

RECREATION CENTRE MASTER PLAN - DISTRICT AND LOCAL LEVEL - FUNDING STRATEGY OPTIONS FOR RECREATION CENTRES

RECOMMENDATION

That the May 16, 2022, Community Services report CS00386, be received for information.

Report Purpose

Information only.

This report outlines the current focus of the Approach to Community Recreation Facility Planning (the Approach) as well as ongoing and future work to further enhance recreation planning at the local and district level. This report also provides information on the work done to date and funding strategy for the proposed new Rollie Miles Recreation Centre.

Previous Council/Committee Action

At the February 3, 2021, Community and Public Services Committee meeting, the following motion passed:

That Administration continue to work with the community and the development community on the full range of tools presented, including a CRL or similar tool, using Rollie Miles as a pilot, to provide a report with a partial funding strategy for future recreation centres, available for Council in advance of the next capital budget process (December 2022).

At the November 15, 2021, Community and Public Services Committee meeting, the following motion passed:

That Administration to prepare a report outlining an updated recreation centre master plan that employs greater emphasis on district level recreation centres.

Executive Summary

- Recreation centres play a critical role in supporting The City Plan's goals of providing healthy and active living opportunities to all Edmontonians.
- Administration uses the Approach To Community Recreation Centre Planning (the Approach), approved by City Council in 2018, to guide the development of City recreation facilities. The

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Approach provides strategic guidelines on how the City should provide equitable access to recreation by allocating sufficient infrastructure, amenities, resources and investment.

- The application of the Approach for major indoor facility development was originally envisioned and continues to remain at the district level, which represents a five kilometre catchment radius.
- To ensure alignment with The City Plan, the Approach is currently being reviewed to align with current district planning work through 2022.
- Significant capital and operating investment is required to build, operate, and maintain recreation facilities. In the context of the proposed Rollie Miles Recreation Centre, Community and Public Services Committee directed Administration to explore alternative tools that could reduce the reliance on traditional tax supported funding sources to finance the recreation centre.
- Alternative funding sources such as a Community Revitalization Levy or Local Improvement Tax are not recommended by Administration to be used for the development of the proposed Rollie Miles Recreation Centre, as indicated in the January 31, 2022, Community Services report CS00387, Policy Options for Alternative Financing Tools - Recreation Centres. It is recommended that the existing capital budget prioritization process be used for the Rollie Miles Recreation Centre utilizing funding sources presented to Council during the budgeting process.

REPORT

Previous Recreation Master Plan

The previous Recreation Master Plan 2005-2015 was developed to meet the recreational needs of Edmonton residents by developing facilities based on corporate direction, market demands and a "Facility Model". This Facility Model identified service level requirements, distribution and implementation principles for the development or redevelopment of recreation infrastructure. The Model established the principles and design standards for modern recreation infrastructure, shifting the focus from single purpose, youth-centric facilities to district level, multipurpose, and more inclusive infrastructure. The application of this master plan resulted in the development of several large scale, multipurpose recreation facilities such as the Clareview Community Recreation Centre and The Meadows Community Recreation Centre.

The majority of the recommendations of this master plan centred on the development of facilities that fall within the category of District Facilities. District facilities were defined as needing to contain a minimum three major recreation facility components (i.e. aquatic elements, indoor ice surfaces, fitness facilities), complementary outdoor amenities and additional community infrastructure such as libraries where possible. These facilities were to be developed based upon market demand indicators, a driving or transit time of 10 to 20 minutes, and were to serve a population of 40,000 to 80,000. Some of the facilities developed under this plan became larger, including some unique sport amenities that serve more than the adjacent district.

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Current Approach to Community Recreation Facility Planning

In 2018, the Recreation Master Plan 2005-2015 was replaced by the Approach to Community Recreation Facility Planning (the Approach). The Approach is based on ensuring that sufficient infrastructure, amenities, resources and investment are allocated to meet the basic commitment to recreation. The basic commitment to recreation outlines the City's intention to provide the public with equitable access to recreation, stating that:

- Every resident will have a place to connect, be active and participate in recreation indoors (e.g. on ice, in water, or gymnasiums and fitness centres) within five kilometres of their residence.
- Every resident will have a place to connect, be active and participate in recreation outdoors within 400 metres of their residence (e.g. sports fields or community parks).
- The basic commitment reflects the efforts and investments in recreation made not only by the City, but also by its partners including community organizations, private industry, and other regional municipalities.
- Decisions regarding the prioritization of projects to meet the basic commitment will be made in the context of the larger recreation network, balanced with the need to reinvest in existing facilities and amenities. Ice, water, gymnasiums and fitness centres would be the "starting point" amenities when considering building new facilities, but the City would continue to assess what the recreation network requires using the demand and prioritization criteria.

