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# City of Miramichi Multiplex Project

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## Needs Assessment and Business Plan Final Report

**Prepared by:**

dmA Planning & Management Services Inc.,

November, 2015



November 18, 2015

Ms. Suzanne Watters  
Director  
Community Wellness and Recreation Dept.  
City of Miramichi  
94 General Manson Way  
Miramichi, NB E1N 6K8

Dear Ms. Watters:

**Re. Multiplex - Needs Assessment and Business Plan**

We are pleased to provide our final report for the City of Miramichi Multiplex Needs Assessment and Business Plan. The study confirmed the need for new and replacement indoor recreation facilities to serve residents in Miramichi and provides an initial projection of operating costs. The proposed Multiplex will replace aging facilities, significantly enhance programming in the community and contribute to operating efficiencies.

As you know, we have recommended that the Department undertake an operational review to investigate the implications of the Multiplex for current staffing, operations and policies. This is an important next step in the planning for this major new recreation facility.

It has been a pleasure working with you on this project. We trust the recommendations will provide a solid foundation for the Department as it continues to work toward the development of the Multiplex.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jim Morgenstern', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Jim Morgenstern, MCIP  
Principal

cc: Ms. Anna Sampson, Practice Leader for Sport and Entertainment, Atlantic Canada. Architecture49

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## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

In February 2015, Architecture49 and dmA Planning and Management Services were retained by the City of Miramichi for pre-design services with respect to the Miramichi Multiplex project. Part of this assignment included a comprehensive Needs Assessment and Business Plan for the proposed Multiplex.

### **1.1 ORGANIZATION OF THE REPORT**

Section One: Background and Approach to the Needs Assessment

Section Two: Needs Assessment – Major Facility Components

Section Three: Business Plan

Section Four: Conclusion and Next Steps

Appendix A – The Benefits of Multipurpose Recreation Complexes

Appendix B – Recreation Participation Trends

Appendix C – Sport and Recreation User Group Input

Appendix D – Key Informants Interviewed

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## 2.0 BACKGROUND AND APPROACH TO THE NEEDS ASSESSMENT

### 2.1 BACKGROUND

In Oct. 2013, the City prepared a Recreation Facility Needs Assessment Plan<sup>1</sup>. The report documented the community's interest in improved and expanded recreation facilities. While the report was not a comprehensive needs or market assessment, it did provide a Vision for the future development of indoor and outdoor recreation facilities based on considerable community consultation. Key findings of the community consultation aspects of the 2013 Study include:

- “Almost all respondents [to the online survey] believe that facilities are in declining condition and require significant repair” .....”in general residents support the decommissioning of the arenas and pool facilities to support the creation of a wellness centre” (P.3-4)
- “residents do not believe that merely replacing existing facilities meets future needs” (p.4)
- “the City should explore the centralization and amalgamation of sport assets” (p. 4)
- “significant civic, recreation and cultural facilities should be planned and located as “complete facilities”. Thus the entire family has a reason to participate .....[and these facilities} should integrate sport, recreation and cultural assets to create multi-use and multi-cultural destinations”.

Building on this community input, the 2013 Study envisioned a recreation concept that included The Miramichi Wellness Centre as “one of New Brunswick’s most significant cultural, recreation and sports venues”. While the specific elements of the Centre are not identified and the report goes on to recommend a major feasibility study to clarify needs and create a business plan, the concept of the Wellness Centre is consistent with major multipurpose recreation facilities that are increasingly the norm in other Canadian communities.

It should be noted that the Vision articulated in the 2013 Report is not a new idea. This interest in improved and consolidated facilities is long-standing and over 15 years ago Miramichi’s most recent Recreation Master Plan called for the “rationalization” of major recreation facilities.

Following the October 2013 Report, a second study was commissioned to investigate the relative costs and benefits associated with renovating and updating existing City of Miramichi

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<sup>1</sup> Council Report. City of Miramichi. Recreation Facility Needs Assessment Plan. Trace Consulting. October 2013.

facilities or replacing them with a new multi-purpose recreation complex<sup>2</sup>. This study, led by Architecture49, concluded that replacement of the aging recreational infrastructure while resulting in higher capital costs offered a number of advantages. This study also included a discussion of the benefits associated with major multipurpose recreation complexes which is reproduced in this report. (See Appendix A).

As part of the Architecture49 2013 study a Discovery Session was held with the Building Viability Committee to clarify the key components of a possible Miramichi Multiplex. At that time, it was determined the Multiplex would include a twin pad arena, with one ice surface accommodating 1800 seats for events that would attract spectators. The facility would also include an aquatic facility with a 25 metre, 6 lane pool ideally with multiple tanks which could accommodate instructional/competitive, recreational and therapeutic uses. Finally, the Multiplex would include a gymnasium/fieldhouse with appropriate finishes and fitments for traditional indoor sports (such as basketball, badminton and volleyball) and flexible multipurpose space capable of accommodating a wide range of other community activities. An indoor walking track was also to be included in the fieldhouse area. The Multiplex would not accommodate artificial indoor turf, which, if warranted, will presumably be made available at an outdoor venue with the potential for seasonal enclosure.

The scope of our work included a needs assessment and business plan for these facilities only (aquatic centre; twin pad arena; multipurpose space and gymnasium/fieldhouse). During the study process, other possible community facilities were mentioned as potential components of the Multiplex. These included other sports facilities but also such things as the public library. While the other facilities mentioned would be compatible with the Multiplex and have often been included as components of major multipurpose recreation centres, they were not part of the needs assessment and business plan. They could however be added in the future if additional study indicated this was warranted and the site and building could accommodate the expansion.

The Multiplex would replace the Lord Beaverbrook Arena, Miramichi Civic Centre<sup>3</sup>, the Chatham and Kinsmen outdoor pools, the indoor pool at the Miramichi Valley High School and the Lindon and Golden Hawk Recreation Centres.

Finally, it should be noted that while this report does not address the broader community and social benefits of improved and expanded recreation services, we believe these are important considerations when evaluating the value of this project. Relative to the Province as a whole,

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<sup>2</sup> Architecture49 Recreation Infrastructure Assessment and Comparison Report. 2014.

<sup>3</sup> While this was the understanding entering the needs assessment, a decision was made to phase the twin pad arena. The Civic Centre will be retained until the second phase of arena development. See Section Two for additional discussion.



the Miramichi region is more likely to report unhealthy eating habits and unhealthy weight for children, youth and adults. While other health behaviours, including sedentary lifestyles and alcohol and tobacco use are more consistent with Provincial levels, they still indicate potential health risks<sup>4</sup>. The role that recreation can play in community health and wellness is understood and reflected in the mission and operating philosophy of the Community Wellness and Recreation (CWR) Department. The Multiplex would contribute to the wellness goals of the Department.

## 2.2 APPROACH TO THE NEEDS ASSESSMENT

### 2.2.1 Needs Assessment Process

The following factors were considered in the needs assessment.

- **Service Area Population/Population Change:** The current and future population defines the potential market for the Multiplex. Both the City's population and that in the regional service area were considered.
- **Availability and Use of Current Facilities:** The proposed Multiplex will replace a number of existing facilities. A major consideration is the extent to which prime time is scheduled to capacity in these facilities as well as any indication of unmet demand.
- **Trends in Participation.** Anticipated change in people's interest in participating in various recreational activities is a major consideration in projecting needs.
- **Community Demand.** The demand for additional facility time among organized sport and recreation groups and other potential users.
- **Levels of Supply in Similar Sized Communities.** Where possible the facility supply per capita in Miramichi was compared to other communities of a similar size. Despite the limitations associated with comparing communities in this manner because of the many intervening variables, population based comparisons can provide a useful benchmark to assist in the assessment. Comparative supply levels was based on data for Ontario communities of 10,000 to 50,000 population. We used Ontario data because it offers a much larger sample of communities (36 for 10,000-50,000 population). In addition, because this was a special study<sup>5</sup> that was undertaken by dmA based on a survey of all major Ontario municipalities we were able to control for quality of the data and ensure that comparable facilities were included in each of the major categories used for benchmarking. The data was compiled in 2005 and is therefore somewhat out of date. It likely underestimates levels of supply in most communities.

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<sup>4</sup> New Brunswick Health Council. My Community at a Glance. Health Indicators for the Miramichi region.

<sup>5</sup> Municipal Recreation Facility Inventory Study. dmA Planning & Management Services, 2005

These were the key considerations in the needs assessment. The following describes key aspects of the study process:

- Background information for the analysis was provided by City staff. This included the inventory and current levels of use of existing facilities.
- The input of organized sport groups was gathered at a workshop and with a detailed survey. In a few cases, user groups were contacted for follow up interviews to clarify survey information. This input was the primary source of information concerning current and future community-based demand. (see Appendix C).
- Interviews were conducted with CWR Department staff, other municipal officials, agency representatives and community members. (See Appendix D for a list of key informants).

As noted above, community based demand for facilities was measured through the input of the users, key informant interviews and CWR staff. We did not conduct surveys of the community at large, focus groups or other methods. For most of the facilities considered in this study, the core user groups are the best measure of demand and, based on our experience in other communities, their input as collected in this study is a reliable measure of the market. Furthermore, given that we are largely dealing with replacement facilities, much of the general community use has been captured in existing programming that will be transferred to the new facility. However, latent demand among current non-participants or anticipated interest in programs that are not currently possible in existing facilities may not be fully represented in the input we received. This would seem particularly relevant for the leisure and therapeutic components of the aquatic centre and for multipurpose program space. In these cases, we have estimated demand based on our experience with comparable facilities and input from CWR Department staff.

### **2.2.2 Key Assumptions**

Key assumptions adopted for the needs analysis include:

- The City of Miramichi's 2011 population was 17,811, which represents a 1.8% decline from the 2006 population of 18,129. We understand that the City's Strategic Plan adopts population growth as a key objective in the hopes of reversing this trend. In addition, there are new business and employment developments – including the government pay centre that will provide over 500 jobs. While these initiatives are encouraging, they do not yet signal a reversal in the trend to declining population. There are no population projections available for Miramichi, but based on discussions with City staff and representatives of regional planning authorities, we have assumed a stable City population of 17,500. While this is a reasonable assumption for planning purposes, it

may be optimistic. Decisions based on this assumption should respect the uncertainty inherent in any future population projection for the Miramichi area.

- For the purposes of this assessment, we have assumed that the City of Miramichi service area extends into the larger region. The overall proportion of non-residents currently participating in arena, gymnastic and aquatic programs in the City is estimated at 17%.<sup>6</sup> Consequently we increased the assumed City population of 17,500 by 17% to arrive at an overall service area population for the Multiplex of about 20,500.
- We have no information on the changing characteristics of the population (age, household structure, employment, income, etc.). New employment, such as the pay centre mentioned earlier, may bring younger families to the area, however, the Miramichi area currently has an older age profile<sup>7</sup> than the Province and a major influx of younger households would be needed to counter the aging trend. Consistent with societal trends we have assumed an aging population which suggests lower levels of participation in active, organized sports. We have assumed that any other changes (income, ethnicity etc.) will not be significant and won't affect the demand for recreation services.
- For the purposes of this assessment, it is our understanding all existing use in decommissioned facilities will be transferred to the Multiplex and no new, competing facilities will be introduced in the market area.
- We have assumed minor change in existing CWR Department policies concerning fees, facility scheduling and other operational issues that might affect demand (see further discussion following).

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<sup>6</sup> Based on information provided by the CWR Department for arena and gymnastics programs in 2014 and aquatic programs in 2008 (the last year for which information is available).

<sup>7</sup> New Brunswick Health Council. My Community at a Glance. Miramichi (and larger area) proportion of population 65 years of age and older is 19%, compared to 17% for the Province.

## 2.3 THE COMMUNITY CONTEXT

The following are unique characteristics of the local community that affect the assumptions and approach we have adopted for our analysis.

### 2.3.1 Multiplex Location

The Multiplex will be a single centralized facility replacing seven stand-alone facilities located throughout the City. The financial and programming advantages of centralized facilities are significant (see Appendix A). However, a concern has been expressed that a centralized location will result in less use. Whether the concern is rooted in historical attachments to pre-amalgamation communities or longer commuting times, if location affects use it is an important consideration in the needs assessment. The site for the Multiplex will not be determined until the needs assessment is complete. However, assuming a site is selected with reasonable access to major arterial roads and transit, we do not believe the location will have an impact on use for the following reasons.

- The majority of sport and recreation groups who will use the Multiplex support this position. Some of these groups (such as minor hockey and ringette) are already using facilities on “both sides of the river” with no detrimental impact on their participation. Most user groups (67% of arena groups and 63% of the gym/multipurpose space users) responding to the study’s survey indicated location would have no impact on use (see Appendix C for details). For all other groups, anticipated impacts were minor and much less likely to be connected to the Multiplex location than to unique aspects of their current scheduling (e.g. the swim team uses the MVHS pool at 4PM and some of the participants can walk to the pool from schools in the vicinity. A new location might necessitate changes in this schedule, but was not expected to have a significant impact on swim team membership. Similarly, high school arena use is often scheduled at the end of the school day and a later start time may be required if additional travel was necessary. This was seen as a very manageable issue.)
- The situation in Miramichi is being repeated in virtually every major regional market in Canada as municipalities move from the old model of stand-alone facilities to large multipurpose recreation complexes. There is no evidence to suggest this transition is having a major negative impact on participation rates; indeed in most communities multipurpose recreation complexes are experiencing higher levels of community use.
- When multipurpose recreation complexes replace older stand-alone facilities, a number of factors generally increase use. The facilities are newer and more attractive to consumers. Contemporary design may introduce new features (such as recreational or therapeutic pools) that attract new markets. Parents attempting to get different

children to pools, arenas and gyms at various locations throughout the city, may find it much more convenient and less time consuming to travel to a single location. It will generally be more cost effective to provide transit to these facilities so service can often be improved.

- Miramichi facilities are already serving a regional market and wherever the Multiplex is located driving times for residents will be reasonable. Few parents would choose to deny their children the opportunity to learn to swim simply because they needed to drive an extra 10 minutes to get to the pool. Particularly if they are driving to a location where they can also register in a program or simply enjoy a cup of coffee in a pleasant setting while waiting for their children to finish a lesson.

For these reasons, we have assumed location will not impact community use. There will of course be impacts on individual users. Some residents faced with an additional commute or opposed to the location for other reasons may stop registering their children in a program – however, we expect these parents may change their minds after a few years and, in any event, these losses will be fully offset by new participants for whom the location is more convenient or who are simply attracted to a new facility. We acknowledge those living within walking distance of a facility that is decommissioned will be impacted. For example, we received an informal survey conducted with residents of Retirement Miramichi which indicated much lower levels of recreation activity if the Golden Hawk Recreation Centre is closed. We expect this would be the case. However, these residents are among very few in the City who can easily walk to a recreation facility of their choice. For the community at large, we believe the location will not affect use.

### **2.3.2 Replacement of Existing Facilities**

Miramichi's existing recreational infrastructure is relatively old – the newest facility of interest to this study was built almost 30 years ago. Maintenance and capital conservation costs are significant and will increase over time. In addition, the facilities were designed for an earlier generation of users and few provide the amenities and programming features associated with contemporary recreation facilities. This is why the community is contemplating replacing these facilities with a new Multiplex.

However, the current supply of facility time is very generous. Some of the current infrastructure was inherited by the City with the closing of the Canadian Forces Base. It provides a level of facility access which far exceeds that in most comparable communities. The Golden Hawk Recreation Centre provides facilities, such as a bowling alley, which are not customarily provided by municipal recreation departments. Similarly, areas in the Golden Hawk Recreation Centre that were re-purposed for community use (e.g. the former rifle range as a dedicated

archery facility and the former theatre as dedicated space for the gymnastics club) would not be available in most Canadian communities.

Consequently, the potential development of the Multiplex represents a significant transition in the manner in which recreation facilities will be provided in Miramichi. For the purposes of this study, we have assumed that recreational facilities will be provided in a manner that is customary in other Canadian communities and some community space currently available will no longer be provided.

### **2.3.3 Staff and Volunteer Program Resources**

The extent of programming in the community has a direct impact on facility requirements. Programming is a function of staff and volunteer resources. CWR Department staff identified new program possibilities with regard to existing staff resources. With the exception of aquatics, volunteers are responsible for most of the activities that will occur in the Multiplex. Most of the volunteer groups returning the survey noted constraints on programming associated with volunteers and skilled coaches and this undoubtedly affects their needs for facility time. Our assessment reflects these constraints and as such represents a realistic but perhaps conservative picture of community needs.

