


Report from: Parks, Recreation and Culture Services, Business Planning and Strategic Services

Report Date: May 7, 2019 **Meeting Date:** September 23, 2019

Report Number: PRCS-193-2019 **File:** 68.32.1

Subject: Rzone Policy

Strategic Pillar: 

Recommendation

That Council endorse the Rzone Policy, attached as Appendix 1; and

That staff be directed to submit to the Budget Standing Committee the costs associated with the proposed additional staffing as part of the 2020 budget deliberations; and

That Council direct the City Solicitor to prepare the necessary by-law(s). FORTHWITH

Summary

This report proposes the implementation of a zero tolerance behaviour policy for users and spectators at City owned recreation facilities. Staff recommend the adoption of the name “Rzone Policy” that is used in many municipalities across Ontario and represents the commitment to fostering an environment where there is Respect for yourself; Respect for others; and Responsibility for your actions. The goal of the Rzone Policy is to promote a positive, safe, enjoyable and supportive environment for all attendees and staff. In addition, the Rzone Policy will establish closer and continued relationships between the City and major user groups to support this policy.

Background

[At its meeting on February 19, 2019](#), the Recreation Master Plan Committee approved the following motion:

That staff prepare a report based on the best practices of a Zero Tolerance Behavior Policy for all recreation facilities by the end of the second quarter.

[At its meeting on February 25, 2019](#), Council approved the following motion made by Councillor Phillips:

That a report regarding the establishment of a policy entitled “Zero Tolerance Behaviour Policy for Users and Spectators at City Owned Recreation Facilities” be delivered to Council by the end of Q2.

Report

St. Catharines: A Compassionate City

Compassion = Care + Action. The City of St. Catharines has made a commitment to making our city a more compassionate and prosperous community by taking personal action and working together.

The Rzone Policy embodies the Compassionate City initiative and encourages a compassionate approach for all parties involved including individuals displaying inappropriate behaviours. The City of St. Catharines promotes accessibility, equality, inclusivity and diversity in all programs, recreational facilities and recreational properties.

The City is Committed to Ensuring Safety

The City is committed to ensuring the safety of attendees and staff in its programs, recreational facilities or recreational properties, and fostering an environment where there is respect for others, and responsibility for all actions. The City will exercise no tolerance to any form of violence, vandalism or inappropriate behaviour in its programs, recreational facilities or recreational properties.

The City’s programs, recreational facilities and recreational properties are places that promote learning and leisure for residents. Attendees and staff have the right to be safe and to feel safe while attending a program, recreational facility or recreational property and treated in a respectful way. With this right comes the responsibility to be accountable for actions or behaviours that put at risk the safety of others.

The Rzone Policy outlines the measures and enforcement steps to be taken by attendees and staff in order to address inappropriate behaviour or violence in City programs, in owned or leased recreational facilities and recreational properties.

Rzone is Designed for Recreational Programs, Recreation Facilities and Recreation Properties

The scope of the Rzone Policy is designed specifically for recreational programs, recreational facilities and recreational properties. This includes all City arenas, City run events, baseball diamonds, indoor/outdoor pools, Morningstar Mill, museum, older adult centres, parks, recreation centres, soccer fields and splash pads. Research from other municipalities with similar policies indicates that the implementation of a policy that governs all City facilities and properties is too extensive in scope and proves to be ineffective.

Education is Key Component to Rzone Success

The City, with its major user groups, will administer a promotional and educational campaign aimed at raising awareness among all attendees of the Rzone operating procedures and, in particular, the importance of their role in creating a positive atmosphere. This component will include signage to be hung in all recreational facilities and properties; circulation of the policy to all major user groups and attendees as well as posting of the policy in all City recreational facilities and properties; and inclusion of reference to the policy in affiliate major user groups newsletters/handbooks.

It is anticipated that the education and promotional campaign will have an immediate impact, but will need to be an ongoing effort. Staff, major user groups and attendees will work together continually to raise awareness of the policy.

Rzone Policy Will Require Additional Arena Staffing for Enhanced User Experience

In collaboration with the Rzone Policy, staff recommend that additional staffing for the arena facilities be included to help assist with the policy and enhance the overall user experience. Staff recommend hiring part-time facility monitors for three arena facilities (Bill Burgoyne Arena, Garden City Arena Complex and Seymour-Hannah Sports & Entertainment Centre) for all prime-time hours (Weekday: 5pm - 11pm and Weekend: 7am - 11pm). The facility monitors will receive de-escalation training and act as a point of contact for all attendees, build relationships with the major user groups, provide roaming customer services throughout the arena facilities, litter pick-up and if required, assist with any incidents. The estimated cost for the facility monitors is \$61,500.

