

## Executive Summary

The City of Greater Sudbury (City) has been approached by three separate businesses inquiring about operating an inflatable water park in Bell Park. Research on inflatable water parks operating at other municipal waterfront areas has been conducted to gather information on typical operations and requirements. A review of existing by-laws and guiding documents demonstrate that this type of operation could be considered for Bell Park or other waterfront areas.

Two potential locations have been identified within Bell Park for the potential operation of an inflatable water park. An alternate site at Moonlight Beach has also been identified.

Based on the analysis of the operations of inflatable water parks, there are no significant issues to consider this type of operation in Bell Park. Therefore the City will issue a Request for Proposal for the operation of an inflatable water park at Bell Park.

## Background

The City has received three separate unsolicited inquiries to operate an inflatable water park off the shores of Bell Park. Inflatable water parks feature a series of climbing and play elements along a configured loop. An example of an inflatable water park is illustrated below:



Inflatable water parks are located throughout Canada on private properties such as campgrounds, children's summer camps, etc. Inflatable water parks are also operated at municipal waterfront areas in British Columbia, Quebec and Ontario. These facilities

provide a unique attraction to waterfront areas, encouraging tourism. In Ontario, the company SplashON operates inflatable water parks in Barrie and Collingwood. A third park operated in the Town of Cobourg in 2018, but the Town of Cobourg Council recently decided that the park would not return in 2019.

<https://www.northumberlandnews.com/news-story/9189253-floating-playground-proposal-sunk-by-cobourg-councillors/>

The operation of existing parks in Ontario has been reviewed in order to determine whether to consider an inflatable water park in Greater Sudbury.

## **Analysis**

### Typical Operations

Inflatable water parks are operated off the shores of waterfront areas requiring approximately 45m by 45m on water (for parks with an 80 person capacity). Operators also require a 20' by 20' space on the beach for a kiosk location to conduct registration, issue lifejackets, etc.

Water park equipment is secured with an anchoring system which remains on site (underwater) during the off season. Inflatable floating equipment is removed seasonally and stored off site.

Operators are responsible for all staffing including qualified lifeguards. Operators also employ security staff who ensure the water park is attended at all times to prevent unauthorized access.

Inflatable water parks operating in Ontario generally operate in the following ways:

- Open for the period of mid-June through September (weather permitting)
- Operate between the hours of 10:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m.
- All participants must wear lifejackets (supplied by the operator)
- Children under 5 years old are not permitted
- Children between 5 and 9 must be accompanied by a parent
- Participants must meet minimum height requirements
- Daily fees of \$25 to \$30, with options for season/multi-day passes

### Parks, Open Space and Leisure Master Plan Implications

The Parks, Open Space and Leisure Master Plan Review (2014) does not specifically address commercial activities. The plan does state that "the City of Greater Sudbury should remain open to discussion from new and emerging sport and leisure groups and evaluate capital proposals through a formal partnership framework..." The City recently adopted a Partnership & Implementation Framework to guide decisions related to collaborating with third parties for the delivery and provision of recreation service and facilities. Given there are a number of potential vendors for the operation of an inflatable water park, the framework directs staff to issue a Request for Proposal.

### Parks By-Law Implications

By-law 2013-54, a by-law to regulate parks under the jurisdiction of the City, states:

27. *While in a Park no Person shall, except as part of an activity authorized by Permit and in accordance with the conditions of the Permit and any other applicable license required for the activity:*

- (a) sell, offer to sell or display for sale any flowers, food, including fruits and vegetables, drink or refreshment;*
- (b) operate any business, game, show or amusement for admission by the public;*
- (c) solicit funds for any charity, organization or individual of any kind;*
- (d) sell, offer to sell or display for sale any goods, wares, merchandise, or articles including promotional material, souvenirs and novelties; or*
- (e) sell, offer to sell or display or sale, any art, skill, service or work.*

In order to have an inflatable water park operate in Greater Sudbury, an appropriate permit (agreement) would be issued to authorize the activity.

### Bell Park Master Plan Implications

The Bell Park Master Plan (2010) notes the park's opportunity as a tourist attraction while emphasizing the importance of protecting sensitive (ecological) areas of the park. The plan suggests two zones which may be appropriate for this type of activity:

- The Recreation Zone – located behind the former St. Joseph's Hospital and at the original location of the Sudbury Canoe Club. This plan describes this area as an ideal location for increased water activity and increased beach zones.
- York at Paris Street Zone – located in the area around the Grace Hartman Amphitheatre, the plan notes this zone as the appropriate area for festivals and events. It would also be a logical location for other commercial activities.

