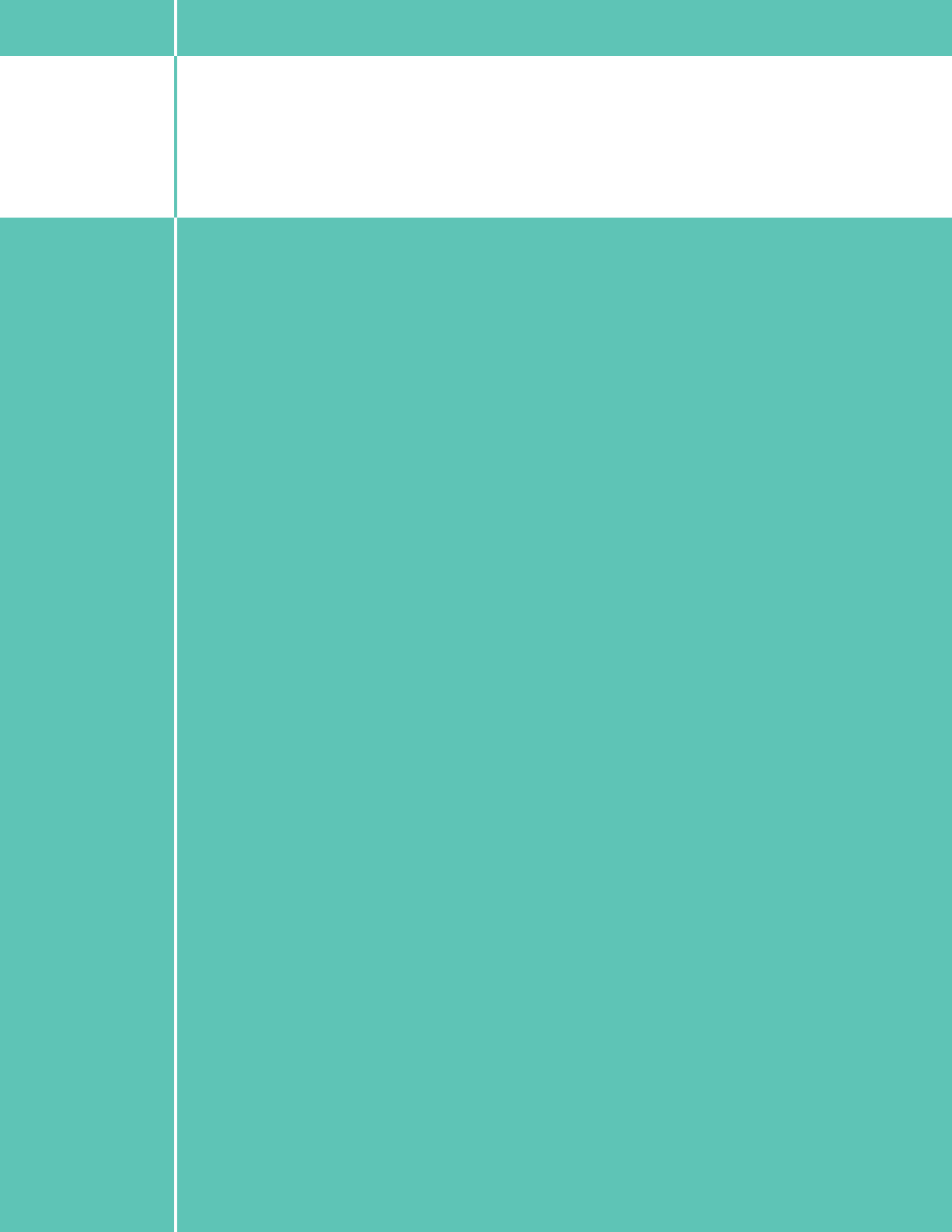




# Approach to Community Recreation Facility Planning in Edmonton

October 2018

Edmonton



# Acknowledgements

Thank you to everyone who contributed their time, ideas and expertise to the development of this approach. We are deeply appreciative of the many residents, groups, organizations and partners who shared their insight by participating in our public engagement activities over the course of the last two years. We are also sincerely thankful to the staff from across the City of Edmonton's administration who provided guidance and expertise throughout the development of this approach.

We respectfully acknowledge we are located on Treaty 6 territory, a traditional gathering place for diverse Indigenous peoples including the Cree, Blackfoot, Metis, Nakota Sioux, Dene, Inuit, and many others whose histories, languages and cultures continue to influence our vibrant community.

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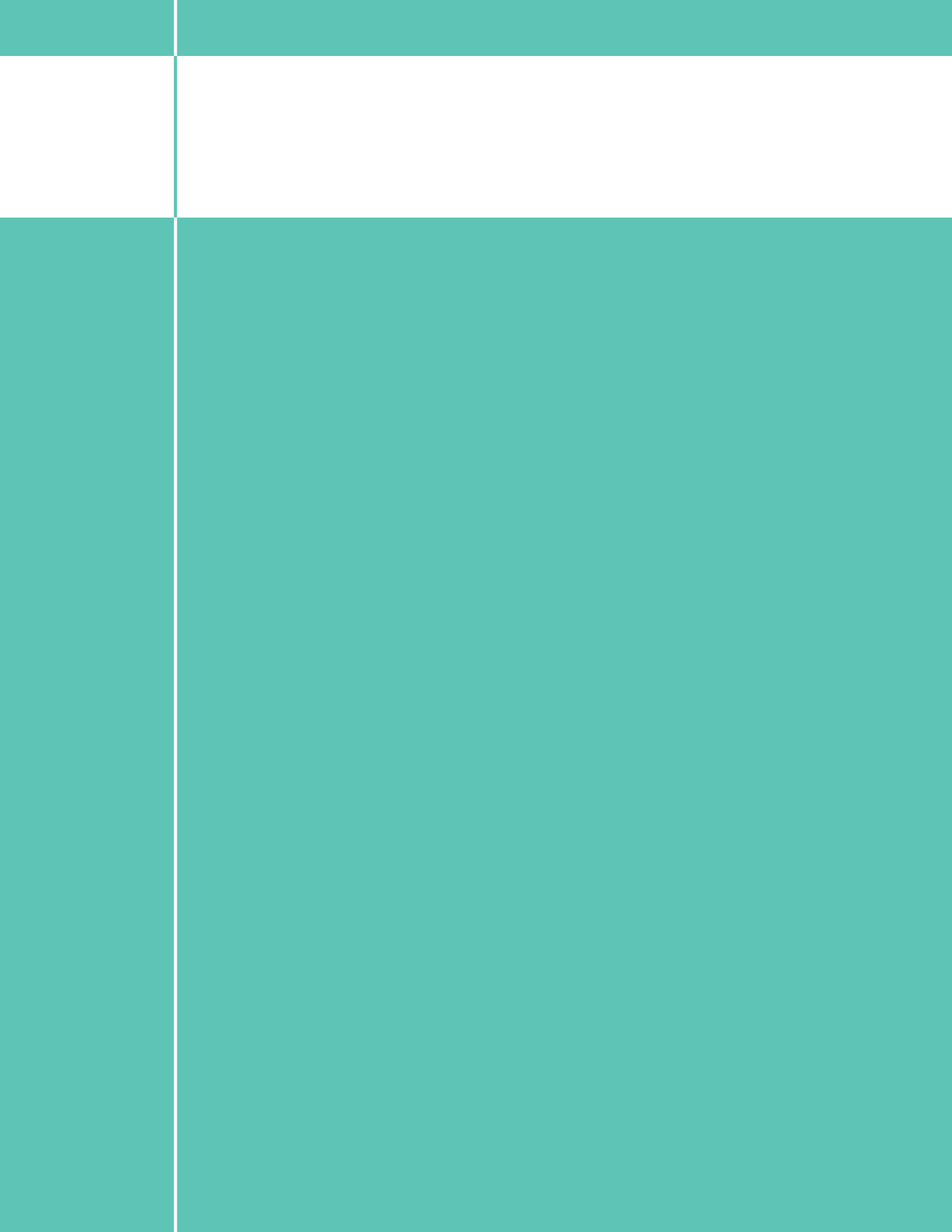
O2 Planning and Design

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# 01

## Executive Summary

Recreation is the experience that results from freely-chosen participation in physical, social, intellectual, creative, and spiritual pursuits that enhance individual and community well-being. The Approach to Community Recreation Facility Planning in Edmonton (“the Approach”) has been developed to ensure Edmontonians will have access to safe, welcoming places to socialize, be creative, play, learn, be active, and participate in desired sport or recreation activity.

The Approach to Community Recreation Facility Planning in Edmonton has evolved from the 2005-2015 Recreation Facility Master Plan. Compared to past plans, the 2005-2015 Recreation Facility Master Plan was intended to better address the needs of a broader resident market (including seniors, youth, and spontaneous users) and has been effective in doing so. The Approach builds upon the successes of the previous plan and should be considered more of a refinement rather than a significant departure from the previous plan. Many of the operating and design principles outlined in 2005 are still relevant today.

The Approach to Community Recreation Facility Planning in Edmonton is essential as it:

1. Provides a transparent way to plan, prioritize, and provide publicly-supported community recreation amenities,
2. Helps the City manage competing priorities,
3. Provides an objective tool for making strategic decisions to help guide assessment of the demand for and prioritization of recreation amenities and facilities, and
4. Presents an approach to balancing infrastructure renewal and growth.

City of Edmonton and partner indoor and outdoor public recreation and sport amenities considered in scope include:



### Indoor

- Gymnasiums
- Aquatics
- Turf fields
- Ice arenas
- Fitness centres
- Curling rinks



### Outdoor

- Rectangular fields
- Pools
- Ice amenities
- Ball diamonds
- Track and field



### Other Amenities

- Multi-purpose spaces supporting delivery of several programs and services as well as emerging recreation activities

Some amenities were not included in the scope of the Approach because they are either captured in other City plans or may be addressed in future plans.

## The Process

The Approach is in alignment with the City's broader strategic framework. The 2050 City Vision and 10-Year Strategic Goals are considered in the Approach. It is also influenced by broader provincial- and national-level policies and initiatives.

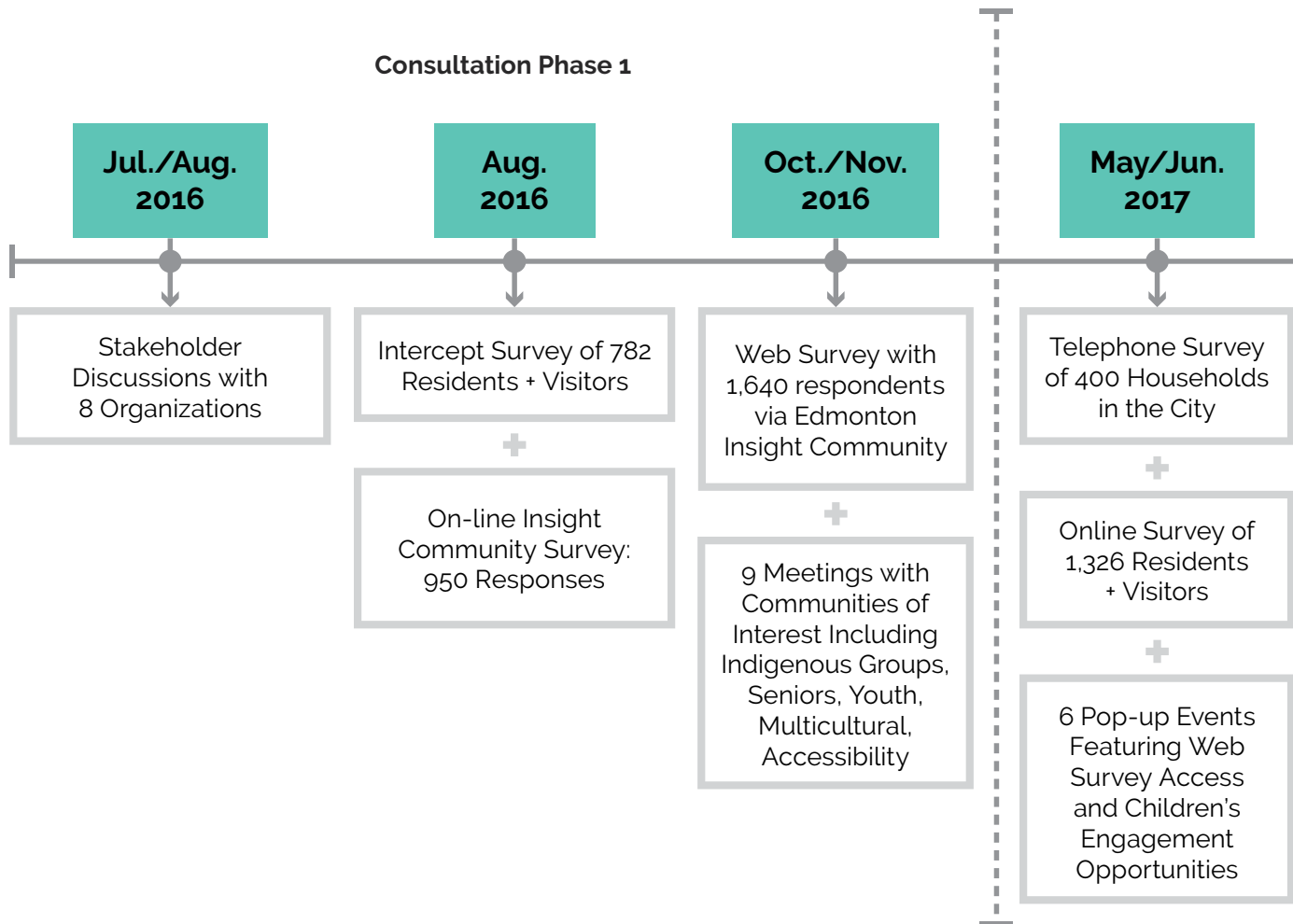
The Approach to Community Recreation Facility Planning in Edmonton was prepared using an evidence-based model for decision making.



The **Current State of Community and Recreation Facilities Report** provides insight into the current state of City-provided recreation services in Edmonton as well as the broader recreational landscape in the city, region, and beyond. This analysis also provides context on prior planning that has been undertaken by the City and identifies a number of broader planning influences, trends and leading practices important in the development of the Approach.

The **"What We Heard" Reports** provide the overview of the public engagement conducted for this project, and identifies what is important to residents, users, stakeholders, and partners.

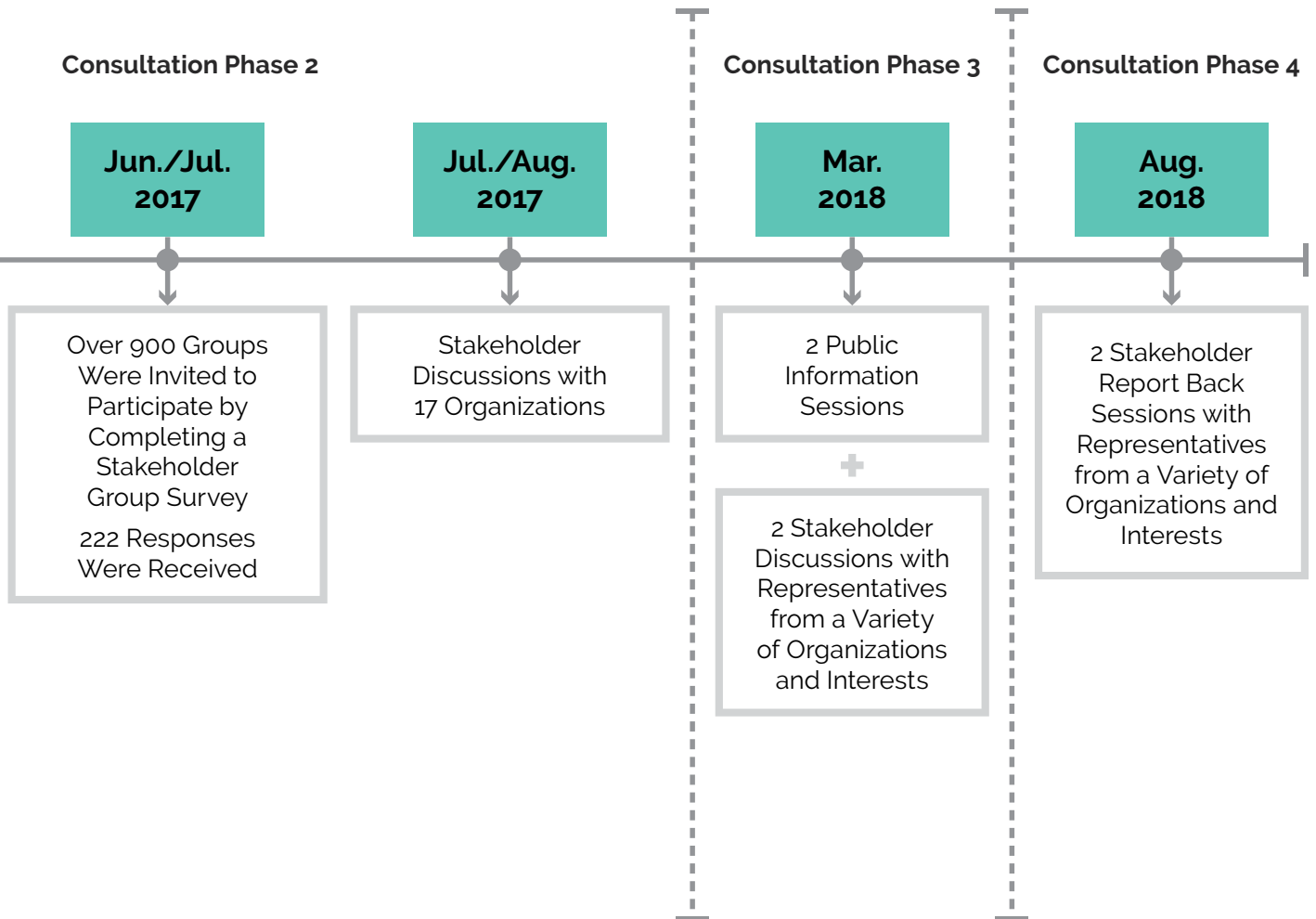
The **Facility Planning Method** was developed by considering the input from public engagement. It has also considered current and expected future market conditions in the city, region, province, and country. The Facility Planning Method is founded in a vision, goals, and set of guiding principles that explain why and how the City invests in community recreation facilities.





The Facility Planning Method was applied to help develop the **Community and Recreation Facility Needs Assessment and Gap Analysis**. Inputs were considered for each of the in-scope community recreation amenities which were scored and prioritized using the prioritization criteria outlined in the Facility Planning Method. In essence, the Facility Planning Method applies the many inputs delineated above to help guide decisions around future development of and investment in the City's recreation facilities. The outputs of the Facility Planning Method (e.g. ranking of amenities) were considered in the development of the Approach.

Four distinct consultation phases (shown below) were undertaken to let Edmontonians and other stakeholders provide input into the creation of the initial draft of the Approach. Between 2016 and 2018, the project team engaged with more than 7,000 citizens during these phases of public engagement. Feedback from Edmonton's residents, community organizations, and community stakeholders helped to inform the Approach. The opinions and input of key recreation service delivery partners of the City, other levels of government, regional municipalities and other important stakeholders have also influenced the Approach.



## What Drives This Plan

The Approach to Community Recreation Planning in Edmonton is designed to accommodate recreation trends, demographic shifts, and regional considerations. It recognizes that new demands on recreation amenities emerge and need to be incorporated into the City's recreation facilities. The significant changes and needs that influence service delivery of community recreation facilities include:

- Continued growth of Edmonton, including population growth in mature neighbourhoods,
- The demand for non-traditional activities,
- The need for social connectedness,
- Greater support for accessible environments that support physical literacy,
- Opportunity for partnerships,
- The need for regional integration, and
- Aging facilities that may no longer meet community needs.

## Strategic Direction

The Approach is guided by a core set of principles and is driven by amenity priorities and strategic directions that provide insight as to what types of amenities should be planned and designed and how they should be operated, maintained, and animated in the future. These strategies, along with a basic commitment to citizens, provide a city-wide perspective related to future development of new community recreation facilities as well as reinvestment in existing community recreation facilities. Beyond direction related to capital investment in new and existing community recreation facilities, the Approach also provides recommendations related to the animating of these essential public places. As decisions are considered regarding the next investment or reinvestment in facilities and their animation, this direction needs to be supplemented with input and research related to the local areas around a new or existing facility and/or site master planning and associated capital project business case assessment for renewal or growth projects.

The development of the Approach to Community Recreation Facility Planning in Edmonton has been based on thorough public and stakeholder engagement, sound research, and extensive existing planning and documentation already in place for the City and its partners. The process has started a dialog with the public and groups which the City intends to continue and revisit. As new information becomes available, the Approach will be able to adapt and adjust to make sure public investment is optimized and community benefit from these essential and vibrant community places can be maximized.



## Purpose

The Approach to Community Recreation Facility Planning in Edmonton is the City's overarching plan to meet community recreation facility needs. The Approach outlines specific strategic action related to existing or future community recreation facilities and amenities, as well as provides an overall philosophic direction associated with the provision of recreation opportunities in the city. This level of strategic planning is critical as Edmonton continues to grow, diversify, and ready itself to become a city of two million people by 2050. The Approach ensures a common roadmap exists to guide decision making and other future planning activities.

As community recreation facilities are essential to the social fabric of Edmonton, planning for their future provision is a vital function of the City; strategic planning ensures that public investment in community recreation facilities is optimized and community benefit is maximized.

The Approach also provides recommendations and direction related to:

- The development of new facilities in the city as well as direction pertaining to the growth and renewal of existing community recreation facilities.
- How the City and its partners can sustain and enhance the animation of community recreation facilities and the amenities within them to optimize benefits for the investment made.
- The frameworks, tools, and systems the City needs to navigate the future of community recreation facility provision based on prevailing and emerging recreation market conditions. These include:
  - » The City's basic commitment<sup>1</sup>: explaining what types of opportunities the City, along with its partners and others, should strive to provide Edmontonians,
  - » Amenity strategy development: providing high-level guidance for each of the specific amenities the City supports,
  - » Partnerships: describing how the City currently, and will continue to, partner with other groups to advance common goals and to provide opportunities, and
  - » Project development and delivery: explaining how the City will approach more tactical planning related to capital projects (new or renewal of existing).

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<sup>1</sup> The basic commitment is intended to provide residents access to indoor and outdoor recreation opportunities that are fundamental to physical literacy (see Chapter 3: The Facility Planning Method).

# Methodology



It is important to note that the Approach to Community Recreation Facility Planning in Edmonton is based upon 2018 market conditions. Although the Approach outlines a course of action for the future, the inputs used to inform strategic action should be revisited periodically and may lead to an adjustment.



# Desired Outcomes

The Approach to Community Recreation Facility Planning in Edmonton has evolved from the 2005-2015 Recreation Facility Master Plan, and associated updates and strategies. The Approach builds upon the successes of the previous plan with a slightly different scope and mandate. The main revisions in the Approach when compared to the earlier version include:

## The Previous Plan...

- Included major speciality facilities such as the Edmonton Valley Zoo and Fort Edmonton Park as a part of its scope.
- Provided some direction on the animation of community recreation facilities.
- Focused more on physical recreation facility infrastructure.

## The New Approach...

- Provides a vision statement and two goals that better articulate the City's strategic intent in providing community recreation facilities.
- Enriches in scope and consolidates principles for design and operations to help react to existing and emerging market conditions.
- Provides an approach to balancing infrastructure renewal and growth through the Facility Planning Method.
- Emphasizes a focus on Edmonton's recreation network through a basic commitment for all citizens.
- Provides an objective tool for making strategic decisions to help guide assessment of the demand for and prioritization of recreation amenities and facilities.
- Does not include speciality facilities.

The 2005-2015 Recreation Facility Master Plan was a roadmap that led to a significant shift in how the City of Edmonton provided community recreation facilities. It led to the development of flagship district recreation centres such as Clareview Community Recreation Centre, Terwillegar Community Recreation Centre, The Meadows Community Recreation Centre, Commonwealth Community Recreation Centre, Coronation Recreation Centre (pending funding) and Lewis Farms Community Recreation Centre (pending funding), as well as significant renewal in a number of other recreation facilities in the city. This substantive investment in community recreation infrastructure reflected the principles established in the master plan. This investment also shifted recreation provision in Edmonton to a new era of multi-purpose service provision that focused on a balanced combination of spontaneous (unstructured) and structured (scheduled) recreation opportunities.

Compared to past plans and strategies, the 2005-2015 Recreation Facility Master Plan was intended to better address the needs of a broader resident market (including seniors, youth, and spontaneous users) and has been effective in doing so.

The Approach to Community Recreation Facility Planning in Edmonton builds upon the successes of the previous plan. As such, the Approach should be considered more of a refinement rather than a significant departure from the previous plan. Many of the operating and design principles outlined in 2005 are still pertinent today.

## Indicators of Success

Through a review of the current state of community recreation facilities in Edmonton and region, several critical external and internal factors (not presented in rank order) influenced development of the Facility Planning Method (Chapter 3). These drivers will continue to shape the long-term direction for recreation spaces and places in Edmonton:

- **Community Needs of Mature Neighbourhoods:** Addressing the needs of growing populations in the city's mature neighbourhoods involves different dynamics such as population density, land availability, and citizen diversity. In addition, it requires a different approach than the development of previously undeveloped sites or new neighbourhood development. The Facility Planning Method must also take into account the different needs and preferences of residents living in higher density mature neighbourhoods.
- **New Non-Traditional Activities:** Building upon the multi-purpose facility concept to include more flexibility to accommodate non-traditional activities.
- **Social Connectivity:** Being more intentional about creating community hubs by ensuring amenities promote social connection and gathering opportunities.
- **Greater Support for Physical Literacy:** Building upon the benefits-based rationale and accepted leading practices, such as Canadian Sport for Life, to make sure key environments that support physical literacy are reasonably accessible to residents and that users of facilities are doing so appropriately.
- **Proactive Partnerships:** Building upon the approach presented in this document, outlining ways the City can partner to further the City's strategic priorities that go beyond being approached with opportunities.
- **Regional Integration:** Considering the regional context more deliberately to leverage public investment and provide enhanced services while recognizing that residents in the broader region are accessing opportunities across jurisdictional boundaries.
- **Aging Infrastructure:** Understanding that new facilities will need to be built to respond to growth, but aging facilities also need to be replaced, repurposed, consolidated, or reinvested in. Aging infrastructure may also need to be closed when the need no longer exists or the basic commitment is addressed via other amenities. These decisions will need to occur with maximum clarity, structure, and rationale.



# Strategic Pathway

## Vision

The City of Edmonton will approach recreation from a holistic and sustainable perspective to address the broad continuum of community recreation needs required by citizens.

Edmontonians will have access to safe, welcoming places to:

- Socialize,
- Be creative,
- Play,
- Learn and develop physical literacy,
- Be active and exercise,
- Build community, and
- Participate in and/or excel in their desired sport or recreation activity.

## Mission

Using a community building approach, rooted in relationships and partnerships with organizations and communities, we work to ensure citizens have a variety of recreation programs to meet their needs.

## Goals



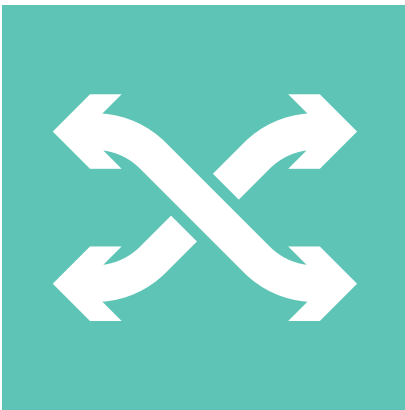
## Guiding Principles

The following principles, listed in no particular order on the following pages, integrate facility planning with programming, financing, and operations. These principles build upon the 2005-2015 Recreation Facility Master Plan principles and incorporate input received during the public engagement and research process for the Approach for Community Recreation Facility Planning in Edmonton. The principles are the lenses by which community recreation facilities and amenities are to be shaped and influenced. They work together to ensure the City's network of recreation facilities, programs and services best serve all Edmontonians.



### **Community Recreation Facilities are Essential to Quality of Life**

Community recreation facilities are essential to the enhancement of quality of life for Edmontonians and visitors alike. These valued public places energize Edmonton and facilitate healthier, more connected residents and communities. These spaces capture and reflect Edmonton's spirit.



