

Engagement Summary: All Ages Activity Centre in Rutland



A component of



**Building a
Stronger Kelowna**

Community, Sport & Wellness Facilities



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Introduction and Background

Building a Stronger Kelowna Initiative

In October 2023, Council approved funding to plan, design, and construct the Building a Stronger Kelowna Initiative. Projects include redevelopment of Parkinson Recreation Centre, new all-ages activity centres in Mission and Glenmore, optimization of the sports field in Rutland, and advancing community partnerships for shared facility use with partners like Okanagan College and Okanagan Regional Library.

New All Ages Activity Centre in Rutland

In September 2024, Council adopted the 10-Year Capital Plan that included \$23 million of approved funding for a new all ages activity centre in Rutland (referred to as Rutland Lions Activity Centre in the 10-Year Capital Plan).

Public Engagement

The City of Kelowna is developing a functional plan for a community, sport, and wellness facility. Listening and learning to what matters to residents in Rutland is a vital step as we finalize functional plans. This report outlines public consultation opportunities and findings specific to how residents see themselves using this space when it is complete, what perceived service gaps may exist in the area, and understanding what residents appreciate about their community today.



Engagement Overview

In September 2024, the City asked for public input to help shape functional plans for a new all ages activity centre to be developed in Rutland beside Lions Park.

Engagement on neighbourhood activity centres builds upon 2022 City-wide engagement for the development of Kelowna's Indoor Recreation Facilities Strategy (IRFS), endorsed by Council in April 2023. The Indoor Recreation Facilities Strategy guides prioritization of the City's facility investment and development of indoor sport and recreation infrastructure in the face of the City's growth and change over the next 10-20 years. Data captured through the Indoor Recreation Facility Strategy engagement process, which featured a postcard survey, sent to all residents in Kelowna, highlighted resident values and considerations, community need, priority of public investment and public sentiment specific to funding.

The Indoor Recreation Facility Strategy supported and built upon findings from previous City infrastructure studies and plans including an Infrastructure Planning study in 2011 and Sport and Recreation Infrastructure Plan developed in 2013 where the redevelopment of Parkinson Recreation Centre was identified as the City's top priority project.

Public input is among several considerations that will go into finalizing functional plans for Rutland's new activity centre in addition to current and future facility demand, trends and best practices, regional supply, and related feedback. This work will lead to a shared vision for the new all ages activity centre in Rutland. This report outlines the public consultation initiatives we used and our findings about how residents see themselves using the space and what programming and services they want in the space.

Engagement Format

Engagement was held and feedback sought through two opportunities.

1. An in-person opportunity at the Kelowna Scarecrow Festival on Saturday, September 21, 2024, at Rutland Lions Park (175 Gray Road).
2. An online survey and a Dream It Activity were available at the City of Kelowna's online engagement portal.

Both formats provided information for residents to learn more about the site of the activity centre, provide input on the programs and services they would like to see in the future activity centre, and ask questions.

Engagement Methods

Engagement occurred over three weeks and included both online and in-person options. A project page, surveys, and activities were used so that residents could provide feedback about how they would use and what they would want to see in the new all ages activity centre in Rutland.

Engagement Summary

At the in-person session, 103 festival attendees participated in the “Dream It” exercise. The online portal received 1732 page visits and 786 contributions to our online “Dream It” exercise and the related survey that asked how residents use existing City facilities and what programs and services they would like to see in the new all-ages Activity Centre in Rutland.



Limitations

While a variety of tactics were used to reach a diverse range of citizens (see: Public Outreach), results from open surveys such as the one provided do not represent a statistically significant sample of Kelowna citizens. Due to the opt-in and open nature of participation, results do not necessarily reflect the views of all Kelowna citizens. In addition, special interest groups are likely to be over-represented in the results.

