

To: Chief Administrative Officer
From: Mark Haney, Manager – Arts and Culture
Subject: **Recreation and Programming Update**

Date: November 20, 2023

Recommendation(s)

This report is provided for information. No staff recommendation accompanies this report and Council action is not required.

Purpose

To provide Council with an update on Recreation statistics and programming through the end of Q3, 2023.

Background

The Recreation area of Parks, Recreation and Culture was perhaps the hardest hit by the pandemic, and in 2023 the entire sector is still recovering from the effects of Covid restrictions. The Mission Leisure Centre is the central hub for Recreation in the City, and through staff efforts revenue and attendance numbers are close to reaching pre-pandemic levels.

Discussion and Analysis

The Mission Leisure Centre and the Recreation division are a vital activity hub for the City of Mission, offering services and activities in the areas of Aquatics, Ice Sports, Health & Fitness, Inclusion, Drop-in Sports, Youth, Seniors, Club K.I.D.S., Special Events, and Marketing.

General Statistics – Covid Recovery – January 1 through September 30 (Q3)

To provide a comparison and an indication of recovery from pandemic restrictions, the following table shows 2019 actuals (last full year without restrictions), 2022 actuals and 2023 actuals through the end of Q3.

Activity	2019 Actual	2022 Actual	2023 Q1-Q3
Number of Leisure Centre visits - membership	118,394	81,537	114,662
Number of Leisure Centre drop in visits	82,140	55,227	52,802
Number of pool visits*	210,966	260,779	226,463
Number of fitness room visits*	92,558	63,646	58,481
Number of pre-registered program registrations – unlicensed - NEW	n/a	n/a	41,707
Number of pre-registered program registrations - licensed	n/a	25,021	30,414
Leisure Centre Total Traffic	690,010	475,894	448,659

PLAY passes issued	0	617	579
Youth Centre Total Traffic:	n/a	17,171	22,046
Boswyk Centre Total Traffic:	n/a	18,833	26,614

** Overlap may occur, as many patrons often participate in both swimming and fitness during same visit. Pool stats also include spectators and swim lessons.*

These statistics show that Leisure Centre and programming usage are growing over last year, and in almost every area are back to pre-pandemic levels. The exceptions are drop-in visits to the Leisure Centre, balanced with a higher level of membership, and fitness room visits. Public fitness was essentially decimated by Covid and pre-pandemic levels may not return after many people developed home-based fitness routines.

Aquatics

The pool at the Leisure Centre is one of the City's most used amenities. Swimming lessons are filled to 90% of capacity with the most popular levels and times having wait lists, to date in 2023 that equals 4,242 spots filled.

As shown above there have been over 226,000 visits to the pool to date in 2023. The lifeguards employed by the City oversee this high level of activity and ensure the safety of all visitors. Year to date there have been 214 incidents involving minor first-aid, 20 injuries considered major first-aid and have a doctor visit recommended and 10 injuries that required follow-up from first responders.

Ice Sports

Public skates and drop-in hockey are on trend to see an increase and are projected to finish 2023 approximately 27% above the projected budget. This can be attributed to increased attendance, marketing, and excellent customer service.

Skating Lessons (CanSkate partnership with Mission Skating Club) are projected to see an increase over 2022 and will come in over the projected revenue for 2023. This can be attributed to the purchase of better rental skates through the capital program equipment fund, community growth and interest in skating lessons.

Through successful partnership agreements with both the Mission Skating Club and the Mission Granite Curling Club, staff are able to provide comprehensive ice sport programming for children. The Mission Granite Curling Club has played a pivotal role in reintroducing the sport of curling to children. In 2023, we anticipate that 22 children will actively participate in the "Curling for Kids" program, enabling them to develop their skills and, ideally, cultivate a genuine passion for the sport. By nurturing and expanding this partnership, we aim to foster the growth of the Curling Club community.

Key challenges faced by ice sports are limited budget and insufficient storage space to maintain a substantial inventory of safe and high-quality rental fleet skates and helmets for popular public skates, lack of capacity to meet customer demand for additional drop-in programs without taking prime ice time away from minor sports groups, and lack of capacity for meeting the demand for tournament, playoff and event rentals without negatively impacting the public skate schedules.

