




INFORMATION REPORT

TO:	Chair and Members Emergency and Community Services Committee
COMMITTEE DATE:	December 7, 2023
SUBJECT/REPORT NO:	Accessibility of City Operated Recreation Facilities (HSC23055(a)) (City Wide) (Outstanding Business List Item)
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	City Wide
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SUBMITTED BY:	Steve Sevor Acting Director, Recreation Division Healthy and Safe Communities Department
SIGNATURE:	

COUNCIL DIRECTION

Emergency and Community Services Committee at its meeting of September 21, 2023 approved the following:

“That staff be directed to expedite the identification of the City’s lower-city recreational facilities with accessibility issues, to include the costs of making these facilities accessible, with a report back to the Emergency and Community Services Committee in Q4 2023; and

That staff be directed to reach out to civic partners to identify existing accessible space that the City may be able to more immediately access through partnerships and report back in Q4 2023.”

INFORMATION

Recreation facilities meet minimum compliance with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), including those where barriers may exist due to aged infrastructure or historical designation. Recreation Centres and arenas in Hamilton lower city wards 1 to 4 inclusive were reviewed by staff in greater detail with the report

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OUR Mission: To provide high quality cost conscious public services that contribute to a healthy, safe and prosperous community, in a sustainable manner.

OUR Culture: Collective Ownership, Steadfast Integrity, Courageous Change, Sensational Service, Engaged Empowered Employees.

back timelines considered. Limitations impacting a high designation of accessibility at most sites include one or more of the following; accessible changerooms, universal (gender neutral) changerooms, universal washrooms and an accessible service counter.

The renovation of an existing recreation facility, to add a universal or accessible changeroom/washroom with an accessible path of travel from the front entrance, particularly in an older building where accessibility is limited, would be considered a major renovation. Major renovations require detailed design, building permits, specific procurement processes, facility closures and additional project processes which increase the lead time to deliver these projects.

The capital cost of a major renovation to upgrade accessibility is site-specific and depends on; the age of the building, accessibility enhancements completed to date and the scope of the planned update. Public Works Committee received a detailed Accessibility Audit on September 11, 2018 (Report PW18064) which identified the accessibility needs of municipal facilities and the cost associated to upgrade. Data provided in the Accessibility Audit to address budget requirements with minimum accessibility benchmarks for the ward 1 to 4 recreation facilities, are summarized with estimated cost escalations from 2017-2024 and included as Appendix "A" to Report HSC23055(a).

Prior to undergoing site specific upgrades, current feasibility with detailed costing for the proposed scope of work would be required. Currently there is no specific City-funded source of capital dedicated to accessibility. There is limited funding for basic lifecycle renewal in recreation facilities with an annually growing backlog due to under-investment. Executive sponsors having access to additional funding sources (e.g. Councillor Reserves) may consider financial contributions to accelerate accessibility related projects where there is staff resource capacity to deliver these projects and timelines for implementation are achievable.

The Recreation Master Plan Implementation Strategy, currently in progress and due for completion in 2024, will assess the financial implications of the master plan. Accessibility enhancements to renovated facilities will be included as part of the strategy with the intent to establish a prioritized listing of capital projects over the next ten years with proposed funding considerations.

To address immediate access to community meeting space where the recreation facility portfolio does not meet enhanced accessibility requirements, staff reviewed facilities of some civic partners within the lower city. Currently there are no existing agreements that Recreation staff are aware of to provide the City of Hamilton the ability to leverage discounted access to rent these spaces for public meeting access. A limited listing of

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civic partners and facilities reviewed has been prepared as Appendix “B” to Report HSC23055(a).

Where the City contributes financially to projects and programs of civic partners with large accessible meeting spaces; and the desire to access these partner spaces be identified as a priority, should result in agreement language to secure these arrangements through consultation with Legal Services as appropriate.

Addressing accessibility within the Recreation facility portfolio is a priority of community, staff and Council. The following measures continue to advance this work:

- The inclusion of accessibility upgrades as part of the building condition assessment process;
- Facility accessibility upgrades actively reviewed for inclusion as provisional packages for consideration on planned major renovation projects; and
- Planned public engagement of a Recreation Needs Assessment and Satisfaction Survey with included accessibility criteria in 2024.

APPENDICES AND SCHEDULES ATTACHED

Appendix “A” to Report HSC23055(a): Lower-city Recreation Facilities Accessibility Estimate

Appendix “B” to Report HSC23055(a): Civic Partner Facility Review