



About REC-REATE

This update has been created by the Strathcona Regional District (SRD) to keep user groups, residents, businesses and the public informed about REC-REATE – the revitalization of the Strathcona Gardens recreation complex.

The goal of REC-REATE is to renew the facility to address aging components and deliver the recreation services the community desires in an exciting, modern, safe and inclusive environment.

If you have questions, please get in touch with the project team via recreate@srd.ca or 250-830-6711.

DESIGN APPROVED: ONTO FUNDING PLANS

Last spring, the Strathcona Regional District board approved a preferred plan for the revitalized Strathcona Gardens, and in November, they saw that plan come into focus. A schematic design created by HCMA Architecture + Design, and presented to the SRD board at the end of November, was approved and staff were directed to take the next step of pursuing grants to fund the construction project.

The schematic design provides greater technical detail to the concept plan, which includes a new aquatic, fitness and wellness centre, with improvements and upgrades to the ice facilities, changerooms, storage areas and public spaces, and reflects the key priorities provided by users and stakeholder groups during outreach in 2016/2017.

"Strathcona Gardens is a well-loved community hub. We have heard from the public that they want to see major improvements to this facility, not just another band-aid solution, and we know from our technical studies that there are expensive items beyond their useful life and in need of repair or replacement," said SRD board chair Michele Babchuk.

With the design in place, and an updated cost estimate with it (see story on Pg. 2), staff can now move forward with seeking funding for the project, which has a target construction date of 2020.

PROJECT PHASES



HOW TO STAY INFORMED

- Visit the project website at: www.recreateSG.ca
- Sign up for the newsletter email list by contacting the project team at: recreate@srd.ca or calling 250-830-6711
- Follow us on: Facebook (@strathconagardensrec) and Twitter (@strathconaRD)

MAKING A FINANCIAL PLAN

The schematic design came with an updated cost estimate of \$62.1 million. This would cover the partial new build of the facility and a new aquatic centre, improved fitness centre, improvements to the ice facilities and new storage/public spaces. Here's what you need to know about the cost:

- This is an increase from the earlier estimate of \$47 million and is the result of a higher degree of certainty, and the escalation of some key cost factors, such as increasing construction costs and the forecast of new steel tariffs. The SRD understands that the cost could rise to \$77.5 million by the time this project is under construction if these external market pressures continue.
- While this is a significant cost, a major renovation is still far cheaper than an entirely new build, which was estimated to come in at \$180 million for a facility with the same features as the proposed revitalization plan.
- The SRD is already contributing to a reserve fund to help pay for this project and does not plan to increase the amount that is collected by taxpayers to cover this increase in cost. The plan is to extend the length of the borrowing term rather than increase the annual tax amounts.
- The goal is to have provincial and federal grants cover the remainder of the cost. Staff are working on an application to the newly-created Canada-British Columbia Investing in Canada Infrastructure Fund which provides 73.3 per cent funding for successfully-selected projects.
- Importantly, a major renovation such as this will save money in the long-run. It will increase future revenues and reduce operational costs. It will also address the need for major capital works required to replace elements of the facility that are past their useful life. As an example, the existing 1970's pool basin is in need of replacement and to replace like-for-like may cost as much as \$18M and require an extensive shut-down.

MORE INFO TO COME

We are thankful for all of the feedback and support that has been provided by the community to date on this plan, and are excited to see a design in place that speaks to their key priorities. To provide a more in-depth update – and to say thank you in person – the SRD is planning public info sessions for early in 2019. Watch for more details soon.



An artistic rendering of the proposed new aquatic centre at Strathcona Gardens