



To: Members of Dublin City Council
From: Marsha I. Grigsby, City Manager *MIG*
Date: October 31, 2013
Initiated By: Matt Earman, Director of Recreation Services
Re: Proposed Soccer Field Use Policy

Summary

In a continued effort to improve the youth soccer programs within the Dublin community, staff has researched the components of several other community soccer program models and explored new strategies to comprehensively address on-going challenges in a way that is consistent with the City's philosophies and policies. As a result of this research and discussions with the various soccer organizations, City staff has prepared the attached Soccer Field Use Policy for Council's review.

Historically, each organization has been required to negotiate a formal Agreement -- either with the City or the Dublin Soccer League (DSL). This type of approach has persistently placed a high level of City influence on how each of the organizations are to be structured, restricting each organization from evolving to meet its own needs as well as the changing needs of the community.

The intended outcome of the proposed Soccer Field Use Policy is to create a City policy that establishes fundamental criteria for allocation of City field space and replaces all existing agreements between the City and the various soccer organizations. This policy will allow each soccer entity to manage its organization independently, acknowledging the parameters under which certain accommodations will be made on City fields. In essence, permit applications will be required from each organization on an annual basis for all types of soccer activities, and permits will be issued based on pre-requisites and priority schedules.

In the process of developing this policy, staff has engaged extensively with representatives from each of the existing Dublin soccer organizations -- Dublin Soccer League (DSL), Dublin United Soccer Club (DU), Ohio Premier Soccer Club (OP) and Club Ohio Soccer Club (CO). It is important to note that each of the organizations' Boards of Directors has reviewed the proposed Policy, has formally approved its content, and agrees to comply with the parameters within. The following list summarizes the overall objectives that were considered to ensure a comprehensive approach was applied:

1. Acknowledge the City's ongoing support of the DSL's primary mission to maximize the accommodation of City residents and its general recreation programming.
2. Establish a field allocation and prioritization schedule for all levels of league play.
3. Identify eligibility requirements for access to City resources for all types of uses.
4. Establish a fee structure consistent with other City programs to offset a portion of the costs of services.
5. Preserve the City's high quality field conditions and field capacity limitations.

6. Establish residency requirements for each level of play.
7. Instill accountability measures to enforce the policy.
8. Develop a new permitting process contingent upon organizational pre-requisites.
9. Recognize all of the existing Dublin soccer organizations and include each in the development of the Policy.
11. Establish an evaluative process and limited administrative flexibility to allow for supplementary adjustments to be made as needed.

Attached is a copy of the proposed Soccer Field Use Policy for your consideration. If approved by Council, this policy would be fully implemented by the 2014 fall season, with an administrative process in place well before the permit application deadline. Additionally, the adoption of this Policy will result in the dissolution of the current agreement between the City and DSL after the spring 2014 season.

Recommendation

For information only. Staff will bring this policy forward for Council's consideration at the November 18, 2013 Council Meeting. If you have any questions regarding this information, please contact Matt Earman at 410-4568.



Community Soccer Field Use Policy (Proposed)

Purpose

The City of Dublin recognizes the considerable benefits of providing a variety of quality recreational youth soccer programs, as they promote healthy childhood development and a heightened sense of community. To maximize these benefits, the City invests in resources necessary for positive, physical, psychological and social development across a broad spectrum of soccer activities.

Resource allocation is a key principle in the City's decision-making process as it supports youth soccer programs for its residents. On a finite budget, the City's responsibility is to balance the use of public resources in a manner that maximizes service to the greatest number of City residents and generates optimal benefit to the overall needs of the community.

This policy establishes the guiding principles, requirements and procedures that govern the allocation and use of the City of Dublin soccer fields.

Priority of Use

The City's primary obligation to youth soccer activities is to first serve Dublin and Dublin City School District (DCSD) residents participating in the general recreational level of play for ages U4 and up. In appreciation of the long standing relationship between the City and the Dublin Soccer League (DSL), the City recognizes the DSL as the sole provider of general recreation youth soccer activities. General recreational youth soccer activities are identified as those that include common public use by City residents, recreational league play, recreational camps, clinics and other City approved activities.

General recreation soccer league play is recognized by, but not limited to, the following criteria:

- The providing organization is a member of the United States Soccer Association, or other City approved soccer association, is an Ohio non-profit corporation, has received tax-exempt status from the IRS, files tax returns and maintains compliance with IRS requirements as a tax-exempt entity, and is community-focused;
- Teams are formed by the organization without the use of exclusionary tryouts and participation is for the inclusion of all levels of skills and abilities;
- Individual teams are coached by unpaid volunteers that may or may not have participants within the program;
- No league games are played against teams from any competitive or semi-competitive league including, but not limited to, Mid-Ohio Select Soccer League, Ohio Champions League, Buckeye Premier Select Soccer League or other competitive leagues;
- All league games are played within the corporate limits of the City of Dublin, with the exception of recreation teams that participate in the Middle School Soccer Association and the High School Soccer Association.



Community Soccer Field Use Policy (Proposed)

Accommodations for non-residents, competitive and semi-competitive league play, private instructional activities, for-profit organizations, non-Dublin based organizations, competitive tryouts that are associated directly or indirectly with an organized group are considered secondary to the City's priority. The City recognizes the value of various offerings to the community; however, accommodations for secondary activities will only be made if additional resources are available subsequent to the needs of the general recreation activities being met. To support this principle, the City will issue permits to organizations providing competitive and semi-competitive soccer league play for teams consisting only of players ages U8 and up.

Requests by organizations to provide secondary types of activities for soccer field use will be considered based on but not limited to affirmation of the following:

- Recreational scope (i.e.: level of play/competition)
- Residency status of participants
- Population to be served
- Local economic influence
- Exclusivity of participation
- Organizational make-up (i.e.: private, public, for-profit, non-for-profit, etc.)
- Other City-endorsed service/program schedules
- Participant fees and financial proceeds (i.e.: fund raising, profitability, etc.)
- Compliance with Federal, State and City Laws/Ordinances
- Existing City Agreements/Contracts and other commitments to community stakeholders/partners
- Facility maintenance schedules (i.e.: turf management practices, renovations, etc.)
- Intended use of requested resources and potential site impacts
- Risk/liability concerns, including background checks of organization representatives
- Costs and availability of City services required
- Compliance with City policies

Policy

According to Ordinance 96.24 (COMMERCIAL ACTIVITIES):

- (A) No person in a park shall sell or offer for sale any article, privilege or service without having first obtained written permission from the Director.
- (B) No person in a park shall beg, peddle or solicit for money, a privilege or a service.

All organized soccer activities are applicable to City Ordinance 96.24, and require written permission for conducting such activities in City parks. Such activities include all soccer league play (practices and games), tournaments, organized non-league related activities including, but not limited to, camps, clinics, tryouts, training sessions and other similar activities.

The City recognizes multiple soccer organizations as partners in serving the community at various levels. Due to the demand for use, the following requirements have been developed to determine the prioritization and scheduling of soccer facilities.



Community Soccer Field Use Policy (Proposed)

Specific requirements and documentation are required in order to receive the appropriate use permit. Permit applications for City of Dublin soccer field use, other than common public use, shall be submitted to the Division of Recreation Services for consideration and approval in advance according to the application deadlines established in this policy.

Soccer Leagues

All permit applications and supporting documentation for league play must be received prior to the second Sunday in June of each year. League play consists of only scheduled league games and associated individual team practices. All other uses must receive a separate permit as noted in the following sections of this policy. Permits for league play will be issued on an annual basis to include both fall and spring seasons in accordance with the City's Soccer Field Allocation and Fee Schedule for League Play, (*Appendix A.*)

The following requirements and documentation must be submitted with all applications to affirm all criteria have been met by organizations to qualify for Priorities 1-4, according to Appendix A. Organizations not meeting the requirements will automatically be positioned at the Priority 5 level.

