

Establishing Okotoks as a Junior Hockey Event Destination

Okotoks Oilers Junior A Hockey Club

Bids for the 2024/25 National Junior A Championship
and 2023 AJHL Showcase



How did we get here?

- Hosting of the 2022 Telus and Esso Cups on an emergency basis
- First time ever two Hockey Canada national events were simultaneously hosted in a single community
- Extremely positive feedback from Hockey Canada and participating teams on the community, facility, and staff





Our First Goal – the 2024 or 2025 NJAC

This event brings 9 Junior A champions from across Canada to a central location to compete with a host team, with the final game broadcast on TSN.

Okotoks unsuccessfully bid for the 2021 edition of this event, which was awarded to Estevan, SK.

Since that time, the event size has doubled.

Great opportunity for local economic impact, as well as to promote our growing community.

Economic impact assessment for the 2019 edition of the tournament in Chilliwack, BC was in the \$2.5-million range.

Would utilize both Green & Gold arenas at a time of low usage.



Our Immediate Goal – the 2023 AJHL Showcase

Brings all 16 teams in the AJHL to a central location to play 2 games each over a 4-day span, September 27-30

Brings media and NHL attention, visitors, and local spending.

Significant reputational benefits for the host; has been hosted in Spruce Grove, Camrose, Brooks, and Blackfalds.

Okotoks unsuccessfully bid for the 2019 event.

Only requires use of the Green Arena

Opportunities for Town Support

- Request is for Council to consider an increased level of support compared to previous bid attempts
- Not a request for a simple donation, but the increased level of support will be reflected in promotion of the Town as a place to live and work
- Both events mean local impact
 - Local hotels, local restaurants to benefit
 - All NJAC profits must be dedicated to a Legacy Fund that benefits local initiatives (e.g., arena improvements, minor hockey, scholarships)
 - Showcase profits do flow back to the Oilers, but will be reinvested back into the Centennial Arena

Event	Recommendation per precedent	Opportunity to set Okotoks apart
2024/25 NJAC	Waiver of facility costs	\$25,000 in sponsorship partnership over 2-3 years
2023 Showcase	Waiver of meeting room costs	Waiver of ice costs

Strengthening the Town's Strategic Plan

Strong Local Economy

- Events like these draw visitors and fans from across the province and country to stay and spend locally
- Expose people to the beauty and benefits of Okotoks who otherwise may never have reason to pass through
- Benefit local businesses first and foremost

Enhanced Culture & Community Health

- Establish Okotoks as a destination for national sports events
- National exposure helping to increase community pride
- A sign of Okotoks' continuing growth in prominence

Timeline

- Guidelines for both events were released in December, making for a tight timeline
- Oilers on pace to submit bids on time for both events
- NJAC – due January 28th, decision in March
- Showcase – due February 6th, decision on February 23rd