

# South West Recreation Facility

*PATHWAY FORWARD FOR AIRDRIE*

Phased Approach to Development of  
Facility Components and Amenities  
Summary Report

May 2023



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Preliminary planning has been conducted for potential facility and amenity components of the South West Recreation Facility in Airdrie. The planning presents two options for Airdrie Council to consider for Phase 1 development of the facility.

Several key influences informed the development of the two options such as:

- Council's vision and objectives for public recreation in Airdrie (Support Active Living and Wellness).
- 10 Year Plan for a sustainable and equitable recreation system.
- Existing facility deficits and current pressures experienced in Airdrie's recreation system.
- Demography of the community (e.g., younger population).
- Modelling of residents' involvement in Airdrie's recreation system.

Using an assumption that approximately \$80 million could be available for the first phase of the South West Recreation Facility, core components of the development would be aquatics and fitness space amenities. The aquatics component, as well as other amenities such as indoor fun/structure spaces or multi-purpose/meetings rooms, would be distinguishing features between the two options.

- The **Broadest Community Voiced Needs/Priorities Option** would have more emphasis on recreational and leisure aquatic opportunities, as well as a 25 metre competitive pool. It would appeal to a higher proportion of Airdronians, address current pressures on the recreation system, and enable higher propensity for the operator to manage cost recovery of the facility.
- The **Sport Focused Use Option** would have 50 metre and 25 metre pools and multipurpose/meeting rooms to address specifications needed to host provincial and national competitions. It would provide an alternative venue in southern Alberta for competitive athletes to train/compete and provide opportunities for economic benefits to local food, accommodation, gas, etc. businesses from 1 or 2 additional competitions per year.

With the immediate pressures being experienced at Genesis Place, which is expected to increase as Airdrie's population grows, and estimated annual use and cost recovery, it is recommended that the Broadest Community Voiced Needs/Priority option be selected for Phase 1 of the South West Recreation Facility.

Upon Council's choice of option, Airdrie Recreation would need to conduct a site assessment and master plan and develop a conceptual functional program for the project.

## Broadest Community Voiced Needs/Priorities

<b>Aquatics</b> ~47,000 ft <sup>2</sup>	
10 lane pool x 25 metres	
Leisure pool with lazy river	~ \$50 million
Waterslides/play features	
Indoor spray park	
Hot tub/steam room	
<b>Fitness spaces</b> ~22,000 ft <sup>2</sup>	
Cardio equipment	~\$14 million
Weight training	
Studios	
<b>Indoor fun/structure space</b> ~6,000 ft <sup>2</sup>	
Play structures	~\$3 million
Climbing/bouldering wall	
Child minding	
<b>Admin/common areas</b> ~14,000 ft <sup>2</sup>	
Common/staff areas	~\$11 million
Mechanical systems/rooms	
Parking lot	
<b>Other</b>	~\$2 million

**Estimated Annual Visitation: 1,025,000**

**Estimated Annual Tax Support: \$1.75 million**

## Sport Focused Use

<b>Aquatics</b> ~48,750 ft <sup>2</sup>	
10 lane pool x 53/54 metres	~ \$52 million
6 lane pool x 25 metres	
Waterslides	
Hot tub/steam room	
<b>Fitness spaces</b> ~19,000 ft <sup>2</sup>	
Cardio equipment	~\$12 million
Weight training	
Studios	
<b>To be determined</b> ~6,000 ft <sup>2</sup>	
Multipurpose rooms	~\$3 million
Meeting rooms	
Child minding	
<b>Admin/common areas</b> ~14,000 ft <sup>2</sup>	
Common/staff areas	~\$13 million
Mechanical systems/rooms	
Parking lot	

**Estimated Annual Visitation: 670,000**

**Estimated Annual Tax Support: \$3.50 million**

# Introduction

The City of Airdrie is planning to build a new multi-purpose recreation facility in the south west corner of the community. Through public engagement processes, community needs and expectations have been identified for the facility. Further planning has identified potential facility components and amenities and examined implications for its development and operations. This summary report presents analysis of two options for a pathway forward to develop amenities at the South West Recreation Facility.

Recreation facilities are as unique as the communities they serve. There is no prescribed formula to determine an optimal composition of facility components and amenities. Rather, local demand, demography, and existing infrastructure typically influence the scale and mix of opportunities developed in new recreation facilities.

Airdrie has grown significantly in population over the past few decades. Facility development is needed to address the increasing demands for recreation among the population. A Recreation Needs Assessment Study<sup>1</sup> conducted in early 2022 acknowledged that public recreation facility needs within the community are extensive due to the growth in population.

Subsequent to the Recreation Needs Assessment Study, Airdrie Recreation prepared a comprehensive report<sup>2</sup> about potential facility components and amenities for the South West Recreation Facility (included as an Appendix to this summary). The report provides information about classifications, features, and implications for different facility components and amenities at the South West Recreation Facility. Local stakeholder groups that would be directly affected by the development of the South West Recreation Facility were further consulted for the report. Estimated capital costs for various amenities that may be constructed at the South West Recreation Facility were also established by an independent cost consultant and were used to inform concepts presented in a summary report.<sup>3</sup>



Based on analysis of all the information gathered, the South West Recreation Facility will require significant investment by the City of Airdrie and will likely need to be developed in phases.

The purpose of this summary report is to present features, characteristics, and models for two options that could be developed in an initial phase of the South West Recreation Facility. Each option provides different outcomes for the community and implications for operational performance. This report is intended to provide information to enable evidence-based decisions by Airdrie Council for the development of the first phase of the South West Recreation Facility. The chosen option will inform a conceptual functional program for the new multi-purpose facility.

HarGroup Management Consultants Inc. was engaged to assist Airdrie Recreation develop the findings and conclusions presented in this summary report.

<sup>1</sup> *Indoor and Outdoor Recreation Needs Assessment Study*, February 2022. HarGroup Management Consultants Inc.

<sup>2</sup> *Recreation Facility Planning – Analysis of Facility Thematic Options and Amenities*, 2022. City of Airdrie.

<sup>3</sup> *Recreation Facility Airdrie, Budgetary Cost Estimate*, 2022. SNC-Lavalin. ('Class D Budgetary Cost Estimate')

# A Sustainable and Equitable Recreation System

Principles have been established by Airdrie Council to guide decisions for key areas of the City's Recreation services.<sup>4</sup> Fundamental to these precepts is the vision that the recreation system will support active living and wellness by ensuring community facilities and amenities meet the demands of Airdrie's growing population.

Other notable guidelines for planning the South West Recreation Facility include balancing facility use between spontaneous activities, organized sports, and registered programs and ensuring year round opportunities are available to enhance residents' quality of life. All of these principles support the notion that the South West Recreation Facility should appeal broadly to all Airdronians and provide accessible opportunities to foster wellbeing in the community.

Development of the South West Recreation Facility is part of a 10-Year Plan for both new and existing facilities. The goal of this plan is to ensure that Airdrie's recreation system, as a whole, is sustainable for the community and equitable for all Airdronians.

- **South West Recreation Facility** addresses highest priority indoor recreation needs
- **Airdrie Multi-Use Facility and Library** addresses cultural facility needs and new larger library
- **Legacy Facilities** are modernized, upgraded, repurposed to meet current and remaining residual needs for indoor culture and recreation
- **Future Facilities** beyond the 10-Year Plan (e.g., Fletcher Site)

Not all needs within the community will be met in the initial phase of development of the South West Recreation Facility. In the conceptual function programming of the initial phase, a master plan of the site will also be prepared for future phases of the facility. Other sites earmarked for community facilities in Airdrie such as the Fletcher Site could also be considered for components and amenities that are not included at the South West Recreation Facility (see map on next page).

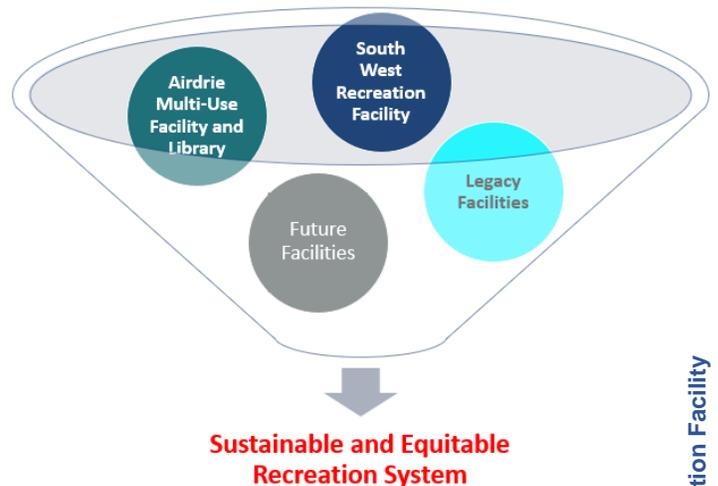
<sup>4</sup> 2019-2022 Council's Strategic Priorities, Council Approved Budget 2022; City of Airdrie, Council Focus Areas, leisure, recreation, and culture.

## Council Vision for Recreation:

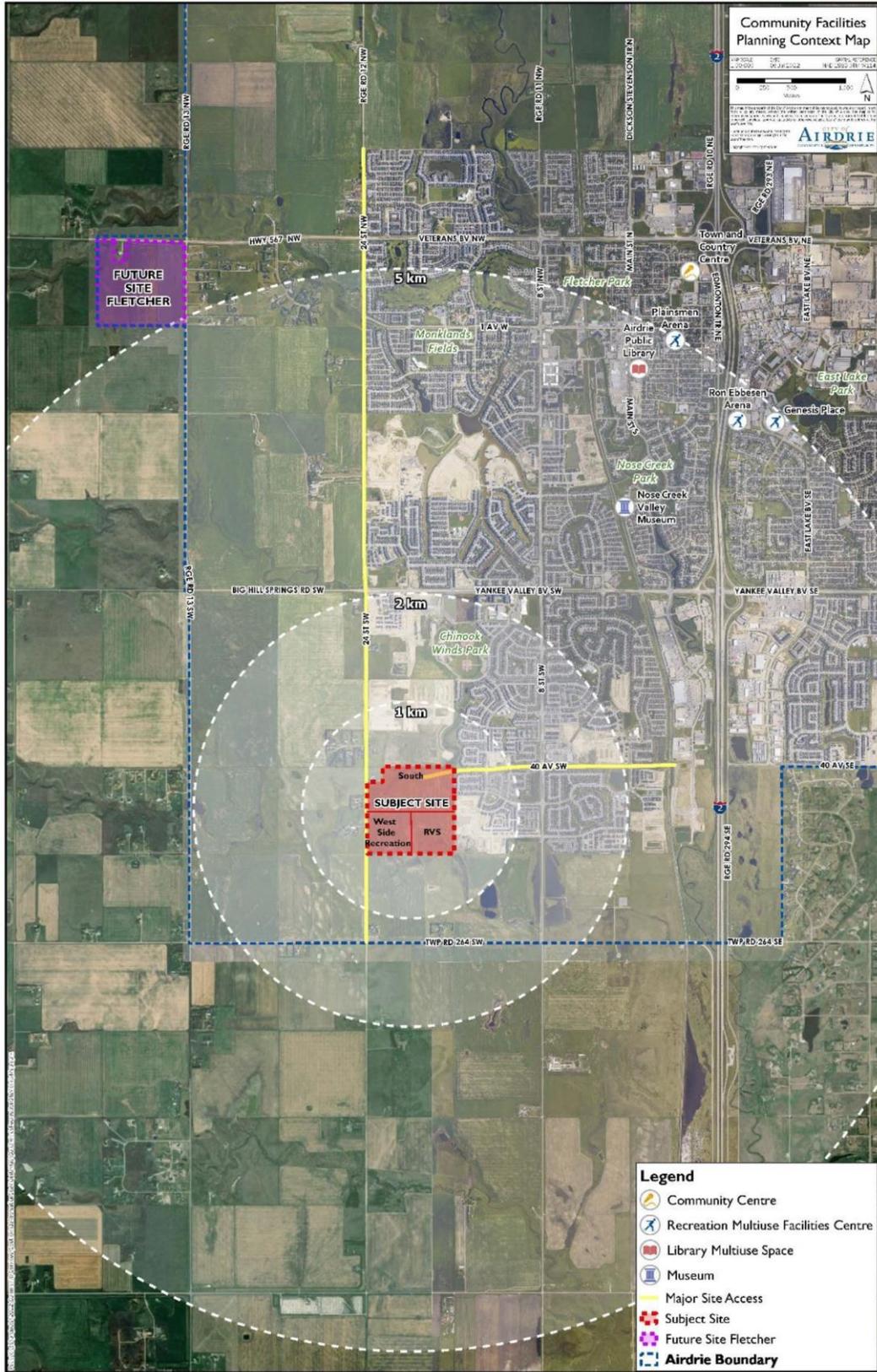
### Support Active Living and Wellness

- *Meet needs* – Airdrie's growing community
- *Balanced facility use* – between spontaneous use, organized sport and registered programs
- *Quality of life* – four season opportunities highly valued by the community
- *Regional partnerships* – Rocky View County for the recreation centre
- *Community participation* – involvement in the outcome
- *Long term capacity* – not at full capacity upon opening

## Interrelationship of Facility Plans to Address Community Recreation Needs over the Next 10 Years



Future Community Facilities Planning Map



# Facility Deficits

The Recreation Needs Assessment Study identified deficits in all types of facility categories. Some of the more notable deficits are presented to the right.

When all phases are completed, the South West Recreation Facility is intended to address facility deficits for Airdrie to a population of approximately 110,000.

For context, the figure below shows different phases of development implemented for Genesis Place. These phases, which occurred every four or five years, were necessary as population growth within Airdrie outpaced facility capacity regardless of the expansions.

## Notable Deficits based on Comparative Review

	(# of amenities per capita)	
	Airdrie	Comparative Review
Swim lanes	1:12,800	1:3,000
Leisure pools	1:77,000	1:36,000
Fitness spaces	1:77,000	1:45,000
Indoor fun/play spaces	1:77,000	1:22,500
Multi-purpose/meet rooms	1:6,400	1:4,500
NHL sized ice sheets	1:15,400	1:11,700
Multi-use courts	1:35,500	1:28,400
Indoor turf fields	1:77,000	1:31,700

Source: Indoor and Outdoor Recreation Needs Assessment Study, 2022

City of Airdrie Historical and Forecast Population



Since the Recreation Needs Assessment Study was completed and operations resumed at Genesis Place following the Covid-19 Pandemic period, demand has been overwhelming for certain programs and services (see below).

These experiences have exposed critical deficiencies within the aquatics, fitness, and other components of the Genesis Place facility. Further, these challenges are expected to continue with future population growth in Airdrie.

### Current Critical Recreation System Pressures

Aquatics

- 1,200+ waitlisted for swim lessons in each 8-week lesson set
- Swim clubs limiting membership growth with finite amount of lanes
- No public swim or lane swim during prime weeknight evenings or weekend mornings
- Capacity reached during most weekend public swims with line-ups down hallways

Fitness Spaces

- Waitlists for drop-in fitness classes with spots having to be secured a week in advance

Other

- Waitlists for preschool and children's programs
- Fun place limited to younger children and a gap in amenities for those 7y-12y

The top community priorities identified for facility components based on the Recreation Needs Assessment Study findings are presented in the following illustration (based on Airdrie household priorities and use of amenities). The top priorities were aquatics (flatwater and leisure pools), fitness spaces (cardio/weight equipment, studios, etc.), indoor fun/structure spaces (fun zone areas with play structures and climbing/bouldering walls), and multi-purpose/meeting rooms. Ice arenas, multi-use courts, and indoor fields were also identified as being priorities although less so than the other facility components.

Also presented in the illustration is a graphic representation of approximate capital costs to address the facility components gaps for a population of approximately 110,000 in Airdrie. Higher costs are associated with the development of aquatic and ice arena facility components (costs are variable depending on scope of amenities developed).

Estimated capital costs to address facility needs for a population of 110,000 in Airdrie would be

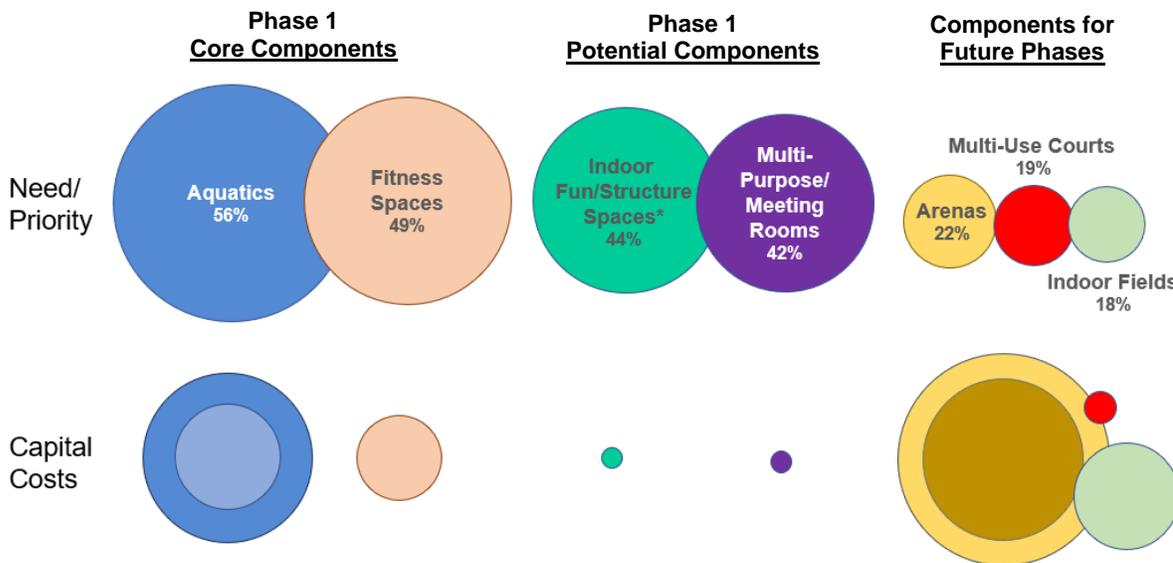
approximately \$230 to \$240 million. It has been assumed that approximately \$80 million could be available for the first phase of the South West Recreation Facility development.<sup>5</sup>

With this level of funding, the core components of Phase 1 are recommended to be aquatics and fitness spaces based on community priorities and current critical deficiencies at Genesis Place. Other components, such as indoor fun/structure spaces and multi-purpose/meetings rooms, would be developed based on availability of funds.

In future phases, other facility components such as ice arenas, multi-use courts, and four season indoor fields would be developed.

It is worth noting that multi-purpose/meeting rooms are being considered for the Airdrie Multi-use Facility and Library. Although, these kinds of spaces may be needed at the South West Recreation Facility depending on the option chosen to be developed.

**Current Critical Recreation System Pressures**



Note: Percentages shown within Need/Priority diagrams are developed from Airdrie household priorities and use of amenities.  
 \*Fun Zone areas with play structures and climbing/bouldering walls.

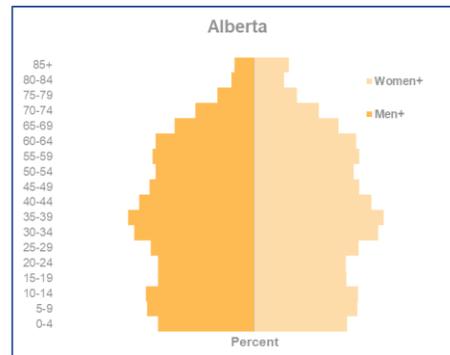
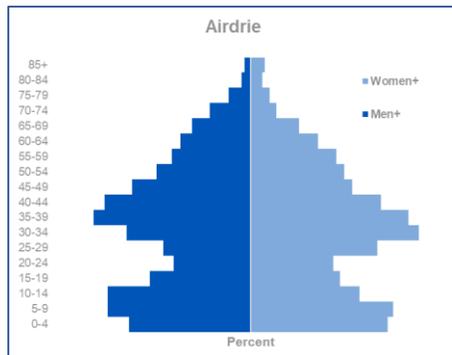
<sup>5</sup> Based on information provided in the *Recreation Facility Airdrie, Budgetary Cost Estimate, 2022*. SNC-Lavalin. ('Class D Budgetary Cost Estimate')

# Demography

One of the main reasons facility deficits exist in Airdrie is the composition of its population. Airdrie is much younger than most communities, which is important as children/youth are typically prominent segments served by public recreation in municipalities.

This characteristic is expected to continue as the population increases. As such, future recreation facilities and services will need to accommodate various levels of interest and abilities, but particularly introductory (“learn to ...”) or physical literacy opportunities and features or activities that support positive engagement among the youth of the community.

Population Age and Gender Characteristics



## Recreation Modelling for Facility Planning

One of Council’s desired outcomes for recreation in Airdrie is to ensure a balanced approach is employed to address the diverse needs of the community, whether unstructured or structured use or involvement. This is a challenging issue for all communities and has been a topic of study over the last decade or so by both industry and academia. Recently, models have been developed to help communities analyze concepts and formulate solutions to address the issue.

