

Report to Council



Date: April 3, 2023
To: Council
From: City Manager
Subject: Indoor Recreation Facility Strategy (IRFS)
Department: Sport & Event Services

Recommendation:

THAT Council receives, for information, the report from the Active Living & Culture Division, dated April 3, 2023, regarding the activities related to the development of an Indoor Recreation Facility Strategy;

AND THAT Council accepts the Strategic Planning framework, and related directions, as outlined in the report.

Purpose:

To provide Council with an overview of the Indoor Recreation Facility Strategy planning process, a summary of the findings from the research and engagement activities; and, an outline of the approach and directions for future recreation facility development

Background:

The City of Kelowna recognizes that there is an undeniable connection between the availability of indoor recreation facilities and services, and healthy people in vibrant communities. For that reason, the City's program delivery model includes a combination of centralized and decentralized amenity provisions that provide broad community reach and access to important recreation facilities and programming.

Within the City's facility provision, there are several large multi-purpose community facilities, or destination centres, that offer a number of amenity types where people congregate from across the City, as well as smaller more focused neighbourhood-based facilities that target the needs of a more concentrated group of local users with specific recreation needs. This community-wide inventory of indoor recreation facilities provides our citizens with the opportunity to engage in meaningful, accessible recreation experiences that foster individual, community and environmental well-being.

As the City’s population grows and the character of Kelowna’s neighbourhoods change, there will be increased calls for intensified levels of service in the form of new facilities and corresponding programs to meet the needs of the various communities within the City. To optimize investment in these important community assets, staff have been working closely with consultants from the JF Group and RC Strategies on the development of an Indoor Recreation Facility Strategy that aligns with, and advances, the City’s program delivery model.

Discussion:

The [Indoor Recreation Facility Strategy \(IRFS\)](#) is intended to bring clarity to the City’s thinking and decision making related to its future provision of indoor sport and recreation infrastructure. It establishes strategic directions and rationale for why and how the City makes investment decisions and provides a methodology to determine the most appropriate facilities to invest in. Though not directly related to any specific project, the IRFS serves as an overarching document and resource to help assess need and inform community plans and projects.

The development of the IRFS has been informed by a considerable volume of research and public consultation undertaken specifically for this project. The “What We Heard” and “State of Indoor Recreation Facilities” reports summarize the research and consultation findings and outline the current market context applied to existing inventory along with the considerations related to their use. Key findings from those reports are highlighted in Appendix 1.

The IRFS planning process involves two phases: *Strategic Planning* followed by *Tactical Planning*:

Strategic Planning focuses on determining the most appropriate solutions to fill facility provision gaps. It includes a criteria-based methodology to assess service levels and prioritize investment in certain amenities over others and utilizes a three-step framework, as outlined below, for looking critically at the indoor recreation amenities the City invests in.



Within the framework, current and future need are determined by answers to seven questions (criteria) that collectively help to provide an indication of appropriate facility provision levels. An additional three questions are applied to various amenity types to help prioritize the most appropriate application of municipal resources. Once the needs have been assessed and priorities determined, strategies and action plans are identified to guide future decisions and planning. The results of Kelowna's needs assessment (step 1) and prioritization ranking (step 2), along with a summary of the IRFS action plans (step 3) to guide the City's indoor recreation infrastructure focus over the next 5-10 years, are included in Appendix 2.

As demand for indoor recreation amenities is broad, the City may not be able to afford the time and resources necessary to undertake the Strategic Planning process for every potential project. To narrow the field of facility development possibilities, four planning triggers have been developed and the City should consider engaging in a Strategic Planning process if one or more of these triggers are met:

- The project includes amenities in which the City has previously invested in or the project demonstrates alignment with strategic aspirations.
- Similar amenities within the community approach 80% to 90% utilization on a sustained basis.
- The cost to repair an aging facility that includes the same amenities is 50% or more of the cost to replace it.
- The project is being proposed by a credible partner that has, or has access to, significant capital and/or operating resources.

Tactical planning focuses on costs and benefits of a specific investment. It is more project specific and occurs when the City contemplates investment in a facility or site to achieve strategic intentions. High priority facility (or amenity) initiatives that are required to fill identified service gaps should proceed to the tactical planning phase of the development process.

The application of the tactical planning elements advances a potential facility/amenity development from the concept stage to the project stage and involves feasibility and functional planning along with detailed design and construction. This phase also investigates a number of key considerations, including:

- Partnership Opportunities: Strong partnerships can advance corporate objectives, build community capacity and connections, and leverage a number of resources to provide more and better services.
- Asset management: All recreation facilities require continuous reinvestment to ensure the asset is consistently capable of fulfilling its intended purpose and remain relevant in meeting contemporary community needs.
- Development & Operational Plans: Planning for, providing, operating and maintaining an appropriate complement of indoor recreation facilities to serve a growing community

requires a clear and consistent methodology that balances service level needs with optimal development/operational plans and investment priorities.

Having protocols and processes in place for making significant investment choices can help align stakeholders' needs with facility provision standards and ensure that the City has adequate valid and applicable information on which to base informed investment and operating judgements. Even though the investigations necessary to complete tactical planning elements are time consuming and sometimes expensive, they are critical to informing the City about the introduction of new or expanded service levels to meet community need and should be a mainstay in the indoor recreation facility development process.

Conclusion:

Indoor recreation facilities improve quality of life of residents by promoting and enabling healthy lifestyles, fostering social connections, and showcasing the community. The Indoor Recreation Facility Strategy provides a planning framework that will optimize investment in these important community assets and ensure they continue to appropriately serve our citizens and contribute to overall community well-being.

The future is bright for the City, and recreation facilities will play a significant role in ensuring that it is a healthy, connected, and active future

Internal Circulation:

- Active Living & Culture
- Communications
- Financial Services
- Infrastructure
- Parks & Buildings Planning
- Partnerships & Investments

Considerations applicable to this report:

Existing Policy:

Imagine Kelowna called to create great public spaces and opportunities for people of all ages, abilities and identities, grow vibrant urban centres and limit sprawl, build healthy neighbourhoods for all, nurture entrepreneurship and collaboration, support innovation, and take action in the face of climate change.

2040 OCP sets a strategic course for the next 20 years as to how our city should grow.

The Kelowna Community Sport Plan provides a framework for the local sport system that will guide decision making and provide direction for strategic leadership.

Considerations not applicable to this report:

Legal/Statutory Authority:

Legal/Statutory Procedural Requirements:

Financial/Budgetary Considerations:

External Agency/Public Comments:

Communications Comments:

Submitted by: Doug Nicholas, Sport & Event Services Manager

Approved for inclusion: Jim Gabriel, Divisional Director, Active Living & Culture

Attachments: Appendix 1 – IRFS Background Reports – Summary
Appendix 2 – IRFS Needs Assessment & Action Plan
PowerPoint – IRFS Presentation – Apr 3, 2023