The Recreation Master Plan Advisory Committee endorses the Rzone Policy

At its meeting on September 17, 2019, the Recreation Master Plan Advisory Committee unanimously approved the following motion:

“That the Recreation Master Plan Advisory Committee endorse the guiding principles of the Rzone Policy as developed by Staff.”

Rzone Brand Provides Consistency for Users

The Rzone Policy brand was first established in 2008 and 12 municipalities in Ontario currently use the Rzone Policy branding. Staff recommend the adoption of the Rzone Policy brand as it will allow for consistency to both attendees and major user groups.

Financial Implications

Funding for a Promotional and Educational Campaign

If the Rzone Policy is approved by Council, the \$30,000 required for the promotional and educational campaign can be accommodated within the current 2019 operating budget. The majority of funds will be utilized to install approximately 175 signs at various recreational facilities throughout the city as well as educational materials for major user groups and attendees.

Additional Arena Staffing for Enhanced User Experience

Staff recommend that consideration to fund the additional staff be referred to the Budget Standing Committee as part of the 2020 operating budget deliberations:

Staff recommend that additional staffing for the arena facilities be included to help assist with the policy and enhance the overall user experience and that hiring part-time facility monitors for three arena facilities (Bill Burgoyne Arena, Garden City Arena Complex and Seymour-Hannah Sports & Entertainment Centre) for all prime-time hours (Weekday: 5pm - 11pm and Weekend: 7am - 11pm). The facility monitors will act as a point of contact for all attendees, build relationships with the major user groups, provide roaming customer services throughout the arena facilities, litter pick-up and if required, assist with any incidents.

Relationship to Strategic Plan

The Rzone Policy will support the following Social Sustainability Pillar Goals:

- Strive for the highest quality of life for all citizens.
- Connect people, places and neighbourhoods.
- Provide excellent customer service and communication with citizens.

Conclusion

Councils approval of this report represents the City's commitment to fostering an environment where there is Respect for yourself; Respect for others; and Responsibility for your actions. The Rzone Policy will promote a positive, safe, enjoyable and supportive environment for all attendees and staff. The Rzone Policy will establish a closer and continued relationships between the City and major user groups to support this policy.

Prepared & Submitted by:


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Manager of Strategic and Business Services

Approved by:

Phil Cristi
Director of Parks, Recreation and Culture Services

Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Rzone Policy

 CITY OF ST. CATHARINES	Parks, Recreation and Culture Services			
	Subject:	Zero Tolerance Behaviour Policy For Users And Spectators At City Owned Recreation Facilities	Policy #:	
	Approved by P.R.C:			
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Background:

At the February 25, 2019 Council meeting, staff was directed to present a report with respect to the implementation of a Zero Tolerance Behaviour Policy for Users and Spectators at City Owned Recreation Facilities. The City has adopted the name “Rzone” that is used in many municipalities across Ontario and represents the commitment to fostering an environment where there is Respect for yourself; Respect for others; and Responsibility for your actions.


St. Catharines: A Compassionate City

Compassion = Care + Action. The City of St. Catharines has made a commitment to making our city a more compassionate and prosperous community by taking personal action and working together.

The Rzone Policy embodies the Compassionate City initiative and encourages a compassionate approach for all parties involved including individuals displaying inappropriate behaviours. The City of St. Catharines promotes accessibility, equality, inclusivity and diversity in all programs, recreational facilities and recreational properties.

Purpose:

- 1) The City of St. Catharines (hereinafter referred to as The City) is committed to ensuring the safety of attendees (as defined on page 7) and staff in its programs, recreational facilities or recreational properties, and fostering an environment where there is respect for others, and responsibility for all actions. The City will exercise no tolerance to any form of violence, vandalism or inappropriate behaviour in its programs, recreational facilities or recreational properties.
- 2) The City’s programs, recreational facilities and recreational properties are places that promote learning and leisure for residents. Attendees and staff have the right to be safe and to feel safe while attending a program, recreational facility or recreational property and treated in a respectful way. With this right comes the responsibility to be accountable for actions or behaviours that put at risk the safety of others.
- 3) This procedure outlines the measures and enforcement steps to be taken by attendees and staff in order to address inappropriate behaviour or violence in City programs, in owned or leased recreational facilities and recreational properties.