### **2.3.4 Fees and Charges**

User fees and facility rental rates are very low in Miramichi compared to many other communities in Atlantic Canada and nationally. Ice time is subsidized; revenue from most gymnasium and multipurpose space is derived from a drop-in fee rather than a set rental rate; and the swim team is charged a very low annual flat fee for pool time. User groups generally recognize facility access fees are lower than in other communities and no group suggested their fees were unreasonable. However, relatively few groups were prepared to pay higher fees for better facilities. Only about 33% and 50% respectively of arena and gym/multipurpose space users reported a willingness to pay higher fees for new or improved facilities

Setting fees for recreation programs and facility rentals is the responsibility of municipal councils. There is no correct or standard approach and the levels of subsidy will vary considerably from one municipality to the next. In Miramichi, a larger proportion of total costs are assigned to the taxpayer than would be customary in many other communities. This is Council's policy and it is not the purpose of this study to review this policy. However, the following implications should be noted.

In most cases, Multiplex revenues will be based on current pricing practices resulting in a higher operating deficit to be covered from the general tax base. (While we will generally use

current pricing practices, exceptions will be made. Miramichi’s current approach to facility pricing is an unusual combination of rental rates, drop-in fees and fixed fees. These approaches are not consistent and do not appear to be governed by an over-riding philosophy for recreational user fees. Consequently, for some programs we will use our judgment and customary practices in other municipalities to set pricing for the Business Plan).

Fees can have a major impact on maximizing the efficiency of facility use and scheduling. This is the objective behind the CWR Department’s current policy that charges the full rate rather than the subsidized rate when an arena group does not show up to use ice time they have booked. While this is a reasonable practice, it does not extend to all recreation facilities and is not reflected in the pay as you go practice employed for many programs. In some cases, the result may be inefficient use of existing facilities and the perception that more facility time is required than is in fact is the case. (We have discussed this point further below).

The final implication addresses demand. Users frequently argue that higher fees will result in lower participation. This relationship is not as linear as most users argue. While marginal increases in fees sometimes have a short term impact on participation, in most cases these are recouped over time. Furthermore, these impacts are most pronounced when existing fees are increased. People are much more accepting of fees for new programs, than increased fees for existing programs. In Miramichi residents are used to low recreational fees and Council will be somewhat constrained in their ability to reduce Multiplex deficits with increased fees without adversely affecting participation, at least in the short term. Consequently, if it is Council’s intent to generate more revenue from users as a condition of developing the Multiplex, gradual annual fee increases should start immediately.

### **2.3.5 Scheduling Practices – Capacity and Use**

In many cases, the Department’s schedule of use for major recreation facilities suggest that available times are fully booked for community use. However, current practices do not reflect efficient scheduling. For example:

- According to the Department master schedule, the MVHS gym is used by the community on Saturdays from 8:30AM until 9PM and on Sundays from 8:30AM to 5PM (Miramichi Hoops Basketball, Miramichi Volleyball and Miramichi Track and Field). This is a total of 21 hours each weekend. Assuming a roughly 28 week season for programming – as much as 588 hours of gym time is available for community use on weekends. However, school use for tournaments and special events takes precedence over community use and CWR Department staff estimate as much as 40% of available community time may be displaced. This would leave roughly 350 hours for community programming. According to the CWR Department program and activity statistics for 2014, the three community programs noted above using the MVHS gym on weekends accommodated

1405 users – or roughly 4 per hour. This suggests that the community demand for gym time at MVHS could be accommodated in many fewer hours than appear on the schedule.

- In the period from September 22 to November 30, 2014, there were approximately 110 hours committed to public swimming at the Golden Hawk Pool. In the Sept. - Nov. time frame 408 people participated according to the Department’s activity statistics, or roughly 3.7 swimmers per hour. The same calculation for day and evening lap swims indicates less than two swimmers per hour. While the available hours provide a very convenient schedule for swimmers, the demand could likely be accommodated in less time without too great an inconvenience.
- The Lord Beaverbrook Arena accommodated 289 public/pre-school skaters in the period October 2013– March 2014. Two hours a week are scheduled for public skating for a total of roughly 48 hours, or 6 skaters per hour. Again it may be possible to allocate facility time more efficiently and still accommodate community demand.

The CWR Department has taken advantage of the available facility time to provide as many, flexibly scheduled hours as possible for Miramichi residents to participate in programs and activities. This is a reasonable and appropriate strategy; however, when determining the need for Multiplex facilities, we will adopt more restrictive scheduling practices that maximize the use of the facilities in the available time without jeopardizing program quality.

### **2.3.6 The Joint Use Agreement for the Pool and Gym at Miramichi Valley High School (MVHS)**

The indoor pool and gym at the MVHS are subject to a joint use agreement signed in 1975 between the former Town of Newcastle and the Board of Education. The agreement sets out the terms and conditions for community and school access and cost sharing for use of the pool and gym as well as providing for access to a wide range of other MVHS facilities and municipal recreation facilities on a reciprocal basis. We understand that the agreement has not been updated and presumably won’t be until Council makes a decision concerning the Multiplex. To the best of our knowledge no formal positions have been taken on the future of the pool or other aspects of the agreement by the parties involved. Given that all capital conservation costs and ongoing maintenance of the pool are assigned to the municipality, if the City is no longer a party to the agreement, we assume the MVHS pool will be closed.

For the purposes of this study, we have made the following assumptions.

- All community use of the pool will be transferred to the Multiplex. This includes the time booked by the Swim Team during “school hours” (The team uses 10 hours on weekdays outside of the hours committed to community use by the agreement).



- The gymnasium space at MVHS will continue to be available for community use when not required for school purposes. While this use may no longer be governed by the existing agreement, presumably the MVHS will accommodate community use in a manner similar to other schools in Miramichi. We will adopt this assumption.
- School users will continue to have access to the City’s arenas. For the purposes of the Business Plan, we will assume there is no cost for school use of the arenas. This is currently the case, however, the manner in which the School District and the City share costs and provide access to their facilities would ideally be the subject of a new, comprehensive reciprocal use agreement. If such an agreement is put in place in the future, the financial projections in the Business Plan may have to be updated.

### **2.3.7 Community Use of School Gymnasias**

Even in the absence of joint use agreements such as that for the MVHS, school gymnasias play an essential role in meeting community recreational needs. Furthermore, in the Miramichi area there will be an increase in the supply of school gymnasias.

We understand that the following changes will be made in the supply of school gymnasias.<sup>8</sup>

- In the Newcastle area, three schools will close (Croft Elementary; Harkins Elementary; and Harkins Middle) and be replaced by a new K-8 school. The new school will provide a regulation size double gym and a single gym; this is an improvement over the quality and supply of gymnasias in the schools that are closing.
- In the Chatham area, two schools will close (Ian Baillie and St. Andrews) and be replaced by a new K-5 school. Gymnasium facilities in the schools to be closed were poor and not well used. The new school will have a double gym.
- In the Douglastown area, an existing K-5 school will be expanded to accommodate K-8. An existing single gym will be replaced with a new double gym.

All of these schools were planned to accommodate community use and we understand there were some discussions with the City about establishing agreements for shared investment and use of these facilities, but these did not materialize.

This information suggests that there will be an increase in the supply of gym time available for community use assuming that access can be arranged. Community use of schools varies widely across various jurisdictions in Canada. In the best systems, municipalities and boards of education enter into strong partnerships based on functional reciprocal use agreements that eliminate many of the frustrations associated with using each other’s facilities. In Miramichi,

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<sup>8</sup> Based on discussions with Tim Dunn, Director of Finance and Administrative Services, Anglophone North School District.

school access is managed by the Principal (in all cases except MVHS where an agreement is in place). A formal policy<sup>9</sup> on community use of schools and a rate structure is in place. The policy assigns priority to school use and prohibits competition with the private sector. The priority for community use is non-profit community activities for youth. However, within these parameters, data provided by the School District indicates a fair amount of community use of current school gymnasiums in the Miramichi area. This will be a consideration in our assessment of the need for a Multiplex gymnasium.

### **2.3.8 The CWR Department's Data Base for Monitoring and Managing Facility Scheduling**

In some cases information that would contribute to a more accurate assessment of community use and demand for recreation facilities is not available in Miramichi. We understand the CWR Department is investigating computerized management systems that could be used for scheduling, on-line registration, invoicing, tracking program registrations and facility rentals, etc. These are increasingly common even in smaller municipal recreation departments. If such a system was put in place in Miramichi, it would greatly improve the Department's capacity for future planning and service evaluation.

### **2.3.9 Comprehensive Review of Recreation Service Delivery Policies**

As discussed above, current CWR Department policies and practices have developed over time and reflect the current facilities. They often lack consistency, may not be contributing to the most efficient use and scheduling of facility time and may not maximize the community access to school facilities. The Multiplex will represent a major transition to a new model of recreation facility provision. It is therefore an ideal opportunity for the CWR Department to review policies and practices associated with scheduling, staffing, managing and monitoring facility use, fees and other aspects of service delivery. This would involve a comprehensive operational review of the CWR Department and should occur prior to the opening of the Multiplex. We strongly recommend that an operational review be undertaken.

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<sup>9</sup> New Brunswick Department of Education. Policy 407: Community Use of Schools. July 1986/Revised June 2006.

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## 3.0 NEEDS ASSESSMENT – MAJOR FACILITY COMPONENTS

### 3.1 INTRODUCTION

#### 3.1.1 The Multiplex

The proposed Multiplex includes a twin pad arena, aquatic centre, double gym and multipurpose programming space. Community needs do not warrant three double gyms, which were originally envisioned as part of a Multiplex fieldhouse. The need for these core recreation facilities is discussed in detail in this section of the report. We have also discussed issues associated with a dedicated gymnastics facility. Finally, we have recommended a number of “best practice” facilities which are recreational spaces with high appeal but for which traditional market assessment is not possible.

#### 3.1.2 Decommissioned Facilities

The Multiplex will replace the Lord Beaverbrook Arena, Miramichi Civic Centre<sup>10</sup>, the Chatham and Kinsmen outdoor pools, the indoor pool at the Miramichi Valley High School and the Linton and Golden Hawk Recreation Centres. These facilities will no longer be available for community use, with the following implications:

- The bowling alley at the Golden Hawk Recreation Centre will be closed; however, a private bowling alley will continue to operate in the community. In most Canadian communities, bowling would be provided by the private sector.
- The dedicated archery range at the Golden Hawk Recreation Centre will no longer be available. The Archery Club reports that they require a space of roughly 35m by 20m, and ideally this would be dedicated space for safety reasons and to avoid the inconvenience of setting up and taking down equipment. It is not reasonable to provide a dedicated space of this size for archery at the Multiplex. The program might be relocated to the gym if the safety of users can be guaranteed, but drop-in use of the range will no longer be possible. CWR Department activity statistics show 604 and 737 uses in 2013 and 2014 respectively of both program participants and drop in users. Archery reports a membership of 35 to 40 individuals and expects future membership to be about the same. While the archery program will suffer from the loss of a dedicated facility accommodating drop-in use, if the Club uses the gym they will provide a service to local residents comparable to what is available in many other communities.

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<sup>10</sup> While this was the understanding entering the needs assessment, a decision was made to phase the twin pad arena. The Civic Centre will be retained until the second phase of arena development. See the arena needs assessment in this section of the report for additional discussion.

- The small fitness room at the Golden Hawk Recreation Centre will no longer be available. This small space has a few pieces of equipment and, we understand, limited use (activity statistics are not maintained for this space). It is Council's position that publicly funded facilities should not compete with those provided by the private sector and a fitness centre will not be provided at the Multiplex.
- Gymnastics could continue to be accommodated in a Multiplex gym and/or Council has the option of providing dedicated space at the Multiplex. Council also has other options for supporting gymnastic facilities that do not involve the Multiplex. These are discussed further in a subsequent section of the report.
- The Farmers Market at the Lindon Community Centre will not be accommodated in the Multiplex and will need to find a new location. Farmers Markets are not traditionally accommodated in community recreation facilities because of incompatible design (flooring, loading docks, etc.) and the requirements for servicing (electrical, water source, refrigeration). In addition the organizers of the market at the Lindon Community Centre are fully committed to staying in Newcastle, ideally as close to the urban centre as possible. They argue relocation would not be supported by their vendors or customers. We understand the Farmers Market has been exploring alternate venues in Newcastle.
- Other major users of the Lindon Community Centre, including bingo, ball hockey, tennis and seniors programming could be accommodated in gymnasiums and multipurpose space at the Multiplex.

## 3.2 CORE RECREATION FACILITIES

### 3.2.1 Twin Pad Arena

#### Conclusion

- Two NHL size ice surfaces; one with seating for 1800 and the other with seating for 200 should be provided as replacements for the Lord Beaverbrook Arena and the Miramichi Civic Centre.
- The City has the option of developing both ice surfaces as part of the initial Multiplex development or in two phases. In the phased scenario, the Multiplex would be designed to accommodate two ice surfaces, but the second surface would be added at a later date. In this scenario, the Miramichi Civic Centre would be retained until the second ice surface was provided at the Multiplex. This is the recommended course of action.

#### Background

<u>SUPPLY/DEMAND</u>	<u>LOCAL INDICATORS</u>
Existing Supply	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1:8,750 (based on assumed City population of 17,500. We have used the City rather than regional population in this calculation to be consistent with the comparative supply data)</li> </ul>
Comparative Supply	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1:9,179 (10,000-50,000 pop)</li> </ul>
Use Levels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The arenas are used to near capacity in prime time.</li> </ul>
User Group Survey Results	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Arena user groups requested a total of 8 hours/week of additional prime time for their existing programs and 9 hours/week of prime time for new programs.</li> <li>• Three groups (minor hockey, figure skating, ringette) returning the survey account for almost 90% of arena users. Two of these groups had declining membership in the last 3 years and one was stable.</li> <li>• Two of six arena user groups expected their membership to increase in the future; the other four expected stable membership.</li> <li>• Arena user groups report that 99.5-100% of their members are under the age of 18; indicating a shrinking market in an aging community.</li> <li>• Reported reasons for restricted participation unrelated to available ice time included the availability of volunteers, skilled coaches, the cost of their programs, and funding.</li> </ul>
Participation Trends	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overall moderately declining use of arenas should be anticipated; particularly in organized team sports directed to younger age groups. More significant declines in participation may occur if health and safety becomes a greater concern</li> <li>• Unorganized, recreational uses (shinny hockey, recreational skating etc.) may experience some growth.</li> <li>• Use of the arena floor for activities when the ice is removed (sports including ball hockey, soccer, box lacrosse, etc.) may represent opportunities for expanded programming.</li> </ul>
Other Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The possible closing of regional arenas may impact use. We have no information on the likelihood of closures. The impact would likely be limited if closures are related to declining participation, which we understand is the case.</li> </ul>

## Discussion

Two ice surfaces for the current population compares favourably with other municipalities.

The existing ice surfaces are used to near capacity in prime time. Use has declined moderately in recent years and we understand that less desirable prime time (early morning and late evening), which would have been scheduled in the past, are no longer needed. Bookings at both arenas generally start between 7-8AM and finish by 11PM. The Lord Beaverbrook Arena is closed on Tuesday and Thursday mornings. In markets where ice demand is high, it would not be unusual to see arenas booked from 6AM until midnight.

We understand the length of the season is also managed to minimize the periods when ice must be maintained in the facilities. The Civic Centre generally has ice from August to March; while the Lord Beaverbrook Arena has ice from October until May (April and May to accommodate a hockey school; if this contract was not in place the ice would be removed sooner).

There is relatively little use of the arenas in the non-ice season. The total number of events (graduation ceremonies; dance and concerts; trade shows, etc.) booked at both arenas in 2014 was 12, occupying fewer than 20 days. There may be possibilities to expand these booking in the off-season if the Multiplex provides a superior venue for events.

CWR Department staff report occasional requests from new groups for ice time, but these are limited and always for core prime time.

The majority of the arena users reported stable to declining participation in recent years and anticipated this trend will continue. (See Appendix C) Two of the current ice users requested additional hours to accommodate both current and new programs. A total of 17 hours/week were requested. The majority of these hours (12 of 17) were requested by Figure Skating who also anticipated a 30% increase in membership in the next 5 years. This projection is based on an aggressive program development strategy and may be somewhat optimistic. However, even if we accept the projections for 17 hours of additional ice time, the demand could be accommodated by returning to a more demanding schedule that required less desirable prime time ice to be used.

The situation reported by arena user groups in Miramichi is consistent with the experience of other municipalities and trends (see Appendix B). Trends suggest that ice related activities will remain stable at best and are much more likely to decline, particularly if energy costs significantly increase user fees with an adverse impact on membership. In Miramichi where fees have traditionally been very low, any adjustment that saw higher costs would have a more pronounced impact. While cost is a significant consideration, other factors including the

continued aging of the population, safety concerns, and increasing winter alternatives to hockey all point to lower levels of future participation. The most probable future scenario is a steady, gradual decrease in demand for ice time.

