



2023 - 2025 City of Regina Leisure Fees

Date	September 21, 2022
To	Executive Committee
From	City Planning & Community Development
Service Area	Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services
Item No.	EX22-102

RECOMMENDATION

The Executive Committee recommends that City Council:

1. Approve the leisure fees and charges as outlined in Appendix A, Schedules A-I;
2. Delegate authority regarding fee discounts and distribution of passes to the Director of Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services as further described in this report;
3. Delegate authority regarding the Employee Leisure Discount Program to the City Manager or designate as further described in this report;
4. Approve the Affordable Fun Policy as outlined in Appendix D;
5. Instruct the City Solicitor to prepare the necessary bylaw changes to give effect to the recommendations described in this report, to be brought forward to the meeting of City Council following approval of these recommendations by City Council; and
6. Approve these recommendations at its meeting on September 28, 2022.

ISSUE

The City of Regina's fees for sport, culture, golf, and recreation facilities are renewed regularly to ensure stable cost recovery levels and equitable user fees. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and its

impact on recreation facilities, Administration has not brought forward an amendment to *The Community Services Fees Bylaw, 2011* (“the Bylaw”) since 2018, through which Council approved recreation fees through the end of 2020. Recreation services are now returning to near pre-pandemic levels and the costs of providing recreation services are increasing. As such, Administration is proposing an inflationary increase based on the Consumer and Municipal Price Indexes. The proposed increase will assist in maintaining cost recovery levels while ensuring that prices remain affordable for Regina residents. The Affordable Access and Employee Discount Programs are related to the Bylaw and changes to those programs are included for consideration.

IMPACTS

Accessibility Impact

The City of Regina (City) offers an Affordable Access Program for residents who experience financial barriers to accessing recreation programs. Amendments to this program are proposed in Appendix D.

Financial Impact

Implementation of the proposed fee schedules will result in approximately \$675,000 in new revenue over three years.

Policy and/or Strategic Impact

The recommendations support the *Recreation Master Plan*, the *Community Safety and Well-being Plan*, and the *Accessible Recreation Plan* by providing opportunities that aim to enhance the community well-being of all citizens by ensuring leisure fees set by the City are fair, equitable, and encourage participation for all ages and abilities.

The recommendations outlined in this report align with the City’s priority of improving financial sustainability by balancing community needs with cost to ensure residents have access to services at an affordable price while ensuring the services offered have cost recovery levels that are consistent with the benefits model.

OTHER OPTIONS

1. No Fee Increase

Keeping leisure fees unchanged from current levels, would keep prices fixed at a cost that is lower than inflation, decreasing cost recovery over time; however, this option would respond to the feedback heard from some user groups on the negative impact of COVID-19 on their organizations.

2. Higher Fee Increase

The proposed leisure fee increases strike a balance between cost recovery and ensuring financial accessibility for recreation services in line with the benefits model pricing principles; however, the

modest inflationary increase does not fully offset the rapid inflation that has occurred since April 2022 or recognize that no increase has occurred in recent years. An additional increase would help alleviate the additional operating costs associated with rapidly rising costs. Council could direct Administration to undertake additional work to propose new fees that achieve a higher cost recovery level. This approach would require further engagement with the community to assess the impacts on participation levels.

COMMUNICATIONS

Administration meets with user groups throughout the year to discuss numerous topics including leisure fees. The proposed changes were brought forward to user groups in early 2022, and there were no significant concerns raised regarding the current fee strategy. Upon approval of the Bylaw, Administration will ensure customers have advance notice of the leisure fee changes through the City's website, public notices at facilities, and direct communication with user groups. The implementation dates for the proposed increases will provide organizations and groups with adequate time to plan their programs and if necessary, adjust their fees to reflect the new City fees.

Once approved, updates and changes to the Affordable Fun Policy will be made available on Regina.ca and supported through the development and implementation of a communications strategy for the program.

DISCUSSION

2023-2025 Leisure Fees

The recommended leisure fee schedules are consistent with the guiding principles and pricing objectives previously approved by Council. Accordingly, the fee schedule associated with a particular facility or service area is determined by a market-based pricing strategy and/or cost-recovery-based pricing strategy. An overview of the benefits principle and cost recovery levels for the City of Regina's recreation facilities can be found in Appendix C.

Based on the Canadian Price Index (CPI) and Municipal Price Index (MPI) numbers provided to the City and increased operational costs post-pandemic, an inflationary increase of two per cent in 2023, and three per cent in both 2024 and 2025, is being recommended for the 2023-2025 leisure fees outlined in Schedules A-I of Appendix A. The proposed fee increase ensures cost recovery levels will remain relatively stable, customer impact will be minimized, and consistency with other providers and municipalities will be maintained.

Administration works with the Conference Board of Canada to calculate a respective Regina and City of Regina CPI and MPI annually. Since calculating these numbers in April 2022, inflation has risen significantly. While an additional increase to the leisure fee schedules in Appendix A would

improve cost recovery levels, Administration is recommending maintaining the moderate inflationary increase of two and three per cent between 2023 and 2025. A lower inflationary increase is better aligned with previous leisure fee schedules approved by Council and minimizes the impact on user groups and customers.

In developing the 2023-2025 leisure fees, a review of leisure fees from other recreation providers in Regina and other municipalities was conducted. The review indicated that the City's rates for leisure and rental fees were comparable to those charged by other major municipalities such as Saskatoon, Calgary, Edmonton, Winnipeg, Victoria, Sudbury, Thunder Bay, and London. It must be noted that direct comparisons with other local providers or regional municipalities are difficult due to the variety of amenities offered.

