

# Recreation Opportunities

Led by: Director of Recreation & Social Programs

## Service Description

Recreation Opportunities leads and invests in Calgary's publicly funded recreation sector, creating, planning and delivering spaces, programs, and services to help Calgarians thrive. We provide accessible and equitable recreation opportunities that improve quality of life, contribute to inclusive communities, and promote social, mental and physical wellbeing. We develop strategies to increase equitable access to year-round indoor and outdoor active living and play opportunities that meet the evolving and diverse needs of Calgarians.

## Service Updates

### Key Service Results

#### Awards

- Best Family Recreation Facility - Winner
- Best Extracurricular Programs for Preschoolers - Honourable Mention
- Best Extracurricular Program for School-Aged Children - Winner

Recreation Opportunities is making progress on returning to optimized service levels . Work supporting the initiative to recover our workforce has achieved good results, with staffing at 87 per cent of optimal levels, up from 75 per cent at the beginning of the year. In 2023, facility attendance is up over one million visits from 2022 (96 per cent of pre-pandemic levels). In 2023, Acadia Aquatic & Fitness Centre reopened resulting in all City-operated recreation facilities opening for the first time since COVID-19 impacted operations.

### Service Challenges

Inflation has been a significant factor impacting several capital projects experiencing gaps in project costs vs. total project budget. In addition, both internal and consultant capacity is delaying the progression of several strategies and projects, including GamePLAN and GamePLAN for Facilities. In affected projects, work is being reallocated to teams with the capacity to successfully undertake the work and strategies are underway.

While overall service delivery staffing is returning to optimal levels, hiring for specific skills (e.g., aquatics, skating and dance) has proved difficult. The labour market continues to be a challenge and is expected to remain volatile for three to five years.

### Trends & Potential Uncertainties

Recreation industry employment volatility, increased incidents of staff harassment and external societal stressors impacting staff are affecting Recreation Opportunities. More Calgarians are accessing Fee Assistance or may not be participating in recreation opportunities due to economic factors. Recent capital investments are not sufficient to meet Calgarians' evolving recreation preferences. Capital costs continue to escalate and a lack of deliberate infrastructure investments may not provide the level of service Calgarians expect.



