

DATE: February 16, 2021

TO: MAYOR AND COUNCIL

NAME AND TITLE: Blake McIntosh, Acting Director Civic Operations

SUBJECT: Downtown Pool Replacement Project

ATTACHMENT(S): Project Construction Photos
[Ninja Cross Obstacle Course Video](#) [video opens in a new window]

RECOMMENDATION(S):

That Council:

1. APPROVES the addition of the purchase and installation of the Ninja Cross obstacle course to the scope of Project #1504 – “Fours Seasons Leisure Pool Replacement”; and
2. APPROVES a budget amendment to Project #1504 – “Four Seasons Leisure Pool Replacement” to show a total project cost of \$36,250,000 with funding sources of \$25,500,000 in MFA Debt Funding and \$10,750,000 in Grants, utilizing both the Regional District of Fraser Fort George contribution of \$750,000 and the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program grant funding awarded to the project of \$10,000,000.

PURPOSE:

This report is to provide Council with an update on the Four Seasons Leisure Pool Replacement project (referred to as the “Downtown Pool Replacement Project” for ease of reference in this report) and to request direction from Council for the addition of a Ninja Cross obstacle course that would be supported through a project budget amendment.

BACKGROUND:

In 2017, Council approved the Four Seasons Leisure Pool Replacement Project in the capital plan for a new location at 7th Avenue and Dominion Street downtown. Contracted design and construction services were secured from HDR Architecture and Chandos Construction, who have extensive experience in pool projects.

The pool design was developed through an inclusive engagement process and a goal to create an energy efficient facility that is fully-accessible for all ages, abilities, and needs. The new pool will be heated through the downtown renewable energy system and will feature amenities such as a teaching pool, lap pool, leisure pool with beach entry, lazy river, whirlpool, waterslide, toddler play toys, and universal change rooms. Safety and accessibility have been addressed through improved lifeguard sight lines, shallow entries, and pool pods that will provide access for people of all ages with mobility challenges to enter the pools safely.

Administration made an application in early 2019 to the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program (ICIP) grant funding to support the new pool project. The City was successfully awarded \$10 million in grant funding in the summer of 2020. Construction for the new pool also commenced with a target completion date of late summer 2022.

STATUS UPDATE:

Project Stage	State	Budget Health	Schedule Health
Build	In Progress	On Plan	On Plan
Approved Project Budget	Actual Costs to Date	Project budget % Complete	Forecasted (Over)/Under Costs
\$35.75M	\$9.1M	25%	0

To date the project is currently 25% complete and \$9.1 million have been spent on the project. The project has achieved a milestone goal of completing the building foundations by the end of 2020. Subsequent works includes concrete work, and the start of structural steel installation.

Specifically, the upcoming scheduled works for 2021 include the installation of the roof structure and perimeter walls in the 1st quarter, followed by interior pool tanks in the 2nd quarter. The remainder of 2021 will focus on the completion of the building envelope and initiation of interior finishes.

The Downtown Pool Replacement Project is currently on target within the projected schedule, budget, and scope of works. City Administration will provide Council with future updates as this major project reaches significant milestones as it progresses through the construction phases.

DISCUSSION:

Ninja Cross Obstacle Course

During the public open house in the spring of 2020, the project design team presented a potential pool play amenity called the 'Ninja Cross'. The Ninja Cross is an on demand obstacle course that suspends from the ceiling over top of the lap pool and retracts into the ceiling space when not in use. The Ninja Cross features various overhead, below, and on the water obstacles that provide fitness and recreational benefits for youth and adults. The installation of a Ninja Cross obstacle course in the new pool project would be the first of its kind in British Columbia.

The new pool roof structure has been designed to accommodate the load of a potential future addition of the Ninja Cross obstacle course. The supply and installation of a dual lane Ninja Cross obstacle course is estimated at \$500,000 and is recommended to be pursued at this stage of the project due to the efficiencies found with install of required cross supports in conjunction with the current installation of structural steel and firm pricing.