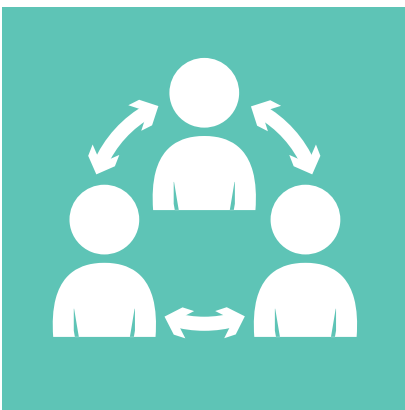
### **Community Recreation Facilities are Flexible**

Community recreation facilities will be designed and programmed to be dynamic and flexible, with the ability to adapt to evolving needs, changing user preferences as well as neighbourhood demographics. Where possible, community recreation facilities and the amenities within them will be planned, designed, operated, maintained, and animated to be multi-purpose and adaptable, while still meeting specific user needs. This concept extends to support areas such as public lobby areas and other spaces that can also be used for multiple purposes. This notion will ensure optimal use of public resources and enhance the City's ability to meet future, undetermined community need.



### **Access to Community Recreation Facilities is Equitable**

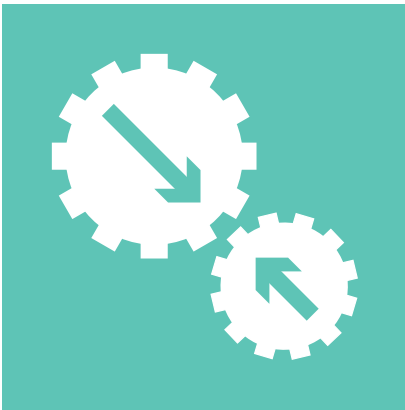
All Edmontonians will have reasonable and equitable access to community recreation facilities. The City of Edmonton will reduce barriers to community recreation facilities, services, and programs.



### **The Provision and Animation of Community Recreation Facilities is a Collaborative Effort**

The City of Edmonton is one of many players in the delivery of community recreation facilities. The City will collaborate and plan with other partners to ensure offerings of services are as complete as possible. The City's tax-supported resources will focus on basic levels of services (e.g. fundamental activities, physical literacy, basic skill levels and social opportunities). Where appropriate and where interests align, the City will explore and capitalize on options to form deliberate and effective partnerships with agencies such as educational authorities, health and social service agencies, other orders of government, community organizations, private operators, and others. In turn, the City will be able to leverage its resources and broaden the benefits that can be publicly delivered through community recreation facilities, programs, and services.





### **Community Recreation Facilities are Integrated**

Where possible, community recreation amenities will be clustered together into multi-purpose service centres. These facilities will be integrated with other arts and cultural spaces, educational spaces, age-friendly spaces, and any other public services with shared mandates or community hubs that enable service effectiveness and efficiencies. Community recreation facilities will be planned and located to integrate with the community, urban form, and the transportation and parks networks throughout the city. All of the City's community recreation facilities are part of a coordinated and complementary system. As a result, these facilities are planned, designed, operated, maintained, and animated within an overarching network and life cycle. As specific community recreation facilities are sustained, enhanced, or closed, and as new ones are developed, the goals of the system are advanced.



### **Community Recreation Facilities are Distributed Throughout the City and Region**

Community recreation facilities will be provided at different levels of facilities and include a varying scope of amenities to achieve strategic intentions and address base levels of service for residents at the metropolitan (city-wide) level, district level, and the neighbourhood level.



### **Community Recreation Facilities are Inclusive**

Community recreation facilities will be planned, designed, operated, maintained, and animated utilizing principles of human-centred and universal design. This will enable facilities to be as inclusive, equitable, safe, and accessible as possible to all people regardless of age, gender, gender expression, gender identity, physical or mental ability, family status, ancestry or place of origin, ethnicity, race, religion, their recreational preferences, levels of ability, special needs, or financial resources. In this way, the City will ensure these facilities are for all.



### **Community Recreation Facilities are Sustainable**

The City and its partners will strive to plan, design, operate, maintain, and animate community recreation facilities to be as flexible and adaptable as possible to evolving community, sport, recreation, and well-being needs. This will include being as environmentally, fiscally, and socially sustainable and resilient as possible throughout their functional life spans. The inclusion of multiple and different spaces to achieve economies of scale will lead to enhanced financial sustainability, as will renewal in or closure of aging facilities that have reached the end of their life cycle. Community recreation facilities will establish, implement, and maintain sustainable building practices over the course of their entire life cycle in alignment with City policies and practices.



### **Citizens and Stakeholders are Engaged in the Planning and Provision of Community Recreation Facilities**

Community and stakeholder engagement is vital to community recreation facility relevance, planning, ongoing services, programs, operations, and performance measurement. Ensuring that all residents are aware of opportunities to visit and use community recreation facilities and that they remain engaged once their interests are captured is key to achieving maximum benefit. Accomplishing this can only be done through effective engagement, public communication, promotions, and marketing efforts. Community recreation facilities will be responsive to the evolving needs of citizens to remain relevant and appealing. Community recreation programs and services will incorporate the spectrum of public engagement commitments expressed by the City through related policies, practices, and engagement with the community.



### **Community Recreation Facilities are of Quality**

The City and its partners will provide quality services and experiences in community recreation facilities, including the provision of places that are safe, relevant, aesthetically pleasing, and that meet user needs. Community recreation facilities are places that residents take pride in. Quality customer service at community recreation facilities is important to the overall user and visitor experience.



### **Community Recreation Facilities are Aligned with Broader City Objectives**

Community recreation facilities will be planned, designed, operated, maintained, and animated in alignment with other City, regional, provincial, and national policies, protocols, and initiatives, including Calls to Action arising from the Truth and Reconciliation effort.



### **Community Recreation Facilities are Animated**

Community recreation facilities are animated (passively and actively) through the efforts of volunteers, community organizations, private contractors, City staff, citizens, and other community stakeholders. Activity in community recreation facilities enables users to be healthy, active, creative, and to connect with each other. Community recreation facilities provide recreation opportunities both indoors and outdoors, regardless of the season.

## Application of Guiding Principles

These principles can be applied to investment and effort of the City related to community recreation facilities in a variety of different ways. The relevance of these principles to different aspects of community recreation facility planning, design, operations, maintenance, and animation are outlined as follows.

Principle	Planning	Design	Operations	Maintenance	Animation
1. Essential to Quality of Life	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
2. Flexible	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
3. Equitable	✓	✓	✓		✓
4. Collaborative	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
5. Integrated	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
6. Distributed	✓	✓	✓		✓
7. Inclusive	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
8. Sustainable	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
9. Engaging	✓	✓	✓		✓
10. Quality	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
11. Aligned	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
12. Animated	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓



## Scope

The City is involved in the provision of a variety of different types of community recreation amenities that enable different types of recreation activities to occur. Community recreation amenities are made available to residents and visitors in the city via the effort and investment of many service providers. The City of Edmonton plays a leadership role in the provision of some amenities while it partners with groups and organizations in the provision of others. There are also amenities the City has no role in the provision of. City and partner indoor and outdoor public recreation and sport amenities considered within the scope of the Approach include<sup>2</sup>:

- Indoor gymnasiums,
- Indoor aquatics,
- Indoor turf fields,
- Indoor ice arenas,
- Indoor fitness centres,
- Indoor curling rinks,
- Outdoor rectangular fields,
- Outdoor pools,
- Outdoor ice,
- Outdoor ball diamonds,
- Outdoor track and field, and
- Multi-purpose spaces supporting delivery of several programs and services as well as emerging recreation activities.

It is important to note that there are other community recreation amenities supported by the City that are not in the scope of the Approach. These other amenities are still important and are either captured in other City plans or may be addressed in future plans.

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<sup>2</sup> Some examples of amenities that were not included include: outdoor spaces (e.g. basketball courts, spray parks, playgrounds, skate parks, etc.), youth centres, senior Centres, community league halls, cultural centres, ski hills, velodromes, golf courses, outdoor tennis courts, attractions (i.e. Fort Edmonton Park, Edmonton Valley Zoo, John Janzen Nature Centre, Muttart Conservatory), cricket fields, etc.



## Alignment to Other Strategies / Plans / Policies

The Approach and the associated research and engagement aligns with the City's broader strategic framework and related plans and policies. It is also influenced by broader provincial- and national-level policies and initiatives. The following delineates a number of these key strategic directives and how they influence the Approach:

### 2050 City Vision and City Council's 10-Year Strategic Goals

In June 2018, City Council approved components of the strategic plan for 2019 to 2028. These included a 10-year principle that guides decision making for the term of the plan and four 10-year strategic goals to facilitate progress towards the Vision.

*Principle - Connected:*

- We create as a community to connect people to what matters to them.
- We care about the impact of our actions on our social, economic, cultural, spiritual, and environmental systems.
- We serve those here today and those who come after us.

The figure below shows the four goals for City Council's strategic plan.



To deliver on City Council's strategic plan, Administration is developing a four-year corporate business plan which will outline the key work and initiatives to be undertaken over the 2019 to 2022 period to help achieve City Council's goals. The corporate business plan sets the direction for each department's business plan priorities which are translated into tactical action plans.

The Approach aligns with the City's strategic goals and will ensure that its direction supports each one. Through its vision, mission, and goals, the Approach will contribute to building a 'Healthy City'. Its focus on multi-purpose facilities, geographic accessibility, and a basic commitment to residents in the provision of recreation opportunities will support the goal of 'Urban Places' through infrastructure that enables healthy living. Finally, by exploring partnerships and regional opportunities, the Approach will be able to influence 'Regional Prosperity'.

## City Plan

The goal of the City Plan project is threefold: develop a new City Plan (combined Municipal Development Plan and Transportation Master Plan), develop a city-wide planning framework to ensure implementation is achieved through efficient and effective planning services, and create a city-building narrative and activation that underpins both internal and external storytelling reflective of a move to a city of two million people. These three deliverables will reflect and interpret the direction of Edmonton's new strategic plan and Vision 2050, creating the conditions for successful short-term roll-out and long-term sustainability.

The Approach and the investment in new and existing facilities must reflect the direction established by the City Plan to ensure vibrant, complete, and livable neighbourhoods, support appropriate density and diversity in the built form, design appropriate and accessible infrastructure, ensure protection of ecologically and culturally sensitive lands, integrate networks, and establish priorities in a growing city.

## Breathe

Breathe is the overarching strategic plan for all of the City's outdoor land and water that is publicly-owned and/or publicly-accessible, including many spaces that are adjacent to in-scope recreational facilities.

Through its basic commitment, the Approach supports the wellness component of the green network. It establishes broadly-distributed sporting amenities that support a high-quality recreation and active living network provision throughout the city (distribution approach aligned with the open space accessibility target of 400 metres / 10 minutes walking distance established by Breathe). According to Breathe, district parks are designed to meet the needs of multiple communities, such as a city quadrant or collection of neighbourhoods under an area structure plan. They may be more specialized than community parks, but also may provide multi-functional amenities. As Breathe is implemented, parkland in developing neighbourhoods will continue to be set aside for recreation facilities as a part of the area structure plan process. Supply and functionality of open space will be assessed in developed neighbourhoods to ensure community needs for open space continue to be met.



## Live Active

Live Active - A Collaborative Strategy for Active Living, Active Recreation and Sport in Edmonton 2016-2026 envisions a future in which all Edmontonians develop an appreciation for the benefits of active living, active recreation and sport. Working together, the City, partners and citizens can bring Live Active to life. The strategy helps to guide policy and decision making by the City, Edmonton Sport Council and Live Active partners and stakeholders in Edmonton.

The City's Live Active Strategy was approved by City Council in 2016, and is a key policy document and a leading practice for the strategic delivery of comprehensive and balanced active living, active recreation, and sport opportunities in Edmonton. In order to realize the vision of the Live Active Strategy, priority for its implementation has been focused on children up to 12 years old and those populations who face the most barriers to being physically active through a cross-sector approach. In addition, the strategy increases the importance of awareness and the opportunities for all Edmontonians to be physically active throughout their lives. Live Active challenges all involved to consider a physical activity lens in all aspects of decision making from policy to program and the built and natural environment.

Live Active supports Edmontonians in living active, where making an active choice is the easy choice at home, work, school, and at play. The Approach outlines how the City will animate community recreation facilities and maximize use at publicly-funded community recreation facilities. Furthermore, in order to do so, the facilities must include appropriate, accessible environments that are known to potential users who choose to participate.

## Asset Management Framework and Infrastructure Strategy

The purpose of the Infrastructure Strategy is to set out an agreed path forward for infrastructure asset management that is aligned with City Council's vision and corporate strategic plans and to set out the mandate for asset management processes for the City. Through the Infrastructure Strategy, the City is moving forward in better integrating asset management and sustainability efforts to improve the connection between investment decisions, level of service commitments to citizens, and sustainable outcomes for communities.

How the City's assets are managed and operated plays a key role in achieving the City's strategic goals and objectives. The Approach defines a long-term path for investment in new assets (facilities) and the renewal and modernization of existing facilities. This investment must reflect the path established by the Infrastructure Strategy for effective asset prioritization and management.



## Capital Planning

The City's overarching asset management practices provide indications as to when renewal investment is triggered for existing assets. These triggers are dependent on the type of asset in the City's inventory as well as a variety of factors including, but not limited to, demand, functionality, and alignment with broader strategic direction. These factors are articulated in City Policy C598 - Infrastructure Asset Management and the Infrastructure Strategy.

As the City reinvests in existing community recreation facilities, it must decide whether to replace existing assets with more of the same (but to a modern standard), repurpose, upgrade, or consolidate existing assets, or close existing assets. A combination of these actions will be required to maintain the City's overall community recreation facility system.

The Approach outlines how City Policy C591 - Capital Project Governance and the Project Development and Delivery Model steer capital project planning and prioritization that applies to both City-driven projects as well as those presented to the City by potential partners. The full process is outlined in Chapter 3: The Facility Planning Method.

## Land Base

Edmonton has an excellent overall green network which is necessary to support the full scope of City services, including the provision of recreational facility development. While some neighbourhoods have a better supply and more diverse opportunities than others, there are many reasons why this might be the case: some neighbourhoods were developed before the City created parkland standards and some neighbourhoods have a larger or smaller population than others. Providing enough open space to meet recreation and other City services incorporates several criteria that acknowledge functionality as a key component of green network value:

- Distribution: the arrangement of open spaces across the landscape.
- Quality: the functionality of an open space, considering the condition of its infrastructure/amenities and the value of the functions it provides.
- Diversity: the arrangement of different open space types and functions across the landscape.
- Quantity of supply: the physical amount of open space available.

When new facilities are planned in developing and urban growth areas, the accumulation of tracts of land large enough for facility development occurs through a combination of municipal reserve dedication via the area structure plan process as well as formal land acquisition (purchase or swap) by the City. For areas in the central core and mature and established neighbourhoods, opportunities to develop needed recreational facilities will be pursued on land holdings within the City inventory through direct purchase or by agreement with partners such as the school boards through the Joint Use Agreement.

When planning for open space requirements to meet recreational needs, the City will utilize tools such as parkland impact assessments, community needs assessments, land acquisition strategies, and development guidelines. By ensuring that suitable land is set aside early in the planning process, the strategic direction of the Approach will be supported. Furthermore, when appropriate, the Approach supports efficient use of land through consideration of regional assets, greyfield redevelopment, and transit-oriented development.





## Art of Living

The objective of the Art of Living Plan is to promote Edmonton as an arts and cultural centre and encourage recreational, cultural, artistic, and entertainment opportunities for all residents. The Art of Living Plan calls for recreation centres to include space for arts activities.

This approach to planning recreation facilities recommends the provision of large indoor multi-purpose social/activity spaces within larger multi-purpose centres to accommodate a variety of different types of activities and social functions including opportunities for the performing arts. Further, the Art of Living, the Approach to Community Recreation Facility Planning in Edmonton, and Breathe collectively provide long-term strategic direction governing the suite of recreation opportunities in Edmonton and provide guidance on the City's response to the diversity of recreation and wellness opportunities available for all citizens.

## Community Hubs

A community hub can be a unique reflection of the needs of a community and its assets. Although there are numerous definitions for community hubs, the working definition the City focuses on is:

*A community hub is an accessible amenity encouraging social gatherings that strengthen citizens' sense of place and connectedness and that appeals to, and brings together, diverse groups of community members.*

The City defines a community hub as:

- An accessible amenity such as a multi-purpose building, a venue, or a vibrant community space, such as a plaza, green space, or street.
- Encourages social gatherings and provide spaces for people to congregate and connect in both planned and spontaneous ways.

The City's recreation facilities and amenities are designed to become community hubs; spaces that invite all citizens to gather, share, learn, and recreate.

## WinterCity Strategy

Climate is a significant factor that influences recreation preferences and facility demands in northern cities like Edmonton. The WinterCity Strategy is a call to action to embrace winter. The WinterCity Strategy intends to transform Edmonton into a more inviting, vibrant, and prosperous place for residents, business, industry, and tourists throughout the winter months, while still being true to its heritage and connection to nature and the environment. The WinterCity Strategy is the blueprint for changing the City's collective story about winter; the narrative woven into how Edmontonians talk about it in their everyday lives. The WinterCity Strategy applies innovative, fun and interesting approaches to challenge existing stereotypes of winter as cold, dull and dangerous.

The Approach focuses on physical infrastructure and how this infrastructure is utilized, programmed, and animated to support use in all seasons. More specifically, the Approach provides guidance that ensures recreation facilities are animated throughout all seasons to help provide recreation opportunities and enable participation.



The Approach supports and informs many other strategies and plans that influence how community recreation facilities are planned, designed, maintained, operated, and animated. These strategies and plans include: Age Friendly Edmonton, Child Friendly Edmonton, Indigenous Framework, EndPovertyEdmonton, City Policy C463 - Accessibility to City of Edmonton Owned and Occupied Buildings Policy, City Policy C466 - Integration of Persons with Disabilities Policy, and many more.

## Current State Summary

The City of Edmonton completed a thorough current state report for this plan, with insight into the current state of City provided recreation services in Edmonton as well as the broader recreational landscape in the city, region, and beyond. This section summarizes the key indicators from available research and other data sources that provide some insight into current community dynamics and potential indicators that will influence recreation needs and preferences. For this report, 2018 is considered "current state."

The implications of these community dynamics for the Approach include the following:

- The population in the region is expected to continue to grow. The Approach will strive to meet the recreation and sport needs of all Edmontonians,
- There will be an increased need for recreational amenities, programs, and services to address the unique needs of a growing diverse population (e.g. specifically Indigenous residents and immigrants from outside of Europe and North America), as well as seniors,
- There is an increased need for recreational amenities, programs, and services to address the needs of non-traditional family households (those with two or fewer people living in them, single parents, multi-generational, etc.), and
- The City of Edmonton has a disproportionately high rate of low-income residents in mature neighbourhoods around downtown compared to the suburban communities, making access to recreation increasingly important for residents in some these neighbourhoods.



## Leading Practices and Trends in Recreation and Sport

Trends in recreation services (facilities and programming) are continuously evolving and require providers to remain current on activity preferences, societal shifts, and other factors that impact demand. Concerning leading practices and trends in recreation and sport, some key findings and recommendations from the report include:

- **Low physical activity among children and youth** (5 to 17 years) is an opportunity area that can help increase participation in recreation and an opportunity to expand our market share by tailoring programming, facility design or improving accessibility.
- While many structured or organized activities remain important, there is an **increasing demand for more flexibility in timing and activity choice**. People are seeking individualized, informal pursuits that can be done alone or in small groups, at flexible times, often near or at home. This trend suggests that ensuring adequate, spontaneous opportunities for recreation are available is as important as planning for traditional structured programming.
- Recreation consumers in Edmonton have a **variety of interests and motivations and demand more tailored activities**. Therefore, it is essential for facilities to increasingly adapt to changing interests and activity preferences in recreation provision.
- The City continues to hold a prominent place in service provision within the recreation facility market; however, the **market share held by the private sector is significant and growing**. Partnership opportunities with the private sector and community organizations, where appropriate or where interests align, can be seen as mutually beneficial. Other potential opportunities can be found through spaces that are dedicated-use spaces and thus competitive in the private sector (e.g. yoga studio/space).
- As Edmonton continues to grow and evolve, there will be continued **demand for inclusive recreational and leisure opportunities** that reflect an increasingly multicultural and diverse city.
- **Time constraints, cost, lack of interest/motivation, health, and location/transportation are common barriers** to recreation participation in Edmonton. Using a combination of direct and indirect recreation provision, partner organizations, facility design, site locations, and a variety of amenities, services, and subsidy programs all help reduce barriers to recreation.
- **Older adult populations are diverse with evolving needs**, attitudes, and preferences. This intricate need may require a balance of provision of dedicated facilities with those that are intended to be intergenerational.

For a complete analysis of leading recreation practices and trends, please refer to Appendix C: Leading Practices and Trends.



## Identified Opportunities, Challenges and Gaps

The following list is a summary of key opportunities/challenges and considerations for the strategic direction that have been identified through research and trends impacting the recreation provision in Edmonton.

### Multi-purpose Community Recreation Centres

Based on current trends, the City is in a position to continue to take advantage of opportunities to serve the greatest number of citizens through a wide range of programming and animation strategies.

Supporting Trends:



### Geographic Accessibility

Based on the current analysis, gaps in provision will exist in the urban growth and developing areas (e.g. outer edges) of the city and in areas with increasing population density (i.e. downtown).

Supporting Trends:



## Renewal in Aging Facilities

Based on the current trends, there is support for the City's facilities to be continually enhanced to ensure facilities meet a basic level of service.

Supporting Trends:



## Partnerships and Regionalization

Based on the current trends, there is support for the City to explore partnership and regional opportunities at the outset when contemplating planning, design, operations, maintenance, and animation of community recreation facilities.

Supporting Trends:



# Engagement Findings

This section represents a summary of the findings from the consultation activities related to the development of the Approach to Community Recreation Facility Planning in Edmonton.

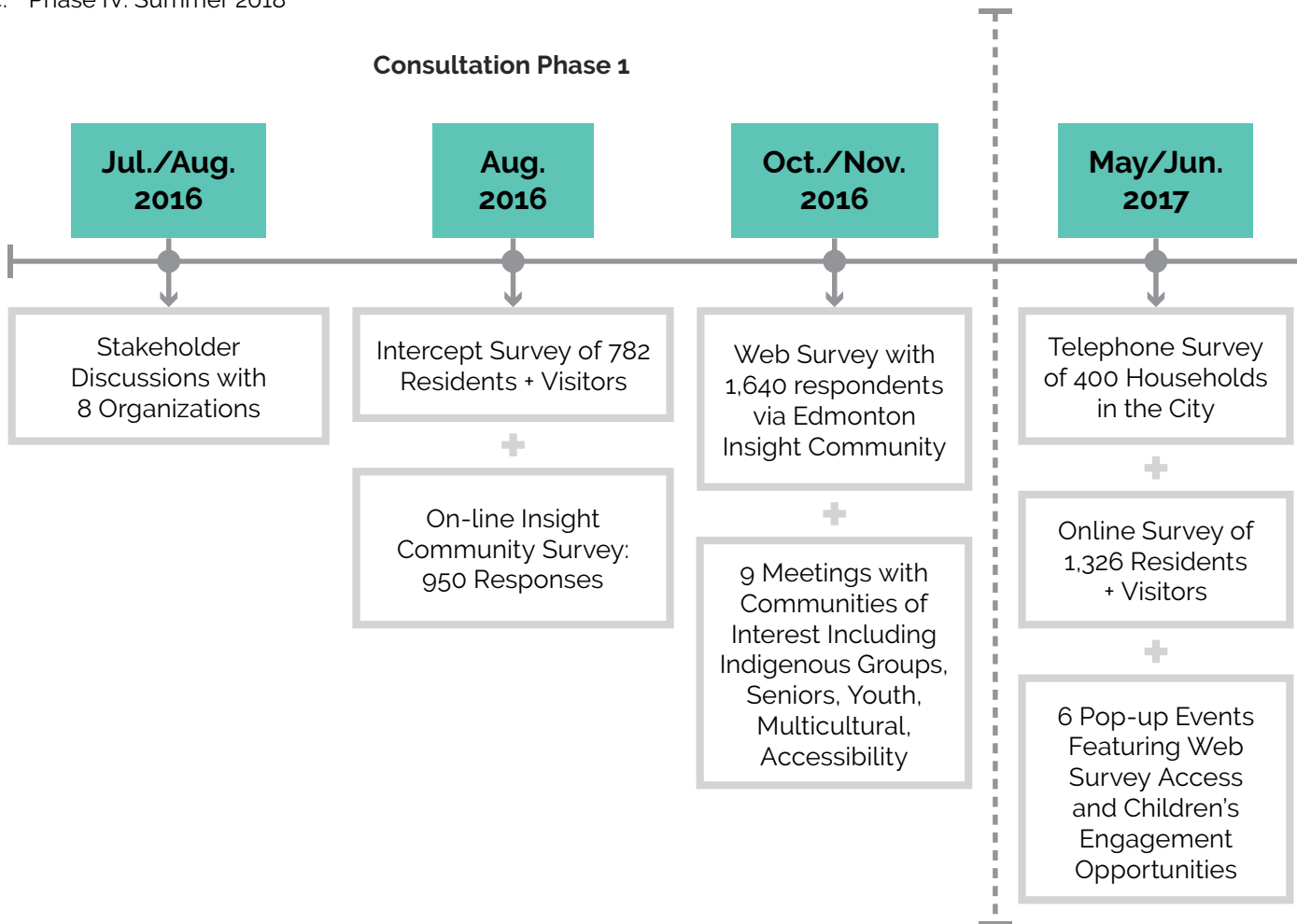
Several different engagement activities were used to learn the perspectives of residents, organized groups, and community stakeholders over a two-year period. Key engagement activities included stakeholder and community group consultation, in addition to web and telephone surveys. Below is a timeline of the engagement activities conducted between 2016 and 2018.

Feedback from this engagement has, where appropriate, been used to help inform corporate decision making; importantly, it is one of many components to arrive at the direction and recommendations that follow.

Of note is that the opinions and input of others, including key recreation service delivery partners of the City, other orders of government, regional municipalities and additional key stakeholders (external and internal to the City) have also influenced the development of the Approach throughout this process. The conclusions presented below address the major issues — not all lines of questioning are included.

Four distinct consultation phases were undertaken to let Edmontonians and other stakeholder provide input into the creation of the Approach.

1. Phase I: Summer/Autumn 2016
2. Phase II: Spring/Summer 2017
3. Phase III: Winter 2018
4. Phase IV: Summer 2018



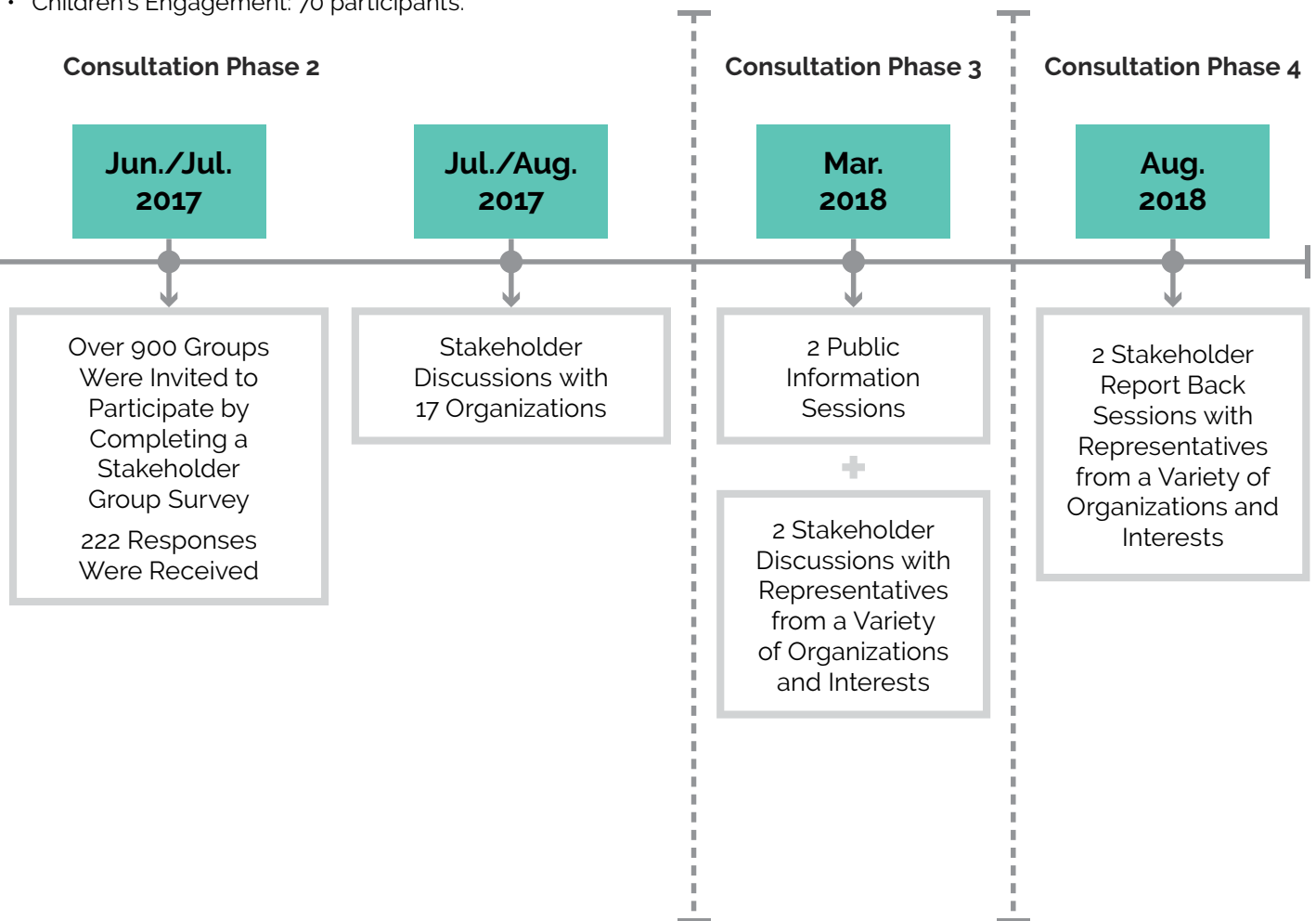
Opportunities for input during Phase I included stakeholder discussions and surveys that tested higher level thoughts and perspectives about why recreation facilities are important in the community and the underlying reasons why the City should invest in them. Engagement methods used in Phase I included:

- Stakeholder Discussions: 6 organizations,
- Intercept Surveys: 782 participants,
- Web-based Survey: 1,640 respondents,
- Engagement with Communities of Interest: 9 meetings, and
- City of Edmonton Insight Community Survey: 950 responses.

