



COUNCIL REPORT

Springbank Park For All Seasons Facility Expansion Project

Electoral Division: 2

File: N/A

Date:	April 8, 2025
Presenter:	Ghada Rafih, Community Services Coordinator
Department:	Recreation & Community Support

REPORT SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is for Council to consider the proposed Springbank Park For All Seasons (SPFAS) Facility Expansion in accordance with two previous Council motions:

- 1) December 6, 2023 Recreation Governance Committee (RGC) meeting:

MOVED by Deputy Reeve Kochan that the Recreation Governance Committee direct Administration to continue working with Springbank Park For All Seasons to develop the concept presented at the December 6, 2023 Recreation Governance Committee meeting into a plan that is at the same level of detail as the Phase II of the South Springbank Community Facilities – Business Case Plan, including identifying needs for a community use gymnasium through a business case.

RGC approved \$30,000 in capital funding to the Springbank Park For All Seasons Agricultural Society in 2024. SPFAS worked with HarGroup Management Consultants to develop the Facility Expansion Business Case, presented in this report as Attachment A.

The Springbank Park For All Seasons Facility Expansion project proposes a new facility featuring multi-use sport courts, an indoor turf training field, and a walking track on County-owned land leased by SPFAS. The total project cost is estimated at \$11.5M, with SPFAS requesting 85% funding from the County (\$9.775M) while committing to contribute 15% (\$1.725M). The business case, developed with support from HarGroup Management Consultants, outlines two potential operating models.

- 2) February 5, 2025 RGC meeting:

MOVED by Deputy Reeve Kochan that the Recreation Governance Committee direct Springbank Park for All Seasons Agricultural Society to submit the Facility Expansion Business Case and capital funding request to be brought to Rocky View County Council at the 2025 spring budget finalization process for review and consideration within the County’s Capital Planning process for evaluation, deliberation, and prioritization.

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ADMINISTRATION'S RECOMMENDATION

THAT Council:

1. Receive the Springbank Park For All Seasons Facility Expansion Project report and Direct Administration to:
 - Work with SPFAS and the Springbank Community Association to:
 - Finalize 'building footprint' opportunities on County-owned land for both the SPFAS Expansion Facility and the Community Event Centre, including cost savings and related alternatives;
 - Host a community engagement session to gather input; and
 - Present the findings to Council by July 2025.

BACKGROUND

Preamble

Rocky View County is a major stakeholder in the delivery of recreation facilities in the region. The funding and administrative support offered by the County to its delivery partners is vital to recreation provision and the abundance of associated benefits achieved regionally.

The County has supported recreation delivery through local non-profits, Agriculture Societies, and inter-municipal partnerships. The County also supports facility operations.

With major growth planned within and adjacent to the County, new residents are, and will continue to, want and expect a wider range of services from open spaces (parks and trails) to multi-purpose facilities with recreation programming. Historically, the county provided support for recreation amenities as follows:

- County owned and third party operated facilities in Cochrane and Chestermere
- Support to local non-profits; and
- Providing usage funding for projects in neighbouring urban municipalities.

However, the County is now receiving requests to fund larger recreation facilities through major capital investments in rural areas and hamlets (Springbank, Indus and Langdon).

The proposed recreation amenities vary across communities from a single-sheet ice rink to a recreation multi-plex approach that incorporates rentable and programmable indoor sports venues (multi-use sports courts, indoor turf training field, and a walking track). The facilities can also include less formal elements such as leisure skating, wellness, indoor walking and jogging, indoor play and indoor childcare, and can also incorporate connective pathways -- all promoting community well-being.

The approach to combining needed recreation venues through a well-designed and coordinated 'building footprint' is an efficient, effective, and equitable way to invest public capital. In turn, to facilitate the evolving recreation needs, the County is developing a new Recreation Framework to enable and guide a wider range of recreation planning and development for the next 5-10 years.

The Framework will consider:

- Developing a methodology to:
 - Prioritize capital and operating costs associated with recreation funding;
 - Develop a classification system to guide County and community planning and budgeting for recreation e.g.: ownership, operational models, usage fees, partnership models, etc.;
 - Identify current and future lifecycle investments to sustain facilities;
 - Ensure cost sharing is based upon population, service levels decisions and usage made with partner municipalities; and

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- Consider County Levy funding opportunities to assist in funding capital construction.
- The number of regional recreation facilities being contemplated which the County will be looked upon to support.
- That the amount and type of recreation facilities available to County residents is comparable to those available in comparable rural Alberta municipalities.
- That residents and groups are satisfied with the provision and availability of recreation facilities.

Background

Recreation facility development in Springbank is currently guided by the South Springbank Community Facilities Business Case Plan and as identified in the Recreation and Parks Master Plan, which includes a phased approach to recreational development as follows:

Phase I – Community Event Centre (\$9.68M in the South Springbank Recreation Reserve): The community event centre is included in the 2026 Capital Plan to replace the community centre that was decommissioned in 2015.

Phase 2 – Indoor Turf Field and Walking Track: While this facility was originally noted in the Master Plan as Phase 2 in the next 5-10 years, the SPFAS is proposing an \$11.5M facility, with a commitment to contribute 15% (\$1.725M) resulting in a capital funding request of \$9.775M. This facility is similar to that proposed by the community association as Phase 2 in the business case (Attachment A). They also have identified support from the Springbank Community Association (March 23, 2025) as presented in Attachment E.

