



Committee of the Whole Report

For the Meeting of October 17, 2019

To: Committee of the Whole **Date:** October 4, 2019
From: Thomas Soulliere, Director of Parks, Recreation and Facilities
Subject: Council Workshop: Crystal Pool and Wellness Centre Replacement Project

RECOMMENDATION

That Council direct staff to report back on the implementation of motions arising from the workshop.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this workshop is to confirm details that will inform the approach to implementing the next phase of work on the Crystal Pool replacement project and ensure the future project plan is aligned with Council's expectations.

BACKGROUND

In February 2017, following the presentation of an independent study on community needs and the future of Crystal Pool, Council decided on replacement of the recreation facility in a new location, rather than renovating or rebuilding on the existing site. At the time, Councillors acknowledged the dire condition of the existing facility, and prioritized continuity of service for citizens who rely on the programs and services provided at the centre. Council and staff also discussed the anticipated impacts to the park, particularly the disruption during construction, and highlighted the need to include residents in planning changes to the park following demolition of the existing facility.

Throughout 2017 until late 2018, the project team progressed through deliverables including; approval of a project plan, schedule, budget, and risk management framework; refinement of conceptual designs into more detailed plans for the facility and immediate surroundings; extensive public engagement; partnerships with funding agencies, while providing regular project updates to Council.

In the fall of 2018, Council received information from residents, including individuals from the North Park neighbourhood, requesting exploration of a new site for the facility, in order to expand neighbourhood park space and consider additional amenities. At the request of Council, the project team responded to several requests relating to parking options, scope changes, and potential siting options through the latter part of 2018 and early 2019. Staff also engaged with representatives of RG Facilities on the potential to accommodate the new aquatic facility in the parking lot area next to the City's arena. The parties engaged in a good-faith dialogue; however, an acceptable business

arrangement could not be reached. With the conclusion of these discussions, staff briefly explored potential siting options with representatives of School District 61.

In June 2019, Council received a presentation from representatives of the North Park Neighbourhood Association consisting of information relating to neighbourhood demographics, potential facility siting options and potential programming. Subsequent to this presentation, Council approved a new set of directions relating to the project:

That Victoria City Council direct staff to develop a plan to revisit the objectives, scope and schedule of activities for the Crystal Pool project that aligns with the new Strategic Plan, including application of the evaluative tools described in section i, ii, iii, iv below, for Council consideration:

- i. Ensure no net loss of green space in the neighbouring area.
- ii. Apply an equity lens to siting, design, amenity selection, engagement, procurement, and evaluation, to inform decisions about and investment in community
- iii. Apply an affordability lens to assess total cost of ownership, siting, amenity selection, operating costs, costs to taxpayers and users
- iv. Invite potential partners and neighbourhood representatives to collaborate to align and help achieve these equity, accessibility and affordability objectives
- v. Embed distributional, procedural, structural and inter-generational equity into the City's corporate policies guiding hiring, staff training and professional development, procurement and civic engagement
- vi. Report back to Council on potential locations in the North Park and Hillside/Quadra neighbourhoods.

Over the past three months, staff focused on pre-planning activities, such as; assessing the lessons learned from the past two years of the project, updating the composition of the project team, and evaluating the approach to implementing the new direction from Council. This work also included research into the experiences of other organizations, as well as stakeholder conversations with representatives of various community groups that contributed to the project to-date.

ISSUES & ANALYSIS

In advance of mapping out a detailed project plan, the project team is seeking a dialogue with Council to ensure clarity about certain components of the recent motion. The output of this workshop is anticipated to establish the foundation upon which the updated project plan, including objectives, scope, budget and schedule, for the next phase of work will be constructed.

The format for the workshop will follow the structure of the content within the June 13, 2019 motion, to review the project team's assumptions about the respective definition or direction, as well as a proposed recommendation for how the direction will be actioned.

Specifically, the workshop will explore the following elements;


- Project objectives
- Project scope
- Alignment with Strategic Plan actions
- Green space parameters
- Equity and affordability considerations
- Community engagement

The project team is also seeking to confirm Council's overall vision for the project.

CONCLUSIONS

The Crystal Pool and Wellness Centre Replacement project remains one of the most significant infrastructure initiatives the City has undertaken. The success of this project requires an effective re-setting of the project foundation. Following this workshop, the project team will prepare an updated plan, based on the motions arising, for Council review.


Respectfully submitted,



Thomas Soulliere
Director
Parks, Recreation and Facilities

Report accepted and recommended by the City Manager:

Date:


Oct 9, 2019

Attachments: