

RECREATION FACILITIES NEWSLETTER #8

July 15, 2010

In 2006 The City of Vancouver suffered a strike. From an ice rink perspective it was the equivalent of shutting down 4.53 rinks for a season. It resulted in about 449,127 playing sessions being lost, most of which were minors. In a sense the kids were held hostage by the dispute. Whether management, the union, or both were responsible will depend on your perspective. There must be a better way to stop the children's playing season being destroyed. I do not have this answer.

Vancouver City has the 3rd largest density in North America following New York and San Francisco. This density will increase with any population gain, and more playing spaces are required. Ice rinks produce the greatest playing density per acre, compared to any other playing use. The greatest indoor need is during the rainy months.

Vancouver has the 7th highest crime rate in Canada. Effective and targeted recreation programs should be beneficial for those youth who may be drawn to criminal activities. Recreation and a healthy lifestyle will equate to reduced medical costs. From a social perspective recreation contributes to family stability. These and other benefits should impact public spending.

The other Metro Vancouver Cities have less density and some of the Vancouver players may be using some of their rinks. The practicality of this is mainly dictated by the travelling time to get there. For example a 11PM ice booking would perhaps be the equivalent of 12 Midnight when travelling time is factored in.

It is my understanding that Vancouver budgets for \$100.3M, and including revenues this is a net cost of \$61.4M. This would equate to a net cost of \$157.60 per person.

There are those who pay taxes and other recreation costs & those who do not use any of the facilities and services. This is like the school system where some pay and do not have children in school. Their value is the overall value to the City.

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Please forward these newsletters to others, or advise me of additions to the email list. I will also forward you back copies. This is published twice each month beginning April 1, 2010.

Old icemen never die, they just slip away !

(Thanks for this to Ed Hender - Port Alice).