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- 4) The goal of this procedure is to promote a positive, safe, enjoyable and supportive environment for all attendees and staff in City recreational programs and facilities, and to increase the level of understanding and awareness of this policy. In addition, this procedure will establish closer and continued relationships between the City and major user groups (as defined on page 8) to support this policy.

Scope:


- 1) This policy applies to all attendees and staff of City programs, recreational facilities and recreational properties including but not limited to patrons, guests, spectators, fans, coaches, players, officials, parents, volunteers and staff. The facilities also include those owned by the City but not currently operated by the City such as the Meridian Centre, Merritton Arena and Haig Bowl Arena. It covers structured (i.e. permit issued) and unstructured (i.e. no permit issued) activities.

Policy:

- 1) Major user groups and attendees that are permitted for the usage of municipal facilities will be required to adopt policies that ensure that the Rzone policies are followed by all attendees while using, entering and exiting the facility. The policies of major user groups shall include sanctions for violation of the Rzone policies.

When a sanction is imposed by a major user group that involves restricting the access of an attendee to city facilities during the time or during certain times that a City facility is in or under the control of a major user group, City staff will assist the major user group by upholding the sanction.

- 2) Inappropriate behaviour and violence for the purpose of this policy includes, but not limited to, the following behaviours:
 - a) Verbal assaults directed at any attendee or City staff that are aggressive or intimidating or having the potential of inciting violence.
 - b) Threats and/or attempts to intimidate.
 - c) Throwing of articles in a deliberate or aggressive manner.
 - d) Aggressive approaches to another individual (physical or verbal).
 - e) Physical contact, such as pushing, poking, bumping or striking another individual.
 - f) Attempts to incite violence in others.

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- g) Theft of property.
- h) Possession of weapons.
- i) Damage to property.
- j) Refusal to follow the rules outlined by the City or to follow the direction of City staff or major user group representatives.
- k) Racial, ethnic or other personal slurs.
- l) Use of Illegal drugs.
- m) Use of alcohol on non-licensed premises.
- n) Harassment (“engaging in a course of vexatious comment or conduct that is known or ought reasonably to be known to be unwelcome” as defined by the Ontario Human Rights Code).
- o) Contravention of City by-laws or policies.

If any of the inappropriate behaviours occurs during an event major user groups should make all reasonable efforts to stop the inappropriate behaviour. If the situation escalates and there is a need to seek the assistance of City staff the major user group may do so at that time.

Procedure:

Education

- 1) The City, with its major user groups, will administer a promotional and educational campaign aimed at raising awareness among all attendees of the Rzone operating procedures and, in particular, the importance of their role in creating a positive atmosphere. This component will include signage to be hung in all recreational facilities and properties; circulation of the policy to all major user groups and attendees as well as posting of the policy in all City recreational facilities and properties; and inclusion of reference to the policy in affiliate major user groups newsletters/handbooks.
- 2) It is anticipated that the education and promotional campaign will have an immediate impact, but will need to be an ongoing effort. Staff, major user groups and attendees will work together continually to raise awareness of the policy.
- 3) The major user group is responsible for taking appropriate actions when inappropriate behaviours take place. City staff can intervene after the major user group has made reasonable efforts to request the offending individual to comply or leave.

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Duty to Report

- 1) The City's primary concern is the safety of the public, attendees and its staff. If at any time attendees or staff feel personally threatened, they are to call the Police immediately. It is NOT the expectation that staff or attendees put themselves at risk or jeopardize one's safety in dealing with any perceived or real situation.
- 2) City staff are to report acts of violence, vandalism or inappropriate behaviours to their immediate supervisor and convey a report to appropriate major user group(s) within 24 hours.
- 3) Attendees of City facilities are to report acts of violence, vandalism or inappropriate behaviours to City staff member and/or a designated person of the appropriate major user group(s) within 24 hours.
- 4) All incidents of violence and or vandalism or threatening situations must be reported to the Police by City staff or attendees.
- 5) Major user groups dealing directly with incidents are required to inform the City of a resolution within 30 days.


Enforcement Options/Steps

The City will take appropriate actions when incidents pertaining to this procedure occur in City recreational facilities, programs or recreational properties. City staff has the responsibility to act if inappropriate behavior or violence are observed or reported in the following instances:

- a) The request of a major user group representative or attendee, who acting reasonably is unable to get co-operation from an attendee.
- b) The request of a major user group or attendee who, as part of their operations, are threatened, intimidated, or persistently disrupted for the purposes of inciting negative activity.
- c) Observation (or potential) of any physical violence or vandalism.
- d) Observation of verbal abuse or (potential) threat.

