

YMCA CHILDMINDING SERVICE AGREEMENT

Recommendation

That the agreement between The City of Edmonton and Young Men’s Christian Association of Edmonton, operating as YMCA of Northern Alberta, for the delivery of child minding services, as outlined in Attachment 1 of the August 28, 2023, Community Services report CS01951, be approved, and that the agreement be in form and content acceptable to the City Manager.

Requested Action	Committee decision required		
ConnectEdmonton’s Guiding Principle	ConnectEdmonton Strategic Goals		
CONNECTED This unifies our work to achieve our strategic goals.	Healthy City Edmonton is a neighbourly city with community and personal wellness that embodies and promotes equity for all Edmontonians.		
City Plan Values	BELONG. LIVE. THRIVE. ACCESS		
City Plan Big City Move(s)	A community of communities Inclusive and compassionate	Relationship to Council’s Strategic Priorities	Community safety and well-being Conditions for service success
Corporate Business Plan	Serving Edmontonians		
Council Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bylaw 16620 - City Administration Bylaw • Policy C187A - Enhancing Community Facility Services through Partnerships 		

Executive Summary

- Administration provides an hourly childminding service for children aged newborn to 11 years old at the five largest City of Edmonton recreation centres.

YMCA CHILDMINDING SERVICE AGREEMENT

- Childminding is an industry standard and a member expectation at most multi-amenity recreation centres.
- In the fall of 2021, Administration explored opportunities to partner with a not-for-profit organization with extensive childminding and childcare experience.
- On March 7, 2022, the City entered into a one-year pilot agreement with the Young Men's Christian Association of Edmonton ("YMCA").
- On March 6, 2023, the agreement was extended for six months to allow for more direction on the OP12 review and resulting initiatives.
- Since March of 2022, the large five City of Edmonton recreation centres have seen a resurgence in attendance. Attendance for the child minding services from January to June 2023 have exceeded the same time period in 2019 by over 2,900 visits as shown in Attachment 2.
- Administration recommends the renewal of this service agreement with the YMCA for a five year period. This service is a \$5.5 million expense, with about \$2.6 million admission/membership revenue anticipated. This will be funded from existing budgets.
- As per City Administration Bylaw 16620, procurement agreements arising from non-competitive procurement processes where the value of the agreement exceeds \$1 million require approval by the Community and Public Services Committee.

REPORT

The City of Edmonton's recreation centres play a critical role in achieving the ConnectEdmonton strategic goal of a healthy city, meeting the recreation needs of Edmontonians to be physically and emotionally healthy. Providing childminding services in the five largest recreation centres helps reduce barriers to participation in recreation and fitness opportunities by supporting parents and caregivers during their recreation and fitness visits. This service is an industry standard for multi-amenity recreation centres and, as such, it is an expected service by members and patrons using the facilities.

Childminding provides drop-in, short-term oversight of children whose parents or caregivers are within the City's recreation centres. Caregivers must remain on the premises as this program is not licensed child care. This service is available with a drop-in admission fee and is included in child and family memberships, including the Leisure Access Program annual pass. Childminding is available for children aged newborn to 11 years old at the five largest City of Edmonton recreation centres:

1. Terwillegar Community Recreation Centre,
2. Kinsmen Sports Centre,
3. Clareview Community Recreation Centre,
4. The Meadows Community Recreation Centre, and
5. Commonwealth Community Recreation Centre.

Administration currently has a number of partner organizations delivering recreation based programs and services in facilities on the City's behalf, through partnership based agreements.

YMCA CHILDMINDING SERVICE AGREEMENT

This approach is often used when the program or service is specialized and would benefit from an organization which delivers this type of service more extensively.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Administration entered into a service agreement with the YMCA to pilot child minding services in five largest recreation centres for one year. The YMCA, the largest provider of non-profit childcare in Edmonton, operates over 60 child care programs for newborns to children 12 years of age across Northern and Central Alberta, as well as childminding in YMCA health and fitness facilities. The YMCA's mandate is to create life-enhancing opportunities for the growth and development of all people in spirit, mind and body. This direction aligns with the City's focus on supporting strong kids, healthy families and thriving communities.

The child-minding services provided by the YMCA in the five City recreation facilities over the last year and a half have resulted in:

- increased attendance,
- quality service validated through excellent customer satisfaction surveys and feedback
- adherence to City service standards and expectations.

Occurring between March 7, 2022, and March 6, 2023, the \$1 million pilot was funded within Administration's existing budget. There was no change made to the existing revenue model for childminding services within the pilot as there was no separate fee for this service, and the City continued to collect and retain all admission and membership revenue. The annual revenue collected through admissions and memberships for those utilizing the childminding service is approximately \$525,000 and this revenue helps to offset the operational expenses.

