

November 23, 2009

**TO:** City Council  
**FROM:** Mayor David Miller  
**RE:** Girls Hockey in City-owned Arenas

I have received a complaint from Toronto Leaside Girls Hockey Association that the City has not adequately nor equitably accommodated girls hockey in the same way as boys hockey, particularly in specific arenas managed by arena boards of management. I have also received numerous letters and emails from Toronto residents expressing concern about a lack of equitable access to city-owned arenas for all users.

The City has received a petition signed by over 2,000 residents requesting that the City provide equitable ice allocation in all City-owned arenas for the 2010/2011 season. I have also received a letter from Leaside Community Gardens Memorial Arena Board of Management identifying the shortage of ice rinks as the major cause of this problem.

Equitable access to City services is a fundamental tenet of municipal government and it is incumbent on each member of City Council to do all we can to ensure that these basic principles and policies are adhered to regardless of management model and geographic area of the City. We need to demonstrate to communities that we have the ability to deal with such issues swiftly and decisively. I have been assured by City staff that the City's ice allocation policy is working well in directly-operated arenas with improvements being made continuously over several years. Ice allocation is usually negotiated in the first quarter of the year for the following winter season. It is therefore important that we are able to gather information from board-operated arenas now to determine whether further improvements are needed and take action immediately to rectify any situations where equitable allocation is found to be an issue. Our objective should be to accommodate house leagues locally and to achieve equity City-wide, which does not necessarily mean at every location individually.

It is understood that there are a number of issues that are inextricably bound together. The shortage of ice availability is a major factor. Proposals for a second pad at Leaside Gardens and 4 pads in the Waterfront have been developed. The City should do all it can to make these initiatives come to fruition. In addition, the issue is linked to fee structures and the objective for downtown arenas to be financially self-sufficient and there are long standing associations with user groups that need to be respected.

I asked Councillor Janet Davis as Chair of the City's Community Development and Recreation Committee to recommend the actions necessary immediately to deal with this issue. I recommend adoption of her thoughtful recommendations attached.

Yours truly,

Mayor David Miller