



## **Committee of the Whole Report**

### **For the Meeting of September 14, 2017**

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**To:** Committee of the Whole **Date:** September 1, 2017  
**From:** Thomas Soulliere, Director of Parks, Recreation and Facilities  
**Subject:** Proposed Memorandum of Understanding with YMCA-YWCA of Vancouver Island

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### **RECOMMENDATION**

That Council approve the attached Memorandum of Understanding between the City of Victoria and YMCA-YWCA of Vancouver Island.

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

There are a number of key stakeholders involved in the delivery of recreation, social and wellness programs in the community. The City of Victoria and YMCA-YWCA of Vancouver Island ("Y") operate the two largest recreation and aquatic facilities within the city limits. Over the past 45 years, the parties have each provided programs and services to citizens with a strong focus on individual and community health and wellness. Together these two facilities manage over 1 million visits per year. While informal coordination has occurred between the organizations from time to time, there has not been a formal commitment to collaboration on an ongoing basis.

In recent months leadership staff with the City and the Y have explored the potential benefits associated with a more structured approach to planning and delivering programs for citizens. The proposed Memorandum of Understanding is based on models used in other jurisdictions and appears appropriate for application in Victoria.

The anticipated benefits from such an arrangement include, increased knowledge regarding community needs, improved program quality, expanded program options, and improved resource utilization. At a time of growing need within the community for social, recreation and wellness programs and services, the City and the Y may further enhance their respective impacts on the health of citizens by focusing efforts and measuring outcomes in partnership.

## **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this report is to outline the rationale for a formal commitment between the City and the Y, to cooperate in the planning and delivery of recreation and wellness programs and services within the city.

## **BACKGROUND**

The City of Victoria is directly involved in the planning and delivery of recreation, social, and wellness activities, through the Recreation Services division. The Y's downtown facility offers licensed childcare and health, fitness and aquatic programs and services.

Over the years staff have collaborated with stakeholders and service providers across the region to ensure programs and facilities are designed to address community needs. Through the recent development of the City's Feasibility Study on the future of Crystal Pool, members of the City team engaged with colleagues at the Y. These conversations led to further discussions about models in other parts of the country, where the Y and municipality established formal arrangements intended to enhance the coordination and delivery of services amongst parties, with improved outcomes for citizens.

## **ISSUES & ANALYSIS**

The City manages approximately 400,000 visits annually to the Crystal Pool and Fitness Centre. The Y's downtown aquatic and recreation facility serves approximately 650,000 visits per year. The two organizations operate under distinct business models, however, they share a number of values, principles and service objectives that aim to benefit the overall health of the community.

In the past year, both parties have conducted independent analyses to determine options for their respective aging facilities, as community demand continues to grow. The City is proceeding with plans for a new facility to replace the Crystal Pool and Fitness Centre in the North Park neighbourhood. Meanwhile, the Y has recently undertaken a "market-sounding" exercise to seek proposals leading to a new facility in the downtown area.

The major capital investment plans and ongoing operations, which are being driven by local and regional needs, require an emphasis on long-term planning for success. Such planning will result from committed efforts by operators, such as the City and the Y, to ensure community needs are anticipated, that facilities are maintained and adapt over time, and that overall health and wellness outcomes are realized.

The formal arrangement envisioned will help to establish a culture of coordination between the two organizations, which account for a significant volume of activity. In a practical sense, this may consist of regular meetings where knowledge is shared concerning changes in the local population, including areas of immediate or anticipated need, opportunities for training and development, consultation on facility planning and design, joint program promotion, and collaboration on special projects. These efforts are expected to result in an enhanced level of customer service and more effective utilization of resources over time.



## OPTIONS & IMPACTS

***That Council direct staff to proceed with the Memorandum of Understanding with the YMCA-YWCA of Vancouver Island. (Recommended)***

An MOU between the City and the Y would indicate a commitment to collaborate on program planning and delivery, which is anticipated to lead to an improved access to quality recreation and wellness services in the city. The MOU recognizes the independence of each organization and does not contemplate changes to staff positions in either organization, nor impacts to established relationships with volunteers or other stakeholders. Coordination sessions would be led by leadership staff from the City and Y, and progress reports would be incorporated within the City's regular processes.

### *2015 – 2018 Strategic Plan*

The proposed arrangement aligns with the Strategic Plan, in particular;

*Objective 7: Facilitate social inclusion and community wellness*

### *Impacts to Financial Plan*

There are no impacts anticipated to the current Financial Plan.

## CONCLUSION

Enhanced coordination amongst key stakeholders involved in the provision of health and wellness programs and services has great potential for improved outcomes. Staff recommend Council support the Memorandum of Understanding between the City and YMCA-YWCA of Vancouver Island as a pro-active approach to meeting the needs of current and future citizens and the community as a whole.

Respectfully submitted,



Thomas Soulliere  
Director  
Parks, Recreation and Facilities

Report accepted and recommended by the City Manager:

  
Date: Sept 8, 2017

### List of Attachments (if relevant)

- Memorandum of Understanding between the City of Victoria and YMCA-YWCA of Vancouver Island