1. Organizations must maintain their primary office address within the corporate limits of the City of Dublin, and submit proof of obtaining a current City income tax filing number or exemption.
2. Organizations must provide documentation of their tax-exempt status with the Internal Revenue (i.e., IRS determination letter). Organizations must demonstrate compliance with tax return filing requirements by submitting the most recent federal tax filing submitted to the Internal Revenue Service (Form 990). The City reserves the right to require additional documentation to affirm non-profit and tax-exempt status as necessary. Additionally, upon request by the City, organizations must disclose financial details of all direct and indirect affiliations with individuals or organizational entities associated with financial gain resulting from the use of City property, including but not limited to foundations, sports tournaments, organizations, corporate sponsorships, etc., that are not disclosed on the organization's federal tax filing forms.
3. Organizations must secure general liability insurance for the minimum amount of \$1,000,000, naming the City of Dublin as additional insured. Organizations must notify the City of Dublin immediately if the insurance has been canceled or changed. A copy of this insurance certificate must be submitted to the City prior to any activities on City property. Failure to maintain the appropriate insurance will result in immediate cancelation of facility use.
4. Organizations must submit their policy in writing regarding the amount of expected game playing time exposure for participants.



Community Soccer Field Use Policy (Proposed)

5. Criminal background checks are required for all organization representatives, including all coaches, volunteers, staff, Board of Director members and committee chairs. The process used to conduct such tests must be approved by the City in advance. Results and documentation of all background checks conducted must be submitted annually prior to the start of each fall season, and prior to the commencement of any new individual representing the organization throughout the year. The City reserves the right to conduct an additional independent background check for any individual and may determine the eligibility of participation or representation based on the results of such checks.
6. A copy of the following documents must also be submitted with the permit application:
 - a. A copy of the organization's Code of Regulations or Bylaws and roster of its Board of Directors;
 - b. The organization's written code of conduct for athletes, spectators and coaches that stresses the importance of good character and specifies ethical obligations and sportsmanship expectations;
 - c. The organization's policy delineating established disciplinary procedures for addressing behavioral problems of athletes, coaches, officials and spectators;
 - d. The organization's emergency communication plan used by the organization to ensure that all member coaches and teams are aware of any severe weather policies or emergency advisory systems. It is the responsibility of the organization or league representative, scheduled referee(s), or permit holder to determine whether or not conditions will endanger the safety of the participants and whether or not the activity will have serious adverse effect on field conditions;
 - e. The organization's previous year game schedule, indicating the number of games played on City fields;
 - f. Notification of all registration fees;
7. No organization may "sponsor" or represent any other organization for the purpose of altering the classification or field use fee assessed to other businesses or organizations.
8. The City of Dublin reserves the right to require additional information relevant to the permit application process or to protect the interests of the City.

Organizations must inform the City of any changes to information provided on the permit application including, but not limited to, league participation, changes in



Community Soccer Field Use Policy (Proposed)

levels of play or other organizational modifications prior to implementation of such changes. Organizations making any such changes during the given permit period will be required to submit an additional permit application for approval. Accommodations to any such modifications are not guaranteed on City fields, and must be approved prior to implementation.

Soccer Tournaments

Preliminary schedules for soccer tournaments must be received prior to January 1st, each year. The City will make an effort to accommodate the schedules as requested, however cannot guarantee all accommodations. Soccer Tournament Permit applications and supporting documentation must be received at least 90 days prior to the scheduled tournament start date. Permits will be considered and issued on an annual basis according to the City's list of recognized soccer tournaments as noted on the City of Dublin Soccer Tournament Field Allocation and Fee Schedule (*Appendix B.*) The actual number of fields permitted for use will be at the discretion of the City depending on the amount of play, field conditions or other variables that would appropriately protect field quality. Tournament permit requests not included on the recognized list will be considered on an individual basis. Additional fees and requirements apply to soccer tournaments and the application process as referred to the City of Dublin Soccer Tournament Field Allocation and Fee Schedule (*Appendix B.*)

Non-League/Non-Tournament Play

To best accommodate all other field use requests, preliminary schedules for non-league and tournament activities including, but not limited to tryouts, camps, clinics, instructional training sessions and other organized activities should be received prior to January 1st for each subsequent year. All non-league/non-tournament activity applications and supporting documentation received after January 1st must be received at least 30 days prior to the beginning date of the activity. Permits will be considered and issued according to the City of Dublin Soccer Field Allocation and Fee Schedule for All Non-League and Non-Tournament Organization Play, (*Appendix C*), and according to field availability.

