

Report to Council



Date: June 1, 2020
To: Council
From: City Manager
Subject: COVID-19 Sport & Recreation Re-Opening Framework
Department: Active Living & Culture

Recommendation:

THAT Council receives for information the report from the Active Living & Culture Divisional Director dated June 1, 2020, regarding the framework and approach to re-opening City-operated sport and recreation facilities and reactivating programs.

Purpose:

To provide Council with an overview of the approach and framework to re-opening City-operated sport and recreation facilities and reactivating programs as part of the COVID-19 response.

Background:

The COVID-19 pandemic has changed the way of life for people in British Columbia and around the world. The measures taken to control the spread of the virus has had a profound impact on how individuals and families spend their leisure time and how they connect with each other and the broader community.

In Kelowna, the closure of sport, recreation and culture facilities, and cancellations of related programs, has been a surreal process, but a necessary measure to ensure public health and safety. BC's progression into Phase 2 of its Restart Plan is a positive step forward and provides guidance as we consider reopening recreation facilities and reactivating programs.

The change in conversation from 'what we can't do' to 'what can we do' is a welcome shift. This has become a growing question from many of our community partners who are looking to the City for guidance. It will be important for the City, through the Active Living & Culture (ALC) division, to provide support and leadership along the way. A systematic community approach to re-entry will help ensure that community services are offered in a safe, progressive and timely manner for all residents.

Discussion:

Provincial Plan

There is an abundance of information available regarding COVID-19 and facility re-opening requirements and considerations including from WorkSafe BC, Health Authorities and various provincial agencies (i.e. Lifesaving Society – BC and Yukon Branch). Within the sport and recreation sector, re-start guidelines have been prepared and forwarded to the Provincial Government for approval. These include:

- **British Columbia Recreation and Parks Association** has developed guidelines for how public recreation and parks sector can operate safely during the pandemic. The guidelines are intended to provide a framework for local and regional governments as they develop their recreation facility and program reactivation plans. The guidelines recognize that each community has its own balance of risk, resources, capacity and public demand to weigh in deciding about their timeline and process for re-opening facilities and offering services. (Approved)
- **ViaSport** has developed sector return to sport guidelines that will support reactivation of the local sport system. Based on these guidelines, Provincial Sport Organizations (PSO) will be required to develop sport-specific return to sport guidelines/plans. The PSO approved guidelines will then be provided to Local Sport Organizations (LSO) to adopt and develop their own Return to Sport plans for local board approval. LSOs will be required to submit their plans to the City/Facility Operators for start-up consideration. (Approval pending)

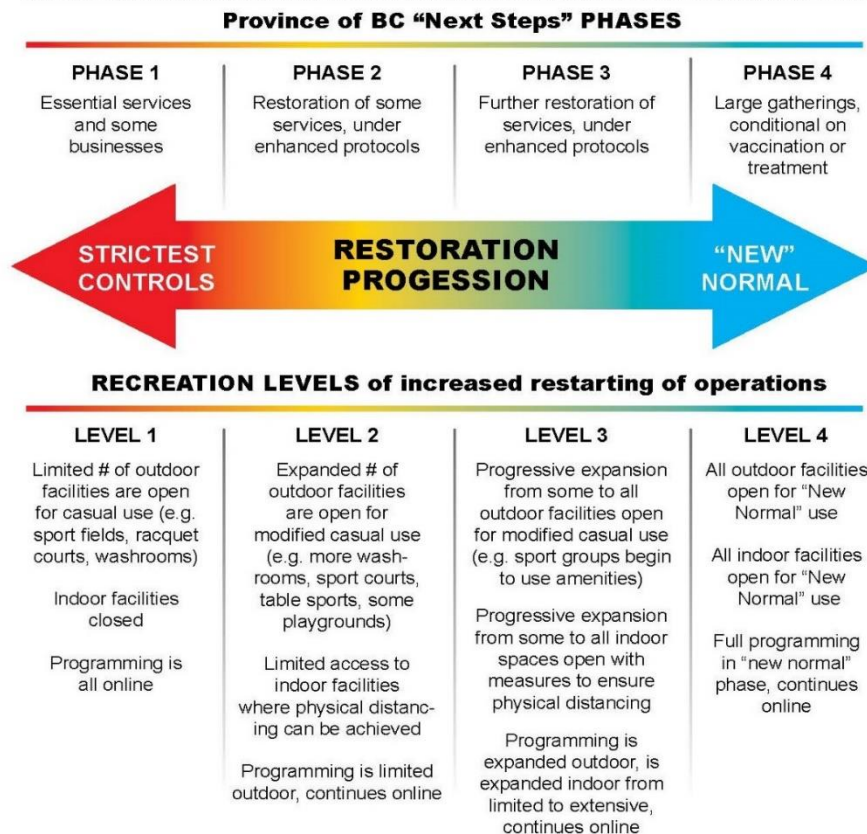
Staff also remain connected with other Okanagan municipalities, School District 23 and Interior Health to discuss re-opening plans and ensure alignment where possible.