What We Learned

Themes that emerged from both the online and in-person engagement opportunities were

- A space to create was important to residents in Rutland. When asked what types of programs and services could be provided in this space responses included language classes, crafting classes (e.g., basket weaving, knitting, quilt making), art classes, music classes, and cooking classes.
- A space to learn/grow also received a high rating. Residents shared that the RutlandY kids programs fill up very quickly and that another facility would be a great resource for the community.
- Community connection rated as important to Rutland residents. Many residents shared their enthusiasm for learning about the cultures and traditions of their neighbours, that they want a space for community celebration and connection and that there is a need for affordable programs for both kids and adults.
- Overall, Rutland residents are excited and looking forward to the activity centre.





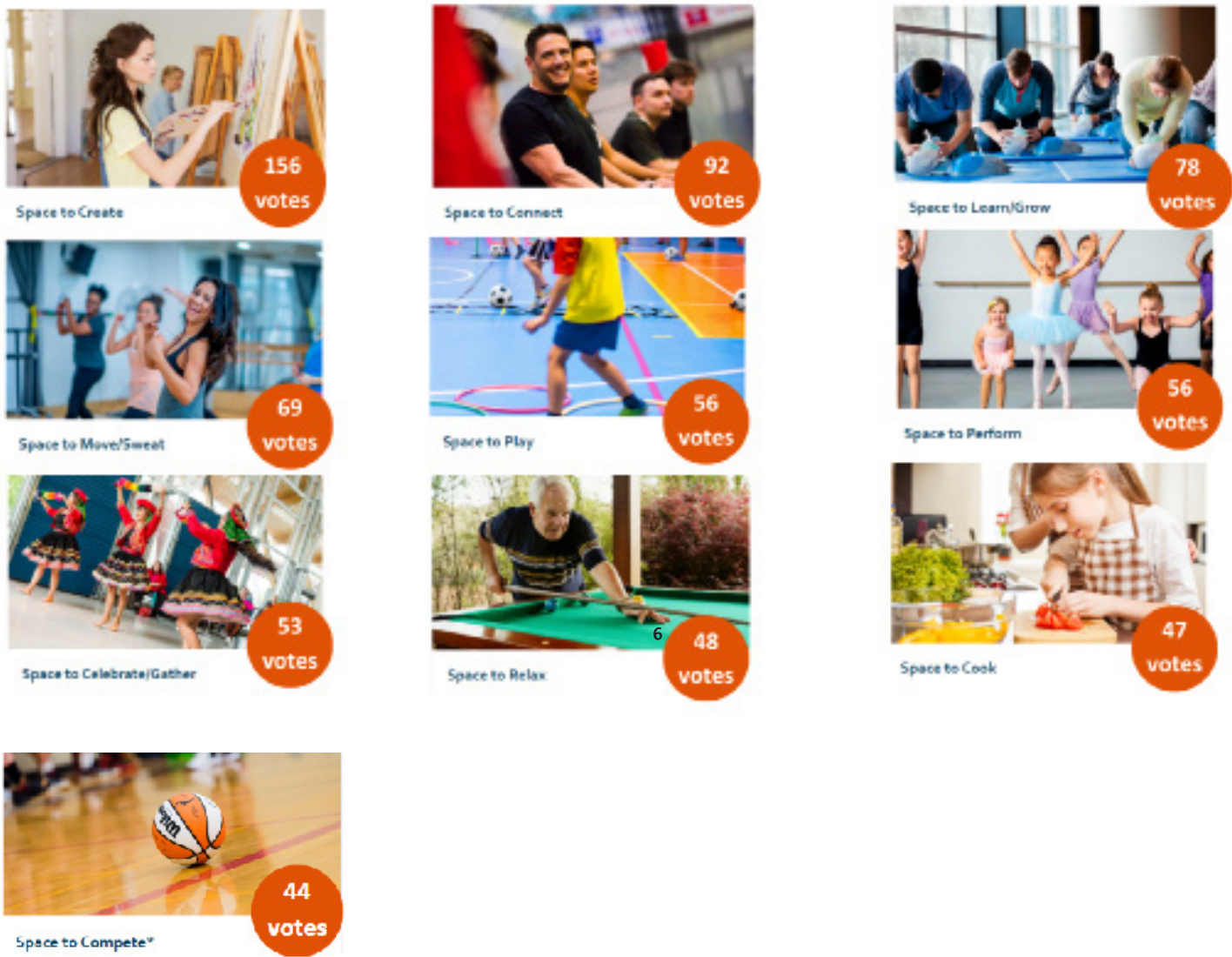
“Dream It” Activity

The “Dream It” activity asked participants to allocate points towards the types of programmable spaces they would most like to see in the new all ages activity centre in Rutland. Online participants could use a sliding point scale to a maximum of 10 points for each of the ten types of programmable spaces typically provided within the activity centre.