Opportunities available in Phase II included surveys and face to face interactions with City staff and members of the consulting team. Input gathered in Phase II was more specific regarding existing and future community recreation facility and activity preferences and further refined and tested the guiding principles information collected in Phase I.

Promotion of Phase II opportunities and the entire planning process occurred through pop-ups at several public events and high traffic areas such as the Mill Woods Farmers' Market, pop-up displays at several locations (e.g. National Aboriginal Days, Clareview Community Recreation Centre, Edmonton Tower, etc.), through posters, online messaging, Great City News, Twitter, Facebook, the project website and email updates. Engagement methods used in Phase II included:

- Telephone Survey: 400 respondents,
- Online Survey: 1,326 respondents,
- Stakeholder Discussions: 17 organizations,
- Community Groups Survey: 222 respondents, and
- Children's Engagement: 70 participants.



In Phase III, the project team shared information with the public and stakeholders about the Facility Planning Method and the needs assessment and gap analysis results, and received input on the information shared. Engagement methods used in Phase III included:

- Information Sessions: 175 participants; invitations to 900+ organizations distributed, and
- Stakeholder Discussions: 35 organizations invited to participate, 8 organizations attended.

Phase IV involved reporting back to stakeholders to inform them that the Community Recreation Facility Master Plan had been refined to better reflect feedback received on community recreation facility planning. Stakeholders were informed that to more accurately capture changes to the plan, the City was now calling this plan the Approach to Community Recreation Facility Planning in Edmonton, and had revised the scope and strategic direction to better meet the recreation needs of Edmontonians. Engagement methods used in Phase IV included:

- Stakeholder Discussions: 35 organizations invited to participate,
- Stakeholder Update: Information provided via email to 900+ organizations, and
- Public Information: Update to be provided on edmonton.ca with early access to all documents.

The following section outlines a summary of key findings from Phase I and Phase II of the engagement process.

## Barriers to Participation

The most common barriers to participation in recreation programs and activities at facilities in Edmonton are cost, transportation, location, health, and lack of motivation.



Cost



Transportation



Location



Health



Motivation

## Satisfaction Ratings

There are relatively high levels of satisfaction with City recreation facilities. Affordability received the lowest level of satisfaction while safety was the highest.



Affordability



General Satisfaction



Safety



## Priorities for Investment of Recreation Facilities

Results of the various surveys and meetings conducted during the planning process in Phase II were used to inform the Approach related to amenity prioritization and demand indication. As well, responses to questions related to future investment focus in existing and new community recreation amenities were used as inputs to arrive at actual amenity priorities.

Over a span of almost seven weeks, the City of Edmonton offered three different surveys to Edmonton residents. The goal of the surveys was to gather information on public preferences and participation in City of Edmonton community recreation facilities and programs and to provide comment on the City of Edmonton's plans to enhance and develop additional community recreation facilities in Edmonton.

- From May 25 to June 30, 2017, the City of Edmonton launched a randomly dialed telephone survey (400 respondents) and an online survey available on the City's website (1,326 respondents). In total, 1,726 survey respondents provided feedback for the Phase II of the public engagement process.
- A survey of community groups was conducted from June 14 to July 14, 2017. Over 900 organizations were emailed an invitation to participate in the survey. Numerous community groups representing a variety of interests completed the questionnaire to provide comment on the City of Edmonton's plans to enhance and develop additional community recreation facilities and programs. In total, 222 community groups provided feedback.

Telephone and web survey respondents strongly agreed that there is a need to upgrade or develop new community recreation facilities in Edmonton.

- Over half (56%) of telephone survey respondents indicated there is a need to upgrade and/or develop new community recreation facilities, with one-third (38%) stating there is no need.
- Seventy-four percent (74%) of web survey respondents stated there is a need to upgrade existing facilities in Edmonton.
- Eighty percent (80%) of web survey respondents agree there is a need to develop additional community recreation facilities in Edmonton.

Respondents were asked to rank the most important types of indoor/outdoor recreation facilities to consider when deciding to upgrade or develop new recreation facilities in Edmonton. Results from the public surveys were combined to develop the final rankings which are presented in the next two sections.



# Investment in Indoor Recreation Facilities

Through public engagement, Edmontonians identified a need to upgrade and develop additional indoor recreation facilities. Based on this input, public priorities were determined for both an enhancement to existing facilities and the development of new facilities. Their priorities are noted in the lists below.





















Of note, the survey asked about a wide range of recreation facility types, beyond the scope of this planning document. As a result, the findings presented below also include facilities outside of the scope of the Approach. The results are being used for the development of multiple strategic approaches.

Indoor ENHANCED/UPGRADED	Indoor NEW/ADDITIONAL
 1. Seniors Centres	 1. Youth Centres
 2. Youth Centres	 2. Child Minding Spaces
 3. Swimming Pools for Recreation	 3. Seniors Centres
 4. Community Halls	 4. Swimming Pools for Recreation
 5. Child Minding Spaces	 5. Indoor Children's Playgrounds
 6. Indoor Children's Playgrounds	 6. Indoor Skating Rinks for Sport
 7. Indoor Skating Rinks for Leisure	 7. Indoor Skating Rinks for Leisure
 8. Indoor Skating Rinks for Sport	 8. Community Halls
 9. Multipurpose program rooms	 9. Multipurpose program rooms
 10. Multicultural Centres	 10. Indoor Fields

*\*Note: Indoor Fields item in the above table includes indoor soccer fields.*

## Investment in Outdoor Recreation Facilities

Through public engagement, Edmontonians identified a need to upgrade and develop additional outdoor recreation facilities. Based on this input, public priorities were determined for both an enhancement to existing facilities and the development of additional or new facilities. Their priorities are noted in the lists below.

Outdoor ENHANCED/UPGRADED	Outdoor NEW/ADDITIONAL
 1. Ice Rinks	 1. Sports Fields: Natural Turf
 2. Sports Fields: Natural Turf	 2. Gazebos/Picnic Shelters
 3. Basketball/Sport Courts	 3. Ice Rinks
 4. Swimming Pools	 4. Bike Parks
 5. Gazebos/Picnic Shelters	 5. Swimming Pools
 6. Bike Parks	 6. Skating Ovals
 7. Skating Ovals	 7. Basketball/Sport Courts
 8. Tennis Courts	 8. Sand/Beach Volleyball Courts
 9. Ball Diamonds: Natural Turf	 9. Ball Diamonds: Natural Turf
 10. Track and Field spaces	 10. Sports Fields: Artificial Turf

## Community Recreation Facility Inventory Management

Participants noted that the most important criteria when considering a reduction in service levels or community recreation facility closure includes:

- Utilization levels at recreation facilities,
- Capital investment to maintain and sustain facilities, and
- Cost to operate facilities.

## Willingness to Pay to Support Community Recreation Facilities

The majority of those engaged prefer keeping current levels of tax support should additional investment be required for the City's recreation facilities. Most support current user fees should additional investment be required for the City's recreational facilities.

## Benefits of Partnerships and Regional Perspective

Relationships and partnerships in the provision of recreation continue to be important and in many cases are becoming more prevalent. These can take many forms and include working with other levels of government, community organizations, academic institutions, and the private sector. While the provision of community recreation services has historically relied on municipalities, many municipalities are increasingly looking to form relationships and partnerships that can enhance service levels and more effectively leverage public funds. Facility naming, sponsorship arrangements, lease/contract agreements, the contracted operation of spaces, operation of entire facilities, or delivery of programs are all examples of relationships and partnerships.

According to one study<sup>3</sup>, 76 percent of Canadian municipalities work with schools in their communities to encourage the participation of municipal residents in physical activities. Canadian municipalities work with local nonprofits (46%), health settings (40%), or workplaces (25%) to encourage participation in physical activities amongst their residents. The majority of municipalities, both large and small, have formed agreements with school boards for shared use of facilities. In fact, since the year 2000, the percentage of municipalities that have reported working with schools, health settings, and local non-profit organizations has increased by 10 to 20 percent.

Partnerships that have proven to be the most valuable and successful in the provision of recreation have been premised on common goals, shared outcomes and objectives, shared investment of resources and risk, and shared accountability, decision making and results.



3 "Municipal Opportunities for Physical Activity" Bulletin 6: Strategic partnerships. 2010, Canadian Fitness & Lifestyle Research Institute.

The benefits of working in partnership include:

- Enhanced programs and services,
- Reduced costs and increased effectiveness and efficiency,
- Ability to harness extensive voluntary support and expertise,
- Extension of the reach of the City into various business, neighbourhoods, and community sectors,
- Enhanced civic engagement and involvement,
- Shared risk/mutual benefit, and
- Enhanced leveraging of operational and capital investments from sources including donations, corporate investments, provincial and federal funding.

## Benefits of Partnerships from a Regional Perspective

Approximately 70 percent of the Edmonton Metropolitan Region lives in Edmonton, which serves as a recreation and economic keystone in the region. The proximity of municipalities within the Edmonton Metropolitan Region provides opportunity for partnerships in the provision of recreation. These partnerships can take multiple forms and are often founded on the basis of intermunicipal collaborative planning, increased capital, and operational efficiencies, as well as to avoid the duplication of facilities. Types of regional partnerships include but are not limited to:

- Per capita cost sharing contributions (operational contributions to a regional entity or main provider of services based on a per capita share of the overall regional population),
- Facility operations cost sharing (operational costs for a facility or multiple facilities are shared by two or more regional municipalities),
- Facility capital contributions (contributions towards the capital project cost by multiple municipalities), and
- Joint ownership (a facility or multiple facilities are owned by an entity consisting of two or more municipalities).



## Relationship and Partnership Corporate Alignment

In 2009, City Council approved City Policy C187A - Enhancing Community Facility Services through Partnerships. This policy established a framework of principles and procedures to guide developing and ongoing partnerships. Key elements of the policy include:

### Partner Identification

The City will seek out partnerships where:

- Community expectations extend beyond City of Edmonton planned service levels,
- Improved service levels will be provided,
- Innovative public recreation and leisure opportunities including specialty facilities are provided, and
- Facility optimization, connectedness, and vibrancy are realized to service broader community needs.

### Partner Selection

Partners are selected in an open, transparent process consistent with established City business practices to determine the overall benefit to the community and value to the citizens of Edmonton.

### Ongoing Evaluation

Ongoing evaluation of partnerships is completed to ensure that services provided in the partnership are provided effectively and reliably to citizens. Evaluation of existing partnerships determines if there is still a mutual benefit or if a change is required.

In 2018, a corporate relationship and partnership framework was developed to set the direction for how the City will achieve excellence in city-building partnerships and will drive relationship and partnership actions on policy decision making, stakeholder connections, innovation, and leading practices. Key elements of the framework include definitions, vision, mission, outcomes, goals, and principles.



# The Facility Planning Method

Chapter 2 explored the current state of recreation in Edmonton, and the anticipated and emerging trends in the sector. Based on this research, Chapter 3 articulates Edmonton's strategic methodology for the future provision of recreation facilities and amenities.

## Strategic Directions

Based on the identified opportunities, challenges and gaps outlined in the previous section, the City of Edmonton has articulated three strategic directions for future planning of recreation and community facilities:

1. Apply the Basic Commitment to Recreation Provision.
2. Define the City's Recreation Network Through a Geographic Classification System.
3. Use the Facility Planning Method for Future Decision Making.

Delivering on these strategic directions may require partnerships with regional partners, community organizations, and the private sector.

## Strategic Direction 1: Apply the Basic Commitment to Recreation Provision

To meet the City's goals and realize the principles of the Approach, the City is introducing a basic commitment to residents for community recreation facilities. Rather than striving to meet a specific resident demand for desired community recreation amenities, the City will target a basic commitment that focuses on a more general mix of opportunities accessible to residents at the district and neighbourhood levels and more reflective of a recreation network. This basic commitment is intended to provide residents access to indoor and outdoor recreation opportunities that are fundamental to physical literacy<sup>4</sup>. The basic commitment will help Edmontonians be active, creative, healthy, and connected to each other and their communities.

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4 This approach is supported by the findings, directions, and recommendations of various national, provincial, and municipal policy documents including:

- The Canadian Parks and Recreation Association and the Interprovincial Sport and Recreation Council's guiding document A Framework for Recreation in Canada 2015: Pathways to Wellbeing
- The Government of Alberta's Active Alberta Policy (2011 – 2021)
- Going the Distance: The Alberta Sport Plan (2014-2024)
- Canadian Sport for Life's Long-Term Athlete Development (LTAD) framework

The basic commitment outlines the City's intention to provide citizens with equitable access to community recreation facilities. The commitment is as follows:

Every resident will have a place to connect, be active and participate in recreation indoors (e.g. on ice, in water, or gymnasiums and fitness centres) within 5 kilometres of their residence.

Every resident will have a place to connect, be active and participate in recreation outdoors within 400 metres of their residence (e.g. sports fields).

The basic commitment reflects the efforts and investments in recreation made not only by the City, but also by its partners including community organizations, private industry, and other regional municipalities.

Decisions regarding the prioritization of projects to meet the basic commitment will be made in the context of the larger recreation network, balanced with the need to reinvest in existing facilities and amenities. Ice, water, gymnasiums and fitness centres would be the "starting point" amenities when considering building new facilities, but the City would continue to assess what the recreation network requires using the demand and prioritization criteria.

### Why 400 m?

400 metres is an accepted City standard walking distance for planning and providing publicly accessible amenities; this distance represents approximately a 5-10 minute walk in 2018.

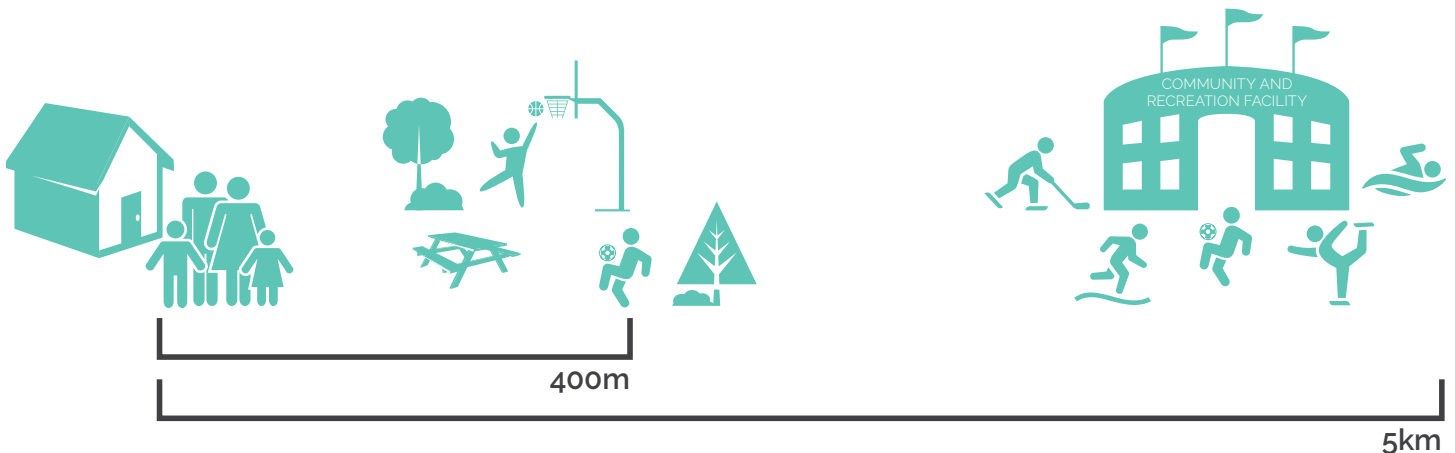
### Why 5 km?

A 5 kilometre catchment area represents approximately a 15 minute drive by personal vehicle or a 20 minute bicycle ride in Edmonton in 2018. Most residents indicated that 15 minutes of travel time was acceptable before distance becomes a barrier to participation.

### What is physical literacy?

Physical literacy is the cornerstone of all activities along the active living, active recreation and sport spectrum. Those who are physically literate are able to move with greater competence and confidence in a variety of physical situations, an ability that enables and motivates them to understand, communicate and apply different forms of movement. Not only does physical literacy help enhance an individual's physical and psychological health, it contributes to the collective well-being of our community. (Live Active, 2016).

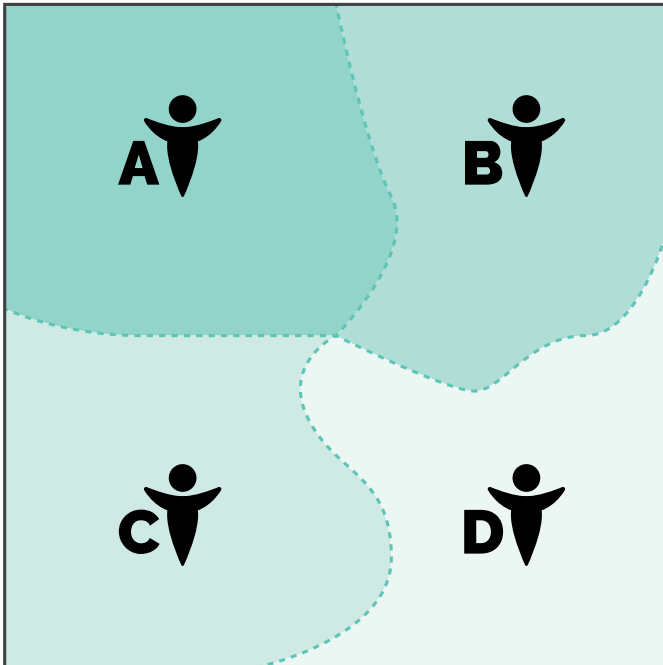
## The City's Basic Commitment for Community and Recreation Facilities to Residents





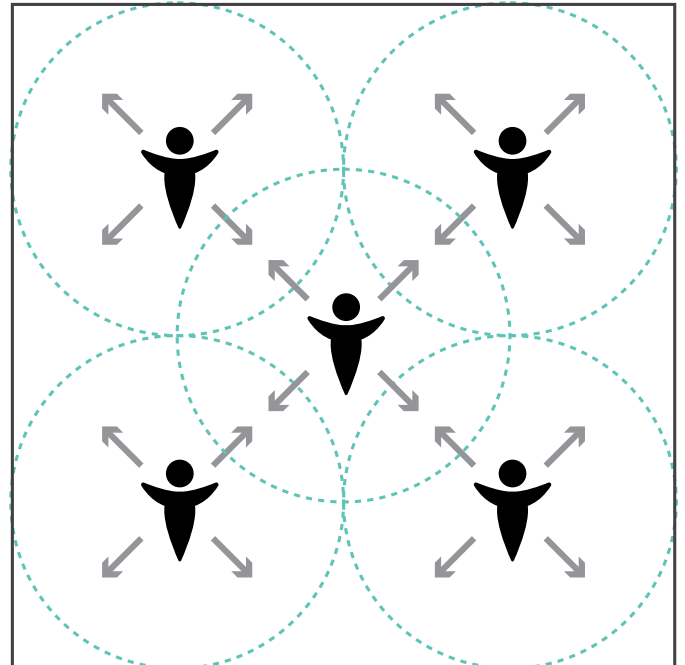
Provision of community recreation facilities, regardless of the opportunity mix of amenities within them, is centred around accessibility to residents and visitors. Although the benefits of recreation span far beyond those accrued to actual participants, facilities need to be accessible to residents and visitors for optimal positive outcomes to occur. Moving forward, the provision of community recreation facilities in Edmonton is residence-centric (residence-based provision) as opposed to defined through specific areas throughout the city. This approach is meant to ensure all residents have access to certain types of activities and levels of service, regardless of where they live. This approach is further explained in the image below.

### Area-Based Provision



A base-level of facilities and amenities are provided in each of A, B, C, and D for residents of each area.

### Residence-Based Provision



A base-level of service is measured by the ability of every resident to access facilities and amenities.



## Strategic Direction 2: Define the City's Recreation Network Through a Geographic Classification System

Edmonton has a recreation facility network which provides space for recreation activities and opportunities across the city and region. Similar to a transportation network (which is a spatial network that allows for the movement of people and products through the network of roads, streets, sidewalks, and railways), the recreation network provides spatial infrastructure for recreation.

To help articulate this network, the City of Edmonton has a classification system for its recreation facilities to help guide decision making for facility deployment. The recreation facility network is comprised of three levels of facilities:

1. Metropolitan (city-wide)
2. District
3. Neighbourhood

Although there are three distinct levels of community recreation facilities in the city, they are all integrated. Metropolitan-level facilities offer specialized, high-performance level opportunities but also include opportunities that would be typically provided in district or neighbourhood facilities. Similarly, district facilities offer opportunities intended to be provided at a broader level but also offer neighbourhood-level amenities and are accessible to local area market as well. Neighbourhood facilities offer opportunities intended to be accessible to a local area market, with broad appeal.

The metropolitan, district and neighbourhood facilities create the City's recreation network by providing multiple recreation opportunities throughout the city. As a result, these recreation facilities provide opportunities for a more connected city.

This recreation network will be in line with the City Plan's urban hierarchy. When significant growth occurs in a place, where people and transport routes unite and link with a significant development (like a facility), these areas can support one or more neighbourhoods and strengthen citizen connectedness across the city.

For a detailed description of each of these facility classifications, please see Appendix E: Facility Classifications in the Recreation Network.



## Strategic Direction 3: Use the Facility Planning Method for Future Decision Making

The Facility Planning Method has been created to help the City of Edmonton get more from its investment in community recreation facilities and amenities. It will help the City and its partners guide the planning, design, operations, maintenance, and animation of community recreation facilities.

The Facility Planning Method has been built to consider:

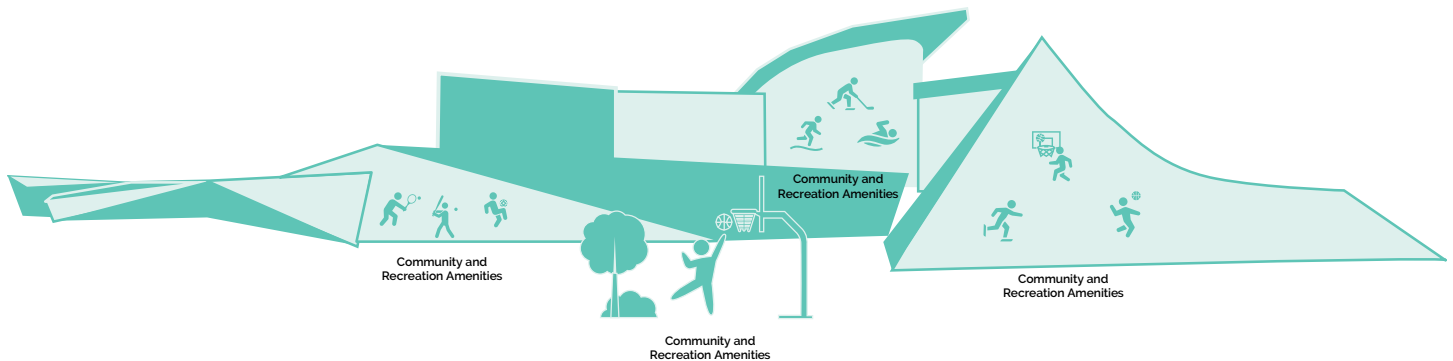
- Input from residents, users, stakeholders, and partners,
- Current and expected future market conditions in the city, region, province, and nation, and
- The City of Edmonton's broader strategic context.

For the purpose of this analysis, note the difference between a community recreation facility and a community recreation amenity:

**A community recreation facility** is a publicly accessible venue for recreation activity to occur; a recreation facility can include any combination of recreation amenities. Examples of recreation facilities are the Terwillegar Community Recreation Centre and the Ivor Dent Sports Park.

**A community recreation amenity** is a specific component within a recreation facility or place. Sports fields, swimming pools, and ice arenas are examples of recreation amenities.

### Community and Recreation Facilities and Amenities



## Amenity Strategy Development

The City is involved in the provision of a variety of different types of community recreation amenities that create opportunities for diverse recreation activities. Community recreation amenities are made available to residents and visitors through the effort and investment of a number of service providers. The City of Edmonton plays a leadership role in the provision of certain amenities. For other amenities, the City partners with community organizations to provide those recreation opportunities for residents and visitors. There are also other amenities in Edmonton that are provided by private operators, without City support. Each amenity in which the City invests accommodates a certain kind of activity and addresses a demand in the community and region. Each amenity is important and helps the City achieve its vision and goals for a network of community recreation facilities and delivers its commitment to residents.

Depending on the City's role, amenity types are characterized as primary, secondary, or other.

**Primary amenities** are amenities which the City plays a significant role in the provision of. Although partners sometimes offer these types of amenities, the City provides them directly as well. These amenities also comprise the City's basic commitment to residents. In 2018, the City's primary amenities are indoor turf fields, indoor ice arenas, outdoor pools, outdoor ice, outdoor ball diamonds, indoor fitness centres, and outdoor track and field.

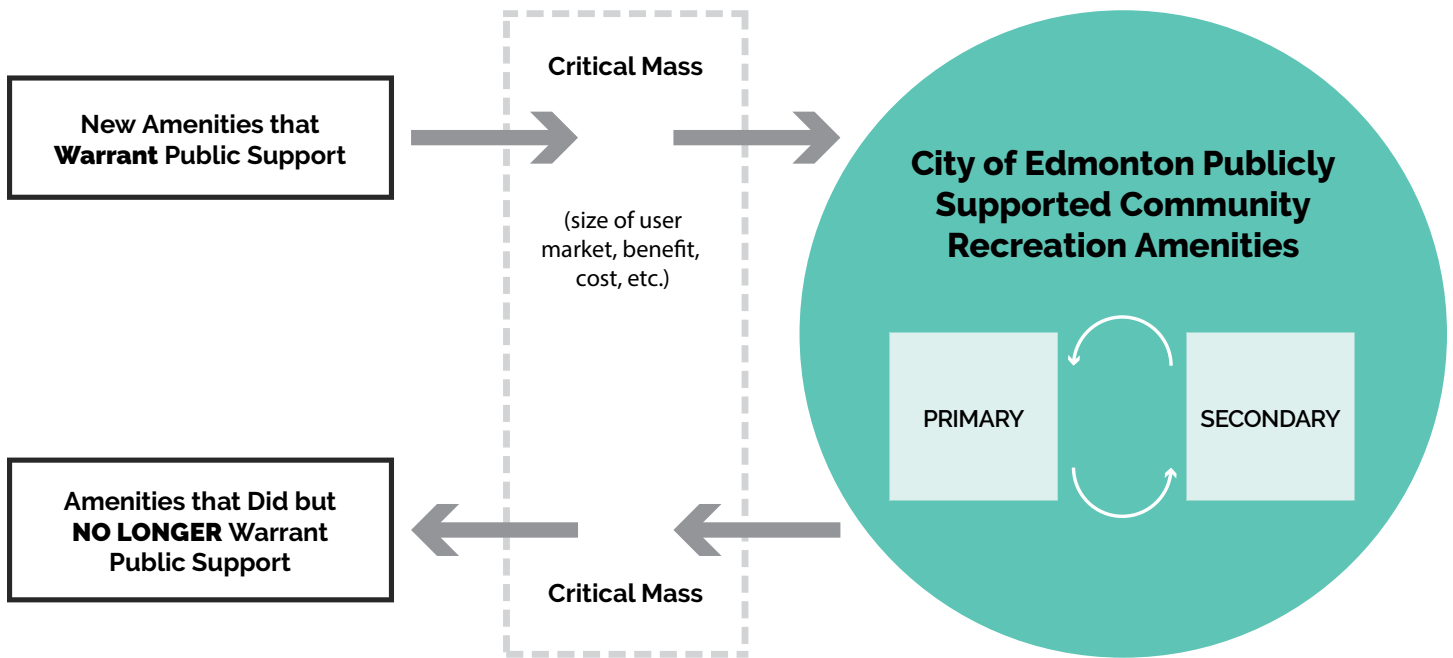
**Secondary amenities** are amenities which the City realizes have significant value to residents and visitors; however, they do not receive the same level of investment and attention as primary amenities. Secondary amenities still warrant public support (where required), but the City would not provide these amenities without a partner. Secondary amenities help the City achieve its vision and goals for community recreation facilities and expand the recreation network to support accessibility for all Edmontonians.

