

SUMMARY OF THE FACILITY COMPONENT PRIORITY ASSESSMENT

The purpose of this project is to establish the facility component priorities for the new southwest facility location to be used to develop the overall concept plan for the facility.

The guiding concept of the Facility Component Priority Assessment is that of a “community hub”. That is,

“The Multi-Purpose Recreation Facility is envisioned to be a dynamic space, full of energy and activity. They will be a place where people of all ages can gather to learn, exercise, relax, meet and enjoy their neighbors and community.”

The specific objectives of the Facility Component Priority Assessment project were designed to ensure that final analysis provides a balance between community and stakeholder input, the Community Services Integrated Service Strategy, The Recreation Facilities Master Plan, and the Community Services Urban Parks Master Plan.

In meeting the project objectives, a research process was designed to collect and analyze information gathered using five research techniques;

- ◆ An environmental scan with current program providers and stakeholders relevant to the City of Edmonton.
- ◆ A consultation process that included both:
 - Themed stakeholder sessions with organizations whose members or clients would be potential users of the new southwest facility.
 - Public consultation sessions, designed to both inform southwest area residents of the status of the project and allow them to provide input into the Facility Component Priority Assessment.
- ◆ A random telephone survey of community residents in the southwest area of the City of Edmonton.
- ◆ Demographic Profile of the community.
- ◆ Examine inventory of other facilities and services in the community

SOUTHWEST MULTI-PURPOSE RECREATION FACILITY “ENVIRONMENT”

The environment in the new southwest Centre should be:

- warm and welcoming
- comfortable and inclusive
- an inviting entrance, lobby and common spaces, attracting visitors into the space for physical activity, learning and visiting with family and friends.
- “inspiring”, esthetically pleasing and visually attractive, building pride in the community, with the designers of the facility “thinking outside the box” and not creating a “monstrous box.”
- state-of-the-art, integrating a “Current Practices” approach. This “Current Practices” approach extends from the design of the facility, to include flexibility, functionality and forward thinking about the community needs now and into the future, to environmental sustainability of the facility, incorporating state-of-the-art concepts like wireless networking and technology, geothermal heating, water recycling and reclamation systems, and solar power.
- accessible via walking, biking, wheelchair, walker and stroller.
- a “hub” with area for spontaneous recreation, supporting all types of activities.
- a place that is accessible, inviting, inclusive and comfortable, not “institutional-looking”.
- a natural meeting space for the community and be a tourist attraction/destination.
- a place where people “like to hang out”,
- a multi-generational centre, with places for children, teenagers, family, seniors can engage in safe activities that are constructive.
- a place that assists seniors to be able to continue living in their homes longer, and try to alleviate the incidence of isolation and depression by offering various programs and services to them including the suggestion to have a senior’s shuttle bus service.
- a general space that is flexible and adaptable, and supports extension programs that could be offered by post-secondary institutions, churches and other outreach types of programs.
- designed to create party theme rooms for rent by the Community.
- a space for playschool and childcare programs that can accommodate the drop-in needs of the community.
- a place that allows spontaneous use by the community at the appropriate times, in contrast to being fully booked by athletic teams and organizations.
- designed to meet the needs of the ethnic community and diverse needs.
- maximize the amount of flexible space versus the amount of “designated space”.
- designed to incorporate natural light and an open-space concept.

FACILITY COMPONENT PRIORITY ASSESSMENT RESULTS

Facility component priorities are;

- Based on extensive resident, community and stakeholder input
- Reflective of the current demographic profile of neighbourhoods and population forecasts of Southwest Edmonton.
- Based on identified needs that may be accommodated in Southwest Edmonton at other locations.
- Categorized into “Indoor”, “Outdoor” and “General” facility components and further segmented by “Highly Important” or Critical Priorities, “Moderately Important” Priorities and “Low Important” Priorities.

Indoor Facility Components		
“Highly Important” or Critical Indoor Priorities	“Moderately Important” Indoor Priorities	“Low Important” Indoor Priorities
Fitness centre	Indoor recreational skating	Arts & cultural multi-purpose studio
Aquatic facilities – leisure/teaching swimming pool	50m swimming pool	Steam room
Gymnasium	Playground	Theatre/Amphitheatre/Auditorium
Indoor track	Fieldhouse that supports diverse activities such as tennis/basketball, soccer, racquetball, and squash	Nutritional retail & service space
Onsite childcare facilities	Hot tub or therapeutic pool	Diving tank
General eating area	Multi-purpose space outside gymnasium	Climbing wall
General lobby and seating area	Meeting rooms/meeting space	Wave pool
Food café and food vendors	Healthcare space	Dance studio
Indoor arena	General Rental rooms	Spa service
Fitness/aerobic Program Space	Massage & physiotherapy service	Banquet facilities
	Social service space	Music room
		Indoor skateboarding space
		Library

