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Media Release

For Immediate Release

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Recreation Centre Referendum: A facility for many types of users

SUMMERLAND – On November 4, 2023, eligible voters in Summerland will be asked if they are in favour of the District borrowing up to \$50 million for the purpose of developing the proposed Summerland Recreation Centre – a new multi-purpose recreation facility intended to replace the Summerland Aquatic & Fitness Centre.

To help voters make a well-informed decision, the District of Summerland is offering information about the project and the referendum process through a series of weekly media releases, leading up to General Voting Day on November 4. Last week we discussed the [aquatic-specific components](#) of the project. This week we are focusing on the dryland amenities.

In addition to a new aquatic centre, what other amenities are included in the proposed facility and why?

During the [2021 Needs Assessment](#) study, the community advocated for the minimum/priority (core) spaces in a new recreation facility to include specific aquatic and dryland features, including:

- A fitness centre to accommodate drop-in workouts with weights, cardio machines and space for stretching
- Multi-purpose fitness/activity room (for activities such as yoga, dance, martial arts, etc.)
- Multi-purpose family/youth room (for youth, childminding, family programs, etc.)
- Universal access, family change rooms

During the public engagement process for the Needs Assessment (which included a public survey, stakeholder questionnaire, stakeholder workshops, and an open house), Summerland residents were asked to offer words to best describe their hopes for an aquatics and indoor recreation facility in the community. The following overlapping vision words and terms emerged:

- Be inclusive and welcoming of all people, ages and abilities
- Encourage active lifestyles
- Be flexible to meet community needs over time
- Create a central community hub
- Bring positive economic benefits
- A high-quality facility

The current Aquatic & Fitness Centre has a single, small (less than 500 square foot) multi-purpose room available that is used for rehabilitation programming, meetings, and birthday parties. The opportunities for this room are limited due to its size. Therefore, based on public and stakeholder consultation and the identified recreation, wellness and family

programming needs of the community, the proposed Recreation Facility has been designed to meet the above community requests, with a 60% larger facility footprint and the inclusion of two dedicated multi-purpose rooms. It is designed to be inclusive, family-friendly, and able to serve residents of all ages and abilities.

Why are family and youth resources included in the proposed facility?

Based on the Needs Assessment Report, family and young child (infant-preschool) drop-in programs were highlighted as a strong need across all engagement methods. Youth-oriented programs were noted by 49% of engagement participants as missing or needing expansion in the community. Youth services was the top priority for community services to be included in a recreation centre, over and above childcare and seniors' services. The Boys and Girls Club mentioned they see a very significant demand for youth programs and services and do not have adequate space to meet that demand. Having dedicated space for childminding while parents and caregivers participate in recreation activities was also an identified need.

Why is a dedicated fitness/activity multi-purpose room included in the proposed facility?

Due to the absence of programming space, the District's Recreation Department has had to seek out satellite locations throughout Summerland to offer fitness and recreation programs. This has created challenges related to equipment availability, rental fees, and room cancellations for other priority bookings. By adding a larger, dedicated space for this type of programming and hosting classes at the Recreation Centre, some classes may be able to increase capacity and residents may be able to benefit from accessing recreation and wellness resources in a centralized 'recreation and sports complex' setting.

For more information on the proposed Summerland Recreation Centre project and the upcoming referendum, please visit www.summerland.ca/recreationcentre.

Reminder of the **Public Open House** on Wednesday October 11 from 4:00 – 7:00 pm in the Banquet Room of the Summerland Arena & Curling Club.

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For more information:

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