If arena sport participation continues to decline at a gradual pace, two ice surfaces will still be required in Miramichi, but will not be used to capacity within 10-15 years. However, if a more pessimistic scenario is anticipated with much steeper declines in hockey participation (see Appendix B) as well as a significant drop in population – the need for a second ice surface in 10-15 years is questionable.

The uncertainty concerning future ice demand may warrant Council's consideration of an alternative for arena development at the Multiplex. The City has the option of developing both ice surfaces as part of the initial Multiplex development or undertaking the development in two phases where the Multiplex would be designed to accommodate two ice surfaces, but the second surface would be added at a later date. In this scenario, the Miramichi Civic Centre would be retained until the second ice surface was provided at the Multiplex. The Civic Centre is Miramichi's best arena and requires less investment in capital conservation than Lord Beaverbrook.

The key advantage of phasing the arena development is that the demand for two ice surfaces will be much clearer in 2025 than it is today. If the second ice surface is not required, the City avoids a major capital expenditure as well as the ongoing cost of operating two ice surfaces, neither of which would be used to capacity. The major short term disadvantage is that the operating cost savings that would have been realized by moving to a twin pad will be deferred. Some capital conservation expenditures will also be required at the Civic Centre. However, on the understanding that the arena is to be replaced in the future, only critical capital conservation expenditures would be approved. These expenditures, and the deferred operating cost savings, are a fraction of the cost of building and operating an arena that is not required.

In our view, phasing the arena development is a preferred course of action.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> This issue was discussed with Council in June 2015. Council subsequently provided direction to the consulting team to proceed on the assumption that the arena development would be phased. The multiplex will include one ice surface capable of seating 1800.

### 3.2.2 Aquatic Centre

#### Conclusion

- The Multiplex should incorporate a contemporary aquatic centre comprised of a 25 m, six lane pool ideally with separate recreational and therapeutic tanks.
- The aquatic centre will replace the indoor pool at the Golden Hawk Recreation Centre, the Kinsmen and Chatham outdoor pools and community use of the pool at the Miramichi Valley High School.

#### Background

<u>SUPPLY/DEMAND</u>	<u>LOCAL INDICATORS</u>
Existing Supply	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Currently the City is served by 4 aquatic facilities – the indoor pools at MVHS and the Golden Hawk Recreation Centre and two outdoor pools. Indoor pools are not programmed during the summer.</li> <li>• Assuming 1.5 indoor pools, Miramichi's level of supply is 1:11,670; and 1:8,750 for outdoor pools.</li> <li>• Existing pools are older, traditional, rectangular designs without recreational or therapeutic features.</li> </ul>
Comparative Supply	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Indoor pools 1:17,463. Outdoor pools 1:25,571.</li> </ul>
Use Levels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In the past decade instructional program registrations at all pools dropped from about 1300 to 1100.</li> <li>• In the period from 2002-2013, recreational use of the outdoor pools has dropped by about 50%. The combined fun and adult swim counts in 2002 were almost 9,000 dropping to about 4,600 for public and lap swimming by 2013</li> <li>• The existing pools are relatively well used, but none are programmed on a year-round basis. A well designed contemporary pool with separate training/instructional, recreational and therapeutic components could readily accommodate existing programs and provide opportunities for expanded use.</li> </ul>
User Group Survey Results	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Swim Team participation is expected to remain stable; no additional pool time will be required</li> <li>• While the MVHS pool meets the Swim Team's need and they have excellent access at a very affordable cost, a new 25 m pool would also serve their needs.</li> </ul>
Participation Trends	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aquatics are amongst the most popular recreational activities for Canadians.</li> <li>• Aquatic programs appeal to a wide range of age groups and, assuming proper facilities are available, deliver a number of health and wellness benefits. Therapeutic and wellness programming is particularly well suited for older age groups and as such participation will continue to rise.</li> </ul>
Other Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The need for a contemporary aquatics facility was supported by key informants.</li> </ul>



### 3.2.3 Discussion

With four aquatic facilities Miramichi's level of supply compares favourably with other similar sized communities. However, the existing pools present a number of programming and operational challenges. The only 25 m pool is MVHS. This pool has the greatest programming potential, but is only operated by the Department from 6-9PM, for ten months of the year. The smaller size of the Golden Hawk pool limits opportunities for simultaneous programming (multiple instructions; instruction plus lane swimming, etc.). Outdoor pools are the only facilities available in the summer months. As with most outdoor pools, programming options are limited, use is weather dependent, and participation is declining. In addition to the programming constraints, it is an added challenge to coordinate staffing across four locations. A single facility would address these limitations.

The two indoor pools in Miramichi are meeting the demand for the aquatic activities that can be accommodated in these pools. With the occasional exception of swimming lessons for the youngest age groups, current programs are not registered to capacity. Public swimming and lane swimming hours are generous and current demand is readily accommodated. The swim team operates 10 months of the year and at MVHS and the outdoor pools; the latter for a summer fun, feeder program focused on introducing competitive swimming. Club membership has fluctuated largely due to the difficulty of maintaining qualified instructors. Currently there is a strong, stable membership of about 50 participants. While some growth is possible, the Club does not anticipate a significant increase in participation and current hours of indoor pool time (11 hours/week) are adequate for the foreseeable future. The Club experiences some constraints in hosting meets at MVHS due to the deck size, absence of spectator seating, and the need to use classrooms or other school spaces for officials, marshalling areas, etc. While the number of meets that could be hosted would not justify major expenditures to support spectators and support space, providing viewing areas overlooking the pool and access to multipurpose space could provide a better venue for swim meets at the Multiplex than is possible at the MVHS.

Unmet aquatic needs in Miramichi can largely be attributed to the design of the pools; not the time available for programming. The existing older facilities of a traditional design cannot provide the full range of programs available at modern facilities. These pools are especially limited in serving the needs of those with disabilities and in attracting recreational and therapeutic users. Given that recreational swimming continues to be one of the most popular leisure activities for all ages and a growing numbers of older adults will drive demand for therapeutic aquatic opportunities, this is a significant unmet need.

CRW department staff identified the following as expanded areas of aquatic programming:

- Leisure swimming and special events focused on recreational features in the pool (slides, water play areas, etc.)
- Therapeutic and rehabilitation programs for older adults and individuals with disabilities. These might be offered in conjunction with other agencies in the community.
- Other health related programs for special groups, such as pre and post-natal water fitness.
- Expanded adult programming – including instructional programs but also the possibility of specialized programs such as hydro-spinning
- Expanded youth programming, such as Lifesaving Sport and leadership courses.
- Increased private rentals.

There is considerable flexibility associated with the design of new aquatic centres and during detailed design programming and activity requirements and preferences will need to be more closely aligned with design options and available construction budgets. While specifics will be determined during detailed design, a new aquatic facility for Miramichi should have three main functional areas: (1) training/instructional, (2) therapeutic, and (3) recreational.

The training and instructional component requires a 25 metre, 6 lane tank – which essentially replicates the existing MVHS pool. The therapeutic pool is envisioned as a separate tank with warmer water, but this need not be a large pool. At minimum, it must be large enough to accommodate typical class sizes (perhaps 15-20 people), and if budget allows, it could be a larger pool. It has specialized design features to accommodate the programming focus. The training/instructional and therapeutic components are the highest priority and the basic requirements noted here should not be compromised, but certainly could be enhanced if resources allow.

The recreational components are the lowest priority but should be developed to the greatest extent possible within the construction budget. Ideally recreational components would be part of a separate third tank rather than integrated with the training/instructional pool. The recreational pool might involve teaching steps and a free form swimming/play area as well as recreational play features (slides, on deck spray pads, etc.) The extent of these installations will be governed by budget.

### 3.2.4 Gymnasium Space

#### Conclusion

- A regulation size, double gymnasias should be a part of the Multiplex to replace the gym at the Golden Hawk Recreation Centre.

#### Background

<u>SUPPLY/DEMAND</u>	<u>LOCAL INDICATORS</u>
Existing Supply	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community residents currently have access to the Golden Hawk and MVHS gym through the CWR Department. In addition to MVHS, there are 12 schools with gyms in the Miramichi area accommodating some level of community use (this excludes French language schools for which we did not compile information).</li> <li>• New school construction will result in an expanded supply of gymnasias. Three double and one single gym will be added to replace aging facilities with less programming potential and limited community use (see earlier discussion re. Community Context).</li> </ul>
Comparative Supply	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information for school facilities is not available</li> </ul>
Use Levels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Very limited weekend use is made of the MVHS gym under the existing community use agreement. The gym is well used by community groups on weeknights.</li> <li>• School gymnasias appear to be well used for community activities (see further discussion below).</li> </ul>
User Group Survey Results	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eight users of gymnasias responded to our survey (see Appendix C for details).</li> <li>• No group reported declining membership, 3 reported increases and 5 reported stable or fluctuating membership in the last 3 years. The majority expected stable future participation, with 3 anticipating increases (ranging from 5-25%).</li> <li>• 5 gymnasium user groups reported they could not currently accommodate interested participants in their programs with the available gym time. Over 40 hours/week of additional gym time was requested by these groups.</li> <li>• Cost, accessibility to schools, volunteers and skilled coaches were also identified as reasons affecting participation.</li> </ul>
Participation Trends	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There will be sustained demand for gymnasias which can be programmed for a variety of active indoor sports and are available for drop-in activities.</li> <li>• General trends indicate increases in gym-based activities (e.g., basketball, badminton, volleyball, wellness activities).</li> </ul>
Other Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• With the exception of the MVHS joint use agreement, no City/School District reciprocal use agreements are in place for school facilities. Based on their experience at MVHS, the Department is very reluctant to place community programs in school gymnasias because of the number of cancellations.</li> </ul>

### 3.2.5 Discussion

Gymnasias for community use in Miramichi are of two types – those controlled by the CWR Department and those controlled by the School District. We have discussed these separately.

The gymnasias controlled by the Department (Golden Hawk and MVHS during public access hours as defined by the reciprocal use agreement<sup>12</sup>) are not fully accommodating community needs because of scheduling issues and current demands:

- The Department is reluctant to use the MVHS gym because public programs are frequently cancelled to accommodate priority school uses. This is customary with community use of school facilities. No records are kept, but Department staff estimate that as much as 40% of community use is cancelled on weekends (much less time is cancelled on weeknights).
- The MVHS gym is only available after 8PM on weeknights. This excludes all but adult programming. The facility is only used for a total of 8 hours, Monday to Thursday, for adult volleyball and badminton.
- While large blocks of time are committed to volleyball and basketball at the MVHS gym on weekends, these are not being extensively used for community use (see earlier discussion in Community Context).
- Use of the Golden Hawk gym is dominated by gymnastics. The Gymnastics Club has the use of one-half of the gym most weeknights and weekends. Despite dominating available gym time the allocated hours do not meet the Club's needs.

These arrangements constrain community programming in gymnasias. A major limitation is programs that provide informal, unstructured access to gymnasias. Many communities are placing considerable emphasis on “open gym” programs for children and youth and parents and tots because these successfully reach the physically inactive and are a major strategy for combating obesity and other impacts of sedentary lifestyles. While some open activity hours are booked in the Golden Hawk gym (4 hours during the week and 4 hours on Saturday, with an additional 7 hours on Sunday for half the year), staff estimate that these can be significantly expanded. As much as 16 additional hours per week of open gym activity is suggested.

Experience in most communities indicates increasing popularity of basketball, volleyball, badminton, floor hockey, and indoor soccer (among other sports) for both league and unstructured participation. CWR Department staff identified a need for as much as 10 additional hours of gym time per week for basketball and ball hockey programs. Input from user

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<sup>12</sup> The Lindon Recreation Centre is considered multipurpose space rather than a gym.

groups substantiates the growing popularity of gym sports and the need for additional gym time in Miramichi.

- Soccer estimates they would use a minimum of 15-20 hours per week for a 24 week season for a winter indoor soccer program. Soccer cannot secure space in gymnasia for this program currently. They are also reluctant to use any available hours at the Golden Hawk gym because of safety concerns resulting from shared use with gymnastics (due to chalk residue on the gym floor).
- Track and field would expand their current two hours at MVHS to six hours if time was available.
- Basketball and Tai Chi requested an additional 10 hours per week of gym time for existing programs and Basketball would like to introduce a new house league program that could require an additional 4-8 hours for a 16-20 week season.
- Gymnastics also requested additional gym time (A gymnastics facility is discussed as a separate section of the needs assessment).

With the exception of some of the open programs, all of the requested gym time noted above would be accommodated in prime time (4-11PM on weekdays and all day on weekends). However, there is a growing demand for daytime access to major recreation facilities in a society where leisure time is more flexible and daily schedules are less likely to be oriented around child responsibilities. The potential for day time use plus opportunities for cross programming when gyms are co-located with other major recreation facilities such as pools, is an added incentive for providing a gym at the Multiplex.

This information suggests that a municipally owned and operated regulation size double gym should be a component of the Multiplex. The information noted here suggests that community programming would fully occupy time available at a Department gym. This would likely be the case even if existing hours committed to the Gymnastics Club were no longer accommodated in the gym (see additional discussion in a subsequent section of the report).

In all communities, the majority of gymnasia for community use are provided by educational authorities. This of course raises the question of whether school gymnasia can adequately meet community needs. Due to no day time access and frequent interruptions in community programming due to school priorities, most municipalities will attempt to augment school facilities with at least one major municipal facility. This is a reasonable strategy in Miramichi and essentially a continuation of the current situation.

We explored community use of gymnasias at 12 schools with data provided by the Anglophone North School District.<sup>13</sup> As discussed earlier, some of these schools will be replaced; improving the supply and quality of gymnasias. Our review of the scheduling data indicates a relatively high degree of community use. Nine of the twelve schools accommodate regularly scheduled sport or athletic programs (i.e. a program operating weekly for the Sept/Oct. to March/June period). These include basketball, volleyball, gymnastics, karate, floor hockey and fitness programs. In addition all of the schools are accommodating short term sporting events in their gyms. These might include a single training event, a two or three day tournament, or a short program operating for five or six weeks. Finally, most of the schools are also accommodating one or more other events in the gym (fund-raisers; home-comings; local community cultural and special events, etc.). This pattern of use appears typical for schools that are not governed by reciprocal use agreements. The level of community use is far below capacity – if capacity was defined as community use in all hours not required for school activities. However, full community capacity is not a realistic expectation, particularly in schools that are not governed by reciprocal use agreements. The design and quality of gyms in schools will not always accommodate all programs; community access will only be possible in most cases when custodians are available; fees and other restrictions on acceptable uses may affect community demand and, perhaps most importantly, in the absence of a formal agreement and coordinated booking process, it is very difficult for community organizations to know what is available to them or how to arrange use.

In summary, our assessment indicates sufficient demand for a municipally owned and operated regulation size double gym at the Multiplex to augment the community's supply of school gymnasias. However, community demand will not be fully accommodated with the Multiplex gym. The community will continue to rely on school gyms and opportunities to further enhance community use should be explored with the School District. The MVHS agreement should be reviewed and options for improving access to other schools explored. Some communities have been able to more effectively address reciprocal use issues (such as the cancelling of community programs for school use) with improved agreements and better communication and coordination. Improved booking procedures should also be investigated. We note that the Community Use of Schools Policy can accommodate a coordinated approach to bookings administrated by local municipal authorities<sup>14</sup>. This would be a significant achievement if put in place in Miramichi.

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<sup>13</sup> Information was provided for the following schools: Dr. Losier; James M. Hill; St. Andrew's; Nelson Rural; Napan Elementary; Gretna Green; Harkins Middle; Harkins Elementary; Harcourt; Miramichi Rural; Croft; Ian Baillie.

<sup>14</sup> New Brunswick Department of Education. Community Use of Schools Policy. Clause 6.2.7.

### 3.2.6 Multipurpose Space

#### Conclusion

- Multi-purpose programming space should be a component of the Multiplex to accommodate programs and activities currently hosted at the Golden Hawk Recreation Centre and Lindon Hall and to provide a venue for expanded CWR Department programming.

