

November 30, 2020

MEDIA RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Edmonton Communities' Deep Dive: Joint Position on Scona, Oliver and Eastglen

There is no doubt that Edmonton has been dealt a difficult hand with reduced municipal funding and the rise of COVID. However, Edmontonians need their City to be there for them now more than ever. Under the Fall 2020 Supplemental Budget Adjustment, the City of Edmonton could trade Edmonton's current and future residents access to several community hubs to save \$1.4M. This is not a worthwhile tradeoff.

Community leagues and other organizations surrounding Scona and Eastglen indoor pools, Oliver outdoor pool, as well as Tipton and Oliver arenas have issued a joint position, "Edmonton Communities' Deep Dive" that proposes a different path forward for these social and recreation facilities. It includes both short-term and long-term considerations.

"Oliver is Edmonton's most densely populated neighbourhood. Taxes collected from our residents supplement necessary things across the entire city. However, as the city continues to invest heavily in other communities, but Oliver repeatedly sees our amenities ignored or taken away, resentment builds. It doesn't have to be this way." says Robyn Paches, President of Oliver Community League.

Rick McAdie is both a teacher at Strathcona High School and President of Bellevue Community League that is working to keep Eastglen Pool open. "These facilities matter. I've seen these pools change lives - the lives of students on the Scona Lords swim team and folks who seek the wellness opportunities and proximity of Eastglen. Eastglen should not be compared with larger facilities like Commonwealth because it services an entirely different segment of Edmontonians."

"We know that Scona Pool is not suitable for long term rehabilitation and will need to be replaced. Until it can be replaced it remains a valuable amenity to the community. At the same time, the city is recovering from COVID and needs to look at the way it builds and operates differently. I think there's a real opportunity for city-wide application in piloting Rollie Miles Rec Centre as a new model that is mindful of the city's bottom line through alternative financing options, fulfills the goals of the City Plan, Energy Transition, and more" says Julie Kusiek, President of Queen Alexandra Community League.

The five short and three long term actions being proposed for City Council this upcoming budget are:

Short Term:

- 1) Continue to operate Scona pool, Oliver outdoor pool and Eastglen pool. These pools are important to maintain the vibrancy in their communities and support the goal of 15 minute communities in the City Plan.
- 2) Communities need transparency in city decision-making. We need access to user numbers to support these community assets.
- 3) Core neighbourhoods need reinvestment as populations increase with densification.
- 4) The city requires a new recreation model that reflects the city's commitment to building 15-minute communities. For example, Rollie Miles Rec Centre represents an opportunity to pilot both a small scale model for local recreation in addition to alternative financing for construction, operations and maintenance.
- 5) While all facilities are important, our priority is to keep pools open.

Long Term:

- 1) Eastglen is rehabilitated and stays open for future generations.
- 2) Oliver has better pedestrian/bike/public transit connections to existing recreation + new community hub.
- 3) Scona pool is replaced with Rollie Miles Rec Centre as a pilot for social & recreational community opportunities throughout Edmonton.

Community members will be speaking to these points and more at the December 3, 2020 public hearing. Read the full joint position [here](#).

Media inquiries can be directed to Julie Kusiek by emailing president@qacl.ca or via Twitter [@JulieKusiek](https://twitter.com/JulieKusiek).