There is an identifiable need for more ice sheets as Mission continues to grow and demand outpaces available space.

Health and Fitness

Daily fitness classes including Synrgy Circuit, TRX Circuit, Aqua Fitness, Yoga Hatha, Tone & Sculpt, Spin, HIIT & Core, and Spin + Circuit are regularly at capacity with waitlists, and approximately 615 people a week attending daily drop-in fitness classes.

In addition to the Leisure Centre, staff offer classes and activities at the Boswyk Seniors Centre and are working to establish programming at Steelhead Hall to better serve the North Mission population.

An adapted gym is offered weekly to ensure inclusion for patrons with accessibility challenges, which is used by Mission Secondary School, Mission Association for Community Living and community members.

New Keiser spin bikes are expected to come online in late November.

Sports

Drop-in Pickleball, Fun n Run, Volleyball, and Wallyball are regularly at capacity with a waitlist, and staff offer a variety of programs serving users from infancy through to older adulthood.

Staff have maintained and fostered strong partnerships with Mission Sports Council, I-SPARC (Indigenous Sport), Racquetball BC and Squash BC.

Inclusion

Staff maintain strong partnerships with Mission Friendship Centre, United Way, Mission Overdose Community Action Team, Mission Community Support Services, and Mission Secondary School.

Youth

Successes - Increased staff and youth safety in and around the youth centre through environmental scans and changes (e.g., related to layout, accessibility, visibility), development of safety and risk management protocols, and clarifying roles and responsibilities of youth engagement worker team.

Maintained or increased free drop-in programming available to youth, including gym and fitness room access at the leisure centre, and social programming, including youth dinners, trivia nights, movie nights, art/crafting activities, outdoor recreational opportunities (e.g., disc golf, kickball), and special events (most recently, a Halloween Carnival enjoyed by approximately one hundred youth, many of which were new to the youth centre).

Developed and sustained partnerships with community agencies and groups offering services and supports to youth, including Mission Community Services Society (MCSS), Mission Association for Community Living (MACL), Mission Arts Council (MAC), Youth Open Stage, and Fraser Valley Youth Society (FVYS).

The youth centre also became the new location for the Mission Youth Clinic, providing weekly access to a medical doctor and social worker to address physical/mental/sexual health concerns, substance use support, nutrition, and health education.

Challenges - Very limited capacity to provide outreach support and relationship-build with youth who are not presenting at the youth centre (but on leisure centre property) and could greatly benefit from accessing youth engagement workers and attending youth centre programming and supports.

Lack of awareness and misperceptions of the Youth Centre as an unsafe or inappropriate environment for youth. Staff are actively working to resolve these challenges through increased

promotion, community agency partnerships, relationship-building with school district and support staff, special events, and upcoming open houses.

2024 budget does not allow for an increase in staffing to safely extend Youth Centre hours (e.g., Saturday hours of operation), provide outreach support, and sustain ongoing youth engagement support at the Leisure Centre. Currently working on partnering with community agencies to help narrow this service gap.

Seniors

The Boswyk Seniors Activity Centre exemplifies how the City and community can collaborate to create a healthy space for community to grow and connect.

Activities at Boswyk are well subscribed and provide a wealth of opportunity for seniors to participate and engage, with growth essentially doubling over 2022. Some popular programs are billiards (2023 – 935, 2022-400), bingo (2023-1881, 2022-1123), Boswyk Café (2023-2931, 2022-1432), dancing (2023-1561, 2022-1093), and carpet bowling (2023-1801, 2022-1099).

Total activity participation has grown from 10,476 in 2022 to 19,010 year-to-date in 2023.

Another longstanding and successful program offered courtesy of Fraser Health is the Healthy Lifestyles program. This program has been offered for 11 years and through outreach, support and the thoughtful efforts from our Fraser Health funded Recreation Therapist, Mission residents struggling with mental health challenges have the opportunity to participate in the Healthy Lifestyles program. This program meets individuals where they are at and it supports them in their mental wellness journey through recreation opportunities such as sports, facilitated socials, coaching and exercise.

Club K.I.D.S.

Club K.I.D.S. is currently operating at nine elementary schools within the City of Mission, and in September 2023 a before school program began at Windebank Elementary School. Additionally, staff operate full day camps for Pro-D Days, Spring Break, Summer break and Winter break. Summer camps operates at 3 locations and serves approximately 800 children in July and August.