# Measuring Our Performance

## Legend

— Actuals

■ Expected Future Performance

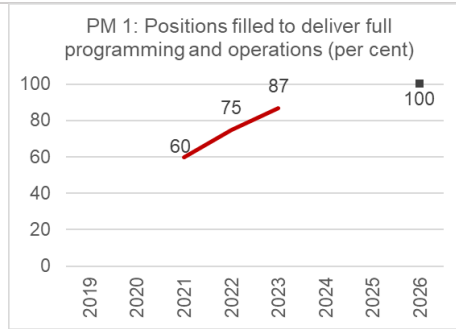
➔ Progressing as planned

⊖ Not progressing as planned

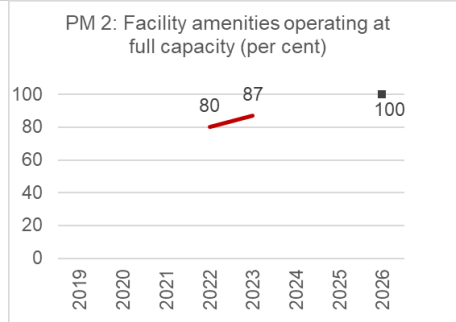
## Performance Measures

## Story behind the numbers

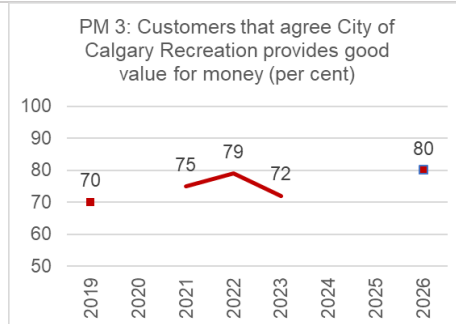
## Status



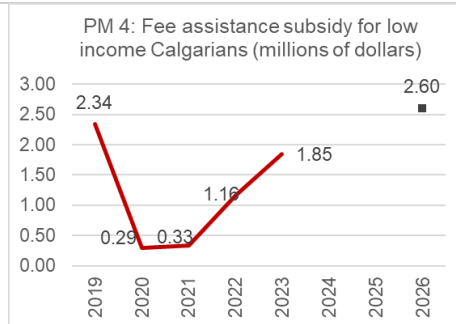
Good progress has been made to improve staffing levels. Operational staffing levels have remained stable since the summer. Current programming staffing levels are at 79 per cent of optimal levels and operations staffing levels are at 88 per cent. Recreation Opportunities will continue to focus on staff recruitment and retention in 2024.



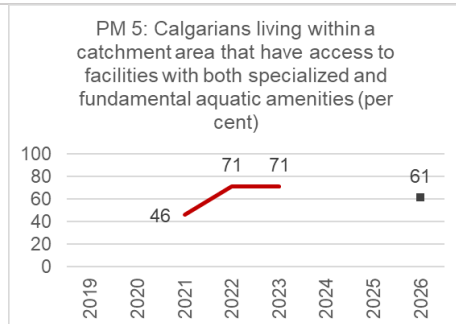
Operating hours at City-operated aquatic facilities are not yet fully optimized. Service adjustments consider workforce availability, seasonal facility use patterns and expectations of customers. With an increased staffing complement, more program hours can be offered, enabling the launch of new and previously enjoyed programming opportunities.



Recreation Opportunities delivers programs, services and access to facilities for Calgarians of all income levels. Customers continue to recognize the value of the programs and services provided and user fees remain competitive in the market. In 2023, 72 per cent of customers agreed that City-operated recreation programs and services provide good value for money. Recreation Opportunities' focus on optimizing staffing levels, operating hours and program offerings will help ensure recreation programs and services continue to provide good value to Calgarians.



Demand for Fee Assistance continues to grow as Calgarians face ongoing economic challenges and recreation offerings recover from COVID-19 impacts. In 2023, the value of subsidies provided to Calgarians living with low-income was significantly higher than it was in 2022. Recreation Opportunities will continue to implement strategies to support usage of Fee Assistance among those qualified through Fair Entry.



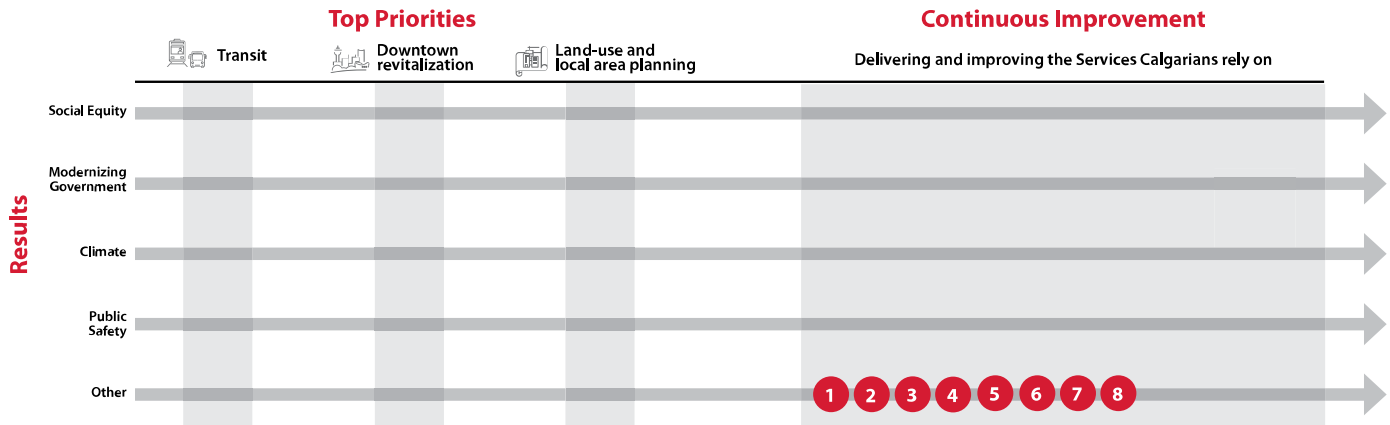
Calgary's aquatic facilities inventory has not changed and 71 per cent of Calgarians continue to live within the catchment area of facilities with specialized and fundamental amenities. Newer aquatic and fitness facilities that provide specialized (e.g., water play features) and fundamental amenities (e.g., flatwater pools) are important community assets. The MNP Community & Sport Centre will create a multi-purpose hub and fill gaps in amenity availability for surrounding communities. More investment is needed to maintain or increase this measure as Calgary's population continues to grow.









