

A photograph of a woman with a ponytail, wearing a white tank top and grey shorts, climbing a colorful indoor rock climbing wall. The wall is painted in sections of blue, white, and yellow, with various colored holds (red, blue, grey) attached. She is in the middle of a climb, with one hand on a hold and her legs positioned to support her weight. The background is a solid light blue.

RECREATION NEEDS ASSESSMENT – RESETTING  
RECREATION

# ENGAGEMENT PLAN

MAY 2024

**rcs<sup>+</sup>**



**CHESTERMERE**



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# 01

## PROJECT PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

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The City of Chestermere is *“Resetting Recreation”*.

The City of Chestermere directly provides and supports the provision of a variety of recreation services to the community. To assist in the most appropriate and sustainable investment of its limited resources, the City is completing a needs assessment. This needs assessment will form the basis on which the City will determine how it will directly provide recreation services and how it will support others in their provision.

Recreation facilities, programs, and events are critical services that significantly contribute to people's overall health and the wellbeing which, in turn, makes the community attractive, thriving, and safe.

There is not a mandated level of service that defines municipal provision of recreation services – service levels are unique to each community and are determined locally. The needs assessment will examine how these services are currently provided and, through engagement with the community and a broader program of research, identify gaps in or enhancements to the current level of provision. The needs assessment may also determine that some elements of the City's current provision should be maintained.

This Engagement Plan document presents the plan for engagement with the identification of audiences, tactics used, and implementation considerations. The engagement undertaken is critical in the completion of the needs assessment. As communications support is an integral aspect of successful launching engagement and maximizing reach and participation, this plan also identifies where communication support will be needed.

The engagement program identified in this plan will reflect the International Association of Public Participation (IAP2) spectrum of participation and its values and principles. Primarily the engagement tactics will fall to the left side of the continuum.

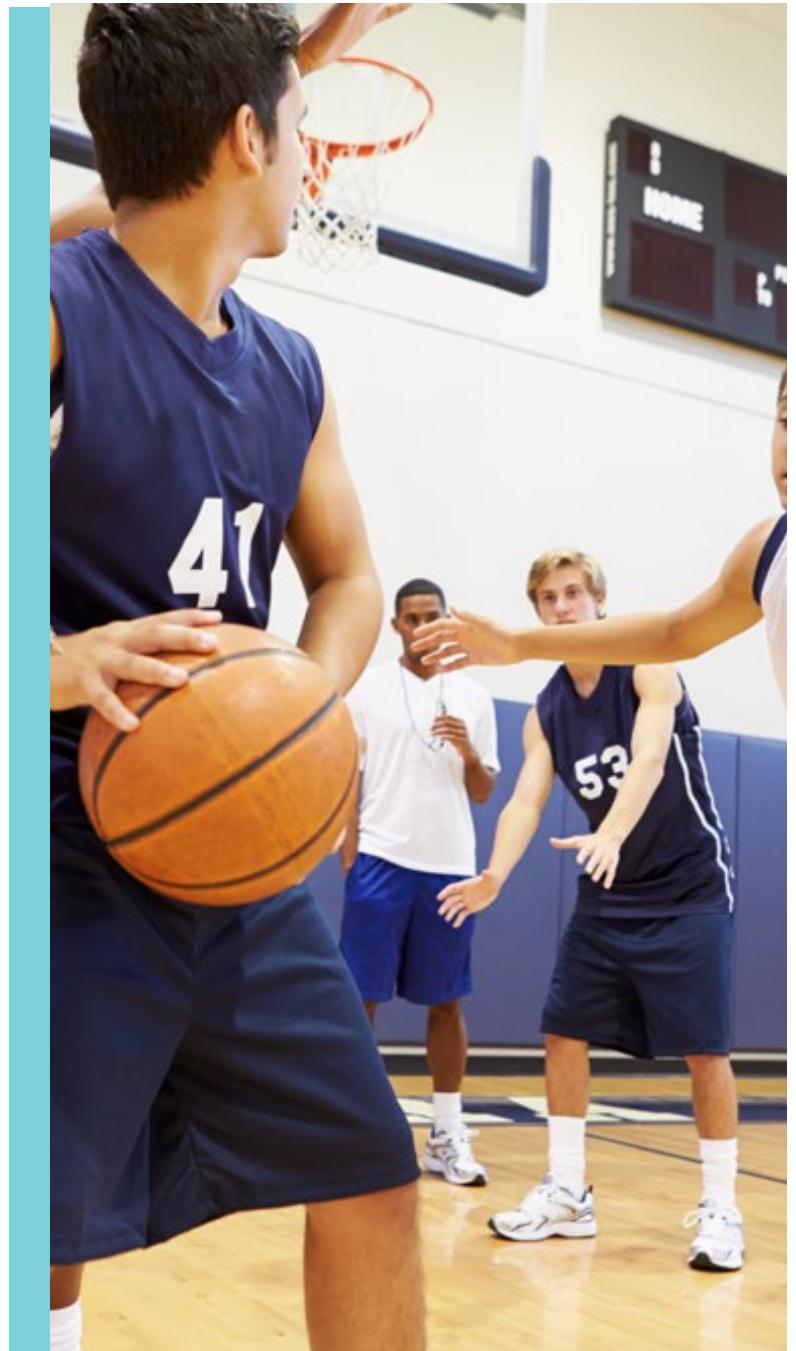
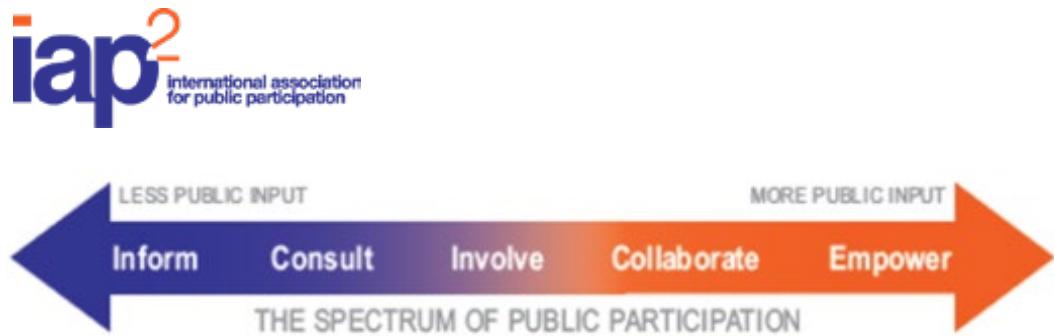
Inform – to provide balanced and objective information to assist the public and participants in understanding the project, its importance, and their opportunities to be involved. This is information sharing from the City to the public.

