

COUNCIL REPORT

To: Mayor & Council

From: Recreation Services

Date: February 21, 2024

Subject: Recreation Access Program Update

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT Council direct staff on next steps.

BACKGROUND:

At the Regular Council Meeting on November 14, 2022, Council directed staff to provide a report reviewing the Recreation Access Program (Policy 8.1) eligibility requirements, income levels and referral/approval options, motion #32696.

The current program is for individuals with limited income and provides free facility access for 12 months. Applicant(s) must be a permanent resident who lives within the District of Mackenzie or surrounding area who qualify under one of the following categories:

- 1) *Referral* - Referred by the Ministry of Children & Family Development/Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation.
- 2) *BC Seniors Supplement Recipient*.
- 3) *Others in Need* - Providing the previous years' Notice of Assessment that is below the qualifying income levels on the application form.

Qualifying Income Levels	
# in family	Level of household income yearly
1	\$18,000.00
2	\$22,453.00
3	\$28,541.00
4	\$32,973.00
5	\$35,973.00
6	\$38,973.00
7	\$41,916.00

The current low income cut-off levels for statistics Canada are slightly above our existing program levels based on population under 30,000:

Low income cut-off		Low income cut-offs before tax, 1992 base			
Geography		Canada			
Community size	Family size	2018	2019	2020	2021
Population under 30,000	1 person	20,301	20,696	20,848	21,548
	2 persons	25,271	25,764	25,953	26,825
	3 persons	31,068	31,673	31,906	32,978
	4 persons	37,722	38,457	38,740	40,041
	5 persons	42,783	43,617	43,938	45,413
	6 persons	48,253	49,193	49,555	51,219
	7 persons or more	53,722	54,769	55,172	57,024

Here are some other low income cut-off levels, selected by proximity to Mackenzie and/or similar population:

Population	24,115	2,970	2,611	2,799	
Family Size	Quesnel	Pemberton	Fort Nelson	Cowichan Bay	Average
1	\$20,848	\$18,192	\$37,957	\$27,514	\$26,128
2	\$25,953	\$22,647	\$44,322	\$34,254	\$31,794
3	\$31,906	\$27,841	\$54,728	\$42,110	\$39,146
4	\$38,740	\$33,804	\$57,692	\$51,128	\$45,341
5	\$43,938	\$38,339	\$82,717	\$57,988	\$55,746
6	\$49,555	\$43,242	\$85,674	\$65,400	\$60,968
7+	\$55,172	\$48,142	\$88,633	\$72,814	\$66,190

SUMMARY:

The intent of the Recreation Access Program is to allow recreation facility access for residents of Mackenzie and surrounding area who are in financial need or are referred to the program via Ministry of Children & Family Development/Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation. As of January 1, 2024, we currently have 50 adult users, 30 youth users, and 17 child users on this program.

Staff feel that increasing the qualifying income level, adding additional referral options such as School District 57 and/or Mackenzie Community Services, and offering Little Mac season passes will increase the uptake of this program. Therefore, helping to improve the lives of more members in our community.

The free facility access memberships and Little Mac season passes would incur minimal costs and loss of revenue, as most applicants would not have previously purchased a membership.

COUNCIL PRIORITIES:

Community and Social Development

- Our investment in the municipality's services and infrastructure, our commitment to principles of social equity and well-being, and our belief in the value of resident engagement, creates a healthy community in which everyone feels valued and enjoys a high quality of life.

Strong Governance and Finances

- As the municipality's elected governing body, we serve all residents and businesses in the community. We engage residents and stakeholders on important issues and make our decisions through open and transparent processes. We are careful in our use of resources, mindful of the need to maintain programs and services, while also meeting the community's infrastructure needs.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:

Terry Gilmer, Director of Recreation Services

Reviewed By: Corporate and Financial Services

Approved By: Chief Administrative Officer