

## ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

<b>TO:</b> Shane Bourke, City Manager	<b>DATE:</b> July 22, 2025
<b>FROM:</b> Dan Lemieux, Chief Public and Protective Services Officer	<b>MEETING:</b> Public and Protective Services Committee
<b>REPORT WRITER:</b> Catherine Ridgeway, Events & Programming Director	
<b>SUBJECT:</b> The Bowes Pilot Project Progress Update	

### RECOMMENDATIONS

Administration recommends the Public and Protective Services Committee receive this report for information.

### PREVIOUS COUNCIL / COMMITTEE DIRECTIONS

At the April 30, 2024, InvestGP Committee meeting the following motion was passed:  
Committee direct Administration to bring back information regarding a pilot program in the Bowes, including what user groups could be involved and potential costs.

At the July 11, 2024, InvestGP Committee meeting the following motion was passed:  
Committee direct Administration to bring back a report 90 days after the pilot project begins with a progress update.

### BACKGROUND

In October 2024, The Bowes was used to pilot an indoor tennis court rental program to evaluate year-round interest, community demand, and potential revenue generation.

### ANALYSIS

The tennis pilot project at The Bowes has been a clear success, serving as an effective strategy to increase venue utilization between event bookings. The presence of tennis has added vibrancy to the space and ensured consistent activity. The tennis community has been both understanding and accommodating during large events, allowing for seamless integration of this offering into the broader facility schedule.

Operational efficiency improved significantly over the course of the pilot. What originally took staff three hours to set up now takes just 1.5 hours. Further, all operational tennis requirements have

been managed by our existing complement of staff. The Operations staff at Bonnetts Energy Centre have been able to shift priorities to accommodate tennis without additional staffing hours.

The booking process also evolved throughout the project. Initially, all bookings were coordinated through the Grande Prairie Tennis Club. This transitioned to individual bookings through the Bonnetts Energy Centre Box Office and later expanded to include online booking capabilities. Each phase of this evolution was well-received and contributed to increased accessibility and ease of use for participants.

The City made an initial investment of \$7,000 for tennis nets, which was quickly offset by the revenue generated through bookings. From October to March, tennis rentals brought in \$23,203.44 in revenue.

Overall, the pilot project has been profitable and has proven to be a valuable addition to The Bowes. It has enhanced community engagement, broadened user demographics — including many professionals and physicians — and contributed to higher utilization of the facility during slower periods.

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

Quality of Life: Active Lifestyle.

Innovative Efficiencies & Economic Readiness: Strategic Growth.

**Environmental Impact**

None.

**Economic Impact**

None.

**Social Impact**

Having tennis in the building has certainly added to the vibrancy of The Bowes, helping ensure the facility remains consistently utilized. The tennis community is also notably diverse, with many professionals and physicians among the regular participants.

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

None.

**Risk**

None.

**Alternatives (Optional)**

None.

**STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT**

Discussions with board members of the Grande Prairie Tennis Club and regular users indicate overall satisfaction with the program. While there are opportunities to improve the space for long-term tennis use, the current setup is meeting user needs and is viewed as a functional venue for play.

## **BUDGET / FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The City made an initial investment of \$7,000.00 for tennis nets, which was offset by the revenue generated through bookings. From October to March, Tennis bookings revenue was \$23,203.44.

## **SUMMARY / CONCLUSION**

The tennis pilot project at The Bowes successfully increased facility utilization during non-event periods and generated positive financial results.

Feedback from the Grande Prairie Tennis Club and users has been generally positive. While some enhancements to the venue could improve the tennis experience, the space has been deemed functional for current needs.

Based on the positive results of the pilot administration will continue to book The Bowes for Tennis into 2026.

## **ATTACHMENTS**