**Other amenities** are amenities which the City understands have value to residents and visitors but do not warrant any level of public support due to the level of specialization, limited public access, or community benefit derived.

It is anticipated that over time, the classifications of specific amenities will shift. For example, in the future, amenities currently classified as "primary," may change to "secondary" or "other" and vice versa.



For the purpose of this plan, "critical mass" is defined as a combination of user interest, willingness to pay, and demand required to capitalize and operate a community recreation facility or amenity within the City's standard operating parameters.



# The Facility Planning Method

In order to ensure the appropriate provision of different types of community recreation amenities, amenity strategies are required to help provide direction for City investment.

To determine the best course of action for a community recreation amenity, the City has created a planning tool to measure the demand for different amenities. The provision of any publicly supported community recreation amenity must demonstrate alignment with broader City strategic direction and must help further the vision and goals outlined for community recreation facilities. If an amenity does not help the City achieve this, it ultimately becomes categorized as "other" and does not warrant public support.

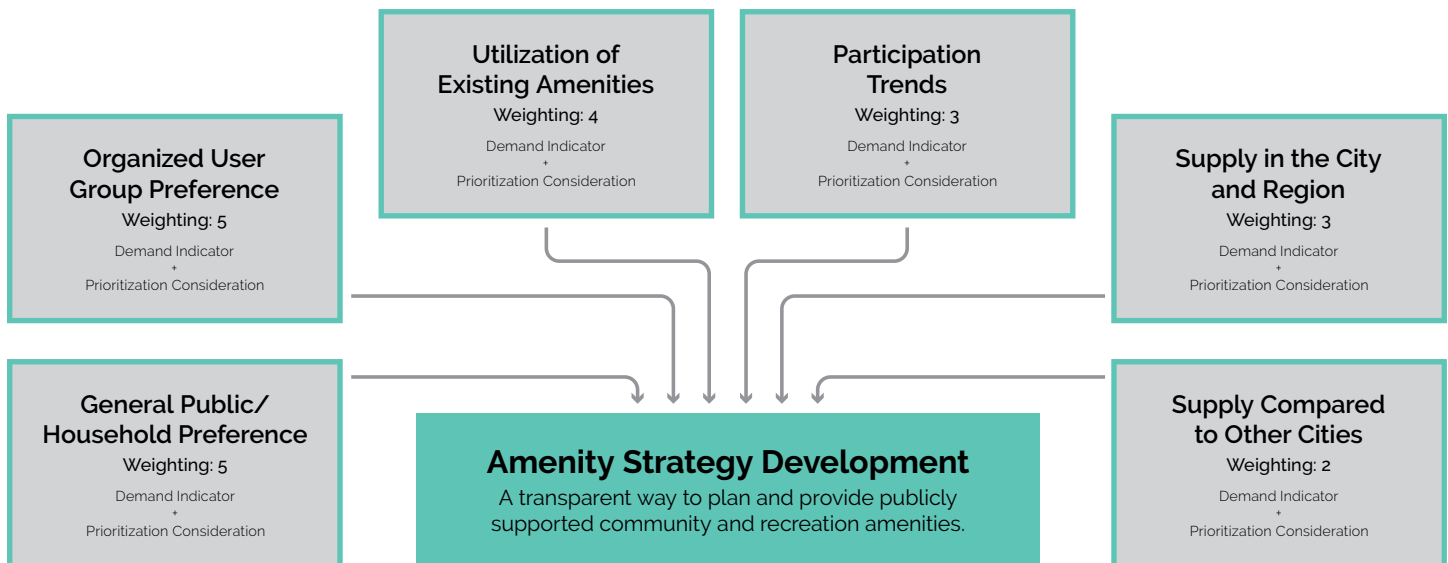
The tool created to determine which amenities would be of most strategic relevance for investment is the Facility Planning Method. The Facility Planning Method is comprised of two parts: a set of demand indicators and a prioritization framework. In order to make strategic decisions, both parts of the Facility Planning Method must be applied in sequential order. The first step identifies the gaps in facility provision and service while the second helps prioritize those gaps.

## Part 1: Demand Indicators

To sustainably plan for community recreation facilities, the City must measure and quantify the level of demand for particular amenities, using an evidence-based matrix. The demand indicators provide this evidence required for decision making.

The demand indicators provide a signal of whether or not the provision of an amenity should be maintained as the city grows, or whether the provision should be decreased or enhanced. They also provide clarity on how the City and its partners best animate community recreation amenities.

This graphic summarizes the demand indicators for different types of amenities.



Six demand indicators demonstrate the level of demand for a certain amenity. Each demand indicator has been weighted to reflect its level of importance to citizens in future decision making, as determined through public engagement and leading practice research.

### **Demand Indicator 1: General Public/Household Preference**

Indications of both current utilization and opinion on future investment focus for the specific amenity as identified through the input of the general public and households. General public/household preference is ideally measured through controlled access and statistically reliable public surveys to ensure there are no biases towards specific interests or demographics.

### **Demand Indicator 2: Organized User Group Preference**

Indications of both current utilization and opinion on future investment focus for the specific amenity as identified through organized user group surveys, discussions, and other sources such as Council presentations or formal group submissions to the City.

### **Demand Indicator 3: Utilization of Existing Amenities**

Actual user/rental statistics related to how existing amenities in the City are being utilized and whether or not there are indications of excess demand.

### **Demand Indicator 4: Participation Trends**

Local, regional, provincial, or national trends related to the amenity that may influence current and future public investment.

### **Demand Indicator 5: Supply in the City and Region**

An overview of both existing and planned inventories of the amenity within the city and the broader region.

### **Demand Indicator 6: Supply Compared to Other Cities**

An overview of how the City compares to other major urban centres regarding the provision/quantity of publicly owned/supported amenities related to the overall market population served.

## **Using the demand indicators**

The demand indicators are to be used to help weigh the demand for different types of amenities and then to provide strategic direction to maintain, enhance, or decrease the number of individual amenity types in Edmonton (service levels).

To determine an overall service level direction for each amenity, the indication (maintain/enhance/decrease) most frequently mentioned is applied to the amenity overall (i.e. 4 "maintains" and 2 "enhances" would result in a "maintain" indication). In the event of a tie, general public/household preference, organized user group preference, and utilization of existing amenities (in that order) are used to provide further clarity.

To create equity and fairness in the system, it is essential that all amenities the City invests in are analyzed in the same fashion, considering all demand indicators as outlined.



Criteria	Strategic Action: Enhance Level of Service	Strategic Action: Maintain Level of Service	Strategic Action: Decrease Level of Service
<b>General Public/ Household Preference</b>	Top 25% of the household survey amenity priorities	Next 65% (26-90%) in the household survey amenity priorities	Bottom 10% in the household survey or not in scope
<b>Organized User Group Preference</b>	Strong (wide spread support) indications of support from the majority of user groups and stakeholders	Moderate (not wide spread) indications of support from user groups and stakeholders	No indications of support from user groups and stakeholders
<b>Utilization of Existing Amenities</b>	Utilization is over 90% prime time/peak season capacity and there are indications of excess demand or it is not currently provided in the market	Utilization is between 60% and 90% of prime time/peak season capacity or currently unknown	Utilization is below 60% of prime time/peak season capacity
<b>Participation Trends</b>	Responds to more than two observed growth trends	Responds to one or two observed growth trends	Does not respond to observed growth trends
<b>Provision in the City and Region</b>	Adds a completely new recreation opportunity in the region	Adds a completely new recreation opportunity in the city or would significantly improve existing recreation opportunities in the region	Multiple amenities already provided in the city and region
<b>Amenity Provision Benchmarking</b>	The amenity is provided in other identified urban centres but not in Edmonton	The amenity is provided at a lower rate in Edmonton as compared to the average of other identified urban centres	The amenity is provided at a similar or better rate in Edmonton as compared to the average of other identified urban centres

## How will the City make decisions about amenities that would support emerging or new recreation activities?

Hoverboard soccer and artificial gravity swimming could be the recreation of the future; citizens in the future may want access to amenities that would allow them the opportunity to participate in those activities -- and others that aren't quite as fantastical, but still not yet within the City's inventory of primary or secondary amenities. The Facility Planning Method has built-in flexibility to help make decisions in the future about amenities that are not currently identified as primary or secondary amenities.



**New Amenities are Identified Through Demand Indicators**

Trends, Public and Group Preferences, Benchmarking, Etc.



**Temporary Support Given to Test Amenity**

i.e. Allocated use of facilities, group capacity planning, etc.



**If critical mass does not exist, discontinue support given to test amenity.**

**If critical mass does exist and the amenity can be proved under similar terms as others, provide amenity on permanent basis.**

In the event that partnerships exist in the development and/or operation of the amenity in question, "critical mass" may be influenced. Determining ideal operating terms (terms similar to other amenities currently supported or offered by the City), or thresholds, for community recreation amenities warranting City involvement is fluid. These considerations include but are not limited to:

- The cost of providing an amenity, measured in terms of the subsidy required or net cost per participant/hour,
- The market demographics served by the amenity in question, and how that aligns with broader strategic intentions of the City, and
- The opportunity cost of providing an amenity in terms of financial cost, site/land availability, or precedence set for other interests.

These considerations, as well as others, determine whether the provision of a community recreation amenity warrants City involvement and support or not. They also provide guidance as to what amenities that do justify public support are considered primary or secondary.

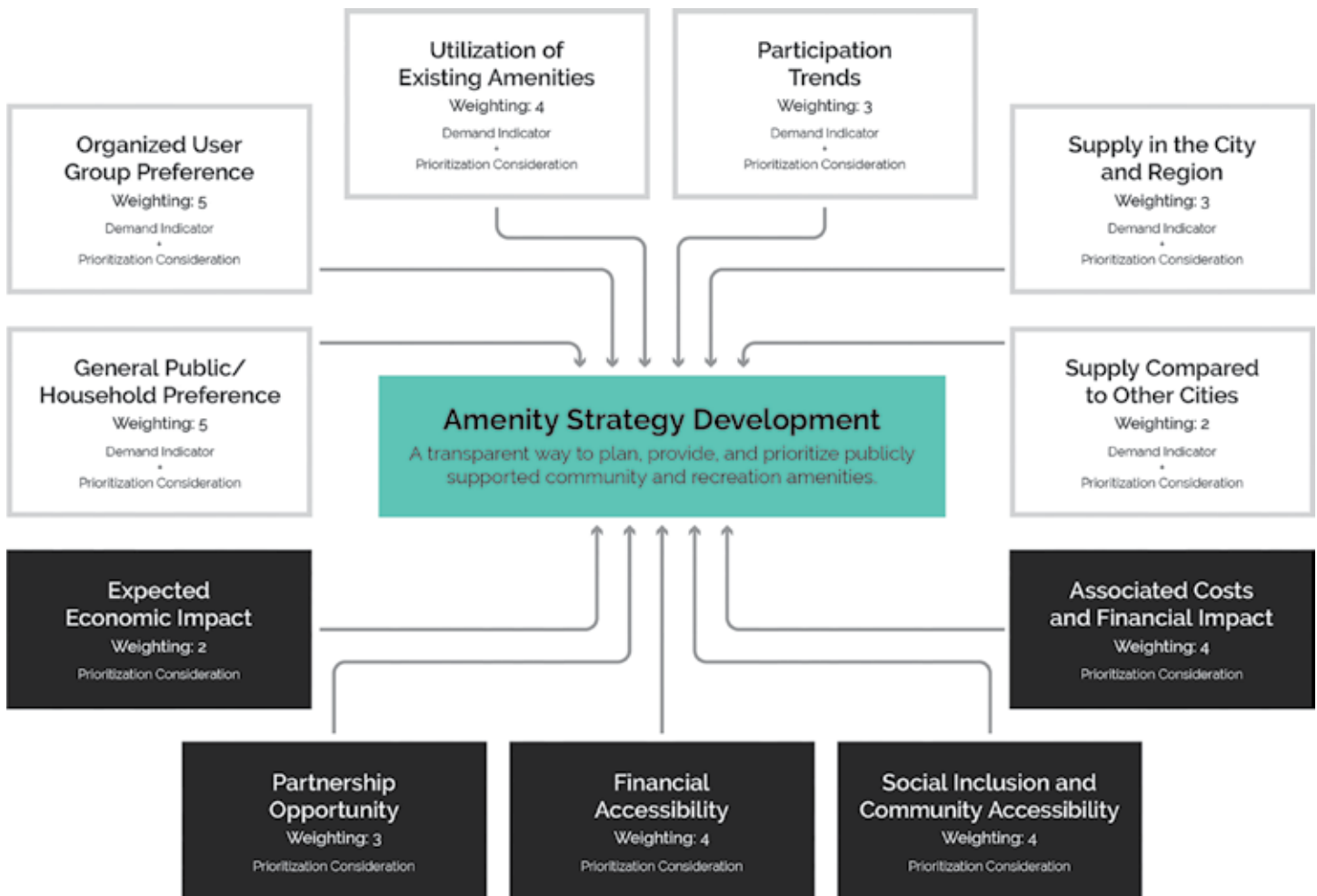
## Part 2: The Amenity Prioritization Framework

The City of Edmonton recognizes that all community recreation amenities are important and all provide community benefit.

Creating a sustainable and equitable recreation network for all citizens is complex. Due to resource limitations and diverse and evolving recreational interests, it is not feasible or reasonable to expect that all residents will have their preferred primary recreational interests met by the suite of community recreation facilities available to them in their immediate neighbourhood or broader district service areas.

Due to limited resources, and the duty as a City to manage these funds responsibly, the City must prioritize certain amenities over others, and strive to make these decisions in a transparent, fair, and evidence-based way. To this end -- and based on public engagement and leading practice research -- the City has created a tool to help prioritize amenity development and reinvestment.

This diagram outlines the criteria and scoring matrix that are important in determining if one amenity warrants more focus than another. It is important to note that for amenities to be considered in this framework, they must align with the City's strategic intentions related to community recreation facilities and amenities.



The demand indicators outlined above in the white boxes are explained in the previous section. The remaining considerations for prioritization are explained as follows:

### Prioritization Criteria 7: Financial Accessibility

The ability of all residents to access the amenity despite financial barriers to participation. Admission cost does not reasonably limit access.

### Prioritization Criteria 8: Social Inclusion and Community Accessibility

The ability of an amenity to have a significant, positive change that addresses pressing social challenges and cultural diversity including increased participation by the indigenous population, non-traditional users, girls/women, seniors, persons with disabilities, and LGBTQ2+ community members<sup>5</sup>.

### Prioritization Criteria 9: Associated Costs and Financial Impact

Overall net cost impact of providing the amenity including capital and operating costs.

### Prioritization Criteria 10: Partnership Opportunity

The ability for the City to reduce public investment in an amenity through capital and/or operational cost sharing with partners. Consider opportunities for partnership for both capital development and ongoing operation of the amenity.

### Prioritization Criteria 11: Expected Economic Impact

Level of economic impact measured by direct injection into the local and regional economy as well as the impact on overall brand and image of the City.

## Using the Prioritization Indicators

In order to prioritize community recreation amenities, it is important to have a logical and transparent framework to rank amenities relative to each other and to be able to explain why investment in certain amenities is made over others. The following list of criteria, metrics, and associated weighting of each has been developed to guide the amenity prioritization process.

The amenities receive a score (0 to 3) for each criterion. Since some criteria are more important than others, each criteria score is multiplied by the criterion's weight and the sum produces a total score. Once all the amenities are scored, they can be ranked in comparison to each other. This ranking informs the amenity strategies in the Approach to Community Recreation Facility Planning in Edmonton and serves as a reference for decision making regarding community recreation facilities and amenities in the future.

5 The World Bank defines social inclusion as:

1. The process of improving the terms for individuals and groups to take part in society, and
2. The process of improving the ability, opportunity, and dignity of those disadvantaged on the basis of their identity to take part in society.



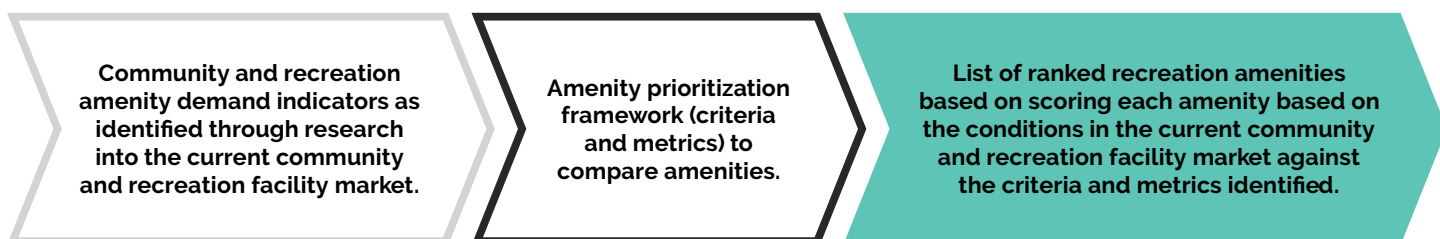
The City has created the following scoring matrix for prioritization.

Criteria	Metric				Weight
	3 Points	2 Points	1 Point	0 Points	
<b>General Public/ Household Preference</b>	Top 25% of the household survey amenity priorities	Next 25% (26–50%) in the household survey amenity priorities	Next 40% (51–90%) in the household survey amenity priorities	Bottom 10% in the household survey or not in scope	5
<b>Stakeholders and Organized User Group Preference</b>	Strong (wide spread support) indications of support from the majority of user groups and stakeholders	Moderate (multiple interest areas, not wide spread) indications of support from the majority of user groups and stakeholders	Indications of support from a few user groups or stakeholders	No indications of support from user groups and stakeholders	5
<b>Financial Accessibility</b>	The amenity through its combination of programs/ rentals/user fees is accessible to all residents.	The amenity through its combination of programs/ rentals/user fees is accessible to most residents.	The facility through its combination of programs/ rentals/user fees is accessible to some residents.	The amenity through its combination of programs/ rentals/user fees is accessible to few residents.	4
<b>Social Inclusion and Community Accessibility</b>	The planning, designing, and operating of the amenity highly contributes to promoting social inclusion and accessibility.	The planning, designing, and operating of the amenity somewhat contributes to promoting social inclusion and accessibility.	The planning, designing, and operating of the amenity moderately contributes to promoting social inclusion and accessibility.	The planning, designing, and operating of the amenity does not contribute to promoting social inclusion and accessibility.	4
<b>Associated Costs and Financial Impact</b>	Low overall cost impact	Moderate overall cost impact	High overall cost impact	Not likely to be financially feasible	4
<b>Participation Trends</b>	Responds to more than two observed growth trends	Responds to two observed growth trends	Responds to one observed growth trend	Does not respond to observed growth trends	3
<b>Partnership Opportunity</b>	Partnership opportunities exist in development and/ or operating that equate to 30% or more of the overall amenity cost	Partnership opportunities exist in development and/ or operating that equate to 10–30% of the overall amenity cost	Partnership opportunities exist in development and/ or operating that equate to up to 10% of the overall amenity cost	No potential partnership or grant opportunities exist at this point in time	3
<b>Utilization of Existing Amenities</b>	Utilization is over 90% prime time/ peak season capacity and there are indications of excess demand and it is not currently provided in the market	Utilization is between 80 and 90% of prime time/peak season capacity	Utilization is between 60% and 80% of prime time/peak season capacity or unknown	Utilization is below 60% of prime time/peak season capacity	4

Criteria	Metric				Weight
	3 Points	2 Points	1 Point	0 Points	
<b>Amenity Provision Benchmarking</b>	The amenity is provided in other identified urban centres but not in Edmonton	The amenity is provided at a significantly lower rate in Edmonton as compared to the average of other identified urban centres	The amenity is provided at a moderately lower rate in Edmonton as compared to the average of other identified urban centres	The amenity is provided at a similar or better rate in Edmonton as compared to the average of other identified urban centres	2
<b>Provision in the City and Region</b>	Adds a completely new recreation opportunity in the region	Adds completely new recreation opportunity in the city	Would significantly improve existing recreation opportunities in the region	Multiple amenities already provided in the city and region	3
<b>Expected Economic Impact</b>	Has the potential to draw reoccurring non-local spending into the region and catalyze provincial, national and/or international exposure	Has the potential to draw reoccurring non-local spending into the region	Has the potential to draw moderate non-local spending into the region	Does not have the potential to draw any regular non-local spending into the region	2

It is important to note that this framework, and the output which it provides, is meant to provide decision makers with a reference point when contemplating an investment in community recreation amenities. It is not intended to circumvent political or administrative decision making. Also important to note is that the framework is based upon the most current market conditions and the rankings which it produces are subject to change as new information related to any of the criteria becomes available. Amenity priorities can help the City determine what types of amenities to put in new facilities as well as what to consider when renewing or repurposing existing facilities. It can also help the City determine which types of partner projects to support.

The process for identifying and articulating amenity prioritization is summarized as follows:



## What This All Means

This new decision-making framework means that traditional forms of sport and recreation, and the amenities that support them, are objectively weighted against all other recreational opportunities. The result is a "ranking" that may mean a change to the types of amenities to be designed and built in new and existing facilities. Traditional amenities (ice rinks, pools, and gymnasiums) may be replaced by non-traditional amenity types to accommodate new sports, new recreation opportunities, and to reflect changing patterns in usage.

It is anticipated that foundational components within the Approach to Community Recreation Facility Planning in Edmonton (vision, mission, goals and guiding principles) will remain static from now until 2040 and beyond. The application of the Facility Planning Method, however, will shift over time to respond to new trends, preferences, and needs that emerge. The Facility Planning Method is a filter through which market data and input can be used to help the City determine strategic action related to community recreation facilities. It is expected that the Facility Planning Method will be refreshed every few years.

The City has applied this new decision-making framework based on 2017-2018 information and data, to the amenities within the scope of this plan. This is what it tells us:

Amenity	Role/Category	Provision	Amenity Ranking	Recommendation
<b>Outdoor Rectangular Fields</b>	Primary	Maintain	1	The City should maintain the current level of provision for outdoor rectangular fields. As the City grows more fields may be considered but there is no short-term need for additional fields in the city as a whole.  Enhancing the quality of some existing fields and reallocating the current inventory of fields to provide more high quality fields should be considered a focus in the short-term for the City and its partners.
<b>Indoor Gymnasiums</b>	Primary	Maintain	2	The City should maintain the current level of service for gymnasiums. As the city grows, and as new areas develop, additional gymnasiums may be considered. Improving access to existing gymnasiums should also be a focus.
<b>Indoor Aquatics</b>	Primary	Maintain	3	The City should maintain the current level of service for indoor aquatics. As the city grows, and as new areas develop, additional indoor aquatic amenities may be considered.
<b>Indoor Turf Fields</b>	Primary	Enhance	4	The City should enhance the current level of service for indoor turf fields. This should be achieved as user markets are proven and once facilities currently being built are in operation and showing signs of excess demand.
<b>Indoor Ice Arenas</b>	Primary	Maintain	5	The City should maintain the current level of service for indoor ice arenas. As the city grows, and as new areas develop, additional indoor ice sheets will be required due to the City's basic commitment to residents. There is no short-term requirement for additional indoor ice sheets in the city.

Amenity	Role/Category	Provision	Amenity Ranking	Recommendation
<b>Outdoor Pools</b>	Primary	Maintain	6	The City should maintain the current level of service for outdoor pools. As the city grows, and as new areas develop, additional outdoor pool amenities may be considered.
<b>Outdoor Ice</b>	Primary	Maintain	7	The City should maintain the current level of service for outdoor ice surfaces. As the city grows, and as new areas develop, additional outdoor ice amenities may be considered.
<b>Outdoor Ball Diamonds</b>	Primary	Maintain	8	The City should maintain the current level of service for ball diamonds. As the City grows adding more diamonds may be considered but there are no short-term needs for additional ball diamond development.  Consider enhancing the quality of some existing ball diamonds and reallocating the current inventory to provide more high quality ball diamonds as a focus in the short-term for the City and its partners.
<b>Indoor Fitness Centres</b>	Primary	Maintain	9	The City should maintain the current level of service for fitness centres. As the city grows, and as new areas develop, additional fitness centres may be considered.
<b>Outdoor Cricket Pitches</b>	Primary	Maintain	10	The City should maintain the current level of service for cricket pitches. As the City grows more pitches may be considered but there is no short-term need for more in the City.
<b>Outdoor Track and Field</b>	Primary	Maintain	11	The City should maintain the current level of service for outdoor track and field. There is no short-term requirement for additional outdoor track and field amenities in the city.
<b>Indoor Curling Rinks</b>	Secondary	Maintain	12	The City should maintain the current level of service for curling rinks. As the city grows, and as new areas develop, additional curling rink amenities may be considered.

This table highlights a strategic direction for the future growth or maintenance of amenities, beginning with a need for more indoor turf fields. For further details on individual amenity strategies, please see Appendix D: Amenity Chapters.

## A Note About Lewis Farms

The 2005–2015 Recreation Facility Master Plan indicated a need for the Lewis Farms Recreation Centre to address developing and urban growth areas in west Edmonton. Planning for this project was supported in the 2015–2018 capital budget, and is currently in the design phase. Construction may begin pending City Council approval of the 2019–2022 capital budget.

The development of Lewis Farms will address the basic commitment need for that area of the city.

# 04

## The Planning Roadmap

The Approach is intended to guide long-term strategic direction and investment in new and existing community recreation facilities. As such, a series of key inputs and factors - including the guiding principles, current state, public engagement, the City's basic commitment, and geographic delineation - shape how, when, where, and why public investment in community recreation facilities will occur. The Facility Planning Method identifies what amenities are required to meet the City's basic commitment and the prioritization of need based on demographic trends, partnership opportunities, utilization rates, and other factors. The many inputs are then applied to determine where investments in recreation facilities are required, resulting in defined direction governing the development of new community recreation facilities or amenities and/or the enhancement of existing facilities, as dictated by the City's ability to meet the basic commitment in both new and existing facilities.

Investment can be quantified across two main streams, capital and operating. The capital investment allocates financial resources to the development of new and existing facilities and/or the renewal of existing community recreation facilities. Operating investment refers to the funding required to resource, animate, and program these places and spaces. Application of the Facility Planning Method and the strategic direction it provides for each type of investment is articulated below.

### Capital Investment

Future capital investment in publicly funded community recreation facilities in Edmonton will occur through two types of capital projects which may be combined:

1. **Growth:** investment in new and existing (modernize and enhance) community recreation facilities.
2. **Renewal:** investment to sustain existing community recreation facilities.

The Facility Planning Method provides direction as to when growth projects are expected to occur. Development of new and existing facilities will occur to meet the City's basic commitment to residents in new or existing areas of the city or to replace existing facilities that, due to life cycle, should not be reinvested in. Development will also occur should decision makers choose to address specific community recreation amenity demand pressures to increase service levels (from current) or to maintain service levels (increasing as the city grows). The Facility Planning Method provides guidance during investment, especially as to how to enhance or change the network of existing facilities.

The City's Infrastructure Strategy provides direction as to when renewal projects are to occur in existing facilities to sustain the infrastructure based on the current state of the assets.



## 2019-2028 Capital Investment Outlook

Community recreation facilities are a key component of quality of life and drive a shared experience as a city. The Approach supports City Council's vision of becoming a healthy city, with ample opportunities for social connection and a place that provides an opportunity for all to learn, create, be active, and play.

The investment in community recreation facilities over the past 10 years has been substantial, achieving the outcomes of the 2005-2015 Recreation Facility Master Plan. With moderating economic and population growth on the horizon, the capital investment over the next 10 to 20 years will be more gradual relative to prior years. The 2019-2028 Capital Investment Outlook provides a roadmap towards understanding how the City manages and pays for its capital assets. The outlook balances the challenge of meeting the demands of an increasing population with maintaining aging infrastructure, against the backdrop of limited and somewhat uncertain funding.