The application of the Approach for major indoor facility development was originally envisioned and continues to remain at the district level, which represents a five kilometre catchment radius or a 15 minute travel time for users. The Approach states that district facilities typically serve areas with 60,000 and 100,000 people. The Approach envisions recreation facilities built in each district to provide recreation services closer to home addressing the significant barrier of travel and pursuing an equitable distribution of facilities across the city.

Update to The Approach

ConnectEdmonton was approved by City Council in June 2019 and The City Plan was approved in December 2020. As the Approach was developed and approved before both these plans, Administration has undertaken work to align the Approach with these plans. While this update will work within the existing framework and stated objectives of the original document, the following areas of the Approach are being revised to reflect the updated Strategic Framework: The City Plan alignment, Strategic Pathways, current state, alignment to other strategies/plans/policies, demand indicators, diverse relationships and partnerships, population trends, leading practices and trends, and amenities (both local & regional).

This work is currently underway and is expected to be completed in summer 2022. The updates to the Approach will reflect the desire for continued emphasis on district level recreation centres as community hubs and will provide guidance to Administration and City Council to make strategic decisions regarding future recreation opportunities in Edmonton.

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District Level Planning

At present, Administration is undertaking a number of major planning projects. This includes developing 15 district plans, creating a framework to review and manage the City's existing planning tools, as well as other activities to prioritize and manage Edmonton's growth. The district plans will provide guidance in line with The City Plan and will focus on growth to 1.25 million residents. The district plans will support Edmonton's growth into a "Community of Communities", with each district having appropriate transportation, housing, employment and recreational opportunities. Attachment 2 provides an overview of anticipated growth of areas as Edmonton moves to 1.25 million people along with a map of potential recreation facilities and amenities for future consideration.

The district plans project is scheduled to conclude in 2023. Information from these plans will be used to further update the Approach and guide decisions for recreation and amenity planning at a district level to ensure appropriate alignment.

Funding Strategy Options for Recreation Centres

In the February 3, 2021, Citizen Services report CR_8024, Innovative Funding Strategies to Build, Operate and Maintain Recreation Centres, Administration presented a number of funding options to offset capital, operating and maintenance costs associated with the proposed Rollie Miles Recreation Centre. At this meeting, Committee directed Administration to explore policy options and alternative funding tools for future recreation centres using Rollie Miles Recreation Centre as a pilot.

In the January 31, 2022, Community Services report CS00387, Policy Options for Alternative Financing Tools - Recreation Centres, Administration recommended utilizing existing policies, processes and strategies to support funding of varied types of recreation facilities and amenity infrastructure while continuing to assess different funding tools on a case-by-case basis. Administration considered alternative tools like a Community Revitalization Levy and Local Improvement Tax for funding the Rollie Miles Recreation Centre, however as indicated in that report, Administration does not recommend using these options. Administration will pursue this project through available capital funding including any partnership or sponsorship funds that can be secured.

As per the Approach, the Rollie Miles Recreation Centre would be a District facility offering three primary amenities to residents located within five kilometres of the facility. Within five kilometres, approximately 148,000 people live in about 86,000 properties.

The functional program for the Rollie Miles Recreation Centre has been completed as part of the Rollie Miles Park Master Plan. The Facility is proposed to be 5,700 square metres and includes:

- 8 lane pool with teaching pool and change areas;
- Single court gymnasium;
- 1 Multipurpose room;
- Fitness Room/area;
- Washrooms and storage to support exterior spaces including an outdoor skating loop.

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The amenities included in the facility will primarily serve residents within the catchment area but will be open to all Edmontonians similar to any other public recreation centre.

Currently, the estimated capital cost is \$76 million (+/-50 per cent) but the project is not yet at Checkpoint 3 and as a result has a high degree of variability in the estimate. In addition, the facility has an estimated net operating cost of \$1.65 million annually (approximately 0.09 per cent tax levy impact). This operating cost estimate includes the cost of building and trades maintenance for the facility, but does not include future capital renewal requirements projected over its lifecycle. If any portion of the construction is funded with debt, there would also be debt servicing impacts to consider.

Next Steps

After completion of the Rollie Miles Recreation Centre preliminary design (Project Development and Delivery Model Checkpoint 3, per the Capital Project Governance Policy (C591), Administration will bring forward the delivery funding requirement for Council's consideration.