Framework and Local Plan

The Progressive Planning Framework below is a layered plan that outlines progressive steps forward. The first layer is phases of the BC's "Next Steps" Plan; the second layer is a recreation levels system designed to enable fluid movement between levels (provided by BCRPA).

The BCRPA Guideline recognize that it is up to each local government to decide how to provide its services and operations as it scales from level to level. The pace of transition from level one to level four will be a gradual process based on risk potential, financial realities and public expectations. Conditions may arise that require movement forward and back between levels as recreation expands and contracts in response to many complex conditions in the pandemic period.

PROGRESSIVE PLANNING FRAMEWORK



Based on the framework, the following general principles will guide our approach to reopening recreation facilities and reactivating programs:

- Focus on outdoor facilities before indoor facilities
- Focus on casual use before programmed use
- Focus on individual activities before group activities
- Focus on skill development before competition
- Focus on local community before neighbouring communities

Outdoor and Indoor Facilities

As per the progressive intent of the framework, several outdoor spaces were opened in May including tennis and pickleball courts, BMX track, disc golf, beach volleyball and basketball courts. All have been opened for casual use only. As planning continues several additional outdoor and indoor facilities have been tentatively targeted for late June or July openings. It is expected that all of these facilities will have

a modified delivery approach and some will have areas within the facility that will be phased in at a later date.

The initial indoor facilities being considered offer larger open spaces that support physical distancing requirements and provide the flexibility to support community groups with approved return to activity plans. Staff are currently completing facility audits to determine requirements and modifications necessary to reopen as well as timelines for facility readiness. It is expected some facilities will take longer to prepare than others.

Several facilities and spaces are user group based (i.e. arenas, activity centres). A key component of the facility audit will include a user group readiness assessment. These assessments will become an important consideration for our facility reopening plans. Also, local organizations will be responsible to develop return to activity/sport plans based on the approved provincial guidelines.

Next phase of facilities under review include:

Outdoor Space	Consideration
Water and splash parks (3)	Possible phased approach considering casual use parameters.
Recreation Parks – Mission Softball Complex, Elks Stadium and sportsfields	Local sport organization readiness with return to activity plans.

Indoor Space	Consideration
Parkinson Recreation Centre	Phased approach – initial focus on weightroom and limited indoor program space. Aquatics to be determined.
Rutland Arena	Possible phased approach based on resources and demand. Local sport organization readiness with return to activity plans.
Activity Centres – Parkinson, Rutland and Mission	Possible phased approach of facilities and/or space within each facility. Rentals/community use would require return to activity plan.
Community Program Space – Kinsmen Fieldhouse and Kinsmen Media Centre	Possible phased approach of facilities and/or space within each facility. Rentals/community use would require return to activity plan.

There are several City-owned facilities operated by a third party including the H2O Adventure and Fitness Centre, Capital News Centre, Okanagan Gymnastic Centre, Kelowna Curling Club and Kelowna Badminton Club. Staff have been in contact with facility operators throughout the closure period and will continue to work with them as they develop their reopening plans. It is important to note that timelines for reopening may vary.