#### Background

<u>SUPPLY/DEMAND</u>	<u>LOCAL INDICATORS</u>
Existing Supply	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multipurpose programming space specifically designed for recreation programming is not available to the CWR Department, however the community uses a variety of spaces for recreational programming, including such areas as the Golden Hawk teen/seniors lounge and activity room and the mezzanine at MVHS (the latter used for Tae Kwon Do).</li> <li>• The Lindon Community Centre is used on a very limited basis for community recreational programs (e.g. ball hockey, tennis and seniors' carpet bowling).</li> </ul>
Comparative Supply	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• n/a</li> </ul>
Use Levels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• None of the current spaces are used to capacity. However, none are designed with appropriate flooring, wall and ceiling finishes, and support facilities to fully accommodate a wide range of recreational programming.</li> </ul>
User Group Survey Results	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No additional time was requested but some of the hours users desired for new and expanded programming in a gym could be accommodated in multipurpose space.</li> </ul>
Participation Trends	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trends support the provision of appropriate multi-purpose rooms within larger recreation complexes. Cross-programming and intergenerational programming opportunities, and the convenience and benefits of combining these types of components under one roof are all justifications of this type of facility model.</li> <li>• General trends indicate increases in a range of activities utilizing multi-purpose space (e.g. fitness programs, dance programs, martial arts, etc.).</li> </ul>
Other Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multi-purpose/meeting space is flexible program space that can accommodate a wide range of indoor, organized, or drop-in sports and recreation and can also be used for dry-land/cross training and non-sport activities.</li> </ul>

### 3.2.7 Discussion

Appropriately designed multipurpose programming space can accommodate a broader range of community activities than virtually any other component of a multipurpose recreation complex. Athletic activities that do not require a full size gym (fitness classes, martial arts, youth groups, cross/dry-land training, etc.) other recreational programming (cultural events, mom-tots programs, etc.) and instructional activities (first aid, child care, etc.) can be accommodated in this space. An area of about 4,000 sq. ft. would generally be provided with moveable walls so that it can be partitioned for simultaneous programming. Flooring, wall finishes and fixtures would be selected to accommodate a wide range of programs, and could include mirrors and sprung floors in some areas. Natural light and amenities required to facilitate programming (storage; sinks; presentation equipment; moveable tables and chairs, etc.) would be available. The space would also be located within the larger recreation complex to take advantage of other support services (kitchen; change rooms) and to be available for cross-programming.

The type of space described above does not exist in Miramichi. Instead, the type of community programming that would generally occur in multi-purpose space is accommodated in gymnasias or in other spaces; few of which are actually designed for multipurpose programming and none of which are extensively used for recreational programming (e.g. the MVHS mezzanine; the teen lounge at the Golden Hawk Recreation Centre; Lindon Community Centre).

Most of the user groups responding to our survey and desiring additional space requested gym time. However, in a number of cases the programs they were interested in offering could be accommodated in multipurpose space because they do not require the high ceiling and flooring customary in gymnasias.

Most of the demand for multipurpose space will originate with new programs. The needs assessment did not include the type of surveying that would generate input from people not currently participating in leisure time activities because programs of interest are unavailable. While we have no quantifiable data to support the interest in these activities, they are customary in other communities. There has been a significant increase in wellness programming in response to concerns surrounding physical inactivity and obesity. These programs focus on movement and social interaction and generally do not require a full gymnasium. Art and cultural programming (art appreciation, dance, painting, children's arts and crafts) is growing in most communities as are a wide range of physical fitness and activity programs such as yoga and tai chi. Programs for parents/care givers and pre-school children are also extremely popular in most communities, and especially where climate or other factors contribute to the isolation of parents caring for young children. Finally, special event programming is often well suited to this type of space.



Not surprising given the high degree of flexibility demonstrated by well-designed multi-purpose space, recreational trends would suggest growing demand. This is also the case because many of the programs and activities that can occur in multipurpose program areas cater to older adults.

Multipurpose program space is relatively inexpensive to provide and maintain, is a customary feature in major multipurpose recreation facilities and should be provided at the Multiplex.

### 3.2.8 Gymnastics Facility

#### Conclusion

- The Miramichi Gymnastics Club offers a strong program that has been well received by the community and has growth potential.
- The Club will lose dedicated and shared facilities at the Golden Hawk Recreation Centre if the Multiplex is developed.
- The City can develop a dedicated gymnastic centre as part of the Multiplex but other options to support the Club appear more desirable.

#### Background

<u>SUPPLY/DEMAND</u>	<u>LOCAL INDICATORS</u>
Existing Supply	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Club currently uses both dedicated and shared facilities at the Golden Hawk Recreation Centre.</li> </ul>
Comparative Supply	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No available information</li> </ul>
Use Levels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In addition to its dedicated facility, the Club makes extensive use of the Golden Hawk Gym. They are allocated one-half of the gym for approximately 26 hours/week for the full year and a further 19 hours/week for half the season.</li> </ul>
User Group Survey Results	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The gym time currently available to the Club does not meet their needs and restricts the potential to offer new programs (see discussion following for details).</li> <li>• Gymnastics has a long history in the Miramichi area and the Club reports stable membership with the potential for growth if more facility time was available.</li> </ul>
Participation Trends	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• General trends indicate an increase in gymnasium-based activities including gymnastics.</li> <li>• Gymnastics Clubs are offering a wider range of programming focused on adults; young children, and health and fitness.</li> </ul>
Other Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dedicated gymnastics facilities are almost exclusively used by the gymnastics club, and do not accommodate other programming or users due to permanently fixed structures and scheduling conflicts because preferred times for community use coincide with club use.</li> <li>• Gymnastics is often run on a for-profit basis and is therefore generally not eligible for subsidy.</li> </ul>

Gymnastics is a strong program with the potential for growth. Current membership is relatively stable at about 250 participants. Due primarily to a lack of gym time, the Club turns away potential participants and has a waiting list of about 40 people. To meet current needs the Club requires at least 20 hours of gym time. The Club currently uses one half of the Golden Hawk gym; their current needs would likely be accommodated with access to a full gym for 8 hour blocks on both Saturday and Sunday. This assumes they continue to have access to dedicated space. The Club would require additional time if new programs were introduced.

The gymnastic club currently has a dedicated space of about 9,000 sq. ft. as well as shared access of the gym in the Golden Hawk Recreation Centre. Both areas are used for programming that requires gymnastic equipment to be set up and dismantled; a major inconvenience in the gym. The Club's preference therefore would be for dedicated space. They indicate that an area of about 12,000 sq. ft. would be required to fully accommodate their programming. This is a large space; larger than many other gymnastics clubs would have access to as dedicated space. It is an ideal allocation because it would allow permanent program areas to be established for activities such as vaulting and allow the sprung-floor to be left in place rather than taken up when additional space is needed for other programs. This is not currently the case and would be a substantial improvement for the Club. However, many gymnastic clubs offer successful programs with less than ideal space; as the Miramichi Club has done for many years. The Club could run a successful program with less than 12,000 sq. ft. of dedicated space.

Given the existence of an established club with a history of successful programming in Miramichi, we are confident that a proper gymnastics facility would increase programming and membership and be well used. However, given the requirements for dedicated use, the viability of this project has more to do with the City's policies and priorities concerning funding than the anticipated use.

The fundamental issue associated with the provision of gymnastics facilities is that unlike multi-functional spaces which accommodate a variety of community needs these are dedicated spaces with permanently installed structures, used almost exclusively by gymnastics clubs. The gymnastics facility could be used for programs such as fitness classes, yoga and dance but this is unlikely because the Club requires the facility on weeknights and weekends for its programs, and during the day other programs could be fully accommodated in multipurpose space at the Multiplex. Because of the requirement for dedicated space, most Canadian municipalities do not own and operate gymnastic facilities.

Assuming that the City of Miramichi wishes to play a role in supporting the capital development of a gymnastic facility<sup>15</sup>, it has three options:

- Option 1: provide a municipally owned and operated facility dedicated to gymnastics. Subject to refinement during detailed design, this might be an area of 12,000 sq. ft.
- Option 2: maintain the current arrangement where the Club shares the Multiplex gym and also has access to a smaller, dedicated space.

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<sup>15</sup> It is not within the scope of our study to recommend a role for the City in the possible development of a gymnastics facility. The issue is relevant to the study because the City is currently providing gymnastic facilities. The City could elect to provide no capital funding for this type of facility. This would not be uncommon in other Canadian municipalities.

- Option 3: support the Club’s efforts to secure an appropriate facility, but not as part of the Multiplex.

Option One requires a policy decision on the part of Council as to whether or not the City will own and operate dedicated recreation facilities. (It should be noted that this decision may have implications for other users such as the Archery Club and the bowlers who will lose their dedicated spaces if the Multiplex is developed).

Option Two best represents the status quo but is a compromise that makes little sense. If Council is prepared to support dedicated facilities, than Option One is clearly the preference. If Council is not prepared to support dedicated facilities, then presumably this also rules out Option Two. Option Two would also be the least desirable for the Gymnastics Club given their preference for dedicated space.

Option Three would see the City assist the Club to secure and operate its own facility. The nature of the support would be determined by the City but in other municipalities this has included a contribution to capital costs; in-kind services or an ongoing operating grant. Option Three best represents the practice in other municipalities that support gymnastic clubs and has a number of possible advantages over Option One. Capital and operating costs would be much lower in this option. If the Gymnastics Club is owned and operated by the City, higher staff costs for maintenance and repair should be anticipated. Capital costs would also be higher at the Multiplex because of the need for a higher quality of construction. It is for this reason that many gymnastics clubs purchase or rent space in industrial buildings at a much lower cost. Finally, while the Gymnastics Club is a perfectly compatible use for the Multiplex, there are very few options for shared use. The Gymnastics Club does not require other spaces or services of the Multiplex and other users do not benefit from access to the gymnastic facility. Consequently, assuming Council wishes to support the gymnastic facility developing it at another location is a reasonable and preferred strategy<sup>16</sup>.

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<sup>16</sup> This issue was discussed with Council in June 2015. Council subsequently provided direction to the consulting team to proceed on the assumption that a dedicated gymnastic facility would not be a part of the Multiplex. The issue of how the City will support a gymnastic facility to replace the areas currently used at the Golden Hawk Recreation Centre, if at all, is not a part of this study.

### **3.3 BEST PRACTICE FACILITIES**

Supply and demand data was not available to assess the following facilities in the same manner as those discussed in the previous section. With the exception of the walking track which was strongly supported, these facilities were generally not discussed by community representatives. However, they are often included in multi-purpose recreation facilities as innovative spaces that offer unique programming opportunities. We have referred to these as “best practice” facilities and these should be considered as components of the Multiplex project. Again, with the exception of the walking track, these are small spaces that would be unique in Miramichi and significantly expand both programming opportunities and the appeal of the Multiplex for a broad range of users, including those who may not be interested in sport facilities.

#### **3.3.1 Indoor Walking Track**

Walking is one of the most popular recreational activities and its appeal extends to a wide range of individuals, including those who are less likely to participate in active sports. Walking is an activity that residents can take part in at their own convenience and with a minimum amount of equipment and training; therefore participation will continue to rise. Indoor walking/running tracks also provide year-round opportunities to be active, benefiting communities that experience cold and lengthy winter seasons. Walking tracks are also well suited to multi-purpose recreation facilities because they complement other programs and can often be accommodated within the larger building design.

An indoor walking track could support participation by those who are currently inactive due to obesity, medical conditions, or age related challenges.

There was strong support for an indoor walking track amongst those interviewed for the study.

While not ideally designed for the activity, individuals do use the gym at the Golden Hawk Recreation Centre for walking. Seniors are the major users and the Departments activity statistics show roughly 1300 and 900 participants respectively in 2013 and 2014. The Civic Centre is also used for a walking program but activity statistics are not kept at this location. We are confident that walking would increase significantly if appropriate facilities were provided as part of a larger multipurpose recreation complex with other amenities such as food service and social space.

### **3.3.2 Community Board Room/Classroom/Skills Development Space**

This space would be used almost exclusively for structured, educational and skills development programs and would accommodate computers, audio-visual equipment, etc. This space could be programmed throughout the day for at-home parents and older adult classes, after school for homework help/tutoring, and in the evening for classes catering to those who work during the day. If rented for meetings and training sessions, the space provides another revenue stream for the facility.

### **3.3.3 Community Kitchen**

A typical kitchen will be included as part of the Multiplex to support occasional rentals and social events in the multi-purpose areas. With a modest addition to the available space, the kitchen space can also be used for programs including cooking classes, food safety instruction and nutritional classes – all of which would support the wellness objectives represented in the Department’s mandate. CWR Department staff identified nutrition, healthy eating and cooking classes as an area of potential demand in the community.

### **3.3.4 Rock Climbing Wall**

A climbing wall, ideally located in a highly visible area such as off the lobby, would be a desirable feature at the Multiplex. Participation in indoor climbing has grown dramatically in recent years and is recognized as having a variety of health and fitness benefits. It is an activity that can be enjoyed year-round and can be undertaken by adults and children as well as by those with physical disabilities. This type of feature is often a major attraction for youth, including those who may not participate in traditional sports.

### **3.3.5 Child Minding Space**

As part of the overall Multiplex design, a small child minding/babysitting component should be incorporated. Appropriate and affordable babysitting options can be difficult to arrange and can often make participating in recreation and leisure activities a challenge. This should be considered as a fee-for-service option during peak periods of use at the Multiplex.

### **3.3.6 Food Service and Community Social Space**

It would be customary to provide an area for food service and informal socialization in major multipurpose recreation complexes. This is both a customer service and a recreational space where residents can socialize. Ideally it would be located in the lobby area and would have views to activity spaces in the complex (e.g. over-looking the pool).

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## 4.0 BUSINESS PLAN

### 4.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the business plan is to provide an initial projection of operating costs and revenues for the proposed Multiplex. It should be understood that, in all cases, the financial scenario presented here is based on a series of assumptions regarding use, operating costs, staffing complement, utility costs, size of facility, fees, rates etc. This information is based on the scope of this study and the best information we have available at this time. The information is presented as a starting point for future decisions that may affect fees charged, facility size or components, scheduling and use, and adjustment in staffing and operational approaches. These future decisions may present opportunities to reduce the net deficit identified by the business plan.

While this is the case for any business plan prepared at this point in a major recreation facility's development, it is particularly relevant in Miramichi. As noted earlier, current policies and practices with respect to fees and scheduling are not customary in other communities and the Multiplex represents a major change in the City's facility model with significant implications for all aspects of the Department's operation. We have recommended that the City undertake a comprehensive operational review of the Department prior to the opening of the Multiplex. Accurate projections of costs and revenues cannot be provided until the operational review is complete.

The business plan provides a projection of net operating costs based on current available information including:

- Size and nature of the planned facility;
- Staffing allocation and costs that reflect current salary, wage and benefit rates; and FTEs reflecting facility components and hours of operation;
- Utility costs<sup>17</sup>;
- Estimated program and general management expenses;
- Current and proposed <sup>18</sup>fee and rental rates;

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<sup>17</sup> These are based on the square foot occupancy costs identified in the 2014 Miramichi Recreation Infrastructure Cost Comparison. Final Report prepared by Architecture49.

<sup>18</sup> Where current facilities don't accommodate a proposed activity a fee has been proposed based on other similar fees within the Province of NB.

- With the exception of gymnastics as discussed earlier, transfer of existing aquatic, gymnasium and multipurpose activities from decommissioned facilities;
- Additional aquatic and gymnasium uses based on staff indications of new programs;
- All existing rentals and programming at the Lord Beaverbrook Arena transferred to the new facility;
- No allowance for the cost of annual capital debt financing.

Based on these assumptions the projected net annual operating cost is in the order of \$680,000. For the most part (assuming that facilities recommended to be decommissioned are) the projected net deficit is not in addition to the Departments current deficit. Rather, expenses and revenues represented in the business plan incorporate a significant portion of the CWR Department's current budget.

It should also be emphasized that revenue projections generally reflect current practices and are quite conservative. As noted in the assumptions that follow, fees are lower than in other communities and in many cases revenue streams available in other comparable facilities are not included for the Multiplex.

In a meeting with the consultant in June 2015, Council indicated its intention to review fees and charges for recreation facilities and potentially move to model that is more efficient, consistent with other communities and may require lower subsidies. We have reflected this intention in the fee assumptions for the business plan. While we have maintained a number of the current fees, which are lower than other New Brunswick communities, we have occasionally used different approaches to charging for community use. For example, instead of assuming Miramichi's widespread use of a per person charge for most programs, we have adopted standard facility rental charges that are customary in most other communities.

We acknowledge that this may have an effect on program participation and use of the Multiplex and this issue should be investigated further, as part of a pricing review, associated with the recommended operational review. As an example, we note that the swim team pays a flat fee of \$1500 annually for pool rentals. Based only on their indoor pool use (10 hours per week at MVHS for 40 weeks/year) this represents about \$3.70/hour. In our experience, this fee is unprecedented. In the business plan, we have used a subsidized prime time pool rental rate of \$45/hour (based on the average rate in three New Brunswick communities).

It was not within the scope of our work to compare the operating costs and revenues of the decommissioned facilities with those of the proposed Multiplex. Providing a "true" comparison would be extremely difficult because of differences in the approach to operating and charging for these facilities (we have used different fee assumptions and, to cite one example, the need



for facility supervisors to collect fees at multiple locations is no longer required with our staffing model). In addition to operational differences, the inherent inconsistencies in comparing older, single purpose buildings to a new Multiplex makes an accurate assessment of net annual operating costs impractical.

More importantly, the comparison is also of limited value. The challenge for the City is to adopt new operational approaches for the Multiplex that are consistent with current best practices in the recreation field and will ensure the most efficient and cost effective scenario going forward.