Academic study has considered distinctions between serious and casual leisure for application to service planning. These terms characterize the extent of effort, commitment, perseverance, and desired outcomes that individuals exhibit in the pursuit of their activities. For example, serious running athletes might train rigorously to pursue high performance competitions, or even Olympic aspirations, while casual runners might run or jog periodically to simply maintain their health or well-being.

### Recreation Activities:

- *Unstructured (spontaneous)* – Individuals or groups engaged in pursuits and interests in an unorganized or informal way for their own reasons. It is intrinsically motivated and typically personally-directed. Examples may include swimming for leisure, public skating, drop-in sports, going to a fitness centre, walking/jogging, reading novels, etc.
- *Structured (organized)* – individuals or groups participate in planned and coordinated programs and services that typically have instruction or direction from a coach, leader, or trainer. Participants are expected to commit to the activity through registrations, fees, set times, and locations.

Research involving these concepts has revealed a notable trend over the past decade or so in that aspiring serious leisure participants have lobbied for more specialized features within public recreation facilities, which do not always adapt well to the interests or use of amenities among casual leisure users (e.g., cost or apprehension to use, deterioration of amenities due to high volume use, etc.).

Within the recreation industry, models have emerged that aid in facility development and planning service delivery<sup>6</sup> (see Appendices for different models). For instance, it is recognized that new facility development should support both structured and unstructured activities to effectively serve the needs of the public, but also foster diverse revenue opportunities from operations.

Using the concepts developed in these frameworks, detailed analysis was conducted with the findings of the Airdrie Recreation Needs Assessment Study to establish a model that could help inform the planning of the South West Recreation Facility. Various questions asked within the Future of Recreation Survey, which was conducted for the Recreation Needs Assessment Study, were cross referenced to gain measurements in organized and unorganized activities, use of facilities, facility development priorities, as well as information gathered from Airdrie recreation services providers and other industry literature.

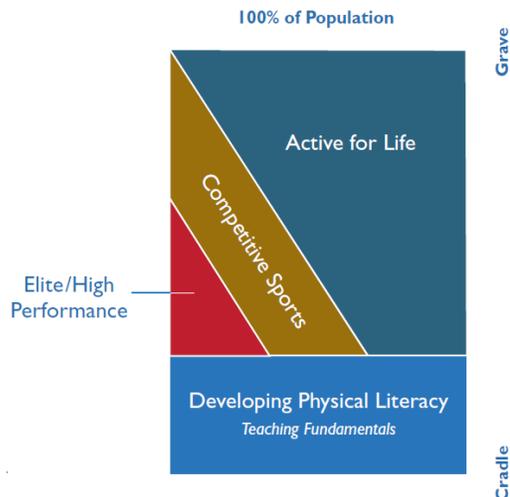
Through the analysis, data were extrapolated to develop estimates for categories of recreation participants based on involvement in leisure activities.

- **Elite** – Participants exceedingly dedicated to pursuing leisure activities that are or will lead to high performance or masters level achievement.
- **Competitive** – Participants interested in being proficient and involved in advanced levels of leisure activities, but high performance or masters level achievement is not the expected outcome.
- **Recreational** – Participants interested and routinely involved in leisure activities but are not pursuing higher levels of proficiency or competence.
- **Leisure** – Participants engage in leisure activities to explore new interests, have enriching experiences, maintain health and wellness, play, etc.

From these findings, the Airdrie Recreation Engagement Model was developed and provides a conceptual interpretation of Airdronians' involvement in recreation activities. The findings reveal that involvement is much more leisure and recreational than competitive or elite.

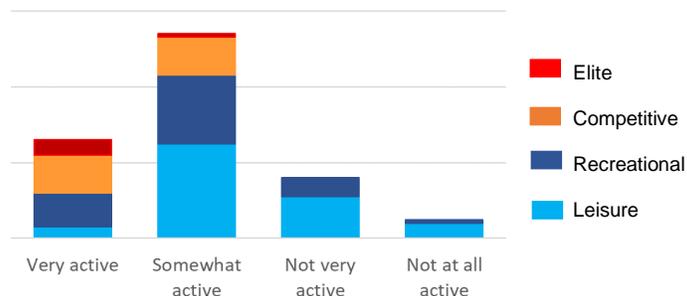
Further application of the model will be used to provide insights for options considered for Phase 1 development of the South West Recreation Facility.

### Inclusive Physical-Literacy Sport and Recreation System

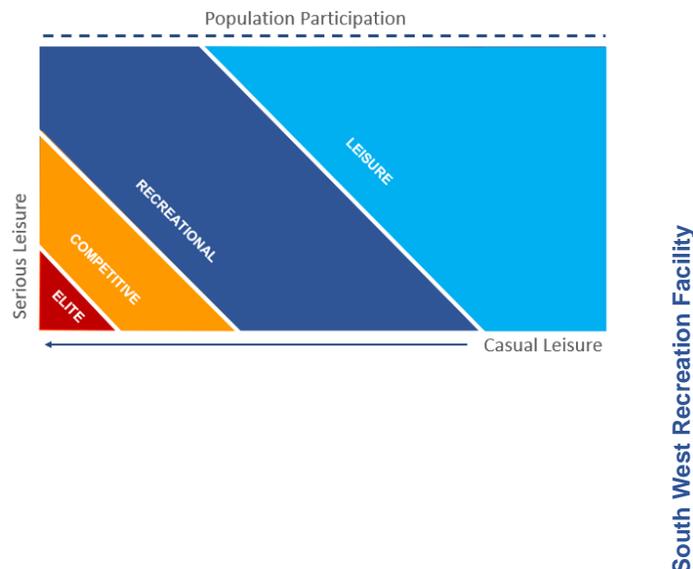


Source: United States President's Council on Fitness, Sports & Nutrition.

### Perceived Levels of Household Activity in Recreation among Airdrie Residents



### Airdrie Recreation Engagement Model



<sup>6</sup> Canadian Sport for Life Athlete Development Model, Sport for Life; Sport for Life, Play for Life Model, Aspen Institute; Inclusive Physical Literacy-Based Sport and Recreation System; United States President's Council on Fitness, Sports & Nutrition.

# Aquatic Amenities

With aquatics being a major core component of Phase 1, the types of amenities to develop represent an important decision for the South West Recreation Facility. Airdrie Recreation in its *Recreation Facility Planning – Analysis of Facility Thematic Options and Amenities* report has examined in detail the types of aquatic amenities that could be included in the South West Recreation Facility. A summary of aquatic amenities considered in the analysis is presented to the right.

In the Recreation Needs Assessment Study, Airdronians were asked about anticipated interests and uses of new aquatic facilities at the South West Recreation Facility. Their responses about preferences are presented below.

Competitive flatwater pools can facilitate some of the interests of residents such as swim lessons, lap swimming, aquatic group fitness, and competitive swimming and diving. However, leisure, instruction, and play water are more accommodating for a lot of the interests preferred by Airdronians. The only type of interest that leisure, instruction, and play water cannot address is competitive swimming, which is an activity that appeals to a small segment of the community.

Its worth noting that the results presented below demonstrate much of the analysis that is presented in the Airdrie Recreation Engagement Model on the previous page with leisure and recreational interests being more prevalent among the population.

## Types of Aquatic Amenities



### Competitive Flatwater Pools

- 25 metre - 6 to 10 lane
- 50 metre – 8 to 10 lane

### Dive Tanks

- Different diving board platforms

### Therapeutic Water

- Hot tub
- Steam room/sauna

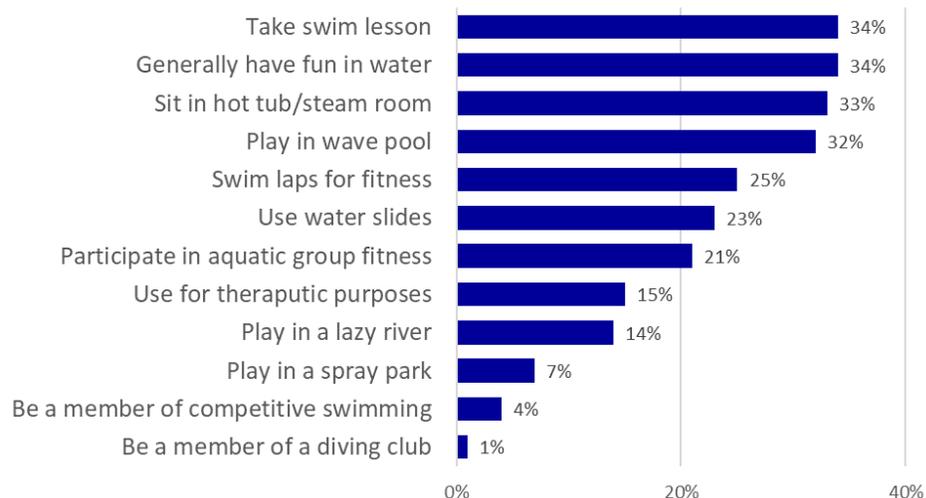
### Leisure/Instruction Pools

- Zero depth entry – relax play sitting areas
- Stair entry

### Play water

- Water slides
- Wave pool
- Lazy river
- Wave rider
- Spray park

## Airdronians' Expected Use of Aquatic Facilities at the South West Recreation Facility



Source: Airdrie Recreation Needs Assessment Study, 2022.

Nonetheless, through the Recreation Needs Assessment Study, it was acknowledged that a more capable competitive flatwater pool is needed within Airdrie to serve existing and future needs of the community.

The type and size of competitive flatwater pool that is developed will facilitate different levels of competitions to occur. Swim Alberta has developed sample design considerations for different types of competitive flatwater pools based on requirements for swimming, water polo, synchronized swimming, and diving competitions, which are summarized in the table below.

Depending on the specifications of the pool, local to national competitions can be accommodated. Provincial and national competitions require more specifications whether it be number of lanes, tank depth, amount of deck space, seating, or support amenities. The more specifications, the more investment required, whether it be capital or operating costs.

For instance, capital costs for permanent seating of 1,200+ spectators would be much higher for a pool that accommodates provincial or national competitions than for 150 or 250 spectators for local or regional competitions. Another example is the deck space needed around the pool with provincial and national competitions needing a large area, (e.g., 500 m<sup>2</sup> on one side) which might be challenging to program when competitions are not occurring.

It is also worth noting that separate warm up pools are needed on site for provincial and national competitions. Being able to effectively attract national competitions would likely require at least a separate 25 metre x 6 lane pool (or an extension to the 50 metre pool) based on facilities used for 2023 national competitions (e.g., Toronto Pan Am Sports Centre, 2 x 50m pools; Windsor International Aquatic and Training Centre, 71m x 10 lane pool with two movable bulkheads; MNP Community and Sports Centre in Calgary, 2 x 50m pools).



Toronto Pan Am Sports Centre, one of the two 50m pools.

Another point to consider is that some specifications, such as pool temperature or depth requirements, can impede other uses such as swimming lessons for younger aged children or just general use among the public. There are methods of mitigating some of these impediments, such as incorporating movable floors to make these types of pools more accessible and programmable and using floatable docks, but all of these would require capital and operational funds.

**Aquatic Facility Design and Usage – Sample Considerations**

Specifications	Type	Local Community	Multi-Use Community	Competition	Premium Competition
Competitions		Local	Local/Regional	Local/Regional/ Entry Level Provincial	Provincial Championship / National Competitions
Length		25 metre	25 metre	53 metre (2 bulkheads, 15 metre hydraulic floor) + 25 metre x 6 lane	54 metre (2 bulkheads) + 25 metre x 6 lane
Lanes		6	8	8	10
Depth		DE 3.5m SE 1.0 m	DE 3.5m SE 1.5 m	DE 4.5m SE 2.0 m	DE 4.5m SE 2.5 m
Deck space Around Pool		3.0 m	3.0 m	4.0 m	5.0 m (10.0 metre on one side of pool)
Seating		150 permanent 150 temporary	250 permanent 150 temporary	350 permanent 250 temporary	1,200+ permanent 600+ temporary
Rooms		2 multipurpose	2 multipurpose 1 meeting space (100 people)	3 multipurpose 1 meeting space (250 people)	4 multipurpose 1 meeting space (500 people)

Source: Swim Alberta, 2019.

# Options for Phase 1 of the New Recreation Facility

Based on the information presented above, two options have been developed for Phase 1 of the South West Recreation Facility.

It has been assumed that a capital limit of approximately \$80 million could be available to construct Phase 1 of the South West Recreation Facility. As such, the two options have been organized to facilitate this expectation.

Each option has aquatic and fitness spaces as core facility components and amenities. Other spaces have been included based on the opportunities or needs associated with each option.

General concepts for the **Broadest Community Voiced Needs/Priorities** and **Sport Focused Use** options are presented below. Summary profiles of facility programs, estimated capital costs, anticipated visitation, and expected municipal contributions for operational costs for these options are presented on the next page.

It is worth noting that any potential capital costing overages associated with the competitive flatwater pools and supportive amenities presented in the Sport Focused Use option would result in smaller or elimination of fitness spaces (or water slides), as these represent minimum specifications.

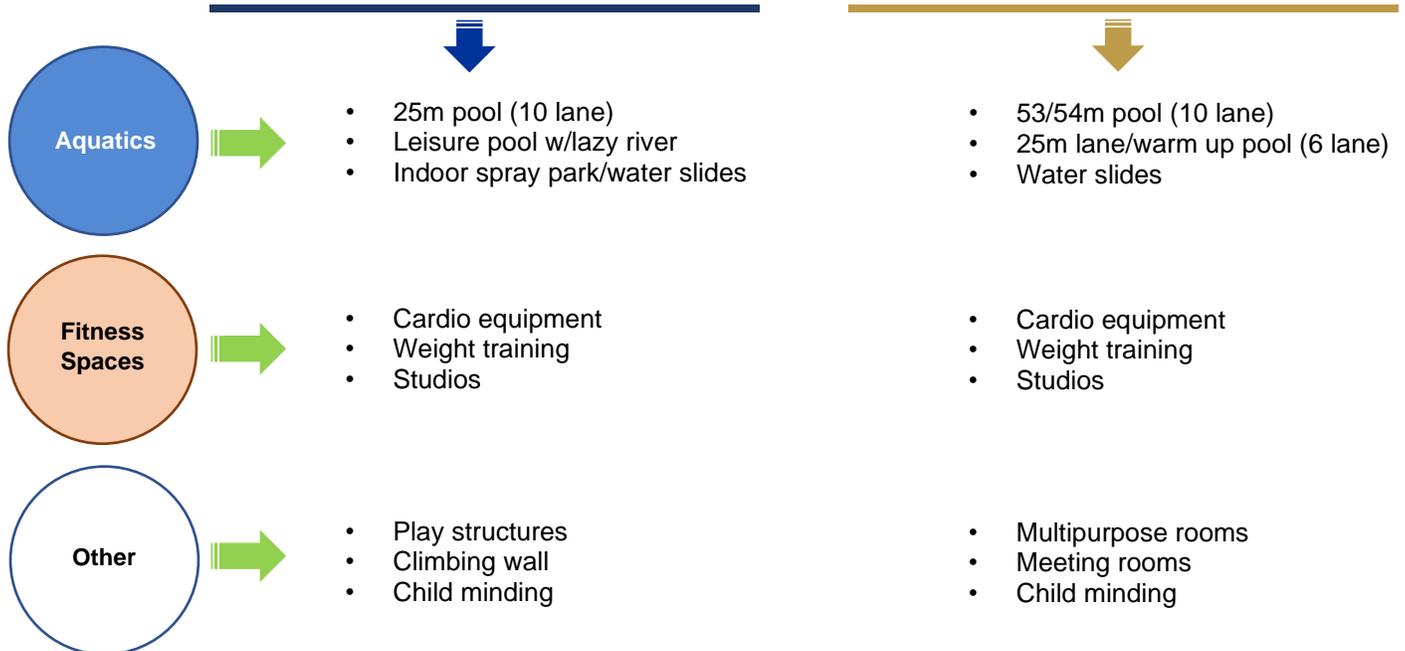
## Optional Concepts for Phase 1

### Broadest Community Voiced Needs/Priorities

- More emphasis is given to recreational and leisure aquatic opportunities for residents, although the facility would also have a competitive flatwater pool
- Provides greater opportunities for spontaneous and programmatic activities of residents
- Complements and augments the operational profile of Genesis Place for program, operations, and revenues

### Sport Focused Use

- Emphasis is given to competitive aquatic opportunities for the community
- Unstructured use of aquatic amenities is considered a secondary focus
- Potential ability to periodically attract national aquatic competitions



Both options have been budgeted at approximately \$80 million to construct based on a Class D estimate.<sup>7</sup> These are order of magnitude estimates for both amenity sizes and costs.

The aquatic amenities and indoor fun/structure spaces of the Broadest Community Needs option would appeal to the younger population of Airdrie, which contributes to higher annual visitation and admissions/pass holder sales. It is also expected to generate more program sales.

The Sport Focused Use option would likely attract 1 or 2 more aquatic competitions annually than already occurs at Genesis Place. As such, this option is expected to attract more spectators due to the type of competitions it might host (e.g., provincial or national).

Operating deficits are expected to be higher for the Sport Focused Use option due to costs to operate and lower expected revenues.

## Broadest Community Voiced Needs/Priorities

## Sport Focused Use

**Program, size, and Estimated Construction Costs<sup>7,8</sup>**

<b>Aquatics</b> ~47,000 ft <sup>2</sup>	
10 lane pool x 25 metres	
Leisure pool with lazy river	~ \$50 million
Waterslides/play features	
Indoor spray park	
Hot tub/steam room	
<b>Fitness spaces</b> ~22,000 ft <sup>2</sup>	
Cardio equipment	~\$14 million
Weight training	
Studios	
<b>Indoor fun/structure space</b> ~6,000 ft <sup>2</sup>	
Play structures	~\$3 million
Climbing/bouldering wall	
Child minding	
<b>Admin/common areas</b> ~14,000 ft <sup>2</sup>	
Common/staff areas	~\$11 million
Mechanical systems/rooms	
Parking lot	
<b>Other</b>	~\$2 million

<b>Aquatics</b> ~48,750 ft <sup>2</sup>	
10 lane pool x 53/54 metres	
6 lane pool x 25 metres	~ \$52 million
Waterslides	
Hot tub/steam room	
<b>Fitness spaces</b> ~19,000 ft <sup>2</sup>	
Cardio equipment	~\$12 million
Weight training	
Studios	
<b>To be determined</b> ~6,000 ft <sup>2</sup>	
Multipurpose rooms	~\$3 million
Meeting rooms	
Child minding	
<b>Admin/common areas</b> ~14,000 ft <sup>2</sup>	
Common/staff areas	~\$13 million
Mechanical systems/rooms	
Parking lot	

**Estimated Capital Costs: ~\$80 million for both options**

**Estimated Annual Visitation**

Drop-in	800,000
Programs	160,000
Rentals	30,000
Spectators	35,000
<b>Totals</b>	<b>1,025,000</b>

Drop-in	450,000
Programs	120,000
Rentals	50,000
Spectators	55,000
<b>Totals</b>	<b>670,000</b>

**Annual Tax Support Anticipated for Operations**

**Estimated \$1.75 million**

**Estimated \$3.50 million**

<sup>7</sup> Based on information provided in the *Recreation Facility Airdrie, Budgetary Cost Estimate, 2022*. SNC-Lavalin. ('Class D Budgetary Cost Estimate').

<sup>8</sup> Admin/common area cost differences between options associated with parking to accommodate seating requirements.

# Trade Offs and Outcomes Analysis

Earlier in this report, an illustration of estimates of residents' involvement in recreation activities were presented through the Airdrie Recreation Engagement Model. Similar assessments have been developed based on the attributed design and capital investments that would be required for each of the two options being considered for the South West Recreation Facility.

Results for the Broadest Community Voiced Needs/Priorities option more closely represent the estimates established in the Airdrie Recreation Engagement Model than for the Sport Focused Use option.

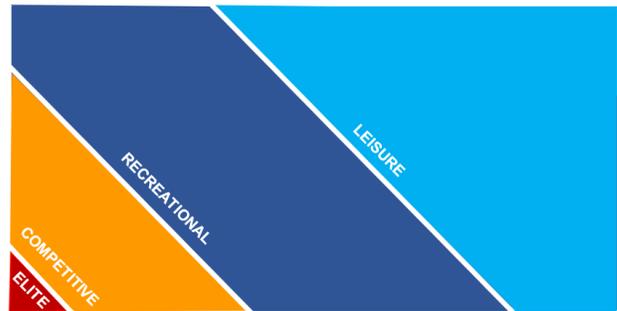
The aquatics and indoor fun/structure space areas of the Broadest Community Voiced Needs/Priorities option offer types of amenities and more unstructured activities, which would appeal to residents interested recreational and leisure opportunities.

