

REPORT TO: Community and Infrastructure Services Committee

DATE OF MEETING: April 22, 2024

SUBMITTED BY: Mark Hildebrand, Director Neighbourhood Programs and Services, 519-741-2200 ext. 7687

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WARD(S) INVOLVED: Ward 5

DATE OF REPORT: March 28, 2024

REPORT NO.: CSD-2024-156

SUBJECT: Community Centre Construction in Rosenberg - Update

RECOMMENDATION:

That the total budget for the City's new Community Centre in the Rosenberg area, which will be built jointly with the Waterloo Region Catholic District School Board, be approved at \$8,125,000 and funded fully through development charge revenue; and

That the new Community Centre be named The Williamsburg Community Centre.

REPORT HIGHLIGHTS:

- This report seeks final approval to proceed with the construction of a joint community centre/school facility in the fast-growing Rosenberg area, at a total cost of \$8,125,000. Construction of the joint facility will be lead and completed by the Catholic school board.
- In 2019, City Council ranked the construction of a new community centre in Rosenberg as its 4th priority for indoor recreation facilities to be funded through Development Charges.
- Building the community centre jointly with the Waterloo District Catholic School board, instead of building a stand-alone community centre will save the City millions of dollars in construction costs.
- Transitioning from the current 3,000 sq ft leased space (Williamsburg Community Centre) to a new 17,000 sq ft facility with a double gymnasium and 4 large program areas provides a substantial service improvement in programs and services for this fast-growing area of the City. Considering access to the school's double gymnasium outside of school hours, this enhances the ability to support programming for a growing community.

BACKGROUND:

In 2019, the City of Kitchener's Leisure Facilities Master Plan (LFMP) underscored the necessity for a community center in the southwest area of the City. The proposed new Community Centre in the Rosenberg area ranked fourth amongst City Council's top five indoor recreation facility priorities for Development Charges funding. The current Williamsburg Community Centre, which this new centre will replace, is leased by the City and is only 3,000

sq ft – which is by far the City’s smallest community centre. This small size does not accommodate the existing programming demands, which are growing significantly as the population in the area grows.

The 2019 LFMP recognized that partnerships with school boards and private organizations were becoming increasingly important to municipalities as costs to build and operate stand-alone recreation facilities continued to rise. Nurturing strong partnerships and investigating and implementing joint-use opportunities with school boards and the private sector was seen as a way the City of Kitchener could deliver innovative recreation services and facilities, at a lower cost to taxpayers. In June 2019, City Council directed staff to include construction of the Huron Community Centre, which was to be attached to a public school, in the 2019 development charge background study and 2019 capital budget forecast. Entering into this partnership with the public-school board to build a joint facility saved the City \$1.3 million in construction costs. Further, this joint facility better serves the community by allowing the City to leverage additional school space (e.g. a double gymnasium and other program spaces) for community use after school hours.

REPORT:

The new Community Centre in the Rosenberg area will be a joint facility, in partnership with the Waterloo Region Catholic District School board. As part of the City’s 2020 capital budget process, City Council added approximately \$6.0 million to the capital forecast for the construction of a 17,000 square foot community centre in the Rosenberg area. Similar to the joint Huron Community Centre, the City anticipates being able to build this joint facility at a lower cost than if we were to build a stand-alone facility. This joint facility will also allow the City to leverage access to additional programming spaces from the school board (e.g. accessing the schools double gymnasium), for community programming after school hours.

During the initial stages of this joint project, City staff engaged with the local community and the Williamsburg Community Association, to confirm the detailed space needs at the new community centre. The Williamsburg Community Association is already a vibrant and active association which runs several programs out of the current Williamsburg Community centre and other facilities throughout the community. Based on this engagement, staff worked with the Catholic School board and their project Architects to design the following spaces as part of the 17,000 square foot community centre:

- A double gymnasium with a small servery and associated storage (which is attached to the school boards double gymnasium and can be opened up to a quad gymnasium),
- 4 program rooms (with storage spaces) ranging in size from approximately 650 to 1,000 square feet for various types of programming,
- A generous lobby, which acts as a waiting space for parents of children attending programs as well as an informal space for residents to connect,
- Staff offices to support the operations of the centre and City of Kitchener programming for children and youth, vulnerable populations etc.,
- Community offices for the Neighbourhood Association and other partners that the City of Kitchener may work with to provide programming to the community, and
- The necessary hookups and access for an outdoor winter rink.