In addition to this inflationary increase, Administration is recommending several small changes as explained in Appendix B (these changes are reflected in Appendix A). These changes are intended to address:

- new facilities that will become available for use during the time period of the report;
- evolving operational practices/requirements;
- cost recovery levels;
- changes in the marketplace; and
- parity across user groups and facilities.

The proposed fee schedules associated with sport, culture, golf, and recreation facilities will begin to take effect on January 1, 2023. Different effective dates are utilized for different fee schedules to simplify the rental and cost estimation processes for user groups.

Affordable Access & Affordable Fun

For almost forty years, the City has assisted residents in accessing leisure services, and, since 1996, has had a specific strategy to assist residents who experience financial barriers to participate in sport, culture, and recreation programs and services through the Affordable Fun program. Originally called Leisure Access in 1986, the Affordable Fun program has undergone significant growth and changes over the years. The umbrella resident affordability program is called Affordable Access, which provides residents with both Affordable Fun and Affordable Transit through a single application.

As the City looks to implement the *Community Safety and Well-being Plan*, Administration is recommending the adoption of a formal Affordable Fun Policy which will balance the objectives of the current Affordable Fun program and overarching Affordable Access program with operational demands. The Affordable Fun Policy in Appendix D formalizes the existing program and proposes increasing the discounted rate offered under the program for Leisure Passes (from 50 per cent to 80

per cent), expanding the qualification criteria of Group Affordable Access for non-profit organizations that support the objectives of the *Community Safety and Well-being Plan*, and the introduction of discounted single admissions. Single admissions are not currently included in the Affordable Fun program, and their inclusion would further decrease the barriers to participation for low-income residents.

In addition to the Affordable Fun program, the City of Regina offers free swimming, skating, and drop-in children's programming throughout the year to ensure that all residents have access to recreation. The City's free recreation programming is targeted toward individuals, areas of the City, and communities that have traditionally experienced barriers to participation. In alignment with the Recreation Master Plan, *Community Safety and Well-being Plan*, and Accessible Recreation Plan, Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services has substantively increased its free programming over the past few years. Highlights of the City's free programming include Free Summer Kids Program, My Time, inclusive recreation programming (Adapted Leisure Swim, Adapted Group Swimming Lessons, Inclusive Dance Class, Adapted Sports Jam, etc), the summer 2022 free outdoor pool programming at Buffalo Meadows and Maple Leaf outdoor pools (Sports Clinics, Lifesaving Sport, Surprise and Swim, etc), and the City's 2021 and 2022 outdoor Winter programming (Snowshoeing, Storytelling, Hot Chocolate and Toboggan, etc). Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services is committed to providing all residents access to recreation by ensuring free programming remains a cornerstone of the City's recreation programming.

Bylaw Changes

Two edits to the body of the Bylaw are outlined in the following table:

Existing provision	Proposed provision	Explanation
The Director of Community Services is authorized to approve of and administer promotions designed to increase participation through fee discounts on leisure passes and admissions.	The Director of Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services is authorized to approve and administer fee discounts on leisure passes and admissions in connection with price promotions, community support, customer service, or other operational purpose.	Administration is requesting that the Director, of Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services authority be expanded, to be more inclusive, support the current <i>Community Safety and Well-being Plan</i> Plan outcomes, offer discounts for unforeseen operational reasons, and create more robust donation and pass practices that satisfy current community needs for both individuals and groups.

Existing provision	Proposed provision	Explanation
n/a Report CR07-83 introduced a pass discount for City Employees	The City Manager or designate is authorized to adopt or amend any policy in relation to or approve any contracts relevant to the City of Regina Employee Leisure Discount Program, including, but not limited to: making changes to the rate of discount, qualifying facilities, or extending the Program to employees of other City of Regina related entities.	In 2007, Regina City Council approved the creation of a Leisure Pass discount for City of Regina employees. The Employee Discount program was established outside of the scope of the leisure fees and charges strategy to derive the range of benefits realized by employers who offer employee wellness programs. Over the subsequent fifteen years, Administration has managed and made small adjustments to this program however this bylaw change is intended to clarify authority for making changes to the program.

DECISION HISTORY

At its meeting on May 28, 2007, City Council considered report CR07-83: Regina *in motion* and City of Regina Healthy Workplace Strategy and concurred in the recommendation contained within after amending #3 to read as follows:

“3. The City of Regina introduce a pass discount of 50% for City employees at City of Regina fitness and leisure facilities effective July 1, 2007”.

At its meeting on June 25, 2007, City Council approved guiding principles and pricing objectives (adopted as a statement of policy by the Parks and Community Services Committee) with respect to setting leisure services fees and charges. PCS 07-35 2008-2010 Leisure Services Fees & Charges: Guiding Principles & Pricing Objectives

At its meeting on June 25, 2018, City Council approved the 2018 - 2019 Community Services Fees and Charges still in effect today.

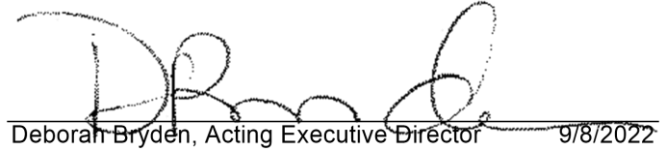
Respectfully Submitted,

Respectfully Submitted,



Laurie Shalley, Director, Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services

8/30/2022



Deborah Bryden, Acting Executive Director

9/8/2022

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ATTACHMENTS

- Appendix A - Leisure Fee Schedules
- Appendix B - Non-Inflationary Fee Schedule Changes
- Appendix C - Facility Revenue and Cost Recovery
- Appendix D - Affordable Fun Policy