Requirements of Users and Volunteers

- a) A representative for each major user group must be on site at all times.
- b) Major user group representatives are required to understand the operating procedures.

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- c) Without jeopardizing one's safety, advise the identified party that they are contravening the departmental operating procedures and contact the Police if necessary.
- d) Prepare an Rzone Incident Report (Appendix 1) providing a full written report related to the incident within the required time frame and notify City personnel.
- e) If misconduct occurs in the permitted parts of City facilities, city staff should only be asked to intervene after the major user group has made reasonable efforts to request the offending individual to comply or leave.

Upon witnessing or suspecting physical violence; enact the following City operating procedures and contact the police immediately:

- a) Without jeopardizing one's safety, advise the identified party to stop the activity immediately or they will be asked to leave.
- b) If party does not co-operate, inform identified party that the Police will be called.
- c) If individual refuses to leave, do not engage in argument or physical confrontation but wait for Police to arrive.
- d) Advise authorized staff supervisor or on call supervisory personnel immediately.
- e) Prepare an Rzone Incident Report.
- f) Incident to be reviewed by staff.
- g) All staff shall cooperate and support the Police during any investigation and prosecution process resulting from any charges laid.

Upon witnessing continued verbal abuse or activity:

- a) Assess the situation to determine if departmental operating procedures should be enacted.
- b) Advise identified party, without jeopardizing one's safety, that they stop the unwanted behaviour immediately or they will be asked to leave.
- c) If party does not co-operate, inform identified party that the Police will be called.
- d) If individual refuses to leave, do not engage in argument or physical confrontation, leave and wait for the Police to arrive.
- e) Advise authorized staff supervisor or on call supervisory personnel.
- f) Prepare an Rzone Incident Report.
- g) Incident to be reviewed by staff.

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Upon reported actions of physical violence by community group/representative or volunteer; enact departmental operating procedures and contact the Police immediately:

- a) Without jeopardizing one's safety, advise the identified party to stop the activity immediately or they will be asked to leave.
- b) If party does not co-operate, inform the identified party that the Police have already been called.
- c) If individual refuses to leave, do not engage in argument or physical confrontation, leave and wait for the Police to arrive.
- d) Advise authorized staff supervisor or on call supervisory personnel.
- e) Prepare an Rzone Incident Report.
- f) Incident to be reviewed by staff.

Upon reported actions of verbal abuse or activity by community group/representative or Volunteer:


- a) Assess the situation to determine if procedures should be enacted.
- b) Without jeopardizing one's safety, advise the identified party to stop the activity immediately or they will be asked to leave.
- c) If party does not co-operate, inform the identified party that the Police will be called.
- d) If individual refuses to leave, do not engage in argument or physical confrontation, leave and call the Police.
- e) Advise authorized staff supervisor or on call supervisory personnel.
- f) Prepare an Rzone incident report.
- g) Incident to be reviewed by staff.

Requirements of City Staff

Should City staff be the first to witness or suspect a violation of the Rzone Policy, the above City operating procedures would be enacted and proper protocols would be followed such as Internal Incident Reports. City staff would advise the major user group of the incident and the appropriate actions taken.

Consequence of Non-Compliance

- 1) Individuals who engage in any unacceptable behaviour, as defined in this procedure, may, depending on the severity, be barred immediately from the premises and if necessary, a suspension for a period of time. The suspension may apply to all programs, recreational

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facilities and recreational properties, if warranted. Length of suspension will be determined by the City's Chief Administrative Officer in consultation with the City Solicitor and will depend on the details of the specific incident and may consider the history of any previous incidents or warnings.

- 2) All incidents that result in a suspension or barring from programs, recreational facilities and recreational properties will be followed up in writing by the City, outlining the details of the suspension. The final decision related to the details of the suspension or barring will be provided in writing. Correspondence related to discipline will be written under the signature of the City's Chief Administrative Officer or designate.
- 3) Appropriate staff in facility sections and or geographic areas will be notified of individuals who are barred or individuals who received a letter of trespass from City recreational properties and recreational facilities. Appropriate organizations may be notified of the situation if warranted.
- 4) Incidents may be reported to the Police, and further actions may follow.
- 5) In addition to any other measures taken, where vandalism or theft has occurred, the individual(s) responsible will be required to reimburse the City for all costs associated with any repairs as well as any lost revenues or where appropriate be asked to repair the damage.