Once built, this Community Centre will be the new home of the Williamsburg Community Association. The development of a double gymnasium and 4 medium to large program spaces, all significantly larger than the existing programming spaces currently at their disposal,

will be a significant program and service improvement. Add on access to the school board’s double gymnasium outside of school hours, the facility becomes well suited to accommodate the programming of a community that is continuing to grow.

Community Centre Name

During the initial planning and the design phases of the project, the Williamsburg Neighbourhood Association shared their preference to keep the name “Williamsburg Community Centre” and migrate it to the new facility. The name coincides with the name of their association, and they have developed a brand that is recognizable and respected within the community. Staff support this request because it provides continuity and ensures the identity and recognition that the Neighbourhood Association has established with this name is preserved and carried over to the new facility. Also, the name Williamsburg is consistently used in the area (e.g. Williamsburg Woods West, Williamsburg Cemetery). Using this name will provide a strong geographical context of the facility and community connection.

Detailed Project Costing

The project team has now reached 80% design, which is a significant milestone. At this stage, with the design nearing completion, cost estimates have been updated to reflect the project requirements provided and any refinements made during design. The project team also analyzed the design during this time to identify opportunities to reduce costs without sacrificing quality of the facility, or the functionality (e.g. exploring alternative materials, construction methods, or design elements to achieve cost savings).

Based on current market pricing, to build a 17,000 square foot community centre in partnership with the Catholic School Board, it will cost \$7.3 million for construction, at a cost of \$426.33 / sq ft, with a total project cost for the community centre of \$8.1 million. The \$7.3 million allocated for construction costs covers the physical building expenses. The remaining \$800,000 of the \$8.1 million total project costs funds essential expenses that encompass soft costs (e.g. architectural and engineering fees, permits), allowances, and furnishings, fixtures and equipment that is crucial for the facility’s functionality.

Construction Cost Comparison

Although the construction costs of the community centre is more than what was originally anticipated, a review of the Altus Group 2023 Canadian Cost Guide shows that the cost / sq ft quoted for construction with the school board is still well below what it is estimated to cost / sq ft for a stand-alone Community Centre. The Canadian Cost Guide is a tool that provides estimates for the construction costs associated with various projects across different regions of Canada. For public sector projects in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA), to build a multi-use recreation centre, construction costs are estimated to be between \$650 to \$1,125 / sq ft.

The following chart shows the City’s estimated construction cost savings demonstrated by building in partnership with the school board rather than building a stand-alone City facility:

	Construction Cost / sq ft	Facility Size	Total Estimated Cost
Building in partnership with the school board	\$426.33	17,000	\$7.3 million
Cost to Build a stand-alone Recreation Facility	\$650 to \$1,125	17,000	\$11.1 to 19.1 million
Total Savings			\$3.8 to \$11.8 million

STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT:

This report supports the delivery of core services.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

The revised budget of \$8,125,000 is an increase of \$2,062,902 to the \$6,062,098 budget already approved by Council in 2022-2024. All of this funding comes from development charges (DCs), meaning the construction of the building will have no impact on municipal taxes. The increased costs of this community centre were accounted for in recent modelling related to the Kitchener Indoor Recreation Complex (KIRC) and the amount of DC debt required for that facility's construction.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:

INFORM – This report has been posted to the City's website with the agenda in advance of the council / committee meeting.

CONSULT – During initial stages of this project both the community and the Williamsburg Community Association have been engaged to confirm community centre space needs. The Williamsburg Community Association will continue to be updated on progress of the project as needed.

PREVIOUS REPORTS/AUTHORITIES:

- CSD-19-007 2019 Leisure Facilities Master Plan
- CSD-18-089 Facility Partnership with the Waterloo Region District School Board in the Huron-Brigadoon area – Update

APPROVED BY: Michael May, DCAO, Community Services Department