Outdoor Facility Components		
“Highly Important” or Critical Outdoor Priorities	“Moderately Important Outdoor Priorities	“Low Important” Outdoor Priorities
Multi-purpose trails	Track	Football field
Playground	Ball diamonds	Skateboard park
Soccer pitch	Skating area/rink	Beach volleyball
	Tennis court	Climbing wall
	Basketball court	Lawn bowling
	Sliding hill	Extreme sports facility
	Spray park / water park	

<i>General Facility Components</i>
<i>“Highly Important” or Critical General Priorities</i>
Transportation Access - Onsite free parking - Onsite ETS pick-up/ drop-off
Ensure physical accessibility to persons with disabilities

CONCLUSIONS & RECOMENDATIONS

1. The concepts that are expected to guide the design of the southwest facility are “flexibility” and “adaptability”. As such, each facility component should be designed to ensure it is supporting a maximum number of potential uses and be able to meet user needs both now and in the future. Examples of these concepts would include;

- ◆ A multipurpose field house that supports diverse activities such as indoor soccer, basketball, badminton, but other up and coming sports like futsal, box lacrosse, and in-line hockey and provides space for community assembly.
- ◆ A flexible aquatic component which provides various aquatic activities, including competitive swimming, and leisure and teaching pool activities.
- ◆ An indoor running track that support not only the traditional activities of walking and jogging, as well as use by those with wheelchairs, strollers, or even in-line skating activities.
- ◆ The arena component that can transform to meet the diverse needs of individuals and group users.

2. While the facility components were prioritized based on a number of data sources, those facility components assigned lower ratings of importance should not be discounted in the development of new facility. Potential partners interested in funding facility components not ranked highly in the priority list should be explored during the design phase.

3. One of the potential partnerships would be with the four schools planned for facility site. Foresight, planning, and partnerships will prevent any potential duplication of facility components, ensuring that the facility opportunities are maximized within this localized area of the southwest. It is also important to note that space constraints may limit the number of partnership opportunities in the facility.

4. The concept of partnerships can take on a number of different meanings and roles in the new facility. From community groups spearheading fundraising initiatives and community grant applications to program providers offering free learn-to-swim programs, to corporate naming rights, provincial and federal funding. Each level of partnership has the potential to impact the new facility, both during the capital funding stages prior to construction to operation of the completed facility.

5. The next stage in the development of the southwest facility is the design phase. It is important that the facility be innovative in its design. Ground breaking concepts and ideas uncovered during the facility component priority assessment should be explored, including, but not limited to, placing the parking beneath the sports fields and using glass sound proof partitions to separate facility areas. An international design competition was suggested by stakeholders as an opportunity to explore a wide range of unique and varied options.

6. A review of current trends and practices should be encouraged during the design phase of the new facility; that is, identifying models from similar facilities. This approach should extend not only in the general design of the facility, but in the safety and esthetics, as well as being environmentally friendly, are all factors that should be associated in facility design.

7. Other local Alberta multipurpose facilities can be considered in the review. The successes and challenges experienced by these facilities are a valuable resource, particularly because the component priorities for the southwest facility closely match the components provided in these facilities. Continued participation and input from these facilities during the design phase would provide valuable insight that could strengthen the final outcome.

8. Recent trends in facility planning have included the incorporation of dedicated arts and cultural space within multipurpose facilities, however, more and more the concept of health and wellness, education and social services within these facilities is becoming a reality, contributing to an overall quality of life for community residents.

9. The idea of combining these services within a community facility supports another concept highlighted during the assessment – “Accessibility”. Community members and stakeholders focused on the need for the facility to be accessible in terms of;

- ◆ Overcoming transportation barriers by providing adequate parking and City of Edmonton transit services.
- ◆ Ensuring those with low incomes can overcome financial barriers to participation.
- ◆ Providing child care services for those that would be unable to participate without that type of support.
- ◆ Ensuring that facility components are design to support use by persons with disabilities.

10. There is a stated desire to incorporate environmentally sound technologies and practices into the new southwest facility design and operation. Experience with and willingness to use these state-of-the-art technologies should be incorporated into the tendering of the design phase of the facility development.

11. It is also essential that community and stakeholder groups remain involved in the process through the design phase, as they will provide valuable insight from a user’s perspective. Additional public and stakeholder consultation sessions may be warranted to obtain this feedback.