



New Downtown Skating Plaza and Centennial Park Ice Skating Trail Expected to Open Soon

Public Asked to Please Stay Off of the Ice Until the Facilities Officially Open

(December 22, 2020 – Ponoka, Alberta) – Town crews and the Ponoka East District Fire Department are working hard to finish ice making at the Downtown Skating Plaza and the skating trail at Lions Centennial Park in Ponoka so both facilities can officially open for public use by the end of December.

“If the weather cooperates, we’re optimistic both facilities will open by the end of this month,” said Andrew Jones, Recreation Coordinator for the Town of Ponoka. Until then, the public is asked to please stay off the ice at both facilities. Jones notes that skating on the ice before it is thick enough will damage the ice surface and delay the opening of these skating facilities longer than is necessary. Signs continue to be posted at both facilities reminding the public that the ice is not yet ready for use.

Strong Winds Delay Ice Making at Downtown Skating Plaza

Ice making at the Downtown Skating Plaza was temporarily delayed this week when heavy winds toppled the Town Christmas tree on Sunday morning along with other trees that were reported to have been blown down in the area. Nobody was on the ice when the tree blew over, as the Downtown Skating Plaza remains closed for public use until an official opening is announced.

Town crews have since reinforced the base of the Town Christmas tree with a new, much larger and heavier steel base that has securely anchored the tree back into place, ensuring it can withstand future windstorms.

With below zero temperatures forecast over much of the next week, Jones says it shouldn’t be long before both facilities are officially ready to open and Ponoka citizens can lace up their skates and enjoy some outdoor fun.

Official Opening will be Announced on Town Website and Social Media Pages

“We are excited to provide citizens with the opportunity to get outside and enjoy these outdoor recreational facilities with their families during the COVID-19 pandemic,” said Jones. The official opening of the Downtown Skating Plaza and the Centennial Park Skating Trail will be announced on the Town of Ponoka website at www.ponoka.ca and on the Town’s Facebook, Twitter and Instagram pages.



Downtown Skating Plaza and Skating Trail for Public Skating Only

The Town thanks the Ponoka East District Fire Department for donating its time and equipment to work with Town of Ponoka winter operations crews to help build the new Downtown Skating Plaza and the ice trail again this year.

The County Fire Department will continue flooding the ice surfaces as needed through the winter. Town of Ponoka winter operations crews will clear snow from the new skating plaza and ice trail surfaces throughout the winter.

The Downtown Skating Plaza is located at the old Town Hall site at 48 Avenue and 51 Street. The ice skating trail is located in Lions Centennial Park on Highway 2A, just north of Highway 53. Both facilities are for public skating only. Hockey will not be permitted.

COVID-19 Measures

Due to COVID-19, there will be one entrance and one exit at the new Downtown Skating Plaza and a maximum of 10 people will be allowed on the ice surface at once. At the skating trail, skaters will be asked to please keep a two metre distance from those outside their household. If it is not possible to maintain a two metre distance, skaters will be asked to refrain from skating until the ice surface is less crowded.

Skaters at both ice surfaces will be asked to limit their time on the ice to allow others who may be waiting for the opportunity to skate as well. Skaters will also be required to follow all provincial health orders, including physical distancing from those outside your household, and will be encouraged to wear a mask where possible.

For more information on how to protect yourself and others from COVID-19, please visit www.alberta.ca/COVID19.

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