Guided by the Approach to Community Recreation Facility Planning in Edmonton and other corporate strategies, the 2019-2028 Capital Investment Outlook is a tool to assist City Council in making strategic decisions on how best to allocate city resources to build and maintain recreation infrastructure. The City's infrastructure supports the continued provision of high-quality services to residents and businesses. To meet current and future service needs, it is vital to identify and prioritize infrastructure projects holistically, taking into account every element of what Edmonton needs to be a great city in which to live, work, and play.

## Balancing Renewal and Growth

The City must be poised and prepared to facilitate growth, but it must also safeguard the integrity of existing services and structures. Focussing too heavily on new projects and services might compromise the condition, lifespan, and value of existing assets over the longer term. An ongoing balance between investing in renewal and growth must be maintained.

When the City discusses the concept of renewal, this refers to investment in existing infrastructure to restore it to an effective operating condition and extend its service life. This might include replacement of individual components as they age or become obsolete. Capital investment in renewal extends the period of service potential but does not change the replacement value, which means it does not increase the size of the infrastructure asset portfolio.

Growth includes investment in new assets as well as investment in existing assets to add or enhance the amenity, all with an eye to improving the type of service provided and/or to improve functionality and/or capacity. Limitations in funding always raise certain questions: What should the City spend on existing assets and on new assets? What will best serve Edmontonians? What is the best use of tax dollars? These and other questions go to the heart of what the City provides citizens. Public infrastructure is essential to residents and businesses. It is critical to the competitiveness of the economy, the quality of life citizens enjoy, and the delivery of public services. Being able to build and properly maintain infrastructure assets is necessary to ensure Edmonton can provide services and remain an attractive and cost-effective place to live and do business.

A core principle of any long-term capital plan is to measure the investment in existing municipal infrastructure to ensure that all assets are in a condition that allows them to meet intended service levels. The best possible balance between growth and renewal makes sure that investments in infrastructure assets maximize benefits, reduce safety risk, and provide satisfactory levels of service to the public.



When the city is aging and growing at the same time, balancing investment choices between renewal and growth is a significant challenge. As infrastructure ages, more maintenance and rehabilitation is required to ensure that it is performing well and continuing to meet the needs of citizens. At the same time, there is always going to be demand for new infrastructure to support growth. The reality is that the City does not have enough funding to meet all its infrastructure needs. Tradeoffs need to be made. The gathering of information, from both data-driven analytics and from listening to what citizens indicate they want and need, is vital.

## City's Approach to Asset Management

The City's approach to asset management is to build an effective, transparent, data-driven system that connects asset investment to strategic goals and service level outcomes. The City has developed performance indicators and raised public awareness of its infrastructure challenges to help define needs. It has identified, developed, and adopted nationally recognized solutions such as evaluation tools, leading-edge models to ascertain long-term infrastructure investment strategies (e.g. the City's Risk-Based Infrastructure Management System (RIMS)), and integrated corporate asset management and capital budgeting. City Policy C598 - Infrastructure Asset Management and the Infrastructure Strategy work towards integrating and maturing our systems across various asset categories and providing improved assessment and asset data management, developing advanced risk analysis techniques, and creating asset specific management plans. Moving hand in hand with these processes will be a series of ongoing conversations with City Council and citizens to establish a more comprehensive level of asset service standards.

Through the Infrastructure Strategy, the City is developing fundamental asset management principles that will be refined and implemented across the City. These principles will focus on these five key themes:

- Service Delivery to Customers,
- Long-Term Sustainability and Resiliency,
- An Integrated, Holistic Approach,
- Investment Decision-Making Innovation, and
- Continuous Improvement.



## Levels of Service

It is important for the City to adhere to defined levels of service, and in doing so balance stakeholder expectations, risk, affordability, time constraints, support City Council priorities, and explore technological advances and evolving markets.

The Infrastructure Asset Management Policy and Infrastructure Strategy identifies that the City shall:

*Have clearly defined Levels of Service, and will target investments to:*

- *Maintain and manage assets at the defined Levels of Service, and*
- *Recognize that Levels of Service can change over time, and therefore monitor standards and service levels to ensure they continue to support community and Council expectations and objectives, and legislative/regulatory compliance.*

*Create a common framework for establishing Levels of Service. The framework should complement and adhere to other City Policy, including the public engagement policy.*

*Establish Levels of Service that will be informed by:*

- *Adherence to all relevant legislative, regulatory, and statutory requirements, where applicable,*
- *A risk-based decision-making framework that considers the impact to stakeholders when evaluating decisions on maintaining and enhancing, or reducing the Levels of Service performance,*
- *Determining the adequate balance between the value of stakeholder service and the cost,*
- *Regular communications to Council and citizens on service performance and/or asset condition,*
- *A clear understanding and evaluation of all options available to provide the service (or its elimination), recognizing advances in technology, marketplace, and changing business models, and*
- *Adherence to industry best practice(s), where applicable.*

Building on the current level of services for community recreation amenities, more comprehensive level of service standards and asset management plans for these assets will be completed by 2022 as defined in the Infrastructure Asset Management Policy and Infrastructure Strategy. Levels of service are the parameters or combination of parameters that reflect socio-cultural, financial/economic, and environmental outcomes that the organization delivers. The levels of service describe the outputs or objectives that the City intends to deliver and includes measures at the corporate, stakeholder, and asset operator levels of the organization. The levels of service are the composite indicators that include quality, quantity, reliability, responsiveness, safety, and cost for each service area or community recreation amenities against which service performance may be measured.



## Capital Funding

The ability to execute on both growth and renewal capital projects is constrained by the amount of available capital funding and debt capacity. Therefore, it is critical to achieve as much certainty as possible around the timing, sources, and amount of funding based on what is known and committed at that time. Funding for capital is provided from various sources both internal and external to the City. The City aims to maximize financing from external sources prior to utilizing internal sources.

The 2019-2028 Capital Investment Outlook and the 2019-2022 capital budget support the strategic direction of City Council and were developed around the following principles:

- Prioritize projects to achieve the best results for the city overall,
- Use cash (i.e. Pay-As-You-Go and grant funding) for ongoing projects (e.g. maintenance and renewal),
- Use borrowing for new significant projects that are eligible according to the Debt Management Fiscal Policy,
- Borrowing capacity is a consideration,
- Align capital projects to the City's 2050 vision, 10-year strategic goals and corporate outcomes approved by City Council,
- Optimize investment in existing municipal infrastructure to ensure all assets are in a condition that allows them to meet intended service levels,
- Allocate resources to achieve an appropriate balance between the renewal of existing infrastructure and the demand for new infrastructure growth, and
- Identify and account for all future operating, maintenance, and renewal costs associated with capital projects, and include those costs in future budgets as appropriate.

## Project Development and Delivery Approach

City Policy C591 - Capital Project Governance, approved by City Council in April 2018, requires all capital projects to follow the Project Development and Delivery Model. The model is a phased approach that includes formal checkpoint reviews as projects progress through the strategy, concept, design, build, and operate value chain.

The Project Development and Delivery Model intends to ensure that an appropriate level of development has been completed on projects prior to them transitioning to the delivery phase. City Council and Administration will be able to make more informed decisions by providing more accurate information at defined points in the development of a capital project leading to clearer project outcomes, effective utilization of capital spending as well as enhanced transparency and communication regarding the project delivery process.

In the case of both growth and renewal of community recreation projects, Administration will bring the projects forward for City Council's consideration following the completion of planning and initial design work. In turn, Administration can conduct robust evaluations of alternatives and scope (with input from key stakeholders through the application of public engagement best practices), increasing the ability for the City to regularly deliver on budget and schedule. Once infrastructure projects have gone through the appropriate level of planning and design in accordance with the Project Development and Delivery Model, City Council will receive an update and will have the capacity at that point to approve additional funding for projects to continue through



detailed design and construction as prescribed by the Project Development and Delivery Model and capital budget processes.

Two public engagement charters guide the public engagement for community recreation facility growth and renewal developments that are aligned with the requirements of the City Policy C593 - Public Engagement Policy. The policy sets the foundation for this engagement program, including a focus on supporting decision making and reporting back. Facility growth and renewal projects align with the overall Community and Recreation Facility mandate: To enhance the liveability and vibrancy of our city by providing places and opportunities for all Edmontonians to gather, connect, recreate and celebrate. Growth and renewal projects allow for change and the provision of recreation opportunities for Edmontonians. Insightful, meaningful public engagement concerning the programming within community recreation facilities helps ensure that this mandate is achieved.

## New Community Recreation Facilities

The development of new community recreation facilities is expected to occur in new growth areas of the city in order to meet the City's basic commitment to residents, beginning with the consideration of on ice, in water, or gymnasiums and fitness centres as a starting point. Areas with the highest rates of growth will be in urban growth and developing areas (outer edges of the city) where populations are expected to increase by almost 150%, as well as within the city's downtown, where populations are expected to more than double. Population density within the downtown is expected to extend beyond 50 people per hectare over the next 20 years, a density level far exceeding any other areas of the city. While this population has geographic access to recreation opportunities currently (thus satisfying the basic commitment), the anticipated growth in demand will require renewal of existing facilities and the development of new partnerships.

In 2018, the City is actively planning and developing facilities to address growth in the western half of the city through design and future development of the Lewis Farms Community Recreation Centre pending approvals.

Beyond projects already underway, defining where and when the next new facilities should be located in growing and developing areas of the city is explained through a combination of current and projected growth, the City's basic commitment, and expected short-term growth.

Determining where to focus limited resources when contemplating new community recreation facility development to meet the City's basic commitment in new and growing areas is the function of the current build-out, short-term share of expected lot growth, the Infrastructure Strategy, and nearby facility development as well as the prerequisites outlined in the Facility Planning Method (i.e. land availability, existing site servicing, and user market critical mass). The intent is that the basic commitment will be met for all residents when complete build-out occurs (when an area has been fully serviced and developed); it is already being met in most areas in the city within the Anthony Henday ring road and many areas outside of it as well.



## What This All Means: Capital Investment in New Facilities

The City of Edmonton is committed to developing multi-purpose, flexible, and adaptable community recreation facilities that will serve as community hubs in these areas, to be operated in a manner to serve the greatest number of citizens through a wide range of programming and animation strategies. Further, these types of facilities best meet the vision, goals, and guiding principles of this long-term planning model.

Since the basic commitment for major indoor facility development is primarily provided at the district level (5 kilometre catchment) and district facilities typically serve populations between 60,000 and 100,000, those area structure plans with populations below this range will be serviced in combination with other areas (e.g. Horse Hill and Pilot Sound together have a projected build out of 110,000 and thus will be serviced concurrently).

Potential partnerships may influence the timing of new facilities in growth areas (or require a phased approach to development should timing of the City and partners not align), such as the partnership opportunity in the Heritage Valley Area Structure Plan in 2018, due to a new school being planned on the district park site (the same site on the area structure plan identifying where a new community recreation facility could be built in the future).

Based on this rationale, the area structure plan requiring community recreation facility development next (after the completion of the Lewis Farms Community Recreation Centre) in order to achieve the City's basic commitment to residents is Heritage Valley in southwest Edmonton. After Heritage Valley, the next area structure plans that could warrant facility development would be Ellerslie and Southeast (combined) in the long term along with the other area structure plans outlined; sequencing would be determined as growth emerges in each area. As new builds begin, ice, water, or gymnasiums and fitness centres would be considered as priorities within each facility, and the City would explore additional amenities based on the prioritization criteria detailed earlier.



## Development in Established, Mature, and Core Areas

Suggested development of new community recreation facilities is not exclusive to newly developing areas in the outer edges of the city. The provision of facilities is necessary throughout the city to meet the basic commitment to residents and to ensure recreation services are available.

The provision of district level facilities is based on proximity to resident targets. Central downtown areas will see significant growth in the future. Although basic commitments within these neighbourhoods are being met with existing facilities, increases in population density in the downtown may warrant the development of new facilities in these neighbourhoods. As the density of the downtown core intensifies, securing land and/or space for these new facilities will be a priority, as will working with partners - including school boards, Joint Use Agreement partners, the private sector, and the development industry - to invest and/or deliver programming in facilities.

Given site availability constraints in mature areas, this enhanced level of service will have to occur in a different way than it will occur in newly developing areas. Rather than the construction of completely new facilities, the Approach instead affirms the need for continued reinvestment in aging facilities (where appropriate, and where levels of service criteria are not being met) reflecting a standard of renewal to ensure facilities meet a basic level of service.

## Infrastructure Supporting Emerging Amenity Needs

Since the 2005-2015 Recreation Facility Master Plan was approved, Edmonton has changed substantially, and it will continue to transform over the next two decades. As Edmonton's demographic profile shifts, its population ages, and new Canadians call the city home, the recreation activities desired may alter as well. As such, the City's recreation facilities need to be flexible enough to not only accommodate growth in the amenities captured within the scope of the Facility Planning Method but also to support a range of other activities and needs that will surface as Edmonton grows. As new amenities become increasingly popular, recreation spaces will need to accommodate these shifting demands for the "evolution of spaces" based on needs assessments and understanding the recreation network, availability of other amenities in the district or neighbourhood, and the basic commitment to residents. In recent years, the City has responded accordingly to the growing demand for new amenities. The Approach must remain flexible enough to continue to accommodate new recreation and sports activities, particularly as it can be expected that increasing demand for new amenities will also continue in parallel with the changing face of Edmonton.

The City's current multi-purpose community recreation centres have adjusted well to the changing face of recreation demands in Edmonton. They have been purposely built to be flexible spaces designed to accommodate multiple demands and needs. Translating these emerging amenity needs into the future means that investment in new facilities and existing facilities incorporates the guiding principles detailed here and meets the broader needs of the community.



# Implementation

## Capital Investment in New and Reinvestment of Community Recreation Facilities

The following table outlines expected capital project budget ranges based on 2018 construction market values and includes investment in new community recreation facilities as well as significant reinvestment in existing facilities. It is important to note that the construction/operational justification and timing associated with these projects may be adjusted as new market information becomes available.

<b>Growth: Investment in New and Reinvestment in Community Recreation Facilities</b>			
<b>Project</b>	<b>Timing</b>	<b>Capital</b>	<b>Justification</b>
<b>Coronation Community Recreation Centre</b>	Short Term	\$\$\$\$	Partnership / Funding Approved (Capital Profile: 15-21-5801)
<b>Lewis Farms Community Recreation Centre</b>	Short Term	\$\$\$\$	Required to Meet Basic Commitment
<b>Terwillegar Heights Artificial Turf or Londonderry Artificial Turf Facility</b>	Short Term	\$	Facility Planning Method Amenity Recommended for Enhancement
<b>South Edmonton Soccer Centre Expansion</b>	Short Term	\$\$	Partnership
<b>Heritage Valley Community Recreation Centre Phase 1</b>	Short Term	\$	Partnership / Required to Meet Basic Commitment
<b>Legend:</b>			
\$ = Less than \$20 million			
\$\$ = Less than \$50 million			
\$\$\$ = Less than \$100 million			
\$\$\$\$ = Over \$100 million			
Short-term = 5 years			

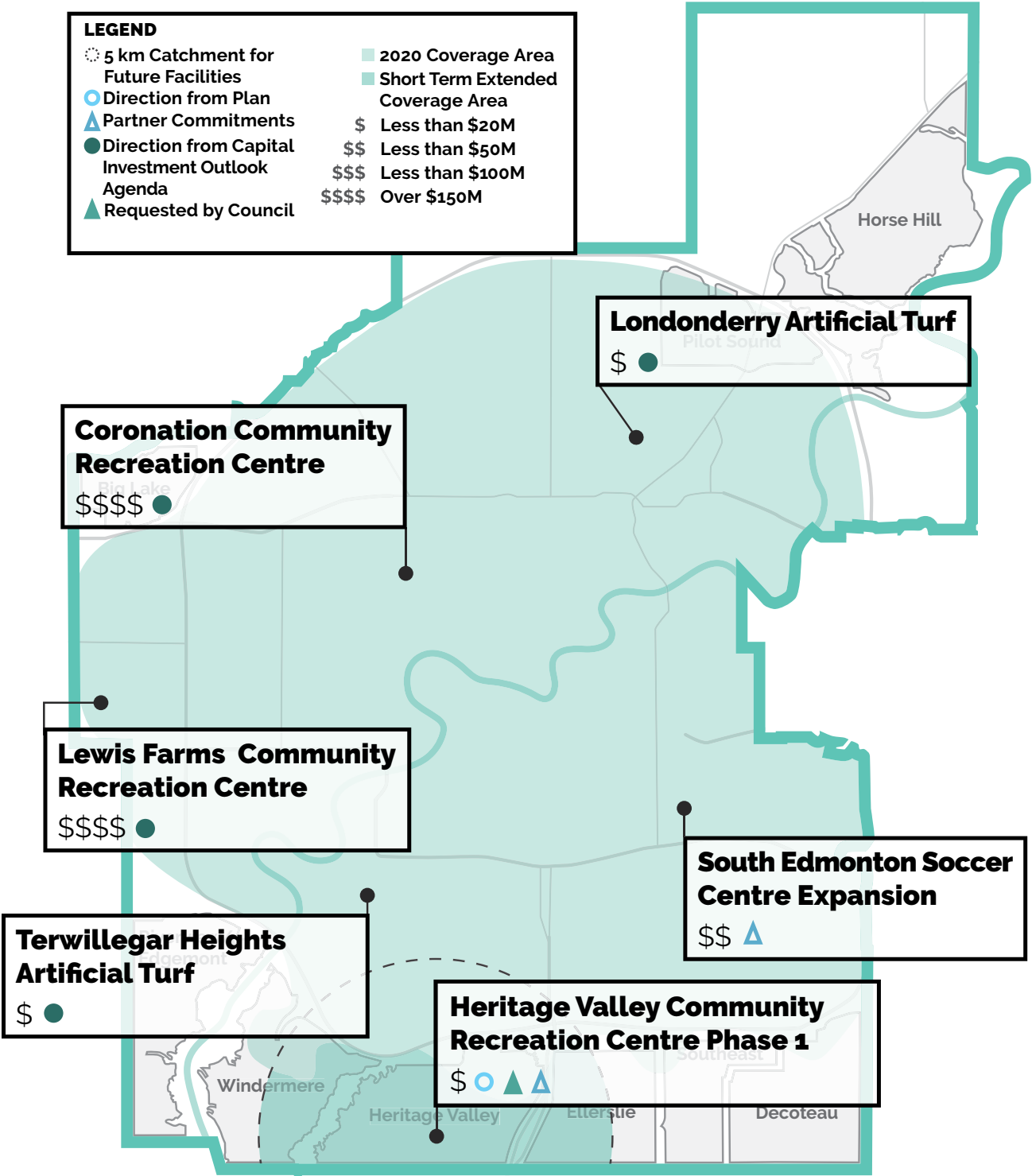
*Note: The City is consolidating future indoor ice arena facilities in groups of two or more where possible to create economies of scale related to operating costs and enable broader programming capabilities. The City is aiming to replace six aging indoor ice arenas and has identified three sites for the location of future twin-pad arenas: Bonnie Doon, North Central, and University of Alberta.*



# Growth: Investment in New and Reinvestment in Community Recreation Facilities

**LEGEND**

○ 5 km Catchment for Future Facilities	■ 2020 Coverage Area
○ Direction from Plan	■ Short Term Extended Coverage Area
▲ Partner Commitments	\$ Less than \$20M
● Direction from Capital Investment Outlook	\$\$ Less than \$50M
▲ Agenda	\$\$\$ Less than \$100M
▲ Requested by Council	\$\$\$\$ Over \$150M



## Capital Investment in Existing Community Recreation Facilities

The overall average age of community recreation facilities in Edmonton is between 30 and 40 years while the expected life cycle for community recreation facilities typically ranges between 40 and 50 years. The need to invest, and in some cases replace, community recreation facilities will become more apparent over the next 20 years than it ever has been before.

The City's asset management practices provide a framework for when renewal will occur on existing community recreation facilities which is supported by asset management plans and defined levels of services for each asset type.

Every four years during the City's capital budget process, the renewal needs of the City's infrastructure are assessed and priorities for renewal investments are determined based on the physical condition of the assets at that time. For community recreation facilities, this will include investment to sustain existing facilities, such as arenas, leisure centres, and recreation centres, with the objective to extend the life cycle of the facility and continue operating as efficiently as possible. The priority lists are provided through the capital budget process. A list of conceptual projects (and projects in the early stages of development) can be found in the 2019-2028 Capital Investment Outlook.

## Working in Diverse Relationships and Partnerships

Relationships and partnerships regarding community recreation facilities enable the City to leverage limited public resources in the planning and construction of infrastructure. They also can be a catalyst for enhanced animation of those same facilities. Animation related relationships or partnerships may emerge with other community recreation service providers as well as organizations operating in other sectors but interested in similar outcomes to those of the City. As well, relationships or partnerships with other sectors, such as post-secondary education providers, may help the City generate and analyze information and data and demonstrate community impact in new and untraditional ways.

## How we Partner

The City of Edmonton recognizes that it cannot effectively meet City objectives alone, and relationships and partnerships are required to achieve priorities and build a great city. Relationships and partnerships are key enablers in driving the achievement of City Council's strategic plan, the corporate business plan, and the Approach. A partnership is defined here as an agreement between the City and one or more organizations to advance common goals, and recognizing shared:

- Outcomes and objectives,
- Investment of resources and risk, and
- Accountability, decision making, and results<sup>6</sup>.

The Modernized MGA (2018) will require that the City have Inter-municipal Collaboration Frameworks (IFC's) focusing specifically on recreation services with all municipalities it shares a geographic boundary with. It will also require municipalities to have **Joint Use Planning Agreements** in place with local school jurisdictions that outlines reciprocal use as well as land use an allocation planning issues.

6 From: Relationship and Partnership Framework 2018-2022

Partners have long played a role in the development, delivery, and animation of recreation spaces and amenities in Edmonton. Many recreation opportunities are available at both the metropolitan and district levels and are supported by partnerships through the provision of facilities such as the indoor soccer centres. At the neighbourhood level, the City's relationship and support of the School Board's Joint Use Agreement plays a significant role in providing local recreation opportunities, both through the coordination of land and facilities.

In 2009, City Council approved City Policy C187A - Enhancing Community Facility Services through Partnerships. This policy established a framework of principles and procedures to guide developing and ongoing partnership relationships. These partnerships provide public recreation opportunities, benefit the community, and enhance community recreation facilities for the citizens of Edmonton. Essential elements of the policy include:

## Partner Identification

The City will seek out partnerships where:

- Community expectations extend beyond City of Edmonton planned service levels,
- Improved service levels will be provided,
- Innovative public recreation and leisure opportunities including specialty facilities are provided, and
- Facility optimization, connectedness, and vibrancy are realized to service broader community needs.

## Partner Selection

Partners are selected in an open, transparent process consistent with established City business practices to determine the overall benefit to the community and value to the citizens of Edmonton.

## Ongoing Evaluation

Throughout the partnership, ongoing partner performance is completed to ensure that services provided in the partnership are offered effectively and reliably to citizens. Evaluation of existing partnerships determines if there is still a mutual benefit or if a change is required.

Partnerships are an essential aspect of the City's provision of recreation infrastructure and overall opportunities. Specifically, the City utilizes a number of approaches to partner with organizations in the provision of recreation facilities and amenity spaces. The following chart provides an overview of these partnership approaches.

Note the following engagement results have been taken from the household telephone survey and group web survey:

- 54% of City residents indicated that they used a recreation facility in a neighbouring community in the last year.
- 83% of households suggested that the municipalities in the Edmonton region should work together to provide recreation facilities for residents.

Partnership Type	Description	Implementation Mechanisms
<b>Capital Contributions</b>	Direct provision of capital funds and/or land from the City to a community organization that results in the enhancement or new development of a recreation facility and/or amenity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community Facility Partner Capital Grant Policy C562B</li> <li>• Provision of land as available</li> <li>• City support via Community Group Led Construction Guide and defined city liaison supports</li> </ul>
<b>Operational Contributions</b>	Ongoing financial support, often in the form of a grant, to support an organization's ongoing operations of a facility.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community Investment Grant to Organizations and Individuals C211H (i.e. operating, hosting &amp; travel)</li> </ul>
<b>Lease</b>	Lease of a City owned facility to a community organization.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Formation of lease agreements based on the parameters outlined in City Policy C187A (Enhancing Community Facility Services through Partnerships)</li> <li>• Non-profit Leasing Guidelines Procedure</li> </ul>
<b>Subsidized Facility Access</b>	Provision of subsidized time at City operated facilities to community organizations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As per City bookings and allocations policies and procedures.</li> </ul>
<b>Planning Support</b>	Provision of City staff and resources to assist groups with strategic facility planning needs and requirements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Through ongoing community group collaborations and communications</li> <li>• Project planning funding stream of the Community Facility Partner Capital Grant Policy C562B</li> <li>• City support via Community Group Led Construction Guide and defined city liaison supports</li> </ul>



## Partnerships and Relationships to Support Infrastructure

In the context of the Facility Planning Method, amenities are distinguished between those amenities delivered by the City on its own (primary) and those built, developed and programmed in partnership (secondary). Moving forward, it is anticipated that more secondary facilities and amenities will be needed to reflect the changing nature of recreation in Edmonton and the financial challenges associated with the City solely developing these spaces on its own. As such, partnerships and relationships with recreation organizations and regions are encouraged, to develop facilities, deliver programs, and manage spaces. Further, given the capital costs associated with the investment in developing new facilities and the renewal of existing recreation spaces, the City will continue to explore the range of potential funding sources for public recreation facilities, including partnerships and relationships with other orders of government, community organizations and the private sector. The City will continue to provide capital support to partners for the development of recreation facilities and amenities through the Community Facility Partner Capital Grant Program which supports projects that enhance public use facilities so Edmontonians can thrive in an active and attractive city. In 2017, the Community Facility Partner Capital Grant Program provided \$7.2 million in funding to partners. Over the past five years (2013-2017), the City has provided approximately \$17.7 million in funding through the program.

## Partnerships and Relationships to Support Operations

The City is also engaged in partnerships with other organizations beyond community recreation facility infrastructure and related to providing recreation opportunities through programs and services. Many of the partnership arrangements supported by the City are through operating grants. Through the Community Investment Operating Grant, these grants target different types of activities, interests, and demographics and change as market conditions evolve.

Partnerships and relationships between the City and local school jurisdictions primarily take two forms:

- Enabling reciprocal access to school and community recreation facilities, and
- Joint facility and/or site development.

The City currently has a Joint Use Agreement with local school authorities that facilitates community use of school facilities and school use of community recreation facilities. This agreement is periodically revisited to ensure optimal use of public facilities. Joint Use Planning Agreements will be reviewed and updated regularly.

Many of the City's existing partnerships and relationships, either in terms of capital project development or the delivery of recreation opportunities are with community organizations (e.g. community leagues, sport and recreation groups, etc.) or educational institutions (schools, post-secondary, etc.).

Partnerships and relationships regarding community recreation facilities enable the City to leverage limited public resources by being a catalyst for enhanced animation of those same facilities. As well, partnerships and relationships with other sectors, such as post-secondary education providers, may help the City generate and analyze information and data and demonstrate community impact in new and non-traditional ways.



**Municipal Strategic Direction and Areas for Community and Recreation Facilities and Amenities are Defined Independently**

**Political and Administrative Will to Collaborate is Demonstrated**

**Areas of Strategic and Tactical Overlap are Identified**

**Feasibility and Business Case are Explored and Proven for Collaborative Projects**

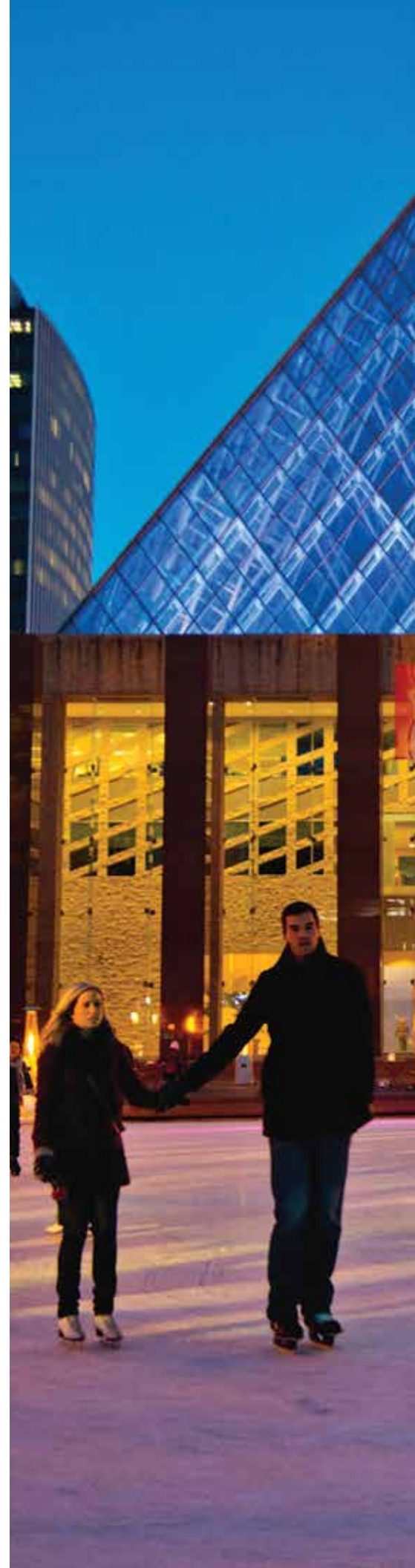
**Regional Community and Recreation Facility and Amenity Projects Emerge**

## Partnerships and Relationships in the Region

The City is part of the broader region, a region that includes a number of other rural and urban municipalities that also invest in community recreation facilities and amenities to varying degrees. The potential for partnership with regional municipalities in the provision of community recreation facilities and opportunities warrants exploration under the following conditions:

1. The City's independent needs for community recreation facilities, amenities, and opportunities are defined.
2. The City's independent needs overlap or are of mutual benefit with those of potential regional municipal partners.
3. User markets of critical mass and associated benefit from community recreation facility and amenity development extend beyond municipal boundaries.

