

Financial Access and Support for Recreation (Policy)

Recommendation:

THAT the Financial Access and Support for Recreation Policy 4.34 be adopted

Report Purpose and Summary Statement:

The Financial Access and Support for Recreation policy outlines the City's process for supporting residents accessing community recreation, by removing financial barriers for individuals at risk of exclusion from participation in community recreation opportunities.

Previous Council Action:

Policy 4.23 Recreation Access

Financial Impact:

See section below for details

Funding Source:

The Financial Access and Support for Recreation policy is funded through an existing \$11,000 budget.

Strategic Alignment:

Engaged Healthy Communities

Advisory Committee Consultation:

Presented to Municipal Advisory Committee on Accessibility and Inclusion and Engaged Healthy Community Advisory Committee

Communications:

Community Education and Awareness

Applicable Legislation/ Bylaw/Policy:

Policy 4.23 Recreation Access

Financial Access and Support for Recreation (Policy)

BACKGROUND:

On November 12, 2024, staff presented to Council the 'Proposal to Increase Financial Access – OKR'. Council directed staff to bring back a revised Recreation Access Policy (Draft) incorporating the recommended updates for Council's consideration.

In reviewing 'Recreation Access' Policy 4.23, staff recommend the creation of a new policy that specifically focuses on 'Financial Access and Support for Recreation'.

The existing policy 'Recreation Access Policy 4.23' will be further updated in Q4-2026 and brought back to Council, focusing on City accessibility (Built environment), disability programming, inclusion, and cultural/ place of origin/ supports.

ANALYSIS:

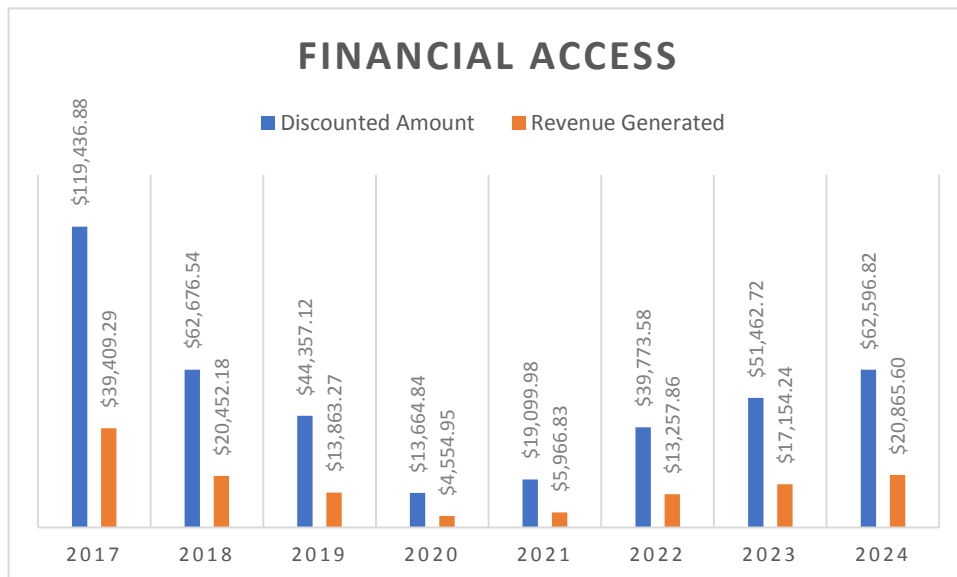
Discussion:

This report outlines the processes by which residents facing financial barriers can access city recreational services. Individuals experiencing low income, disabilities, and children and youth under guardianship encounter a variety of challenges that may limit their ability to participate in recreational activities. Consequently, some residents may miss out on the benefits of recreation and community involvement.

The Financial Access program supports community health and wellbeing, encouraging residents to maintain healthy lifestyles and positive connections with community, diverting costs associated with health care, and community safety.

This policy details the eligibility criteria for Maple Ridge residents to receive financial support through one of three available streams. The financial implications associated with this policy are supported by an existing budget of \$11,000 to offset registered program costs. Drop-in services have very little to no impact on the overall budget, as these services are offered independently of participants accessing financial assistance.

The table below outlines the overall revenues and expenses from previous years of offering the Financial Access program. It is important to note that costs associated with individuals attending drop-in services do not impact overall budget expenditures, as no additional staff hours are required. The hard costs within the Financial Access program relate to registered programs due to increases in staff ratios, staff hours, and/or equipment requirements or replacements.



Project Description:

This new policy provides details regarding eligibility, fee discounts and program restrictions for residents. Please note that within the policy, offerings under section 2 and 3 are new opportunities for our community and are designed to provide a unique level of financial support to a specific and diverse population.

1. Financial Access (Access Pass)– Strives to ensure that all residents who meet the eligibility criteria set in section 1 have access to Maple Ridge community recreation services and programs.
 - (a) *Eligibility* (income greater than \$18,001 and less than LICO scale as defined below)
 Eligibility for Financial Access is based on individual or household need as defined under this Policy's definitions of "Residents" and "Family", and those who apply for Financial Access must meet the following eligibility criteria:
 - i. be a Resident of Maple Ridge, (not applicable to persons with a study, or visitor visa);
 - ii. the primary applicant must be 19yrs or older, and
 - iii. have a household combined income at or below the Low Income Cut off (Before Tax) for a community size of 500,000 and over, as set by Statistics Canada; or
 - iv. have completed Third-Party Verification/ adjudication, in a form satisfactory to the City (ex. medical, school, community service provider, etc.).

