



Adapted Recreation Plan - Preliminary Report

Date	September 15, 2021
To	Community Wellness Committee
From	City Planning & Community Development
Service Area	Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services
Item No.	CWC21-10

RECOMMENDATION

The Community Wellness Committee recommends that City Council:

1. Approve \$375,000 in ongoing funding be brought forward in the 2022 budget process for final discussion for the following:
 - \$145,000 for an Inclusion Support Program that will provide one-on-one support to people with disabilities and their families who are accessing City-run recreation and leisure opportunities
 - \$200,000 to maintain the Adapted Sport and Recreation funding stream of the Community Investment Grants Program that was launched in 2021
 - \$30,000 through the 2022 budget process toward training for all existing recreation staff in disability and inclusion.
2. Delegate authority to the City Manager to adjudicate, approve and administer the Adapted Sport and Recreation Funding stream of the Community Investment Grants Program.
3. Delegate authority to the City Manager to approve a funding agreement with the Government of Canada should the City's application to the Government of Canada's Enabling Accessibility Fund be successful.
4. Approve these recommendations at its meeting on September 29, 2021.

ISSUE

In April 2021, City Council brought forward a motion to "Increase Recreation and Leisure Activities for People with Disability" (MN21-2, Appendix A), directing Administration to conduct consultations

toward the development of an Adapted Recreation Plan. The motion requested that Administration return to Council in Q3 of 2021 with a preliminary report, and in Q1 of 2022 with a final report.

MN21-2 directs a broad-based consultation with the general public, people with disabilities, care providers of children with disabilities, the recreation and leisure sector, and the provincial and federal governments in order to identify barriers and opportunities for improving the accessibility of local recreation and leisure activities. It also requests Administration to do a cost analysis for expanded programming and include budget recommendations with both the preliminary and final reports.

This report outlines the consultation and engagement work completed to date, related budget recommendations, and the plan for completion of the remainder of the work.

IMPACTS

Accessibility Impacts

The content of this report was presented to the Accessibility Advisory Committee on September 7, 2021. The Committee expressed general support for the recommendations, and highlighted:

- The strong link between access to transportation and recreation, and the need for additional investment in both ParaTransit and general Transit, to help people access recreation opportunities
- A suggestion to strengthen relationships with local cab companies to support with transportation needs
- The importance of ensuring consistency and choice within the Inclusion Support program, and exploring options for subsidizing residents to bring their own support staff as well as providing City-employed Inclusion Support Workers
- The importance of not requiring all people with disabilities to utilize the Inclusion Support Program, and continuing to support other forms of access
- Several specific suggestions for staff training the City can explore
- Several suggestions for outreach related to the public survey in the fall

These recommendations are expected to enhance the accessibility of City of Regina (City) programs and services for people with a wide variety of barriers to participation. One-on-one support allows for the City to provide person-centred service and to respond to the specific needs of each individual or family who is accessing the Inclusion Support Program.

Additional staff training in disability and inclusion is expected to make all City recreation and leisure programs safer and more welcoming to people with a wide variety of abilities, whether they are accessing the Inclusion Support Program or not.

Grant funding for community-based organizations will help to spur community-driven accessibility

upgrades to their facilities and programs, thereby widening the variety of programs and services that are accessible to people with disabilities throughout our city.

Financial Impacts

The total value of the recommendations is \$375,000 for the 2022 budget.

This is a starting point based on our initial consultation and outreach, and current staff capacity. We expect additional funding requests for the 2023 and 2024 budgets based on the final results of our consultations. An overview of the results and options for multi-year funding will be presented to Council in Q1 of 2022 for approval.