In-Person “Dream It” Results

The in-person engagement activity leveraged the existing Scarecrow Festival at Lions Park in Rutland and saw 103 participants. Participants were given 40 stickers to allocate to the types of programmable spaces they would like to see in the new all ages activity centre in Rutland. The results were:



Online “Dream It” Results

Online, the “Dream It” tool provided participants with a sliding point scale to a maximum of 10 points for each of the ten types of programmable spaces typically provided within the activity centre. 442 contributors used the scale to respond to the question, what would you use most in Rutland’s future activity centre? The results were:



Space to Learn/Grow

341
votes



Space to Move/Sweat

338
votes



Space to Play

334
votes



Space to Create

302
votes



Space to Celebrate/Gather

261
votes



Space to Relax

256
votes



Space to Connect

240
votes



Space to Perform

215
votes



Space to Cook

209
votes



Space to Compete*

179
votes

Combined “Dream It” Results

The top three results from the “Dream It” activity align with feedback received from the in-person and online engagement opportunities. Space to create, learn/grow and move/sweat were topics of discussion and interest for Rutland residents. The community is enthusiastic about opportunities for community connection, wellness, and kids programming for this space.

When adding the votes up from both the online and in-person “Dream It” activity the top three spaces that residents would like to see in the new all-ages activity centre in Rutland include:



Space to Create

458 votes



Space to Learn/Grow

419 votes



Space to Move/Sweat

407 votes

299

contributors participated in the survey

90%

of survey contributors currently use a recreation facility

Survey

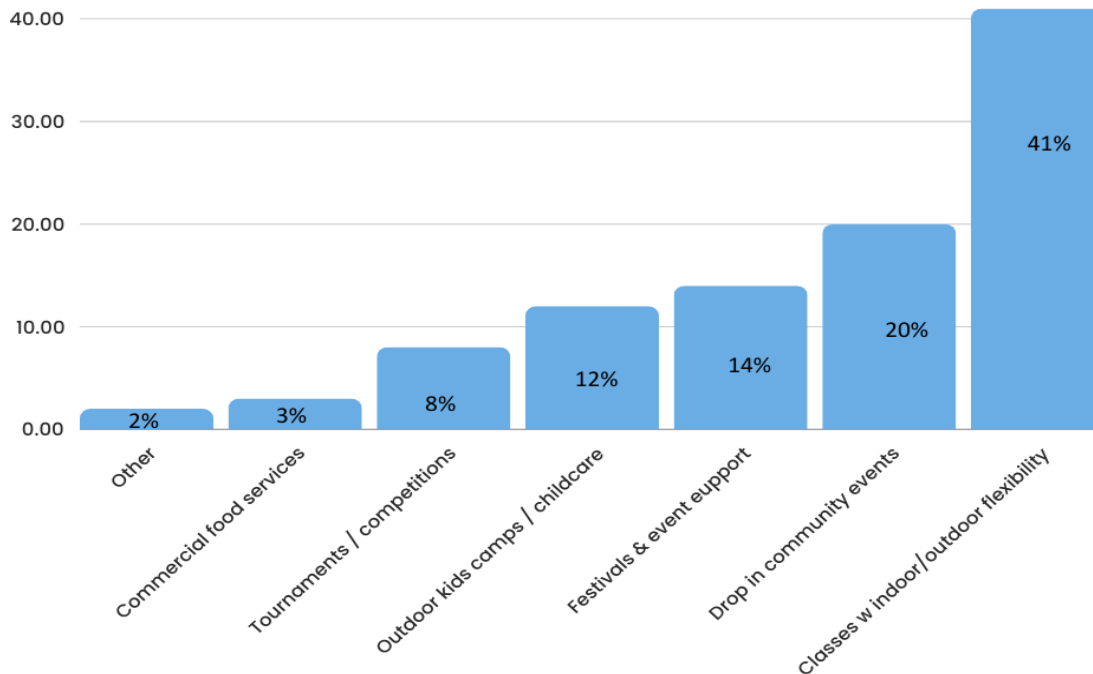
The second tool used for activity centre engagement was an online multiple-choice survey with opportunities for qualitative input. The survey sought to understand resident priorities and preference for indoor amenities including perceived service gaps within the neighbourhood.

