

Castle Downs Partnership Opportunity

Recommendation

That Community and Public Services Committee recommend to City Council:

That \$300,000 be transferred from Capital Profile CM-10-1010 Facility Planning and Design - Growth to the 2021 Community and Recreation Facilities branch operating budget for a potential contribution to the design of a community recreation amenity within the new Edmonton Catholic Schools development, as outlined in August 25, 2021, Citizen Services report CS00674.

Executive Summary

In 2021, Edmonton Catholic Schools received provincial funding to initiate the design for a future high school within the Castle Downs District Park. This new school will have a capacity of 1,300 students and serve a high demand in the area. The anticipated opening, pending Government of Alberta construction funding, is fall 2024.

In preparation for the design of the new high school, Edmonton Catholic Schools approached Administration and the YMCA of Northern Alberta to determine if there would be an opportunity to partner on the development of a community amenity within the new school, recognizing the demand for recreation amenities in this area. The potential partnership would require a financial contribution by the City of up to \$300,000 for the design of the future community recreation amenity, to be completed in 2022. If a partnership model can be confirmed, additional funding for construction and ongoing operating contributions will be required at a future date and, if directed by City Council, can be brought back for consideration in future supplemental budget adjustments and/or the 2023-2026 proposed budget, as appropriate.

Administration is recommending that \$300,000 be transferred to support the design of a community amenity within the school, and allow Administration to initiate more detailed work on the partnership and the specifics of the project and return to Council with the terms of an agreement, including the amount of the City contribution towards construction, ongoing operating requirements and details on the specific amenities and community access provisions.

Report

In early 2021, Edmonton Catholic Schools approached the City and the YMCA of

Northern Alberta to explore the possibility of constructing a new community recreation amenity as part of development of a new high school on the Castle Downs District Park. This would be similar to the partnership the City entered into with Edmonton Public Schools to develop the Community Centre in the Dr. Anne Anderson High School in Heritage Valley. This potential partnership could offer an opportunity to enhance access to recreation amenities in the northwest area of the city, including access to gymnasiums and community programming spaces for targeted community programming. This opportunity is supported by City Policy C187A, Enhancing Community Facility Services through Partnerships, which states that the City will seek out partnerships or opportunities that improve service levels and support innovative ways to provide public recreation and leisure opportunities.

Castle Downs District Park located in northwest Edmonton meets a variety of community needs as a central hub district park. Amenities located within this park include a playground, spray park, skateboard park, sports fields and diamonds, and walking trails. In addition to park amenities, the City of Edmonton recently renovated the twin pad arena and oversees the Castle Downs Park Pavilion. During the winter, an outdoor skating rink is maintained by the City. The Castle Downs Family YMCA is also located on the park site with amenities including a fitness centre, gymnasium, leisure and teach pool, a daycare and the Family Resource Centre. This park is situated on the potential future LRT line with a designated stop proposed at the high school location.

Administration is seeking approval to transfer \$300,000 from Capital Profile CM-10-1010 Facility Planning and Design - Growth to the Community and Recreation Facilities operating budget for a potential contribution from the City to the design of a new high school being developed by Edmonton Catholic Schools. Under the potential partnership model, the City could contribute up to \$300,000 to the design of the facility in order to include additional community amenities as part of the design scope.

At this time, the Government of Alberta has not confirmed which type of development model will be used for this project. If a public-private-partnership model is confirmed, Administration will work with Edmonton Catholic Schools and the Government of Alberta to determine what impacts this would have to the partnership model and the community amenity. A partnership model may not be feasible under a public-private-partnership, in which case the City would not provide design funding towards an additional amenity. If the model does not meet the requirements and needs of the partners, the funding contribution and additional community amenity would not move forward. The design of the school would proceed without the community amenity in order to meet their schedule of a fall 2024 opening (pending construction funding).

If the opportunity to contribute to the design of a community amenity within the high school is confirmed by the partners, Administration will develop a funding agreement outlining the terms and conditions of the design funding.

Budget/Financial Implications

Administration recommends that \$300,000 be transferred from Capital Profile CM-10-1010 Facility Planning and Design - Growth to the 2021 Community and Recreation Facilities operating budget for a potential City contribution. Funding would be dependent upon the confirmed partnership model.

Future construction and operating funding will be determined once design is completed by the end of 2022. At that time, Administration would return to City Council with a further funding request for the construction contribution if the design meets the needs of Administration and a partnership model has been defined.

Based on the experience with Dr. Anne Anderson High School partnership, Administration anticipates that the total construction funding requirements including design costs would be in the order of \$5.5 million on a one-time basis and would need to be refined as design progresses. A request for additional construction funding would be brought forward for City Council’s consideration at future budget deliberations. Payments for the design would be required in 2022 with construction funds required in 2023-2024.

Future operating support costs to the City, based on projections from the Dr. Anne Anderson High School facility, are anticipated to be approximately \$300,000 annually and would commence in 2024 upon opening. The funding request would be brought forward as operating impacts of capital in the 2023-2026 proposed budget and would require tax levy funding or other ongoing funding strategies. Further details are required specific to lifecycle and operational contributions and could differ from the estimate quoted in this report.

Public Engagement

Edmonton Catholic Schools is not required to complete public engagement for its infrastructure requirements. Engagement by the City and other potential partners will need to be determined if a partnership proceeds.

Corporate Outcomes and Performance Management

Corporate Outcome: Edmontonians use facilities and services that promote healthy living.			
Outcomes	Measures	Results	Targets
Citizens utilize the recreation facility to improve their health and wellness	Recreation facility and attraction attendance	2020: 3,226,075 2019: 9,169,310	Ongoing: 9,000,000
	Overall facility customer satisfaction (according to facility customer satisfaction survey)	2020: 85%	90%

Risk Assessment

Risk Element	Risk Description	Likelihood	Impact	Risk Score (with current mitigations)	Current Mitigations	Potential Future Mitigations
If recommendation is approved						
Financial	Total expected funding requirements for development are greater than anticipated	4 - Likely	2 - Moderate	8 - Medium	Coordinating with the school board on timelines to ensure sufficient time is available for budget development and Council's decision after the design phase	
Commercial	Funds for design of the facility are greater than anticipated requiring further investment from the City	3 - Possible	1 - Minor	3 - Low	Work with the school board to ensure that the design funds are sufficient and the budget is adhered to	
If recommendation is not approved						
Customer / Citizens	Amenities are still desired/needed for the area.	3 - Possible	3 - Major	9 - Medium	Follow City plans and policies as to the new facility prioritization direction	
Public Perception	Perception that the City does not support health and wellness of citizens in that area of the city	3 - Possible	2 - Moderate	6 - Low	Provide communications to the public to ensure it is aware that there are other recreational opportunities	

Others Reviewing this Report

- C. Owen, Deputy City Manager, Communications and Engagement
- D. Croft, Acting Deputy City Manager, Financial and Corporate Services
- A. Laughlin, Deputy City Manager, Integrated Infrastructure Services
- K. Fallis-Howell, Acting City Solicitor