

Women's Only Swim Pilot Update**Report Purpose**

To update Council on the progress of the Women's Only Swim Pilot and to request an extension to allow for more accurate data collection and reporting at the end the pilot.

Recommendation

THAT a six-month extension of the Women's Only Swim Pilot, be approved; and

THAT Administration prepare a report for Council's consideration by the end of Q2 2024 with an evaluation of the pilot and any recommended next steps.

Our Strategic Goals

Goal 2 - Healthy and Safe Community

Goal 4 - Municipal Excellence

Goal 2 Priority - A diverse, welcoming, inclusive, and an accessible community for all

Goal 2 Priority - Social supports that enhance community well-being and safety, and build community connection

Goal 4 Priority - A workplace culture that is connected, inclusive, diverse, and promotes employee development

Report

Strathcona County is committed to supporting and developing an inclusive community that embraces, respects, accepts and values differences and works towards removing barriers to participate in recreational activities. On October 25, 2022, Strathcona County Council passed a motion for a six-month Women's Only Swim Pilot at the Kinsmen Leisure Centre. The pilot commenced on February 18, 2023, and ran on the third Saturday of each month until July 15, 2023. Participation gradually increased month over month with 7 attendees in February and 35 in July. Despite this gradual increase, participation over the six-month pilot was relatively low with a total of 122 participants. The program was promoted through various Strathcona County social media channels, website, digital and print signage, and Recreation and Culture Program guide. In addition, local groups with members that may benefit from the program were contacted and informed of the pilot program. To ensure multiple options existed during this six-month pilot, times were available for private Women's only groups bookings for those that prefer private/dedicated use for their group or prefer alternative dates.

During the six-month pilot, most participants paid a daily admission fee with very few utilizing an active pass. Facility staff received some general feedback from participants who noted that they were not County residents, however, administration did not request participants to provide residency information to confirm this information.

Administration is recommending extending the pilot for an additional six months with swim times occurring monthly on specified Saturdays from 7:30 pm to 9:00 pm. During this time, administration will evaluate the local community need for a women's only swim program further and determine if the trend in increasing participation continues and will request attendees to provide their postal code to confirm residency information. In addition, administration will continue to have dialogue with local groups to gain a better understanding of their needs and if there are any barriers to participation.

Administration will report back to Council before the end of the second quarter in 2024 and will provide a recommendation for Council's consideration.

Council and Committee History

- October 25, 2022 THAT the proposed six-month Women's Only Swim Pilot at the Kinsmen Leisure Centre, based on the parameters as set out in the October 25, 2022 Recreation, Parks and Culture report, be approved; and THAT Administration prepare a report for Council's consideration by the end of 2023 with an evaluation of the pilot and any recommended next steps.
- April 26, 2022 THAT Administration prepare a report for Council's consideration by the end of the fourth quarter of 2022 on the feasibility of a six-month pilot project for a women's only swim program at the Kinsmen Leisure Centre, based on the following conditions: Swim time to take place once a month, during the weekend; windows must be covered, and an all-female staff be present; and children, male and female, under the age of eight can be included in the swim time.

Other Impacts

Policy: GOV-002-040 Diversity and Inclusion

Legislative/Legal: N/A

Financial/Budget: N/A

Interdepartmental: N/A

Master Plan/Framework: Strathcona County Social Framework, Recreation and Culture Strategy

Communication Plan

Strathcona County residents will be informed of the Women's Only Swim Pilot extension via County website, digital and print signage and various County social media channels.

Administration will have conversations with local women's groups before, during and after the pilot to gather feedback.