Programs and Events

Re-start Guidelines have been developed to welcome participants back to recreation programs in a safe and gradual manner. Wherever possible, programs and activities will be held outdoors. Following the reopening of some facilities, programs will begin to be held indoors with modifications:

- Promote physical distancing through small class sizes, individually focused activities (versus partners) and utilizing large spaces for programs

- Promote hand hygiene through frequent hand washing and cleaning high touch areas
- Ensuring staff and participants do not attend programs if they're sick
- Increasing cleanliness by not sharing equipment and providing adequate time and resources to effectively clean between classes

At this point, summer program registration will open by mid-June for programs running in July and August. The Summer Activity & Program Guide will be delivered to the community in an online format only which allows ongoing flexibility in displaying the modified programs being offered as we move through the phases of reactivation. As COVID-19 is unpredictable, we need to adapt as well to be able to add, change or cancel programs as the pandemic and associated measures evolve.

All large outdoor events have been cancelled to the end of August; however, smaller scale events (fewer than 50 people) might still be held with modifications that align with the Provincial Health Office. Details around the event permitting process during COVID 19 are currently being finalized.

Health & Safety Considerations

As the City continues to re-open facilities and re-activate programs, there will need to be changes in how these are delivered. Appropriate protective measures will be put in place to ensure a safe environment exists for both staff and public. These measures include:

- Heightened cleaning and disinfection
- Modifications of facilities to include protective plexiglass barriers for front counters where appropriate
- Ensuring physical distancing is maintained where possible through program modifications and queuing strategies
- Directing anyone experiencing symptoms to stay home
- Promoting high levels of handwashing and personal hygiene as a key preventative measure
- Providing public education on maintaining physical distance at indoor and outdoor spaces
- Ensuring clear return to activity guidelines are in place for groups

These and other considerations will direct planning as staff continue to move forward with reopening facilities and reactivating programs.

Conclusion:

Kelowna, by nature, is an active community. In the 2018 Citizens Survey, Kelowna residents ranked “good recreational facilities, opportunities and activities” as one of the top three qualities that make a city a good place to live. While the cancellation of many sport, culture and recreation offerings has been necessary for the collective health of our citizens, we also know it has been incredibly challenging for our community. Recreational and cultural opportunities provide benefits, reaching far beyond just physical well-being to include social, intellectual, and emotional benefits. While we are eager to reintroduce programs and facilities, it must be done with the safety of both residents and staff as the highest priority.

Staff will continue to work with key stakeholders to advance through the planning framework in a thoughtful progressive manner to reopen facilities and reactivate programs.

Internal Circulation:

Active Living & Culture Managers
Infrastructure Operations
Communications
Human Resources
Financial Services

Financial/Budgetary Considerations:

The reopening of facilities and reactivating of programs will have financial implications:

- Facility and program modifications will need to be implemented. Modifications may include physical changes within facilities, enhanced cleaning, reduced program participant capacities and partial opening of some facilities.
- Extraordinary costs (both one time and ongoing) needed to ensure the safety of the community and staff (i.e. signage, hand sanitizing stations).
- Staff that were laid-off will need to be rehired (based on need).

At the onset of COVID-19 pandemic, all staff worked with the Financial Services Division to adjust revenues and expenditure budgets for 2020 Final Budget. Staff have also worked to forecast cash flow impacts resulting from COVID-19.

As staff move forward with planning and reopening steps there will be a heightened attention to matching revenue streams with expenses, where possible. Staff will continue to work with the Financial Services Division to communicate financial plans affecting the City's cash flow and budget.

Communications Comments:

Public communication regarding reopening dates and safety guidelines will be key to public understanding and commitment to new protocols. In addition to the online distribution of the Summer Activity & Program Guide, a number of additional tactics including media releases, social media and e-bulletins will be utilized to inform the public of summer programs and reopening phases.

Considerations not applicable to this report:

Existing Policy
Legal/Statutory Authority
Legal/Statutory Procedural Requirements
External Agency/Public Comments

Submitted by:

J. Gabriel, Divisional Director, Active Living & Culture

Approved for inclusion:

Attachments PowerPoint Presentation