Prior to meaningful regional collaboration, the City must clarify its priorities, and so too must its potential regional partners. Once these independent needs are known, the process as outlined in the flowchart above will help the City and regional areas navigate potential future regional partnerships related to community recreation facility and amenity development.



Partnerships with regional municipalities or other organizations related to the provision of community recreation facilities are important and will continue to be in the future.

Partnerships are vital to contributing to diverse community recreation facility opportunities available to citizens; they are essential when citizens expectations and needs extend beyond the City's basic commitment to residents. Future capital projects and the recommendations related to the City's role in animating community recreation facilities will most likely be implemented through a combination of City and partner involvement. The Facility Planning Method outlines a process for partnerships to be considered from the community organizations, private, and public sectors (regional municipalities, other levels of government, school authorities, and post-secondary).

Ongoing acceptance of partnership proposals through existing channels is expected to continue over time and influence capital projects on an ongoing basis.

## Operating Investment

### Facility Animation and Increasing Participation

The provision of community recreation facilities is an important function for the City of Edmonton. Recreation facilities create a common good where they provide significant, economic, and social benefits throughout the community, city and region. Those who use and/or visit facilities have the opportunity to benefit even more from public investment in these essential services as they can become healthier and more connected to their community.

To get the most benefit from its investment in community recreation facilities, the City must also consider how to enhance and sustain activity in these environments, and create spaces for people to connect in planned and unintentional ways. Animating spaces, either via direct programming, enabling other parties to access spaces, or by providing spontaneous drop-in opportunities, ensures that the network of community recreation facilities reaches its full potential. Again, partners play a vital role. The City will continue to partner with community organizations to provide all Edmontonians with a diverse range of recreation and sport opportunities, in line with the Approach to Community Recreation Facility Planning in Edmonton.

What stands between the network reaching full potential or not are barriers residents and visitors face to participation and visitation. Barriers can be physical, social, or financial. Successful animation of recreation amenities by the City and through partners requires that these barriers be addressed, that the guiding principles shaping this long-term approach are met, and that recreation facilities and amenities continue to reflect changing health and wellness needs of Edmontonians.



## Accessibility

The City of Edmonton recognizes that in the diversity of human experience, there are many types of accessibility, beyond just physical accessibility. Accessibility to community recreation opportunities can also be considered as:

- Geographic (location relative to residents and provision across the city),
- Financial (free to access or different levels of cost to participate), and
- Social (completely open regardless of skill, ability, health, culture, and language level perspectives and other social determinants).

### Addressing Physical Accessibility

Physical accessibility of community recreation facilities is a priority for all new and redevelopment capital projects. Building codes, leading practices, and interaction with potential users can help positively influence the design and construction process to ensure that newly developed spaces accommodate all abilities. This practice is already apparent in existing City design standards and practices; both of which will be updated on a regular basis as new information becomes available.

Older assets in the City's inventory do not always achieve desired physical accessibility. The City is committed to investing in improving accessibility wherever possible. Updating existing community recreation facilities to enhance physical accessibility where required will be possible using a prioritized and phased approach based on need. This recommendation is already being enacted through City policies and is supported by and consistent with the vision, goals, and principles related to community recreation facilities outlined in the Facility Planning Method.

### Addressing Geographic Accessibility

The intentions of the City as it relates to geographic accessibility have been articulated with proximity targets for certain types of opportunities.

### Addressing Financial Accessibility

As it relates to financial accessibility, the public provision of community recreation facilities is focused on the following:

- The City will provide low/no-cost opportunities at community recreation facilities where feasible,
- The City will set user fees which are affordable while respecting the local tax base and targets for efficient cost recovery. This may include options such as differential pricing for peak times or for bulk time spent at a facility (e.g. reduction in prices through memberships for those that visit more often), and
- The City will continue to ensure that financial assistance programs are in place for those who need them and will continually strive to mitigate barriers to accessing these programs (e.g. social stigma, language barriers, physical barriers, etc.).

The needs assessment and gap analysis findings outline financial accessibility gaps that the City should focus on in the short- to mid-term of the Approach. These gaps are listed as follows along with potential ideas and actions on how to address them.





Gap	Recommendations	Timing
While financial assistance programs do exist, both directly and through partners, financial accessibility remains a barrier for some residents.	That investment in existing City sponsored financial assistance programs to be sustained, monitored, and potentially increased if warranted where possible.	Short term (in progress)
While efforts do exist to increase resident knowledge about financial accessibility programs, including no-cost/low-cost programs, some residents are still not aware of these opportunities throughout the City.	That existing City sponsored programs, as well as all other available to residents, be inventoried and shared with residents via marketing and promotional efforts, where possible.  That the inventory of all free community recreation facility opportunities be regularly updated and shared with residents and visitors via purpose-built communications efforts.	Short term (in progress)

## Addressing Social Accessibility

The needs assessment and gap analysis findings also outline a number of social accessibility gaps. These gaps are listed below along with potential ideas and actions to address them.

Gap	Recommendations	Timing
While customer service is a priority, enhanced training is perceived to be needed, especially, to be welcoming to those with diverse backgrounds and abilities into community recreation facilities.	That the City continue to offer customer service training to all staff (front line and management) including components on diversity and inclusion to reduce participation barriers where at all possible.	Short term (in progress)
Additional focus could be placed on making sure there are introductory level and inclusive programs provided at community recreation facilities so that new participants are more likely to engage in activity and to enhance physical literacy for all.	That the City facilitate, and provide if necessary, introductory level programming for activities that occur in community recreation facilities to ensure all residents have an opportunity in publicly funded spaces.	Short term (in progress)
Through the engagement process, particularly the stakeholder interviews, the City was encouraged to animate community recreation facilities to respect and plan for cultural and lifestyle dynamics.	That the City, through its direct programming and through the influence it has with other providers, ensure that the unique dynamics of culture and lifestyle are considered in program and opportunity design.	Short term (in progress)

The public provision of community recreation facilities is grounded in the guiding principles and focused on the following:

- The City will provide access to facilities on an equitable basis regardless of age, gender, gender expression, gender identity, physical or mental ability, family status, ancestry or place of origin, ethnicity, race, religion, how they travel to the facility, their recreational preferences, levels of ability, special needs, or financial resources.
- The City will provide spaces within community recreation facilities that promote social cohesion, interaction, and connectivity.
- The City will provide places that accommodate different sport and recreation interests — both traditional and new/emerging — and skill levels (from recreational to high-performance in a variety of activities).
- The City will provide community recreation facilities that are physically accessible, safe, and welcoming.

The City provides levels of service beyond the geographic access targets, social and financial intentions, and the intended opportunity mix outlined in the City's basic commitment for community recreation facilities. This extended level of service enables the City to differentiate in terms of community recreation opportunities and enhance resident and visitor quality of life. The provision of amenities not integral to the basic commitment, such as outdoor pools or multi-amenity outdoor sports parks, is one way Edmonton stands out as a community that people want to be a part of and visit.

## Accessibility and Design Influences

Community recreation facilities are more than just infrastructure. They serve as places to connect, play, recreate, and grow. They need to be attractive, safe, accessible, functional, and engaging. Enhancing and sustaining activity in these facilities means delivering programs and services in a manner that fosters these and other qualities. As a result, beyond data gathering, partnership opportunities and funding considerations to support planning and provision, there are a number of high-level design influences that should be embedded in the planning and design of new and existing community recreation facilities. These design influences nurture feelings of safety, environmental responsibility, inclusivity, and accessibility, and they include but are not limited to:

- Environmental sustainability and climate resiliency,
- Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design,
- Sponsorship and exposure for those advertising in City recreation facilities,
- Activity integration/blending,
- Indoor-outdoor integration,
- Age- and child-friendly,
- Indigenous truth and reconciliation,
- Gender Based Analysis Plus, and
- Transit-oriented design and multi-modal transportation.

Where possible, community recreation facilities and amenities should be planned and developed through these complementary lenses and guiding policies. These influences align well with the 12 guiding principles of the Approach and, taken together, will ensure recreation amenities and programs are safe, accessible, and inclusive for all.



## Local Needs Assessment/Engagement

To ensure that community recreation facilities are relevant, that they meet community needs, and that they optimize public investment, the City must undertake constant industry research and dialogue with the public and stakeholders (including citizens, City staff, partners, user groups, visitors, etc.).

Ongoing, succinct, and coordinated public engagement with stakeholders will help to measure performance, understand majority preferences, and determine demand of community recreation facilities. It will also uncover new information about the community recreation facility market which will provide necessary inputs for the Approach to Community Recreation Facility Planning in Edmonton, and associated tools and frameworks. It is recommended that the City undertake a coordinated, time series, standardized approach to community recreation facility public engagement including periodic surveys of the public and stakeholder groups and ongoing conversations with partners and other stakeholders. Although City staff have had success in connecting with residents and groups related to specific community recreation facility projects and related planning exercises such as Breathe: Edmonton's Green Network Strategy and Live Active, there is no coordinated approach to ongoing input gathering. When regular engagement is complemented by an ongoing research program related to community recreation facilities, City staff will be able to make informed decisions, influence strategic action through revisiting the Facility Planning Method, and share important information with community recreation facility partners.

In order to develop and administer an ongoing research and engagement program to support community recreation facility planning and provision, the City may bring on partners to help. The research will include referencing industry publications, professional development for staff, and determining utilization data for all publicly supported amenities. Strategic alliances with post-secondary institutions, community organizations, regional municipalities, or private sector consultants could be included.



## Recommendations

Community recreation facilities are key to quality of life in Edmonton and the surrounding region and their prudent planning help ensure they continue to serve as community hubs enabling all residents to be active, creative, and healthy. The planning context, Facility Planning Method and the planning roadmap in the Approach have delineated a long-term picture to ensure community recreation facilities are designed, developed, and maintained to meet the high expectations of Edmontonians and a growing city. The following recommendations are identified as a means to advance the development of new recreation spaces and places while ensuring existing facilities within mature communities are invested in for renewal and reinvestment/modernization. Each recommendation is accompanied with appropriate and relevant performance metrics and anticipated timelines for implementation.

## Capital Investment

Recommendation	Timeline
1. That the City of Edmonton continue to emphasize and focus on the development of multi-purpose community recreation centres (where possible).	Short term (in progress)
2. That capital development of new facilities and the redevelopment of existing is based on the basic commitment to residents to provide recreation facilities within 5 kilometres of their home (typically will include arenas, swimming pools, gymnasiums and fitness centres as a starting point). This basic commitment will help to identify areas for new facilities and the need to retain, enhance or replace existing facilities. It will also provide for the consideration of alternatives where service levels exceed the basic commitment. It is further recommended that if an existing facility or amenity does not meet its level of service due to functional obsolescence, it will be understood that this facility is not contributing to meeting the basic commitment.	Short term
3. That building on the current levels of service for each community recreation amenity, more comprehensive level of service standards and asset management plans for these assets be completed by 2022 as defined in the Asset Management Policy and Infrastructure Strategy. These levels of service and the basic commitments will be achieved through capital investment in both renewal and growth, where priority for growth includes reinvestment in aging facilities (where appropriate)	Short term
4. That partnership opportunities be explored for community recreation facility capital projects. Partnerships could emerge between regional municipalities, schools, community organizations, or the private sector and would be explored on a case by case basis. Partners are required for secondary amenities. Exploration of partnership opportunities should take place during the planning phase. It is further recommended that a process for the proactive engagement of partners be developed.	Short term (in progress)
5. The Edmonton Community Sustainability Coalition should continue to explore partnerships with local school authorities related to community recreation facility development and reciprocal use	Short term
6. That before any capital is invested, the business case defines alignment with the following strategic directions: review of the basic commitment, assessment of amenity priorities and strategic directions, input and research related to needs. Depending on the scope of the project, a site master plan may be required.	Short term
<p><b>Legend:</b>            In Progress = occurring presently            Short term = present - 2026            Medium term = 2027-2034            Long term = 2035+</p>	

Recommendation	Timeline
7. That all capital investment in facilities (new and existing) have as minimal an environmental footprint as possible and be aligned with the Sustainable Building Policy, Greenhouse Gas Management Plan, Edmonton's Environmental Management System Policy, Environmental Policy, and the Climate Change Adaptation Strategy and Action Plan.	Short term (in progress)
8. That public engagement charters and plans are in place for community recreation facility (capital) development.	Short term
<p><b>Legend:</b>            In Progress = occurring presently            Short term = present - 2026            Medium term = 2027-2034            Long term = 2035+</p>	

## Operating Investment

The Approach provides recommendations related to the animating of these essential public places. The following table captures these recommendations:

Recommendation	Timeline
1. That the City continue to undertake a coordinated, time series, standardized approach to community recreation facility public engagement including periodic surveys of the public and stakeholder groups and ongoing conversations with partners and other stakeholders.	Short term
2. That the City take a leadership role in coordinating a regional conversation about community recreation facilities. This coordination should satisfy the requirement of recreation-focused Intermunicipal Collaboration Frameworks (which is required to be completed by April 1, 2020, with each municipality the City shares a border with) and go beyond in improving cooperation and service delivery related to community recreation facilities throughout the Edmonton Metropolitan Region for years to come.	Short term
3. That the City strengthen intermunicipal relationships by working with the Edmonton Community Sustainability Coalition to build upon existing Joint Use Agreements in place with local school jurisdictions in fulfilling the requirement of Joint Use Planning Agreements as per the City Charter and modernized Municipal Government Act which will need to occur within three years after the regulation comes into effect, estimated to occur in spring 2018.	Short term (in progress)
4. That moving forward the City continue to proactively seek and work with partners, both community organizations and private sector, to deliver a broad spectrum of programs and services within existing and new recreation facilities to meet the changing needs of communities and citizens.	Short term (in progress)
<p><b>Legend:</b>            In Progress = occurring presently            Short term = present - 2026            Medium term = 2027-2034            Long term = 2035+</p>	

Recommendation	Timeline
5. That the programming and animation of recreation facilities and amenities address the many Truth and Reconciliation calls to action to address improved health outcomes of indigenous peoples; foster Indigenous inclusion; support community sports programs reflective of Indigenous peoples; deliver culturally relevant programs for coaches, trainers and sports officials; and provide anti-racism awareness and training programs. Doing so will help bring to life many of the guiding principles framing this plan.	Short term
6. That sufficient time is made available within all amenities for programming, spontaneous drop-in, and user groups for balanced service delivery.	Short term (in progress)
7. That for each amenity, allocation of time is based on standards of play reflecting current governing bodies' mandates, physical literacy recommendations, and Canadian Sport for Life/ Long-Term Athlete Development guidelines <sup>7</sup> .	Short term
8. That associated user fees and facilities made available for rent to user groups and community members are aligned to help the City achieve a balance between its financial and social goals.	Short term (in progress)
9. That the direction provided for each amenity within the scope of the Approach (as articulated in the amenity chapters) be implemented as appropriate.	Short term
<p><b>Legend:</b>            In Progress = occurring presently            Short term = present - 2026            Medium term = 2027-2034            Long term = 2035+</p>	



7 [http://sportforlife.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/LTAD-2.1-EN\\_web.pdf?xg6000](http://sportforlife.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/LTAD-2.1-EN_web.pdf?xg6000)

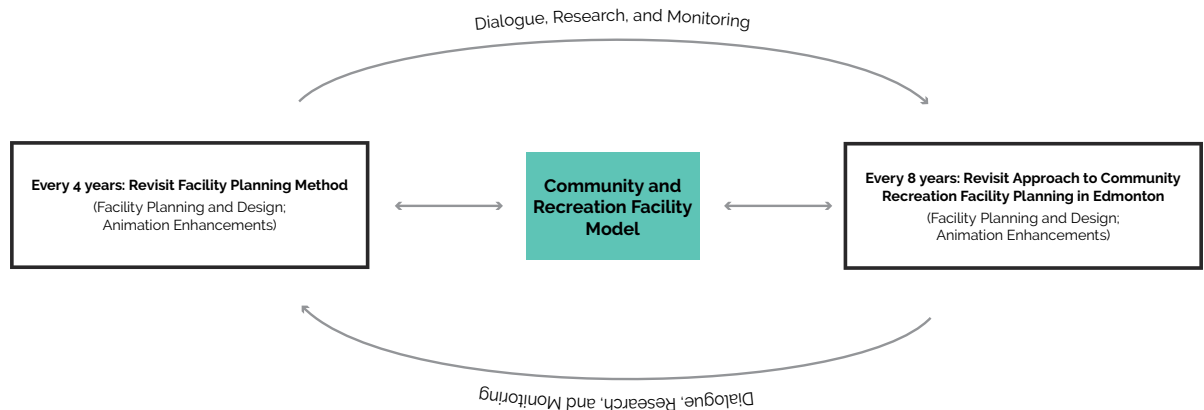
# 05

## Conclusion and Next Steps

Over the last decade, Edmonton has seen significant growth in its recreation facility network due to a complementary combination of factors and sound planning efforts. The Approach intends to build on this momentum and help Edmonton adapt and animate its recreation spaces and places to meet the shifting health, wellness, community, and recreation needs of Edmontonians.

The Approach outlines the strategic direction for community recreation facilities and amenities based upon current 2018 market information. A plan like this needs to be flexible in able to adapt to changing conditions; the application of the Facility Planning Method will enable the City and its partners to adapt. For this reason, the application of the Facility Planning Method will need to be revisited periodically (every four years in alignment with the capital budget cycle). The timing of this review and revision (as necessary) will need to occur in alignment to capital investment planning so as to shape future direction in this regard.

The development of this approach has been based on thorough public and stakeholder engagement, sound research, and extensive planning and documentation already in place for the City and its partners. The process has started a dialogue with the public and groups which the City intends to continue and revisit. As new information becomes available, the Approach will be able to adapt and adjust to make sure public investment is optimized and community benefit from these essential and vibrant community places can be maximized. This work has also resulted in a number of capital investment and facility animation recommendations. These recommendations will be tracked and reported on in successive iterations (every four years) of the Approach going forward, timed to guide and influence future capital investment in community recreation facilities and amenities. A number of the recommendations may also be included in annual Community and Recreation Facility branch business plans. In this way, the progress of work in bringing these recommendations to life is transparently communicated to City Council and citizens.



The City is committed to delivering on the projects that have been initiated and it will continue to work to renew existing recreation facility infrastructure in a manner consistent with the guiding principles of the Approach, the basic commitment, and the Facility Planning Method.





# A

## Definitions/Glossary of Terms

The following are definitions of commonly used words, terms, and acronyms that are used throughout this report document.

- **Animation of community recreation facilities:** The entire spectrum of community recreation facility visitation and utilization including organized programming, spontaneous activity, informal and formal social gathering, and spectatorship.
- **Area Structure Plan:** A statutory plan that identifies future neighbourhoods and where residential, commercial, institutional, and recreational sites will be located in a previously undeveloped area and how essential municipal services such as water, sewer systems, and roads will be provided. These plans also describe the number of people that are expected to live in the new area and how development will be staged over time.
- **Basic commitment:** The basic commitment outlines the City's intention to provide citizens with equitable access to community recreation facilities. The commitment is as follows:
  - » Every resident will have a place to connect, be active, and participate in recreation indoors (for example on ice, in water, or gymnasiums and fitness centres) within 5 kilometres of their residence, and
  - » Every resident will have a place to connect, be active, and participate in recreation outdoors within 400 metres of their residence (for example sports fields).
- **Benefits of recreation:** The resulting benefits in the City from public investment in community recreation facilities that are accrued by users (through enhanced personal health and wellness) and non-users (through enhanced community connectedness and cohesion, reduced anti-social behaviours, economic impact, and environmental stewardship) which all residents cannot escape.
- **Community hubs:** A community hub or site is an accessible and inclusive public amenity such as a multi-purpose building or a vibrant community space or place such as a plaza, green space, or street. Community hubs seek to optimize the use of public assets, are designed to encourage public social gatherings, and provide spaces for people to congregate and connect in both planned and incidental ways. Broadly defined, community hubs are public spaces that strengthen citizens' sense of place and connectedness.
- **Community organization:** A non-profit community group with a mandate to provide a program or service to a specific group, and/or area of the city, and/or the entire city.
- **Community recreation amenity:** A specific component within a recreation facility or place. Sports fields, swimming pools, and ice arenas are examples of recreation amenities.
- **Community recreation assets:** Either community recreation facilities or community recreation amenities that form part of the City's overall network of public recreation infrastructure available to residents.
- **Community recreation facility:** A publicly accessible venue for recreation activity to occur; a recreation facility can include any combination of recreation amenities. Examples of recreation facilities are the Terwillegar Community Recreation Centre and the Ivor Dent Sports Park.
- **Critical mass:** A combination of user interest, willingness to pay, and demand required to capitalize and operate a community recreation facility or amenity within the City's standard operating parameters.
- **Direct provision:** Recreation opportunities/services that are delivered by the City of Edmonton.

- **District facility:** A facility that serves at the district level of the recreation network.
- **Edmonton Metropolitan Region:** A conglomerate of 21 municipalities throughout the Edmonton capital region.
- **Facility:** A building or location built with the purpose for participation in the spectrum of recreation and community activities. For the purposes of the Approach, “recreation facilities” include both indoor (arenas, pools, etc.) and outdoor spaces (sports fields, ball diamonds, etc.).
- **Field house:** A large indoor multi-use space with a hard court (non-turf) floor.
- **Functional obsolescence:** A reduction in the usefulness or desirability of an amenity or facility because of outdated design features that cannot be easily changed.
- **Indirect provision:** Recreation opportunities/services that are delivered by partner organizations and supported in some manner by the City of Edmonton.
- **Joint Use Agreement:** Joint Use Agreement - Land means an agreement between the City of Edmonton and the publicly funded school boards that operate in Edmonton dealing with the planning, assembly, and use of school sites in Edmonton. Joint Use Agreement - Facilities means an agreement between the City of Edmonton and the publicly funded school boards that operate in Edmonton dealing with shared access to facilities owned by the City of Edmonton and the school boards.
- **Metropolitan facility:** A facility that serves the entire city within the recreation network.
- **Municipal Government Act:** The law under which all Alberta municipalities are empowered by the Government of Alberta to shape their communities.
- **Neighbourhood facility:** A facility that serves at the neighbourhood level of the recreation network.
- **Non-profit sector provision:** Recreation opportunities that are provided by non-profit sector or by non-profit community organizations and that do not have a formal relationship with the City of Edmonton.
- **Other amenities:** Amenities which the City understands have value to residents and visitors but do not warrant any level of public support due to the level of specialization, limited public access, or community benefit derived.
- **Partner organization:** An organization that has a formalized relationship with the City of Edmonton to provide recreation opportunities. These organizations can include both the public sector (e.g. community organizations, education sector) or the private sector.
- **Partnership:** An agreement between the City and one or more organizations to advance common goals and recognizing shared outcomes and objectives, investment or resources and risks, and accountability, decision making, and results.
- **Primary amenities:** Amenities which the City plays a significant role in the provision of. Although these types of amenities are sometimes offered by partners, the City provides them directly as well. These amenities also comprise the City's basic commitment to residents.
- **Private sector provision:** Recreation opportunities that are provided by the private sector and/or for-profit entities and that do not have a formal relationship with the City of Edmonton.
- **Programming of community recreation facilities:** Includes the facilitation and provision of organized recreation activities and opportunities in community recreation facilities.
- **Project Development and Delivery Model:** The model is a phased approach that includes formal checkpoint reviews as projects progress through the strategy, concept, design, build, and operate value chain.
- **Provision:** The delivery of recreation opportunities/services.
- **Recreation:** Recreation is the experience that results from freely chosen participation in physical, social, intellectual, creative, and spiritual pursuits that enhance individual and community well-being. It is recognized that this is a provincially mandated service of the City of Edmonton.
- **Recreation facility network:** Edmonton has a recreation facility network which provides space for recreation activities and opportunities across the city and region. Similar to a transportation network (which is a spatial network that allows for the movement of people and products through the network of roads, streets, sidewalks, and railways), the recreation network provides spatial infrastructure for recreation.

- **Regional municipality:** Refers to a municipality (urban or rural) in the Edmonton Metropolitan Region.
- **Relationships:** The practice of developing mutually beneficial relationships with external organizations who play a role in achieving the City's vision and goals.
- **Secondary amenities:** Amenities which the City realizes have significant value to residents and visitors, however, they do not receive the same level of investment and attention as those considered as primary amenities. Secondary amenities still warrant public support (where required), but the City would not provide these amenities without a partner. Secondary amenities help the City achieve its vision and goals for community recreation facilities and expand the recreation network to support accessibility to all Edmontonians.
- **Site:** Refers to the overall location that hosts associated recreation infrastructure.

# B

## Population Trends

### Anticipated Growth

The City of Edmonton has experienced rapid growth over the past decade, gaining approximately 202,000 residents between 2006 and 2016; a similar growth in population is anticipated for the next two decades. For context, this growth equates to adding the combined populations of Red Deer and Medicine Hat into Edmonton in a 10-year period.

Future localized growth projections suggest that while mature areas, established neighbourhoods, and developing areas will continue to experience steady growth over the next 20 to 25 years (13% - 27%), the most aggressive growth in the city will occur in the central core given recent focus on downtown development and infill. As reflected in the following chart, the central core is expected to grow by 222% and have a population of nearly 250,000 residents in 20 to 25 years. Population in industrial areas is expected to increase during this time frame as well.

**20 – 25 Year Growth Projections**

Neighbourhood Class	Total CURRENT Population (#)	Proportion of CURRENT Population (%)	Planned FUTURE Population	Planned FUTURE Population Increase (%)
Central Core	77,000	9%	248,000	222%
Mature Areas	285,000	32%	361,000	27%
Established Neighbourhoods	295,000	33%	369,000	25%
Developing Areas	239,000	27%	595,000	149%
Urban Growth Areas	1,500	0%	209,000	13%
Industrial Areas	1,500	0%	15,000	905%
City-Wide	899,000	100%	1,797,000	100%

### Edmonton Metropolitan Region Board Planning

In 2016, the Capital Region Board (now the Edmonton Metropolitan Region Board) published the Edmonton Metropolitan Region Growth Plan with the objective of providing a comprehensive and integrated policy framework for planning for growth tailored to the regional context. Foundational to the plan were six interrelated policy areas as illustrated by the following graphic. The importance of quality of life services such as recreation and parks was identified as having a significant influence on achieving the goals and objectives of the Plan. Specifically, these services are linked in the document to the economic, competitiveness and employment policy area and identified as being key factors that will drive the attractiveness of the Edmonton region for businesses and individuals in the future.

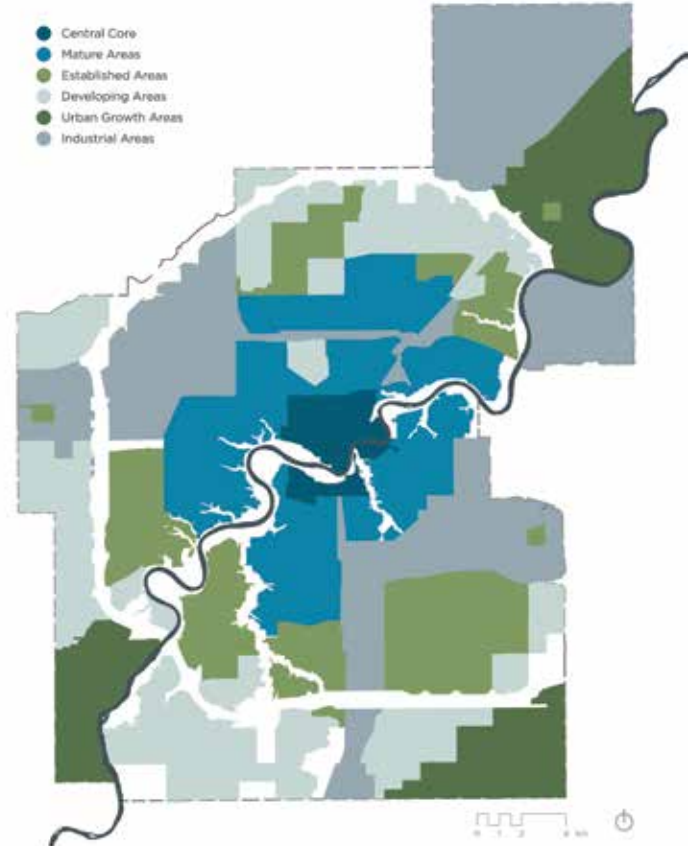
## Current Population Distribution

The City categorizes Neighbourhoods into the following classes:

- Central Core,
- Mature Areas,
- Established Areas,
- Developing Areas,
- Urban Growth Areas, and
- Industrial Areas.

