as the conduit between grant programs and local organizations to ensure they are aware of available funds to reduce costs or expand programs to make community programs and facilities more accessible.

COMMUNICATIONS

- 87.22 The Municipality will endeavour to inform, educate, and communicate all of its recreational facilities and infrastructure, programs, and services, to all residents in methods and through various medias that are accessible as reasonably as possible such as print, audio, website compatible in various signs and formats, multiple social media platforms, et cetera, as appropriate to communicate with the target audience.
- 87.23 Council agrees to fund such additional communications activities each fiscal year in order to provide the most appropriate communications to the most residents in a reasonable fashion.

87.24 Recreation and Healthy Communities Department will compile a list of low or no cost recreation opportunities available to residents and share the list to promote the opportunities and benefits to target populations on an annual basis.

SERVICES

87.25 The Municipality will seek out training opportunities and endeavour to train its staff on a regular basis concerning legislation, regulations, needs and the importance of ensuring that the built environment, programs, services, transportation issues, and communications are reflective of all communities throughout Queens County and are accessible to all.

87.26 Municipal services shall be provided in such a way to reasonably minimize cost and time required by residents to access such services and be as convenient as possible for all considering the financial costs for the Municipality to offer such services.

EVENTS

87.27 All events hosted by the Municipality shall provide for participation by all residents considering physical accessibility needs, audio and visual needs, parking requirements, costs and fees, transportation, and other required services, where reasonably and practically possible.

87.28 Community organizations shall be afforded the opportunity to apply for funding under the Municipality's Community Investment Fund program where their proposed event incorporates inclusionary events, programs and services within.

87.29 When organizing or hosting public meetings or recreational meetings, Director of Recreation and Healthy Communities and other Municipal staff shall endeavour to use a facility that is accessible to all.