



City of Hamilton Report for Information

To: Chair and Members
Emergency and Community Services Committee

Date: March 20, 2025

Report No: HSC23055(b)

Subject/Title: Accessibility of City Operated Recreation Facilities

Ward(s) Affected: Ward 2

Recommendations

That Report HSC23055(b) respecting Accessibility of City Operated Recreation Facilities **BE RECEIVED** for information.

That Report HSC23055(b) respecting Accessibility of City Operated Recreation Facilities **BE CONSIDERED COMPLETE AND REMOVED** from the Emergency and Community Services Committee Outstanding Business List.

Key Facts

- The Emergency and Community Services Committee at its meeting on December 7, 2023, in Report HSC23055(a), directed staff to identify facilities in Ward 2 that can be used free of charge for City events, meetings, and activities.
- The report provides a list of available facilities, categorized into:
 - City-Owned & Operated Facilities
 - City-Owned facilities/land Under Operating or Lease Agreements
 - Other Community Facilities
- Facility operators have responded to inquiries from recreation staff based on the operational realities of their organizations. Facilities listed in the report and appendices are either available at no cost, or in some cases are available at a flexible rate commensurate with community benefit.
- Rental information and processes are currently listed on the City website and Recreation staff routinely assist community members and Councillors to identify

and secure suitable space for events and requests. Recreation staff will work with the Ward 2 Councillor to share the information in this report in ways that are accessible to and transparent for community members.

- The report aligns with Council's Safe and Thriving Neighbourhoods and Responsiveness & Transparency priorities.

Financial Considerations

N/A

Background

The Emergency and Community Services Committee, at its meeting on December 7, 2023, in Report HSC23055(a), directed staff to:

“Report back to the Emergency and Community Services Committee on the facilities, City-owned and otherwise, that can be used free of charge by the City for events, meetings, and activities in Ward 2.”

City staff have compiled a list of facilities in Ward 2, including City-owned and operated, City-owned and third party operated, and those which received City funding or land, that can be used for City events, community meetings and activities. The review includes an inventory of recreation centres, arenas, cultural venues and community spaces, as well as any applicable fees, to provide a comprehensive understanding of cost structures and identify opportunities to enhance accessibility for public use, including free-of-charge options.

Recreation user fees are reviewed and presented to City Council annually for approval, with adjustments generally reflecting the rate of inflation. These fees help to ensure the continued maintenance and operation of community and recreation facilities while keeping spaces accessible to a broad range of users. The cost of renting meeting space in a City owned and operated facility varies depending on the type of space and the classification type of the asset. In 2024, the standard room rental rates ranged from \$24.53 to \$63.38 per hour, while subsidized rates for eligible organizations range from \$12.27 to \$31.84 per hour. Subsidized rental fees are available to groups that meet the City's eligibility criteria, ensuring that non-profit organizations, community groups, and other qualifying entities have affordable access to recreational and meeting spaces.

As part of their review of Ward 2 facilities, City staff conducted a thorough scan of to identify spaces with the potential to accommodate community use, including meetings, events, and activities. This assessment involved evaluating a wide range of locations based on factors such as availability, accessibility, and suitability for public gatherings. Staff examined City-owned and operated facilities, City-owned properties managed by third parties, and locations that have received City funding or land support. In addition, outreach was conducted to non-City-owned facilities, and some organizations responded with details on spaces they have available for community use.

Through this extensive review, staff carefully assessed all potential options. However, not all facilities met the necessary criteria for inclusion. The facilities outlined in this report represent the most appropriate spaces and viable options available free of charge or low-cost rental opportunities in Ward 2.

Analysis

An overall analysis was developed with input from internal and external stakeholders, ensuring a comprehensive understanding of available facilities in Ward 2.

Internal Consultations:

- Recreation Division, Healthy and Safe Communities Department – Provided insights on facility spaces available.
- Corporate Real Estate, Planning and Economic Development – Assessed lease agreements in Ward 2.
- Facilities Division, Public Works Department – Provided insights on facilities spaces available.

External Consultations:

- Facility operators under lease agreements were engaged to determine availability and terms for community use.

Key Findings from Consultations:

- External stakeholders emphasized some usage would be eligible free of charge or at reduced rates.
- City funded facilities with third party operators do not have a requirement for public access or affordable community rentals within their licence agreements.

The results of these consultations informed the summary below and detailed information is attached as Appendices “A-C” to Report HSC23055(b).

1. City-Owned and Operated Facilities

The City owns and operates several community and recreation facilities in Ward 2 that offer a variety of spaces suitable for events, meetings and activities. These facilities provide accessible and affordable options for community groups, organizations, and residents. The types of spaces available include gymnasiums, multipurpose rooms, meeting rooms and specialized venues such as arena floor pads and historic spaces.

Availability and costs vary based on eligibility criteria:

- **Internal groups (City related use):** Free of charge

- **External groups:** Appropriate Council approved fees applied and insurance required. Fee waiver option for partial of full fee reduction

These facilities include:

- Bennetto Community Centre – 1 Gymnasium, 2 community rooms,
- Central Memorial Recreation Centre – 1 gymnasium, 2 activity rooms
- Eastwood Arena – 1 arena floor pad
- City Hall – 12 meeting rooms and the Council Chambers
- Lister Block – 2 meeting rooms
- Stables at Whitehern Historic House – 1 meeting room
- Stelco Tower – 6 meeting rooms

A full listing of room details and available spaces in Ward 2 is provided in Appendix “A” to Report HSC23055(b).

2. City-Owned Facilities/Land under Operating or Lease Agreements

The City owns additional properties/land in Ward 2 that are under operating or lease agreements. Presently, the agreements do not include parameters for low-cost public use; however, future agreements will consider this need in negotiations. These facilities may have available spaces for community use:

- Art Gallery of Hamilton (AGH) – Managed independently; no guaranteed access to space.
- FirstOntario Centre – Currently unavailable for community use. External rental rates apply when the space is available.
- The Gas Works – Available for meetings and workshops. Requirements within agreement with the City include making “demonstratable efforts to the community to market the facility and attract users” No specific requirement for fee reduction however subsidized rates for not-for-profit groups are currently being applied.
- Hamilton Farmers Market – Event space proposals reviewed for approval. Not for profit & community use rentals free of charge.
- Beasley Community Centre – Operated By Wesley Urban Ministries rentals are free for community/public use.
- Simone Hall - Operated By Wesley Urban Ministries rentals are free for community/public use.
- David Braley Health Sciences Centre – Subsidized rates for internal groups for spaces outside of the “leased” space by the City of Hamilton. Otherwise external rates apply.

A full listing and detailed fee information are attached as Appendix “B” to Report HSC23055(b).

3. Other Community Facilities

Staff investigated other facilities in Ward 2 and only a few operators responded with

appropriate and accessible meeting space for community use.

- New Vision United Church – Open to negotiations with community organizations
- Workers Arts and Heritage Centre – Reduced rental fees for not-for-profit organizations.

A full listing with meeting space fee information is attached as Appendix “C” to Report HSC23055(b).

Alternatives

N/A

Relationship to Council Strategic Priorities

This report aligns with the City of Hamilton’s 2022-2026 Council Strategic Priorities in the following ways:

1. Safe & Thriving Neighbourhoods

- Expands access to recreational and community spaces, fostering a sense of community and well-being.
- Enhances equitable access to public amenities, particularly for underserved communities.

2. Responsiveness & Transparency

- Ensures clear communication and transparency in the availability and use of public spaces.
- Engages residents and stakeholders in discussions regarding facility use and accessibility improvements.

3. Sustainable Economic & Ecological Development

- Encourages shared community use of existing resources, reducing the need for new infrastructure investment.
- Supports local non-profit organizations and businesses by facilitating community events and engagement opportunities.

Previous Reports Submitted

- [Accessibility of City Operated Recreation Facilities \(HSC23055\) \(City Wide\)](#)
- [Accessibility of City Operated Recreation Facilities \(HSC23055\(a\)\) \(City Wide\)](#)

Consultation

Deborah Keddy, District Operations Manager, Healthy and Safe Communities

Leigh Young, District Operations Manager, Healthy and Safe Communities

Ray Kessler, Chief, Corporate Real Estate Office, Planning & Economic Development Department

David McCullagh, Senior Real Estate Consultant – Special Projects, Planning & Economic Development Department

Ritta Nazi, Property Management Officer, Public Works, Facilities

Erica Enfanti, Core Entertainment, First Ontario Place

Jennifer Atkinson, McMaster University

Micha Van Dijk - Gasworks, Manager

Alexandra Morgan – Hamilton Farmers Market, Marketing Program Director

Alec Latham – Workers Arts Heritage, Heritage Facilities Specialist

Megan Olynik – Art Gallery of Hamilton, Marketing and Communications

Appendices and Schedules Attached

Appendix A: City operated facilities

Appendix B: City owned leased facilities

Appendix C: Other facilities

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Healthy and Safe Communities, Recreation

Submitted and recommended by: Steve Sevor, Director (Acting), Recreation
Healthy and Safe Communities, Recreation