# Progress on Service Delivery

## Alignment with Council Refined Priorities and Result Areas



- Legend**
- Completed
  - Progressing as planned
  - Not progressing as planned
  - Not started
  - Initiative number

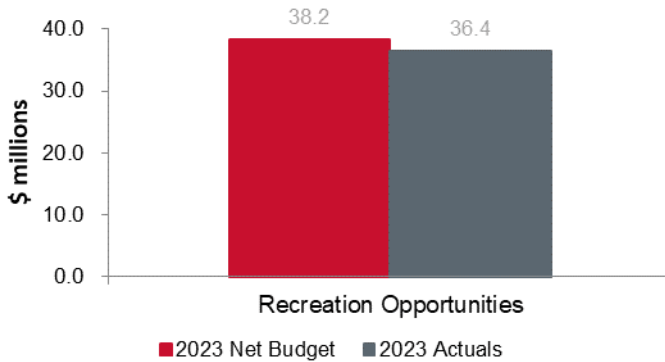
Initiative	Initiative Update	Status
1 Offer full programming and operations by recruiting and retaining the required complement of staff to recover our workforce post-pandemic.	Staff wellbeing and satisfaction is critical to both recruitment and retention. A project to strengthen a respectful workplace and improve staff safety has been implemented, including staff training supports. Signage promoting inclusivity and clarifying behaviour expectations of customers has been posted at facilities. The Code 86/81 Wage Review & Implementation addressed market changes and brought seasonal staff pay in line with market. As staffing levels stabilize, a new-hire onboarding and training project is underway to strengthen our workforce and increase retention of new hires.	
2 Return to full amenity and service hours to meet the recreational needs of Calgarians by stabilizing and recovering direct delivery of recreation opportunities post-pandemic.	Open and accessible facilities with a full complement of programming will help bring service offerings in line with Calgarians' expectations. The Arts Centre Staffing Model is underway, with a review of facility operations continuing into 2024. In 2023, Acadia Aquatic & Fitness Centre reopened resulting in all City-operated recreation facilities opening for the first time since COVID-19 impacted operations. With an increased staffing complement, the service line can run more program hours and relaunch new and previously enjoyed programming opportunities.	
3 Support Calgarians' ability to experience the benefits of recreation by providing a range of equitable and accessible recreation opportunities that encourage active daily living.	A Program Strategy is underway to support a coordinated approach to program delivery for Recreation Opportunities and Social Programs. Several innovative technology projects underway will increase staff capacity and improve our ability to meet customers' expectations, including an on-line booking system and digital waivers. An Equity in Service Delivery grant for Village Square Leisure Centre funded inclusion training for staff, youth engagement and safety projects and access to low-income transit passes.	
4 Deliver equitable and accessible recreation opportunities by stewarding the publicly-funded recreation system to enable and support partners.	Recreation Opportunities stewards public recreation in Calgary and works with its partners to fill amenity gaps. Inflation continued to be a significant factor in several capital projects experiencing gaps in project costs vs. total project budget through 2023. Two major capital projects have completed detailed design: the Rocky Ridge Athletic Park will address a long-standing need for outdoor artificial turf fields in northwest Calgary and the Soccer Centre Dome & Artificial Turf Field Upgrade will provide citizens with a high-quality, year-round practice and play space.	