### Bell Park Advisory Panel Recommendation(s)

The potential operation of an inflatable water park in Bell Park was reviewed with the Bell Park Advisory Panel. Panel members noted that an inflatable water park provided additional recreational opportunities and tourism opportunities with other Bell Park events and the adjacent Science North. Panel members also expressed concerns about accessibility to the facility, the need for measures to restrict any boat traffic from the area and wanting to ensure that the operation of the park would not restrict access to portions of Bell Park. Overall, the panel was supportive of the concept but emphasized measures should be in place for the safety of participants and to ensure Bell Park remains open to residents.

### Other Considerations

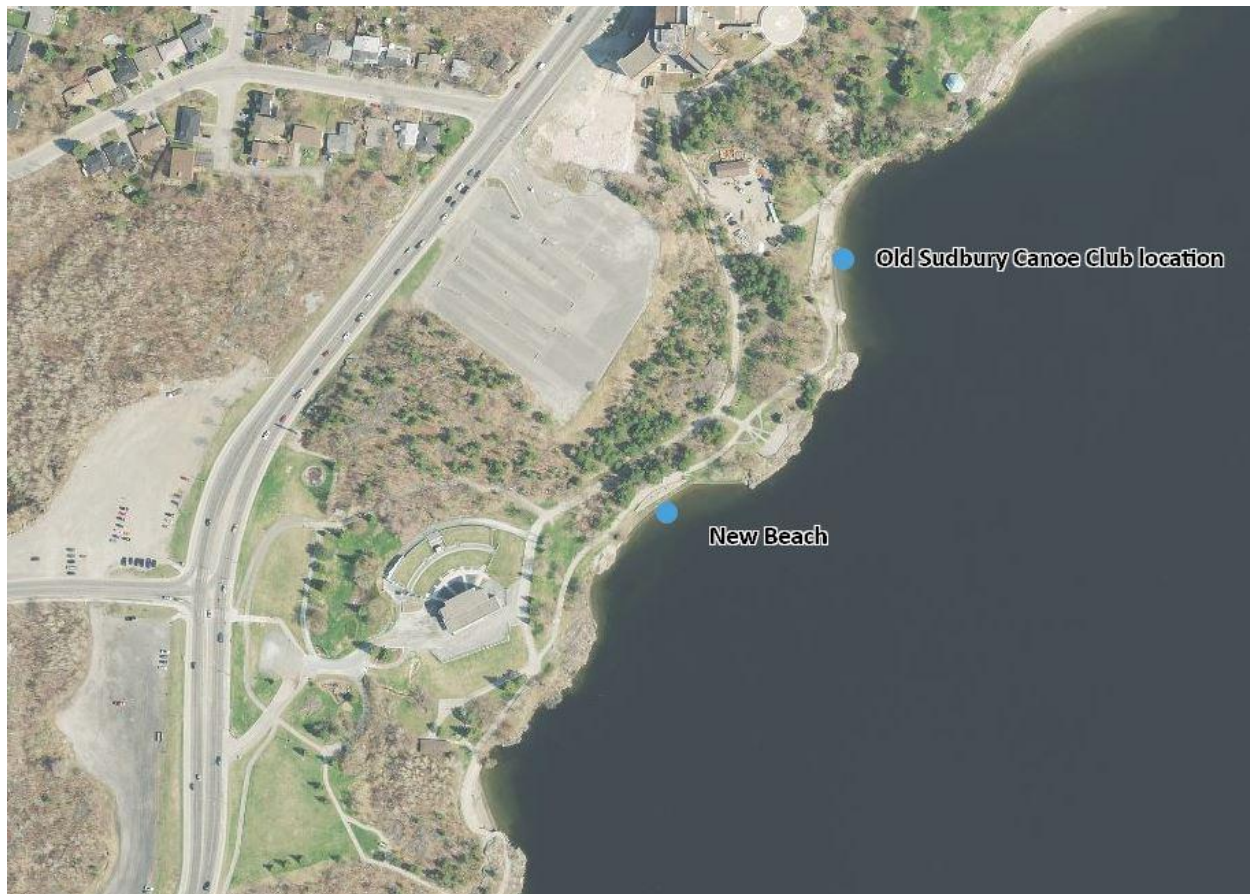
The following is a summary of other considerations and observations relating to a potential inflatable water park in Bell Park:

- Parking – It is anticipated that there would be additional parking requirements to accommodate families and individuals.
- Neighbourhood Impacts – While there aren't any mechanical components that would generate noise, the addition of an inflatable water park could increase noise levels coming from the participants using the park.