Rental Fees

The City of Dublin charges non-refundable fees for each type of use as indicated in the attached Appendices A, B and C.

For league play applications, a non-refundable deposit in the amount of 50% of the projected field use fee will be collected once the application has been approved. Projections will be based on actual roster counts from the previous permit year's fall and spring seasons. Actual permits will not be issued until payment of the deposit has been received. At the end of the following spring season the City will invoice the applicant for the total field use fees based on the actual number and residency of participants, minus the pre-paid deposit.



Community Soccer Field Use Policy (Proposed)

In order to prepare final invoices each year, organizations must submit their entire team rosters including the address of every player that has participated in both the fall and spring seasons (including substitute players, player additions, player eliminations, changes/additions to form Elite Clubs National League teams, etc.) Rosters must be complete with complete, accurate residency address information, and submitted within five business days following the final spring season game. Final payments must be paid to the City before future applications will be considered for the following permit year.

Accountability

The City of Dublin reserves the right to deny permit holders any future or existing scheduled use, assess additional fees according to the respective fee schedules, and/or require restitution for costs associated with damages to City property if it has been determined that one or more of the following has occurred:

1. Required documentation is not submitted, or inaccurate documentation/ information is submitted.
2. Field use fees are not paid within the specified time frame.
3. Lack of good stewardship that contribute to unnecessary field damage.
4. Discrimination because of race, religion, color, gender, national origin, age. Disability or any other basis prohibited by state or federal law.
5. Participants of the requesting organization have demonstrated dangerous and/or violent behavior towards others or among themselves, and/or participants/organizations whose literature or stated philosophy promotes hatred and/or violence.
6. Condemnation of other individuals or organizations permitted to use City soccer fields, or preventing others from participating in activities offered by such organizations.
7. Subleasing or transferring of field use permit to an unauthorized entity or individual without prior approval from the City of Dublin.
8. Failure to comply with the policies and procedures outlined within this Policy.
9. Disrespectful behavior toward City staff, other park users or the general public.
10. Conducting activities on City property that are not included as the intended permitted use.
11. Unauthorized solicitation on City property of any kind, including the recruitment of individual players, coaches or teams of Dublin-based soccer organizations for the purposes of joining another organization.
12. Any other occurrence that is deemed to be inconsistent with the intent of this policy and the parameters herein.



Community Soccer Field Use Policy (Proposed)

Miscellaneous

Permits will be issued based on the above mentioned criteria; however, additional criteria may also be considered prior to permits being issued. These criteria include, but are not limited to, conflicts with City sponsored events, field conditions, City field maintenance programs, field capacity issues or other conflicts as determined by the Director of Recreation Services or designee.

All outstanding fees must be paid prior to consideration of any new applications. Permits that are approved by the City only authorize the use of available fields and do not guarantee field availability due to unforeseen circumstances. The City reserves the right to close permitted fields at any time and for any reason.

Organizations and/or individuals receiving soccer field use permits are responsible for all field preparations and must coordinate such with the Dublin Soccer League. This includes all configurations, field lining, goals, goal placement, nets, flags and any other equipment or services required to conduct the activities associated with said permit. General turf management and maintenance will be provided by the City based on the City's field maintenance schedule. It is the responsibility of the permit holder to ensure appropriate safety measures are taken to inspect and secure all soccer goals that remain on City of Dublin fields. The City of Dublin is not responsible for any loss or damage to equipment placed on City fields.

All rules, regulations, codes of conduct, protocols and guidelines established by the City for the sake of administering this policy must be adhered to at all times. Behavior and conduct of individuals representing or participating in activities associated with a permit are the responsibility of the permit holder.

Evaluation

It is the responsibility of the City's Director of Recreation Services to monitor and evaluate the intended outcomes of this policy annually. Based on results of such analysis, the Director of Recreation Services has the discretion to appropriately modify the administrative processes and parameters herein in order to maintain the intent of this Policy. Prior to any modifications of fees associated with this policy being made, recommendations will be provided to City Council annually.