Temporary Trespass Notice

As outlined in the Consequences of Non-Compliance, individuals who engage in any unacceptable behaviour, as defined in this procedure, may, depending on the severity, be barred immediately from the premises and if necessary, a suspension for a period of time. The length of suspension will be determined by the City's Chief Administrative Officer in consultation with the City Solicitor and will depend on the details of the specific incident and may consider the history of any previous incidents or warnings.

Should an incident occur outside the City's regular business hours (Monday to Friday, 8:30am to 4:30am) that requires an individual to be barred immediately from City premises for an extended period of time, a temporary trespass notice can be issued by the Director of Parks, Recreation and Culture Services or his/her designated authority in coordination with the Police (where applicable). The temporary trespass notice length can be up to 5 business days. Following the temporary trespass notice, the Consequences of Non-Compliance procedures would be initiated.

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Appeal Process

- 1) Individual(s) wishing to dispute any sanction may present their case in writing, within 14 days of the decision.
- 2) The Chief Administrative Officer in consultation with appropriate staff will review the appeal and any decision made is final.

Definitions

For the purposes of the Rzone Policy:

Attendees: those attending City programs, recreational facilities and recreational properties, which includes patrons, guests, clients, visitors, spectators, coaches, officials, players, members, parents, volunteers, invitees, participants, user groups and users;

Ban: the prohibition of an individual from entering or attending specific City facilities for a specific duration;


Diversity: refers to the composition of various genders, races, ethnicities, statuses, abilities, ages, sexual orientations, classes, beliefs, ideologies and other states of being;

Equality: ensuring that all people have the resources or opportunities to succeed. It recognizes that true justice may demand treating people differently since they have different needs and capacities;

Harassment: engaging in a course of vexatious comment or conduct that is known or ought reasonably to be known, to be unwelcome;

Inclusion: the process of bringing in and making space for those who are marginalized by those with privilege;

Major User Groups: Permitted, formally organized, regularly scheduled, associations, groups or organizations. This includes, but not limited to, all types of baseball (minor, recreational, high school, junior, senior, university), all types of hockey (minor, recreational, high school, junior, senior, university), all types of lacrosse (minor, recreational, high school, junior, senior, university), all types of soccer (minor, recreational, high school, junior, senior, university), ringette, swimming organizations and volleyball.

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Recreational Programs/Recreation Facilities/Recreational Properties: This includes all City arenas, City run programming, City run events, baseball diamonds, indoor/outdoor pools, Morningstar Mill, museum, older adult centres, parks, recreation centres, soccer fields and splash pads.

Trespass Notice: is authorized under the Trespass to Property Act, and is a written notice prohibiting an individual from entering specific City programs, facilities or properties for a specific duration and is issued to an individual for the purpose of imposing a ban;

Vandalism: the malicious, willful, and deliberate destruction, damage or defacing of property.

Responsibilities of Attendees and Staff

- 1) City Staff are the key personnel responsible for the implementation of this policy.
- 2) City programs, recreational properties or recreational facilities are responsible for ensuring that preventative measures are in place so that incidents of violence, vandalism and inappropriate behaviour do not occur.
- 3) Attendees to the City's recreational programs, recreational facilities or recreational properties are responsible for behaving and acting in a manner that respects the rights of others in order for the services to be used and enjoyed by all.
- 4) Attendees of City programs, recreational facilities and recreational properties are primarily responsible for the behaviour of everyone associated with them including participants, officials, spectators, patrons, parents, guests, etc.
- 5) Major User Groups by virtue of their signed agreements for use of City recreational facilities, programs and recreational properties, are expected to promote, support and endorse the City operating procedures within their organizations. In addition, it is the responsibility of the signatory to sign a code of conduct and to ensure all those involved with the group (including out of City groups) are aware of the City's Rzone Policy. Major User Groups must also provide the City with the names of any suspended parties outside the City's Rzone Policy.
- 6) Attendees that are non-permitted are expected to abide by, support and endorse the City's Rzone Policy.

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- 7) The City shall work in partnership with major user groups to ensure that their members have the opportunity to volunteer in a safe and positive environment.

Policy Review Cycle

This policy will be subject to review from time to time in a manner consistent with the City's policy review procedures.