## 4.2 FACILITY USE ASSUMPTIONS

The following assumptions reflect the use of existing facilities that will be decommissioned as well as information received from the user group consultation activities, from trend data, and from discussion with staff.

### 4.2.1 Arena

- The development of a twin pad arena will be phased at the Multiplex. A single ice surface will be provided to replace the existing Lord Beaverbrook Arena in the first phase and the business plan is based on this scenario. For the purposes of this assessment, we have assumed that only use at the Lord Beaverbrook Arena will be transferred to the new facility. This may not be the case if users of the Civic Centre prefer the new arena. However, any additional transfers to the new arena at the Multiplex would be lost revenue at the Civic Centre and would not affect City wide arena revenues.
- It is assumed that the arena will operate with ice from the first week of September to the first week in May (35 weeks). This accommodates the regular minor hockey ice season of October through March, providing a slightly earlier start. The April and May opening is for the hockey school that currently operates from the Lord Beaverbrook arena. If this contract was not renewed in the future, ice would not be required for these months.
- Despite the fact that the proposed arena could accommodate summer ice, it has not been considered in the costs and revenues. User groups did not express a need for summer ice hours and these are not currently provided. If summer ice is considered in the future, additional use would reflect additional revenue, but also additional operational costs. This should be assessed, if warranted, in the future.
- Reflecting current practice in Miramichi, different fees were not used for prime and non-prime ice time.

- Ice use projections are based on current experience at the Lord Beaverbrook Arena for a total of 53 hours weekly minor hockey rentals, 3 hours of shinny, and 9 hours of senior public and family skating at an estimated hourly participation of 15 persons;
- No passes or group fees were used in the creation of the revenue estimates. While it is anticipated that users will avail themselves of passes, it is not possible at the current level of assessment to know which or how many individuals will use these options. As only per person and per hour revenues have been estimated it is possible that revenues are slightly over estimated. On the other hand no assessment has been given to program increases and therefore in the short term these two assumptions will likely cancel each other out.
- Seven days of non-ice summer usage is projected based on the current situation at Lord Beaverbrook Arena. Two of those days were used for school graduations and it is assumed that no revenue will be received. The other five uses were for tournaments and events and it is assumed these days are charged at the non-profit rate for day use. (This is not entirely consistent with the current practices where tournament revenue is limited to charging a fee for attendees and different charges are in place for events with and without alcohol).

Table 4.1 illustrates the assumptions used for arena use and participation.

**Table 4.1: Arena Use Assumptions**

Arena Uses	number of hours per week	Number of Weeks per Year	average number of users
Minor Hockey	53	24	N/A
Public Skate	9	30	15
Shinny Hockey Rental	3	24	12
School Use no charge	12	20	N/A
Hockey School	192	8	N/A
Full Day Rentals - For Profit Group	0	0	
Full Day Rentals - Not for Profit Group	1	5	

#### 4.2.2 Aquatic Facility

- It is assumed that with the opening of the proposed lap and leisure pools all other aquatic facilities in the City will close including both outdoor pools and the indoor pools at the MVHS and the Golden Hawk Recreation Centre.
- The pool schedule used to calculate use and revenues is based on discussion with City Aquatic staff and includes:
  - Fitness swims every morning, noon hour, and late evening;
  - Senior Fitness swims during the day time;
  - 15 hours of public swim
  - Teen night
  - Various drop in fitness programs such as pre and post-natal fitness, aqua-stretch, hydro spinning, a full range of leadership instructional programs, and swim lessons for all ages.
- Table 4.2 illustrates a possible schedule for the pool. This does not suggest the way the pool will be programmed but rather illustrates that the number of hours used to calculate revenues and staff requirements are consistent with time available in the new aquatic facility.
- It is noted that while programming largely fills the traditional six-lane pool there remains excess time for programming the leisure pool. There is also likely capacity within existing programs and space for additional concurrent programming.
- No activities identified specifically for the therapy pool and this is an area of potential growth during day-time hours particularly.
- Lifeguards have been included based on a ratio of 1:25 with a single guard never being responsible even if there are fewer than 25 participants in the pool. A guard is on deck whenever the facility is in use including when aquatic instructional staff are working and for community rentals, such as swim team use.
- Three guards (one senior and two assistant) are on deck during all public swim times with a fourth on staff for breaks.
- Fees for community hourly rental are based on an average of three pools in the Province (Dieppe, Fredericton, Riverview) as the City of Miramichi does not currently have an indoor pool rental fee.

Table 4.3 illustrates the usage assumptions.

**Table 4.2: Aquatic Facility Projected Schedules**

Monday							Tuesday									
Rectangular Pool				Leisure Pool/Therapy Pool			Rectangular Pool				Leisure Pool/Therapy Pool					
Time	Use	Hours	# users/hr	Use	Hours	# users/hr	Time	Use	Hours	# users/hr	Use	Hours	# users/hr			
7:00	Lap Swim	1.0	8				7:00	Lap Swim	1.0	8						
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9:30	Senior Fitness Programs	2.0	25				Senior Fitness Program			9:30				Pre School Lessons	=5 1/2 hour classes	5/ 1/2 hr
10:00																
10:30																
11:00																
12:00	Lap Swim	1.0	8							12:00	Lap Swim	1.0	8			
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8:00	Leadership	2.0	= 24 /hr	Public Swim	2.0	25/hr				8:00				Leadership	3.0	= 24 /hr
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9:00	Lap Swim	2.0	8/hr							9:00	Lap Swim	1.5	8/hr			
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Wednesday							Thursday																																																																																																																																																																																																																																									
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Friday						
	Rectangular Pool			Leisure Pool/Therapy Pool		
Time	Use	Hours	# users/hr	Use	Hours	# users/hr
7:00	Lap Swim	1.0	8			
7:30						
8:00						
8:30						
9:00						
9:30	Senior Fitness Programs	2.0	25	Senior Fitness Program		
10:00						
10:30						
11:00						
11:30	Lap Swim	1.0	8			
12:00						
12:30						
1:00	School Use	3.0	NA			
1:30						
2:00						
2:30						
3:00						
3:30	Leadership	4.0	= 24 /hr			
4:00						
4:30						
5:00	Teen Night	2.0	50	Teen Night		
5:30						
6:00						
6:30						
7:00						
7:30	Lap Swim	2.0	8	Hydro Swimming	2	= 25 /hour
8:00						
8:30						
9:00						
9:30						
10:00						
10:30						
11:00						

Saturday							Sunday									
Time	Rectangular Pool			Leisure Pool/Therapy Pool			Time	Rectangular Pool			Leisure Pool/Therapy Pool					
	Use	Hours	# users/hr	Use	Hours	# users/hr		Use	Hours	# users/hr	Use	Hours	# users/hr			
7:00	Lap Swim	1.0	8				7:00	Lap Swim	1.0	8						
7:30							7:30									
8:00	Swim Lessons = 12 hours			Aqua Stretch	2	= 25 /hour	8:00	Swim Club	4	N/A						
8:30				Pre School Lessons =5 1/2 hour classes	5/ 1/2 hr	8:30	12:00							Lap Swim	1.0	8
9:00						9:00										
9:30						9:30										
10:00						10:00										
10:30						10:30										
11:00	11:00															
11:30	11:30															
12:00	Lap Swim	1.0	8				12:00	Lap Swim	1.0	8						
12:30	Public Swim 5.0 25/hr			Public Swim			12:30	Public Swim 4.0 25/hr			Public Swim					
1:00																
1:30																
2:00																
2:30																
3:00																
3:30																
4:00																
4:30																
5:00																
5:30																
6:00																
6:30																
7:00	Party Rental	2.0	N/A				7:00	Synchro	2.0	TBD						
7:30							7:30									
8:00	Lap Swim	2.0					8:00	Lap Swim	2.0	16						
8:30							8:30									
9:00							9:00									
9:30							9:30									
10:00							10:00									
10:30							10:30									
11:00							11:00									

**Table 4.3: Aquatic Use Assumptions**

Aquatic Facility Usage	Number of hours per week	Number of weeks or <b>sessions</b> Per Year	Average number of users per session
Fitness Swimmers	28	48	8
Senior Fitness Swimmers	6	48	25
Public Swim	15	48	25
Teen Night	2	40	50
Pre and Post Natal Fitness / Parent Tot	4	40	15
Pre School Class (1/2 hour lessons)	14	<b>4</b>	5
Swim Kids 1-6 Lessons	40	<b>4</b>	7
Swim Kids 7-9	2	<b>4</b>	10
Lifesaving Sport	3	<b>1</b>	12
Adult learn to swim	3	<b>3</b>	10
Aqua Stretch	4	40	25
Hydro Spinning	4	40	10
Bronze Star	2	<b>4</b>	12
Bronze Medallion	2	<b>4</b>	12
Bronze Cross	2	<b>4</b>	12
NLS	4	<b>1</b>	8
Synchro	2	<b>4</b>	10
School Use no charge	12	40	25
pool rental (subsidized prime)	10	40	25
pool rental (party rental)	4	40	15



### 4.2.3 Multi-Purpose Space

- Multi-purpose space will be used by both community rental and CWR Department programming;
- No revenues or expenses have been attributed to use for CWR Department programming on the assumption that the cost of space will be incorporated in the Departmental budget and programs will be operated at a break-even basis. CWR Department programs include such things as “Girls on the Move” or teen drop in programming. Currently the Department charges a \$3/per person fee for attendance at these events but this revenue is not specifically related to facility or program expense (e.g. room rental; staff who are not volunteers; program supplies, etc.) For the purposes of this assessment, we have assumed revenues are sufficient to cover costs for these types of programs;
- Community programs identified for the multipurpose space include such things as yoga and Tai Chi. These may be day time or evening and/or weekend programs. We have assumed that community groups will rent the space from the Department and cover these costs (and any others) through fees that they charge their participants. This would be a customary practice in most communities. As the space is divisible there is considerable excess capacity to increase programming. The hours identified are largely those transferred from decommissioned facilities;
- Rentals for meetings by private or community organizations are not easily accommodated with current facilities in Miramichi and the Department does not currently charge for meeting room rentals. Better facilities will be available at the Multiplex and, with a change in pricing policies, the CWR Department could likely generate revenue from meeting room rentals. However, based on current practice, we have not assumed revenue from meeting room rentals.
- Party Rental of the Climbing Wall and Multi-Purpose space is an estimate although no information from the community was provided as to its potential use.

Table 4.4 illustrates anticipate use of multi-purpose space.

**Table 4.4: Multi-Purpose Space Use Assumptions**

Multipurpose Space Use	Number of Hours Per Week	Number of Weeks Per Year
Community Meeting Rentals	0	0
Community Programs	42	35
Party Rental Climbing Wall and Multi-Purpose Room	2	30

#### 4.2.4 Gymnasium Space

- Based on the needs assessment and the assumption that all existing gym use (including that at the MVHS) is transferred to the Multiplex and that additional time requested by users for new programs is accommodated, there is considerably more demand than can be accommodated within the gym space available at the Multiplex. However, as discussed in the needs assessment, the Multiplex gym’s role is to complement gymnasia provided by educational authorities who will continue to meet most the community’s needs. The Multiplex gym may be preferred to those provided by schools because there will be fewer restrictions on use, but our assumption is that school gymnasia will continue to serve the community.
- While all uses have been noted as full gym use this reflects in many cases two groups using half the gymnasium;
- Consistent with current practice, no use has been identified for summer use. However, we anticipated that the Department will program the facility for summer programs during the day and that once built community groups will express an interest in summer use;
- As with multi-purpose space no revenue will be identified associated with CWR Department programs (e.g. open gym time) on the assumption that fees will cover costs.
- We have not identified revenue associated with private or full day rentals of the gym. This is not customary in Miramichi, but may be an added source of revenue at the Multiplex.

Table 4.5 illustrates gym time used to generate the pro forma.

**Table 4.5: Gymnasia Use Assumptions**

Gymnasium Use	Number of Hours Per Week	Number of Weeks Per Year
Community Group hourly gymnasia rentals evening & weekend full gym	35	40
Community Group hourly gymnasia rentals daytime	8	40
Department programs evening / weekend	15	40
Department programs daytime	15	40

#### 4.2.5 Other Spaces and Revenue Potential

- Revenue for the walking/jogging track is currently charged \$3.00 per person for use at Golden Hawk Gymnasium for 12 hours per week. It is assumed, based on similar walking programs that a majority of the approximate 150 users per month are regulars coming several times a week and throughout each month. Based on this assumption there may be about 10-15 regular walkers. There is considerable capacity to increase usage and it is recommended that a walking pass be instituted. A projection of 200 distinct users annually purchasing passes of \$100 is used in this pro forma.
- Additional revenue from concessions, a percentage of the gate for events, profit from instructional classes and membership fees if charged, advertisement, donations etc. should be anticipated. We have not estimated these revenues.
- Food service will be available at the Multiplex and will likely represent an improvement over that available at current facilities. However, the number of potential customers will not support a national franchise, a restaurant or other full service option. While there are a variety of options for providing food service and these will need to be investigated further by the Department, some combination of concessions and vending machines would be customary in a facility of this type. While some revenue may be generated, it would be more appropriate to view this as a customer service than as a profit centre.
- It has been suggested that office space might be provided and rented as an additional source of revenue. Even if the City was prepared to assume the role of landlord and there was a need for additional commercial rental space in Miramichi, this is not a likely scenario. Construction costs at the Multiplex will be considerably higher than for building commercial space elsewhere in Miramichi. Common operating costs – such as snow removal and landscaping – will also be higher because of City staff costs. Consequently rents at the Multiplex would need to be much higher than comparable office space elsewhere in the community. To be competitive the rents would need to be subsidized by the municipality, which presumably defeats the purpose of raising revenue and would not be acceptable to taxpayers who own commercial properties, particularly if these properties are vacant.

### **4.3 MANAGEMENT APPROACH**

It is assumed that the City of Miramichi’s CWR Department will operate the Multiplex. The proposed staff complement in Table 4.5 illustrates what is needed to operate the new facility based on our experience with other comparable multipurpose recreation complexes and input from CWR Staff. It was not our purpose to “reassign” existing staff to the Multiplex. The extent to which these are existing, reclassified or new staff positions will be determined by the Department. However, to a considerable degree the staffing and other costs used to create the pro forma are already within the City’s operating budget.

The staffing complement, full and part time, illustrated in Table 4.6 reflects hours of operation, staff to participant ratio’s, and the positions required to operate the facility. This should be considered a starting point for discussion. Based on City policies and practices this complement may increase or decrease.

While we have included a full time program coordinating position, as noted earlier, the staff complement does not include part-time program staff associated with CWR Department recreational or active living programs; these costs are assumed to be covered by program revenues. Part-time aquatic staffing is as required to operate the pool as programmed in Table(s) 4.2. The positions were reviewed with the CWR Department Aquatics supervisor. Other part time staff associated with the arena, maintenance and customer service and would be customary in a facility of this type.

Salaries, hourly wages and benefit rates are consistent with current practice in Miramichi.

**Table 4.6: Staff Complement for the Proposed Facility**

Staff Complement				
Position	Salary	Hourly Wage	Benefit Rate	FTE's
<b>Full Time Staff</b>				
Facility manager/Director	\$75,000		33%	1.00
Aquatic Coordinator	\$50,000		33%	1.00
Facility Coordinator	\$55,000		33%	1.00
Program Coordinator	\$50,000		33%	1.00
Administrative Assistant (35 hours per week)	\$40,000		33%	1.00
Operations Staff (40 hours per week)	\$52,000		33%	3.00
<b>Part Time Staff</b>				
Head Guard	6,272	\$12.00	13%	3.45
Assistant Guard	5,472	\$11.05	13%	3.01
Instructor	2,720	\$10.55	13%	1.49
Aquafit Instructor	480	\$10.55	13%	0.26
Cashier / Customer Service Assitance	2,640	\$10.30	13%	1.45
Maintenance Staff	5,824	\$20.00	13%	3.20
Rink Attendants - public skating	270	\$10.55	13%	0.15
Rock Wall and Teen Supervisor	450	\$10.55	13%	0.25
<b>Total Full time and Full Time Equivalent</b>				<b>21.26</b>

#### 4.4 OPERATING COST ASSUMPTIONS

Multiplex operating costs exclusive of staffing are described in Table 4.7. These are general estimates based on other similar facilities. A number of these costs are comparable to Miramichi’s current experience (e.g. insurance for the decommissioned facilities is roughly \$43,000; chemicals and cleaning supplies are \$19,000) and in some cases we have included costs not represented in Miramichi’s budget (such as volunteer recognition and staff training). One major difference is in the marketing and promotion budget. We have allowed for \$20,000 to promote the new facility and encouraging participation. The CWR Department’s current advertising budget is \$8,600.