Community Soccer Field Use Policy

Appendix A

Soccer Field Allocation and Fee Schedule for All League Play

League Play is limited to general team practices and team games during the Fall and Spring seasons. Fall season begins the second Monday before Labor Day, and ends the first Sunday in November. Spring season begins the fourth Saturday in March, and ends the second Sunday in June. League play does not include practices or games outside of the Fall or Spring seasons, or other activities such as camps, clinics, tournaments, tryouts and other organized activities.

	Priority 1	Priority 2	Priority 3	Priority 4	Priority 5
	City of Dublin Programs	General Recreation	**Middle-Tier	***Select/Elite	Other
Organization Provider		*Dublin Soccer League Only	No Restrictions	No Restrictions	No Restrictions
Residency Requirement (Dublin/DSD)		Minimum 90% Residents	Minimum 90% Residents	Minimum 50% for U9 - U12 No Restrictions for U13 and Up	No Restrictions
Resident Fee Per Player/Season		Waived	\$10	\$10	\$100
Non-Resident Fee Per Player/Season		\$100 Phased Over 3-Year Period (\$50/\$75/\$100)			\$100
Games Played on Dublin Fields		All League Games Except MSSA/HSSA	Up to 60%	Up to 60%	TBD
League Games Travel Restrictions		Dublin Corporate Limits Except MSSA/HSSA	Central Ohio Only	No Restrictions	No Restrictions
Exclusionary Tryouts		Not Permitted	Not Permitted	No Restrictions	No Restrictions
Age Restrictions		U4 - Up	U8 - U12****	U8 - Up	No Restrictions
Team Coaching Restrictions		Volunteers Only	Volunteers Only	No Restrictions	No Restrictions

* The City recognizes the Dublin Soccer League as the only organization eligible to provide general recreation league play on City fields. Dublin Soccer League will be responsible to provide sponsorship and representation to other leagues, field scheduling and field services for other eligible organizations. Such services will be performed for a pre-set fee established by DSL. Fees for services, or changes to fees for service, must be provided to the club organizations at least one year in advance.

** As a long standing provider of “Middle Tier” soccer league play in Dublin, the Dublin United Soccer Club will be accommodated prior to other organizations at this level of play, so long as all organization and program eligibility requirements have been met.

*** As a long standing provider of the “Select/Elite” soccer league play in Dublin, the Ohio Premier Eagles Soccer Club and Club Ohio Soccer Club will be accommodated prior to other organizations at this level of play, so long as all organization and program eligibility requirements have been met.

**** U12 Teams that have already been formed under the “Middle Tier” level will continue to be eligible at the Priority 3 level for ages U13 - Up, so long as all other criteria have been met. Applications and requirements for newly formed teams at the U13 – Up age groups must be submitted at the “Select/Elite” Priority 4 level.



Community Soccer Field Use Policy

Appendix B

Recognized Soccer Tournaments and Fee Schedule

All soccer tournaments require a separate permit and review process from all other activities, and are subject to additional fees for services provided or required by the City.

Field use fees for all tournaments are as follows:

Dublin Soccer League:	Fee Waived
Dublin based not-for-profit organizations:	\$100 per field/day
Non Dublin based not-for-profit organizations	\$500 per field/day
For-profit organizations:	\$1000 per field/day

DSL Charity Cup

DSL Kohl's Cup

Nike Cup – Club Ohio

Ohio Premier Invitational – Ohio Premier

Dublin United Champions

Ohio Champions League (Alternating years depending on number of participating jurisdictions)



Community Soccer Field Use Policy

Appendix C

City of Dublin Soccer Field Allocation and Fee Schedule for All Non-League and Non-Tournament Organization Use

Non-League and Non-Tournament Play includes all camps, clinics, training programs and other organized activities not associated with general league or tournament play.

Dublin Soccer League	Fee Waived
Dublin based not-for-profit organizations/City of Dublin Residents:	100 per field/day
Non Dublin based not-for-profit organizations	\$500 per field/day
For-profit organizations/Non-Residents:	\$1000 per field/day

Priority 1: City of Dublin Recreation Programs and Special Events

Priority 2: Dublin Soccer League Activities

Priority 3: Other Dublin-Based Not-For-Profit Organization Activities

Priority 4: All Other Organized Activities