

## ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

<b>TO:</b> Shane Bourke, City Manager	<b>DATE:</b> October 10, 2023
<b>FROM:</b> Dan Lemieux, Chief Public & Protective Services Officer	<b>MEETING:</b> Public & Protective Services Committee
<b>REPORT WRITER:</b> Stephanie Cajolais, Recreation & Culture Executive Director	
<b>SUBJECT:</b> Indoor Climbing Wall Project	

### RECOMMENDATIONS

That Committee recommend Council approve the location of the Indoor Climbing Wall at the Activity and Reception Centre.

### PREVIOUS COUNCIL / COMMITTEE DIRECTIONS

At the November 18, 2022 City Council Committee of the Whole meeting, the following motion was passed:

“Council amend the 2023 Capital Budget to include "Indoor Climbing Wall" in the amount of \$115,000, to be funded from Capital Tax; and direct Administration to work with the Climbing Club to decide how to best use these funds.”

### BACKGROUND

The Grande Prairie Climbing Association previously presented as a delegation to Council expressing their interest in promoting recreational climbing within the region through the establishment of working relationships with local municipalities. Currently residents must travel to Edmonton for the closest indoor climbing facility while the closest outdoor climbing environment is in Tumbler Ridge.

While Northwestern Polytechnic (NWP) previously housed a 3,500 square foot climbing facility that accommodated a wide range of recreational climbing programs, they have since ceased operations.

A (8 feet x 20 feet) boulder wall was installed at the Activity & Reception Centre in June of 2022, to accommodate elementary school users in a drop-in setting, and does not address the desire for adult recreational climbing opportunities.

## ANALYSIS

Two sites were explored as part of this review. The Activity and Reception Centre has been identified as a potentially suitable facility to accommodate an Indoor Climbing Wall of 2400 square feet while the space available at the Eastlink Centre adjacent to the Fieldhouse could accommodate a climbing wall of approximately 900 square feet.

The Climbing Association has made the following suggestions on how to provide indoor bouldering and lead climbing opportunities within the Activity and Reception Centre. The total space requested is W=75ft x H=34ft with 50 feet of the space dedicated to roped climbing (Areas 1-3) and the remaining space dedicated to bouldering.

- Area 1: High Difficulty - Competition style lead wall (W=16ft x H=34ft)
- Area 2: Intermediate Difficulty – Recreational lead wall consisting of variance in features and angles (W=16ft x H=34ft)
- Area 3: Low Difficulty – Vertical to slightly angled lead wall (W=16ft x H=34ft)
- Area 4: Bouldering Area – Two story area with overhanging feature (W=24ft x H=19ft) (mezzanine bouldering section is not captured in the attached images)

Assuming the City would retain professional services to assess the facility specifications, a competitive bid process would be undertaken.

A high-level estimate in terms of process is outlined below:

- Issue RFP (Proposal) and put on the market (3 weeks)
- Evaluation (2 weeks)
- Award and contract (2 weeks)

### **Relationship to City Council's Areas of Focus / Strategic Priorities**

This proposal aligns with Council's Strategic Priority of Quality of Life and the Focus Area of Active Lifestyle – encouraging and facilitating healthy individual and family lifestyles that are inclusive and affordable to residents.

### **Environmental Impact**

Every effort will be made to mitigate the environmental impacts specific to this project.

### **Economic Impact**

With a dedicated competitive climbing wall, this space could attract revenue through potential lead rope climbing events.

### **Social Impact**

Increasing the number of recreation spaces within the city offers increased opportunities for participation, numerous social benefits, and addresses the diverse needs of the community.

### **Relevant Statutes / Master Plans / City Documents**

[Grande Prairie Area Joint Recreation Master Plan](#) (2016)  
[Recreation and Culture Strategy](#) (2023)

## **Risk**

The climbing wall and mats will slightly reduce the footprint of the activity space available for other recreation opportunities.

## **STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT**

Administration previously engaged the Corporate Facility Management department regarding the feasibility of installing climbing features within an existing City-owned facility. Professional services will need to be consulted to assess infrastructure requirements and ensure the facility can safely bear the load to support climbing amenities in the desired facility.

The Grande Prairie Climbing Association has contributed to discussions through design suggestions for a new recreational climbing space and have continually expressed interest in partnering with the City in this endeavour through potential financial contributions as well as future programming/instruction.

## **BUDGET / FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

During 2022 Budget deliberations, Capital Tax Funding in the amount of \$115,000 was allocated towards the Climbing Wall project. These funds would be allocated towards professional services as well as the purchasing and installation of the necessary climbing wall infrastructure to accommodate both lead rope and bouldering activity at the selected site.

The Grande Prairie Climbing Association estimates that it will cost \$403,000 to build and equip the climbing centre they envision. Once a location is identified, the Grande Prairie Climbing Association will also explore fundraising and sponsorship opportunities to help offset project costs. Numerous community partners have offered gift-in-kind services to support the Climbing Association in their pursuit of an indoor climbing wall.

The Grande Prairie Climbing Association submitted a request for capital funding through the Community Group Funding process which has been referred to 2024 budget deliberations.

## **SUMMARY / CONCLUSION**

The City's new Recreation and Culture Strategy identifies four 'Big Plays' to enhance recreation and culture service provision and ensure alignment to the strategic direction of the City. By working with the Grande Prairie Climbing Association to provide programming that further diversifies recreation opportunities and increases the potential for new sporting events to be held in Grande Prairie, the proposed indoor climbing wall directly addresses Partnerships, Inclusion and Diversity, and Event Hosting components of the Recreation and Culture Strategy. Administration recommends that Committee and Council approve the location of the Indoor Climbing Wall at the Activity and Reception Centre.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

Attachment 1 – Climbing Wall Mock Up (courtesy of the Grande Prairie Climbing Association)

Attachment 1 – Climbing Wall Mock Up





