

Open House Survey Summary Report- Master Plan for the Mill Woods Recreation Center

August 22, 2012

Background

1. Objective

This survey was part of a public involvement initiative for creating and confirming that a Master Plan for renewing the Mill Woods Recreation Centre is needed. The primary goal of this survey was to understand the recreation, arts and cultural needs of the Mill Woods community.

2. Methodology

The open house consultation was held on June 21, 2012 at the Mill Woods Recreation Centre. The public was provided with two options to complete the survey: on site or on-line. The public had until July 5, 2012 to complete the surveys. A total of 211 responded to the survey (some of the public only wanted to answer certain questions that were important or that affected them) while 167 were completed (the public answered all the questions asked). Park and Facility Development section developed the questionnaire, and the Community Initiatives section provided support in terms of programming the survey on-line by using the internal on-line survey tool Vovici, and prepared this summary report based on the survey results.

3. Considerations

Rather than surveys with random samples where conclusions can be drawn to represent the general population of the certain area, this survey was conducted among those who attended the Open House or completed the on-line survey thus the result does not represent the general population. Most of the time surveys conducted during open houses/on-line represent people who are more involved in the topic due to various reasons and the result is more geared toward heavier users.

Current Usage

1. How often do they visit and for how long?

Among the 178 who responded, about a third (34%) visit the facility 3 or more times per week, a little less than half (49%) visit 1-2 time a week, while 17% do not usually use the facility. This is much higher than the result from the phone survey that the consulting firm

“Leger Marketing” conducted at the end of June which indicated only 7% visiting the facility 3 or more times per week and 8% visiting for 1-2 times per week. This is a strong indicator that the survey result is profoundly skewed towards heavy users of the facility in the community.

Among the respondents, most of them spend a fair amount of time in the facility when they visit: 45% of the respondents spend 2 or more hours in the facility and 38% spend 1-2 hours.

of visits per week (N= 178)

Response	Frequency
1-2	49%
>= 3	34%
Don't use	16.9%
Total	100%

of hours per visit (N= 154)

Response	Frequency
1 to less than 2 hours	38%
2 or more hours	45%
Other Responses	17.5%
Total	100%

2. When in the year and what time in the day do they use the facility?

Most respondents use the facility in all four seasons of the year. More than 80% visit during the fall, the winter, and the spring. Summer sees slightly flat visitation at 69% possibly due to the various outdoor attractions/recreation options in Edmonton.

During the day, “later in the day” is the most popular time slot for the respondents’ group; 78% of them use the facility after work or in the evening, and a significant portion of the respondents (42%) use it in the morning. More than a third of the respondents use the facility in the afternoon.

When to visit in the year (N= 162)

Response	Frequency
Fall	83.3%
Winter	83.3%
Spring	82.7%
Summer	68.5%

What time to visit in the day (N=161)

Response	Frequency
Morning	42.2%
Over Lunch	8.1%
Afternoon	34.2%
After Work/evening	77%

3. Are they accompanied?

Besides a handful of respondents who visit the facility with an organized group (around 20), most respondents visit the facility either on their own or with family/friends. About half of these users visit on their own most of the time and the other half visit with family or friends. A lot of parents go to the facility with their kids so the kids can either swim or attend a lesson in the facility.

4. How far they live and how they get to the facility?

Most of the respondents who answered this question (64%, 65 out of 105) live within a 5 km radius of the facility; additionally 21% of the respondents live more than 5 km away from the facility.

Most of the respondents (77%, 134 out of 174) drive to the facility. There are people who usually take the public transit (6%, 10 out of 174) or walk (5%, 9 out of 174) and we assume these are respondents who live close to the facility. Some of them use a combination of drive, cycle, bus or walk.

Needs/ Wishes

1. Overall

The respondents were definitely in support of the renovation of the Mill Woods Recreation Centre. The facility does need an update after years of use, and the current capacity makes it difficult to accommodate the growing population in the area. Below is a comment from a respondent of this survey:

“Mill Woods is the only rec centre that services most of Mill Woods and east. It is getting too busy and the Meadows rec centre is still a few years away. The facility needs to be bigger to accommodate the increase in population. It is so hard booking into swimming lessons unless you call on the first day of open registration.”

2. Spaces and activity areas- Pool and Fitness

Respondents suggested that the pool (43 out of 133), the fitness area (34 out of 133), and the change rooms (23 out of 133, especially woman's) were the top three spaces that could be improved. When they were asked about possible new spaces or activity areas that could be added to the facility, the pool and the fitness areas were the top two as well. Among other items that were mentioned, building more indoor tracks, adding an area for kids to play, creating space for Art/Culture activities, and having more family change rooms, was also suggested by multiple respondents (> 5).

The suggestions around the pool were mainly to have a separate and larger area for kids, especially younger kids where they can play or learn to swim, and have a separate lane swimming area for adults and swimmers.

The main reason for improving or adding new spaces for the fitness areas was for the fitness classes. Respondents indicated that fitness classes, i.e. Yoga, Zumba, Dance etc. need

larger/more/cleaner spaces, and should not take place in the court where people play racquet balls.

3. Programs and services- Fitness and Art

Adding more fitness classes, i.e. Yoga, Zumba, dancing, was suggested by 19 out of the 70 respondents who answered this question about what programs could be added. Some mentioned because there was not enough options at Mill Woods Recreation Centre that they had to go to Terwilleger Community Recreation Centre for these classes. These same respondents said that other Recreation Centres (such as TCRC) are too far from their home and would like to see some of the classes offered at Mill Woods Recreation Centre.

The second largest area was the Art/Culture programs (11 out of 70). The respondents would like to have more programs like music, dance, and other performing arts available at Mill Woods Recreation Centre. One person said “Mill Woods is SO diverse in population...why not be more inclusive in the activities at a recreation center?” And another one said “We need more programs for all the arts, currently the centre is focused way too much on sports. There should be more of a balance.”