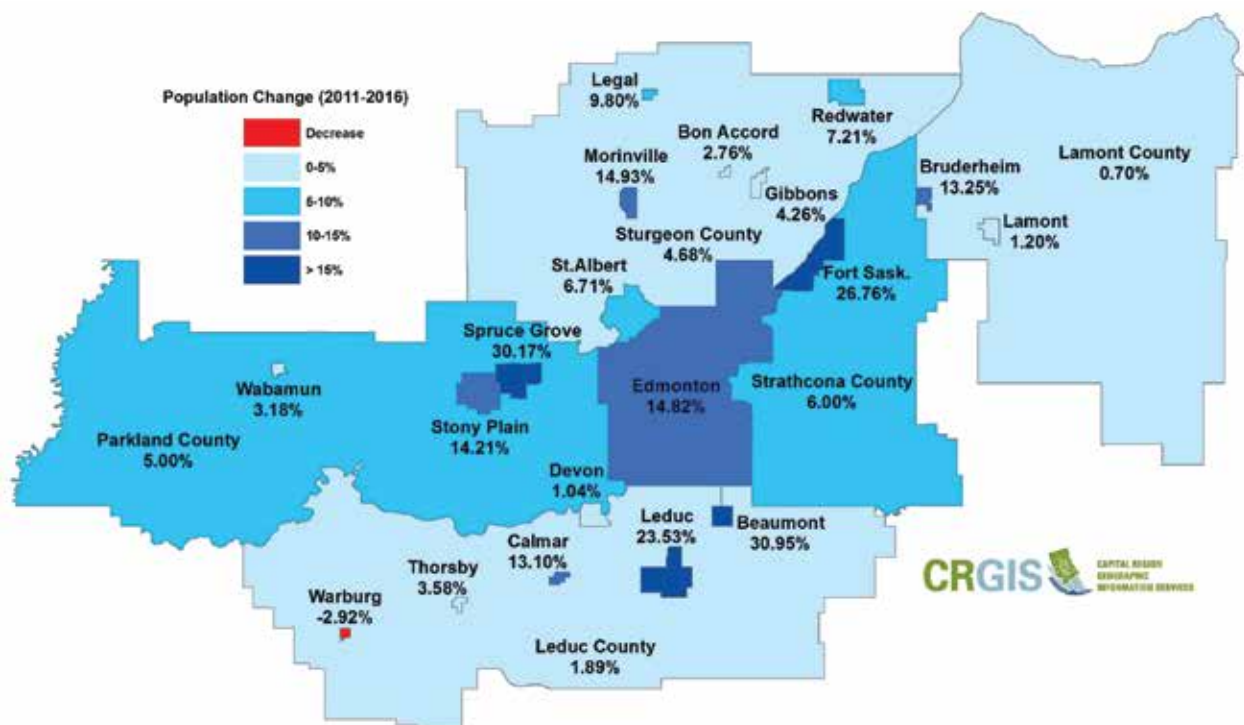
The following map illustrates the current distribution of these neighbourhood classes across the City.

The population of the greater Edmonton region is expected to continue to grow. This growth must be accommodated not only by addressing the recreation needs of residents in developing neighbourhoods, but also in the central core and mature neighbourhoods.



## Regional Growth

Growth across the Edmonton Metropolitan Region will also impact recreation infrastructure needs for public sector providers, including the City and other municipalities in the region. As illustrated in the following image, population growth in Edmonton is higher than many other outlining communities. However, strong growth is occurring in municipalities throughout the region which will broadly impact recreation needs.



The following chart provides an overview of major public recreation infrastructure located in surrounding Edmonton Metropolitan Region municipalities.

Municipality	Major Multi-Purpose Indoor Recreation Facilities	Indoor Ice Arenas (Sheets)	Field House (Boarded or Unboarded)	Outdoor Artificial Turf Fields	Indoor Aquatics Facilities	Fitness Centres
City of Fort Saskatchewan	1	3	1	1	1	1
City of Leduc	1	4	2	0	1	1
City of Spruce Grove	1	4	2	2	1	1
City of St. Albert	1	5	3	1	2	1
Edmonton Garrison	0	2	0	0	1	1
Enoch Cree Nation	0	3	0	0	0	0
Leduc County*	0	4	1	0	0	3
Parkland County*†	0	3	0	0	0	0
Strathcona County	3	9	2	1	3	3
Sturgeon County*	0	4	0	0	0	0
Town of Beaumont	0	2	0	0	1	1
Town of Devon	0	1	0	0	0	0
Town of Morinville	0	1	0	0	0	0
Town of Stony Plain*†	0	1	0	0	0	0
<b>Regional Total (Not including City of Edmonton)</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>12</b>

\* Inventory includes smaller urban municipalities located within these rural municipalities unless otherwise identified in the chart (e.g. Sturgeon County count includes Gibbons but not Morinville).

† Tri-Leisure Centre amenities counted under the City of Spruce Grove. Parkland County and the Town of Stony Plain cost share for the facility.

The following chart identifies an inventory of major recreation infrastructure across the greater Edmonton Metropolitan Region, located within proximity of the city's four quadrants. It identifies a greater concentration of facilities in the northwest and northeast quadrants within the context of the metropolitan region.

Municipality	NW	NE	SW	SE	E
City of St. Albert	13	0	0	0	0
Edmonton Garrison	0	2	0	0	0
Strathcona County	0	0	0	0	22
Town of Beaumont	0	0	0	4	0
Enoch Cree Nation	4	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>22</b>

# C

## Leading Practices and Trends

Trends in recreation services (facilities and programming) are continuously evolving and require providers to remain current on activity preferences, societal shifts, and other factors that impact demand. Below are observed key trends that have been noted in numerous recreation and related studies and other pertinent documents. These trends provide additional insight into recreation "consumer" attitudes and shifts in customer preferences for recreation as well as trends and leading practices pertaining to recreation infrastructure.

### A. The Importance of Structured and Spontaneous Activities

While structured or organized activities remain important, there is an increasing demand for more flexibility in timing and activity choice. People are seeking individualized, informal pursuits which can be done alone or in small groups, at flexible times, and often near or at home. This does not eliminate the need for structured activities and the stakeholder groups that provide them. Instead, this trend suggests that ensuring adequate spontaneous opportunities for recreation are available as equally important as planning for traditional "structured" programming. As resource limitations remain a challenge, municipalities may need to seek innovative partnerships that allow for a focus on both spontaneous use and structured programming.

### B. Flexibility and Adaptability

Recreation, parks, and leisure users have a greater choice of activity options now than at any time in history. As a result, service providers are being required to ensure their approach to delivery is fluid and is able to quickly adapt to meet community demand. Many municipalities have also had to make difficult decisions regarding which activities they are able to directly offer or support, versus those which are more appropriate to leave to the private sector to provide.

Ensuring programming staff and management are responsive to current and emerging trends is important in the identification and planning of facilities and programming. Regular interaction and data collection (e.g. customer surveys) from the public are other methods that service providers use to help identify programs that are popular and in demand. The development of multi-use spaces can also help ensure municipalities have the flexibility to adapt to changing interests and activity preferences.

### C. The Integration of Technology into Recreation and Leisure

The age of digital transformation has revolutionized every industry in multiple ways through its very definition of "the realignment of or investment in new technology, business models, and processes to drive value for customers and employees."<sup>8</sup> Automation and its associated technologies will become a disruptive force within organizations and societies within the next five to 20 years. We are living on the brink of the fourth industrial revolution as current advances in technology will fundamentally change the way we live, work, and relate to one another. In recreation, the application of technology in service delivery can assist in enhancing client experience beyond the walls of the recreation facility, engaging a wider segment of the population, and enabling staff to make informed decisions on the current needs and demands of the community.

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8 [www.wellable.co/32](http://www.wellable.co/32) Solis, B. & Littleton, Aubrey (2017). The 2017 State of Digital Transformation.

## D. The Evolving Nature of Volunteerism

Volunteers continue to be vitally important to the planning and delivery of recreation, events, and programs. The following identifies a number of pertinent trends in volunteerism that may impact or have relevance to the delivery of programming and facility operations. Findings are from the 2010 Canada Survey of Giving, Volunteering and Participating; Alberta data tables<sup>9</sup>.

- Albertans volunteer at a higher rate (54.7%) than the national average (47.0%).
- The highest volunteer rate in Alberta is among adults aged 35 to 44 (63.4%) followed by ages 15 to 24 (56.7%) and ages 55 to 64 (51.3%).
- Although seniors (65 years and older) had the lowest volunteer rate (49.6%), they had the highest average of annual volunteer hours (206 hours on average per year).

## E. Concerns over Aging Infrastructure

The 2016 Canadian Infrastructure Report Card<sup>10</sup> included an assessment and analysis of the state of sport and recreation facilities in Canada. The report revealed a number of concerns and issues that will impact the delivery of sport and recreation infrastructure over the next number of years. Key findings from the report include the following:

- The report card demonstrates that Canada's infrastructure, including sport and recreation facilities, is at risk of rapid deterioration unless there is an immediate investment.
- The average annual reinvestment rate in sport and recreation facilities is currently 1.3% (of capital value) while the recommended target rate of reinvestment is 1.7% – 2.5%.
- Almost one in two sport and recreation facilities are in 'very poor,' 'poor,' or 'fair' condition and need repair or replacement.
- In comparison to other municipal infrastructure assessed in the Report Card, sport and recreation facilities were in the worst state and require immediate attention.
- The Report Card indicated that the extrapolated replacement value of sport and recreation facilities in 'poor' or 'very poor' condition is \$9 billion while those in 'fair' condition require \$14 billion, and
- Chapter 3 highlights the required reinvestment in Edmonton's mature facilities to address immediate infrastructure and modernization needs.



9 Data compiled by Statistics Canada. <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/89-649-x/2011001/tbl/tbl210-eng.htm>

10 <http://canadianinfrastructure.ca/en/index.html>



## F. The Evolution of Recreation Facilities

Over the past 30 to 40 years in Canada, there has been a continued evolution in how recreation facilities are sited, designed, and operated. This evolution can be summed up as follows:

- 1st Generation of Facilities (pre-1990s): stand-alone, mostly single-purpose,
- 2nd Generation of Facilities (early 2000s and ongoing to some degree): large, multi-component/multi-purpose, often with integration into community park spaces and/or school sites, and
- 3rd Generation of Facilities (ongoing): retrofit/renewal of 1st generation facilities, often with a focus on adding amenity spaces and aesthetic enhancements.

Recreation facility providers are becoming increasingly aware of the need for, and benefits of, ongoing life-cycle budgeting. This practice involves putting away annual contributions for future facility upgrades and renewal.

## G. Multi-purpose Spaces

Recreation facilities are increasingly being designed to accommodate multiple activities and to encompass a variety of different components. The benefits of designing multi-use spaces includes the opportunity to create operational efficiencies, attract a wide spectrum of users, and procure multiple sources of revenue. Creating spaces within a facility that are easily adaptable and re-configurable is another growing trend observed in many newer and retrofitted facilities. Gymnasium spaces and field house facilities are being designed with adjustable barriers, walls, bleachers, and other amenities that can be easily set up or removed depending on the type of activity or event.

## H. Integrating Indoor and Outdoor Environments

An increasingly important concept in recreation infrastructure planning is to ensure the indoor environment interacts seamlessly with the adjacent outdoor environment. This can include public event spaces, indoor/outdoor walking trails, indoor/outdoor child play areas, and indoor/outdoor public art. Although there are a number of operational issues that need to be considered when planning indoor/outdoor environments (e.g. cleaning, controlled access, etc.), the concept of planning an indoor facility to complement the site it is located on (and associated outdoor amenities included) as well as the broader community parks and trail system is prudent and will ensure the optimization of public spending on both indoor and outdoor recreation infrastructure. Integrating indoor and outdoor environments can be as simple as ensuring interiors have good opportunities to view the outdoors.



## I. Ensuring Accessibility

Many current recreation facilities are putting significant focus on ensuring user experiences are comfortable by ensuring they meet accessibility requirements and incorporating designs that can accommodate various levels of physical ability. Programming is made as accessible as possible via “layering” to provide the broadest appeal possible to people of all abilities. Meeting the needs of various user groups is also an important aspect of accessibility. Incorporating mobile technologies, rest spaces, child- and senior-friendly spaces, crafts areas, and educational multi-purpose rooms for classes and performances are emerging trends. Accessibility guidelines set by governments, as well as an increased understanding of the needs of different types of visitors, is fueling this shift. Technology is also being embraced as a modern communication tool for effectively sharing messages with younger audiences.

## J. Quality Design, Aesthetics, and Creating a Sense of “Place”

Increasingly, recreation facility providers are placing an emphasis on developing facilities that are attractive, warm, and appealing for a wider cross-section of residents. Doing so can help increase visitation and the overall perception of a facility and/or the activities that take place in that facility. Integrating public art, natural light, and open design concepts can help achieve these ends and ensure that users feel “at home” in a facility. Quality design can also help create a sense of place in a facility and reflect the desired “feel” and values of a community.

## K. Revenue Generating Spaces

Operators of community facilities are being required to find creative and innovative ways to generate the revenues needed to both sustain current operations and fund future expansion or renovation projects. By generating sustainable revenues outside of regular government contributions, many facilities are able to demonstrate increased financial sustainability and expand service levels.

Lease spaces provide one such opportunity. Many facilities are creating new spaces or redeveloping existing areas of their facility that can be leased to food and beverage providers and other retail businesses. Short term rental spaces are another major source of revenue for many facilities. Lobby areas, programs rooms, and event hosting spaces have the potential to be rented to the corporate sector for meetings, team-building activities, holiday parties, and a host of other functions.



## L. Social Amenities

The inclusion of social amenities provides the opportunity for multi-purpose community recreation facilities to maximize the overall experience for users as well as to potentially attract non-traditional patrons to the facility. Examples of social amenities include attractive lobby areas, common spaces, restaurants and cafeterias, spectator viewing areas, meeting facilities, and adjacent outdoor parks or green space. It is also becoming increasingly common for new public facilities, especially in urban areas, to be equipped with public wireless internet.

Another significant benefit of equipping facilities with social amenities is the opportunity to increase usage and visitation to the facility during non-peak hours. Including spaces such as public cafeterias and open lobby spaces can result in local residents visiting the facility during non-event or non-program hours to meet friends or simply as part of their daily routine. Many municipalities and community organizations have encouraged this non-peak hour use in order to ensure the broader populace perceives the facility as accessible and available to all members of the community.



# D

## Amenity Chapters

The following provides additional context, information, and strategic direction regarding the amenities in the scope of this planning approach.

### General amenity considerations

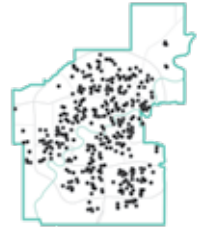
- Include operational staff in the planning of facilities early in the planning process to ensure functionality of the design.
- Ensure that community recreation facilities are well planned and functional.
- Where possible, incorporate community hub design principles into publicly funded infrastructure to create spaces that will facilitate the connections of family, friends, neighbours, and communities.
- Incorporate community input to foster greater pride and care of public assets.
- Consider sport and recreation tourism opportunities to help diversify and strengthen the economy.
- Continue ongoing communication with amenity users, including spontaneous users, to determine current participation levels and identify expected trends and shifts in usage and environmental and climate patterns.
- Encourage and promote the benefits of active and healthy lifestyles to mitigate costs associated with health care, crime, and social disorder.
- Maximize the use of publicly funded facilities to address community recreation needs.

# Outdoor Rectangular Fields

## Primary & District/Neighbourhood

Standard Fields **1,000+** Artificial Turf **8** Staffed Fields **3** Premier Fields **36**

Total Quantity **1,119**



## What is the current amenity situation in the city?

The City has over 1,000 rectangular fields including eight artificial turf fields, three staffed field complexes, and 36 premier fields. Some of the premier sports fields are operated by partner organizations who have contributed to the development and ongoing operation of the fields and supporting infrastructure. Other organizations within the region, including municipalities, also provide rectangular fields. Rectangular fields accommodate sports including, but not limited to, soccer, football, rugby, and ultimate frisbee.

The City uses a tiered field classification system to manage and maintain the current and expected future inventories of rectangular fields. These amenities are typically accessed by organized user groups through rentals as well as by community members through spontaneous drop-in. Different fees and different levels of maintenance are provided for each tier of field.

Outdoor rectangular fields are one of the potential ways to provide outdoor recreation opportunities to meet the City's basic commitment.

### What does the Facility Planning Method tell us?

Is the current level of service appropriate? **Yes**

The City should maintain the current level of provision for outdoor rectangular fields. As the City grows more fields may be considered but there is no short-term need for additional fields in the city as a whole.

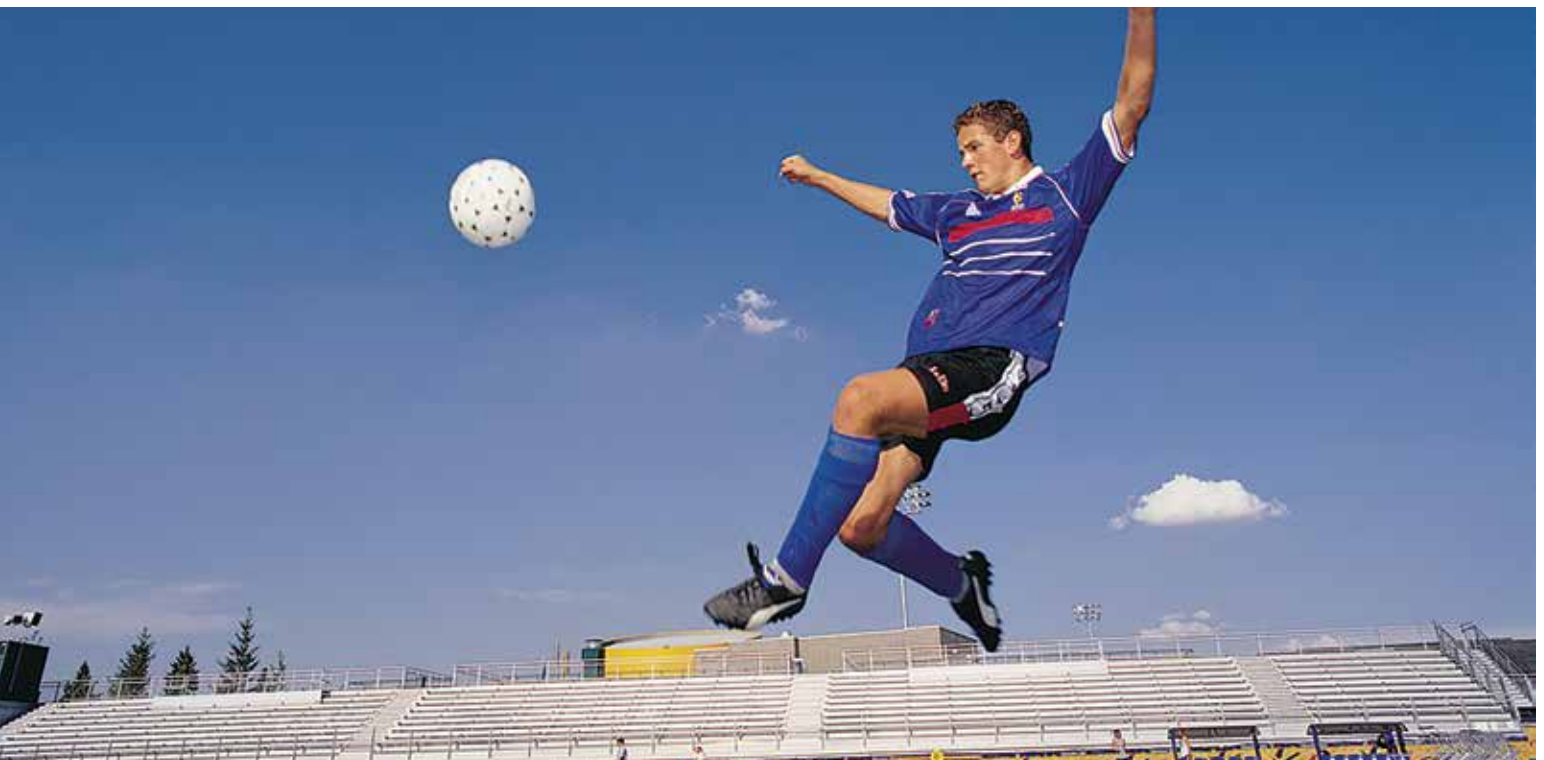
Enhancing the quality of some existing fields and reallocating the current inventory of fields to provide more high quality fields should be considered a focus in the short-term for the City and its partners.

## Amenity Considerations

- A comprehensive sports field strategy should be undertaken.
- As the existing amount of high-quality premier fields does not meet current user demand, the City should support the provision of more premier fields and adjust the inventory and classification system to include an additional tier of fields that provide a user experience between types of sports fields. The provision of higher quality premier fields with amenities will be explored as potential partnerships with stakeholders.
- Maintain provision of fields at the neighbourhood level for spontaneous drop-in and focus more intense use on better quality fields, ideally located at multiple field sites with appropriate amenities, such as public washrooms. These higher quality sites should be provided by partner organizations.
- Continue to work with school boards to leverage opportunities to align long-term outcomes.
- Identify and accumulate sites of sufficient size to accommodate multiple field configurations, including support amenities. As development occurs, ensure consideration to geographic distribution.
- The enhancement of current and future inventories should be of focus including the potential of conversion of existing natural turf to artificial turf in some instances.

## What else do we need to think about regarding animation of this amenity?

- Ensure sufficient time is made available at rectangular fields for programming, spontaneous drop-in, and user groups (including all types of field users).
- Continue regular communication with rectangular fields user groups to educate users on the field classification system to align expectations with appropriate field tiers, determine current participation levels, and identify expected trends and shifts in usage and environmental and climate patterns.
- Ensure associated user fees and allocation procedures are aligned to help the City achieve its goals.
- Allocate time based on standards of play, ensuring these standards of play reflect current governing bodies' mandates, physical literacy recommendations, and Canadian Sport for Life/Long-Term Athlete Development guidelines.



# Indoor Gymnasiums

## Primary & District

City Facilities with  
Gymnasiums

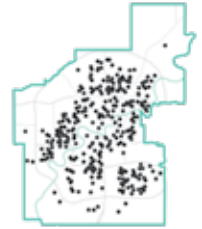
8

Schools with  
Gymnasiums

300+

YMCAs with  
Gymnasiums

5



## What is the current amenity situation in the city?

Indoor gymnasiums provide opportunities for multiple activities to occur. Indoor gymnasiums in the city are found in a variety of size and shape configurations and can include hardwood or other non-turf surfaces. The provision of gymnasiums available for community use in Edmonton is a collaborative effort. The City operates eight community recreation facilities with gymnasiums, which includes the Kinsmen Field House. The City provides gymnasium space at the district level and partners with schools through Joint Use Agreements to enable community access of over 300 school gymnasiums at a neighbourhood level. In addition, the City supports other post-secondary and community organizations that provide gymnasiums space. YMCA facilities in Edmonton also offer indoor gymnasium spaces.

The City contributed capital funds to the development of Saville (West) Community Sports Centre, located on the University of Alberta South Campus, which contains 12 full-sized hardwood courts.

Additional indoor gymnasiums (three courts) are also being planned at the Lewis Farms Community Recreation Centre.

Organized user groups access school gymnasiums for basketball, volleyball, and other activities through rentals. City gymnasium facilities can be accessed through City programming, user group rentals, and spontaneous drop-in.

Indoor gymnasiums are one of the potential ways to provide indoor opportunities to meet the City's basic commitment.

### What does the Facility Planning Method tell us?

Is the current level of service appropriate? **Yes**

The City should maintain the current level of service for gymnasiums. As the city grows, and as new areas develop, additional gymnasiums may be considered. Improving access to existing gymnasiums should be a focus.

## Amenity Considerations

- Provide indoor gymnasiums when developing new facilities or redeveloping existing facilities as the multi-use nature of gymnasiums can accommodate a variety of different types of activities. The design material for gymnasiums will require consideration to be able to accommodate a variety of activities.
- When considering the development of gymnasiums, partner with other organizations, including exploring the feasibility of joint capital development and operational cost-sharing agreements for community spaces within new and/or renewed schools.
- Design facilities to enable multiple activities to occur simultaneously, provide ample storage, and enable the three modes of use (rentals, programs, and drop-in) seamlessly. During design planning, consider the needs of activities beyond typical gymnasium sports, such as ball hockey and lacrosse.

## What else do we need to think about regarding animation of this amenity?

- Ensure sufficient time is made available in gymnasiums for programming, spontaneous drop-in, and user groups.
- Continue ongoing communication with gymnasium user groups to determine current participation levels and identify expected trends and shifts in usage patterns.
- Optimize use of gymnasiums enabling multiple uses and simultaneous scheduling.
- Allocate time based on standards of play, ensuring that these standards of play reflect current governing bodies' mandates, physical literacy recommendations, and Canadian Sport for Life/Long-Term Athlete Development guidelines.
- Ensure associated user fees and allocation procedures are aligned to help the City achieve its goals.
- Although the City already has agreements in place with school jurisdictions, the new provision in the Municipal Government Act requires the agreements to have a broader scope than currently exists; therefore, the City will need to revisit existing joint use agreements in the short term.

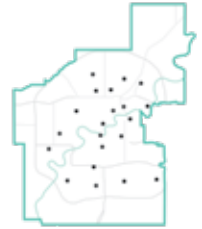




# Indoor Aquatics

## Primary & Metropolitan/District

City Owned/  
Operate **16** YMCA Owned/  
Operated **4**



### What is the current amenity situation in the city?

The City operates 16 indoor aquatic facilities and the YMCA operates four. Post-secondary institutions (NAIT, University of Alberta, MacEwan) also have indoor pools in the city. Within the region, there are 10 additional municipal indoor aquatic facilities and a number of indoor aquatics opportunities available to Edmontonians provided by private sector organizations. Additional indoor aquatic facilities are also being planned at the Lewis Farms Community Recreation Centre. The facilities in the city range in amenities and may include 25 metre and 50 metre configurations as well as dive tanks, leisure pools (zero-depth entry), program teach pools, waterslides, hot tubs, steam rooms, saunas, lazy rivers, and varying levels of spectator seating. The City operates three of the four 50 metre pools located in Edmonton.

City operated indoor aquatics facilities can be accessed through programming, user group rentals, and spontaneous drop-in. As the average age of City owned and operated indoor aquatic facilities is approximately 40 years, investment in existing infrastructure will be a priority in the future.

Accessibility to aquatic opportunities within a 5 kilometre catchment is part of the consideration when meeting City's basic commitment to residents. The City relies on its partnership with the YMCA to meet this basic commitment in some areas. The City also provides access to a number of other specialized aquatic opportunities such as competitive sport and therapeutic aquatics. As of 2018, City indoor aquatics venues enable nine different types of activities that can be accessed in three ways as outlined in the table below.

Nine Categories of Aquatic Service	Drop-In	Program	Rental
<b>Categories Ideally Suited to Achieve the City's Basic Commitment</b>			
1. Recreational Swimming	Yes	No	Yes
2. Skill Development (swim lessons)	No	Yes	Yes
3. Fitness (lane swimming, aquatic fitness programs)	Yes	Yes	No
4. Water Orientation for Toddlers and Preschoolers	Yes	Yes	No
5. Therapy and Rehabilitation	Yes	Yes	Yes
6. Leadership Training	No	Yes	No
7. Respite from Summer Heat and Winter Cold (seasonal)	Yes	Yes	No
<b>Categories that Service More Competitive or Specialized Interests</b>			
8. Specialized Sport Training	No	No	Yes
9. Special Events (e.g. sport competitions)	No	Yes	Yes

*\*Note that all of these activities can also be accommodated in outdoor pools.*

Although all of these activities are suited to meet the City's basic commitment for indoor aquatics, categories one to seven and the amenities that support them (e.g. 25 metre configurations, 50 metre configurations with bulkheads and adjustable floors, zero-depth entry leisure tanks, waterslides, hot tubs, steam rooms/saunas, etc.) are more focused on the general population than categories eight and nine. For this reason, categories eight and nine are typically serviced at a metropolitan level while categories one to seven are provided at a district Level.