In contrast, much of the Sport Focused Use option is comprised of flatwater pools, as well as amenities that would support competitive events held at the facility such as spectator seating, deck space, and multipurpose/meeting rooms. These amenities concentrate more on elite and competitive categories of the Model.

Visitation estimates for the Broadest Community Voiced Needs/Priorities option are higher than the Sport Focused Use option. In addition, the amenities of the first option are also more likely to draw users from throughout Airdrie. Alternatively, the latter option would likely have a user base concentrated from the west side of Airdrie, as well as competitive swim groups. Based on these concepts, the estimated percentage of the Airdrie population (based on 110,000) to use the South Recreation Facility is higher for the Board Community Voiced Needs Priorities option.

## Attributed Design and Capital Investment Comparisons

### Broadest Community Voiced Needs/Priorities Option



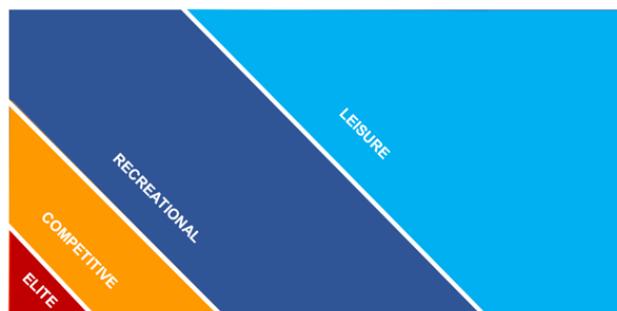
Estimated % of Population Using Facility: **41%**  
(annually, based on 110,000 population)

### Sport Focused Use Option



Estimated % of Population Using Facility: **20%**  
(annually, based on 110,000 population)

### Airdrie Recreation Engagement Model (for reference)



Each of the options are expected to offer different outcomes to the Airdrie community.

The Broadest Community Voiced Needs/Priority option provides more diversity of activities for residents and, thus, offers more opportunities for the quality of life within the community. As well, use will be greater among Airdronians, particularly for family focused spontaneous activities, skill development for children, and positive engagement opportunities for youth. Further, this option is expected to offer more activities throughout the year, require less financial subsidy to operate and, ultimately, foster higher household satisfaction with Airdrie's recreation system.

The Sport Focused Use option would enable higher level competitions and training to occur within Airdrie for aquatic sports. This would benefit local and, possibly regional, athletes that are pursuing elite or competitive levels of play. There are also potential economic benefits to primarily local food, accommodation, gas, etc. services from one or two additional competitions per year. As well, it would contribute to the development of Airdrie as community. To a lesser extent than the other option, it would alleviate current pressures on the recreation system and provide dryland opportunities.

## Outcomes Analysis between Options

### Broadest Community Voiced Needs/Priorities

- More diversity of activities – quality of life
- Greater use from family focused spontaneous activities
- More skill development and positive engagement opportunities for children/youth
- Ability to eliminate current pressures on system
- Requires less financial subsidy to operate
- Dryland opportunities for families to recreation (4 seasons)
- Ability to eliminate current pressures on system
- Higher household satisfaction

### Sport Focused Use

- Enables higher level competitions and training
- Benefits local economy (food, accommodation, gas, etc. services) from 1 to 2 additional competitions per year
- Contributes to the development of Airdrie as a community
- Alleviate some of the current pressures on system
- May provide some dryland opportunities

## Concluding Remarks

This summary has identified two different options for Phase 1 development of the South West Recreation Facility.

From a recreational and social perspective, the Broadest Community Voiced Needs/Priorities option:

- Appeals to a higher proportion of Airdronians who are keen on participating in recreational and leisure opportunities in the community.
- Addresses excess demand for services that is currently challenging the recreation system.
- Enables higher propensity for facility operators to manage cost recovery of the facility.

From a sport and economic perspective, the Sport Focused Use option:

- Provides an alternative venue in southern Alberta for competitive athletes to train/compete.
- Enables opportunities for high performance competitive events to occur in Airdrie.
- Provides opportunities for economic benefits to local food, accommodation, gas, etc. businesses from 1 or 2 additional competitions per year.

Airdrie has a dearth of recreation amenities that are needed within the community. Both of the options identified within this summary would address gaps within the current recreation system. However, with the immediate pressures being experienced at Genesis Place, mainly through the younger population of the community, which is expected to continue as Airdrie's population grows, it is recommended that the Broadest Community Voiced Needs/Priority option be selected for Phase 1 of the South West Recreation Facility.

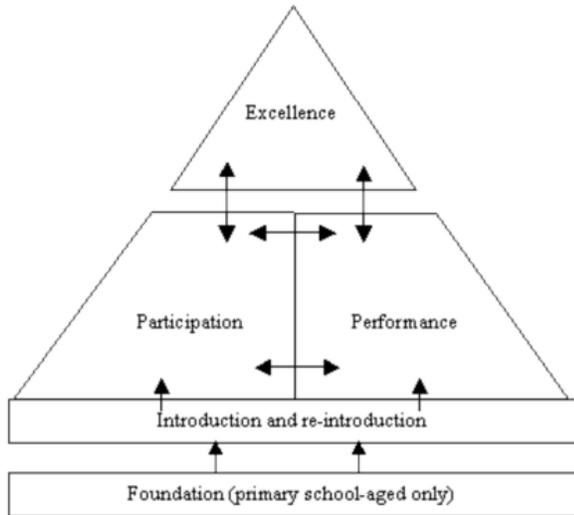
Upon Council's choice of option, Airdrie Recreation would need to conduct a site assessment and master plan and develop a conceptual functional program for the project.



Appendices:

Sport and Recreation Models

Sport Development Pyramid

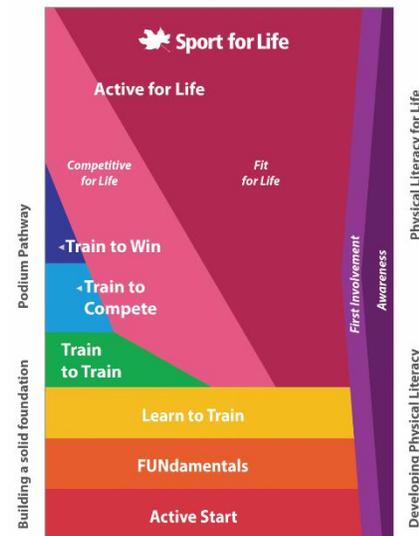


Practical Sports Development, 1993.

Sport for Life Athlete Development and Active For Life Models

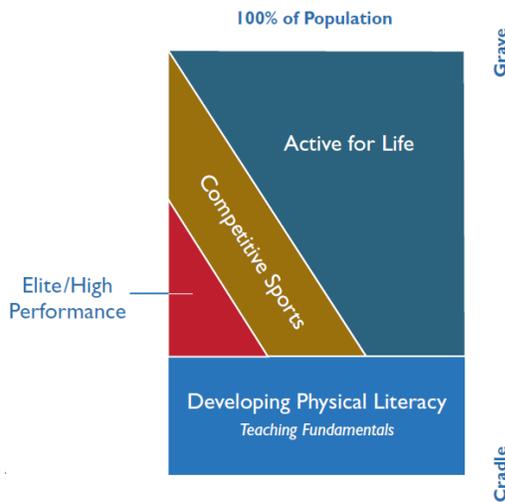


Long-Term Development in Sport and Physical Activity



Canadian Sport for Life, 2005 (continually evolving).

Inclusive Physical-Literacy Sport and Recreation System



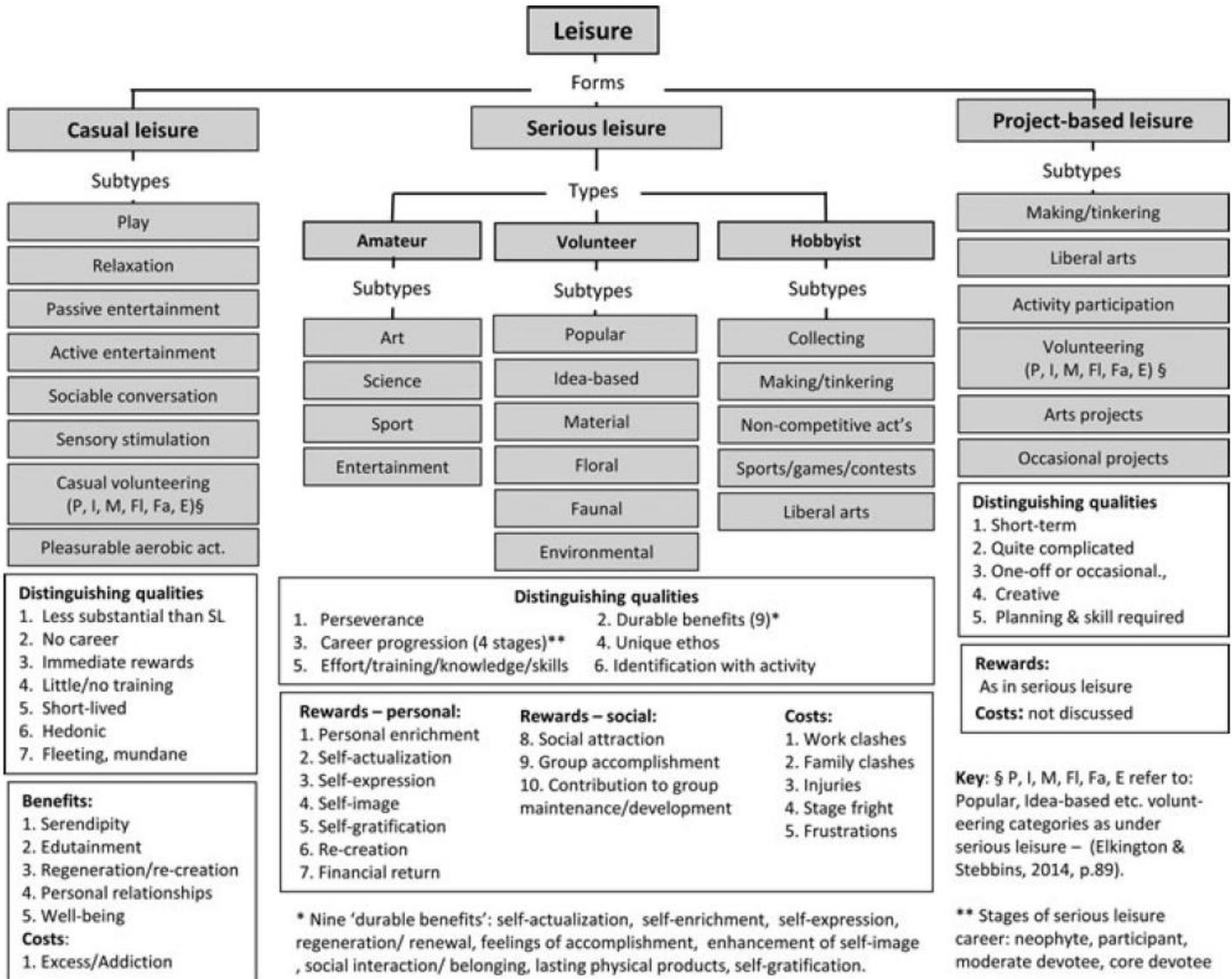
United States President's Council on Fitness, Sports & Nutrition, 2016.

Sport for All, Play for Life Model



Aspen Institute, 2015.

## Aspects of Casual and Serious Leisure



**Key:** § P, I, M, FI, Fa, E refer to: Popular, Idea-based etc. volunteering categories as under serious leisure – (Elkington & Stebbins, 2014, p.89).

**\*\*** Stages of serious leisure career: neophyte, participant, moderate devotee, core devotee

The Serious Leisure Perspective and the Experience of Leisure, Leisure Sciences, 2017.

### Appendices:

## Assumptions for Models and Projections

### Airdrie Recreation Engagement Model

- Developed from concepts established in other recreation and sport models such as the Sport Development Pyramid, Sport For Life Development in Sport and Physical Activity, Sport for All, Play for Life, Inclusive Physical-Literacy Sport and Recreation System, and Casual and Serious Leisure Perspectives.

- Data and analysis used to establish measurements within the Airdrie Recreation Engagement Model included:
  - Population of Airdrie 70,564 (2019).
  - Estimated participants among user groups using City of Airdrie facilities in 2019

- (approximately 10,000 to 14,000).<sup>9</sup>
- Airdrie program registrants at Genesis Place in 2019 (approximately 18,500).<sup>9</sup>
- Perceived activity levels in recreation among Airdrie households (e.g., very active 26%, somewhat active 54%, not very active 16%, not at all active 4%).<sup>9</sup>
- General perceptions about recreation in Airdrie:<sup>8</sup>
  - Recreation is important to the quality of life of members of your household
  - Members of your household know about the types of recreation facilities and programs that are available in Airdrie
  - Importance of recreation facility development in Airdrie to household
- Participation in organized vs. unorganized activities (overall estimates from survey data were 29% and 71% respectively).<sup>9</sup>
- Data researched from other studies such as Canadian Sport Policy, Canadian High Performance Sport Strategy, Sport Heritage Canada, Sport Participation in Canada; Canadian Fitness & Lifestyle Research Institute, Physical Activity Monitor; City of Calgary, Recreation Gap Analysis; Sport Calgary, Sport Facilities Supply and Demand Study, etc.

### Estimated Annual Visitation and Annual Tax Support Anticipated for Operations

- Operational information (e.g., visitation and financial performance) for other recreation centres such as Genesis Place and Village Square Leisure Centre, in particular, but also Westside Recreation Centre, Trico Centre for Family Wellness, VIVO for Healthier Generations, MNP Community & Sports Centre, Toronto Pan Am Sports Centre, Windsor International Aquatic and Training Centre.
  - Population of Airdrie 110,000.
  - Estimated days and hours of operation.
  - Genesis Place admissions, pass, and program visitation.<sup>10</sup>
  - Monthly averages of lane use.
  - Program participation.

- Visits per participation type (competitive flatwater pool vs leisure/instruction water). Lane hours per week and weeks per year.
- Swimmers per lane/spectators per swimmer ratio.
- Rental hours per lane for swim competitions (1 to 4 competitions per year).
- Estimated swim club memberships.
- Admissions and pass pricing based on individual and family access.
- Passholder estimates and use per pass.
- Passes being valid at both Genesis Place and South West Recreation Facility.

### Attributed Design and Capital Investment Comparisons

- Capital costs for associated to amenities based on information provided in the *Recreation Facility Airdrie, Budgetary Cost Estimate, 2022*. SNC-Lavalin. ('Class D Budgetary Cost Estimate'). Elite and competitive categories assessed by purpose and use of aquatic, fitness spaces, and other spaces in the facility.
- Estimated use from admissions, passholders, program participants, and swim clubs/competitions.

### Estimated % of Population Using Facility

- Population of Airdrie 110,000.
- Estimated visitation based on drop in, programs, rentals and spectators established for the facility. These estimates were developed from experiences at Genesis Place and Airdronians' expected use of aquatic facilities at the South West Recreation Facility (Future of Recreation in Airdrie Survey results, e.g., appeal of leisure water activities/opportunities).
- Estimated ratios based on annual passholder use based on experience at Genesis Place and industry standards (IHRSA Health Club Standards).
- Estimates for swim club memberships.
- Attributed use between admissions and pass holder, swim competition use, and spectators (accounting for out-of-town users).

<sup>9</sup> Results of the Future of Recreation in Airdrie Survey, Presentation of Methodology and Summary of Survey Results, Indoor and Outdoor Recreation Facilities Needs Assessment, 2022.

<sup>10</sup> Data presented in the Future of Recreation in Airdrie Survey, Presentation of Methodology and Summary of Survey Results, Indoor and Outdoor Recreation Facilities Needs Assessment, 2022.

Appendices:

**Airdrie Recreation Report**



RECREATION FACILITY PLANNING –  
ANALYSIS OF FACILITY THEMATIC  
OPTIONS AND AMENITIES

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## INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this report is to provide an analysis of the various facility components and amenity considerations, for scale and mix that would address the needs identified in the 2022 Indoor and Outdoor Recreation Facility Needs Assessment. The information provided within this report is intended to aid in the determination of which amenities would best address the highest expressed needs, the identified indoor recreation infrastructure gaps and ultimately contribute to the positive health and wellbeing of Airdrie residents, as a result of the significant investment by the municipality to build new community facilities, such as, the new Library /Multi Use Facility in the Downtown and the South West Multi-Purpose Recreation Facility.

This report contains a detailed analysis of the desired and high priority facility components and the possible amenities that could form part of the overall offering in the new recreation facility. The information is intended to provide a comprehensive summary of the factors that need to be considered, as part of the decision-making process to determine the amenity mix, size, and scale within the new Southwest Multi-Purpose Recreation Facility.

This report provides an analysis of various amenities and have been presented for consideration and 3 thematic options. Each option presents a different mix of amenities that, when combined, would deliver targeted and focused outcomes for recreation provision within the overall facility and address different aspects of Council's Strategic Priorities. Each option provides a slightly different opportunity to address the expressed needs of the community and the current recreation infrastructure deficits.

At the conclusion of each facility component section a chart summarizes the extent to which the amenity would address needs and gaps, the capital investment, and projected operating costs.

### Background - Recreation Facility Planning

The City of Airdrie recognizes that all community recreation amenities are important, and all provide benefit. Developing a sustainable and equitable "*Recreation System*" for Airdrie's citizens is complex. There is not an established formula that prescribes the number and type of recreation facilities and amenities that a municipality ought to provide. Every municipality is unique, with a historical context that serves as the foundation for the future. Communities evolve and their image, identity, sense of pride and place, is often strongly connected to and reflected in the recreation and leisure facilities and opportunities that are available within a municipality.

Some notable findings that were reported in the Recreation Needs Assessment and that support the criticality of recreation facility planning and the imminent decisions related to the determination of the amenity composition within the new multi-use recreation facility.

- a) 97% of residents state that "Recreation is important to quality of life in Airdrie".
- b) 86% of households indicated that they would be more active if more recreation facilities were available.
- c) Households allocated \$68 out of \$100 towards Indoor Recreation.

## Role of a Municipality in providing Recreation Facilities

Every municipality has a unique approach to providing Recreation Facilities. There is no legislative requirement to provide community recreation and facilities. The Municipal Government Act defines the purpose of a municipality as follows:

- a) to provide good government,
- b) to provide services, facilities, or other things that, in the opinion of council, are necessary or desirable for all or a part of the municipality,
- c) To develop and maintain safe and viable communities, and
- d) To work collaboratively with neighboring municipalities to plan, deliver and fund intermunicipal services.

Developing a sustainable and equitable “Recreation System” for Airdrie’s citizens is complex. There is not an established formula that prescribes the number and type of recreation facilities and amenities that a municipality ought to provide. Every municipality is unique, with a historical context that serves as a foundation for the future. Communities evolve and their image, identity and sense of pride and place is often strongly connected and reflected in the recreation and leisure facilities and opportunities that are available.

One commonality across all municipalities in today’s context, is that there are limited resources to invest in the provision of public services and the expectations for diverse and complex range of services is growing. Further, it is critical that all decisions related to the allocation and investment of public funds be done in a transparent, equitable and evidence – based approach.

To this end, this report applies the results and findings of the Indoor and Outdoor Recreation Facilities Needs Assessment, 2002 which was presented to the Community Services Advisory Board in February and Airdrie Council in March. Administration had facilitated further consultations with various organized sport and community stakeholders to better understand their specific needs and those are identified in the corresponding facility component sections.

