

Report to Council



Date: May 15, 2017
File: 0610-01
To: City Manager
From: Mariko Siggers, Community & Neighbourhood Services Manager
Subject: Neighbourhood Learning Centres

Recommendation:

THAT Council receives, for information, the report from the Community & Neighbourhood Services Manager dated May 15, 2017, regarding current and future Neighbourhood Learning Centres in Kelowna;

AND THAT Council endorse in principle the City's intent to establish a Neighbourhood Learning Centre as part of the future Okanagan Mission Junior Middle School as outlined in the report dated May 15, 2017;

AND THAT Council authorize the Mayor and City Clerk to execute a letter of intent with School District #23 regarding the Neighbourhood Learning Centre at the Okanagan Mission Junior Middle School;

AND FURTHER THAT staff report back with a recommendation on whether or not to proceed with a joint use agreement for the Neighbourhood Learning Centre at the Okanagan Mission Junior Middle School.

Purpose:

To provide Council with information on existing Neighbourhood Learning Centres as per SR #395953, school joint-use agreements and a new Neighbourhood Learning Centre opportunity associated with the planned development of the Okanagan Mission Junior Middle School.

Background:

The City currently has a number of partnerships with School District #23 (SD 23) including Joint-Use Agreements, school events and program support, as well as a Neighbourhood Learning Centre at Okanagan Mission Secondary School (OKM).

Programming in schools allows the City to expand the reach of Active Living & Culture initiatives to the outlying areas. Schools are a natural space for community development and connecting neighbours.

Programming in neighbourhoods reduces geographical barriers, allows for specific needs, such as licensed care to be addressed and encourages interaction among residents. Fostering the relationship with SD 23 and continuing to expand programming strategically into neighbourhoods is an important aspect of the program delivery model.

Joint-Use Agreements

Formal joint-use agreements exist at Watson Road Elementary, Bankhead Elementary and South Kelowna Elementary. Community recreation programs are offered at all three locations and licensed child care and preschool are operated at Bankhead and Watson Road. The agreements outline the management and usage of the facilities including an annual base cost which is reflective of the shared costs for maintenance and operations. Overall, the joint-use agreements are effective in allowing the City to provide neighbourhood based programs.

Within each of the schools, programs are run on a direct program cost-recovery basis. The table below outlines the usage of the schools with which the City has a joint-use agreement in place from 2016:

School	Types of Programs	Total # programs	Program hours	Total # Registrations
Bankhead Elementary	Licensed group care Community programs Camps	45	1195	580
Watson Road Elementary	Licensed group care Community programs Camps Birthday parties	245	3181	1680
South Kelowna Elementary	Community programs	99	1178	669
Total		389	5554	2929

School partnerships

A relationship exists with most of the schools in the district. City of Kelowna staff support school events through providing games, resources and inflatables. In addition, City staff program special events or "Family Active Nights" at a variety of schools throughout the city inviting students, parents and other community members to enjoy free games and activities. City staff also rent space in various schools to run programs and sport leagues.

Neighbourhood Learning Centre

Neighbourhood Learning Centres (NLC's) are made possible through a provincially funded program which allows schools to apply for up to 15 per cent extra of the total floor area to be utilized by a community partner. The intention of the initiative is to maximize the benefit of schools by integrating a broader community use. Currently, the City's only formal NLC exists at Okanagan Mission Secondary School (OKM). As part of the school's renovation, a second gymnasium was constructed in 2014. A partnership between SD 23 and the City outlined a joint-use agreement (5 year agreement that expires June 30, 2019) whereby the City has access to the gymnasium and classroom space outside of school hours. Having the City as a partner enabled SD 23 to expand the size of the second gymnasium.

Below are some key components of the existing agreement for the NLC at OKM:

- Capital costs were borne by the SD 23 and the Province
- Operating, equipment and maintenance costs are shared proportionately
- The City has first right to access the gymnasium between 6 p.m. and 10 p.m. on weekdays during the regular school year
- The City has first right to access the gymnasium between 8 a.m. and 10 p.m. on weekdays during school holiday periods and weekends subject to maintenance and security requirements

Currently, City programs offered at OKM include sport leagues and recreation programs. Overall, the NLC has had some proven successes, but there are also some challenges:

- Access after 6 p.m. on weeknights limits the programming opportunities as it is late for children and families to participate. Programs rarely run beyond 9 p.m.
- The school's need for use of the gymnasiums is significant which can create scheduling challenges for City programs (i.e. when OKM hosts a tournament in both gymnasiums, City programs are bumped)
- Any use of the facility on weekends or non-school days requires an additional fee of \$30 per hour to cover maintenance costs, making many programs cost-prohibitive
- No spaces are designated solely for City use so all programming must take place outside of school hours
- There is no ability to rent unused space to other community groups although there is demand for community gymnasium space
- The City's portion of the annual operating cost is approximately \$40,000 while the net revenue (after program expenses) is approximately \$7,000. City staff are actively working on implementing new ideas in order to improve revenues and maximize community use in order to align with the net revenue target of \$20,000.