299 contributors participated in the survey and 90 per cent of survey contributors currently use a recreation facility within the city of Kelowna.

Physical health and wellness ranked first and participating in activities with family and friends ranked second when survey respondents were asked to rank which activities they visit a recreation facility for.

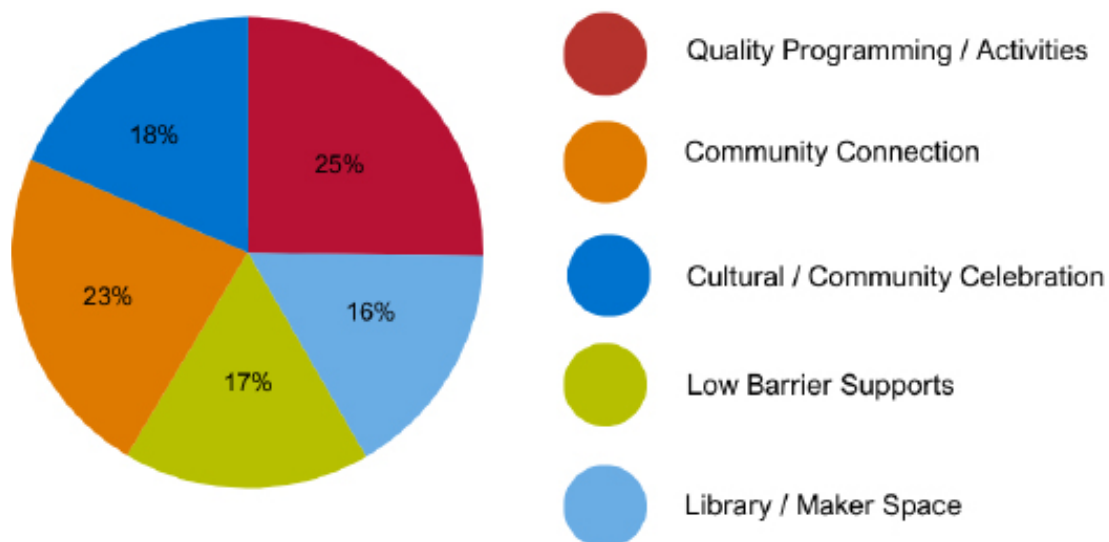
When asked what type of event or program residents in Rutland would like to see more of within the recreation park by adding a new all-ages activity centre in Rutland, the responses showed that a space for classes, programs and workshops with indoor/outdoor flexibility rated the highest, followed by drop in social and community events.

Top rated activities for the park / activity centre space



When asked to rate services that could be available at the new all ages activity centre in Rutland, contributors scored the following services as very or somewhat important:

How important are the following services in the Activity Centre?



Aesthetics and Environment

When asked if there were any service gaps in Rutland that could be addressed by an activity centre some themes emerged including:

Social Supports and Services

- Concern about folks who shelter outdoors in the area and supports available to help them.

