REQUEST FOR DIRECTION
Subject: The Fenlands - Future Options

Presented to: Governance and Finance Committee Date: 2020 July 13

Submitted by: Amanda Arbuckle, Manager, Recreation/Alison Gerrits, Director, Community Services Agenda #: 7.2

RECOMMENDATION
That the Governance and Finance Committee provide input to administration on the proposed future options for the Fenlands and direct administration accordingly.

BACKGROUND

Reason for Report
To present a business case and concept drawings for potential future recreational amenities at The Fenlands that aim to meet community needs, while addressing the recently vacated leased space and use of the facility by the Banff Hockey Academy (BHA).

Summary of Issue
The Banff Hockey Academy advised the Town of Banff that they would be terminating their lease at the Fenlands Banff Recreation Centre in May of 2020. As a result, approximately 4000 square feet of purpose built, leased space by the high performance hockey school is currently unoccupied and a significant reduction in The Fenlands ice rentals is therefore expected. As a result, administration has developed a business case to repurpose parts of the Fenlands to offset this loss, which would diversify the offerings available at The Fenlands, transitioning it to more of a year round recreational facility.

The 2013 Recreation Facilities Master Plan identified some weaknesses at The Fenlands that highlighted its low percentage of multi-functional spaces, and that the current space configuration was geared toward winter sports such as skating and curling, and had limited summer use as a result. It also identified it as "not performing as a complete community centre". Now, with the departure of the BHA and a need for the municipality to respond to the vacated space and loss in ice revenue, an opportunity exists to address these identified weaknesses.

The attached "The Fenlands Business Case" (Attachment 1) outlines the current situation, provides a history of facility use, outlines findings from other municipalities, and provides information and background from a variety of town published reports as well as other recreational/sport trends. It also outlines a number of potential options for The Fenlands including the conversion of Arena 2 to a field house, or a multi court sport service or indoor pump track or a continuation of two ice sheets and the development of a fitness centre and multi-purpose activity area, or the option to re-lease the vacated space.

Although all identified scenarios are options available, administration recommends that Council consider pursuing the option identified in the additionally attached, "Banff Recreation Centre Field House Proposal" (Attachment 2). In order to address the changing demographic needs of our community, to create a year round recreation centre, and to ensure the municipality has the ability to

program and operate as needs change, it is recommended that of all the options presented in this scenario which include a year round field house, a basic fitness centre and multi-purpose space would provide a wide variety of options for the community and would help to meet recreational needs in Banff for many years to come. Based on analysis of other communities, and given the lack of a field house in the Bow Valley, administration anticipates the demand for such an amenity would be high, and could result in the future creation of other leagues and opportunities. As included in the business case, the operation of such an amenity would recoup lost revenues tied to the loss of the BHA, and could potentially surpass current net revenues over time given cost savings tied to facility operation and energy costs.

Response Options
The Governance and Finance Committee may:

1) Direct administration to seek community feedback on the attached Fenlands Banff Recreation Centre Field House Proposal and to further explore funding options for this option and to return to Council with the findings; or
2) Direct administration to pursue another option identified in the Business Case.

IMPLICATIONS OF DECISION

Budget
The initial estimated cost of the renovation is approximately $2.3 million (this includes a contingency of 15 per cent and 10 per cent for engineering, architectural and testing permits).

To date, no municipal funds have been spent on this initiative other than staff time to create the concepts and develop the business case. The services of GEC Architecture to develop the enclosed concept design were provided at no cost to the municipality.

Internal Resources
Staff time from our Community Services team has been used to create the concepts presented and to develop the business case.

Banff Community Plan

Social
- Improve the quality, quantity and access to social programs, recreation, education and cultural facilities; and
- Offer a wide range of quality recreation and active living programs.

Council Strategic Priorities
Enhancing Quality of Life – Addressing Cost of Living Goal (provision of affordable offerings for residents through the provision of accessible recreational amenities)

Other
Banff Community Social Assessment (2019) – Cost of Living, Community Wellness
Recreation Programs and Services Master Plan (2015)

Banff Recreation Facilities Master Plan (2013)

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 – The Fenlands Business Case
Attachment 2 – Fenlands Banff Recreation Centre Field House Proposal

Circulation date: 2020 July 3

Submitted By: Amanda Arbuckle/Alison Gerrits

Reviewed By:
Kelly Gibson, Town Manager