Policy Impacts

Design Regina: The Official Community Plan Bylaw No 2013-48 (OCP) prioritizes access to a variety of recreation programs and services for all Regina residents. These Sections ask the City to minimize barriers to the use of municipal facilities, programs or services and to consider the needs of the most vulnerable populations when planning recreation opportunities. It explicitly asks the City to support seniors and people with disabilities by using principles of barrier-free and universal design, and by coordinating accessibility actions and initiatives across City departments. These recommendations will support the above strategic outcomes as outlined in Sections: D7 – Parks, Recreation & Open Spaces; D8 – Culture; and D11 – Social Inclusion.

The *Recreation Master Plan* recognizes accessibility to recreation as an important catalyst in developing more connected and welcoming communities. It promotes equitable provision of recreation opportunities, reducing barriers to access, and fostering cultures of inclusion throughout the recreation delivery system.

OTHER OPTIONS

1. Status Quo:
 - No immediate investment in expanded disability-related services
 - Existing staff would continue to do their best to support people with disabilities
 - Disability awareness training for recreation staff would be delivered from existing training budgets, possibly at the expense of other training
 - No continuation of the Adapted Sport & Recreation grant program started in 2021
 - Future investment could be triggered and guided by the Accessibility Plan to be discussed in Q2 of 2022, giving the City a more comprehensive understanding of accessibility priorities broadly
 - This option is not recommended because consultations conducted through this Motion have identified a clear need for the recommendations within this report, and taking immediate action will support the City's work in building trust with residents with disabilities
2. Additional capital investment of \$400,000:

- Everything in Recommendation, plus:
 - \$400,000 in annual capital funding to address findings of accessibility audit
- This option represents a total cost of \$775,000.
- Administration has an existing budget of \$150,000 annually for program and accessibility upgrades to facilities; this would be in addition to that funding.
- Administration is conducting an Accessibility Audit of all public-facing City of Regina facilities over the next 3 years. The Audit will outline priorities and cost estimates for future work to make City facilities more accessible. It is anticipated that significant capital will be required to respond to the recommendations of the Audit.
- This Option would enable Administration to begin making immediate progress on the accessibility of City facilities, based on early results of the Audit, while programs and services for people with disabilities are being expanded.
- If this option is not selected, Administration will bring forth capital requests related to accessibility through future budget cycles, upon the completion of the accessibility audits, and through additional work on a corporate accessibility plan

COMMUNICATIONS

A communications plan is being developed to support awareness and distribution of the public survey as well as the promotion of funding opportunities and other ways for the broader community to be involved.

DISCUSSION

Breakdown of Current and Future Work

Administration has completed the following work between April and August 2021, the results of which are outlined below and inform the recommendations in this report:

- Focus groups with people with disabilities and their care providers
- Engagement with the federal and provincial governments

The following work will be completed between now and December 2021, the results of which will be included in the final report presented to Council in Q1 of 2022, with additional budget requests:

- Engagement with the recreation and leisure sector
- Development of an inventory of existing recreation and leisure activities for people with disabilities
- Public survey

Focus Groups with People with Disabilities and their Care Providers

Administration contracted consultants John Loeppky and Traci Foster from Listen to Dis' Community Arts Organization. Listen to Dis' is a Regina-based, disability-led arts organization with a strong history of cultural and recreational programming, disability audits, and consultation work around inclusion and access. John and Traci are both disabled artists themselves, and each has been

personally and professionally engaged in arts, culture, sport and/or recreation for many years. Their full preliminary report is attached (Appendix B).

Listen to Dis' facilitated 20 focus groups with a total of 50 participants throughout the month of July. Participants included a range of perspectives, including 34 who identified as having lived experience of disability, and the remainder as support systems and/or people who work in the recreation and leisure sector.

The Consultants' recommendations include:

- That the City explore and implement changes to communication strategies that reflect the barriers to entry disabled people are currently facing
- Additional funding to Paratransit to have more busses at more times, and to decrease the window of expected pickup, which was identified as a major barrier to accessing recreation and leisure opportunities
- That the City explore new programming options for the upcoming period that balance integrated and specialized programming
- That the City hire additional disabled staff and program providers, including funding for care and support staff of the participant's choosing
- That Council fund training for current staff and community to better meet the needs of those listed in the original motion

Engagement with Provincial and Federal Governments

Administration has met with the Government of Saskatchewan's Office of Disability Issues. They are aware of this and other accessibility-related work being conducted by the City. Administration is awaiting the release of the Province's forthcoming Accessibility Legislation. They do not currently have any funding opportunities related to recreation and leisure for people with disabilities.

