

Report to Council



Date: July 8, 2024
To: Council
From: City Manager
Subject: Activity Centre Functional Space Plans and Okanagan Regional Library Partnership Update
Department: Active Living & Culture/ Partnerships & Investments

Recommendation:

THAT Council receives, for information this report from Active Living & Culture/ Partnerships & Investments, dated July 8, 2024, regarding the functional space planning for the Activity Centres in Glenmore and Mission, and an update on the strategic partnership with the Okanagan Regional Library as part of the Building a Stronger Kelowna portfolio;

AND THAT Council directs staff to enter into a Letter of Understanding with the Okanagan Regional Library for the provision of two express libraries under the general guidance discussed in this report.

Purpose:

To inform Council of the functional program for the Activity Centres in Glenmore and the Mission and the partnership with the Okanagan Regional Library within the Building a Stronger Kelowna portfolio of projects.

Background:

Activity centres play a unique and important role in delivering recreation and community services. In May 2023, new activity centres in Glenmore and Mission were approved as part of the Building a Stronger Kelowna initiative. These centres will provide local spaces for community, cultural, health, and wellbeing activities, fostering a sense of belonging and reflecting neighbourhood identities.

The new centres will offer multi-generational programs and will each include a 91-space childcare centre funded by a Provincial grant and operated by a non-profit partner. The other amenities within the centres have been determined through a functional planning process. The facility planning exercise considered recent community engagement, the Indoor Recreation Facility Strategy, and future projects in the capital plan. Considerations around current and future adjacent amenities were part of the plan including future renovations or enhancement of existing facilities in both Mission and Glenmore Recreation Parks.

Establishing strategic partnerships was endorsed as a guiding principle for the future recreation centre portfolio by Council in January 2022, and conversations have been ongoing with a variety of interested parties, including the Okanagan Regional Library.

The following sections outline the various elements that were considered to determine the functional space plan of the activity centres:

Public Engagement:

The City of Kelowna undertook a multi-platform public engagement initiative to gather input on the functions of two new all-age activity centres. Public feedback informed the recommended space programs, including the inclusion of certain amenities and design considerations. Information sessions were held in Glenmore and Mission as close as possible to the future sites, allowing residents to engage with staff, view future site maps, and provide input. Over 1,300 resident contributions were received through online and in-person community engagement activities including 727 contributions specific to Glenmore Activity Centre and 459 contributions specific to Mission Activity Centre. General themes emerged such as the importance of active spaces for health, the need for facilities for seniors, children, and families, the popularity of pickleball, and the need for welcoming community spaces.

Public engagement also included surveys to understand residents' priorities and preferences for indoor amenities, revealing that 95 per cent of Mission respondents and 93 per cent of Glenmore respondents currently use Kelowna's recreation facilities. Participants ranked spaces for entertainment, physical activity, and personal development as top priorities, with physical health and exercise being key motivators for facility use. Additionally, respondents provided feedback on motivations to attend facilities, design and atmosphere and programming considerations. In Mission, "neighbourhood identity" was a prominent theme, while Glenmore residents expressed excitement about future outdoor amenities including the notion that Glenmore is 'overdue' in the development of new community facilities. The [engagement results](#) have been instrumental in shaping facility development decisions and amenity choices for the new activity centres.

The City worked with a recreation facilities consultant and the BSK project team to carefully craft the functional plans for the new activity centres. These plans are based on current and future adjacent amenities, trends in recreation, local needs, public input and interest group engagement.

Mission Recreation Park Campus:

In setting future service delivery goals, thorough consideration was given to the existing amenities at Mission Recreation Park to ensure that there would be no duplication or competition with other City facilities within the neighborhood. Consequently, the planning scope was broadened to include potential opportunities for the future expansion of MNP Place, the H₂O Adventure + Fitness Centre, and the overall Mission Recreation Park (MRP) campus.

MNP Place Expansion:

The City's 10-year capital budget includes a renovation and expansion of MNP Place in 2028-29. The planning for MNP Place focuses on expanding its facilities to meet community priorities and enhance its role as a sports hub. Key developments include the addition of two new ice pads, making it a quad-pad arena, which will host various ice based tournaments and events. For dry-land sports, plans include multi-sport court space, indoor turf, a training track, and multi-purpose/classroom space. These expansions aim to enhance revenue opportunities, attract diverse sports organizations, and accommodate a wide range of events, ensuring the facility meets the evolving needs of the community.

H2O Expansion Feasibility:

While the 10-year capital plan does not include significant renovation or expansion of H2O Adventure + Fitness Centre, this facility is both the City of Kelowna's aquatics competition venue and a well-used community fitness centre, and as such its future needs to be considered in the context of the Mission Recreation Park Campus master-plan.