## Strategic Pathway - Alignment to Council’s Strategic Priorities

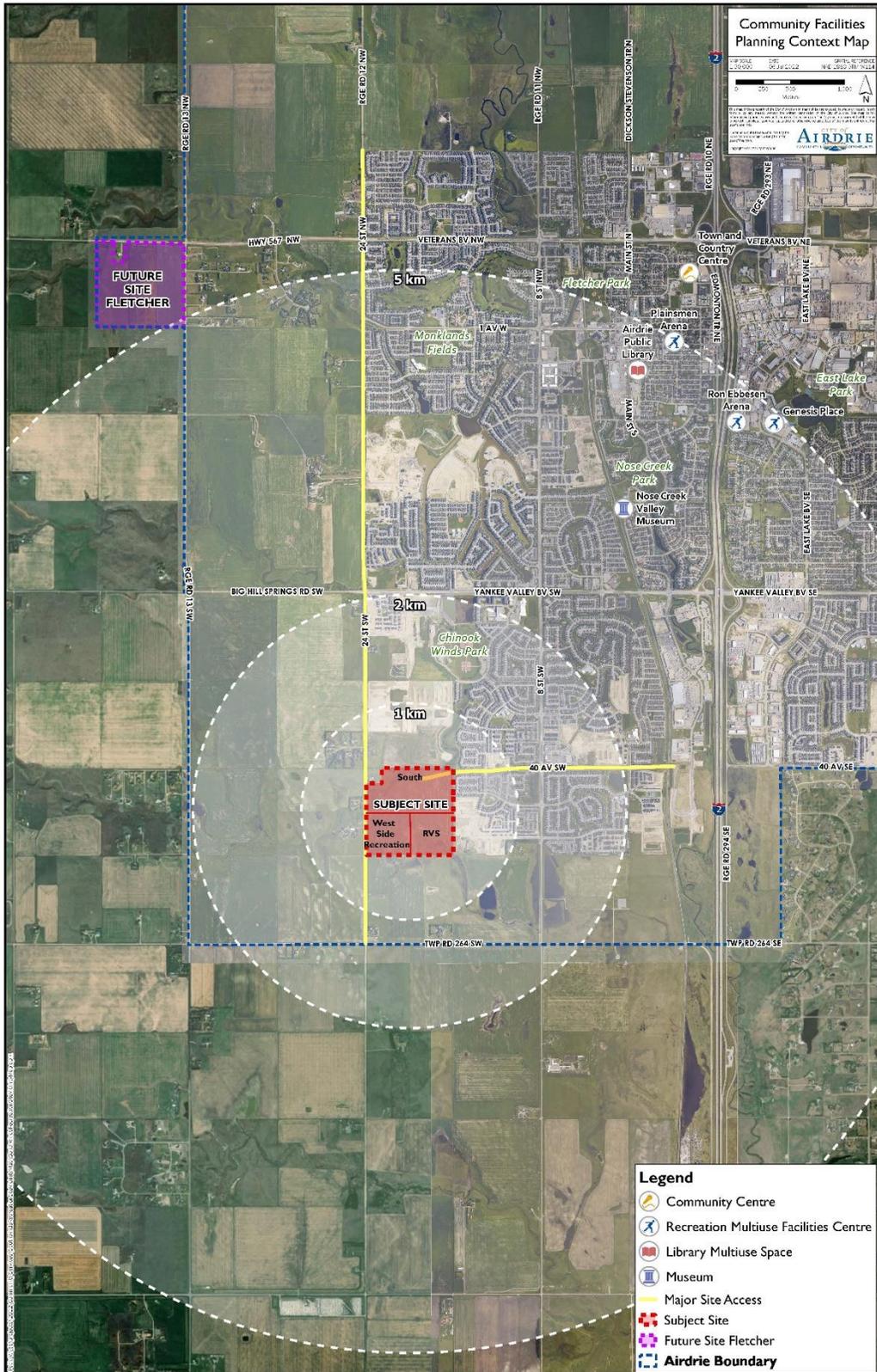
2019 - 2022 Expand Community Facilities - Council has had as a strategic priority to; plan and construct a new library/Multi use facility in the downtown and to plan for a new Southwest Multi- Purpose Recreation Facility. Council’s desired outcomes for new facilities are:

- a) Community facilities meet the needs of Airdrie’s growing population
- b) The new Library will serve a population of 125,000
- c) Regional partnerships for the recreation centre, it is included in the County’s recreation planning
- d) People are using the new recreation centre and not at full capacity upon opening
- e) Community participation in the outcome
- f) Facility use is a balance between spontaneous use, organized sport and registered programs
- g) Council Focus Areas 2023-2026 – Leisure, Recreation and Culture

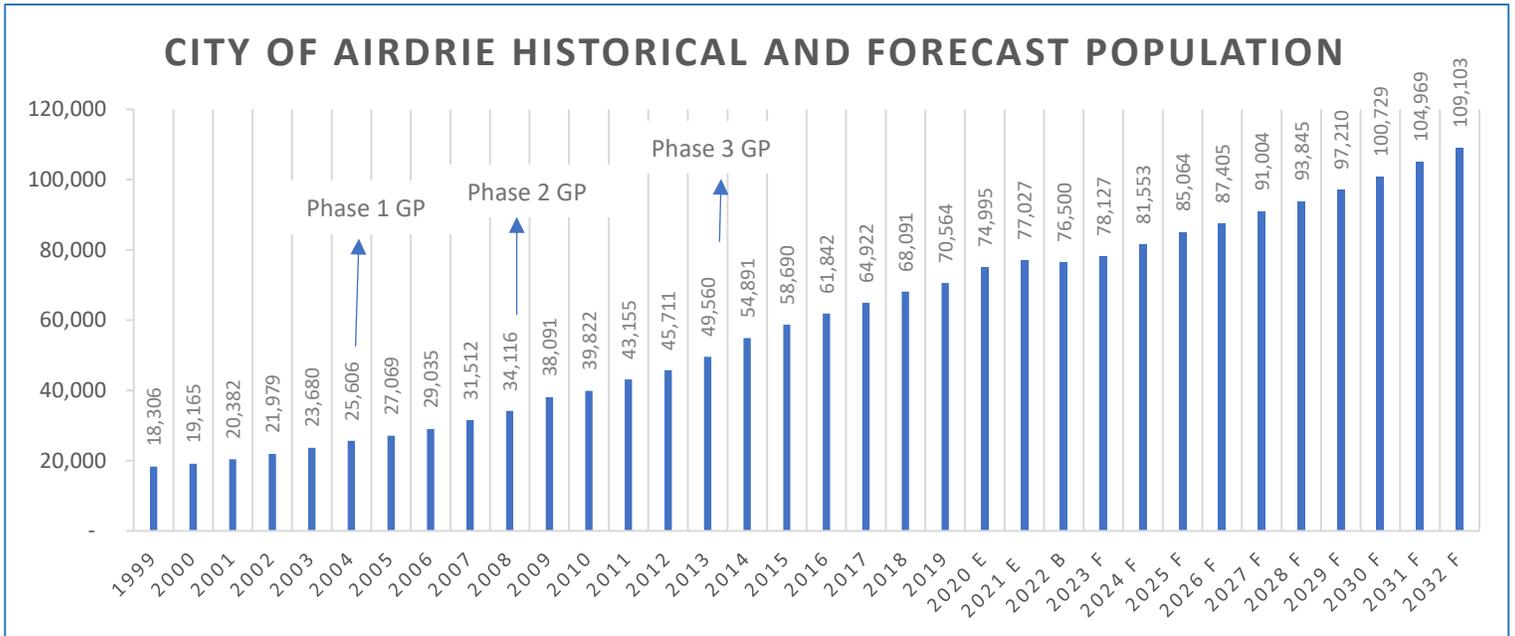
## Council's Desired Outcomes

- a) Four Season opportunities for recreation and social connection through events, arts and culture are highly valued by our community and enhance residents' quality of life.
- b) Community facilities and amenities are needed to meet the demands of Airdrie's growing population.
- c) A revitalized downtown will be a place people want to gather, visit and be, where residents meet and connect socially.
- d) The Library/ Multi-use Facility and future Southwest Recreation Facility are key amenities that will serve our community.

# Community Facilities Planning Context Map – Population Growth History and the Impact to Recreation Facility Planning Airdrie’s

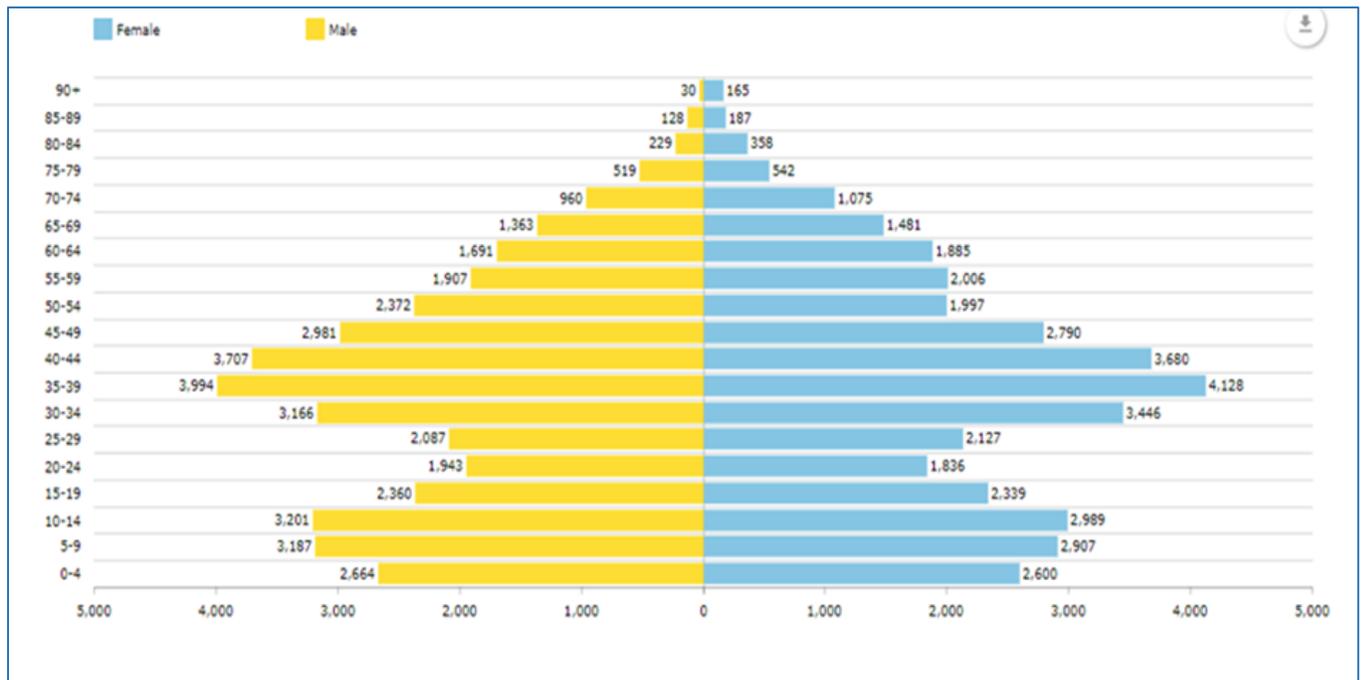


## Historical and Forecast Population Graph

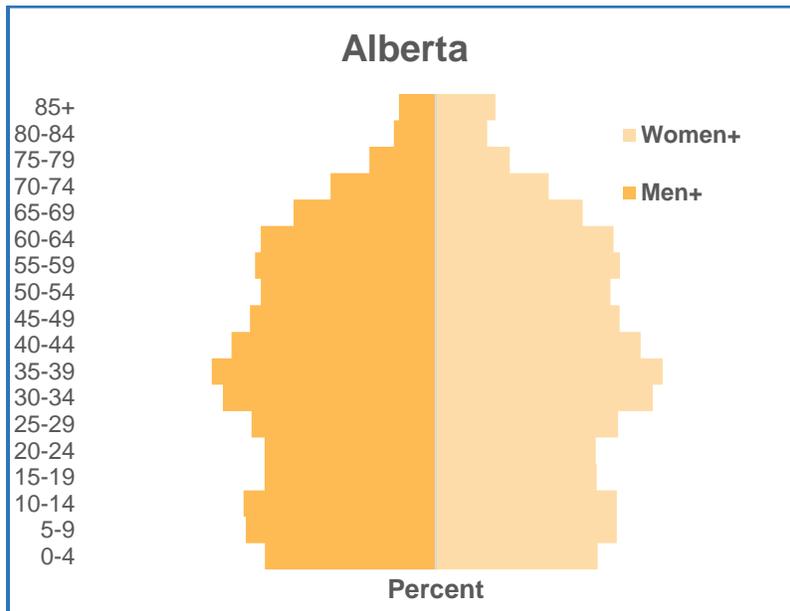
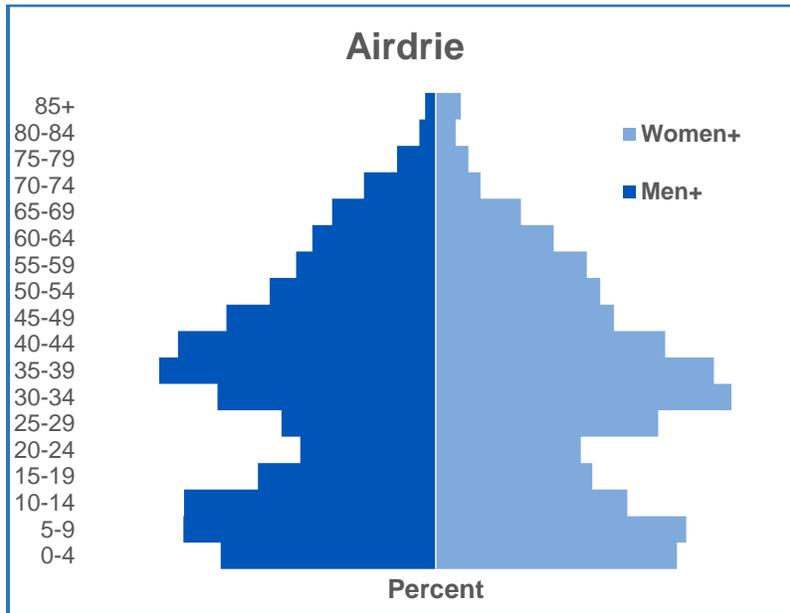


## Demographic Influences – Age and Diversity

City of Airdrie – Alberta Regional Dashboards, March 2022  
 Gender by Age Group



## Population Pyramids for both Airdrie and Alberta – 2021 Census Profile



It is important to consider factors such as population growth rates and have the populations needs of today and in the future will be address through specific amenities within a community recreation facility.

## The Following Charts are Visuals that Summarize the Evidence of Needs

### LEGEND

Resident Demand - Spontaneous	Resident Demand – Programming	Organized Sport & Stakeholder Demand	Current Prime Utilization	Operating Cost	Capital Cost	Facility Gap Based on Comparative Analysis
Percentage of respondents in Recreation Facility Needs Assessment Study X = <4% ✓ = 5%-9% ✓✓ = 10%-19% ✓✓✓ = >20%			Utilization rate during prime time (4pm-close weeknights & open-close weekends)	Taxpayer support required \$ = <\$250k \$\$ = \$251k-\$1M \$\$\$ = \$1M-\$3M \$\$\$\$ = >\$3M	Based on comparative review, availability, utilization, and trends. X = No deficit ✓ = Minor Gap ✓✓ = Moderate Gap ✓✓✓ = Major Gap	

## ANALYSIS OF VARIOUS FACILITY COMPONENTS AND AMENITIES TO ADDRESS COMMUNITY NEEDS AND PRIORITIES

### FACILITY COMPONENT – AQUATICS

#### Summary of Aquatics

Gap Monitor of Aquatic Facilities								
	Potential Solutions by Physical Amenities	Resident Demand - Spontaneous	Resident Demand – Programming	Organized Sport & Stakeholder Demand	Current Prime Utilization	Operating Cost	Capital Cost	Facility Gap Based on Comparative Analysis
Flatwater	25M	✓✓✓	✓	✓	100%	\$	\$\$\$	✓✓✓
	50M	✓✓✓	✓	✓	NA	\$\$	\$\$\$\$	✓✓
	Spectator Seating	Included in design to accommodate viewing for programming/organized sport.						
Leisure	Leisure Pool	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	X	100%	\$\$	\$\$\$\$	✓✓✓
	Wave Pool	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	X	NA	\$\$	\$\$\$\$	✓✓
	Outdoor Pool	✓	✓	X	NA	\$\$	\$\$\$	✓✓
	Splash Pad	✓✓✓	X	X	6-8 Weeks	\$	\$\$	✓✓✓

<b>Therapeutic/ Ancillary Space</b>	<b>Hot Tub</b>	<b>Included as supplementary aspects of a complete aquatics complex.</b>
	<b>Steam Room</b>	

## Analysis of Aquatic Amenities:

Resident interest and participation in aquatic amenities and programming was the largest indoor need identified in the *Recreation Facility Needs Assessment*. 52% of residents responded that they already participate or wish to utilize indoor aquatic features in Airdrie for unstructured or spontaneous use, 25% frequent pools for fitness related activities, 31% for swimming lessons/programming, and 9% train for some type of individual or team competition. The numbers found in the recreation needs assessment are backed up by the utilization numbers and trends seen over the years at Airdrie’s only public aquatic facility at Genesis Place which is maximized and capped during prime time. Annual programming participation has nearly quadrupled to over 16,000 registrants from phase one of Genesis Place opening in 2004 with hundreds of more potential participants sitting on waitlists each session. Rental hours have risen from 3,000 in 2004 to over 4,100 today. An estimated 37,000 unique individuals attend the swimming pool for unstructured or spontaneous use annually with their families or friends and over 20,000 pool specific visits occur each month. The current utilization and community demand together highlight the requirement for new aquatic amenities to be designed and constructed as Airdrie’s population has and will continue to rise sharply while the inventory of facilities has remained unchanged since 2004.

Aquatic amenities form a fundamental aspect of any multi-use recreation facility found within the region or through the *Recreation Facility Needs Assessment* comparative review. Any major pool or aquatic amenity found within the review also underscores that municipalities are tasked with building, and most often operating, those type of facilities and amenities within multi-use centres as there are significant expenses associated with operations. There are no examples of a privately built and operated large scale aquatic facilities in Alberta outside of West Edmonton Mall’s waterpark.

## Potential Amenity Solutions to Address Expressed Needs for Aquatic:

### Leisure and Deep Water Pool Amenity

A leisure pool is a body of water that facilitates a range of uses but most often for fundamental skill development and play/leisure. This type of amenity can be found in a variety of sizes and shapes and often contain a graduated entry, a range of depths, play features (lazy river, climbing wall, buckets, toys, swing rope, etc.), and plenty of space for different ages and abilities to participate at the same time. Deep water designed mostly for programmatic and spontaneous activities including aquatic fitness, diving boards, rope swings, etc. These types of amenities, either separate or integrated, should be considered for the community based on the following factors:

- **Indoor Amenity Desired by Airdrie Residents** - Over 50% of Airdrie residents responded that they participate or intend on using a new facility to swim for pleasure or leisure, that is for just having general fun in the water and to utilize waterslides, diving boards, lazy rivers, and spray

features. The desire for unstructured fun in the water is understandable when considering Airdrie's population profile and the percentage of young families. As Airdrie's population approaches 110,000 by the year 2040 it is estimated that nearly 55,000 residents will seek out pool amenities for unstructured activity, the single largest indoor community/recreation need identified.

- **Most Subscribed Program (Swim Lessons)** - In addition to unstructured use, a leisure pool and deep water can facilitate programming. 34% of residents indicated that themselves or a household member participate in swimming lessons. A graduated entry leisure pool is an extremely versatile and developmentally appropriate amenity for roughly 80% of lessons (beginner through intermediate). Further, 21% of residents participate in aquatic group fitness with the majority of those classes designed for leisure or deep pool water. Leisure pool water is also warmer than that of a lane pool which is ideal for younger families and older adults. The ability to integrate some dedicated lanes for spontaneous fitness/training during all hours is something that should be considered in the design process.
- **Stakeholder Use** - Demand for leisure pools is very limited from rental and stakeholder groups.
- **School Access** - Schools across Airdrie utilize the leisure pool for swim lessons and open swims sessions which is scheduled up to 250 hours – within non-prime time hours. This utilization focuses on 'swim to survive' programming that develops critical life skills for those who may not have had experience around water.
- **Utilization / Trends** - The leisure pool within Genesis Place is utilized at 100% during prime time hours (Monday - Friday from 4:00 to 9:00pm). Waitlists for swim programming often contain more names than actual spots available. Admission to the pool is often capped on busy nights/weekends especially in the fall and winter season. As Airdrie grows to a community of 110,000 even an additional leisure pool of the same size as Genesis Place will not be able to accommodate the demand of spontaneous use and programming.
- **Capital / Operating Costs** - Leisure pools have substantially less operational costs than that of a competition pools and wave pool. Typical leisure pool designs require less lifeguard supervision than a wave pool, less mechanical equipment, and allow for wider participation than a wave pool designed for older age/skill segments. A leisure pool presents lower capital costs compared with a wave pool as there is less need for pool mechanical equipment, smaller basins, and elevated walls.
- **Comparative Review Analysis** - All multi-use recreation centres identified in the *Recreation Facility Needs Assessment Study* did possess some type of leisure pool and an integrated or separate deep-water component. A new leisure pool in Airdrie would need to consider during design how it augments and diversifies its elements compared to the existing basins at Genesis Place to ensure both are relevant and leveraged together to accommodate demand.