The City's relationship with the Edmonton Public School board and support of the School Board's Joint Use Agreement plays a significant role in providing local recreation opportunities, both through the coordination of land and facilities. As a recent example of this coordination, the partnership between the City and the Edmonton Public School Board resulted in the construction of the Dr. Anne Anderson School and Community Centre near Heritage Valley.

To further support the physical and recreational opportunities the City provides for youth, Administration will work closely with the Edmonton Public School Board through the development and use of the Rollie Miles Recreation Centre and District Park and its alignment to Strathcona High School.

COMMUNITY INSIGHT

Administration continues to listen to and engage with varied community stakeholders on various aspects of recreation planning as well as on specific recreation centre projects. Significant public and stakeholder engagement was conducted as part of developing the Approach to better understand how facilities are being used, identify gaps, guide decisions for future recreation facilities and services as well as address the City's dual challenge of aging infrastructure and rapid growth. Results from this engagement have been shared with Council in previous reports and are publicly available on the City of Edmonton website.

The Friends of Scona Rec, a community advocacy group, has been engaged with Administration for a number of years and as a result has been identified as a key stakeholder in both the Rollie Miles Recreation Centre project as well as the Rollie Miles Athletic Grounds Enhancement project. The Friends of Scona Rec presented at the September 14, 2020, City Council Public Hearing meeting, supporting The City Plan and its alignment with projects like Rollie Miles. Administration also met with the Friends of Scona Rec in February 2022, to confirm their role in the advancement of the project and discuss funding opportunities. They indicated that they did not have the capacity to contribute funding for the Rollie Miles Recreation Centre but saw themselves in more

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of a project advocacy roles and would like to stay involved and advocate for the project. The meeting provided them assurance that they are an identified stakeholder and would continue to be engaged in the project with other community groups as the public engagement plan for the project is developed.

GBA+

A guiding principle in the Approach is that recreation facilities are inclusive. This means that recreation facilities will be planned, designed, operated, maintained and animated utilizing principles of human-centred and universal design. This intend that facilities are inclusive, equitable, safe, and accessible to all people regardless of age, gender, gender expression, gender identity, physical or mental ability, family status, ancestry or place of origin, ethnicity, race, religion, recreational preferences, levels of ability, special needs, or financial resources/income levels.

City Policies C538 - Diversity and Inclusion, C602 - Accessibility for People with Disabilities and C624 - Fiscal Policy For Revenue Generation address the importance of providing equitable access to City infrastructure and services. Administration will continue to take into consideration equity measures to ensure Edmontonians are not disproportionately impacted in their ability to access the City's recreation centres as the City progresses to recreation facility development toward district and neighbourhood level amenities. This includes, but not limited to:

- Designing recreation facilities (for example, the new Coronation Park Sports and Recreation Centre and Lewis Farms Recreation Centre) with gender neutral amenities such as washrooms and change rooms.
- Offering dedicated programs for women and girls, such as the For Girls By Girls program at Terwillegar Community Recreation Centre which is a free drop in program in partnership with University of Alberta women athletes.
- Offering varied youth based programs like Youth in Action for fitness centre and pool use, Nikaniw Indigenous Youth Leadership Program and other after school programs with partners like C5, Africa Centre, Riverbend Rocks and Free Play. More details will be presented in the May 20, 2022 Community Services Committee report CS00940 City-owned Recreation Spaces for Youth Free Admission Drop-in Activities.
- Ensuring physical access to facilities is barrier free (i.e. ensuring patrons can easily access entry and various spaces within the facility) as well as providing opportunities for accessing recreation programs virtually.
- Utilizing the Leisure Access Program (LAP) to allow eligible low-income Edmontonians to access participating City of Edmonton recreation facilities through an annual pass or a subsidized monthly pass, and ensuring that this program is easily accessible (for example, launching the online application portal, allowing direct income verification and extension of the enrollment duration).

As the Rollie Miles Recreation Centre project advances to the next phase, the project team will engage with stakeholders using a GBA+ lens to ensure diverse voices and needs in the community are identified. In terms of funding the Rollie Miles Recreation Centre, the use of

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alternative financing options based on additional taxes within the facility catchment area may lead to inequity of recreation opportunities in neighbourhoods that do not have the expertise or ability to afford alternative financing tools.

ATTACHMENTS

1. District and Local Level Focus in the Approach to Community Recreation Facility Planning
2. Anticipated Growth by Area & Potential Recreation Centre/Amenity Locations