Exercise and Fitness

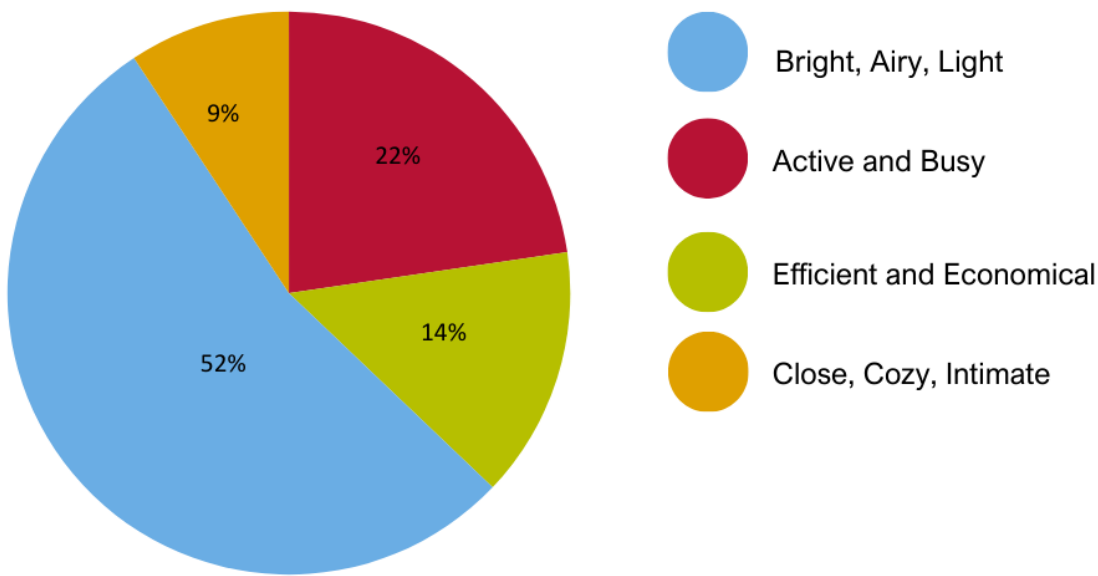
- Classes for older adults and people and kids with diverse abilities.

Programs and Amenities that Connect Community

- Suggestions include a brewery, a garden, and transportation options that accommodate people without a car

When asked, when you enter the new all ages activity centre in Rutland what words best describe what you think the space should be?

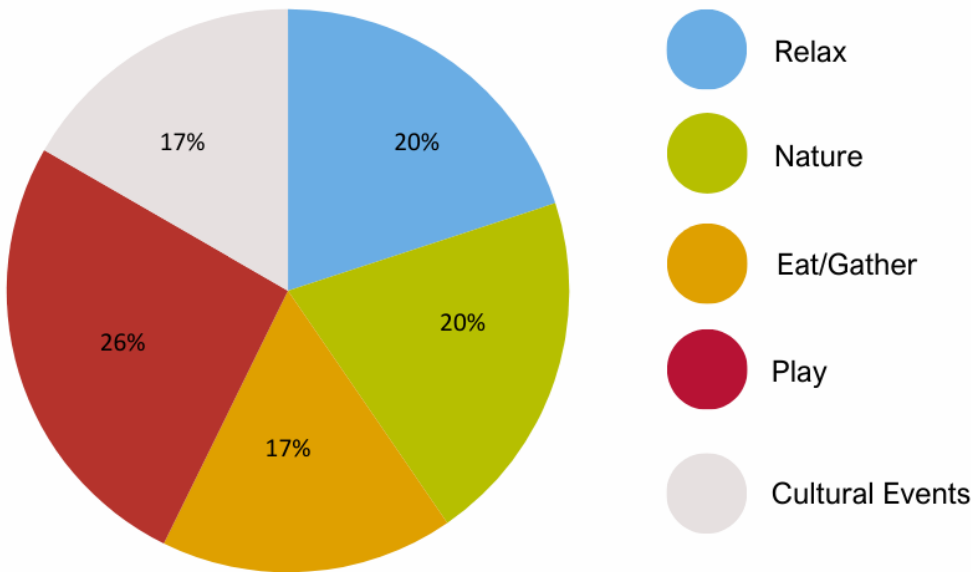
What words best describe what you think the space should be?



When we asked respondents what was the most important to them about the spaces at Lions Park?