## Amenity Considerations

- Plan investment in new and existing indoor aquatic facilities to accommodate as many categories of aquatics services as possible, focusing on categories one to seven at the district level (as part of the consideration for the City's basic commitment) and categories eight and nine at the metropolitan level. This should also include the enhancement of support amenities such as storage, multi-purpose space, increased deck space, and inclusive change rooms.
- When planning and developing new indoor aquatics facilities with 50 metre configurations, include movable bulkheads and adjustable floors to meet a variety of basic commitment categories as well as being able to accommodate specialty categories of aquatics services.
- During the planning process of a given facility, conduct a local needs assessment to determine specific aquatic feature needs in the event that basic categories cannot be accommodated.
- When contemplating the development of specialty aquatics categories (eight and nine), these items will serve broader metropolitan level markets and thus parts of an overall service level across the city.
- As existing facilities have an average age of approximately 40 years, the user experience in some facilities does not meet modern expectations. Investment in existing facilities is required to modernize functionality and demand, including physical accessibility.

## What else do we need to think about regarding animation of this amenity?

- Ensure time is made available in indoor aquatic facilities and optimized for programming, spontaneous drop-in, joint use by schools, and rental groups.
- Continue ongoing communication with indoor aquatic users to determine current participation levels and identify expected trends and shifts in usage patterns.
- Optimize use of indoor aquatic facilities enabling multiple categories of use and simultaneous scheduling.
- Ensure associated user fees and allocation procedures are aligned to help the City achieve its goals.
- Allocate time based on standards of play, ensuring that these standards of play reflect current governing bodies' mandates, physical literacy recommendations, and Canadian Sport for Life/Long-Term Athlete Development guidelines.

### What does the Facility Planning Method tell us?

Is the current level of service appropriate? **Yes**

The City should maintain the current level of service for indoor aquatics. As the city grows, and as new areas develop, additional indoor aquatic amenities may be considered.

# Indoor Turf Fields

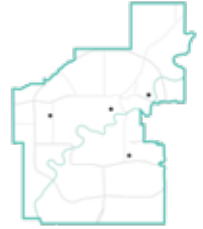
## Primary & District

Number of Indoor non-boarded Turf Facilities

4

Number of Indoor boarded Turf Fields

12



## What is the current amenity situation in the city?

Currently, the City directly operates an indoor non-boarded field (approximately half the size of a regulation-sized rectangular field) at Commonwealth Community Recreation Centre and also invests in partner operated indoor boarded turf facilities throughout Edmonton operated by the Edmonton Soccer Association. Indoor boarded turf facilities have existed in the city for a number of years and have established user markets. Non-boarded facility markets are new to the region, and although proven in other urban markets throughout Canada, are still evolving in Edmonton.

Demand for indoor boarded fields for activities such as soccer, ball hockey, and box lacrosse remains strong. There are three soccer centres operated by the Edmonton Soccer Association, each containing four indoor boarded turf fields. One centre is currently being enhanced to include another boarded turf field and one boarded concrete surface.

The Victoria Soccer Club and the Edmonton Scottish Soccer Society (currently being developed) each own and operate indoor non-boarded turf fields. Foote Field is an outdoor non-boarded artificial turf field located on the University of Alberta South Campus and is domed in the winter, providing year-round use. Privately operated indoor non-boarded facilities exist in the city and are used as training facilities for sport organizations.

Organized user groups typically access indoor turf fields through rentals. However, the City does provide some spontaneous drop-in time for users at the Commonwealth Community Recreation Centre indoor turf field.

Indoor turf fields are one of the potential ways to provide opportunities to meet the City's basic commitment.

### What does the Facility Planning Method tell us?

Is the current level of service appropriate? **No**

The City should enhance the current level of service for indoor turf fields. This should be achieved as user markets are proven and once facilities currently being built are in operation and showing signs of excess demand.

## Amenity Considerations

- The recent introduction of a dome covering the full size turf at the University of Alberta's Foote Field, a smaller non-boarded turf field at Commonwealth Community Recreation Centre, and other sites in the region will help to determine market demand for a new variation of full-sized indoor non-boarded fields as well as testing key attributes such as willingness to pay/financial feasibility. The City needs to monitor this demand as new information on utilization and other parameters are made available. This information will help the City determine whether or not to invest, directly or through partners, in this evolving community recreation amenity.
- Monitor demand for indoor boarded and non-boarded fields and work to coordinate the efforts of stakeholders for both so that public investment is protected.
- Assess provision of indoor fields, including seasonal doming, when new facility development or existing facility redevelopment occurs as the multi-use nature of these facilities can accommodate a variety of different types of activities.
- When new indoor fields are developed, even in the event they are boarded, design should include the ability to convert boarded to non-boarded venues where possible. As well, the ability to accommodate non-turf activities should also be considered.
- When contemplating indoor field development, explore partnerships with other organizations.

## What else do we need to think about regarding animation of this amenity?

- Ensure that sufficient time is made available in indoor fields for programming, spontaneous drop-in, and user groups.
- Continue ongoing communication with indoor field users to determine current participation levels and identify expected trends and shifts in usage patterns.
- Optimize use of indoor fields enabling multiple uses and simultaneous scheduling.
- Ensure all field activities can access indoor field facilities where possible.
- Influence the setting of user fees and allocation procedures where possible so that they are aligned to help the City achieve its goals. This is also applicable to partner-operated facilities supported by the City.



# Indoor Ice Arenas

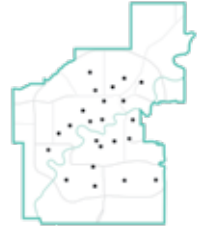
## Primary & District

City ice sheets  
(average age 40 years)

**32**

Non-City ice sheets  
within the City

**12**



## What is the current amenity situation in the city?

The City and partners currently operate 23 indoor ice arena facilities which include a total of 32 ice sheets. There are an additional 10 facilities (12 ice sheets) within city boundaries provided through private and post-secondary operators. An additional 46 ice sheets are available in the surrounding municipalities for a total of 90 ice sheets in the region. Additional indoor twin ice arenas are being planned at the University of Alberta and Lewis Farms Community Recreation Centre and there are approximately 15 other new additional ice sheets being planned in the region by other municipalities or organizations. This will increase the total to more than 110 ice sheets available within the Edmonton Metropolitan Region.

City amenities are typically accessed by organized user groups, such as hockey, figure skating, ringette, and through rentals as well as some programming and public drop-in use.

As the average age of City owned and operated indoor ice arenas is 40 years, investment in existing infrastructure should be a priority in the future.

Accessibility to indoor ice opportunities within a 5 kilometre catchment is part of the consideration when meeting City's basic commitment to residents.

### What does the Facility Planning Method tell us?

Is the current level of service appropriate? **Yes**

The City should maintain the current level of service for indoor ice arenas. As the city grows, and as new areas develop, additional indoor ice sheets will be required due to the City's basic commitment to residents. There is no short-term requirement for additional indoor ice sheets in the city.

## Amenity Considerations

- Consolidate future indoor ice arena facilities in groups of two sheets or more where possible to create economies of scale related to operating costs and enable broader programming capabilities.
- Ensure new or existing indoor ice arena facilities are able to adapt to foreseeable usage and demand shifts, such as half-ice hockey usage, and associated needs for more change room and site parking capacities.
- Explore partnerships with other organizations when contemplating indoor ice arena development.
- As existing facilities have an average age of 40 years, the user experience in some facilities does not meet modern expectations. When required, reinvest in existing facilities to modernize functionality, including physical accessibility.

## What else do we need to think about regarding animation of this amenity?

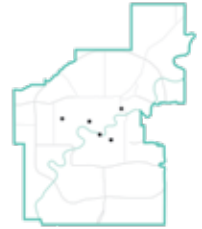
- Ensure sufficient time is made available in indoor ice arenas for City programming, spontaneous drop-in, and user groups.
- Continue ongoing communication with indoor ice arena users to determine current participation levels and identify expected trends and shifts in usage patterns.
- Optimize use of ice facilities year round enabling dry pad use when demand for ice is low. Ice user groups will have priority access to indoor ice arenas.
- Ensure associated user fees and allocation procedures are aligned to help the City achieve its goals.
- Continue to allocate time based on standards of play, ensuring these standards of play reflect current sport governing bodies' mandates, agreed to physical literacy recommendations, and Canadian Sport for Life/Long-Term Athlete Development guidelines as well as other applicable references.



# Outdoor Pools

## Primary & Metropolitan

Number of Outdoor Pools **5**



### What is the current amenity situation in the city?

The City operates five outdoor pools; Oliver, Fred Broadstock, Mill Creek, Queen Elizabeth, and Borden Natural Swimming Pool.

As discussed in the indoor aquatics amenity section, outdoor pools also provide combinations of the nine categories of aquatics services. Outdoor pools are primarily used via drop-in use but also include some programming and rentals.

#### What does the Facility Planning Method tell us?

Is the current level of service appropriate? **Yes**

Outdoor pools are Metropolitan amenities and serve the entirety of the City. Current demand indicates that the City is able to meet user demands throughout the entirety of the network. The basic commitment for aquatics is addressed through the provision of indoor aquatics.

### Amenity Considerations

- Consolidate future outdoor pools with spray parks and/or other recreation facilities to create economies of scale related to operating costs and enable broader programming capabilities.
- Ensure new or existing outdoor pools can adapt to foreseeable usage and demand shifts, such as programming, group rentals, and associated needs for more change room and site parking capacities.
- Explore partnerships with other organizations when contemplating outdoor pool capital projects.
- As existing facilities range in age from one year to 96 years, the user experience in some facilities does not meet modern expectations. When required, renew existing facilities to modernize functionality including physical accessibility, inclusive change rooms, and exterior lighting for evening use.

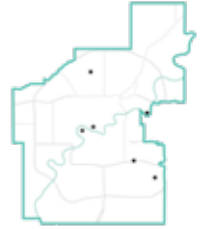
### What else do we need to think about regarding animation of this amenity?

- Ensure sufficient time is made available in outdoor pools for City programming, spontaneous drop-in, and rental groups.
- Continue ongoing communication with outdoor pool users to determine current participation levels and identify expected trends and shifts in usage patterns.
- Optimize use of outdoor pools during summer evenings by adding exterior lighting.
- Ensure associated user fees and allocation procedures are aligned to help the City achieve its goals.

# Outdoor Ice

## Primary & District/Neighbourhood

City **7** Community League **115**



### What is the current amenity situation in the city?

The City directly operates seven outdoor ice skating locations, including the IceWay Winter Skating Trails at Victoria Park and Rundle Park as well as the speed skating oval at Victoria Park. The oval is operated in partnership with the Edmonton Speed Skating Association. In addition to the primary amenities, there are 115 outdoor ice rinks that were developed and are maintained by local community leagues. The Alberta Legislative Grounds operates one public use outdoor ice amenity.

The City operated ice surfaces are typically accessed through spontaneous drop-in.

Outdoor ice surfaces are one of the potential ways to provide ice recreation opportunities to meet the City's basic commitment.

#### What does the Facility Planning Method tell us?

Is the current level of service appropriate? **Yes**

The City should maintain the current level of service for outdoor ice surfaces. As the city grows, and as new areas develop, additional outdoor ice amenities may be considered.

### Amenity Considerations

- Include the development of some support features at existing and new outdoor ice surfaces such as lights, washrooms, skate change areas, benches, and warm-up areas.
- Explore partnerships with community leagues and other organizations when contemplating outdoor ice development.
- Explore the creation of outdoor skating paths to link indoor and outdoor amenities.
- Consider incorporation of outdoor rinks in public spaces.

### What else do we need to think about regarding animation of this amenity?

- Ensure the majority of available time at outdoor surfaces continues to be dedicated for spontaneous drop-in.
- Define and monitor the costs associated with the provision of each publicly supported City operated outdoor rink.
- Consider opportunities to provide free and low-cost skate use ice rinks.



# Outdoor Ball Diamonds

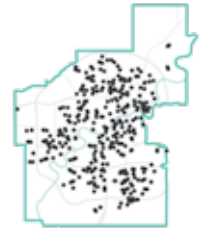
## Primary & District/Neighbourhood

Staffed  
Diamonds **9**

Premier  
Diamonds **101**

Home Base  
Diamonds **23**

Standard  
Diamonds **650+**



Total  
Quantity **799**

### What is the current amenity situation in the city?

There are nearly 800 City owned ball diamonds in Edmonton, including nine staffed diamond complexes and 101 premier diamonds. Twenty-three ball diamond complexes are maintained as part of the Home Base Program, which is a partnership between a community organization and the City. As part of this agreement, the organization agrees to develop or upgrade and then maintain the ball diamond to a premier level or better. Additionally, RE/MAX Field is partner operated and City owned. There are many other ball diamonds provided by municipalities and other organizations throughout the region.

The City uses a tiered ball diamond classification system to manage and maintain the current and expected future inventories of ball diamonds. Ball diamonds within this classification system accommodate multiple variations of ball including baseball, softball, fastpitch, and slowpitch serving different ages and skill levels on varying diamond sizes. Different fees and different levels of maintenance are provided for each tier of ball diamond.

These amenities are typically accessed by organized baseball and softball user groups through rentals as well as through spontaneous drop-in.

Outdoor ball diamonds are one of the potential ways to provide outdoor recreation opportunities to meet the City's basic commitment.

### What does the Facility Planning Method tell us?

Is the current level of service appropriate? **Yes**

The City should maintain the current level of service for ball diamonds. As the city grows, adding more diamonds may be considered but there are no short-term needs for additional ball diamond development.

## Amenity Considerations

- When existing ball diamonds are renewed or when new ones are developed, they will be designed to accommodate multiple sizes and activity configurations. This includes multiple types of surfaces, sizes, and the ability to change them if needed.
- Consider enhancing the quality of some existing ball diamonds and reallocating the current inventory to provide more high-quality ball diamonds as a focus in the short-term for the City and its partners.
- Consolidate ball diamonds on multi-amenity sites with support facilities such as washrooms and parking.
- When contemplating ball diamond development, continue to employ and consider partnerships with other organizations.

## What else do we need to think about regarding animation of this amenity?

- Ensure sufficient time is made available at ball diamonds for spontaneous drop-in and user groups.
- Continue ongoing communication with ball diamond user groups to determine current participation levels and identify expected trends and shifts in usage and environmental patterns.
- Ensure associated user fees and allocation procedures are aligned to help the City achieve its goals.
- Allocate time based on standards of play, ensuring these standards of play reflect current governing bodies' mandates, physical literacy recommendations, and Canadian Sport for Life/Long-Term Athlete Development guidelines.



# Indoor Fitness Centres

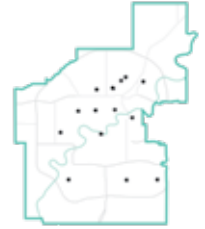
## Primary & District

City operated  
Amenities

13

YMCA

5



## What is the current amenity situation in the city?

Thirteen City operated community recreation facilities contain fitness centres. These spaces often have cardio machines and weight training equipment. There are also some community organizations, post-secondary institutes, and private sector organizations that provide indoor fitness opportunities throughout the region. The City's partners, such as the YMCA, also provide fitness opportunities. Additional fitness centres are being planned at the Lewis Farms Community Recreation Centre and Coronation Recreation Centre.

City operated amenities are typically accessed by public drop-in use and through programming.

Fitness centres are one of the potential ways to provide indoor dry land opportunities to meet the City's basic commitment.

### What does the Facility Planning Method tell us?

Is the current level of service appropriate? **Yes**

The City should maintain the current level of service for fitness centres. As the city grows, and as new areas develop, additional fitness centres may be considered.

## Amenity Considerations

- Examine provision of fitness centres when new facility development or existing facility redevelopment occurs, as these facilities appeal to broad user markets and can add to the multi-purpose, convenient nature of community recreation facilities with multiple amenities.
- Evaluate provision of fitness centres by external groups and partners when assessing potential market feasibility for City operated fitness centres.
- Examine partnerships with private sector fitness facility providers to accept the use of the Leisure Access Program within their respective facilities as a means to help enhance activity rates among low-income citizens.

## What else do we need to think about regarding animation of this amenity?

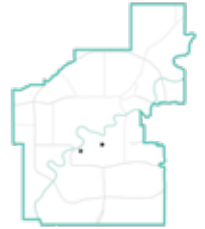
- Ensure that sufficient time remains available in fitness centres for various skills and abilities.
- Continue ongoing communication with users and staff to determine current participation levels and identify expected trends and shifts in usage patterns.
- Ensure fitness equipment is modern and suits the needs of users.
- Optimize use of fitness centres enabling multiple uses and simultaneous scheduling.
- Align associated user fees and allocation procedures to help the City achieve its goals.



# Outdoor Track and Field

## Primary & Metropolitan

Number of amenities **3**



### What is the current amenity situation in the city?

Rollie Miles Athletic Grounds is the only competitive outdoor track and field site operated by the City with two additional recreational (non-competitive) shale tracks (Coronation Park Site and Jasper Place Bowl Site) available through rentals or spontaneous use. The University of Alberta operates a facility on their South Campus site and there are other recreational track and field tracks throughout the city at school sites.

Outdoor track and field spaces are one of the potential ways to provide outdoor recreation opportunities to meet the City's basic commitment.

#### What does the Facility Planning Method tell us?

Is the current level of service appropriate? **Yes**

The City should maintain the current level of service for outdoor track and field. There is no short-term requirement for additional outdoor track and field amenities in the city.

### Amenity Considerations

- Ensure potential new sites have space for outdoor track and field events (e.g. pole vault, high jump, etc.) as well as support facilities such as storage buildings, washrooms, and bleachers.
- Explore partnerships with other organizations including, but not limited to, schools and post-secondary institutions when contemplating outdoor track and field facility development.

### What else do we need to think about regarding animation of this amenity?

- Allocate time based on existing joint use agreements with school boards.
- Ensure that appropriate time is made available at publicly supported outdoor track and field facilities for spontaneous drop-in.
- Continue ongoing communication with outdoor track and field users to determine current participation levels and identify expected trends and shifts in usage and environmental and climate patterns.

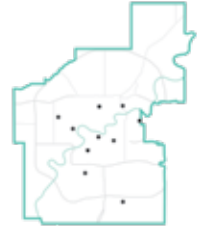
# Indoor Curling Rinks

## Secondary & District

Number of Amenities **11**

Number of Ice Sheets **79**

Partner Operated Amenities **5**



### What is the current amenity situation in the city?

There are eleven curling facilities in Edmonton (including Edmonton Garrison which is just north of city boundaries). The City does not directly operate curling rinks. Curling clubs operate all existing facilities, however, five of them are located on City owned land (Jasper Place, Crestwood, Thistle, Ellerslie, and Shamrock). There are also a number of curling facilities operated by public, community, and private organizations within Edmonton and throughout the region.

Current partner facilities are aging and require investment. The average age of curling rinks is 61 years. The newest club was built in 2004, with the majority of rinks built in the 1950s.

These amenities are typically accessed through club programming and rentals.

Curling rinks are one of the potential ways to provide indoor ice opportunities to meet the City's basic commitment.

### What does the Facility Planning Method tell us?

Is the current level of service appropriate? **Yes**

The City should maintain the current level of service for indoor aquatics. As the city grows, and as new areas develop, additional indoor aquatic amenities may be considered.

## Amenity Considerations

- Continue to conduct condition assessments of existing curling rinks located on City land to better understand their current physical state. Where possible, help curling rink operators better understand the current state of their physical infrastructure.
- As a secondary amenity, public investment will be considered only if a partner organization is contemplating new curling rink development or expansion.
- If reinvesting in partner curling rinks, look to consolidate investment and service provision where warranted, including encouraging collaborative approaches to multi-purpose and year-round use. Although a collective facility vision is not necessary now, it may be in the future especially for clubs with significant renewal requirements that are in close proximity to each other.

## What else do we need to think about regarding animation of this amenity?

- Continue ongoing communication with curling clubs to determine current participation levels and identify expected trends and shifts in usage patterns.
- Encourage curling clubs to continue introductory programming (e.g. Learn to Curl) and rentals are available for the public.
- Encourage alternative use of curling clubs during the off-season to help ensure club sustainability.



# E

## Facility Classifications in the Recreation Network

### Metropolitan Facilities in the Recreation Network

Metropolitan facilities serve the entire city.

Generally speaking, a metropolitan level facility is "the only one" for the entire city or region. Occasionally, where market demands are high, there may be more than one provided for the entire city or region.

People travel from across the city and region to metropolitan facilities. Since there is typically only one (or a few) metropolitan facilities of any given type, these facilities are best located centrally in the city and region and/or along major transportation routes/corridors. Where multiple facilities exist, access to facilities from different parts of the region is more important than balancing their exact locations.

Metropolitan facilities are designed for professional, competitive/high-performance level sport, and specialized recreation opportunities and are used for both spontaneous use and structured use.

Due to the scope and focus of these types of facilities, they may be operated directly by the City but are also commonly operated by community organizations and/or private sector partners with some level of public support. These facilities are candidates for regional collaboration, joint planning, and integration as there is a high level of interest from community organizations and private sector partners in these facilities, and partnership opportunities exist.

Wherever community recreation facilities offer unique and specialized services and spaces (e.g. large amounts of spectator seating, specialized staging systems, spaces which support competition and special events, specialized training systems and spaces), priority is given to residents and activities that require them, so as to meet the original intended purpose of the facility.

General characteristics of metropolitan facilities:

- Highly specialized, targeted activities and interests,
- Designed for professional, competitive, and/or spectator use,
- Serve the entire city and region and often have a provincial or national event hosting focus,
- Could be co-located within District facilities and also operate at these levels, and
- Geographic location is important. Geographic balance (in the event more than one facility exists) is not integral but should be considered.

Example of a metropolitan facility:

- Kinsmen Sports Centre.



## District Facilities in the Recreation Network

Unlike metropolitan facilities, district facilities are intended to serve sub-segments of the city and/or regional population. District facilities typically have a higher multi-purpose capability than other facility classifications as they serve a large enough population to offer activity choice.

While such facilities will be provided with reasonable access to all residents and will deliver equitable levels of community recreation facility service throughout the city, they are not all the same. District facilities will not be identical across the city. The basic commitment will guide individual amenities within each district facility which will be selected based on community needs and the needs of the larger recreation network.

Within each district facility (or grouping of facilities), at least three major community recreation facility amenities, and potentially multiples of each amenity (e.g. ice sheets, gymnasiums, indoor soccer pitches, multi-purpose spaces), are provided to promote economies of scale and expand residents' opportunities. The kinds of amenities to be considered in each district level facilities may include a variety of amenities, including indoor pools, indoor ice rinks, indoor soccer pitches, multi-purpose activity halls, and gymnasiums, as well as other programming needs as determined by the community. They may also include fitness and wellness areas, fitness studios, dance and program rooms, arts and crafts spaces, meeting rooms, and spaces dedicated to specific age groups (e.g. seniors lounge, teen centre, pre-school program centre, community organization's space).

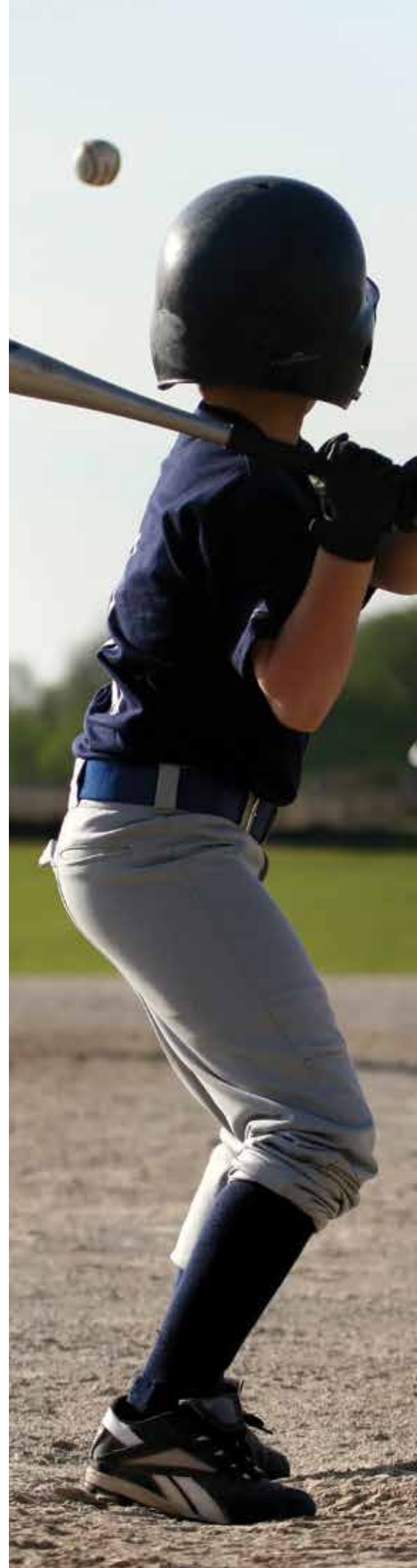
Where possible, community recreation amenities are collected into centralized complexes at locations that are accessible to citizens. Where this is not achievable, a suite of smaller stand-alone facilities within a 5 kilometre radius are provided in order to achieve the intended use.

The spatial accessibility target for district facilities is within a 5 kilometre radius of every resident.

Due to their size, scale, and multi-purpose nature, district facilities provide tremendous opportunity to serve as community hubs. Where possible, district facilities are located adjacent to and are contiguous with other types of public service spaces which operate at the district level and/or in alignment with a district planning structure. This includes, but is not limited, to district parks, library services, community health services, large educational institutions, and social and community services. In addition, these facilities provide opportunities for clustering of public service sites (potentially with housing, retail and other institutional opportunities like schools and healthcare facilities). This approach helps to expand access to these facilities and support diversity and inclusion. The co-location of amenities and services promote economies of scale.

Amenities defined as typical components of Neighbourhood level can also be, and ideally are, part of the scope and operations of district facilities.

Due to the scope and focus of these types of facilities, they are typically operated directly by the City, but in some cases can be operated by community organizations and/or private sector partners with some level of public support.



General characteristics of district facilities:

- Responds to high and broad market demand,
- Provides for a continuum of user skill levels from introductory to advanced,
- Can accommodate local competition but primarily designed with amateur recreational use in mind,
- Responds to organized, structured and informal, and spontaneous interests,
- Could be co-located with Metropolitan or Neighbourhood facilities,
- Geographic location in proximity to residents is important; geographic balance through the city is also important, and
- Where practical to do so, the amenities are collected into centralized complexes at locations that are accessible to citizens. Where this is not achievable, a suite of smaller stand-alone facilities within a 5 kilometre radius are provided in order to achieve the intended use.

Examples of a district facility include:

- Terwillegar Community Recreation Centre, and
- Meadows Community Recreation Centre.



## Neighbourhood Facilities in the Recreation Network

A neighbourhood is defined as a sub-segment of the city comprised of up to approximately 20,000 residents that relate to each other in terms of urban design and geographic area. Neighbourhoods are at the root of community connectedness. Community recreation facilities and amenities provided at the neighbourhood level are key public areas where this connection occurs. As such, each resident should be able to access at least one neighbourhood amenity in alignment with the basic commitment.

As neighbourhoods aren't large enough to justify a full range of indoor and outdoor spaces and places like those provided at the district or metropolitan levels, the facility activity categories for neighbourhood facilities focus more on providing community-based opportunities for social interaction, physical activity, community building, and creativity. Neighbourhood facilities should be accessible and appeal to as many local residents as possible, and as such, are typically less specialized in nature. Indoor spaces can typically include multi-purpose, indoor space such as school gymnasiums. Outdoor spaces can typically include ball diamonds, grass fields, and outdoor ice. Ideally, opportunities at the neighbourhood level are low or no-cost and present few or no barriers to participation. Due to the scope and focus of these types of facilities, most are operated by community organizations with some level of public support by way of grants or other funding models.

Neighbourhood level facilities are vital components of community hubs, not only for the actual opportunities they offer to residents to connect with each other, but also due to the level of community engagement they require in their planning, design, operations, and maintenance. It is important to note that in order to have equitable access to recreation services, there are neighbourhoods in the city that may require more or different spaces or support than others. This requires flexibility in how neighbourhood facilities are operated and supported and recognition that variety of amenities for residents may need to be served by accessing facilities located in neighbouring communities.

General characteristics of neighbourhood facilities:

- High local demand,
- Some amenities are developed through partnerships,
- Could be co-located with metropolitan or district facilities,
- Geographic location within each neighbourhood is important (at least one within 400 metres of each residence); geographic balance through the city is also important,
- Designed for leisure recreation and sport opportunities, and
- Spontaneous use and structured use.

Examples of a neighbourhood facility:

- Outdoor baseball diamond,
- Outdoor ice rink, and
- Outdoor soccer field.