Administration submitted an application to the Federal government's Enabling Accessibility Fund for \$1M toward accessibility-related upgrades to three of our neighbourhood centres and one leisure centre. Administration continues to explore other federal funding opportunities for future capital upgrades that will improve accessibility.

Recommendation Details

If the recommendations contained in this report are approved, the City will deliver new or expanded services for people with disabilities as follows:

Inclusion Support Program: \$145,000

- Inclusive Recreation Specialist (FTE) to provide one-on-one support to people with disabilities and their families to advise on recreation options and connect with programs and Inclusion Support Workers as needed. The addition of this expertise and labour would support the rollout of additional measures in future years.

- Adapted Program Specialist (0.5 FTE; top-up of existing 0.5 Adapted Recreation Specialist) to lead adaptations to existing programs and development of new programs according to the Adapted Recreation Plan.
- Inclusion Support Team – training and development of a team of Inclusion Support Workers who can act as attendants to people with disabilities in order to facilitate access to recreation and leisure activities
- In all of the above positions, Administration plans to respond to the Consultant recommendations around improving disability leadership within the City by prioritizing hiring people with lived experience of disability

Grants to community-based organizations: \$200,000 (annually)

- To continue the Adapted Sport & Recreation funding established in 2021, and support community-driven improvements to accessibility

Training for all existing recreation staff in disability and inclusion: \$30,000 (annually)

- To equip all recreation workers with the basic knowledge and tools to provide respectful, appropriate services to people with disabilities
- Including both practical training such as how to use accessible equipment and behavioral training such as communication and active listening

Application to the Government of Canada's Enabling Accessibility Fund

- Administration submitted this application in July, but will require Council approval in order to enter into an agreement if the funding is approved, as funding agreements of \$500,000 or more require approval from City Council
- The application is for a total of \$1,000,000 toward accessibility-related upgrades to entrances, washrooms and wayfinding at:
 - Cathedral Neighbourhood Centre
 - Core Ritchie Neighbourhood Centre
 - Glencairn Neighbourhood Centre
 - Sandra Schmirler Leisure Centre
- This project would greatly improve the physical accessibility of City facilities, employment opportunities, and both City and community programming that takes place in these facilities

Conclusion

These recommendations focus on what the City can do in 2022 to begin to make recreation and leisure more accessible in our city.

Pending 2022 budget approval, hiring several new positions to specifically focus on inclusive recreation will provide a necessary base of expertise and labour within the City to be able to guide and build additional accessibility measure in future years.

An immediate investment in training for recreation staff, pending 2022 budget approval, will ensure staff are better prepared to offer a safe and inclusive environment as the City works to expand programming options.

Investing in ongoing Adapted Sport and Recreation funding for community-based organizations acknowledges that the City is not the only local provider of recreation and leisure, and ensures the City is supporting improvements in accessibility across our community.

Consultations are ongoing and have already identified priorities that are not included in this report. Through ongoing engagement with the recreation and leisure sector, and the public survey, Administration anticipates additional recommendations and accompanying budget requests in the Final Report in Q1 of 2022.

DECISION HISTORY

On April 14, 2021, City Council directed Administration to conduct consultations and develop a plan to increase recreation and leisure activities for people with disabilities (MN21-2, Appendix A).

Respectfully submitted,

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Laurie Shalley, Director, Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services

9/8/2021



Diana Hawryluk, Executive Director, City Planning & Community Dev.

9/9/2021

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ATTACHMENTS

Appendix A - Council Motion April 21

Appendix B - Consultant Report