## Wave Pool Amenity

Wave pools are often a major feature of water parks and some leisure centres. These types of pools are generally larger than most recreational swimming pools and may attract regional use due to the thrill unique experience type amenity. This type of amenity should be considered in Airdrie based on the following criteria:

- **Indoor Amenity Desired by Airdrie Residents** - 50% of residents voiced their desire to utilize aquatic amenities simply for the purpose of swimming for fun or leisure with family and friends and a wave pool is a highly desirable amenity for such purpose. Additionally, the needs assessment identified that 32% of residents wished to play in a wave pool specifically.
- **Most Subscribed Program** - Dependent on design, a wave pool could satisfy some demand for lessons and programming. The main concern would be the allocation of space as a wave pool comes with the expectation that additional time is protected for open/public swim during prime hours.
- **Stakeholder Need** - Demand for leisure pools is very limited from rental and stakeholder groups. Although designs could allow for 25M lanes across during non-wave times, it is difficult to coach or lifeguard due to the higher walls and elevated decks.
- **School Access** - Schools across Airdrie would be able to utilize a wave pool for lessons as well as fun swim days. With the expectation of waves generated throughout the day, flat-water lesson times may conflict with general public use.
- **Utilization/Trends** - Currently at Genesis Place, approximately 65% of prime hours are allocated for unstructured/spontaneous use while the remaining percentage is dedicated for programming. A wave pool could see the demand increase for additional spontaneous open swim times especially on weeknights. This may require the bulk of swim lessons to occur at Genesis Place when considering how two facilities are leveraged together to accommodate overall Airdrie resident demand.
- **Capital/Operating Costs** - The size and scale of these type of amenities come with additional capital investment, startup and ongoing costs compared to a leisure pool. This includes increased labor cost of lifeguards/facility operators due to higher risks and lower swimmer visibility. Pumps, motors, pool basins themselves need to be upgraded over a traditional leisure pool for the wave generation equipment.
- **Comparative Review Analysis** - When scanning the comparative review found in the *Recreation Facility Needs Assessment Study* wave pools are found in about half of comparable communities. In Calgary, only 4 multi-use recreation facilities have wave pools while the others have Village Square Leisure, Southland Leisure, Westside Recreation Centre, and Trico Leisure.

## 25M Pool (8-10 Lane) Amenity

Flat water lane pools generally serve residents and users who wish to participate in programming, fitness activities, or organized sport clubs. Utilization is high during weekday prime hours but often will be much slower on the weekends when rental groups and swim lessons are not active. Unlike a leisure pool, a lane pool is generally colder with less features and is not typically leveraged to address the demand for unstructured leisure use. This type of amenity should be considered in Airdrie based on the following criteria:

- **Indoor Amenity Desired by Airdrie Residents** - The *Recreation Facility Needs Assessment Study* demonstrated 25% of residents swim laps for fitness, 21% participate in aquatic group fitness, and 5% utilize lanes for unstructured competition training (triathlon, etc.).
- **Most Subscribed Program** - Approximately 20% of swim lessons require use of lanes for the higher levels. The bulk of learn to swim programs occur in a graduated entry, warmer temperature and leisure basin.
- **Stakeholder Need** - Overwhelmingly, aquatic user groups in Airdrie have voiced their desire for increased lane space to grow their membership and expand programming. The needs assessment identified that 4% of residents intend on participating in some type of aquatic organized group or club. Beyond training, a lane pool allows clubs to host competitions which can be vital for the fiscal sustainability of their programming. While a 50M pool is the gold standard aspired to by aquatics organized sport entities, an 8-10 lane 25M pool with adequate deck space would allow clubs to host local and regional meets.
- **School Access** - The lane pool at Genesis Place is the least utilized basin and spectator viewing by schools. The majority of school swim lessons and fun swims occur in the leisure pool basin.
- **Utilization/Trends** - The lane pool at Genesis Place is utilized at 100% during prime hours. There is conflicting demand from residents, programming, and stakeholders and all are unsatisfied with the amount of time they are allocated. With the expected growth in Airdrie by 2040 it can be predicted that over 30,000 residents would want to make use of a lane pool annually in some way.
- **Capital/Operating Costs** - While any pool amenity is expensive to operate, a 25M pool requires significantly less operational expenditures than a 50M due to the lifeguard ratio required, pool chemical/filtration, and heating. Additionally, a 25M pool requires less capital funds both at the outset and throughout the lifecycle due to the smaller footprint which downsizes the equipment and basin required from that of a 50M basin.
- **Comparative Review Analysis** - When reviewing the *Recreation Facility Needs Assessment* results it was found that Airdrie has the lowest number of lanes compared with any other like-sized municipality. The addition of 8-10 lanes to the existing 6, would have Airdrie get closer to the average of 23 lanes. An additional 2-4 lanes should be considered as part of the leisure pool

to address the spontaneous/unstructured lane swimming needs which could allow access at any point during prime time.

## 50 M Pool Amenity

A 50-meter pool, commonly referred to as an Olympic-size swimming pool, conforms to the regulated dimensions that facilitate long course swimming competitions. The size of these types of pools makes them ideal for organized swimming clubs as well as large competitions. For large Provincial, National, or international competitions the governing body of swimming (FINA) requires an additional body of water for lane swimming to facilitate warm up/cool down activities. This type of amenity should be considered in Airdrie based on the following criteria:

- **Indoor Amenity Desired by Airdrie Residents** - 25% of Airdrie residents stated in the 2021 recreation needs assessment, they intend on utilizing aquatic amenities for fitness. A 50M pool would provide adequate space to accommodate a range of lane uses for those who are dedicated to fitness. A 50M pool, while ideal for lane and competitive swimmers, is not conducive for other aquatic uses identified highly. Pool depth creates a higher risk for younger ages or non-swimmers and would not be able to accommodate shallow water fitness as currently with the 25M pool at Genesis Place. Variable depth pools exist in some facilities outside of Alberta, but further research would need to be undertaken to understand the reliability and costs of such systems. Although busy during weekday mornings and weekends, a 50M pool would sit quiet during weekdays on the evenings when there were no competitions.
- **Most Subscribed Program** - 30% of all residents identified their households desire to participate in swimming lessons. Over 80% of swim lessons/levels occur in the leisure basin while the remaining 20% occur in the lane pool. A 50M pool, while providing an ideal space for the higher levels, would be overbuilt for the programmatic needs of Airdrie residents.
- **Stakeholder Need** - A 50M pool is highly desirable by all aquatic user groups in Airdrie. The amount of lane space per capita is inadequate as compared to other municipalities and pools user groups frequent. A 50M pool would allow for growth in user group programs and allow for frequent regional and Provincial competitions that contribute to their sustainability and profile. A FINA standard competition pool, in addition to a 50M basin, would also require another basin with a minimum of 4 25M lanes for athlete warmup and cooldown. It could be expected that the 50M pool would be requested for some type of competition every second weekend throughout the fall/winter season. This would greatly contribute towards Airdrie's sport tourism but vastly restrict the amount of use by Airdrie residents.
- **Utilization/Trends** - The current lane pool at Genesis Place is operating at 100% utilization and there is a desperate need to increase the amount of lanes available in Airdrie. The key utilization factor to consider when debating between a 25M and 50M lane pool is the allocation and the intended use. A 25M pool would accommodate more local and regional use while a 50M pool would be requested frequently to host wider draw competitions. Along with the larger basin, a 50M competition pool would also require adequate deck space, spectator viewing, and technical components required for higher level competitions.

- **Capital/Operating Costs** - A 50M pool has significant operating expense implications compared to a 25M pool. The large basin requires increased chemicals, filtration, and mechanical equipment. It also requires two-three lifeguards during all operational hours due to the size of the basin and bulkhead. To facilitate larger (Provincial/National) sanctioned competitions there also would be a need for additional lanes in another basin or to extend the pool to 65M which would require additional capital costs.
- **Comparative Review Analysis** - Most municipalities of Airdrie's size documented in the *Recreation Facility Needs Assessment Study* do not contain a 50M pool. There are three 50M pools in Calgary that service the regional needs for larger competitions. An 8-10 25M pool would still allow for local and regional competitions but would not attract the larger Provincial or National events.



## Waterslide / Indoor Splash Park Amenity

'Fun' features are key components of a complete aquatic facility within a multi-use complex. Features add value especially to younger patrons and families who are wanting to utilize a facility for active fun. These types of features should be considered during the design of a new multi-use facility in Airdrie due to the following criteria:

- **Indoor Amenity Desired by Airdrie Residents** - In addition to the 50% of residents who want to generally have fun in aquatic amenities, 23% of residents stated they wish to utilize waterslides and 7% who wish to play in spray features. Nearly a third of all Airdrie residents are under the age of 20 years. This particular age segment is looking for experiences and opportunities that are fun, memorable, and diverse. Having 'fun' features as part of a larger aquatics complex ensures there are various activities that are relevant by attracting and retaining all age stages.
- **Most Subscribed Program** - These types of amenities are not typically programmed or rented to external groups.
- **School Access** - 'Fun' features attract school activity days and complement the other aquatic amenities that provide variety during their visit.
- **Utilization/Trends** - The waterslide is operational nearly 2,000 hours annually at Genesis Place. It is a key draw for young families and even brings visits from North Calgary where facilities, such as Vivo, do not offer such an amenity. When older multi-use facilities undergo major renovations, they more frequently are bringing online larger indoor spray parks/pads (Village/Southland Centres in Calgary). These structures consider the youngest users and provide a fun and safe place to recreate in water.
- **Capital/Operating Costs** - 'Fun' features do require higher levels of staffing to supervise but those expenses are offset by the amount of use and revenue they facilitate. Family passes at Genesis Place are often sold due to the aquatics amenities and without 'fun' features it would be expected that overall pass numbers would be much lower both in the existing or new facility. Design should, however, consider 'fun' features that allow for the highest numbers of use. Waterslides or indoor splash parks allow for hundreds of uses per hour whereas features such as wave riders can be expensive to supervise with only one individual being able to use it at a time for lengthy periods. Premier water features (waterslides, indoor splash parks, etc.) do come at a considerable capital cost. Planning should consider which provide the greatest return on investment and draw for the broadest use.
- **Comparative Review Analysis** - All comparatively reviewed facilities have some type of 'fun' water feature.

## Outdoor Splash Park Amenity

Splash parks have become extremely popular over the past couple of decades and are popping up in communities across the Province in lieu of outdoor pools. In Airdrie, there is only one splash park located in Chinook Winds Park and is often overcrowded on warm days throughout the summer months. This type of amenity could be an extension of a multi-use recreation facility based on the following criteria:

- **Indoor Amenity Desired by Airdrie Residents** - Approximately 40% of residents in Airdrie access the Chinook Winds splash park. The high need and interest are backed by Airdrie's community profile which demonstrates the overwhelming numbers of children, youth, and young families. A splash park accommodates those seeking unstructured/spontaneous aquatic play which over 50% of Airdrie residents are seeking more of. Further, there is evidence of need in Airdrie of additional opportunities as over 30% of residents are going to other outdoor splash parks outside of the City's boundary including Calgary and Crossfield.
- **Most Subscribed Program/Stakeholder/School Access** - These types of amenities are not typically utilized for programming or rentals.
- **Utilization/Trends** - Splash parks are much more prevalent in new communities as outdoor aquatic amenities than outdoor pools. This is due to the lower operational cost they present, longer operating season, and lower risks. In Airdrie, with a population expected to reach 110,000 by 2040 there will be high demand for spontaneous outdoor amenities during the summer months that one spray park will not be able to carry.
- **Capital/Operating Costs** - A splash park located adjacent to a multi-use recreation centre could leverage several options to decrease overall expenditures compared with a standalone option. Staff with water chemistry expertise would be able to oversee operations on daily basis. Parking, washrooms, changing facilities, and other services would be available. It also would present an option of collecting a user fee for use or combining it with other multi-use facility amenities to sell the value of a monthly pass. The operational costs are also lower than that of an outdoor pool which requires higher supervision, chemical treatments, heating, and basin work. Although expensive, a splash park is considerably less than that of an outdoor pool basin.
- **Comparative Review Analysis** - All benchmarked municipalities have at least one splash park with most having multiple locations.

## Outdoor Pool Amenity

Outdoor pools gained in popularity across the Province in the mid to late-1900s but new construction of outdoor pools has slowed down significantly since 2000. This type of amenity should be considered in Airdrie based on the following criteria:

- **Indoor Amenity Desired by Airdrie Residents** - Nearly an identical number of Airdrie residents (8%) voiced their interest in an outdoor pool as a new spray park (7%). With Airdrie's community profile made up of young families it is expected that unstructured/spontaneous outdoor

amenities would rank high as families look for fun and memorable experiences during the summer months. An outdoor pool could act as a featured amenity that would have a high draw for 6-8 weeks during the summer months.

- **Most Subscribed Program** - The City would continue to only offer swim lessons in the indoor aquatic amenities to ensure weather did not disrupt regular schedules.
- **Stakeholder Need** - Swim clubs and aquatic organizations have voiced that an outdoor pool would not be utilized for their training or competitive programs.
- **Utilization/Trends** - Although some type of outdoor pool scored high on the *Recreation Facility Needs Assessment Study*, with a range of needs and amenity deficits identified, there will need to be consideration on budget priorities and on what dollars will garner the most impact and social return. A pool operational 6-8 weeks may not serve the community the same way dollars could enhance indoor amenities. Most municipalities and communities are shying away from outdoor pools, in lieu of spray parks, due to the costs and lower complexity of operation.
- **Capital/Operating Costs** - Outdoor pools require the same mechanical systems and basin work as indoor pools but are only operational for around 6-8 weeks of the year. Contaminants in outdoor environments (sunscreen, bugs, UV, etc.) all require more use of chemicals and filtration systems. Lifeguarding would also be required, compared to an outdoor splash park/pad, and staffing would need to be increased to handle indoor and outdoor components for a few weeks in the summer and then decreased when the extra hours are no longer available in the fall/winter.
- **Comparative Review Analysis** - Outdoor pools are not as commonly found but are used in some rural communities as tourism attractions (Blackfalds).

### Therapeutic Amenity

All multi-use facilities with aquatic centres operate a range of supportive/therapeutic amenities that enhance the overall health and wellness opportunities found within. These types of amenities include hot tubs, steam rooms, or saunas. A combination of supportive and therapeutic amenities should be considered as a piece of the overall aquatic centre in a new recreation facility.

## FACILITY COMPONENT – CLIMBING WALL/BOULDERING

### Summary of Climbing Wall/Bouldering

	Gap Monitor of Climbing Facilities							
	Potential Solutions by Physical Amenities	Resident Demand - Spontaneous	Resident Demand – Programming	Organized Sport & Stakeholder Demand	Current Prime Utilization	Operating Cost	Capital Cost	Facility Deficit in Airdrie
Climbing Wall	25-35 ft wall	✓✓	X	X	NA	\$	\$\$\$	✓✓
Bouldering Wall	10-15 ft wall	✓✓	X	X	NA	\$	\$\$	✓✓

### Analysis of Climbing Wall/Bouldering Amenities:

12% of Airdrie residents noted they participate in climbing or bouldering activities with an additional 4% demonstrating a desire to learn/start. Climbing and bouldering walls are amenity gaps that were noted in the *Recreation Facility Needs Assessment Study*. These gaps are easy to reconcile as Airdrie is without any type of public or private climbing facility and the young population within the City can be expected to be looking for this type of activity both as a family-fun outing as well as for children’s programming.

Climbing walls are amenities that are found both within municipal recreation centres but increasingly are being run through private operators. The Calgary Climbing Centre operates four facilities within the region that give participants the ability to try out various walls and levels of difficulty. Additionally, 7 of the 9 climbing walls comparatively reviewed in the *Recreation Facility Needs Assessment Study* were private operations.

### Potential Amenity Solutions to Address Expressed Needs for Climbing Wall/Bouldering:

#### Bouldering Wall Amenity

Bouldering is a form of climbing that is performed without the use of ropes or harnesses on walls that are typically less than 15ft in height. Bouldering places large emphasis on strength and technique while not requiring equipment or intense supervision. Skills and abilities developed on a bouldering wall can be applied when attempting larger walls, both inside and outdoors. Bouldering walls also appeal to the full range of ages and abilities as routes can be set for beginners through to expert. This type of amenity should be considered in Airdrie based on the following criteria:

- **Indoor Amenity Desired by Airdrie Residents** - 8% of residents stated in the *Recreation Facility Needs Assessment Study* that a climbing or bouldering wall should be a priority within a new recreation facility. Additionally, 12% of respondents answered that they already participate in climbing activities, the bulk of which occurring in Calgary. A bouldering wall included in a new

facility would be the most accessible of the two options as it could be open during all operational hours and accessible to all age and skills ranges.

- **Most Subscribed Program** - There may be some ability to program or utilize for day camps, preschools, etc. but only 1% of respondents answered that they were interested in climbing specific programming.
- **Stakeholder Need** - There is no voiced demand from organized groups for climbing facilities in Airdrie. Professional climbers utilize the premier facilities in the Calgary metropolitan area.
- **School Access** - A bouldering wall is the safest of the indoor climbing options and would be appealing to schools who participate in fun/activity days.
- **Utilization / Trends** - Bouldering walls are more frequently popping up in multi-use facilities and within schools. They provide a safe alternative to high walls and require little to no supervision which encourages use and accessibility.
- **Capital / Operating Costs** - Due to the unsupervised nature of bouldering walls it would not require a contingent of highly trained/specialized staff to oversee or ropes/anchor points that require frequent inspections. The space required also is much lower than a high climbing wall and could be integrated with another amenity (fitness centre, indoor playground, etc.).
- **Comparative Review Analysis** - The comparative review within the *Recreation Needs Assessment Study* finds that only two comparables offer municipally operated climbing amenities. There are more options available in other cities, but they are built and operated by private entities.

## Climbing Wall Amenity

Climbing walls are large indoor structures that typically involve multiple panels that reach over 25ft in height. To ensure safety of participants on the walls they require climbing rope, harnesses, anchor points, and self-belay systems. Additionally, all private and public climbing walls are supervised by highly specialized staff as there is potential for serious injury or death if safety equipment or belay devices are not utilized properly. This type of amenity should be considered in Airdrie based on the following criteria:

- **Indoor Amenity Desired by Airdrie Residents** - 8% of residents stated in the *Recreation Facility Needs Assessment Study* that a climbing or bouldering wall should be a priority within a new recreation facility. Additionally, 12% of respondents answered that they already participate in climbing activities, the bulk of which occurring in Calgary. Those are looking for high level climbing would still seek out larger facilities in Calgary where routes are dynamic and there is more variety.

- **Most Subscribed Program** - There may be some ability to program or utilize for day camps, preschools, etc. but only 1% of respondents answered that they were interested in climbing specific programming.
- **Stakeholder Need** - There is no voiced demand from organized groups for climbing facilities in Airdrie. Professional climbers utilize the premier facilities in the Calgary metropolitan area.
- **School Access** - Climbing walls are considered 'high risk' amenities within the school off-site categories. There would be additional insurance and waivers required for participation and lower grades may not be able to participate at all.
- **Utilization / Trends** - The *Recreation Needs Assessment Study* found that climbing facilities are more frequently being built and operated by private entities. These facilities are typically massive buildings which attract users regionally. Additionally, climbing walls within multi-use facilities usually have limited hours due to the low utilization outside of prime hours. Climbing walls require highly trained and specialized staff. Many of these staff are drawn to the major climbing centres (Calgary Climbing Centres) due to the size and variety.
- **Capital / Operating Costs** - High walls require staff to supervise and there is an intense ratio of staff to number of active participants. Additionally, there is a great deal of annual inspections and maintenance on safety devices, ropes, anchors, etc.
- **Comparative Review Analysis** - Moderate to serious climbers will drive to Calgary to access the variety and challenges of multi-wall climbing centres. Calgary Climbing Centre's 'The Hanger' is located near the Calgary Airport which is only a 15 minutes' drive from Airdrie.

## FACILITY COMPONENT – ICE SURFACES

### Summary of Ice Surfaces

		Gap Monitor of Ice Facilities						
	Potential Solutions by Physical Amenities	Resident Demand - Spontaneous	Resident Demand – Programming	Organized Sport & Stakeholder Demand	Current Prime Utilization	Operating Cost	Capital Cost	Facility Deficit in Airdrie
Ice Surfaces	NHL Size Arena	✓✓✓	X	✓✓	95%	\$\$	\$\$\$\$	✓✓✓
	Performance Bowl	X	X	✓	NA	\$\$	\$\$\$\$	✓✓✓
	Leisure Ice	✓✓✓	X	✓✓	NA	\$	\$\$\$	✓✓

### Analysis of Ice Surfaces Amenities:

The City of Airdrie currently contains and operates 5 ice surfaces within 3 arenas that include Genesis Place (twin), Ron Ebbesen (twin), and Plainsmen (single sheet). Currently, all prime-time space is booked to full capacity during the primary season by mostly provincial sport sanctioned organizations including Airdrie Minor Hockey, Airdrie Ringette Association, and Airdrie Skate Club. Many other unaffiliated youth and adult groups and leagues also book leftover slots, non-prime and late night. Airdrie’s 5 ice surfaces equate to roughly 1 sheet per 15,000+ residents whereby the provincial average is 1 sheet per 13,000 residents within municipalities as found with the *Recreation Facility Needs Assessment Study*. With an estimated population to consist of 110,000 residents by 2040 the city would require a total of 9 ice surfaces to maintain the current ratio. The optimal ratio is 1 surface per 10,000 participants which would mean 11 ice surfaces operating in Airdrie by 2040. With many groups unable to secure required ice time in Airdrie to service their needs they utilize ice facilities in surrounding communities including Calgary, Cochrane, Crossfield and Bieseker.