The pilot was extended to the end of September 2023 to align with the expected timing of information from reviews relating to the 2023-2026 budget Operating Amendment (OP) 12. While analysis regarding the City's future involvement in childminding have not been determined by the time of writing this report, Administration is recommending the continuation of childminding through the YMCA, as a necessary support service, through a five year contract (Attachment 1).

Budget/Financial Implications

There are no budget impacts for this contract as the full five year agreement value of \$5.5 million will be funded from existing budgets allocated for childminding services. The total front line staffing cost of this service through partner delivery is approximately the same as if the City was offering it directly.

The approximate \$525,000 in annual revenues collected from users of childminding services (estimated to be \$2.6 million over the full five year agreement) is broken down into 93 per cent membership visit revenue and 7 per cent children single admissions revenue and is part of the existing revenue budgets.

Legal Implications

As per the City Administration Bylaw 16620, procurement agreements over \$1 million that do not arise from a competitive procurement process must be approved by the appropriate Council Committee. The City is subject to trade agreements that require an open competitive process for

YMCA CHILDMINDING SERVICE AGREEMENT

procurements of this value, unless a trade agreement exemption applies. For this procurement, there is an exemption in each applicable trade agreement, which is procurement of social services.

Community Insight

Childminding at City of Edmonton recreation centres is an important service for caregivers and parents with young children who want to engage in physical activity. The service allows for a two-hour maximum daily visit so that a parent or caregiver can take part in programming and fitness opportunities offered in the facilities.

The City of Edmonton and YMCA regularly conduct and review customer satisfaction surveys. Throughout the duration of the pilot program, the YMCA's collaborated with the City to conduct ongoing surveying and engagement of recreation centre members and public who have used the YMCA delivered childminding service. Ongoing customer engagement is a built-in term within this agreement. The feedback and testimonials received in 2022 from patrons and staff during the pilot year have been positive, with many individuals indicating they now use childminding because the YMCA is the service delivery operator with decades of experience in child care in Edmonton.

GBA+

Administration reflected upon various biases and completed a review of existing research on socio-economic factors, as well as other challenges families could face when there is a barrier to accessing recreational opportunities¹, such as mental health, financial constraints, physical wellness issues, anti-social behaviour and social isolation.

Research findings indicate that:

- Reducing access barriers to participation plays a pivotal role in ensuring equity for children and families of all backgrounds.
- The benefits of accessing recreation suggest that it can help enhance social, mental and physical wellbeing while building strong families and communities.²
- Quality child care safeguards a child's health and safety and if the program is conveniently located and affordable, it helps parents balance life priorities while giving them peace of mind.³

The provision of childminding services at City of Edmonton recreation centres:

- Reduces financial barriers to low income parents and families with the Leisure Access Program which provides an affordable admission option to access the facility and pay for the service.

¹ Canadian Parks and Recreation Association (CPRA) and the Provincial/Territorial Parks and Recreation Associations. *A Framework for Recreation in Canada / Pathways to Wellbeing*. National Recreation Framework Working Group. Canada. 2015

² Canadian Parks and Recreation Association (CPRA) and the Provincial/Territorial Parks and Recreation Associations. *A Framework for Recreation in Canada / Pathways to Wellbeing*. National Recreation Framework Working Group. Canada. 2015

³ Childcare Resource and Research Unit. *Finding Quality Child Care: A guide for parents in Canada*. website <https://findingqualitychildcare.ca/#>

YMCA CHILDMINDING SERVICE AGREEMENT

- Offers availability at the five large recreation centres located throughout the city to provide the largest geographic benefit to patrons.
- Provides a booking process that is easy and convenient.
- Allows parents and guardians to have the ability to use facility amenities, fitness and recreation programs knowing that their children are nearby and in good care with a respected and trusted provider.

The City of Edmonton has a long history of working with partner organizations to provide recreational opportunities within recreation facilities. This includes City Council approved Policy C187A - Enhancing Community Facility Services through Partnerships. This policy established a framework of principles and procedures to guide developing and ongoing partnership relationships. The YMCA partnership supports parents and guardians of all socioeconomic status to access recreation opportunities to benefit the community overall and provides tremendous value through community understanding, continuous engagement, and expertise within the diverse communities they serve.

Attachments

1. Young Men's Christian Association of Edmonton Childminding Service Agreement - Key Terms
2. Childminding Attendance January to June 2019 vs 2023