

COMMUNICATION PLAN – Aquatic Services

Emerald Hills Leisure Centre | Kinsmen Leisure Centre | Millennium Place

BACKGROUND

The aquatic schedule for the new Emerald Hills Leisure Centre (EH) was developed using an integrated approach in response to best meeting aquatic needs that were identified through public engagement in the Aquatic Strategy. This involved looking across the three aquatic facilities, including the Kinsmen Leisure Centre (KLC) and Millennium Place (MP), using the following guiding principals to determine programs and services at each location:

- Community needs identified in the Aquatic Strategy
- Operational cost efficiencies across three aquatic facilities
- Integrated approach
- Aquatic trends
- Age demographics
- Consistency and inclusivity

COMMUNICATION CONSIDERATIONS

Managing expectations will be key. This involves educating the public on the primary focus of the Emerald Hills Leisure Centre in which the number one priority identified through the Aquatic Strategy was learn-to-swim lessons.

COMMUNICATION GOALS AND KEY MESSAGES

Goal: To communicate the new aquatic schedule for Emerald Hills Leisure Centre and updates to the schedule for the Kinsmen Leisure Centre and Millennium Place in response to feedback from the Aquatic Strategy.

Key messages

- Integrated approach to meeting needs identified in aquatic strategy across three aquatic facilities
- Three pools combined provide a spectrum of aquatic services and amenities
- Focus of new Emerald Hills Leisure Centre is providing swimming lessons to meet growing demand
- We will continue to listen to the aquatic needs of our community so we can provide the best service that meets everyone's needs. Stay tuned on the status of the project. Visit www.strathcona.ca/emeraldhills.

COMMUNICATIONS OBJECTIVES

- To communicate benefits directly to invested community stakeholders including swim clubs, aquatic fitness participants and Elk Island Public and Catholic schools.
- To promote the new facility amenities and aquatic services to the general public including swim lessons, recreational swims, fitness and lap swim opportunities.

AUDIENCES

Primary: Swim clubs including high school teams; lap and recreational swimmers; swim lesson families; Schools, Young-at-Heart 55+ and drop-in aquatic fitness program participants; Robin Hood Association

Secondary: Kinsmen Leisure Centre and Millennium Place guests and the general public

Internal: Council, Executive Team; Kinsmen Leisure Centre and Millennium Place front-line staff; All county staff

APPROACH

The strategy for existing users will be to offer new opportunities at Emerald Hills, and leave other schedules in place at Kinsmen Leisure Centre and Millennium Place for Fall 2016. This time will be used to evaluate service need and guest preferences/needs to inform revisions to aquatic schedules for the winter 2017 session.

Here's what we did... (public engagement summary)

Recommendations outlined in the Aquatic Strategy reflect two years of [public and stakeholder consultation](#). This included an in-depth review of public feedback, along with follow-up on a number of points and ideas brought forward by residents.

Here's what we heard... (needs)

The highest priorities for indoor aquatics are:

1. Learn-to-swim lessons
2. Lap swim lanes for spontaneous use and aquatic fitness
3. Lap swim lanes for swim club use
4. Rehabilitation/therapy space
5. Recreational space for ages newborn to six years old

Here's how we are meeting your needs (overarching highlights)

- **Learn-to-Swim lessons** – Schedule reflects 100% increase in high demand preschool lessons during peak times; primary pool for learn-to-swim lessons will switch to Emerald Hills as it is designed for this purpose (temperature, depth, teach pool, family changerooms etc.)
- **Lap swim lanes for spontaneous use and aquatic fitness** – Available times more than double from Kinsmen Leisure Centre to Emerald Hills; times maintained at Millennium Place
- **Lap swim lanes for swim club use** – Millennium Place is the preferred location. Additional times available for camps during Millennium Place annual closure in September.
- **Rehabilitation/therapy space** – New amenities and features include family change rooms, accessible/warm water; Emerald Hills accessibility and pool temperatures provide an excellent opportunity to develop programs geared towards injury rehabilitation, older adult and special needs.
- **Recreational space for ages newborn to six years** – In addition to Millennium Place 9:00 a.m.-9:00 p.m. daily, new fall schedule at Emerald Hills/Kinsmen Leisure Centre reflects 50% increase in recreational swim times including an increase in kids pool times featuring warmer/shallow depth water (0-6)

RECOMMENDED TOOLS AND TIMING

- Website (short url, banner on main/secondary pages, cross page links)
- Mobile app
- Print - posters, ad copy, Digest and Dates, utility bill insert, recreation guide
- Digital - electronic road signs at Millennium Place and Ardrossan
- Information release
- Community road signs (Glen Allan Recreation Complex, Ardrossan Recreation Complex, Broadmoor, Strathcona Athletic Park, Kinsmen Leisure Centre)
- Advertising – Sherwood Park News and Country Asides
- Social media - <http://www.strathcona.ca/getsocial>

TIMELINE

- June 30: Start commissioning pool (90 days)
- August 23: Learn-to-swim lesson registration for Emerald Hills & Kinsmen Leisure Centre starts (Fall guide available July 22)
- September 19: Staff training
- October 1-2: Grand opening program (October 1); FREE recreational swims opening weekend
- October 3-10: Recreational swim schedule & featured program showcase
- October 11: First learn-to-swim session starts at Emerald Hills Leisure Centre

COMMUNICATION ACTIVITIES

Activity	Purpose / Content	Timeframe	Lead
SWIM LESSONS: Infographic & spring/ summer guide feature <i>Received Hermes International Creative Communication Award 2016 - Platinum</i>	Communicate how we are meeting swim lesson participant needs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Web infographic - swim lesson FAQs - social media 	Deadlines: Recreation Guide: June 10 Fall distribution: July 22 Swim registration: August 23	Sue/Liz (Lead Role); Josh/Al/Ruth (Support Role)
LAP/REC/ AQUATIC FITNESS: Spontaneous Use Highlights Drop-in swim schedule: spring/ summer promo	Highlight new aquatic opportunities in the fall schedule – NEW Emerald Hills Leisure Centre opening October 1! <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Drop-in schedule - TV screens - Newspaper ads (incorporate highlights into summer & fall cover wraps in Sherwood Park News) - Social media - Direct flyer to lap/aquatic fitness swimmers 	Deadlines: Spring Schedule: June 30 Fall Guide News wrap: EHLC opening/ schedule: June 30	Sue/Liz (Lead Role); Heather (Support Role)

SWIM CLUBS: Pool allocation	Communicate available hours for swim clubs as part of the pool allocation process - direct allocation meetings	Pool allocation update meetings	Heather (Lead Role)
Council updates	Council/Executive Team – Aquatic Service Model and Emerald Hills Leisure Centre update	June 2016	Terry/Sue
Just right campaign	<p>Promotional program – Strathcona County and the three pools</p> <p>Goal 1: Education and awareness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How: Just right? Campaign <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Managing expectations leading to opening Ambassador program <p>Goal 2: Generate excitement upon opening</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grand opening/Free opening weekend Transition planning Engagement/Evaluation 	August – October 2016	Sue/Liz (Lead Role) Whitney (Support Role)

EVALUATION/FOLLOW-UP ENGAGEMENT

- Feedback gathered from opening day for first six months (point of sales; class registration reports; County Connect; guest feedback; web/social media analytics; public engagement follow-up)
- Based on feedback review, drop-in aquatic schedule will be adjusted with potential changes to be made in Spring 2017 across Kinsmen Leisure Centre, Emerald Hills
- More fine-tuned approach for Fall, 2017 schedule and recreation guide