## Potential Amenity Solutions to Address Expressed Needs for Ice Surfaces:

### NHL Sized Multi-Sheet Arena Amenity

Except for regions that service small populations, single sheet arenas are no longer built as there are efficiencies found when constructing/operating twin, triple, or even quad ice surface complexes. In Airdrie, understanding the current and future deficits of arena amenities, a multi-use facility containing multiple ice surfaces should be considered based on the following factors:

- **Indoor Amenity Desired by Airdrie Residents** - The *Recreation Facility Needs Assessment Study* identified a strong desire, 43% of all residents, for purely spontaneous or unstructured use of ice. Currently during the primary season, Airdrie dedicates roughly 19 hours a week of spontaneous use via public skating or drop-in shinny options. The demand for additional leisure skating opportunities speaks to the need for either more time to be allocated for spontaneous use within NHL sized ice surfaces or the construction of a designated leisure ice surface.
- **Most Subscribed Program** - 14% of residents indicated ice skating instruction was an activity that they or someone in their household intended on attending. Within a balanced allocation schedule, an NHL sized sheet of ice can facilitate instruction for up to 50 participants per hour.
- **Stakeholder Need** - The need for more ice surfaces in Airdrie is highly sought by various ice stakeholder and user groups within the City. Often, both unaffiliated and affiliated groups, are booking ice in other surrounding communities to accommodate their size of membership.
- **School Use Need** - Rocky View Schools utilize the arena for school activity days as well as sports performance classes.
- **Utilization/Trends** - The current ice surfaces within the City of Airdrie are utilized at near 100% during the prime season. Unaffiliated sport organizations, who rank lower in the allocation priority order, are unable to secure times in Airdrie and book into the surrounding communities. Forecasting the enrollment in organized ice sports by 2040 sees nearly 10,000 participants which would require between 10-11 total ice surfaces to keep pace with the current ratio of participants to ice sheets.
- **Capital/Operating Costs** - Multi-sheet arenas are cheaper to construct and operate than two or more standalone facilities as the ice plants and systems can be upgraded to service two or more pads instead of having to build multiple plants. As well, there are reductions on the other supporting systems/costs required including parking lots, washrooms, staffing, lobbies, etc., if multiple ice sheets are contained within one building structure. With user fees now positioned at market average the City of Airdrie is near to reaching 100% cost recovery at the existing twin arenas.
- **Comparative Review Analysis** - Airdrie already lacks behind the optimal ratio of residents per ice surface. A multi-sheet arena can right size the amenity deficit for today and for tomorrow.

- **Plainsmen Arena** - The construction of a new triple ice facility would also allow for Council to review the purpose and future investments into the single surface Plainsmen Arena. Constructed in 1977 it is at end of life and would require considerable work to remain functional for the next 25-30 years.

### Leisure / Half NHL Size Ice Surface Amenity

Leisure ice surfaces have emerged in multi-use facilities over the past couple of decades and are purposefully designed to facilitate unstructured and non-competitive use. The design allows for skill progression type activities and typically more time is allocated within them for spontaneous public skating use. This type of amenity should be considered in Airdrie based on the following criteria:

- **Indoor Amenity Desired by Airdrie Residents** - The *Recreation Facility Needs Assessment Study* identified a strong desire, 43% of all residents, for purely spontaneous or unstructured use of ice. A leisure ice or small boarded rink, by design, would cater to allocation strategies that prioritized spontaneous or leisure use. Much like a leisure aquatic amenity, it would be available for extended hours within prime time for casual skating with friends and family members.
- **Most Subscribed Program** - A leisure ice surface allows for programs that do not require a traditional boarded setup. Thus, early level learn to skate programs could be housed exclusively on that type of surface which eliminates the need to put those programs on high-demand NHL sized pads.
- **Stakeholder Need** - A half ice boarded ice surface could continue to facilitate rentals from across all stakeholder groups. It would be used for the youngest age levels and learn to skate programs. It would allow the full-size NHL sheets to be protected for the higher levels and ages.
- **School Use Need** - Such an amenity would be ideal for school use for activity days and learn to skate programming.
- **Utilization/Trends** - Facilities across the Province and regionally are frequently considering leisure ice surfaces in lieu of a full-size NHL rinks. The design promotes more casual and unstructured use which adds value to pass holders and residents who purely want to have unorganized fun on an indoor ice surface by removing the pressure an ice surface would field from large user groups.
- **Capital/Operating Costs** - Situating a leisure ice surface within a multi-sheet arena and multi-use facility would present considerable cost savings as staff (operators, attendants, administrators), equipment, and ice plant systems would already be in place and leveraged.
- **Comparative Review Analysis** - Airdrie lacks in both allocated time for public skate time (indoors) and outdoor ice rinks typically used for unstructured/spontaneous activities when reviewing the *Recreation Facility Needs Assessment Study*. Municipalities such as St. Albert and Sherwood Park not only have indoor leisure ice surfaces but also 31 and 17 outdoor rinks respectively compared to Airdrie's 6.

## Performance Ice Surface / Bowl Seating Amenity

As noted in the *Recreation Facility Needs Assessment Study* among the benchmarked comparatives, Airdrie is the only municipality that does not have some type of performance style rink/bowl that could seat between 2,000-6,000+ spectators. The performance rinks/bowls in the comparatives are there to service the needs of major junior hockey teams including those in the Alberta Junior Hockey League (AJHL) and the Western Hockey League (WHL). It is worth noting that while St. Albert built a performance rink for a AJHL team in 2005 the team relocated out of St. Albert in 2012 due to lack of corporate support and another team has not filled the void. This type of amenity should be considered in Airdrie based on the following criteria:

- **Indoor Amenity Desired by Airdrie Residents** - A performance ice surface/arena does not necessarily address voiced gaps in recreation amenities for spontaneous or unstructured use for residents. A performance bowl is designed and allocated primarily for higher level competitive teams and organizations. A performance bowl also attracts larger events and tournaments which may restrict resident use on other ice surfaces as well.
- **Most Subscribed Program** - While the ice surface could be utilized for programming, there would be no need for the expansive bowl for the vast majority of hours.
- **Stakeholder Need** - Major hockey user groups in Airdrie have voiced their support for an arena in Airdrie that would be able to accommodate larger tournaments, elite teams, and potentially a major junior team (Alberta Junior Hockey League). Airdrie Minor Hockey has voiced a desire specifically to move their top teams (Xtreme, Lightning, Thunder) from the Ron Ebbesen to a new performance bowl if it had all the supporting amenities such as dryland training space, dedicated dressing rooms, coaching/meeting space, etc.
- **School Access** - While schools would utilize the ice surface there would be no required for the performance bowl outside of graduation ceremonies if the ice surface was removed.
- **Utilization/Trends** - The current ice surfaces within the City of Airdrie are utilized at near 100% during the prime season. Any ice surface constructed would be booked at near capacity as there is currently a deficit within the City and both affiliated and unaffiliated groups book ice in surrounding communities to supplement what they receive within Airdrie. A performance bowl, however, is intended for teams and events that draw large crowds. Most events/teams now have not needed a spectator space larger than the Blue Ice at the Ron Ebbesen arena outside of a few games per year. But if a major junior league was attracted to Airdrie a bowl would receive more frequent use. It is important to note that St. Albert built a performance bowl within Servus Place for an AJHL. But after only 5 years of operation (2007-2012) their team, the St. Albert Steel relocated due to low support and sponsorships.
- **Capital/Operating Costs** - Due to the size and scale of a performance ice surface/bowl there would need to be considerable investment into both the construction and day-to-day expenses. Typically, performance bowls require multiple public washrooms, concessions, expansive lobbies, overbuilt parking lots/dressing/green rooms, and not usually found in residential

settings. Further, the large space presents challenges for daily operations as the expansive bowl area and supportive systems require cleaning, oversight, and maintenance.

- **Comparative Review Analysis** - All the municipalities reviewed in the *Recreation Needs Assessment Study* have a performance rink to support a major hockey team (AJHL/WHL). A further assessment would have to be undertaken to understand the potential of attracting a major junior hockey team to Airdrie, especially given Airdrie’s proximity to Calgary and the Calgary Flames AHL affiliate just announcing their relocation which may further stretch fan base and sponsorship support within the region.

## FACILITY COMPONENT – FIELDHOUSE

### Summary of Fieldhouse

		Gap Monitor of Field House Facilities							
	Potential Solutions by Physical Amenities	Resident Demand - Spontaneous	Resident Demand – Programming	Organized Sport & Stakeholder Demand	Current Prime Utilization	Operating Cost	Capital Cost	Facility Deficit in Airdrie	
Field House	Open Turf Pitch	✓	✓ ✓	✓ ✓	NA	\$	\$\$\$\$	✓ ✓ ✓	
	Boarded Pitch	✓	✓ ✓	✓	90%	\$	\$\$\$	X	

### Analysis of Fieldhouse Amenities:

In 2009, Phase II of construction at Genesis Place was completed and included a fieldhouse with 2 playing surfaces. Prior to 2009 any indoor field-based activities either modified their activities and booked Airdrie’s hard-court gymnasiums or commuted to Calgary facilities. The fieldhouse at Genesis Place contains two standard boarded fieldhouse surfaces, with one being a plastic sport court and the other containing a removable carpet turf on top of a drypad, that serve ~2,500 participants annually. The plastic sport court is a multi-sport surface (volleyball, badminton, basketball, lacrosse, soccer and pickleball) but is utilized predominantly in the prime season by Airdrie & District Soccer Association for their younger age groups and practices. The space is also used as a drop-in space for basketball, badminton, and pickleball by Genesis Place spontaneous users while smaller bookings are also facilitated for gymnasium based sports (Airdrie Volleyball, Rockyview Schools, Baton Twirling, etc.). The boarded turf field is primarily used for soccer between October and March by Airdrie & District Soccer Association. In the spring and summer this amenity is used for drypad rental space when the turf is

removed and serves the community as an event space or for larger dry floor tournaments and competitions.

Over the past decade, indoor soccer is moving away from boarded facilities to unboarded, full synthetic grass facilities. This is being driven from the National and Provincial governing bodies of soccer down to all member clubs and facilities. Many indoor boarded facilities across Alberta have or are in the process of reviewing how they might retrofit their indoor fields to accommodate the unboarded game. Airdrie and District Soccer Association have voiced their desire to have a local facility that accommodates the unboarded game so that higher-level aged players don't have to commute to Calgary facilities.



## Potential Amenity Solutions to Address Expressed Needs for Fieldhouse:

### Indoor Unboarded FIFA Pitch Amenity

The emerging standard for indoor soccer across Canada and Alberta is the unboarded game, while boarded soccer may remain only for some of the youngest age categories. The premier facility for the unboarded game is a full FIFA endorsed 11 versus 11 field that can be split into three 9 versus 9 player fields or four 7 versus 7 fields. There are currently two that exist in the Calgary region, the West Calgary Soccer Centre and the Foothills Fieldhouse. Soccer is currently one of the fastest growing sports in Canada and while Airdrie and District Soccer Association service 1,200 indoor players in 2022 this number is expected to more than double by the year 2040. A full FIFA indoor pitch should be considered when planning for a new facility based on the following factors:

- **Indoor Amenity Desired by Airdrie Residents** - A full FIFA endorsed sized field in Airdrie that is able to be divided into four 7v7 fields would accommodate most of soccer's demand at the one facility. This would allow Genesis Place's boarded fields to be repurposed for spontaneous use

or for other stakeholders. This would increase the amount of drop-in time for residents to play basketball, badminton, pickleball, or other family focused activities.

- **Most Subscribed Program** - An unboarded fieldhouse, outside of soccer programs, could also be used for introduction to sport activities (lacrosse, baseball, football, etc) as well as daycamps.
- **Stakeholder Need** - There are approximately 2,500 fieldhouse users in Airdrie with a projected growth of 100% by the year 2040. It is expected that any sanctioned game by the year 2040 will need to occur in an unboarded structure. Already, U14-U18 players in Airdrie are having to drive to Calgary for league games and tournaments. An open pitch design also allows for other options such as football, baseball, field hockey, rugby, and cricket. Airdrie and District Soccer Association is intent on joining the Alberta Youth Soccer League for all U14-U18 teams. This requires that their association can provide a sanctioned 11 versus 11 field for use during the 10-month season.
- **School Access** - An unboarded fieldhouse would allow for significant use by schools during non-prime hours as the space can be divided into multiple playing sections.
- **Utilization/Trends** - A scan of the comparative communities and Provincial projects in the que demonstrates that Airdrie is in a fieldhouse deficit position and that any new builds are unboarded facilities. It is expected by 2040 that any sanctioned game will need to occur in a non-boarded soccer pitch.
- **Capital/Operating Costs** - A full FIFA pitch can be divided into smaller sections and rented out for a higher fee the majority of the time. The current market average user fees are higher than that of an unboarded field and would be expected to run near cost recovery during the prime season. A full FIFA pitch can be brought online in two different ways. Some facilities including in Edmonton, Red Deer, and Calgary are built within an air-supported structure ('bubble') that are significantly cheaper than a bricks and mortar facility such as the Foothills Fieldhouse. There also could be the ability to utilize the bubble during the winter months and transition the field to an outdoor amenity during the spring and summer that would be further reviewed is this amenity type was desired by Council.
- **Comparative Review Analysis** - With no easy to access unboarded soccer facility on the north end of Calgary it could be expected that the facility would draw from that region of Calgary. This additional market, serviced and prioritized after Airdrie resident/team use, could allow for increased facility utilization and cost recovery. This type of facility would also draw larger events and tournaments that would garner economic benefits for the greater community.
- **Genesis Place Boarded Field Repurpose** - If a full-size FIFA pitch was constructed there would be an opportunity to transition the Genesis Place boarded field to a multi-use court. This would involve installing the plastic sport court, dividers, basketball boards, and cored holes for badminton, pickleball, and volleyball. This would allow for Genesis Place to still be utilized for

practices and young age level games but also improve the ability to host drop-in sports and major tournaments with the ability to run six full-size gymnasiums in one location.

### Boarded Indoor Turf Field Amenity

The boarded game has transitioned across Canada with Alberta Soccer being one of the last Provincial Sport Organizations who still sanction this type of play. Evidence has proven that skill development is much higher in facilities where players need to control the ball along the sidelines and aren't able to utilize boards. Additionally, the boarded game is typically a smaller field and doesn't closely replicate the outdoor unboarded game where there can be up to 11 players per side. This type of amenity should be considered in Airdrie based on the following criteria:

- **Indoor Amenity Desired by Airdrie Residents** - There is not necessarily broad resident interest in unorganized fieldhouse activities as only 6% of respondents to the *Recreation Needs Assessment Study* stated a desire to utilize an indoor field for unstructured activities.
- **Most Subscribed Program** - A boarded fieldhouse can be an ideal space for introduction to sport activities as well as daycamps. The boarded fieldhouse at Genesis Place is able to meet the current and forecasted demand for boarded field activities and programs.
- **Stakeholder Need** - Airdrie and District Soccer Association, upon guidance from their National & Provincial sports authority, have advocated that the boarded game will no longer be a part of their gameplay in 10-15 years. Thus, most players and teams will need to commute to facilities that accommodate unboarded field dimensions for 7 versus 7, 9 versus 9, and 11 versus 11.
- **School Access** - Schools do utilize the boarded fields at Genesis Place frequently for activity days and physical education classes at around 600 hours annually.
- **Utilization/Trends** - The current boarded inventory within Airdrie meets the current needs of field house users as voiced through the stakeholder survey and conversations. The level of utilization of boarded fields is expected to decrease as more sanctioned games only occur in unboarded facilities.
- **Capital/Operating Costs** - A fieldhouse containing boarded fields can be cost comparable to that of larger unboarded playing surfaces. The board systems require maintenance and lifecycle considerations and the turf systems themselves only have 10-15 years of life. There is minimal operating costs differences between boarded and unboarded fields.
- **Comparative Review Analysis** - Airdrie has a comparable number of indoor boarded soccer facilities when reviewing similar sized municipalities within the *Community Recreation Facility Needs Assessment Study*. Other municipalities are no longer considering designing/building boarded fields but instead exploring the feasibility of larger turfed unboarded fieldhouses (Red Deer, Strathcona County, Calgary, etc.)

## FACILITY COMPONENT – GYMNASIUM / HARD COURTS

### Summary of Gymnasium / Hard Courts

		Gap Monitor of Gymnasium / Hard Court Facilities						
	Potential Solutions by Physical Amenities	Resident Demand - Spontaneous	Resident Demand – Programming	Organized Sport & Stakeholder Demand	Current Prime Utilization	Operating Cost	Capital Cost	Facility Deficit in Airdrie
Hard Courts	Gymnasium – Synthetic Floor	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓	90%	\$	\$\$\$	✓✓✓
	Gymnasium – Hardwood Floor	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓	90%	\$	\$\$\$	✓✓
Racquet Sports	Squash / Racquetball Courts	X	X	X	NA	\$	\$\$\$	✓✓

### Analysis of Gymnasium / Hard Courts Amenities:

Gymnasiums are versatile amenities that accommodate a range of unstructured, programmatic, and organized sports. A gymnasium of some size is included in all multi-use recreation facilities comparatively reviewed across the Province. In Airdrie, there is a great demand for hardcourt surfaces as represented in the *Community Recreation Facility Needs Assessment Study*. Top activities identified include Basketball (17% of residents), Badminton (11%), Ball Hockey (7%), Intro to Sport Programs (7%), Pickleball (11%), and Volleyball (12%). The bulk of the rental hours booked for the aforementioned sports occur within school gymnasiums with annual rental hours totaling over 4,000 of community use. The gymnasium at Genesis Place is the only hard court that is available spontaneously for the public and over 60% of time is protected for unstructured (drop-in) sports. The gymnasium is also programmed for children and youth skill development activities, day camps, and birthday parties.

Racquet court surfaces, such as squash or racquetball, have all but exited the multi-use recreational landscape over the past few decades. The *Community Recreation Facility Needs Assessment Study* found that only 3% of Airdrie residents participate in those type of activities. Additionally, these courts take up a considerable footprint (both height and sq ft) and are only able to accommodate 2-4 participants at a time.

## Potential Amenity Solutions to Address Expressed Needs for Gymnasium / Hard Courts:

### Multi-Court Gymnasium Amenity

Gymnasiums are frequently constructed in multi-use recreation facilities with synthetic flooring, in lieu of sprung wood, as it is more resilient and able to be flexed to accommodate atypical use. As well, most school sites continue to install sprung wood floors that accommodate the users who require that particular type of product. A multi-sport gymnasium should be considered within a new facility based on the following factors:

- **Indoor Amenity Desired by Airdrie Residents** - The dominate interest in hard court activities comes by way of unstructured or spontaneous use. Over 80% of respondents in the *Community Recreation Facility Needs Assessment Study* who identified interest in gymnasium type sports/activities do so through unorganized means. The challenge to this large segment is that school gymnasiums only permit access to organizations and not spontaneous group of friends or families. Thus, multi-use recreation facilities play a key role in providing space and time for those residents who simply want to develop a skill or stay active.
- **Most Subscribed Program** - Gymnasiums are one of the most versatile spaces to facilitate active living programming. The gymnasium at Genesis Place is used for fundamental skill development classes, intro to sport programs, and day camps.
- **Stakeholder Need** - While there is increasing voiced need from stakeholders to get more gymnasium space within City owned facilities it is important to note that the bulk of rentals occur in school gymnasiums within Airdrie. Rentals within school operated gymnasium amount to over 4,000 hours of community use per year. Additionally, if a large unboarded fieldhouse was constructed in a new recreation centre it would present the opportunity to review if the current boarded field in Genesis Place could be converted into a triple gymnasium that could accommodate even more stakeholder use – both for regular bookings and large tournaments.
- **School Access** - A gymnasium is an ideal space for school use for both active living days and physical education classes.
- **Utilization/Trends** - The gymnasium at Genesis Place operates at near capacity across all prime times. Over the last number of years Administration has attempted to increase the amount of drop-in times and activities to accommodate the growing demand from pass holders. As the only gymnasium provided in Airdrie that accommodates spontaneous use it is vital more time is protected for those who want to engage in unstructured activities with family and friends.
- **Capital/Operating Costs** - A synthetic flooring gymnasium is extremely versatile and has much lower lifecycle and ongoing maintenance expenses as a traditional sprung wood floor. It also limits damage due to scratches, misuse, abuse, or liquid spills.

- **Comparative Review Analysis** - There currently is only one gymnasium in Airdrie, at Genesis Place, that accommodates the bulk of the drop-in/unstructured types of use. Popular especially with youth, the current gymnasium can often be seen with 20-40 youth in a half gym during prime times which results in increased incidents and inability to participate. Additionally, when reviewing comparable municipalities in the *Community Recreation Facility Needs Assessment Study* it is noted that Airdrie has the lowest number of courts available.

### Racquet Sport Courts Amenity

The popularity in activities that utilize smaller racquet courts, such as squash and racquetball, peaked in the 1970 and 80s and have been in decline ever since. In Airdrie, less than 3% of residents demonstrate an interest in those type of sports. Even if operating at peak utilization a racquet court would not see more than 30-40 participants per day through a single court whereas a fitness studio or gymnasium could house that many participants every hour. Thus, many racquet court spaces across the Province have or are being transitioned into other uses. Council may still choose to explore further this type of facility based on other criteria.

