

Parks & Recreation

Recreation Program Residency

Request

Concerns were brought forward through social media regarding the residency of customers enrolled in popular programs during the advanced registration timeframe.

Summary of Findings

The exploration of the available data found that there was no evidence of abuse of the advanced registration timeframe.

Context

Recreation course registrations are open to all residents, and non-residents. However, Okotoks and Foothills County residents are provided an opportunity to register 7 days in advance of residents from other communities. Foothills County residents are eligible for the advanced registration timeframe as they contribute through a Master Shared Services Agreement (MSSA).

The MSSA between the Town of Okotoks and Foothills County is a model throughout the province of Alberta which enables cooperation and collaboration between municipalities for the greater benefit of their citizens. The MSSA between the municipalities includes indoor recreation, among other services, and establishes cost sharing based on the utilization of its citizens.

Methods & Findings

Data was extracted from the recreation booking system to explore if issues regarding the residency of customers could be identified for the advanced registration timeframe between December 7th and 13th 2023.

The exploration was limited to courses with the highest demand, those that were filled with a waitlist. Within these courses, 93% (557) of the 597 total registrants were individuals who declared themselves as eligible residents and signed up during the advanced registration timeframe.

Among the remaining 40 (7%), 8 (20%) of participants provided a Calgary contact address. As these registrations occurred after the advanced registration timeframe, they were entitled to participate and join these courses.

Thirty (5%) participants who registered within the advanced registration timeframe did not provide a confirmable address. This was largely due to issues with Foothills County residents who provided incorrect addressing information or a PO Box in lieu of a civic address.

Foothills County registrants represented approximately 14% of those who registered during the advanced registration timeframe with a verifiable address. As previously mentioned, Foothills County residents are also eligible to register 7 days in advance of residents from other communities.

Resident-owners represented 85% of the 317 households of Okotoks registrants from the advanced registration timeframe. These results are in line with 2021 Census data which suggests that approximately 86% of Okotoks households are owner-residents. This measure was evaluated as a significant deviation from the expected household composition would have warranted further investigation.

Finally, 17 (3%) participants were identified as having unique circumstances that still fell within the intent of the residency criteria.