**Table 4.7: Operating Costs (Exclusive of Staff)**

<b>General Office</b>	<b>Costs</b>
Marketing, Promotions	\$ 20,000.00
Office Supplies	\$ 10,000.00
Office Equipment	\$ 10,000.00
Telephone	\$ 6,000.00
Postage/Courier	\$ 2,000.00
Insurance	\$ 46,000.00
Dues/Subscriptions	\$ 500.00
Volunteer Recognition/Recruitment	\$ 2,000.00
<b>Maintenance</b>	<b>Costs</b>
Pool Chemicals	\$ 10,000.00
Cleaning & Maintenance Supplies	\$ 10,000.00
Small Equip. Repair	\$ 10,000.00
Minor Building Repair	\$ 10,000.00
Contracted Cleaning	\$ 20,000.00
<b>Program Costs</b>	<b>Costs</b>
Aquatic program supplies	\$ 10,000.00
Part time staff training	\$ 3,000.00

In addition to the expenses noted above, utilities are another significant cost. Utility costs are based on a previous report<sup>19</sup> and are estimated at approximately \$2.50 per gross square foot for heat, water, electricity and some lifecycle maintenance. This figure should be reviewed and confirmed with other currently operating facilities. Based on that gross square foot estimate and the projected size of the facility approximately \$300,000 is projected for annual utility costs.

## 4.5 REVENUE ASSUMPTIONS

Revenues were generated using the program and rental fees provided by staff and/or existing. In a few cases e.g., indoor pool rental to community groups that does not currently exist with respect to the municipal pool time, an hourly fee is proposed.

Not all fees were used in calculating revenues. For example we did not use family rates or multi-use passes. It is not possible at this level of evaluation to identify how many of a group of say public swimmers will be there as a family, as a senior, as an individual, on a multi-use pass etc. We have therefore used single use payments for these calculations. This may enhance revenues slightly. On the other hand it should also be assumed that use may also be underestimated and the two situations will have the effect of mitigating each other.

Fees and rates used are listed in Table 4.8.

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<sup>19</sup> Architecture 49 Recreation Infrastructure Assessment and Comparison Report. 2014.

**Table 4.8: Fee and Charge Assumptions**

<b>Program Fees &amp; Charges</b>		
<b>Aquatic Programs and Uses</b>	<b>Fee</b>	<b>Length of Use</b>
Daily Pool Drop-In / Public Swim / Lane Swim fee	\$ 3.00	per time
Youth Teen Night	\$ 3.00	per time
Pre and Post Natal Fitness drop in	\$ 3.00	per time
Pre School Class (1/2 hour lessons)	\$ 35.00	per lesson group
Swim Kids 1-6 Lessons	\$ 50.00	per lesson group
Swim Kids 7-9	\$ 60.00	per lesson group
Lifesaving Sport	\$ 60.00	per lesson group
Adult learn to swim	\$ 60.00	per lesson group
Aqua Stretch	\$ 3.00	per lesson group
Hydro Spinning	\$ 3.00	per lesson group
Swim for Life Instructors	\$ 200.00	per lesson group
Bronze Star	\$ 60.00	per lesson group
Bronze Medallion	\$ 125.00	per lesson group
Bronze Cross	\$ 100.00	per lesson group
NLS	\$ 200.00	per lesson group
Synchro	\$ 60.00	per lesson group
pool rental (subsidized prime)	\$ 45.00	per hour
pool rental (non subsidized)	\$ 90.00	per hour
pool rental (non subsidized)	\$ 90.00	per hour
<b>Arena Programs</b>		
Minor Hockey	\$ 70.00	per hour
Public Skate	\$ 3.00	per hour
Hockey School	\$ 155.00	Per hour
Rentals - Not for Profit Group	\$ 500.00	per day
<b>Gymnasium</b>		
Full Gymnasium	\$ 60.00	per hour
Active Living Space	\$ 35.00	per hour
Meeting room	\$ 25.00	per 3 hours
Climbing wall and party room	\$ 100.00	per two hours



#### **4.5.1 Revenue Projections**

Table 4.9 illustrates revenue projections based on the use noted in earlier tables and the fees and charges noted in the preceding section. As noted earlier, our assumptions concerning fees and revenue sources are quite conservative. In most cases there is some additional capacity for increased use in proposed spaces that could enhance revenues. This is particularly the case with respect to summer and daytime use. It is likely more classes could be added to the pool although as the traditional pool is largely programmed there may be additional requirements for guards to supervise other areas of the pool should additional programming be added using other pools.

**Table 4.9: Revenue Projections by Program Area**

AQUATIC FACILITY						
PUBLIC SWIM AND DROP IN PROGRAMS	No. of Sessions/Times	Annual weeks/year	Sessions /Year	Fee	Participants /Hour	Revenue
Fitness (lane) Swim	28	48	N/A	\$ 3.00	8	\$32,256.00
Senior(Lane) Fitness Swim	6	48		\$ 3.00	25	\$21,600.00
Aqua Stretch	4	40		\$ 3.00	25	\$12,000.00
Hydro Spinning	4	40		\$ 3.00	10	\$4,800.00
Pre and Post Natal Fitness / Parent Tot	4	40		\$ 3.00	15	\$7,200.00
Teen Night	1	40		\$ 3.00	50	\$6,000.00
Public Swim	15	48		\$ 3.00	25	\$54,000.00
INSTRUCTIONAL	No. of classes / Season	Annual weeks/year	Sessions /Year	Fee	Participants / Class	Revenue
Pre School Class (1/2 hour lessons)	28	N/A	4	\$ 35.00	5	\$ 19,600.00
Swim Kids 1-6 Lessons	40		4	\$ 50.00	7	\$ 56,000.00
Swim Kids 7-9	2		4	\$ 60.00	10	\$ 4,800.00
Lifesaving Sport	3		1	\$ 60.00	12	\$ 2,160.00
Adult learn to swim	3		3	\$ 60.00	10	\$ 5,400.00
Bronze Star	2		4	\$ 60.00	12	\$ 5,760.00
Bronze Medallion	2		4	\$ 125.00	12	\$ 12,000.00
Bronze Cross	2		4	\$ 100.00	12	\$ 9,600.00
NLS	1		1	\$ 200.00	8	\$ 1,600.00
Synchro	2		4	\$ 60.00	10	\$ 4,800.00
RENTAL	No. of Hours / Week	Weeks / Year	Sessions /Year	Fee	Participants /Class	Revenue
pool rental (subsidized prime)	10	40	n/a	\$ 45.00	N/A	\$ 18,000.00
pool rental (non subsidized)	4	40		\$ 90.00		\$ 14,400.00
School Rental	18	40		\$ -		\$ -
<b>Revenue Total</b>						<b>\$ 291,976.00</b>
ARENA						
Ice Rentals	No. of Hours or Uses / Week	No. of Weeks / Year	Average No. of participants	Fee	Participants	Revenue
Minor Hockey	53	24	N/A	\$ 70.00	N/A	\$ 89,040.00
Shinny Hockey Rental	3	24	12	\$ 3.00		\$ 2,592.00
Public Skate	9	30	15	\$ 2.50		\$ 10,125.00
School Use no charge	12	20	N/A	\$ -		\$ -
Hockey School	24	8	N/A	\$ 155.00		\$ 29,760.00
Full Day Rentals - Not for Profit Group	1	5	N/A	\$ 500.00		\$ 2,500.00
<b>Revenue Total</b>						<b>\$ 134,017.00</b>
MULTI-PURPOSE SPACE AND GYMNASIUM						
Rentals and Uses	No. of Hours or Uses / Week	No. of Weeks / Year	Average No. of participants	Fee	Participants	Revenue
Community Meeting Rentals	0	0	N/A	\$25.00		\$ -
Community Programs	42	35		\$35.00		\$51,450.00
Party Rental Climbing Wall and Multi-Purpose Room	2	30		\$100.00		\$6,000.00
Community Group hourly gymnasias rentals evening & weekend full gym	35	40		\$60.00		\$84,000.00
Community Group hourly gymnasias rentals daytime	8	40		\$60.00		\$19,200.00
Department programs evening / weekend	15	40		\$0.00		\$ -
Department programs daytime	15	40		\$0.00		\$ -
<b>Revenue Total</b>						<b>\$ 160,650.00</b>
<b>Total Annual Revenue</b>						<b>\$ 586,643.00</b>

## 4.6 OPERATING PRO FORMA

Net operating cost projections (Table 4.10) are based on the assumptions noted in preceding sections. The pro forma does not represent all the additional programming that may evolve as the Multiplex is built, marketing initiatives that may be developed, policies that would increase or limit participation, or other directions that are not part of this study. These projections represent a reasonable starting point from which to begin the process of more exact programming, scheduling and budget projections. Staffing costs for full-time employees are escalated at 2% annually, recognizing cost of living increases and incremental movement of staff through the pay range. Other operation costs are also escalated at 2% annually as well.

The net operating cost does not include contributions to ongoing capital conservation or debt repayment. While not currently the practice in Miramichi, it may be advisable to build in contributions to ongoing capital conservation and this should be assessed as part of the recommended operational review.

Total annual gross operating costs in the first full year of operation are approximately \$1.27M using assumptions as outlined in this section of the report. Many of these costs are currently within the CWR Department operating budget. While a direct comparison is not possible due to the manner in which the budgets are kept, the 2014 budgeted expenditures for the existing facilities that will be decommissioned when the Multiplex opens were about \$1.25million.) Program costs comparable to those included in the business plan added about \$168,000 to this total for overall expenditures in the order of \$1.5million.

This estimate suggests that Multiplex costs are marginally lower than those for the existing decommissioned facilities, but may in fact under-estimate the savings due to the proposed staffing. The Multiplex budget includes a facility manager, a program coordinator, and administrative and customer service staff who may be covering some job responsibilities of existing staff not represented in budgets of the decommissioned facilities. We have recommended an operational review that will clarify how Multiplex staff relate to existing Department staff and we expect this will indicate some duplication and therefore opportunities to realize further staff efficiencies within the CWR Department.

The business plan indicates approximately \$587,000 of revenues in the initial year of operation. This is somewhat higher than the roughly \$400,000 in revenues in 2014 that could be attributed to the decommissioned facilities. However, it is not possible to directly compare revenues because of the manner in which budgets are kept and fees are charged by the Department.

The business plan indicates an approximate \$670,000 annual operating deficit. This would appear to be a marginal improvement over the financial performance of the facilities that the

Multiplex will replace. This reflects current pricing practices in Miramichi. It also assumes that the operating efficiencies associated with a twin pad arena are delayed until such time as the Civic Centre ice surface is decommissioned and replaced at the Multiplex.

**Table 4.10: Five Year Operating Pro Forma**

Salaries	Year One TOTAL	Year Two	Year Three	Year Four	Year Five
<b>Full Time Staff</b>					
Facility manager/Director	\$ 99,750.00	\$ 101,745.00	\$ 103,779.90	\$ 105,855.50	\$ 107,972.61
Aquatic Coordinator	\$ 66,500.00	\$ 67,830.00	\$ 69,186.60	\$ 70,570.33	\$ 71,981.74
Facility Coordinator	\$ 73,150.00	\$ 74,613.00	\$ 76,105.26	\$ 77,627.37	\$ 79,179.91
Program Coordinator	\$ 66,500.00	\$ 67,830.00	\$ 69,186.60	\$ 70,570.33	\$ 71,981.74
Administrative Assistant (35 hours per week)	\$ 53,200.00	\$ 54,264.00	\$ 55,349.28	\$ 56,456.27	\$ 57,585.39
Operations Staff (40 hours per week)	\$ 69,160.00	\$ 70,543.20	\$ 71,954.06	\$ 73,393.15	\$ 74,861.01
<b>Total FT Staff Costs</b>	<b>\$ 428,260</b>	<b>\$ 436,825.20</b>	<b>\$ 445,561.70</b>	<b>\$ 454,472.94</b>	<b>\$ 463,562.40</b>
<b>Part Time Staff</b>					
Head Guard	\$ 85,048.32	\$ 86,749.29	\$ 88,484.27	\$ 90,253.96	\$ 92,059.04
Assistant Guard	\$ 68,326.13	\$ 69,692.65	\$ 71,086.50	\$ 72,508.23	\$ 73,958.40
Instructor	\$ 32,426.48	\$ 33,075.01	\$ 33,736.51	\$ 34,411.24	\$ 35,099.46
Aquafit Instructor	\$ 5,722.32	\$ 5,836.77	\$ 5,953.50	\$ 6,072.57	\$ 6,194.02
Cashier / Customer Service Assitance	\$ 31,472.76	\$ 32,102.22	\$ 32,744.26	\$ 33,399.14	\$ 34,067.13
Maintenance Staff	\$ 131,622.40	\$ 134,254.85	\$ 136,939.94	\$ 139,678.74	\$ 142,472.32
Rink Attendants - public skating	\$ 3,218.81	\$ 3,283.18	\$ 3,348.84	\$ 3,415.82	\$ 3,484.14
Rock Climbing Supervisor	\$ 5,364.68	\$ 5,471.97	\$ 5,581.41	\$ 5,693.04	\$ 5,806.90
<b>Total PT Staff Costs</b>	<b>\$ 363,201.89</b>	<b>\$ 370,465.93</b>	<b>\$ 377,875.24</b>	<b>\$ 385,432.75</b>	<b>\$ 393,141.40</b>
<b>Total Staff Costs</b>	<b>\$ 791,461.89</b>	<b>\$ 807,291.13</b>	<b>\$ 823,436.95</b>	<b>\$ 839,905.69</b>	<b>\$ 856,703.80</b>
<b>General Office</b>					
Marketing, Promotions	\$ 20,000.00	\$ 20,400.00	\$ 20,808.00	\$ 21,224.16	\$ 21,648.64
Office Supplies	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 10,200.00	\$ 10,404.00	\$ 10,612.08	\$ 10,824.32
Office Equipment	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 10,200.00	\$ 10,404.00	\$ 10,612.08	\$ 10,824.32
Telephone	\$ 6,000.00	\$ 6,120.00	\$ 6,242.40	\$ 6,367.25	\$ 6,494.59
Postage/Courier	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 2,040.00	\$ 2,080.80	\$ 2,122.42	\$ 2,164.86
Insurance	\$ 46,000.00	\$ 46,920.00	\$ 47,858.40	\$ 48,815.57	\$ 49,791.88
Dues/Subscriptions	\$ 500.00	\$ 510.00	\$ 520.20	\$ 530.60	\$ 541.22
Volunteer Recognition/Recruitment	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 2,040.00	\$ 2,080.80	\$ 2,122.42	\$ 2,164.86
<b>Total Office Costs</b>	<b>\$ 96,500</b>	<b>\$ 98,430</b>	<b>\$ 100,399</b>	<b>\$ 102,407</b>	<b>\$ 104,455</b>
<b>Maintenance Costs</b>					
Utilities	\$ 295,770.00	\$ 301,685	\$ 307,719	\$ 313,873	\$ 320,151
Pool Chemicals	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 10,200	\$ 10,404	\$ 10,612	\$ 10,824
Cleaning & Maintence Supplies	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 10,200	\$ 10,404	\$ 10,612	\$ 10,824
Small Equip. Repair	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 10,200	\$ 10,404	\$ 10,612	\$ 10,824
Minor Building Repair	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 10,200	\$ 10,404	\$ 10,612	\$ 10,824
Contracted Cleaning	\$ 20,000.00	\$ 20,400	\$ 20,808	\$ 21,224	\$ 21,649
<b>Total Maintenance Costs</b>	<b>\$ 355,770.00</b>	<b>\$ 362,885.40</b>	<b>\$ 370,143.11</b>	<b>\$ 377,545.97</b>	<b>\$ 385,096.89</b>
<b>Program Costs</b>					
Aquatic program supplies	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 10,200.00	\$ 10,404.00	\$ 10,612.08	\$ 10,824.32
Part time staff training	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 3,060.00	\$ 3,121.20	\$ 3,183.62	\$ 3,247.30
<b>Total Program Costs</b>	<b>\$ 13,000.00</b>	<b>\$ 13,260.00</b>	<b>\$ 13,525.20</b>	<b>\$ 13,795.70</b>	<b>\$ 14,071.62</b>
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>1,256,731.89</b>	<b>1,281,866.53</b>	<b>1,307,503.86</b>	<b>1,333,653.93</b>	<b>1,360,327.01</b>
Revenues - Aquatic Facility	291,976.00	300,735.28	309,757.34	319,050.06	328,621.56
Revenues - Arena	134,017.00	138,037.51	142,178.64	146,443.99	150,837.31
Revenues - Multi Purpose Space & Gymnasium	160,650.00	165,469.50	170,433.59	175,546.59	180,812.99
<b>TOTAL REVENUES</b>	<b>\$ 586,643.00</b>	<b>\$ 604,242.29</b>	<b>\$ 622,369.56</b>	<b>\$ 641,040.65</b>	<b>\$ 660,271.86</b>
<b>NET DEFICIT</b>	<b>\$ (670,088.89)</b>	<b>\$ (677,624.24)</b>	<b>\$ (685,134.30)</b>	<b>\$ (692,613.29)</b>	<b>\$ (700,055.15)</b>

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**APPENDIX A**

**MULTIPURPOSE RECREATION COMPLEXES – BENEFITS, DESIGN  
PRINCIPLES, PROGRAMMING ENHANCEMENTS**

## COMMUNITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, HEALTH AND SOCIAL BENEFITS<sup>20</sup>

There is considerable research to suggest that the economic, health and social benefits that are frequently attributed to recreation are in fact maximized with multiuse complexes.