Consult – to obtain input on the provision of services or feedback on proposed courses of action. The intent is to understand the perspectives of the public and consider these perspectives as decisions are made. The City will hold the decision-making authority.



The engagement activities for the needs assessment will also adhere to the City's Public Participation Policy No. 127 and will reflect the principles identified therein:

- **Meaningful:** The City will seek out Public Engagement when there is an opportunity for Stakeholders to influence a decision. Participants will have access to information that helps them participate in a meaningful way.
- **Appropriate:** The City will choose a level of engagement that is appropriate to the amount of influence Stakeholders can have on the process, appropriate to the scope of the project, and within the City's capacity to achieve. The City will also provide an appropriate level of time to advertise the opportunity or accept public input.
- **Transparent:** The City will clearly communicate why engagement is being sought, what the engagement will impact, and the results of the engagement.
- **Inclusive:** Whenever possible, the City will seek a range of views to ensure that the engagement is generally representative of affected residents. The City will hear and consider all views equally. The City will also seek to conduct engagement activities that meet the needs of the Stakeholders most impacted.



## 02

# THE IMPORTANCE OF ENGAGEMENT

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Recreation services are value based; the provincial government does not dictate what types of facilities and services a community needs to provide. As such, service delivery becomes a product and balance of both community and political will. For this reason, providing meaningful opportunities for community input when thinking strategically about the future of recreation is critical.

A balanced approach with a diversity of tactics is important when conducting engagement. The passion that drives organized user groups needs to be balanced by general public benefit. Likewise, others in the community, who may not traditionally be seen as "having a stake" in recreation services, do offer important perspectives. Recreation services offer benefits everyone in the community.

Engagement with residents, community organizations, community contributors will provide important information to understand the diverse perspectives of those using and benefiting from recreation services. The processes employed will provide a two different input opportunities: interviews & meetings, and community conversations. Both in-person and virtual techniques will be promoted and implemented. It is important to note that the City recently completed broad community engagement. The findings from that work will feed into the engagement tactics outlined herein.

All participants will be welcome into engagement activities. While methodologies have been set, flexibility exists to in the specific implementation. Efforts will be made to ensure the program of engagement is designed to be accessible and inclusive.