A high-level feasibility study demonstrates that with the location of H2O within the campus, there is opportunity to add supporting aquatic amenities including a warm-up pool and expanded spectator seating. The site can also accommodate the expansion of the lobby, dryland multi-purpose space and fitness facilities. The vision is that these upgrades provide the facility with what would be necessary to host higher level aquatic events and extend the membership capabilities of the facility.

Discussion:

Activity Centre in Mission - Functional Space Program:

The planning team has provided clear directives for the development of the new activity centre in Mission, emphasizing connection, health, and belonging as its core focus. The facility is anticipated to offer unique amenities that compliment those in other MRP facilities, such as community programs, cultural spaces, and gathering areas, while maintaining a welcoming atmosphere for families and youth. Additionally, the activity centre will be designed to enhance the park's outdoor activities and become the community living room of the campus.

Integration with existing municipal assets is a priority for the activity centre. The facility should enhance the synergy among all park facilities and open spaces while aligning with the health and wellness activities at H2O. The design process will explore opportunities for thoughtful integration and direct connection between the activity centre and H2O, aiming to maximize mutual benefits and facilitate efficient traffic flow between the two facilities.

Consultants suggest several key amenities for the activity centre, including a multi-use activity space, a multi-program room, a community living room, and a teaching kitchen. The design should feature open and interconnected areas to minimize the need for separate rooms and corridors, thus reducing the space allocation for circulation.

Activity Centre in Glenmore – Functional Space Program:

In contrast to the future activity centre in the Mission, the future activity centre in Glenmore will be a stand-alone facility contained in Glenmore Recreation Park. Within the Glenmore neighbourhood, there are very few indoor recreation facilities and none that are solely operated by the City. The future activity centre has the opportunity to be a true community connection hub and provide much needed activity, culture, sport and gathering spaces.

While many of the facility amenities will be similar to those in the activity centre at Mission Recreation Park, there is a greater deficit of indoor sport and wellness amenities in Glenmore. In response to this need, a full-size gymnasium is planned as well as large multi-purpose rooms that will serve as fitness and wellness spaces for people of all ages and abilities. In addition, there will be a community teaching kitchen, program rooms appropriate for dance, drama and language classes, social gathering areas, a childcare centre and an "express branch" regional library.

The activity centre will provide indoor/outdoor connectivity to enjoy and enhance the various sports and activities taking place in the Glenmore Recreation Park.

Below is a high-level description of the amenities included in each future activity centre:

Amenity	Use
Gymnasium/large activity space	Open, versatile activity area Learn to, drop-in sport Recreational sport competition (Glenmore) Large gathering space for celebrations
Social Spaces	Casual gathering space to encourage socialization objectives
Wellness space	Flexible program space designed for fitness/wellness activities (Glenmore)
General program rooms, teaching kitchen	Small social gatherings & meetings Wellness activities Art or creative expression programs
Childcare (funded through Provincial grants)	Infant/Toddler, out of school care
Operational support	Administration, washrooms, mechanical, storage
Library (Tenant improvement funded by ORL)	Innovative “express branch” library services (Glenmore)

Library Partnership

Recognizing that libraries serve as community gathering spaces, foster social interaction, and enrich the cultural fabric of their environments, the City engaged in conversations with the ORL to explore potential partnership opportunities.

Innovative delivery and program models for libraries within recreation community centres are emerging, featuring a compact footprint of around 350 square feet. These “express branches” offer access to curated collections of popular books, digital resources, and essential services such as internet access and community information. During operating hours, the library shares the community centre's social space, allowing for flexible and efficient use of the area. The addition of these branches will not only broaden the spectrum of amenities available in the new facilities but also meet the community's desire for increased library spaces.

Following Council endorsement, the City and the Okanagan Regional Library will sign a Letter of Understanding to establish express libraries both at the redeveloped PRC and in the new activity centre in Glenmore based on the following guidelines: ORL will pay the City a market lease rate for a 350 sf area with direct access to interior community space in both facilities. The proposed length of the term is 15 years plus two 5 year renewals.

Conclusion:

Comprehensive thought and discussion have gone into the functional plans for the new activity centres in Mission and Glenmore. Many parties, including public input, interest group engagement, community partners, and facility operators, recreation professionals, and planning professionals have been consulted to develop facilities that will both complement the respective recreation parks and will fill a deep need within those neighbourhoods.

Next steps:

The functional plans will be provided to the BSK planning team for inclusion in the validation process for the activity centres which will begin in Q4 of 2024. A more detailed analysis of performance requirements, including for the partnership spaces, will be developed for each of the components identified to ensure that the design and construction teams have a clear picture of the intent and desired outcomes for the centres. The activity centres will be included in the delivery of the BSK project with a projected opening date of late 2027.

Internal Circulation:

Partnerships & Investments
Active Living & Culture
Communications
Finance
Infrastructure Delivery

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.

Considerations not applicable to this report:

Legal/Statutory Authority:
Legal/Statutory Procedural Requirements:
Financial/Budgetary Considerations:
External Agency/Public Comments:
Communications Comments:

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cc: