

Municipality of Chatham-Kent

Community Human Services

Community Attraction & Leisure Services – Recreation Services

Information Report

To: Mayor and Members of Council
From: Ann Robinson,
Manager, Recreation Services
Date: November 18, 2019
Subject: Recreation Services Revisioning

This report is for the information of Council.

Background

Historically, the Recreation Services business unit has delivered programs and services in the core areas of aquatics, summer camps, preschool, youth, adult and special populations.

In 2008, an additional focus of low cost/no cost barrier free community recreation programs and events funded through the Mayor's Golf Tournament and other funding sources evolved (i.e. CKYouth Festival, PlayRangers, Play Pods, Movies in the Park, etc.).

The Parks and Recreation Master Plan was conducted in 2010 with the vision of "Chatham-Kent will be a community where residents value and enjoy healthy, vibrant and engaged lifestyles through regular participation in recreation, parks, and open spaces."

The vision of the Master Plan speaks to the importance of community health as an important value for all residents. The enjoyment of this value comes from regular participation in recreation activities.

The Parks and Recreation Master Plan identified the importance of actively repositioning Recreation Services' role, focus and priorities. This would be a transition from revenue generation as a primary focus through direct program delivery which is often subsidized, to facilitating and partnering with the community to provide more sustainable and a greater variety of community based recreation programs.

Comments

With Council's renewed focus and priority on community engagement, Recreation Services conducted an internal assessment to revision the current service delivery model to realign and incorporate a more wholesome community engagement approach.

The goal of the assessment was to directly align with the Parks and Recreation Master Plan recommendations and support Council's priorities which highlight the importance of Community Engagement.

This new model would allow Recreation Services delivery growth in the areas of:

- Older Adults
- Neighbourhood Development
- Community Engagement Initiatives
- Arena programming assessment support to increase usage

This integrated community engagement service delivery model would realign staff resources to work directly with community partners and stakeholders to maximize community recreation programs, events and services. It will address barriers, allocate and improve access to resources and maximize community group success.

Some examples of this work would include:

- Assist with older adult recreation programming where possible to support age-friendly initiatives and corporate strategic initiatives
- Assist with the development and implementation of a comprehensive recreation neighbourhood development strategy
 - i.e.: by providing easy to use tools, resources, navigation, access to facilities, etc. to allow community residents to take the lead and build capacity in their own neighborhoods
- Assist with the development of marketing strategies as identified for community based recreation programs and events
- Develop and facilitate partnerships unique to each community for integrated recreation service delivery options and opportunities
 - i.e.: creating partnerships with senior centres to provide additional programming options at aquatic facilities within Chatham-Kent
- Act as a liaison to provide support to various recreation community committees (committee governance, funding opportunities, grant writing, administration, facility access, etc.)
- As per the Arena Business Plan Report to Council from August 12, 2019, "assist in facilitating a recreation program needs assessment in collaboration with the Recreation Facility Supervisors within the 10 existing arenas, understanding that each arena may have specific program needs and opportunities that are unique to their own communities."

This recreation services delivery model has been adopted and successfully implemented in other municipalities.

Staff resources and duties have been readjusted to facilitate the move from direct program delivery to community engagement. Core recreation programs and services such as swimming lessons, summer camps, youth, special populations and adult programming will remain unchanged. The net impact of the FTE is a savings of 0.13.

Consultation

Manager, Parks and Open Spaces/Recreation Facilities was consulted on this report.

Budget and Performance Services was consulted on the impact to the Recreation Services' operating budget.

Financial Implications

The revisioning of the Recreation Services' portfolio has a neutral budget impact. It is funded through re-purposing existing wages and section volume revenue increases. The net impact is a savings of 0.13 FTE.

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Consulted and confirmed the content of the consultation section of the report by:

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Attachments: None

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