City of Kamloops

Canada's Tournament Capital

COUNCIL MEMO

Date: October 27, 2026

To: Mayor and Council

From: C. Mazzotta, MA, Community and Culture Director

RE: Westsyde Pool and Fitness Centre Engagement Findings and Optimization Plan

COUNCIL STRATEGIC PLAN

This memo supports Council's strategic priorities and areas of focus regarding:

- **Governance and Service Excellence**
  - Asset Management: We plan for the development, improvement, repair, and replacement of our infrastructure.
  - Community Engagement: We promote purposeful, available, and innovative engagement opportunities to ensure a range of voices are heard, thus informing decisions, creating transparency, and cultivating relationships.
  - Fiscal Responsibility: We are accountable to Kamloops residents and businesses in providing effective management, best value, and responsible use of tax dollars.
  - Service Excellence: We promote the continuous development of staff and encourage innovation in process and service delivery.
  - Governance: Council embraces our diversity and shared commitment to the citizens of Kamloops. We put the interests of the City ahead of our own and advocate with a unified voice, fostering public confidence through healthy debate and sound decision-making which we collectively stand behind.
- **Livability and Sustainability**
  - Recreation and Culture: We prioritize the development of amenities to cultivate diverse and equitable opportunities for recreation, arts, and culture.
  - Healthy Community: We foster an environment that supports and promotes healthy living through community, recreation, and social connection.
  - Inclusivity: We reduce barriers for underrepresented groups to bring inclusivity, diversity, and fairness to our community.
- **Economic Health**
  - Business Development: We ensure our efforts and investments are measurable and accountable.
  - Economic Strength: We build strategies to increase our competitive advantage, cultivate growth, and support our residents.
  - Partnerships: We seek and foster the key relationships that will support our economic goals.
  - Growth Management: We are deliberate and purposeful in planning for the growth of our community.

The purpose of this memo is to provide Council with findings from community engagement conducted in June and July 2026 on the Westsyde Pool and Fitness Centre and to outline a plan to optimize facility use through service enhancements, programming opportunities, and operational improvements that reflect community priorities and support the facility's long-term sustainability.

This engagement began following the 2026 budget process, when Council directed staff to complete a comprehensive operational review of the Westsyde Pool and Fitness Centre, including a community engagement component to identify opportunities to optimize facility use and improve cost recovery.

Summary of Engagement

The Westsyde Pool and Fitness Centre—Recreation Conversation community engagement activities provided the City valuable insights into current facility use, community expectations, and opportunities to improve access to programs and services. Engagement included a survey conducted June 16–July 3, 2026; a Let's Talk Kamloops engagement page; facility displays; and in-person engagement opportunities at Northills Mall and Westsyde Centennial Park promoted through a news release, social media, and an engagement newsletter.

The online survey received 1,654 contributions from 1,597 contributors. The in-person engagement opportunities generated approximately 160 interactions and included distributing approximately 180 information cards.

The primary questions in the survey included:

- Do you and/or your family use the Westsyde Pool and Fitness Centre?
- How do you and/or your family primarily use the Westsyde Pool and Fitness Centre?
- How frequently do you and/or your family use the facility?
- What time of day do you and/or your family currently use the facility?
- What would encourage you and/or your family to use or visit the facility more frequently?
- Would you be willing to pay higher user fees for access to the Westsyde Pool and Fitness Centre?

Key Findings

The key findings from the community engagement were as follows:

- The facility is well used by survey respondents, with 87.1% reporting that they or a family use the facility. The pool was the most frequently used amenity (93.8%), followed by the hot tub (67.4%), fitness centre (49.5%), sauna (45.0%), steam room (38.6%), and swimming lessons (37.6%).

- Among respondents who did not use the facility, 48.6% cited its location, 24.8% said operating hours did not suit their family's needs, and 24.3% cited unreliable hours.

- Demand is strongest during periods that could support improved service optimization. Weekday evenings were the most frequently reported time of use (51.9%), followed by Saturday afternoons (44.9%) and Sunday afternoons (41.1%).

- Increased operating hours and additional programming were identified as the primary factors that would encourage more frequent use. Of the 1,190 respondents who answered this question, 60.9% selected different operating hours and 60.4% selected additional programs and activities.

- Expanded weekend hours was the most requested schedule-related option among the 721 respondents who provided feedback on operating schedules.

- Respondents expressed strong interest in fitness classes, private swimming lessons, specialized lessons, and private parties. Of the 694 respondents who identified desired

program additions, 61.5% selected fitness classes, 38.0% selected private swimming lessons, 27.7% selected specialized lessons, and 25.1% selected private parties.

- Fee-related feedback suggests an opportunity to explore targeted, value-based pricing. Of the 1,440 facility users who responded to the fee-related question, 40.2% indicated a willingness to pay higher user fees, 46.2% said they might be willing, and 13.6% indicated they would not.

- Among the 579 respondents willing to pay higher fees, support was strongest for enhanced pool access (79.6%), followed by fitness centre access (50.4%), hot tub access (44.4%), fitness classes (37.8%), swimming lessons (36.8%), and aquafit (31.6%).

Next Steps

The engagement results demonstrate strong community support for the Westsyde Pool and Fitness Centre and identify opportunities to improve access, expand program offerings, and better align services with user demand. In response to this feedback, Administration has developed a phased plan to optimize facility use.

Administration will focus on practical changes to better align facility operations with user demand, including reviewing operating hours to reallocate underutilized time to higher-demand periods such as evenings and weekends. Staff will monitor facility usage to support these efforts. Staff will also align operating hours so that the fitness centre and pool open at the same time.

Other actions include adding more swimming lessons; expanding private lessons; offering Bronze Star, Bronze Medallion, and Bronze Cross courses; and providing additional water safety education opportunities. Staff will also promote programs and services that encourage greater participation in fitness classes and use of the fitness centre. In addition, staff will work with local organizations to explore opportunities to further expand programming in fall 2027, including specialty swims and See It, Try It sessions.

Staff will monitor participation levels, revenue, staffing impacts, and customer feedback to evaluate the effectiveness of these changes and determine which changes to maintain, adjust, or expand. The results will inform future resource allocation and help establish performance measures to guide ongoing facility optimization.

These actions are intended to improve access, increase participation, maximize existing facility capacity, and support informed operational and capital planning decisions. By focusing on facility optimization, service excellence, and long-term sustainability, the City will strengthen the Westsyde Pool and Fitness Centre’s role as an important recreational, wellness, and community gathering space.



C. Mazzotta, MA
Community and Culture Director



Approved for Council

Concurrence: K. Rodrigue, Communications and Strategic Partnerships Director
J. Luison, Civic Operations Assistant Director

Author: S. Holmes, BPhEd, Sport, Recreation, and Wellness Manager

Reviewed by: L. Stride, Recreation, Health and Wellness Supervisor
M. Strecheniuk, Aquatics Program Supervisor
Q. Hatch, Communications and Engagement Manager

SH/kjm