Currently for the 2023-2024 school year there are approximately 500 different children's registration forms submitted. This allows those children to register for our licensed programs. In the Afterschool Club KIDS program the average is 185 kids per day but have reached over 215 kids in a single day. Club K.I.D.S. has had approximately 29,000 registrations from January-October 31st.

Club K.I.D.S. staffs approximately 35 staff per day for our after-school program. The program is currently able to support 15 children with a 1-1 staff member to assist with their inclusion and involvement in our program.

The key challenges this program faces are high staff turnover rate as it is often a job for students or an opportunity for growth on the path to be a teacher. This results in continuous interviewing, hiring, orientations and on-site trainings which take an abundance of staff time. Additionally, Club K.I.D.S. is constantly faced with new behaviours occurring from children which requires a greater number of staff on site to ensure the quality of our program remains while each of the children gets the attention they deserve.

Special Events

The following is a compilation of community events that PRC either host or attend. It is worth noting that the department receives numerous invitations to participate in various community events and is often expected to contribute to them. Many organizations regard the department

as the source of fun, games, and activities to enhance their events. Unfortunately, we currently lack a dedicated community engagement and outreach budget or position within our department, limiting how many events staff can produce or attend.

February: Family Day

March: Shine Bright

May: Youth Week

June: Seniors' Health Week / Seniors' Week, ParticipACTION, Children's Festival, Welcome to Kindergarten (involving 10 schools)

July: Canada Day

August: Mission Fest

September: Culture Days

October: Career Fair at MLC, Safety Fair

December: PRC Holiday Open House

The City of Mission's Strategic Plan serves as a guiding framework for the city's budget allocation for service delivery. Specifically, it emphasizes Goal #2, which entails investing in an Activity Hub for the Centennial Park/Leisure Center Complex and Mission Senior Secondary area. To materialize this vision and establish a genuine activity hub, it is imperative to allocate staff for event coordination and booking, as well as to invest in special event programming to breathe life into the envisioned space.

Marketing

Piggybacking on the new city brand, staff embarked on the opportunity, with the support of Communications, to undertake a rebranding for the department. With the goal of honouring the engagement work and identity that came out of the greater corporate brand process staff worked with a designer to roll out a new PRC brand. This brand aims to portray a distinct playful spirit and yet has enough dimension that all areas of our department, preschool to parks, can leverage the aesthetic to best connect with the various demographics and groups that we serve. This PRC brand now serves as a foundation for years to come that will guide the look and feel of what comes out of our department.

To date the following applications of the new PRC brand have included: Fall Winter Leisure Guide, facility posters, facility schedules, social media posts, PRC membership cards, PRC gift cards, and single page promotional flyers.

The goal of our marketing efforts is connection, which includes several challenges:

Who sees what when; what media challenges are best to invest limited time, funds and resources in? How to best connect with all the unique demographics and their unique needs. Should the guide be printed? How much digital presence should be invested in? How much hard copy? How and to whom are guides distributed? How much social media and which channels? Newspaper and other ad space? What relationships exist and how to leverage them to deepen connection? How to continue to grow an email list and grow engagement?

Recovery Rate

The recovery rate for the PRC Department is well above the regional average, showing community support for PRC programming, services, and the ability of staff to create programming that is not only beneficial to the community but also fiscally sound.

Year	Abbotsford	Maple Ridge	Mission
2016	33%	32%	42%
2017	37%	23%	42%
2018	34%	18%	39%
2019	32%	18%	40%
2021	20%	17%	37%
2022	26%	16%	45%

Financial Implications

There are no financial implications associated with this report.

Communication

No communication action is required.

Summary and Conclusion

The Mission Leisure Centre is a vital community hub that serves the Mission community from pre-school age through the senior years with a variety of recreation programming and opportunities. Through staff's knowledge, experience and exceptional work this programming is well subscribed in the community and operates with a recovery rate above the regional average.

Report Prepared by: Mark Haney – Manager of Arts and Culture

Reviewed by: Louis Dauphin – Director of Parks, Recreation & Culture

Approved for Inclusion: Mike Younie, Chief Administrative Officer