

DATE: July 15, 2020

TO: MAYOR AND COUNCIL

NAME AND TITLE: Dave Dyer, General Manager of Infrastructure and Public Works

SUBJECT: Parks and Outdoor Recreation Facilities COVID-19 Operating Plans - Masich Place Stadium Update

ATTACHMENT(S):

1. *Masich Place Stadium 2018 Consultation Results* (doc # 554788)
2. *Masich Place Stadium Operational Season 2019* (doc # 554792)
3. *Masich Place Stadium Safety Procedure for Visitors* (doc # 554291)

RECOMMENDATION(S):

THAT COUNCIL RECEIVES FOR INFORMATION the report dated July 15, 2020 from the General Manager of Infrastructure and Public Works titled “Parks and Outdoor Recreation Facilities COVID-19 Operating Plans - Masich Place Stadium Update.”

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this report is to provide information to Council regarding the COVID-19 operational plans for Masich Place Stadium for the 2020 summer and fall season.

BACKGROUND:

Masich Place Stadium re-opened in August 2018 following a significant redevelopment of the track and synthetic infield. At that time, the Parks and Solid Waste Services Division staff conducted the following in an effort to inform the development of the stadium’s operational plan for 2019:

- a public input survey;
- tracked public walking demands;
- conversations (including facility tours during construction) with the main user groups that rent the facility; and,
- a review of similar facilities elsewhere in BC and Alberta.

This plan permitted an enhanced use by as many user groups as possible, including the public, while maintaining the condition of this now premier facility and maximizing the public’s investment for many years to come.

Attached is a summary of the 2018 feedback under the title “*Masich Place Stadium 2018 Consultation Results.*”

In 2019, the hours of operation were from 6:00am to 9:00pm for the public track walking program; changes to the operational plan resulted in additional safety measures that increased public walking during most booked infield use.

Attached is a summary of the 2019 Season at Masich Place Stadium which is titled “*Masich Place Stadium 2019 Season.*”

After one full season of operations at Masich Place Stadium and following the experience of other communities with similar facilities, the 2020 operational model for Masich Place Stadium (Pre-COVID-19) was intended to continue to more closely resemble other City recreation facilities that have staff on-site whenever the facility is open to the public or booked. The staffed hours of operation for the public track walking program and booked usage were to be 6:00am - 9:00pm.

DISCUSSION:

In 2020, an extensive facility renovation project began. Areas of enhancement include a new scoreboard, improved LED lighting and upgrades to the change room and washroom areas.

COVID-19 Public Track Walking Program and Booked Usage

Walkers began utilizing Masich Place Stadium on Wednesday July 15, 2020 with enhanced safety protocols. This includes signage, entrance/parking lot restrictions, physical distancing on the track, monitoring of participants in the facility, education, sanitation of touchpoints, and enhanced cleaning of porta-potties (and washrooms once they are open). The hours for the walking program are from 6am to 9pm daily. This is consistent with past seasons.

Once construction work is complete, bookings for Masich Place Stadium will be contingent on the demand for the use of the facility. Bookings will be accepted and contracts and permits will be issued for this facility that reflect the control and responsibility of the municipality to ensure safety plans are adhered to with respect to physical distancing, flow of participants and common touch areas. Those organizations that request to book must submit an approved ‘Return to Sport/Play’ plan, a signed COVID-19 facility use agreement waiver, and proof of insurance documents.

Masich Place Stadium is a premier sports facility and from the experience of the past one and a half seasons, full time staffing is required to protect the substantial capital investment, to manage intended use and to provide customer service as directed through the Park Strategy’s dedication to park visitor services and communications.

To operate the facility and meet the provisions of the safety plan, it is necessary to move four staff (three full-time equivalents) from Parks Operations to Masich Place Stadium.

Masich Place Stadium Staffing - 2020							
Employee	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
#1	13:30 21:30	OFF	OFF	13:30 21:30	13:30 21:30	13:30 21:30	13:30 21:30
#2	06:00 14:00	13:30 21:30	13:30 21:30	OFF	OFF	06:00 14:00	06:00 14:00
#3	OFF	06:00 14:00	Parks Operations	Parks Operations	06:00 14:00	Parks Operations	OFF
#4	OFF	Parks Operations	06:00 14:00	06:00 14:00	Parks Operations	Parks Operations	OFF

The four employees had been re-assigned to other areas of Parks Operations to perform work that could not be done because seven labourer positions were not filled for the 2020 summer season in the Parks and Solid Waste Services Division. Moving staff back to Masich Place Stadium will have the following service level impacts to other parks operations:

- a reduction in weed control along medians and boulevards (around trees, poles and signs, as well as fence lines);
- a reduction in the frequency of trim mowing in major parks, medians and boulevards;
- reduced garbage removal and litter control in the City's parks, playgrounds, and dog parks;
- and reduced graffiti removal and vandalism repairs.

Masich Place Stadium Staffing

Several benefits to staffing Masich Place Stadium during public track walking and booked events are listed below:

- The public has expressed that they feel more secure at Masich Place Stadium with the presence of City staff.
- During sporting events, the staff have been able to deal with issues quickly and effectively (score clock issues, public address system, public washrooms, unruly people, conflicts between user groups, access to storage, parking, etc.).
- Visitor management is key when dealing with the public and user groups. Parks and Solid Waste Services staff have done an exemplary job in assisting with any inquiries and setting up for various events.
- Maintaining and cleaning the entire facility. This ensures that inspections are performed on a regular basis and minor repairs are addressed before they become major repairs. The cleaning and maintenance of the washrooms, change rooms, concession, and bleachers provide Masich Place Stadium customers, both the public and booked users, with a safe, clean and inviting atmosphere.
- During this time of COVID-19, it is imperative that Masich Place Stadium be staffed. The staff will be there to inform the users of the facility's new procedures, clean high touch points, perform enhanced cleaning protocol, monitor physical distancing, and help the public/booked users with any concerns/questions that they may have.

Administration has explored the utilization of a security company or Bylaw Services as part of its due diligence when determining the staffing requirements for Masich Place Stadium, both when completing the debriefings after the 2018/19 seasons and again this season when looking at potential cost savings in re-opening the facility. The use of spot checks throughout the day would only provide very cursory check-ins that would not meet the requirements of the Masich Place Stadium facility safety procedure which was written and approved for both the staff and visitors (public and booked users) and is required by WorkSafe BC as part of the City's COVID-19 return to safe operation obligations.

With the public track walking program, there are additional risks as the City of Prince George is the responsible organization (rather than a specific user organization) and takes on the liability for the public using the track. This means that City Staff are responsible for site management, confirming the public are following the facility safety procedure, and providing the necessary sanitation requirements.

Research on similar stadiums in Coquitlam, Kamloops, Lethbridge, and Vernon identified a variety of approaches to staffing, contracted services, maintenance, scheduling, and public access. Stadium operational hours vary by community and stadiums that have limited staffing or surveillance from adjacent land uses are typically locked during non-booked hours, with no public access aside from a scheduled public walking program.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION:

The purpose of this report is to provide information to Council regarding the COVID-19 operational plans for Masich Place Stadium for the 2020 summer and fall season. A site-specific safety plan is in place at Masich Place Stadium and Parks employees are trained and working hard to create a safe work environment for staff, and recreational space for users.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:

Dave Dyer, General Manager of Infrastructure and Public Works

PREPARED BY: Gina Layte Liston, Director of Public Works and Sean LeBrun, Manager of Parks and Solid Waste Services

APPROVED:

Kathleen Soltis, City Manager

Meeting Date: 2020/07/27