Program Components:

Persons meeting eligibility requirements as outlined in (1a) of this section, will receive the following benefits (per 12-month calendar):

- 75% off Admissions (single admissions, 10-pass, 20-pass, 1 & 3-month pass); and
- 50% off registered programs to a maximum spending of \$300.

(b) *Eligibility* (income less than \$18,000)

Eligibility for Financial Access is based on individual or household need as defined under this Policy's definitions of "Residents" and "Family", and those who apply for Financial Access must meet the following eligibility criteria:

- i. be a Resident of Maple Ridge, (not applicable to persons with a study, or visitor visa);
- ii. must not be a post secondary student;
- iii. the primary applicant must be 19yrs or older, and
- iv. have a household combined income at or below \$18,000.

Program Components:

Persons meeting eligibility requirements as outlined in (1b) of this section, will receive the following benefits (per 12-month calendar):

- 90% off Admissions (single admissions, 10-pass and 20-pass); and
- 50% off registered programs to a maximum spending of \$300.

2. Persons with Disabilities (New) – embraces the uniqueness and potential in every resident with a diagnosed temporary or permanent disability who is interested in participating in the city's recreation service and programs.

Eligibility

Eligibility for Financial Support for persons with Disability(ies) is based on individual need and the individual must meet the following eligibility criteria:

- i. be a Resident of Maple Ridge; (not applicable to persons with a study, and visitor visa); and
- ii. be diagnosed with a temporary and/or permanent Disability(ies) with required documentation; or
- iii. provide Third-Party Verification/ adjudication demonstrating that they meet the above criteria, in a form satisfactory to the City (ex. medical or para-medical referral, etc.).

Program Components:

Persons meeting eligibility requirements as outlined in (2) of this section, will receive the following benefits (per 12-month calendar):

- 50% off Admissions (single admissions, 10-pass, 20-pass, 1 & 3-month pass), and,
- 25% off program fees to a maximum spending of \$150 annually.

3. Children/Youth in Care (New)– is for children and youth who are in the guardianship of the Ministry of Children and Family Development, (or other government guardianship agency) to help them build healthy lifestyles, habits, and meaningful community connections.

Eligibility

Eligibility for Financial Support for Children and Youth in Care (guardianship) is based on individual need, and the person must meet the following eligibility criteria:

- i. be a Resident of Maple Ridge; (not applicable to persons with a study or visitor visa); and:
- ii. they must be in the care (guardianship) of:
 - o the Ministry of Children and Family Development (Youth between the ages of 0-18 years); or,
 - o Any Province of BC affiliated Child/Youth in Care (guardianship) Program/ service (Children/Youth between the ages of 0-18 yrs)
- iii. provide Third-Party Verification/ adjudication demonstrating that they meet the above criteria, in a form satisfactory to the City (social worker).

Program Components:

Persons meeting eligibility requirements as outlined in (3) of this section, will receive the following benefits:

- 50% off Admissions (single admission, 10-pass, 20-pass, 1 & 3-month pass); and,
- 25% off program fees to a maximum spending of \$150 annually.

Program Restrictions

Please note that there are some exclusions to registered programs for section 1, 2 and 3, and include but not limited to:

- Private Swimming Lessons
- High Performance Training Camps
- Contracted/ partner programs greater than \$299.99
- Licenced Afterschool Care
- Employment certification

Strategic Alignment:

The Strategic Priority "Engaged, Healthy Community" works towards removing barriers and focusses on providing a diversity of inclusive and accessible recreation opportunities.

Advisory Committee Consultation:

Staff presented to the Municipal Advisory Committee on Accessibility and Inclusiveness on September 18th, 2025, and to the Engaged Healthy Community Advisory Committee on October 2nd and November 6th, 2025. Themes within the feedback received included: considerations for eligibility, provisions for individuals with extreme low income and program restrictions. The feedback was considered, and where applicable, incorporated into the proposed draft policy.

Both Committees have endorsed the Financial Access and Support for Recreation (Draft Policy).

Financial Impact:

The Financial Access Program has undergone multiple reviews over the years to ensure accountability to both residents and the municipality. This program includes a revenue-generating component that successfully collects funds, which likely would not have been obtained otherwise, as residents might not have the opportunity to afford the service.

Supporting the Financial Access and Support for Recreation policy and associated service is an existing \$11,000 budget to off set registered program costs.

Full financial impact will not be fully known until a full year of data is collected due to the recommendation of two new financial support opportunities:

1. Persons with Disability (and)
2. Children/ Youth in Guardianship

Applicable Legislation/Bylaw/Policy:

Policy 4.23 Recreation Access

OPTIONS & IMPLICATIONS:

1. Adopt the new Financial Access and Support for Recreation Policy 4.34; or
2. Maintain the current Recreation Access Policy 4.23, and the associated Financial Access program, however this option does not take into consideration cost of living based on the community's geographical location.

CONCLUSION:

By implementing the Financial Access and Financial Support for Recreation (Policy) we will ensure that all community members will have the opportunity to participate in community recreational programs and ensure promote community inclusivity.

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Community Wellbeing

Attachments:

- (A) Financial Access and Support for Recreation (Draft Policy)
- (B) Policy 4.23 Recreation Access

Report Approval Details

Document Title:	Financial Access Policy for Recreation.docx
Attachments:	- Financial Access Policy - Draft_Final.docx - Recreation Access - 4.23.pdf
Final Approval Date:	Nov 26, 2025

This report and all of its attachments were approved and signed as outlined below:

Chad Cowles, Manager of Community Safety & Wellbeing

Cidalia Martin, Director of Recreation Services

Corinn Howes, Deputy Corporate Officer

Stephane Labonne, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer

Scott Hartman, Chief Administrative Officer