It has long been recognized that in an increasingly competitive economic environment, communities with quality recreational resources will have a significant advantage over others in the drive to attract new investment and recruit and retain a skilled labour force. Indeed, some studies suggest that following health care and education, recreation infrastructure is the most significant factor attracting and maintaining businesses and a stable labour force in a region. A number of authors including Dr. John Crompton of Texas A & M, a leading expert in the economic benefits of recreation, Mr. Richard Florida, author of the best-selling book – *Creative Cities*, and Enid Slack for the Laidlaw Foundation have written, at some length, about the recreational benefits to local businesses.

- “Small business ranked recreation, parks and open space first among, quality-of-life elements in location decisions...”<sup>21</sup>
- “Recreation, parks and open spaces are important in attracting small businesses, and areas which fail to recognize this are likely to lose them to cities that emphasize these amenities.”<sup>22</sup>
- “Cities need to attract business and skilled labour to be globally competitive. Services that enhance the quality of life of individuals in the community (such as parks, recreation, and cultural activities) feature prominently among the characteristics that attract the knowledge workers to particular places...”<sup>23</sup>
- “Over 90 percent of businesses in America employ 10 or fewer people, and most growth in business starts with those small companies. Those business owners can live wherever they want to live, and they will trade off some revenue potential for quality of life opportunities.”<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> This appendix is taken from a Discussion Paper that was part of the earlier study: Architecture 49 Recreation Infrastructure Assessment and Comparison Report. 2014

<sup>21</sup> Steve Hill, newsteam@agnews.tamu.edu from Interview with Dr. J. Crompton, *Parks, Recreation Could Help Attract Business* (1995).

<sup>22</sup> Florida, Richard, *Competing on Creativity; Planning Ontario Cities in the North American Context* A report prepared for the Ontario Ministry of Enterprise, Opportunity and Innovation and the Institute for Competitiveness and Prosperity, p.1

<sup>23</sup> Slack, E. (2003). *Municipal Funding for Recreation*. Prepared for the Laidlaw Foundation

<sup>24</sup> Gale Group (2004). *Leverage your parks: a quality parks system, which B.R. lacks, can help keep workers and attract new companies - Community – Interview*. Retrieved on December 10, 2004 from: <http://www.findarticles.com>

These quotes, which reflect a common theme in a growing body of literature, indicate the importance of high quality recreation facilities for attracting business and investors to a community and retaining a skilled labour force. The existing Miramichi recreation facilities do not appear to support the local economy in these important ways. While renovations and updates would undoubtedly improve this situation, this strategy is unlikely to have the impact of a new multiuse complex. A new multiuse complex will send a different message to potential investors by introducing a signature facility, state of the art design, and a quality community focal point with something for everyone. It is the type of facility that could be the centre piece of a marketing and promotional strategy for the region.

One of the most prevalent trends in recreation service delivery in New Brunswick, and elsewhere in Canada, is the increasing emphasis on physical activity and healthy lifestyles. For the following reasons, we might expect the beneficial health impacts of a multiuse complex in Miramichi to be more significant than those associated with updating or renovating the existing facilities. The complex can:

- Provide facilities not currently available (e.g., therapeutic pool; a well-designed walking track) that can offer specialized programming with a wellness focus.
- Greatly expand the supply of well-designed multipurpose space that can be used for physical activity programs.
- Offer enhanced opportunities for cross programming (gym and swim) and family programming (leisure pool with recreational components such as aquatic climbing walls).
- Provide better multipurpose space and venues for educational programs to promote health and wellness.

Multiuse complexes will generally increase the use of recreation facilities and, more importantly, frequently attract new users. In addition, because all facilities are under one roof – these complexes can make a significant contribution to a wide range of social objectives including higher levels of community cohesion and social interaction; inter-generational contact; and opportunities for shared program delivery.

The current facility model in Miramichi largely focuses on single-purpose facilities, geographically dispersed and with few complementary and supporting amenities required to maximize community use. A multiuse complex introduces a new model with the ability to attract those who would not normally be regular or frequent participants and to create a community focal point. While the municipality has provided a strong youth programming focus



at the Golden Hawk Recreation Centre (with a dedicated youth room and outdoor skateboard park), we expect a new multiuse complex would be more attractive and cater to a broader range of young people. The multipurpose complex would be a facility that encourages hanging-out and impromptu social opportunities through design and programming. It would bring people in and encourage repeated use of all parts of the facility. Youth who have a place to congregate can be encouraged to contribute programming ideas for other activities, (e.g., youth-only swims, creative opportunities for those not interested in, or only in, sports). Community interaction supports social cohesiveness and contributes to wellness through activity and social networking.

Unlike stand-alone facilities, multi-component recreation centres provide many opportunities for cross-programming (e.g. a gym and swim program) or concurrent programming (e.g. a single location where family members can simultaneously participate in programs of interest). Consequently, the municipality is a position to expand its program base in both different areas of interest and service combinations. In addition, only large multi-component recreation centres generate use levels high enough to support a full range of ancillary facilities and amenities such as food service, child-care, and facilities for those with special needs; etc.

## **OPERATING COST BENEFITS**

In addition to providing modern, full service sport, recreation and wellness facilities, multiuse complexes create unique opportunities for more cost effective service delivery.

Net operating costs depend on a variety of factors affecting costs and revenues and are community and facility specific. Identical facilities will have very different net operating costs based on municipal policies concerning fees and cost recovery and labour agreements. Programming policies and priorities will also have a major impact on the bottom line because of different cost recovery ratios for various activities. Finally, the design of the facility and the initial capital investment in furnishings, fitments and equipment will have a major impact on operating, maintenance and repair costs over the life of the building.

While the scope of this study did not include an assessment of operations, costs and revenues that would allow us to quantify the savings associated with a multiuse complex, the following are possible cost savings.

### **Staffing**

- Twin pad arenas can be operated with fewer staff than two single pad arenas.

- Maintenance and cleaning staff can be much more efficiently deployed in a larger complex.
- Administrative, security and reception staff functions are shared. Generally in single purpose facilities, these staff are either not provided or are very poorly utilized because of low levels of use. They can be efficiently deployed in a multiuse facility.

#### Administration and Operations

- Equipment can be shared between facilities resulting in lower overall operating costs.
- Economies of scale can be utilized to negotiate better arrangements for service contracts, insurance, etc.

#### Energy

- Generally less overall space will be provided in a multiuse complex than would be needed for stand-alone facilities (e.g. shared lobbies, washrooms; maintenance and work areas, etc.) In addition to savings on capital costs, this results in more efficient buildings which cost less to heat and maintain.
- There are opportunities to exchange heat and make better use of energy by co-locating facilities such as the arena and the pool.
- New facilities will achieve greater operating efficiencies than the existing facilities, even if these are renovated and updated. Facilities can be developed to green building standards to achieve higher levels of energy efficiency and overall sustainability.

#### Enhanced Revenue

- Much higher levels of use can be anticipated and this will yield higher program revenues.
- Shared facilities allow for shared amenities (such as food service) and higher levels of use significantly enhance revenue streams. This is particularly the case if the facility attracts casual users, participants and residents who simply want to socialize in community space.
- Facility users will be willing to pay higher rental rates and program fees for quality facilities

While the multiuse complex will be more cost effective than maintaining stand-alone facilities in most respects, the indoor aquatic facility will likely be the exception. Staffing costs are a major part of the operating budgets and we should expect a larger staff complement because

of higher levels of use; more programming potential; and features that must be supervised. (such as slides, climbing walls or other recreational elements). These additional costs will be offset to some degree by higher revenues. The extent to which higher operating costs would be incurred for a new aquatic facility in the multiuse complex can only be determined with a more detailed assessment of operations.

## **PLANNING AND DESIGN PRINCIPLES – RELEVANCE TO MULTIUSE COMPLEXES**

Section One of the paper identified a number of significant benefits associated with multiuse complexes that suggest this option is preferred to the renovation and retention of existing stand alone and single purpose facilities (assuming this is reasonable based on the relative capital costs). However, it is also important to note that multiuse complexes are also more consistent with facility development planning and design principles. The principles noted below represent best practices in community recreation facility planning. These are generally much more consistent with a centralized facility model.

### **Principle 1: Multi-Purpose Community Hubs**

When developing new recreation facilities or expanding and redeveloping existing facilities, they should be designed to function as community hubs. Where feasible, more than one recreation component (e.g. an indoor aquatic facility, twin pad arena, large multi-purpose or gymnasium, etc.), as well multi-purpose programming and arts related spaces will be combined in one facility cluster. Other community facility components such as a branch library, health and wellness related facilities, and appropriate services (e.g. sport medicine, therapeutic health, etc.) could be provided through partnerships with others. Complementary outdoor facilities that enhance the “community” experience are strongly supported. Facilities such as multiple soccer fields, multi-purpose courts, play structures, splash pads, all contribute to an enhancement of experience and may be considered to complement the indoor experience. This principle is well reflected in the Vision presented in the October 2013 Recreation Facility Needs Assessment Plan and was clearly the preference of Miramichi residents participating in that study.

### **Principle 2: Grouping of Facility Components**

Where feasible, “like” facility components (ice surfaces, indoor aquatic components) will be twinned or grouped together to support economies of scale and expanded user opportunities, where geographic access can be maintained. This principle responds to one of the key drivers of recreation planning today - the financial realities of ever increasing operating costs - and recognizes the economies of scale that contribute to financial and other resource efficiencies

with grouped rather than single facilities. Bringing together the two arenas and the two indoor pools in Miramichi is consistent with this principle.

### **Principle 3: Flexible and Accessible Design**

Future development will ensure to the degree possible, that facilities are flexible and accessible, with opportunities to accommodate as wide a range of use as possible, and to be converted to other uses in the future. This principle supports long term financial sustainability and community responsiveness. With community growth and the aging of the population, needs and interests will change. It is imperative therefore that recreation facilities are built to accommodate change. This is largely a design issue that ensures flexibility in all aspects of facility development and does not compromise the functionality of the facility for today's users.

### **Principle 4: Sustainable Building Practices**

Where developing new or redeveloping existing facilities, to the extent possible, the municipality should employ sustainable building practices and energy conservation measures. For all new facility development and when redeveloping or adding significant space to existing indoor and outdoor facilities, opportunities to improve/maximize energy efficiency and to educate and inform the public of these practices should be pursued. Sustainable use of resources also implies that funds continually be set aside for capital conservation purposes. Sustainable building practices include such considerations as: sensitivity to the ecology of the building site; using locally available or historic building materials, or building materials with recycled content and/or with lower impact manufacturing methods and by-products; use of a well-insulated and energy efficient building shell, high-performance windows and doors, and passive solar design; enhanced day-lighting; use of interior finishes which promote a healthier interior environment; use of energy-efficient and water-saving fixtures and equipment, and employing state of the art technologies in heating and cooling. Over time, the benefits of including these efficient systems in terms of operational savings far outweigh the capital cost differential. Fully sustainable construction of recreation facilities will only be possible in Miramichi with new construction. The existing older facilities can be improved, but they cannot reasonably be expected to meet the same standards of sustainability as new facilities.

### **Principle 5: Welcoming Facilities That Support Social Interaction**

Where developing new or redeveloping existing facilities, the municipality should include elements that encourage social interaction and a wide range of activities. New and redeveloped community recreation facilities (where feasible) should strive to include a bright, welcoming, open-concept lobby area with amenities encouraging social interaction (comfortable seating, views of all major components, food services, etc.) supporting a wider range of activities and a

longer length of stay. Consideration should be given to ensuring indoor and outdoor facilities provide a mix of opportunities and incorporate spaces that support active and social recreation, spaces to exhibit and display, and spaces to learn and socialize. Opportunities for unstructured social interaction are particularly important for youth, young families and older adults.

This of course is one of the major benefits of a multiuse complex that cannot be replicated in stand-alone facilities. In Miramichi, this may be one of the few opportunities to create a social centre which brings together the community.

#### **Principle 6: Physical Linkages & Access**

The municipality will support access to recreation facilities by a range of travel modes, by locating facilities on major transit routes, and by connecting geographic hubs and other recreation and district facilities by natural and hard surface trails. To ensure that a focus on communities does not negate the sense of citywide attachment, major nodes of activity should be connected to the extent possible by a variety of hard surface trails, bus routes, roadways, pathways, etc. Such physical linkages respond to active transportation initiatives, build local communities, and connect those communities through positive physical form. They provide opportunities for active living, recreation and general health. By ensuring community facilities are linked by transit routes and connected, where possible, by natural and hard surface trails, the municipality supports access by a range of travel modes to these amenities.

This concept is also reflected in the Vision presented in the October 2013 report and in the municipality's active transportation strategy. A multiuse centre is a significant community attraction, with high enough levels of use, to be positioned as a major node in Miramichi's transportation corridors, both vehicular and active transportation.

#### **Principle 7: Partnerships and Alternative Funding Mechanisms**

For all new and redeveloped facilities, the municipality will explore the full range of partnership and alternative funding mechanisms as part of a broader feasibility study. As part of its commitment to being fiscally responsible, and to nurture partnerships, a full range of potential partnerships with community organizations, partner agencies, other levels of government, and the private sector should be explored as part of the feasibility assessment for new community facilities. Opportunities to maximize funding through grant programs, corporate sponsorship, community group sponsorship, private donations, etc. should also be investigated for all facility development and redevelopment projects.

This is an issue that requires further investigation in Miramichi, but a multiuse complex maximizes the opportunities for partnerships that are beneficial to the municipality. The number and diversity of residents who will be attracted to the centre, make it extremely

attractive to partners that are providing a service (e.g. life skills for youth; programs to support independent living among the elderly, etc.) or have products to sell (e.g. retail or business interests such as sports medicine, food service, etc.). The attributes also make it an ideal location for other municipal services – such as the library. The co-location of libraries and recreation centres is a well established practice in Canadian communities and in virtually all cases mutually beneficial. Libraries in recreation centres experience much higher levels of use and attract many more new members than stand-alone facilities. The library provides another social and activity space for patrons of the recreation complex, particularly those that are waiting for other family members to finish a program, and as such is a particularly attractive feature in these facilities.

## **COMMUNITY USE AND PROGRAMMING - ENHANCEMENTS IN MIRAMICHI**

We anticipate that new facilities as part of a multiuse complex will offer a number of programming opportunities that cannot be realized with the upgrading of existing facilities. We have commented on selected opportunities below.

### **Indoor Pools**

Due in large part to their age and traditional design, Miramichi's aquatic facilities cannot fully respond to the full range of aquatic needs and interests of residents now or those of future residents. Opportunities to respond to these issues through enhanced programming or minor renovations are limited by the nature of the facilities. A new leisure pool could include the following features to enhance use; programming opportunities and resident use and satisfaction:

- specially designed therapeutic pools with a separate tank and warmer water which can be used for specialized programming (e.g. for older adults with arthritis) as well as a wide range of programs for older adults and younger children;
- accessibility components such as zero-depth entry, wheelchair ramps with handrails, hydraulic lifts;
- indoor water play features such as sprays and jets;
- the design requirement for instructional, fitness and training programs;
- an atmosphere (natural light, enhanced social and deck space) and amenities (full family change rooms, on-deck whirlpools, food service) that will attract a wider range of residents to use the pools more frequently.

These pools will also enjoy much higher levels of use, higher revenues and more efficient operations. While they may ultimately have higher net operating costs, this will largely be attributed to much higher levels of community use.

### **Arenas:**

While the Lord Beaverbrook Arena is in much worse condition than the Miramichi Civic Centre, both arenas are older, single pad, stand-alone facilities which are less efficient to operate than multiple-pad, contemporary arenas. The combination of age and limitations in the outdated design and equipment add to operating inefficiencies, increasing maintenance costs, and ultimately result in user dissatisfaction.

Replacing the existing single pad arenas with a twin pad facility in a multiuse complex can respond to community needs and interests by including elements such as an expanded lobby with food service; a warm viewing area; improved seating; expanded, improved dressing rooms, female dressing rooms, etc.

A twin pad arena will also improve the municipalities ability to host tournaments and meets. This includes off-ice events such as trade shows or major community special events. Higher levels of community use, and programming as well as improved revenue opportunities are the result.