Initiative	Initiative Update	Status
5 Provide sport leadership, sport partnership, sport opportunities, and sport experiences by progressing the Sport For Life Policy.	The Sport for Life Policy focuses on working with partners to provide Calgarians access to participate in sports. The Sport Environment pillar will develop a transparent, repeatable process to onboard new and emerging sport groups to determine their asset requirements and how to accommodate them either through the City's existing inventory or through capital investments. The Emerging Sport Study will identify emerging sports and outline responsibilities with other service lines. A consultant has been onboarded and framework development will begin in 2024.	
6 Better demonstrate the value of the publicly-funded recreation system, through work with our partners to develop and report on performance measures.	This work is resourced to begin in a future year.	
7 Lead and invest in the future of Calgary's publicly-funded recreation system by resourcing and prioritizing the GamePLAN and Facilities Investment Plan.	GamePLAN is the 10-year vision for the public recreation system and will define what we and our partners are collectively striving for. GamePLAN has completed partner engagement. Public engagement continues until mid Q1 2024 and staff engagement begins Q1 2024. GamePLAN for Facilities (formerly the Facilities Investment Plan) continues to progress with the aim of presenting to Council alongside GamePLAN in Q3 2024.	
8 Optimize current service delivery through a strategic approach to pricing, product and service offerings, and policy to meet market demand.	Several sites have been identified for service provision evaluation, including Forest Lawn Multi-Service Centre, Rocky Ridge Athletic Complex and Belmont Fieldhouse. Service level agreements outlining the support Recreation & Social Program's Customer Service Centre provides to Parks & Open Spaces were presented with sign off pending. These agreements include rentals, Intelli and golf support. A draft service level agreement has been completed for the Calgary Board of Education. Once reviewed by Law, this agreement will support the 2024-25 school year.	



## Service Updates on Financial Performance

### Net Operating Budget and Actuals as of December 31, 2023

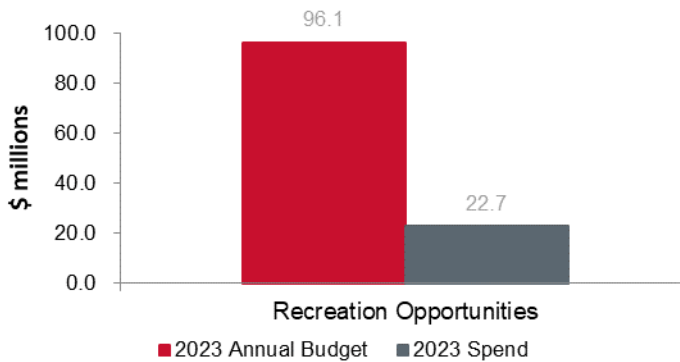


### Operating Budget Updates - 2023 net operating budget vs actuals:

Recreation Opportunities has a favourable operating variance of \$1.8 million. Recreation facility operations continue to recover and maintain a positive trend; however, operations remain below historical levels. Revenues and attendance remain below historical levels, but intentional workforce management and facility operating hours offset impacts to revenue and generate cost savings.

City-operated Golf Courses exceeded a break-even position in 2023 and did not require the use of the tax supported portion of the budget as a result of higher-than-expected revenues.

### Capital Budget and Spend as of December 31, 2023



### Capital Budget Updates - 2023 total capital budget vs 2023 spend:

Recreation Opportunities spent 23.7 per cent of its 2023 capital budget. This spend rate reflects the challenges of delivering capital projects in 2023. Inflationary pressures meant a number of projects could not progress without adjustments to scope and alternative funding options.

Delays to active projects with funding shortfalls due to cost escalation are addressed. The Soccer Centre Dome & Artificial Turf Field Upgrade project also faced cost escalations and delays, resulting in the single largest unspent budget for Recreation Opportunities in 2023 at \$22 million. The low spend rate is also a result of misalignment between project budgets and current execution schedules and plans; e. g., Foothills Fieldhouse.

Several key projects were successfully at or near completion by the end of 2023, including the Vivo Expansion, substantial completion of renovations to Glenmore Athletic Park and resurfacing of the Foothills Athletic Park Track. The Foothills track is now ready for the 2024 & 2025 National Youth Track and Field Championships.

Looking ahead, cost escalations for the Soccer Centre and Rocky Ridge Athletic Park have been resolved through the 2024 Budget Adjustments process and project delivery will ramp up over the coming year.