

## 2020 Year-End Report – Recreation and Community Development Department

### ISSUE

This report summarizes work completed in 2020 by the Recreation and Community Development Department and provides an overview of significant activities anticipated in 2021.

### BACKGROUND

The Recreation and Community Development Department (Department) is comprised of a wide-ranging team of staff who oversee the provision of opportunities for residents to participate in and enjoy the benefits of sport, culture, recreation, community development, social development and wellness activities. Within the current Department, four Sections deliver an array of programs and services which include the following:

- 1) Community Development;
- 2) Recreation Facilities and Programs;
- 3) Special Use Facilities and Capital Planning; and
- 4) Saskatoon Forestry Farm Park and Zoo.

### CURRENT STATUS

The Department oversees the provision of an abundance of opportunities for residents and visitors to participate in and enjoy the benefits of sport, culture, recreation, community development, social development and wellness activities, which contribute to quality of life in Saskatoon. To help encourage as many people as possible to take advantage of activities available throughout Saskatoon, the Department operates a number of facilities and provides direct services and programs. The Department also provides support to community-based organizations involved in delivering programs and services, facilitates partnerships, information sharing, collaboration to strengthen groups, and promote inclusion and address racism.

The work of the Department supports many aspects of the City of Saskatoon's Strategic Goals of Quality of Life, Sustainable Growth and Continuous Improvement. Furthermore, the work of the Department helps advance outcomes for four of City Council's priority areas:

- 1) Recreation, Culture and Leisure;
- 2) Reconciliation, Inclusion and Diversity;
- 3) Community Safety and Well-Being; and
- 4) Core Services.

### DISCUSSION/ANALYSIS

The 2020 Year-End Report for the Department provides an overview of initiatives undertaken throughout 2020 and highlights significant projects anticipated in 2021 (see

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Appendix 1). The 2020 Year-End Report also summarizes specific activity levels and data associated with key functions of the Department.

The year 2020 was extremely challenging with the impact of the COVID-19 global pandemic, which resulted in the temporary closure of all recreational facilities and significant operational restrictions under the Re-Open Saskatchewan Plan when facilities were able to reopen. The Department has focused on providing recreational opportunities and support to the community during the pandemic for the physical and mental health and well-being of residents.

Some key highlights of 2020 include:

1. Supported the work of the Saskatoon Inter-Agency Response to Covid-19, including staff secondments and the administration of \$219,813 in third-party funds to organizations working with vulnerable populations.
2. Prepared Return-to-Play plans with community associations for community gardens and outdoor rink operations.
3. Installation of the sculptures Saadat Qalbi/Miyawâtam 1 and 2 by Ruth Cuthand and Suada Jailan.
4. Cash grants in the amount of \$2,572,722 to community organizations providing services in the sport, culture, recreation and social service sectors, including the one-time “Take-it Outside” winter grant.
5. The COVID 19 pandemic had a significant impact on the operation of leisure facilities in 2020. Indoor Leisure Centres were closed March 16, 2020 and did not begin re-opening until late July. Capacities of various programs and services were reduced significantly and continued to be modified throughout the year based on updated guidelines from the Chief Medical Health Officer and regulated under the Government of Saskatchewan’s Re-open Saskatchewan Plan.
6. The City’s six indoor Leisure Centres had 457,561 visits and hosted a combined total of 7,247 rental bookings, which attracted 130,527 individual participants. The Shaw Centre and Saskatoon Field House hosted 10 local, provincial and national special events.
7. As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, two outdoor pools were opened for the season. New safety protocols were put in place and admission volumes at the two outdoor pools totaled 19,045.
8. A Park Ambassador program launched with redeployed staff from Leisure facilities. Park Ambassadors patrolled over 200 city parks to provide education on physical distancing and the installation of safety signage with COVID-19 protocols.
9. During the time when Leisure Centres were closed, the Facilities Department completed several maintenance projects. A significant upgrade was completed on the Dive Tower at the Shaw Centre which included: refinishing the concrete on the platforms, replacement of the handrails and matting and repainting of the entire structure. Also, the family pool, warm-up pool and hot tubs were drained

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- so the basins could be cleaned and re-grouted as required. This project was initially scheduled for the summer of 2021.
10. During the non-summer months, low-cost/no cost programs are offered to youth by the City and community agencies, with funding support from the City. In 2020, four targeted programs (with 14 sessions) reached 1,166 participants, employed 28 young adults, and resulted in 14 different partnerships.
  11. The three city golf courses offered a safe place where people could gather outside and take part in an activity with family and friends. Golf was a safe recreational activity during the pandemic and golf courses were some of the busiest recreation facilities in the city. Transfers to reserves as a result of operations were \$441,206 above budget.
  12. The City allocated 88% of available prime time ice at the arenas even under Re-Open Saskatchewan restrictions.
  13. Construction on the new universal washroom facility at the Gordon Howe Campground began and will be operational in 2021.
  14. The City received 297 outdoor special event applications and processed 105 requests for events, which attracted approximately 120,500 people to an outdoor special event in Saskatoon in 2020. There were 192 outdoor special event cancellations and an estimated 170 outdoor special events which did not operate due to COVID-19. In 2020, there were 35 new outdoor special events which used creative ideas which allowed their event to occur within the COVID-19 guidelines.
  15. In 2020, construction began on the new multi-sport building at the Gordie Howe Sports Complex. The new building will be a four-season facility and support ball diamonds, speed skating oval, track and field and cross-country skiing. The building is scheduled to be complete by summer of 2021.
  16. The City allocated approximately 28,600 hours of outdoor sport fields from the beginning of July to the end of October. Approximately 12,000 hours (6,000 games) were allocated on 97 charge sport fields and 16,600 hours on no charge fields.
  17. The Saskatoon Forestry Farm Park and Zoo had admission attendance (July 6 to October 31) of 70,542 people, leading to revenue of \$487,645. Highlights include beginning of construction of the new prairie dog and butterfly house exhibits.

### **OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

There are no financial, legal, environmental or social implications identified.

### **NEXT STEPS**

The Recreation and Community Development Department reports annually on its activities.

### **APPENDICES**

1. 2020 Year-End Report - Recreation and Community Development

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### REPORT APPROVAL

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