## FACILITY COMPONENT – FITNESS CENTRE AND RUNNING TRACK

### Summary of Fitness Centre and Running Track

	Gap Monitor of Fitness Facilities							
	Potential Solutions by Physical Amenities	Resident Demand - Spontaneous	Resident Demand – Programming	Organized Sport & Stakeholder Demand	Current Prime Utilization	Operating Cost	Capital Cost	Facility Deficit in Airdrie
Fitness Centre	15k-20k sq ft (strength and cardio)	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	X	100%	\$	\$\$\$\$	✓✓
Studios	Fitness studios and spaces	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓	70%	\$	\$\$\$	✓✓
Track	Walking / Running	✓✓✓	X	X	100%	\$	\$\$\$\$	✓

### Analysis of Fitness Centre and Running Track Amenities:

A combination of fitness and training spaces are critical components of any found multi-use recreation facility within the region or Province. It is widely understood that fitness centres contribute greatly to the sustainability of multi-use complexes as well as provide an active living outlet for individuals all along

the Canadian Sport for Life 'Active for Life' pathway. Fitness centres and spaces are almost always available for spontaneous or unstructured use which allows individuals to recreate at any convenient time found within operational hours without the need to plan or reserve.

In Airdrie at Genesis Place, 80% of pass holders utilize fitness specific amenities and between pass scans and paid drop-in visits the fitness centre, running track, and fitness studios can see monthly visits of 25,000 and up. The original phase one fitness centre opened in 2004 at approximately 5,000 sq ft and one studio but quickly needed to be expanded as Airdrie's population increased. The current fitness centre opened in 2009 and is 14,000 sq ft with a four lane 200-meter indoor running/walking track and a total of two studios. Since 2009 facility passes have increased by 320% and since resuming normal operations post-pandemic Genesis Place has seen record number of visits, pass sales, and fitness class attendance. It is important to note that 60% of pass holders reside on the west side of highway 2, a more residentially dense geographic area of Airdrie, which highlights the importance of constructing amenities within a tighter radius of that side of the City.

## **Potential Amenity Solutions to Address Expressed Needs for Fitness Centre and Running Track:**

### **Fitness Centre / Running Track / Fitness Studios**

- **Indoor Amenity Desired by Airdrie Residents** - The *Recreation Facility Needs Assessment Study* identified that Airdrie residents (49%) participate in fitness training type activities including weight and cardio equipment use. Further, 30% of residents indicated that they utilize Genesis Place for their fitness activities. These numbers speak to the overwhelming desire, especially in the adult and senior age categories, of utilizing fitness centre amenities to stay active for life. With Airdrie's population forecasted to reach 110,000+ in the next 15 years it can be expected that the current fitness centre/studios at Genesis Place will not be able to accommodate the demand for use. Unlike boutique or specialized private fitness operations, a multi-use recreation facility allows for use by any age, skill, or ability. Often at Genesis Place a 10-year-old youth will walk the track with a parent or a teenager will attend a fitness class. The walking/running track allows for activity throughout the colder months for those with wheelchairs, walkers, strollers, or other mobility challenges.
- **Most Subscribed Program** - 27% of residents responded that they participate or intend on attending an instructor led fitness class or program. This represents nearly 21,000 Airdrie residents who plan on utilizing a civically operated fitness centre for a class or program. If additional fitness amenities were included in a west side multi-use recreation facility there would be the ability to widen program offerings and frequencies. Classes throughout the day could be duplicated on both the west and east side of the City or rotate demographic specific type programming on alternating days of the week at each facility.
- **Stakeholder/School Access** - Groups who utilize fitness centres and studios are often either organized sport teams or schools. It can be expected in a new recreation centre that there

would be considerable demand from user groups to utilize personal trainers and group fitness leaders for dryland training and school activity days.

- **Utilization/Trends** - Currently at Genesis Place there has been record breaking usage leading up to and after the pandemic. There is currently nearly 30,000 pass scan visits to the fitness centre by over 6,000 unique individuals. A well-positioned recreation centre on the populous west side of Airdrie could expect to draw even higher facility visits and pass sales.
- **Capital / Operating Costs** - Fitness centre amenities greatly contribute to the overall cost recovery of a multi-use facility. 80% of current Genesis Place pass holders make use of the fitness centre and the amenity receives more pass scans/drop-in visits per month than the other amenities within the facility. For the size of space, it requires lower levels of staffing compared with aquatic amenities and allows the greatest number of individuals per square foot. Without a fitness centre component within a multi-use recreation centre it can be expected that the overall cost recovery will be much lower due to less pass holders (which represents over 50% of revenue at Genesis Place) and higher expense amenities remaining. While the original investment is high in the space and equipment, the ongoing lifecycle costs are low. Compared with amenities such as aquatics or ice surfaces, there are no high-ticket pumps, chemicals, motors, or refrigeration plants to replace. Equipment is reviewed annually, and it is expected that the annual lifecycle costs over 10 years amount to under \$1million.
- **Comparative Review Analysis** - The current pass holder census at Genesis Place also presents nearly 5,000 individuals with an address on the west of highway 2 which speaks to the relevancy of considering an additional facility with greater ease of access and that may encourage active transportation. Additionally, contained within the comparative review of the *Recreation Facility Needs Assessment Study*, there are much lower number of private fitness studios and centres in Airdrie compared against other like-sized municipalities. This highlights the key role the municipality plays in providing activity space for those along the 'active for life' spectrum.

## FACILITY COMPONENT – ANCILLARY SPACES

### Summary of Ancillary Spaces

Gap Monitor of Ancillary Facilities							
Potential Solutions by Physical Amenities	Resident Demand - Spontaneous	Resident Demand – Programming	Organized Sport & Stakeholder Demand	Current Prime Utilization	Operating Cost	Capital Cost	Facility Deficit in Airdrie
Tenant Spaces	X	X	X	NA	X	\$\$	X
Kids Spaces (Child Minding / Indoor Playgrounds)	✓✓✓	✓	X	80%	\$	\$\$\$	✓✓✓
Meeting & Multi-Purpose Rooms	X	✓✓	✓✓	60%	\$	\$\$\$	✓✓

### Analysis of Ancillary Spaces:

Ancillary and supportive spaces typically found in a multi-use recreation facility supplement and enhance primary amenities and offerings. As well, supporting facilities and services should also help the overall complex achieve stronger cost recoveries and social return. Commonly found ancillary or supportive spaces in multi-use recreation facilities include multi-purpose/meeting rooms, kids play centres, child minding rooms, public gathering space, and opportunities for tenants. At Genesis Place in Airdrie, meeting/multi-purpose rooms are used for internal staff training, external bookings, and special functions. Child minding provides an opportunity for parents to recreate while their children engage in positive and supervised play. The indoor playground acts as a physical and social outlet for parents and children alike. Lifemark Physiotherapy provides critical support to residents while connecting them into other features of the recreation facility.

### Potential Amenity Solutions to Address Expressed Needs for Ancillary Spaces:

#### Tenant Spaces

Any comparatively reviewed multi-use recreation facility in the region or across the Province has at least some form of tenant space. Some have multiple tenant spaces while others possess a single tenant usually in the form of a food service operator. Tenant spaces should be considered as part of a complete new recreation facility in Airdrie based on the following factors:

- Alignment to Recreation Purpose - Tenant spaces such as food services, paramedical clinics, or otherwise, should align with the overall purpose or intention of recreation – that is they should provide healthy options and supportive or wrap-around services to customers accessing the facility.

- Operating Cost Recovery – Tenant revenue contributes to the overall cost recovery of multi-use recreation facilities and rent is typically charged at market value.

## Children / Youth Spaces

Multi-use recreation facilities are designed and built to facilitate activity for all ages and stages. Children and youth spaces, such as childminding, preschool rooms, and indoor play centres are critical support pieces to a complete facility. A variety of children and youth spaces should be considered as part of a new recreation facility in Airdrie based on the following factors:

- Broadest Need – Airdrie is home to one of the youngest communities in Alberta and across Canada. Nearly a third of all residents within the municipality are under the age of 20. Further, the population age distribution found in Airdrie’s community profile demonstrates children, youth, and young families are the fastest growing resident segments. It is vital that facilities and services are right sized to develop fundamental skills and physical literacy in children and youth to give them the best chance of being active and healthy for life.
- Market Comparisons – Any multi-use recreation facility found within the comparative review contains children and youth specific spaces. They usually can be flexed to accommodate a range of use including fundamental physical literacy programming, child minding, birthday parties, and preschool.

## Multi-Purpose / Meeting Rooms

Beyond primary active living amenities, there is a requirement for spaces that flex to meet a range of uses and purposes. In all found multi-use facilities there are rooms available for staff training, community meetings, birthday parties, creative programming, martial art, etc. These types of spaces are critical within a planned recreation facility due to the following criteria:

- Broadest Need – Activities found in the *Recreation Facility Needs Assessment Study* that would utilize multi-purpose/meeting spaces include Dance (13% of residents), Martial Arts (7%), Before/After School Programming (9%), Creative Arts (16%), and Senior Groups (4%).
- Supplementary for Key Users – Major stakeholders often require meeting or multi-purpose space to host meetings or team training. Currently within Genesis Place, a range of spaces are used daily by groups and without access to these secondary rooms their programming would not be able to be facilitated holistically.

## Public Space

Multi-use recreation facilities all have some form of free to access public space. This often takes form in large corridors, open indoor plazas or seating areas, informal gathering space, and is usually connected to viewing areas of highly utilized amenities. These spaces are critical components within a planned west-side recreation centre but there a number of considerations to evaluate to ensure the spaces remain safe and functional:

- Health/Safety – Large areas of public space do present safety issues to multi-use facilities as they are difficult to supervise or secure. At Genesis Place, there are rising numbers of incidents within the facility as it acts as the only free public gathering point within the municipality. Along with the benefits this public space provides, it also attracts individuals or groups who may not intend on using the spaces for positive activity.
- Operating Costs - Larger public space may require increased operating dollars for security or supervision to ensure appropriate behavior and use. These spaces also historically track larger amounts of vandalism and damage which increases repair and maintenance expenses.
- Access Control – Public space adjacent to amenities presents issues within Genesis Place as attendees can bypass access control points without payment. This occurs currently from the pool viewing deck, gymnasium, and field house. Any public space in a new facility must consider how it protects the integrity of check-in/control points.

## CONCLUSION AND OPTIONS

Administration is presenting three options for CSAB and Council's consideration. These options are based on the information gathered in the *Recreation Needs Assessment*, utilization trends in current recreation facilities, feedback from stakeholder groups, and cost estimates to construct new amenities within new recreation facility. Once a thematic option is selected, Administration would work to perform a detailed site assessment, undertake further financial projections (both operating and capital), engage deeper with key stakeholders on utilization and intention, and return to Council with the aforementioned information prior to entering a concept design phase. The three options that Council are being presented are:

1. Broadest Community Voiced Need

The design of spaces will support the recreation and leisure needs of Airdrie residents as a primary driver. As noted in the *Recreation Community Needs Assessment*, the largest voiced need by Airdrie households is for unstructured and spontaneous access to facilities and active opportunities for individuals and families. Local stakeholder groups and programming would also be well served in this option as spaces would be multi-use and allocation policies developed to ensure space and time mirrors the broadest needs found in the community assessment.

2. Sport Tourism / Stakeholder Use

The emphasis on the design within this option is to spur visitation to Airdrie, attract regional competition, and leverage recreation amenities to spur economic benefits. Beyond the physical design and construction, allocation policies would be required to be amended to ensure space and time is prioritized to the use the design intends. This option would cater to stakeholder (sport organizations) first and spontaneous/unstructured use as well as programming would need to adapt to the design of sport-based amenities.

3. Hybrid Approach

Council could collectively prioritize the amenities to create an alternative option. This would provide clarity to Administration on which elements of a facility Council feels should be primarily resident focused and which amenities should be designed by prioritizing stakeholders. With the inability to accommodate all uses and focuses there will most likely be some needs that go unaddressed for both residents and specific stakeholders.

## Option One – Active Living Focus

The design of spaces will support the spontaneous, unstructured, and programmatic needs of Airdrie residents. Facilities will be designed, and time allocated that mirrors the highest resident needs voiced in the *Recreation Needs Assessment*. Emphases will be placed on spaces that are flexible in use and accommodate all ages, skills, user types, and programming levels. The design and use will facilitate Canadian Sport for Life Society's *Long-Term Development Model* that provides a foundation and pathway for activity throughout one's life. Top drivers and considerations within this option include (found in detail in the body of this report):

### Aquatics

- 52% of residents desire aquatic amenities for unstructured and spontaneous use.
- 31% of residents wish to participate in swimming lessons and programs.
- 4% of residents participate in organized swim clubs or associations.

### Arenas

- 43% of residents desire time to utilize ice for unstructured or spontaneous uses.
- 14% of residents intend on attending skating lessons.
- 17% of residents participate in either hockey or ringette.
- To achieve a ratio of 1 ice surface per 10,000 residents the City will need 9 ice surfaces by 2040 to meet population forecasts.

### Climbing/Bouldering Wall

- 8% of residents desire a climbing amenity within a new recreation centre.
- Increasingly, climbing facilities are being built and operated by private entities. The Calgary Climbing Centre's 'Hanger' is ~15 minutes from Airdrie.

### Field House

- Soccer is one of the fastest growing sports in Canada. Expected that Airdrie could have 5,000 field house users by 2040.
- Unboarded fields are required into the future as Soccer Canada will most likely no longer sanction indoor boarded fields for higher age/skill gameplay.

### Fitness

- 49% of Airdrie residents participate in fitness training activities and 30% of residents do so at Genesis Place currently.
- A Fitness Centre is a cornerstone piece within a multi-use facility and contributes greatly to its financial sustainability.

### Gymnasium

- 80% of residents who make use of hard-court activities do so within unstructured or spontaneous activities.
- Gymnasium provides versatile space for programming, drop-in use, and rentals.

## Outdoor Aquatics

- 40% of residents utilize the Chinook Winds Splash Park and 50% desire further outdoor aquatic amenities.
- 30% of residents are leaving Airdrie to find outdoor aquatic options in other communities.

Based on the detailed rationale and evidence provided in each amenity section of this report a facility which meets the broadest resident need would contain:

AMENITY	Projected Cost (Class D Estimate)
<b>AQUATICS</b>	
10 lane – 25 metre lane pool	\$7,496,862
Indoor spray park	
Leisure pool (with integrated deep water & lanes)	\$14,993,725
Waterslide	\$10,225,720
Hot Tub / steam room	\$2,998,745
	\$2,398,996
<b>ARENAS</b>	
3 - NHL sized arenas	\$37,246,218
Leisure/Half ice surface	\$4,664,106
<b>CLIMBING WALL</b>	
Bouldering wall	\$184,620
<b>FIELD HOUSE</b>	
11v11 Field house – air supported	\$12,000,000
<b>FITNESS</b>	
~10,000 sq ft fitness centre	\$10,327,663
Four lane running/walking track	\$8,884,011
<b>GYMNASIUM</b>	
Double gymnasium – synthetic floor	\$3,287,084
<b>OUTDOOR AQUATICS</b>	
Splash pad	\$10,271,470
<b>ANCILLARY SPACES</b>	
Child minding	\$1,522,305
Indoor playground	\$1,850,769
Meeting/Multi-Purpose rooms	\$1,266,800
Staff/Admin areas	\$8,064,000
General Building Envelope/Systems, Inflation (current and future), Contingency, Site Work, Design.	\$87,771,453
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$225,454,553</b>

## Option Two – Sport Tourism / Organized Sport Focus

The primary emphasis and funds spent on this option is to support stakeholders' groups, their participants, as well as leverage recreational assets for economic benefits for the targeted (food & beverage and hotel) businesses. If this option is selected, Administration would work with the Economic Development department to explore further and return with evidence on what level of financial and social impact a sport tourism/stakeholder group driven recreation facility would generate. The amenities would also function to support resident unstructured and programmatic use but the design and allocation of time within sport/competition centric venues may not meet the broadest voiced needs. Top drivers and considerations within this option include (found in detail in the body of this report):

### Aquatics

- Stakeholder groups have voiced their desire for a 50M competition pool with additional warm-up lanes to accommodate regional, provincial, and national level swim meets.
- Competition use would most likely occur at minimum twice per month.
- 4% of residents participate in organized swim clubs or associations.

### Arenas

- Stakeholder desire to move higher level groups and teams to a performance bowl ice surface.
- Potential to draw a major junior hockey team to Airdrie (AJHL / WHL).
- Ability to attract large tournaments and events to Airdrie – ice in or out.

### Climbing/Bouldering Wall

- 8% of residents desire a climbing amenity within a new recreation centre.
- Increasingly, climbing facilities are being built and operated by private entities. The Calgary Climbing Centre's 'Hanger' is ~15 minutes from Airdrie.

### Field House

- Soccer is one of the fastest growing sports in Canada. Expected that Airdrie could have 5,000 field house users by 2040.
- Unboarded fields are required into the future as Soccer Canada will most likely no longer sanction indoor boarded fields for higher age/skill gameplay.

### Fitness

- 49% of Airdrie residents participate in fitness training activities and 30% of residents do so at Genesis Place currently.
- A Fitness Centre is a cornerstone piece within a multi-use facility and contributes greatly to its financial sustainability.

### Gymnasium

- 80% of residents who make use of hard-court activities do so within unstructured or spontaneous activities.

- Gymnasium provides versatile space for programming, drop-in use, and rentals.

#### Outdoor Aquatics

- 40% of residents utilize the Chinook Winds Splash Park and 50% desire further outdoor aquatic amenities.
- 30% of residents are leaving Airdrie to find outdoor aquatic options in other communities.

Based on the rationale provided in each amenity section of this report a facility which financially prioritizes the greatest voiced stakeholder needs:

AMENITY	Projected Cost (Class D Estimate) *cost estimate will be provided on a separate document
<b>AQUATICS</b>	
10 lane – 50 metre lane pool	\$22,490,588
Leisure pool (with integrated deep water & lanes)	\$10,225,720
Waterslide	\$2,998,745
Hot tub / Steam room	\$2,398,996
<b>ARENAS</b>	
2 - NHL sized arenas	\$24,830,812
NHL sized arena with performance bowl	\$37,246,218
<b>CLIMBING WALL</b>	
Bouldering wall	\$184,620
<b>FIELD HOUSE</b>	
11v11 Field house – brick and mortar with viewing	\$41,504,991
<b>FITNESS</b>	
~10,000 sq ft fitness centre	\$10,327,663
Four lane running/walking track	\$8,884,011
<b>GYMNASIUM</b>	
Double gymnasium – synthetic floor	\$3,287,084
<b>OUTDOOR AQUATICS</b>	
Splash pad	\$10,271,470
<b>ANCILLARY SPACES</b>	
Child minding	\$1,522,305
Indoor playground	\$1,850,769
Meeting/Multi-Purpose rooms	\$1,266,800
Staff/Admin areas	\$8,064,000
General Building Envelope/Systems, Inflation (current and future), Contingency, Site Work, Design.	\$114,130,567
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$306,149,470</b>

### Option Three – Hybrid Approach

The design of a new facility would contain amenities that are deemed to be of highest priority to Council and would consider each amenity individually and not necessarily be a facility with a broad thematic design philosophy. Due to the limited budget currently allocated in the 10-year capital plan to a new recreation facility there would be necessary cuts from the broadest list that may result in resident and/or stakeholder dissatisfaction.

A full cost estimate of building nearly all amenities would see a budget in excess of \$350,000,000 required.

### ADMINISTRATION RECOMMENDATION

Based on the review of the *Recreation Community Needs Assessment*, current utilization, and review of comparables/trends, Administration recommends CSAB, and Council moves to explore further option 1 - a multi-use recreation facility that prioritizes and designs with the broadest voiced community needs as the primary driver.