It is important to note that this project will be a data-driven and service level-based needs assessment. It is not intended to be solely reliant on community engagement; community engagement will be one, albeit important, input into the entire plan. Municipal resources are limited and must be prioritized appropriately through the annual financial planning process. The resulting findings in the needs assessment are meant to inform the City's long-term planning.



# 03

# PROJECT ENGAGEMENT FOUNDATIONS

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## 3.1 OBJECTIVES

While there are specific objectives related to the individual engagement tactics, there are some overall objectives that will guide the program of engagement. These objectives can be considered in two different groupings: content related and process related. The content related objectives refer to the information collected that will inform the needs assessment. The process objectives speak to items to achieve through implementation of the engagement.

### CONTENT OBJECTIVES

Gather greater understanding and insight into:

- How the public and community organizations use recreation amenities.
- The motivations of users.
- Satisfaction with current opportunities.
- Barriers and challenges impacting access to recreation and culture opportunities.
- Preferences and demands related to existing, enhanced, and services.



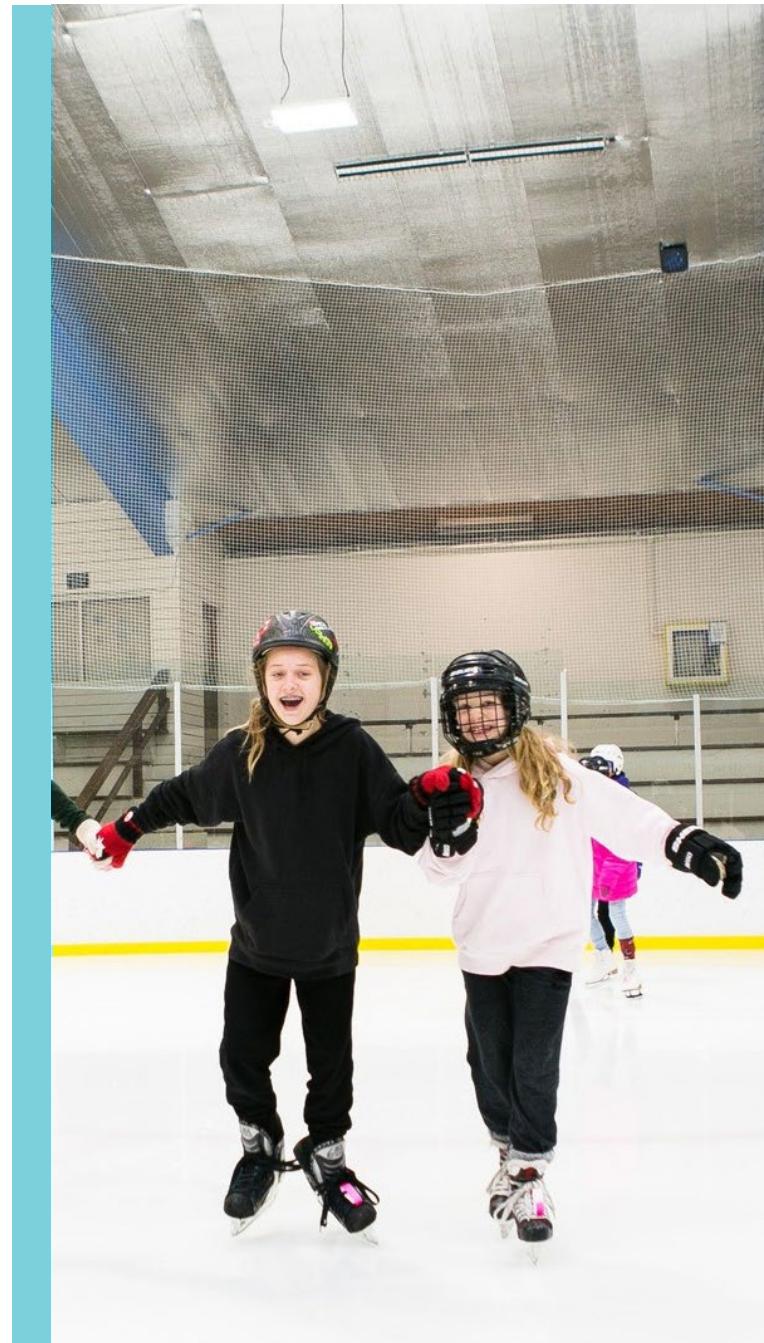
## PROCESS OBJECTIVES

These process objectives are very much tied into the values of the IAP2; they also are directly connected to the completion of the needs assessment; and they align with the City's principles of engagement.

