

## **Executive Summary: Foothills and Glenmore Athletic Parks Concept Plan**

### **The Situation**

The Foothills and Glenmore Athletic Parks are two premier facilities operated by The City of Calgary Recreation. Both are strategically located in inner city communities and feature close proximity to transit, regional pathways, the University of Calgary and Mount Royal University. The two parks are located nine kilometres apart, linked by Crowchild Trail.

Both parks began major construction in 1962/1963 and facilities were added to the sites over the next 10-15 years. The major facilities (arenas/pools/ outdoor velodrome) are now between 35 and 48 years old. While some have had major construction upgrades (i.e. Stu Peppard Arena), others have had lifecycle repairs to roof or mechanical systems as required to continue operations.

Calgary does not have a multi-sport field house, which has limited this city's ability to host major events. This has been a source of criticism by sport and recreation groups for many years. Calgary also suffers an inventory deficiency to meet the ever-growing demand for sport and recreation facilities and indoor space for practice and play.

### **Investigation**

A concept plan was initiated as a tool to guide future capital investment at the parks. The first step was a review of the existing facilities and sites for their condition and suitability for intended use. This process identified a stock of aged, outmoded buildings and recreational assets that are both inefficiently located on their respective sites and incapable of meeting users' needs. The parks also lack a clear sense of identity in that the facilities do not necessarily relate to their sites, nor do they connect to one another or respect their surrounding urban context.

Research gathered from extensive workshops, policy analysis and stakeholder consultation identified additional gaps in the city-wide inventory of sport and recreation facilities. Specifically:

1. Existing facilities are unable to meet today's demand, much less that of the future, for a wide variety of sport and recreation facilities;
2. Calgary is missing economic opportunities due to the absence of competition-class sport and recreation facilities;
3. Space for indoor practice and play is extremely limited;
4. There's opportunity for a unique, complementary inventory of facilities accessible to all Calgarians regardless of level of ability or interest; and,
5. Opportunity to create dynamic civic spaces with a distinct sense of place specific to and identifiable with each athletic park.

Based on all of these findings, five objectives were established to create a concept plan for developing the Foothills and Glenmore Athletic Parks as vibrant civic athletic facilities, in alignment with Council Priorities and "Team Spirit: Advancing Amateur Sport for all Calgarians; A 10 Year Strategic Plan for Sport Facility Development and Enhancement (The 10 Year Plan).

1. Maximize available resources to achieve excellent sport and recreation opportunities for Calgarians – improving health and wellness opportunities.
2. Create sustainable amenities that reflect The City's social, environmental, economic and cultural priorities.
3. Provide facilities that allow local, high-performance athletes to stay home for training and competition, and attract newcomers.
4. Create dynamic and distinctive public environments for all Calgarians to enjoy.
5. Guide the development of the two parks as premier facilities that will help Calgary achieve its vision to be a world centre for sport.

The outcome is a draft Concept Plan that is responsive to market demand for new facilities able to accommodate all performance levels. It encourages adaptable design to serve the needs of numerous activities in one location. It incorporates national and international standards for new facilities, and provides for community wellness and lifecycle/maintenance sustainability.

### **Recommendations of the Concept Plan:**

The Concept Plan recommends an overall site reorganization for each park to address existing deficiencies and enhance the cultural, experiential and aesthetic qualities within each park.

The plan recommends new facilities and improvements to existing amenities. New facilities include a multi-sport field house at the Foothills Athletic Park, featuring a 400-meter indoor track, a full size indoor soccer/rectangular field and gymnasiums. Glenmore will feature a field house with a 330-meter indoor velodrome and gymnasium spaces, as well as new fitness facilities and a new twin arena. Both sites require new aquatic centre amenities.

Combined with existing spaces, these new facilities will provide year-round access to health and fitness activities, and position Calgary to host major competitions. No new land will be required as new facilities will replace existing ones within the current park boundaries or adjacent City of Calgary lands.

The draft Concept Plan recommends a phased construction approach to keep the inventory of available amenities as high as possible at any given time. For example, exhausted amenities will only be removed as new ones are opened.

The phased approach also offers a conservative funding schedule. Spread out over multiple years, the larger capital expenditures would be required near the end of construction. This will allow a longer term for fundraising and financial planning. With each phase providing specific improvements, if funding were to be eliminated at any time, each site could continue to operate.

Finally, the draft Concept Plan includes consideration for site design and potential standard design components critical to creating functional yet distinct athletic parks.