### **Multi-Purpose Space**

We anticipate that the provision of new, well designed multi-purpose space as part of a larger community “hub” model will improve programming venues for a wide range of community active living, arts and cultural and social programming as well as provide better equipped rental and training spaces. While space for these types of activities are available in Miramichi and the Golden Hawk Recreation Centre, the Lindon Recreation Centre and other venues, the quality of the space and the support features (such as storage, changerooms, etc.) are not always ideal. These programming venues would be improved in a new multiuse complex.

### **Older Adult Space**

Older adult space is provided at various locations in the community and in the case of the Golden Hawk Recreation Centre, users have access to other facilities. However, the design and arrangement of programming spaces in existing Miramichi facilities will not fully address the leisure needs of the current and future generation of older adults.

Research clearly indicates that the emerging generation of older adults will be interested in a broader range of leisure opportunities, including (but not limited to) a strong interest in

aquatics, fitness and wellness activities, art and cultural programming, general interest courses and lifelong learning, community and special events, intergenerational programs, and trail usage. This diversity of needs cannot be addressed with sole purpose, stand-alone seniors centres or with facilities that are not designed for older adult use (such as traditional aquatic facilities).

A multi-purpose complex is a preferred approach to serving older adults if their needs are considered in facility design and programming. Older adults can be expected to use all components of these facilities (including aquatic facilities, multipurpose areas) assuming the design is conducive to older adult programming.

### **Space for Youth**

In addition to traditional sports and youth-specific activities such as skateboarding, research indicates a growing interest in a broader range of physical activities, arts and cultural programming, and unstructured, drop-in activities. Multi-purpose space and/or gymnasium spaces as part of larger centres can best address these interests, particularly the interest in unstructured, social activity.

Dedicated, stand-alone youth centres, where the municipality is the sole provider, are not recommended for many of same reasons as described above for dedicated older adult centres. However, the municipality might from participate in the development of youth-focussed programming using the appeal and resources of a multiuse complex. As discussed earlier, a multiuse complex lends itself to partnerships with a variety of other agencies (health, social service, employment, counselling, etc.) in a manner that would likely not be possible at smaller, single purpose stand-alone facilities.



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## **APPENDIX B**

### **RECREATION PARTICIPATION TRENDS**

## INTRODUCTION

The following discussion describes factors affecting participation in various activities and programs that might be accommodated at the core facilities in the Multiplex. The anticipated trends in participation are a major consideration in the needs assessment. These trends are provincial and national in scope and to the extent we might expect variations in Miramichi this is discussed in the needs assessment.

## ARENA PARTICIPATION TRENDS

Arena sports will conform to the broader trends indicating a decline in organized sports. However, a combination of other factors suggest that arena sports – primarily hockey – may experience much more significant declines.

As early as the late 1980s some commentators were predicting a significant decline in the use of Canadian arenas. These early projections of declining participation were primarily based on the then dominance of arena sports by young males and the anticipated aging of the Canadian population. The predicted decline did not materialize as soon as expected in large part due to the emergence of girls' hockey and the growth of adult leagues. National enrolment in hockey has experienced a modest increase in the past decade due to women and adult participation, but the longer term trend is one of significant decline. "Enrolment in Hockey Canada teams is currently 572,000 [2012 data], down more than 200,000 from its peak. And the prospects are grim. In the next decade, some say there could be 200,000 fewer kids playing the game".<sup>25</sup> A 2011-12 survey of hockey parents by Hockey Canada found that 21% were considering leaving the sport.<sup>26</sup> Particularly troubling is the decline in participation amongst the youngest players. A 2014 study reported no increase in novice registration in Canada's four largest hockey markets (BC, Alberta, Ontario and Quebec)<sup>27</sup>. Surveys with parents suggest that the younger players may be leaving due to lack of interest or cost, however, health concerns are a significant contributing factor with older players.<sup>28</sup>

Hockey New Brunswick reported almost 18,000 registrations in 2004-05, which dropped to between 14,500 and 16,000 over the next decade. However, the 2013-14 data has shown a return to the 2004-05 levels.

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<sup>25</sup> Toronto Star. Editorial. The Future Looks Bleak for Canadian Minor Hockey. Jan. 2012.

<sup>26</sup> Cited in: Shifting Ice and Minor Hockey's Tipping Point. Globe and Mail. Sept. 2013.

<sup>27</sup> Canada's Game? Hockey Losing Ground Among Cash Strapped Families? Jamie Sturgeon. Global News. Mar. 2014.

<sup>28</sup> Cited in: Shifting Ice and Minor Hockey's Tipping Point. Globe and Mail. Sept. 2013.

Women's' and girls' hockey is now an established sport in many communities and the aging trend is accelerating. Consequently, many communities have seen relatively stable participation in arena sports in recent years.

Looking forward, there are a number of indicators that would suggest that stable participation is an optimistic scenario and modest, perhaps steep, declines are more likely. These include:

- Continued aging with ongoing increases in the proportion of the population in the oldest age categories
- Increasing user fees due to the high cost of building, maintaining and operating arenas relative to many other indoor sports facilities. Increasing energy costs in particular will likely continue to have a disproportionate impact on arena user fees. According to a 2011 survey of parents and volunteers in Canada, 35.7% of respondents indicated that increasing ice costs were the single greatest issue facing their hockey communities and amongst parents who did not register their kids in hockey, 38% said it was because it was too expensive.<sup>29</sup> A more recent study undertaken by the Scotia Bank found that one-third of parents with kids playing hockey say the sport is becoming unaffordable.<sup>30</sup>
- Health and safety concerns highlighted by media reports of injuries in professional contact sports. The Toronto Star editorial cited earlier projects further significant declines in hockey registration if safety issues are not addressed.<sup>31</sup> The editorial cites Canadian research on health injuries and suggests that “fear of injuries is driving young children and their parents away from the game”. Recent media reports claiming hockey helmets are defective and citing major concussion related law suits in professional sport likely continue to fuel parents’ perceptions that arena sports are risky.
- Expanding indoor recreational opportunities, many at lower costs that will compete with arena sports for the winter market. (e.g. in many communities soccer is now a year round activity)
- While less relevant in Miramichi<sup>32</sup>, in most major Canadian centres increasing diversity is resulting in residents with a broader range of recreational interest and in many cases less experience with arena sports. Provincial hockey associations in some jurisdictions are addressing this issue with outreach programs, the success of which remain to be seen.

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<sup>29</sup> “Canadian minor hockey risks stalling as boys enrolment sinks, costs rise”. Rachel Brady. Article in the Globe and Mail. Dec. 5, 2011.

<sup>30</sup> Cited in: Canada’s Game? Hockey Losing Ground Among Cash Strapped Families? Jamie Sturgeon. Global News. Mar. 2014.

<sup>31</sup> “The future looks bleak for Canadian minor hockey” Emile Therien. Article in the Toronto Star. Jan. 4, 2012.

<sup>32</sup> New Brunswick Health Council. My Community at a Glance. In 2011, Miramichi (and larger area) report 1.6% of the population as immigrants, compared with 3.9% for New Brunswick. Both figures are very low compared to major urban centres in Canada.

These indicators were perhaps best summarized in a survey of 875 non-hockey playing families in Ontario and Nova Scotia who provided four major reasons for not playing the game: (1) it wasn't fun, (2) was too time consuming, (3) safety concerns, and (4) affordability.<sup>33</sup>

All of these concerns are being addressed by the hockey associations in Canada and the long range impact on participation is uncertain. However, a reasonable projection for the next ten years would be modestly declining participation rates in arena sports. However, the impact of health and safety concerns could be much more significant if studies indicate serious risks or if a major event, such as a lawsuit, is widely publicized. In this scenario, more significant declines in participation could result.

## **AQUATIC PARTICIPATION TRENDS**

Aquatics share many of the characteristics of other activities which are growing in popularity. These include: ability to participate regardless of age and skill (at entry level); relatively low cost requiring little equipment; and, ability to participate according to one's own schedule (e.g., for lap swim or recreational swim).

Not surprisingly, therefore, recreational and fitness swimming continues to be one of the most popular leisure activities for all ages.

As the population ages and older adults remain active well into their 80's and beyond, demand to participate in this mildly aerobic low impact activity will increase. Reduced impact exercise programs are provided in warm water pools with a water temperature between 32°C and 35.5°C and a consistent depth (approximately 1M)<sup>34</sup>. This form of therapeutic recreation is extremely beneficial for those who are physically challenged due to injury or illness designed to improve quality of life<sup>35</sup>.

Instructional swimming programs continue to experience strong participation among children, whereas leadership and aquatic instructional participation has declined as the population of teenagers' declines. Competitive swimming continues to be strong. Competitive diving and synchronized swimming have both been relatively stable over the past few years. Participation in these programs is limited by the availability of facilities and trained coaches, and typically enjoys success as a result of Canadian athletes in international competition.

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<sup>33</sup> Cited in: Canadian Families Shunning Hockey, Survey Finds. Globe and Mail. August 2013.

<sup>34</sup> Lifestyle Information Network. McCune, Gabrielle. Warm Water Pools-Durham Warm Water Aquatic Program (2009).

<sup>35</sup> Lifestyle Information Network. McCune, Gabrielle. Warm Water Pools-Durham Warm Water Aquatic Program (2009).

Swimming is one of the most integrated sports in Canada, which will likely lead to relatively strong increases in future participation by swimmers with a disability. SWAD (Swimmers with a Disability) Canada continues to pursue high performance swimming opportunities and development initiatives to attract and train athletes. Specialized aquatic programs are increasingly recommended as a form of therapy for older adults and others with acute or chronic conditions (e.g., for stroke recovery, cardiac care, flexibility for arthritis sufferers, etc.).

Contemporary aquatic facilities often incorporate three tanks to accommodate three separate streams of programming.

- **Traditional Pools:** Aquatic facilities built primarily for competitive use, instruction and fitness are rectangular pools of 25 meters with a minimum of 6 lanes, a deep end and a shallow end. They typically have a cooler temperature (approximately 28 degrees Celsius).
- **Leisure Pools:** Beginning in the 1980's communities began to build free form pools referred to as leisure pools. These pools often had limited deep water, many had limited lanes suitable for fitness swim, and larger pool decks to accommodate longer stays in a recreational setting. They often incorporated fun-oriented apparatus such as slides, Tarzan ropes, ball hoops and nets. Usually pool temperature is in the mid-range (approximately 29-30 degrees Celsius). These pools are attractive for recreational swimming, support activities such as aquafit programs that required fairly shallow (waist-deep) water, and are ideal for early level instructional programs. They are less viable for higher level instruction, do not always support lane swimming or competitive use. Consequently, leisure components are almost always combined with traditional pool tanks that accommodate these activities.
- **Therapeutic Pools:** Therapeutic pools are generally small tanks, fully accessible and often incorporating water jets, in-tank seating etc. The water is warmer (approximately 30-32 degrees Celsius). These pools accommodate therapeutic use by older adults and people with disabilities, as well as parent and tot users and very young swimmers. They are well used for true therapy programs for people with arthritis, fibromyalgia, initial post cardiac care etc.

## **GYMNASIUM PARTICIPATION TRENDS**

**Gymnasium Activities** – Participation in activities such as basketball, volleyball and badminton continues to be popular, particularly among youth and young adults and where there are opportunities for unstructured or more flexible participation. Badminton continues to be a popular drop-in activity for young adult couples and seniors. Racquet sports (including indoor tennis, squash and racquetball) have declined nationally since their peak in the 80's. Squash participation has declined considerably nationally but continues to be popular among

university-aged males. Indoor soccer on the other hand has experienced significant growth in association with the growing popularity of soccer in Canada. While smaller communities typically use gym space for winter soccer programs, enclosed artificial turf fields are now common in most major centres.

## **MULTIPURPOSE SPACE PARTICIPATION TRENDS**

Well-designed multipurpose space provides virtually unlimited opportunities for community use. With appropriate lighting, flooring and fixtures, and an appropriate relationship to other multipurpose centre facilities (such as change-rooms and the kitchen) these spaces can be used for a wide range of fitness, sport, arts and cultural programs as well as social and educational events. This also prime rental space and can be a significant revenue source.

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## **APPENDIX C**

### **SPORT AND RECREATION USER GROUP INPUT**

**INTRODUCTION**

The study process included meetings with the major organized sport and recreation groups using Miramichi facilities. Separate meetings were held with users of arenas and gymnasia/multipurpose space. Each organization was also asked to complete a questionnaire.

The following groups were invited to participate. While most groups participated, some elected not to provide input despite repeated requests. In these cases we have assumed that the groups are satisfied with their current arrangements and have no need for improved facilities or additional facility time.

Arena Users	Gym/Multipurpose Space Users
Miramichi Minor Hockey Miramichi Ringette Miramichi Figure Skating JMH Boys Hockey JMH Girls Hockey MVHS Boys Hockey MVHS Girls Hockey	Tai Chi Gymnastics Archery Tae Know Do - 2 clubs Basketball Soccer
Invited – But Did Not Participate	
Timberwolves Junior A Hockey	Volleyball

In addition to the groups noted above, a representative of the Swim Team was interviewed and provided information that was used in the needs assessment; however, the Swim Team was not asked to complete the questionnaire.



**SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS**

Key findings are summarized below. Other information retrieved from the questionnaires is reported in the main body of the report.

**AGE/RESIDENCY PROFILE OF PARTICIPANTS**

Virtually all of the participants in arena user groups were 0-18 years of age. Between 75-98% of participants were residents of the City of Miramichi.

Gym/multipurpose space user groups reported a broader age range of participants; however 63% reported 75-100% of their participants were 18 years of age or younger. Only Tai-chi reported a majority of participants over the age of 55. All but two of these groups reported 80% or more of their participants were residents.

**MEMBERSHIP TRENDS**

In the last three to five years has the number of people participating in your programs/activities:	Arena Users % of respondents	Gym/Multipurpose Users % of respondents
Increased	17	38
Decreased	0	0
Fluctuated	33	13
Remained Stable	50	50

Five years from now, do you expect your membership will have increased, decreased or be about the same as it is today?	Arena Users % of respondents	Gym/Multipurpose Users % of respondents
Increased	33	38
Decreased	0	0
About the Same	67	63

**FACILITY NEEDS**

Can you adequately accommodate all interested participants in your programs with the ice time/gym time currently available to your organization in Miramichi?	Arena Users % of respondents	Gym/Multipurpose Users % of respondents
Yes	67	38
No	17	63
Not Sure	17	0

How many additional hours of ice/gym time per week are required to meet your <b>existing demand</b> (i.e. hours required to accommodate all interested participants and appropriate practices/events)?	Arena User	Gym/Multipurpose Users
Total Hours requested – all respondents	8	56

Are there <b>new</b> programs your organization would like to offer at arenas/gyms in Miramichi but are currently unable to due to a lack of ice/gym time (i.e. programs that you don't currently offer, but would like to if more ice time was available).	Arena Users % of respondents	Gym/Multipurpose Users % of respondents
Yes	33	38
No	50	38
Don't Know	17	0
Did not answer the question	0	25
Total Hours requested/week – all respondents	9	31

### IMPACT OF THE LOCATION OF THE FACILITY

If a new Multiplex was built within the City of Miramichi, what impact, if any, would the location have on the number of people participating in your programs?	Arena Users % of respondents	Gym/Multipurpose Users % of respondents
No impact – our members would participate regardless of the location within the City	67	63
Minor impact – some of our members would not participate if a new location was less convenient	33	38
Major impact - many of our members would not participate if a new location was less convenient	0	0

**FEES AND FUNDRAISING**

Would you agree to a new or an increased fee if new and improved facilities were available for your use at a new Multiplex in Miramichi?	Arena Users % of respondents	Gym/Multipurpose Users % of respondents
Yes	33	50
No	17	0
Don't Know	33	50
Did not answer the question	17	0
Would your organization participate in a fundraising program for a new Multiplex in Miramichi?		
Yes	67	63
No	17	0
Don't Know	17	25
Did not answer the question		13

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## **APPENDIX D**

### **KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEWS**

## Key Informant Interviews

The following individuals were interviewed as part of the study process.

- Mike Noel, City of Miramichi, CAO.
- Suzanne Watters, Director, City of Miramichi, Community Wellness and Recreation Department
- Holly Allison, Aquatics Coordinator, City of Miramichi, Community Wellness and Recreation Department
- Jason Walsh, Senior Youth Coordinator, City of Miramichi, Community Wellness and Recreation Department
- Anna Dean, Facilities and Administration Coordinator, City of Miramichi, Community Wellness and Recreation Department
- Claude Schofield, Miramichi Swim Team
- Shemera LeBlanc and Pat O’Brien, Farmers Market
- Betty Morrison, M.O.R.E Services.
- Tim Dunn, Director of Finance and Administrative Services, Anglophone North School District
- Wilson Bell, Regional Services Commission.