## NEW CULTURAL FACILITY

A new cultural facility, the Airdrie Multi-Use Facility and Library (AMUFL) is necessary to support the increasing needs of Airdrie residents, providing a collective gathering space for all members of the community that will engage and inspire. Council has envisioned this facility to be:

- A catalyst for the downtown,
- Multiple Uses and Activities, and
- Hub for community development

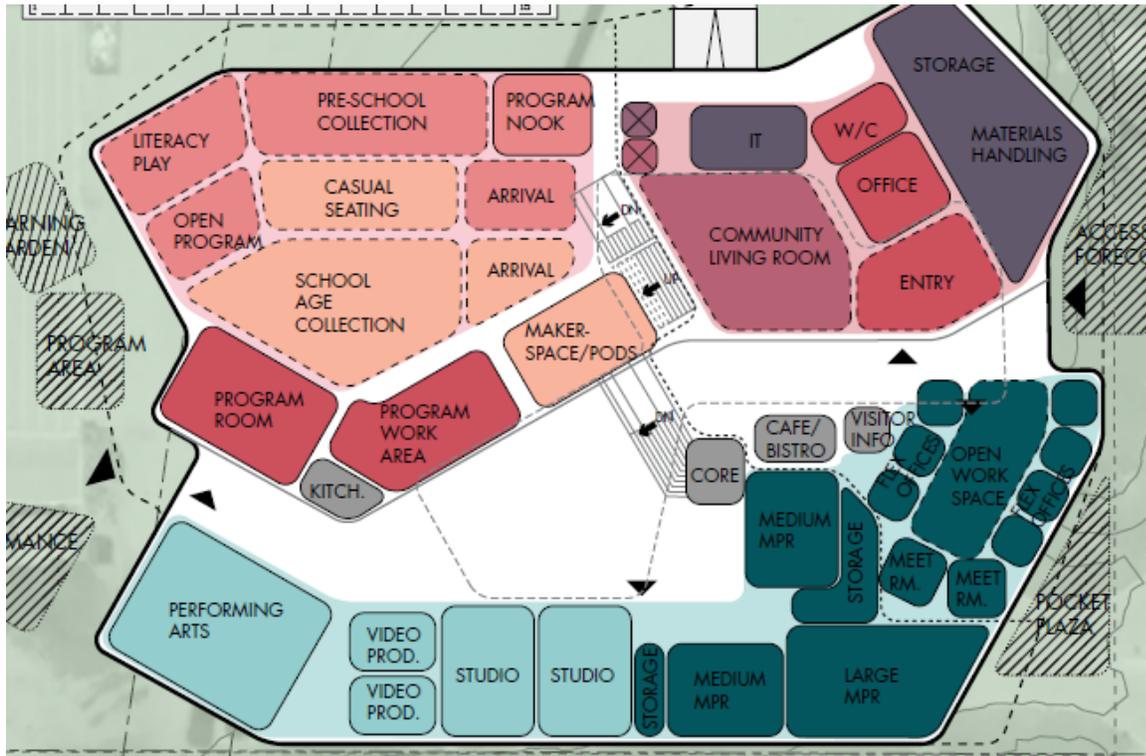
The program for the AMUFL consist of two primary components: the Multi-Use Program and the Library Program. The Library Functional Program formed the basis for the relationship and functional layout of the new Library spaces based on the Library's Service Plan. The Multi-Use Program was developed based on input from various stakeholder groups and feedback from residents through a feasibility study and consists of three themes:

- Lifelong Learning - Opportunities for post-secondary programs offered to residents. Lifelong learning is the ongoing voluntary, and self-motivated pursuit of knowledge for personal or professional reasons.
- Arts Development - Opportunities to learn, express and participate in fine and performing arts. Arts development is arts centered activity, which is created with community members, and enhances and strengthens that community.
- Shared Community Resources - Opportunities to access services and resources that promote community connections, and multiple uses of the facility including multi-purpose rooms.

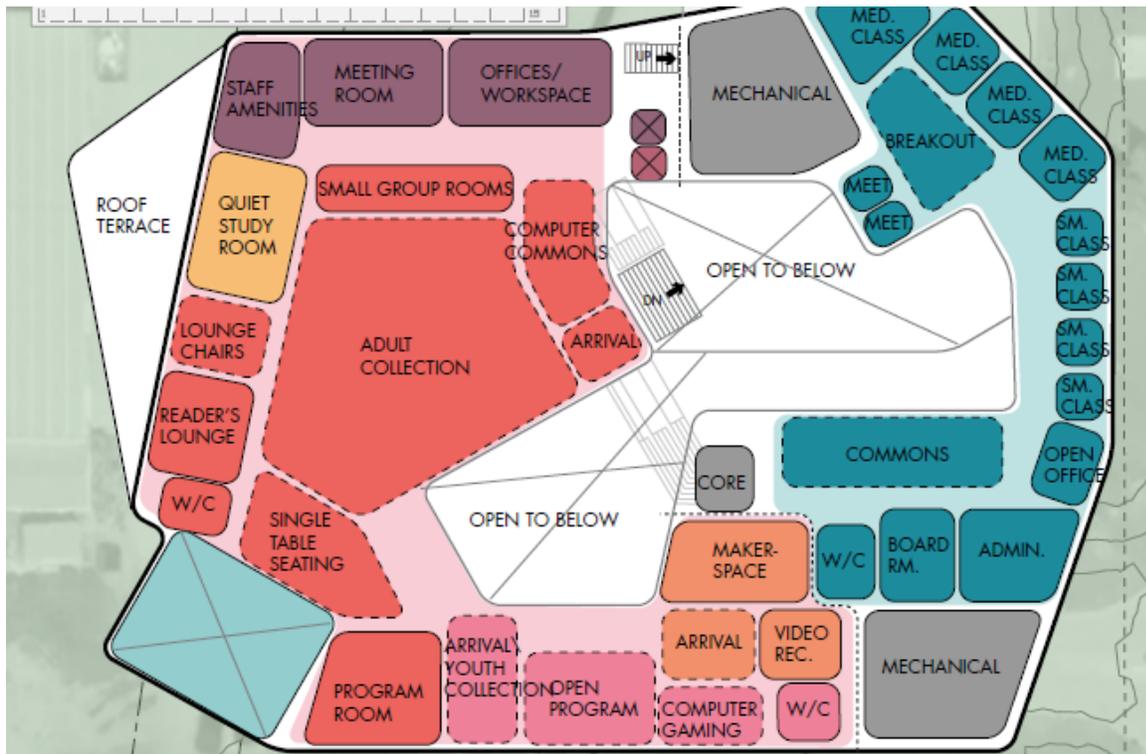
Planning is currently underway for the AMUFL and addresses the cultural facilities gaps identified above. Aside from the Library, the Multi-Use Facility will include the following amenities:

<b>Airdrie Multi-Use Facility (AMUFL)</b>	
<b>Allocated Theme</b>	<b>Space Components</b>
<b>First Floor</b>	
<b>Arts Development</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Performance space/Event space</li> <li>• Video production rooms (2)</li> <li>• Studio spaces and storage for fine arts programming (2)</li> </ul> Total: 5,300 ft <sup>2</sup>
<b>Shared Community Resources</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Workspaces and offices (community organizations)</li> <li>• Large multipurpose rooms (2)</li> <li>• Medium multipurpose rooms (2)</li> <li>• Multipurpose storage</li> <li>• Small meeting rooms (2)</li> </ul> Total: 7,000 ft <sup>2</sup>
<b>Enhanced Atrium</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Retail pop-up pods</li> <li>• Visitor information area</li> <li>• Visual Exhibition space/Public Gallery</li> <li>• Atrium</li> <li>• Café/Bistro</li> </ul> Total: 9,000 ft <sup>2</sup>
<b>Second Floor</b>	
<b>Lifelong Learning (Post-secondary education)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Classrooms</li> <li>• Supportive Administrative Spaces</li> </ul> Total: 6,100 ft <sup>2</sup>
<b>Outdoor</b>	
<b>Plazas and Green Spaces</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Performance Plaza, Pocket Plaza</li> <li>• Learning Garden, Program Area</li> <li>• Pathway connectivity to Nose Creek Regional Park and Downtown</li> </ul>

The first floor shown in the diagram below includes the Library Program on the north side and the arts development (turquoise), shared community resources (dark green) and enhanced atrium spaces (white):



The second floor houses the Library Program and lifelong learning (turquoise).



The information below provides details of how cultural amenities are being integrated in the AMUFL Project and proposed planning to modernize Legacy Facilities including the Town and Country Centre and Nose Creek Valley Museum.

### Airdrie Multi-Use Facility

Potential Solutions by Physical Amenities	Amenities desired by residents in the new Multi-Use Facility	Other services collocated with the Library	Facility Deficit in Airdrie
Art Exhibition spaces	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓
Art Centre/Studios	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓
Video Production	✓	✓	✓
Pop-up Artisan Market	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓
Multi-Purpose Rooms and Performance Theatre	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓

### Proposed Programmatic Plan for the Multi-Use Space in the New Airdrie Multi-Use Facility and Library:

#### Art Exhibition Space

Art gallery display has been ranked by residents as a highly desirable use that would draw them to the new Airdrie Multi-Use Facility and Library. Art galleries were also ranked 17<sup>th</sup> out of 21 priority amenities in the *Facility Recreation Facility Needs Assessment Study*.

Art Exhibition spaces are subsets of art galleries. Currently an art exhibition space is being planned in the new Airdrie Multi-Use Facility and Library. An exhibition is a public display of art or items of interest. Exhibitions are usually held in places like museums, art galleries, parks, libraries, or fairs. These are all cultural or educational settings and not to sell art. Art exhibitions may involve different genres and artifacts: drawings, paintings, sculptures, crafts, and sound installations. Calgary Public Library has Art Exhibit Spaces where they invite artists to submit their work for display consideration. Artwork provides educational and cultural enrichment, encourages lifelong learning, and connects communities. Some of the advantages of an art exhibition space:

- Expressed Needs—Residents expressed a desire to visit art galleries and exhibits. The common barrier for visits is that these types of facilities do not exist in Airdrie and thus people go to Calgary and Area to have cultural experiences. The lobby at Bert Church Theatre has been used in the past as an art exhibition space. Viewing was challenging as the location was not ideal for day visitors.

The art exhibit space in the multi-use component of the new Library facility will address this need by providing a purpose-built space.

- Spontaneous use—because the art exhibition space is located in the atrium of the AMUFL, patrons can view artwork when visiting the facility, unless the atrium is booked for a private/closed function.
- Interpretive Centre—opportunities for rotation of pop-up interpretive displays, exhibits, events and temporary programming projects to attract patrons by animating public places that can educate, inspire, and/or create opportunities to connect the community.
- Open Public Access—as this is in the general public area, admission would be free

## Art Centres / Studios

Airdrie residents have expressed a desire for visual art pursuits in Airdrie. Because art studios (a place to do a variety of art sculpting, drawing, and painting, printmaking, mixed media) do not exist in Airdrie, they go outside of the community to participate in various cultural facilities that do not exist in Airdrie such as an art centre. This demand has been shown both in the *Library Feasibility Study* and the *Recreation Facility Needs Assessment Study*. In the past, visual arts programs were offered at Bert Church Theatre. The Bert Church Theatre was not built with the intention of holding visual arts programming and faced challenges when holding such programs such as the lack of studio space, proper sinks, flammables cabinets, drawing tables, etc. The limitations of the space and the associated challenges in delivering these programs resulted in a decision to no longer offer visual arts programs.

An art studio is being planned in the Multi-Use Facility space approximately 1,900 ft<sup>2</sup> plus storage spaces. This would create areas where artists of all ages and skill levels can learn and create art through sculpting, drawing, and painting, printmaking, mixed media. With additional resources, it could be programmed by the municipality to deliver arts creation or booked by artists to teach art classes. It needs to be fully equipped with storage for supplies, double sinks, adjustable tables, standing easels with durable flooring and appropriate lighting. Municipally operated art studios provide staff to support programming of the space where residents can register for arts programs or book the spaces for custom events. Professional Artists can book these art studios for private use and instructions.

- Programming - Similar municipally run arts centres include programming for evening and weekend opportunities which requires support staff. A facility with a similar footprint in Calgary requires 4 full-time staff and between 10-12 contracted instructors available at different times of the year to deliver arts programs. Dedicated staff would initiate programming, events and activities and create opportunities to develop greater community capacity to participate.
- Resident's demand for programming - In the Recreation Facility Needs Assessment Study and Library survey, residents indicated a desire to participate in arts program. An art centre provides creative expression for all ages ranging from painting basics to drawing for children, youth, adults and seniors.

- Booking opportunities - Studios would be equipped for fine arts and would be open for public bookings around scheduled programming. Birthday parties for example can be customized through artistic experiences. Corporate team building events, professional development can be customized through visual arts to meet group's needs.

## Video Production

Although it was not mentioned in the Recreational Needs Assessment, the Multi-Use Facility Feasibility Study indicated desire from creative industries to have a video production space. The Video production space is made accessible to residents, entrepreneurs, youtubers to produce their online events, webinars, digital courses and more in a video production space. This studio room will be used to shoot videos, editing and a green screen for interviews.

- Booking opportunities - As a rental space, home-based video production companies, social media influencers and students could bring their video equipment to shoot videos on a green screen with good lighting.

## Pop-up Artisan Markets

A Pop-up market is a temporary retail space used to introduce a new product, experience or to generate awareness of a brand. As opposed to a commercial art gallery, convention or trade fair, a pop-up artisan market is a fairly low-cost solution to seek new ways to engage customers without the cost of a permanent storefront. Art and creative industries often want to showcase and test the market for their work and pop-up markets provide these opportunities. Typically has low vendor fees and the organizer's costs are primarily the venue rental, supply rental and advertisement. Customers have a fun, culturally enriching and "instagrammable" experience, and opportunity to purchase art works. Pop-up Market—the AMUFL contemplates a pop-up market for artisans and creative businesses in the Atrium, this will allow local artists and artisans to book the space and sell their work.

- Low operating costs - It will require booking and scheduling, set-up and take down as a rental space for event organizers.
- Spontaneous use and downtown catalyst - From the residents' perspective, this provides opportunities to casually visit downtown and the Multi-Use Space. It provides opportunities not just for the vendors to gain business but food, retail vendors in and around downtown.
- No cost to visitors - as this is in the general public area, admission would be free.

## Multi-Purpose Rooms (MPR's) and performing Arts Theatre

In addition to T&C halls, BCT lobby, the Multi-Use Facility contemplates a variety of multi-purpose rooms (MPR's) and event spaces to meet smaller more intimate events (performance theatre, atrium, and small and large multi-purpose rooms). These spaces can be configured to meet a variety of needs for rentals and programming. The multi-use facility will lend itself to business meetings, weddings, presentations, medium sized performances, rehearsals, markets, and classes.

- Operating cost - The staffing model will be established once further details of the space are determined through schematic design, however, it will likely include a combination of different functions including facility attendants, customer service representatives, and technicians, depending on the number and type of events that are taking place.
- Performing Arts Team - The business unit formerly known as Bert Church Theatre has been realigned to provide programming oversight to any performing arts activities in the Multi-Use Facility, BCT and amphitheater in Nose Creek Park.
- Centralized bookings and Box Office - Within cultural facilities, there are a variety of multipurpose rooms and performance spaces including new Multi-Purpose Facility, T&C and BCT. Centralizing bookings will provide better customer service and create efficiencies. The new Multi-Use Facility will have greater people traffic which would be better location for box office to serve all performance spaces.

## LEGACY FACILITIES

The inventory of community facilities that are over 40 years of age include the Town and Country Centre, Nose Creek Valley Museum and Plainsmen Arena. Administration requires a process to analyze the programs and services that are being provided currently within these facilities. Once the imminent decision is made around the thematic options and mix for the future South West Recreation Facility, then the remaining community needs can be considered in relation to plans for modernization and upgrade of these legacy facilities.

Potential Solutions by Physical Amenities	Resident Demand - Spontaneous	Resident Demand - Programming	Organized Community & Stakeholder Demand	Operating Cost	Capital Cost	Facility Deficit in Airdrie
Museum/Interpretive	✓	✓	-	\$	\$\$\$	*
Curling rinks	✓	✓	✓	\$	\$\$\$	
Seniors centre	✓	✓	✓	\$	\$\$\$	
Banquet/halls	✓✓	--	✓✓	\$	\$\$\$	

### Nose Creek Valley Museum - Current State\*

In the *Facility Recreation Facility Needs Assessment Study*, museum visits did not emerge as one of the top activities that residents do locally. However, half of the respondents indicated they go to Calgary and region to visit museums, historical sites and interpretive centres. Although a museum exists in Airdrie, respondents may have been referring to specific features or types of museums that do not exist in Airdrie. The Nose Creek Valley Museum can be categorized as an history and archival museum but perhaps residents are accessing other types of museums and interpretive centres in Calgary and region. An option might be to further explore the different types of museums that is of interest to residents. This exploration or study would further understand the desires of residents of the types of museums they would visit and their frequency of use.

### Planning for the Future of the Town and Country Centre

The Town and Country Community Centre was Airdrie's first multi-use community facility. It is a City-owned facility that was opened in 1977. Historically the operation and management of the facility was provided by the Town and Country Society until their dissolution. Through a variety of lease arrangements, the Curling Club and Over 50 Club have responsibilities for their programming, interior upkeep of their portion of the facility and a portion of the utilities. Lease arrangements are for a nominal fee (1 dollar) except pay for utility costs. The Community Halls are managed and operated by the City of Airdrie's Cultural Facilities Department. Since it was built there has not been any major renovations done to the

facility apart from lifecycle and maintenance work. It is common practice for municipalities to upgrade and maintain Legacy Facilities such as the Town and Country Centre especially if they continue to serve a purpose for the community. Modernization of Legacy Facilities create efficient operations and prolong the life of the facility for patrons to continue to enjoy in the long-term.



## Planning for a Curling Facility

The Town & Country Centre is home to the Airdrie Curling Club, a non-profit group which manages the 8 sheets of curling ice, full-service lounge, kitchen, and Pro Shop. The *Recreation Facility Needs Assessment Study* did not indicate high interest in curling from respondents. The recreational needs assessment included a gap analysis between current facilities and the demand from the Airdrie Community, with curling facilities receiving a priority ranking of 20/21. Participation over the past five years have been stable at 600 +/- participant. The Club offers a variety of leagues for various groups and ages. Given that participation is stable, and that growth is not anticipated, the current offering of 8 sheets of ice has been deemed sufficient to address community needs. However, the physical plant requires upgrade to the ice plant and the facility. In the Capital Plan, the City is investing \$1.6 million to upgrade the freon-based ice plant of the curling facility as freon is being phased out as an ozone depleting agent. In order to replace the existing freon plant, upgrades to the facility are required to meet new building code standards and CSA B52 which regulates installation and maintenance of mechanical refrigeration system for public safety. The project is slated to start in 2023.

## Seniors Centre-Current State

In the *Recreation Facility Needs Assessment Study* seniors centre was ranked as 12/21 as a gap. It did not rank high as a priority for residents but ranked important by service providers for seniors. Airdrie has a seniors centre located in the Town and Country Centre. The Airdrie Over 50 Club is a not-for-profit tenant in the Town and Country Centre occupying over 1,200 ft<sup>2</sup>. They host year-round activities for up to 270 seniors such as cards, carpet bowling, pool, shuffleboard, table tennis, painting, crafting, and social activities targeted at seniors. The Over 50 Club have highest recreational use of their space during daytime. Some evenings are scheduled for card games but often space is rented to community groups. Weekends are typically under used.

Administration has been working with the Airdrie Over 50 Club to understand their programming needs which drives space requirements. The Airdrie Over 50 Club has expressed a need for a larger space than they currently have at the Town and Country centre at 2,834 ft<sup>2</sup>. They have expressed a need for at least 6,400 ft<sup>2</sup> of dedicated space for their programs. In the 10 Year Capital Plan, one option is to modernize the Town and Country Centre Hall to meet the needs of the Over 50 Club. Administration will work with the Club to further understand their program needs and identify opportunities to either locate them to a new space or upgrade and expand their current location (if feasible) as part of the Town and Country modernization and upgrade.

## Banquet/Community Halls

In the *Recreation Facility Needs Assessment Study* banquet/halls/rooms were identified as gaps in the community. In the *Recreation Facility Needs Assessment Study*, 1 in 4 residents have indicated visiting or using the T&C Halls. The Town & Country Centre large hall is the largest venue in Airdrie and can accommodate up to 600 people (non-fixed seating) and 490 people (fixed seating). It is a very versatile space that can be used for multiple purposes and uses. It includes a commercial kitchen which can be booked independently for banquets, weddings etc. Weekends are highly desirable especially in the fall season. A medium size hall is available for smaller meetings and events and can accommodate 90 people. The City provides staff support for bookings, set-up and take down.

Over six years of City operations, Administration has recognized the following trends:

- Annually the T&C Halls manages approximately 250 bookings. In 2021 the number of bookings has increased to 389, with 123 of these being AHS Covid Clinics. 2020 and 2021 are anomalies due to the pandemic but typically private functions (weddings, birthdays, celebrations of life) and business functions (AGM, corporate training, markets) account for 67% of bookings.
- 32% are used by not-for-profit (social agencies, church groups, fundraisers) and public organizations (flu clinic, blood donor clinic) while the remaining 10% are bookings for City corporate functions (safety meetings, training).

- Roughly, 78% of rental customers are identified as local while 22% are from other communities.

**Facility Plan:**

- Proposed Plan to Upgrade to the Facility - In the 10 Year Capital Plan, one option is to modernize the Town and Country Centre Hall to best meet community needs. Many municipalities maintain their halls as multi-purpose rooms because they still have a purpose and need in the community. The Town and Country Centre Hall is highly used for mid-size, self-catered events. Improvements will make the T&C aesthetically more enticing and competitive with newer venues.