Snow Melt System

The design process for the new pool explored the feasibility of adding an on-site snow melt system to inform decisions on whether to include it within the project scope. The on-site snow melt system would utilize the district energy system heat to keep the building's pedestrian routes and main entrance vehicular driveway clear of ice for improved accessibility during the winter. The addition of the snow melt system is estimated at \$350,000 with annual operating costs of \$10,000 to \$15,000.

City Administration reviewed the potential snow melt system and is **not** recommending it be added to the project scope. This review identified operational concerns associated with a requirement for continued snow removal operations, ice formation in transitional areas, and the performance of the snow melt system over the long-term with potential concrete cracks or shifts that could cause leaks in the concrete encased piping. Any necessary repairs to the system would be costly, or alternatively the system would need to be abandoned in place.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:

The Downtown Replacement Pool project supports the City Administration's 2020 Workplan Priorities and Council's focus areas to:

- *“Support and promote initiatives that facilitate healthy and active lifestyles”;*
- *“Enhance safety and security throughout Prince George with a focus on downtown”;*
- *“Make Prince George accessible and enjoyable for everyone, regardless of their age or ability”;* and
- *“Prioritize infrastructure re-investment and renewal”.*

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS:

The \$35.75 million capital budget for the Downtown Replacement Pool Project is mainly funded through \$35 million of borrowed funds from the Municipal Finance Authority, as approved through the 2017 referendum process. An additional \$750,000 was provided for the project as a capital contribution from the Regional District Fraser-Fort George.

The addition of the Ninja Cross obstacle course will require an addition of \$500,000 to the project budget for a revised total project budget of \$36.25 million. A budget amendment is recommended to accommodate this addition and utilize funding from the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program grant awarded in support of the pool. The remaining funds from the \$10M Canada Infrastructure Program grant would be used towards the cost of completing the existing scope of the Downtown Replacement Pool Project, and would reduce the amount required to borrow from the Municipal Finance Authority.

ALTERNATE CONSIDERATIONS:

The purchase of the Ninja Cross obstacle course at a later stage of the project is possible, but may result in increased purchase and installation costs, and would need to be accompanied by a revised cost estimate and budget amendment for Council's consideration. Administration recommends that the Ninja Cross obstacle course be considered for approval at this time and that the ICIP grant funding be considered to amend the Downtown Pool Replacement project budget accordingly.

Alternative Council direction for the Ninja Cross obstacle course includes the following:

- (a) that the Ninja Cross obstacle course be considered closer to project completion and that revised costs and budget amendments be returned for Council consideration that proposes to utilize the ICIP grant funding as a funding source; or
- (b) that the addition of the Ninja Cross obstacle course to the project scope and budget be denied.

A decision to add the on-site snow melt system to the project would need to occur at this time given the impacts to other planned components of the pool, with delays that would affect the overall project budget and schedule. For clarity, Administration is recommending that the on-site snow-melt system not be added to the scope and budget of the pool project. No resolution of Council is required for Administration to proceed on that basis, as it maintains the status-quo.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION:

Construction of the \$35.75 million Downtown Pool Replacement Project commenced in 2020 to replace the existing Four Seasons Leisure Pool facility. The new pool will be heated through the downtown renewable energy system and will feature various aquatic amenities and universal design to accommodate people of all ages and abilities. City Administration is recommending the addition of a Ninja Cross obstacle course to provide a number of health and recreational benefits for both youth and adults. A purchase of the Ninja Cross obstacle course is recommended at this stage of the project and would require a budget amendment for an addition of \$500,000 to the project, with funding to be allocated from the \$10 million Investing in Canada Infrastructure project grant awarded for the project.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:

Blake McIntosh, Acting Director Civic Operations

PREPARED BY: Laurie-Ann Kosec, Strategic Planner

APPROVED:

Walter Babicz, Acting City Manager

Meeting Date: 2021/02/22