- Impact on Other Bell Park Events – Bell Park and the Grace Hartman Amphitheatre are home to numerous special events, concerts, walks, etc. The location of an inflatable water park must consider the impacts on other events. For example, the Sudbury Dragon Boat Festival has a permanent water course on Ramsey Lake. Required set backs from the water course will be determined to have an inflatable water park operate in Bell Park.
- Affordable Access - As part of the Affordable Access to Recreation Strategy presented to Council, it noted that the City would ensure that lease agreements developed for municipal facilities should include affordable access language. Any agreement for the operation of an inflatable water park will include affordable access language.
- Availability of Qualified Aquatic Staff – The operator of an inflatable water park will be responsible for hiring sufficient, qualified lifeguards. There is the potential that there may not be sufficient qualified staff available, or potential negative impacts on staffing levels of municipal waterfronts and pools. The City will work to ensure that a sufficient labour pool of qualified lifeguards is available through training and recruitment.

#### Potential Bell Park Locations for an Inflatable Water Park

Based on the requirements of an inflatable water park and considerations noted above, the following potential locations in Bell Park have been identified:





Both locations are consistent with the Bell Park Master Plan. Locations will have minimal impacts on existing programming. Parking is available at either the York Street Parking lots or the renovated former St. Joseph's Hospital parking lot.

#### Alternate Location – Moonlight Beach

While requests received by the City were to establish an inflatable water park at Bell Park, Moonlight Beach is viewed as a potential alternate location. Moonlight Beach provides sufficient parking and the required space for the operation of an inflatable water park. There may also be programming synergies with Camp Sudaca programming. The inflatable park would be situated at the most southerly portion of Moonlight Beach to not interfere with waterfront activities and to minimize any noise concerns with local residents as illustrated below:



## Summary

Analysis on the Bell Park location doesn't identify any significant obstacles or concerns. The inflatable water park will help to improve recreation and tourism opportunities in Bell Park. There appears to be sufficient parking available and there are locations within Bell Park where a water park could be established which will have minimal impacts on existing events. All three inquiries to establish inflatable water parks specifically identified the Bell Park location. Based on these factors, the City will issue a Request for Proposal to establish an inflatable water park at Bell Park.

## Next Steps

A Request for Proposal would be issued including the following requirements:

- Operational Plan – Proponents to supply proposed installation process, operating season, times, pricing plan, staffing plan, etc.
- Risk Management and Security Plan – Proponents to supply their plans for participant safety and securing the inflatable water park when not in use.
- Insurance Requirements – Sufficient insurance coverage for the operation would be required. The City of Orillia required insurance in the amount of no less than \$10 Million. Minimum coverage required to be confirmed with the City's Risk Management/Insurance Officer.
- Indemnification – Proponents will be required to indemnify and hold the City of Greater Sudbury harmless of any losses, liabilities and damages.
- Requirements for Permits – The proponent would be responsible for all permits including, but not limited to environmental assessments, business licenses, etc.
- Required set backs from the existing racing course on Ramsey Lake.
- Affordable Access – Proponents to provide information on plans to provide affordable access to those individuals where barriers to pay exist.
- Minimum Reserve Bid – Proponents will be asked to propose a minimum reserve bid (lease) payable to the City of Greater Sudbury. The City of Orillia is to receive \$31,000 over a four-year lease period.
- Term – The City will identify a minimum agreement (lease) term with extension periods.

## References

Parks, Open Space and Leisure Master Plan Review (2014)

<https://www.greatersudbury.ca/play/parks-and-playgrounds1/parks-open-space-and-leisure-master-plan-review-2014/>

By-law 2013-54, A By-Law to Regulate Parks under the Jurisdiction of the City of Greater Sudbury

<https://www.greatersudbury.ca/city-hall/by-laws/by-law-pdfs-en/c-by-law-2013-54/>

Bell Park Master Plan (2010)