A space to play for children and youth rated highest followed by a place to connect with nature and a space to relax.

What is most important to you about spaces at Lions Park?



Key themes

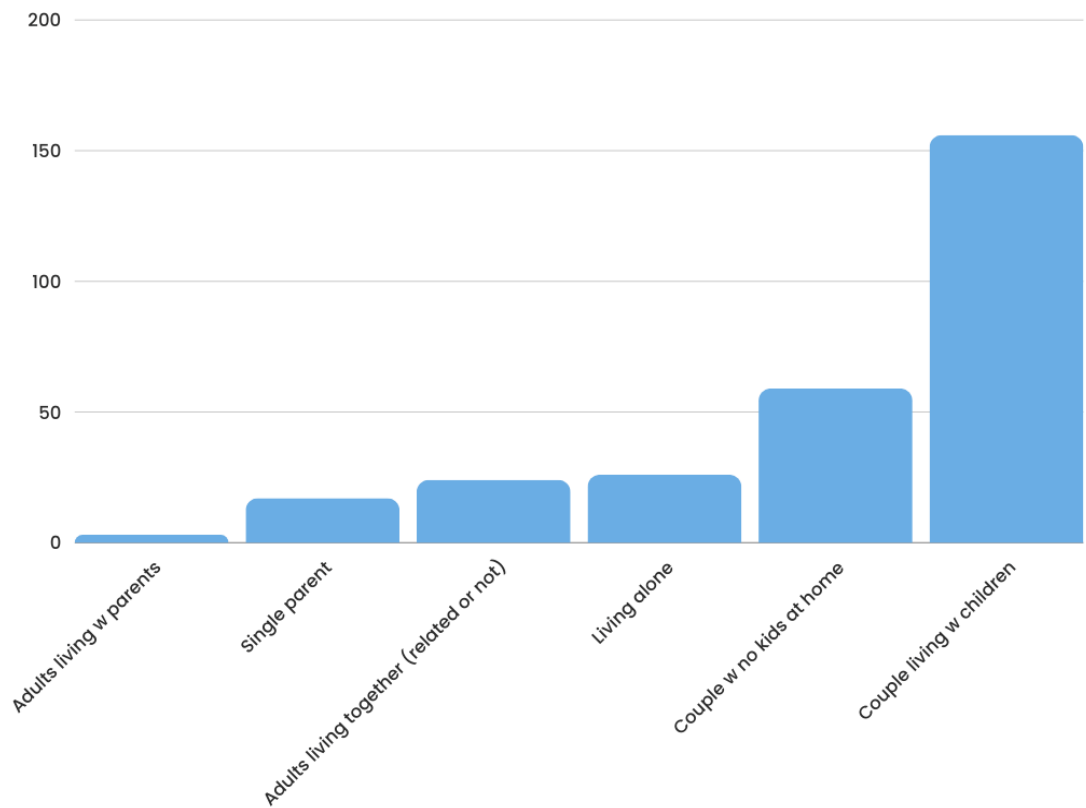
In comparing spaces to create, learn and grow, and move and sweat as the top results from the “Dream It” activity with the survey results, the community of Rutland values connection and creativity. They are keen on a space that is designed for creative pursuits, that can provide for kids, youth, to play, learn and grow and to offer a space for fitness and wellness.

There is enthusiasm for the new all ages Activity Centre and the positive impact it could have at Lions Park. A space that can offer indoor and outdoor programming based on seasons and community need is something that the Rutland residents are looking forward to. Additional comments and questions from both the online and in-person information sessions included:

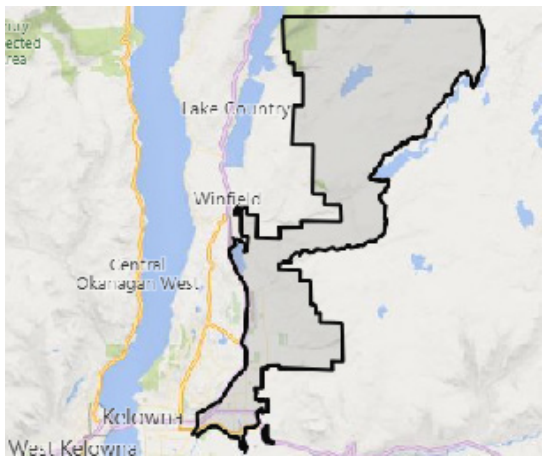
- Excitement for the project and interest in programming for kids and families.
- Participants were eager to know when the facility will be built and when they will be able to access programs and services.
- Discussion about ensuring that the activity centre is accessible by transit and easy to get to without relying on a car.
- Interest in the amount of available parking.
- Interest in activity centre funding and if the building of this will impact existing programs and/or facilities.
- Interest about how success of the activity centre will be measured.
- Request for inclusive programming so that children with diverse abilities can participate.
- Excitement about available space for not-for-profits to use for their own programming (e.g., Scouts and Guides).
- A design suggestion that included adding a covered area in Lions Park that is connected to the Activity Centre (e.g., roll out roof that is attached to the side of the Activity Centre facing Lion’s Park), where performances and community events could take place.

Participant overview

Residents that participated in both the online and in-person public consultation opportunities were a diverse mix of ages and backgrounds including young families and retirees. Most of the survey respondents were couples living with children followed by couples without children living at home and singles.



Most survey respondents were between the ages of 35 and 54. The majority of respondents participated in the survey because they love in the neighbourhood with 87 per cent of online respondents indicating that they live in the V1X postal code area which is in or near Rutland.



Public Outreach

To create awareness for the public consultation opportunities an advertising campaign was used that included the following:

Engagement Activity Results	Type of Space	Use
Space to Create	Multi-use	• Creative classes – art, crafting, music
Space to Learn	Lobby Sport Court Kitchen	• Drop-in classes • Community celebrations • Educational classes
Space to Move Space to Play	Multi-use	• Fitness and wellness classes



Conclusions & Next Steps

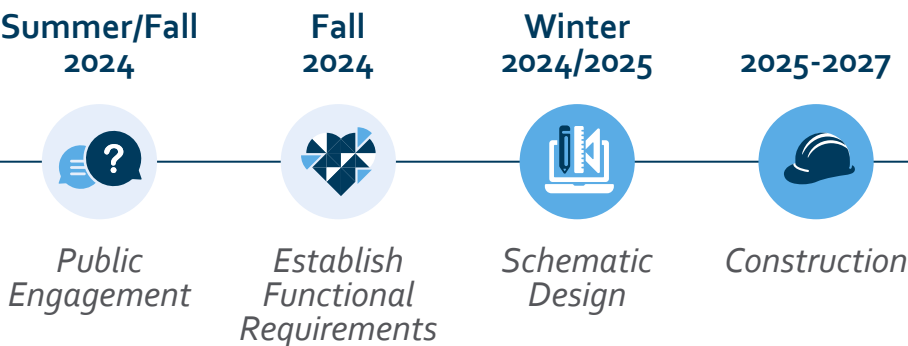
Public engagement revealed enthusiasm for the new all ages activity centre in

Rutland and the potential positive influence it could have on Lions Park. Residents value community connection and are wanting a space that inspires creativity, learning, and connection. Respondents appreciate the value of an indoor/outdoor space designed for flexibility so that it can accommodate lots of activities, ages, and interests.

The construction of a new all ages activity centre in Rutland will be built next to Lions Park and residents expressed concern about outdoor sheltering in the park. Therefore, considerations about social supports and programs may need to be considered when planning the design of the space.

The activity centre will act as a community hub bringing together residents for classes but also for cultural exchanges and community celebrations. The public consultation results indicate that this is more than a space for fitness it is a space for community connection. A true gathering place. A place to create, connect, learn, and grow in.

Public input will help inform final facility design to create a welcoming community space for all ages and abilities that support neighbourhood service needs and enhance what residents already love about where they live. Here is a general timeline of next steps for development of the all ages activity centre in Rutland:



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