The agreement at OKM is relatively new. Both the City and SD 23 are committed and actively reviewing the model to address the challenges mentioned above.

Opportunity

In April, 2017, the Province announced the plan to construct the Okanagan Mission Junior Middle School. The budget for construction is approximately \$36 million and includes capacity for 750 students in grades six through eight. The school site is adjacent to a proposed City of Kelowna park which is proposed to have one adult sports field, 2 tennis courts, a playground, a nature trail, parking and washrooms.

SD 23 staff and City staff have had preliminary discussions about a potential partnership. There is an opportunity to create designated community space as well as shared space in the new school. There are strong benefits that stem from a partnership established at the design stage. It provides an opportunity for the City to have a role in creating the culture of the building and maximize overall benefit to the community. In the NLC model, which would apply to this proposed partnership, the City does not contribute to capital costs (unless the City desires to expand beyond the allotted space); however, ongoing maintenance and operating costs are proportionately shared by SD 23 and the City.

Based on the formula for Neighbourhood Learning Centres, 971 square metres has been designated for community use. There is some flexibility in how the NLC space could be allocated including some of the following options:

- Additional gymnasium space
- Storage space (internal and/or exterior)
- Multi-purpose gathering area
- Multi-purpose program space
- Meeting rooms
- Kitchen servery

Staff have looked at other community models that have proven to be successful. Mar Jok Elementary School in West Kelowna is an excellent example of a successful partnership between the District of West Kelowna and SD 23. There is a designated community room which is exclusively operated by the District of West Kelowna. In addition, there is community access to the gym seven days a week. The principal of the school is very supportive which has proven to be a critical component to the success of the partnership. In this example, the District of West Kelowna was involved in the design stage to ensure that the community needs were met in the construction of the facility.

In the new Okanagan Mission Junior Middle School, there are many opportunities to expand programming to this neighbourhood and to create a “community hub” in a highly residential area. There are a number of potential uses for the NLC spaces:

- Recreational programs for children, youth, adults and seniors
- Licensed care (would require bus service)
- Preschool programs
- Sport leagues and programs
- Gymnasium rentals for community groups or teams
- Meeting space for community organizations or City functions
- Community gathering space
- Community kitchen or cooking programs

The timeline for this project is ambitious with the intent to open in September 2019. In order to meet this target, the components of the school will need to be determined in the coming months. Information gained from other NLC's and examining the demographics of the neighbourhood suggest that certain design components will maximize benefit to the community:

- At least one designated multi-purpose community room with separate storage, access from the exterior of the building (preferably the front) and immediate access to green space;
- An expanded gymnasium large enough to accommodate adult sports, community gatherings and various programs
- Washroom and storage facilities accessible from the exterior of the building

In addition to designing a space that will service the greatest community needs, it will be important to ensure that the space can be accessed at optimal times for programming. The following are some key principles for maximizing community use:

- Exclusive use of designated community room(s), accessible 365 days per year
- Access to gymnasium space on weekdays (after school and early evening hours)
- First right to book gymnasium on weekends, holidays and non-school days (summer holidays, spring break, etc.)

- Opportunity to rent space to other community organizations if the space is not needed by the school or the City
- Access to the gym and community rooms on weekends, holidays and outside the regular school year

The design process of the new middle school has already begun with a workshop held on April 26, 2017, led by the architects hired for this project. In order to contribute at a meaningful level on the design and to explore the opportunity of a partnership further, SD 23 has requested that the City provide confirmation of interest through a non-binding letter of intent to operate the NLC component of the school once it opens in 2019. Should Council endorse the recommendations, the next steps include:

- Providing a letter of intent to SD 23
- Continue to work with the architects as part of the design team
- Develop a business case for the 2019 operating budget which includes estimates for shared operating costs, program revenue and rental potential
- Report back to Council with a recommendation on proceeding with the development of joint-use agreement.

Internal Circulation:

Divisional Director, Active Living & Culture; Sport & Event Services Manager; Communications Advisor

Considerations not applicable to this report:

External Agency/Public Comments

Existing Policy:

Financial/Budgetary Considerations:

Legal/Statutory Authority

Legal/Statutory Procedural Requirements

Personnel Implications

Communications Comments

Alternate Recommendation

Submitted by:

M. Siggers, Community & Neighbourhood Services Manager

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

Attachments: Attachment 1 – Presentation – Neighbourhood Learning Centre

Cc: Divisional Director, Corporate Strategic Services
Divisional Director, Financial Services