

2021 Annual Report – Recreation and Community Development Department

ISSUE

This report summarizes work completed in 2021 by the Recreation and Community Development Department and provides an overview of significant activities anticipated in 2022.

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 (City) Strategic Goals of Quality of Life, Sustainable Growth and Continuous Improvement. Furthermore, the work of the Department helps advance outcomes for three of City Council's priority areas:

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

DISCUSSION/ANALYSIS

The 2021 Annual Report provides an overview of initiatives undertaken throughout 2021, highlights significant projects anticipated in 2022 and summarizes specific activity levels and data associated with key functions of the Department (see Appendix 1).

The year 2021 was challenging with the continuing impact of the COVID-19 global pandemic, which resulted in the constant change to safety protocols for staff and residents in accessing programs and facilities, including restrictions on capacities of all recreational facilities. Department staff demonstrated incredible resiliency and adaptability to all the changes to protocols in response to the Public Health Orders and safety requirements with the focus on providing recreational opportunities and support to the community for the physical and mental health and well-being of residents.

Some key highlights of 2021 include:

- 1) Continued to support the Saskatoon Inter-Agency Response to COVID-19 with dedicated staff secondments. In partnership with Indigenous Services Canada, distributed 500 cleaning kits to Indigenous community members in the city. With the Saskatchewan Health Authority, facilitated access to vaccine clinics for the South Sudanese, the Karen, Nepalese and Eritrean communities.
- 2) Issued 4,612 Leisure Access cards to eligible lower-income residents.
- 3) Supported the city's 47 Community Associations, specifically in the use of virtual technology to ensure Community Association executives were able to meet and host annual general meetings and offer programming.
- 4) Construction of energy efficient community recreation buildings in Al Anderson, Hampton Village and Glenn Penner Parks.
- 5) Installation of five (5) new public art sculptures and one mural.
- 6) Awarded \$2,720,110 in cash grants to 180 community organizations providing services in the sport, culture, recreation and social service sectors.
- 7) The City's six (6) indoor Leisure Centres hosted a combined total of 13,023 rental bookings, which attracted 110,671 individual participants. In 2021, the number of visits to Leisure Centres totaled 525,434. Between June and December, the Shaw Centre and the Saskatoon Field House hosted 10 local and provincial special events.
- 8) Capacities of programs at outdoor pools and indoor pools were reduced throughout the summer of 2021, due to provincial health orders and a shortage of qualified lifeguards in Saskatoon and the province. In 2021, admission volumes at the City's four (4) outdoor pools totaled 54,452.
- 9) 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 2021, nine (9) targeted programs (with 23 sessions) reached 797 participants, employed 58 young adults and resulted in two (2) partnerships.
- 10) Animal Services saw a 3.3% increase in pet licenses sold.

- 11) With the required protocols in response to COVID-19, the City received 282 outdoor special event applications and processed 230 requests for events in 2021.
- 12) The three (3) City golf courses continued to offer a safe recreational activity during the pandemic and golf courses were some of the busiest recreation facilities in the city. Overall attendance at the three municipal golf courses in 2021 was 127,645, an increase of 26,512 rounds from 2020.
- 13) The City allocated approximately 50,350 hours of outdoor sport fields from the beginning of May to the end of October. Approximately 21,350 hours (10,675 games) were allocated on 97 charge sport fields and 29,000 hours on no charge fields.
- 14) The Saskatoon Forestry Farm Park and Zoo had admission attendance (April 1 - October 31) of 130,904 people, leading to revenue of \$836,797. The 23rd Annual Enchanted Forest event had attendance of more than 80,000 visitors and surpassed sponsorship targets.
- 15) The Saskatoon Forestry Farm Park and Zoo opened the new prairie dog exhibit and completed a significant renovation of the Affinity Learning Center. The prairie dog exhibit and education programs were recognized with national awards from the Canadian Association of Zoos and Aquariums.

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. 2021 Annual Report - Recreation and Community Development

REPORT APPROVAL

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