Phase 3 – Outdoor Park and Pathway Enhancement: As Phase 3 is a longer-term implementation, further engagement and planning should be completed on this phase to ensure community and County needs are included.

The business case provides a forecasted operating budget including:

- A direct rental only model which would see an annual operating deficit of \$2,500; or
- SPFAS programming offered in addition to direct rentals which would see an annual operating surplus of \$5,000. Projections are based on a steady operating state for the facility. The business case proposes initial financial support from the County for the first three operational years for the facility.

SPFAS has submitted a formal capital funding request for the Facility Expansion Project, included in Attachment C.

ANALYSIS

In addition to the capital request of approximately \$9.8M, there is also potential for annual funding requests from the SPFAS for operating deficits, as outlined in the proposed operating models. Given the potential for longer-term operating cost requests to the County, Administration will work with SPFAS to identify a lifecycle management approach to ensure long-term sustainability and cost effectiveness.

COMMUNICATIONS / ENGAGEMENT

The table below specifically identifies the community engagement on the southwest side of the County up to and including the approval of the South Springbank Business Case.

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Date	Project	Area	Type of Engagement
2017	Recreational needs in the southwest region (formerly Rocky View West Recreation District)	Springbank; Bragg Creek; Jumping Pound; Elbow Valley	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey • One-on-one interviews
2018	Recreational needs in the southeast region (formerly Bow North Recreation District)	Langdon; Indus; Dalemead	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey • One-on-one interviews
2019	Recreation Needs Assessment	County	Postcards mailed to each household providing a link to an online survey.
2020	Recreation and Parks Master Plan	County	<p>In addition to the findings identified in the Recreation Needs Assessment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One-on-one interviews • Open houses • Conversation cafes • Community organization's business cases prioritized <p>Recommendations within the document were drafted with consideration of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Industry trends and issues • Facilities development being considered over a 5-10 year period • Opportunities for collaboration with Rocky View County • Success factors for public recreation service providers • Customer composition and preferences • Perceptions of recreation facilities • Operational outcomes
2022	South Springbank Business Case	South Springbank; North Springbank; Elbow Valley	<p>A Stakeholder Advisory Group was established consisting of key community leaders and elected officials in the identified communities. Members were appointed by Council.</p> <p>Mandate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be a voice throughout the advisory group process • Identify recreation and community amenities that could be beneficial • Identify priorities of multi-faceted projects <p>Other sources of information included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business case and survey results from Springbank Community Association

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Date	Project	Area	Type of Engagement
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews with potential user groups, as identified by the advisory group • Market analysis • Regional usage opportunities • Existing recreational facilities in the region (avoid duplication) • Future potential partnerships with neighbouring municipalities

In addition to the community engagement conducted by HarGroup Management Consultants, Administration has received requests from Springbank residents to have further engagement regarding recreation planning in the Springbank area. As noted in the proposed Recommendation, hosting an additional community engagement session would support greater awareness by the community of the proposed plans, amenities and potential sequencing alternatives.

IMPLICATIONS

Financial

Recreation projects can be funded through public reserves, grants, cost-sharing arrangements, and tax stabilization reserve, each offering different financial strategies to support capital investments. The following table is the balance of the available reserves as of the end of 2024.

Reserve	Balance as at December 31, 2025
Public Reserve	\$22,682,157.58
Tax Stabilization Reserve	\$67,502,983.45
Voluntary Recreation Contribution Reserve	\$1,653,994.57
South Springbank Rec Reserve	\$9,906,777.27

The County is considering multiple recreation facility proposals, each serving a range of community needs across different areas. Given the volume of strategic initiative requests (roads, bridges, recreation, infrastructure, etc.), Administration is developing the following policies for Council approval:

- Fiscal Management Strategy with policy considerations including multi-year budgeting, capital committee, capital budgeting, reserves, debt management; assessment growth, levies, master rates, etc.
- Recreation Framework to enable and guide current and future recreation opportunities in or adjacent to the County.

STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

Key Performance Indicators.		Strategic Alignment
Effective Service Delivery	SD2: Services are resourced and delivered to specific groups as intended, and citizens are satisfied with the outcomes	SD2.1: Citizens satisfied with the range of County services available/delivered
		Council's consideration of the facility expansion business case addresses community recreation needs in Springbank.

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ALTERNATE DIRECTION

Administration is not providing any alternatives at this time in consideration of the current recommended motion for a report to Council no later than July 2025.

ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment A: Springbank Park For All Seasons Facility Expansion Business Case
- Attachment B: South Springbank Community Facilities Business Case Plan
- Attachment C: Springbank Park For All Seasons Capital Funding Application
- Attachment D: 5-year Capital Plan for Recreation Facilities and Associated Projects
- Attachment E: Community Support Letters

APPROVALS

Manager:	Sarah Paterson, Manager of Recreation and Community Support
Executive Director/Director:	Amy Zaluski, Director, Intergovernmental & Regional Services
Chief Administrative Officer:	Reegan McCullough, Chief Administrative Officer