- The engagement opportunities will enable targeted audiences to participate in a manner that encouraged participation and provides valuable input.
- Participants will be engaged at appropriate times in the project process to advance project objectives and to align with the stage of engagement as identified on the IAP2 continuum.
- Participants will understand the purpose of their participation.
- Interested parties (including individuals) will have an opportunity to share their opinions in a meaningful manner.
- Participation barriers will be identified and mitigated where feasible.
- Engagement process is recognized as being fair.

## 3.2 OUR COMMITMENT TO THE PUBLIC

All participants will be treated with respect and their opinions valued. Their input will be collected, housed, and reported on in a manner that respects the intent with which it was gathered. Input will only be solicited on items and issues only on those items for which it will truly be considered. The City of Chestermere will collect personal information pursuant to Section 26 of the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, for the following purpose: 26(c) - the information relates directly to and is necessary for a program or activity of the public body. The public and community participants will understand the scope of the engagement and any limitations that exist as it relates to decision making.



# 4.0 ENGAGEMENT AUDIENCES, TACTICS AND TIMING

Tactic	IAP2 Continuum of Public Engagement	Purpose	Targeted Stakeholders	Implementation	Timing	Responsibilities CC - Client (City of Chestermere) RCS - Consultant team	Communication Tactics
Strategic Advisory Contributor Meetings	Consult	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide strategic advice and the perspective of the community related to future recreation amenity priorities and service delivery</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6 community members who represent different perspectives and aspects of Chestermere</li> <li>Expertise and experience in recreation, facility development, property development, law, economic development</li> <li>Not affiliated with any single interest</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2-3 sessions across the project including an onboarding session and to follow the community conversations and interviews</li> </ul>	April - July	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CC to identify potential candidates</li> <li>RCS to review and provide comment</li> <li>CC to recruit participants</li> <li>RCS and CC to onboard group</li> <li>RCS to lead meeting facilitation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Direct outreach to individuals</li> </ul>



Tactic	IAP2 Continuum of Public Engagement	Purpose	Targeted Stakeholders	Implementation	Timing	Responsibilities CC - Client (City of Chestermere) RCS - Consultant team	Communication Tactics
Interviews and Meetings	Consult	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Solicit input from some of the predominant organized recreation groups as well as gathering the perspectives of others in the community about the importance of recreation services. Strengths of current provision as well as gaps / barriers will be explored; suggestions for future services will be solicited</li> <li>More fully explore / investigate topics raised in the survey</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some major recreation organizations</li> <li>Other perspectives from groups / organizations in Chestermere such as social agencies, educational institutions, justice, business and tourism community</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify groups / representatives to include in the discussions sessions / meetings</li> <li>Select dates and extend invitations</li> <li>Host meetings virtually</li> <li>15-25 meetings</li> </ul>	May - June	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>RCS and CC to determine participants and groupings</li> <li>RCS to draft invitation message</li> <li>CC to extend invitations</li> <li>RCS to develop meeting agenda / protocol</li> <li>CC to approve</li> <li>RCS to facilitate meetings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Direct invitations to groups / representatives</li> </ul>



Tactic	IAP2 Continuum of Public Engagement	Purpose	Targeted Stakeholders	Implementation	Timing	Responsibilities CC - Client (City of Chestermere) RCS - Consultant team	Communication Tactics
Community Conversations	Consult	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Through a group setting, enable participants to fully react to and provide input into community need and prioritization of need.</li> </ul>	<p>2 sessions including the following perspectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Representatives of groups / organizations who deliver recreation programming</li> <li>Unaffiliated members of the broader Chestermere community</li> <li>Selected community contributors and influencers.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Send invitations to groups' representatives inviting participation in a session.</li> <li>Online recruitment process for members of the public.</li> </ul>	June	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>RCS to develop recruitment process for community members</li> <li>CC to approve and implement recruitment process</li> <li>RCS to develop facilitation guide</li> <li>CC to approve</li> <li>RCS to develop recruitment process</li> <li>CC to implement recruitment and invitation process</li> <li>Workshop style format in which participants participate in plenary and small group discussion.</li> <li>CC to manage logistics of each session (e.g. room booking and set up, registration, refreshments)</li> <li>RCS to facilitate the session</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promotion on the City website of opportunity and the means to apply</li> <li>Direct invitation to group representatives and community contributors</li> </ul>





