

## BOARD WORKSHOP

### Land Acknowledgement

“The Athabasca Regional Multiplex is located on First Nations Treaty 6 territory. We respect and honour all First Nations, Metis and Inuit Peoples connection to these lands, their history, language and culture.”

1. Approval of Agenda
2. Introductions
3. Path and Purpose
4. Strategic Plan Overview and Survey Results
5. Round Table
6. Adjournment

## **The Benefits of Recreation and Culture**

- Health
- Social & Cultural
- Economics
- Environmental

## **Purpose, Mission and Values**

### Mission

- ARMS enriches life in the Athabasca Region by providing inclusive, quality recreation and cultural services that reflect community needs and characteristics.

### Vision

- ARMS fosters happiness, health, and connection in the Athabasca Region by providing recreation and cultural opportunities. Through the stewardship of safe, welcoming, and modern spaces, we strive for all community members to feel valued, involved, and supported.

### Values

1. Participation and Access for All; ARMS aims to maximize participation by providing inclusive, equitable, and accessible recreation and cultural opportunities for all residents and visitors.
2. Partnership and Collaboration; ARMS works with the community to help leverage private investment and broaden the impact of municipal investment.
3. Financial Accountability and Efficiency; ARMS aims to optimize Town and County investment, while reducing the cost per use / user fees of programs and services wherever possible. One of the key measures of the success of ARMS is subsidization/user.
4. Innovation through Data Driven Creativity; ARMS leads with creativity and innovation, using quality data to design, deliver, and improve impactful programs and services.
5. Environmental Sustainability; ARMS projects and initiatives aim to reduce the environmental impact of its operations.

## **Strategic Focus**

### **PILLAR 1: GOVERNANCE**

#### **PURPOSE**

- To ensure that the appropriate agreements, structures, and processes are in place to effectively govern ARMS, within a framework of accountability and transparency. This governance ensures the Society remains accountable and responsive to its staff, users, and partners.

#### **GOALS**

1. Align all activities with the Society’s mission and vision.
2. Maintain a proactive, engaged, and informed Board of Directors.
3. Uphold sound financial practices to ensure long-term viability.
4. Comply with all legal and fiduciary responsibilities.
5. Build and maintain trust with communities and partner organizations.
6. Monitor progress toward strategic goals and adjust strategies as needed.
7. Establish management continuity and ensure organizational resilience.

#### **INDICATORS OF SUCCESS**

- Sustained patron attendance and engagement.
- Progress toward completion of strategic goals.
- Clean audits, adherence to budgets, an up-to-date asset management plan, increased financial reserves, and diversified funding sources.
- Regularly reviews and updates of bylaws and policies.
- Positive feedback from community members and partner organizations.
- Consistently positive performance evaluations of the General Manager.
- Clear evidence of leadership accountability.

### **PILLAR 2: PROGRAMS AND PATRON EXPERIENCE**

#### **PURPOSE**

- To develop, maintain and support a variety of programs, amenities and services at ARMS facilities, while adhering to established objectives, strategies, and budget.

#### **GOALS**

1. Maximize use of ARMS facilities and spaces to realize community benefit.
2. Develop and host programs that are responsive to evolving community needs.

#### **INDICATORS OF SUCCESS**

- Controlled deficit per user
- Strong relationships with community groups.
- Variety of programs and services available to different parts of population.
- Improved utilization rates of ARMS facilities and spaces.
- Responding to community recreation and cultures needs and wants.
- High community satisfaction rates.

### **PILLAR 3: ASSET MANAGEMENT**

#### **PURPOSE**

- ARMS is responsible for the operations and stewardship of public investment in recreation facilities and must ensure they are operated and maintained in an appropriate way over time.

#### **GOALS**

1. Responsible management of public investment.
2. Continue regional collaboration to support the long-term investment of recreation and culture facilities and spaces based on the needs assessment.
3. Establish a long-term investment plan to maintain existing service levels.
4. Practice environmental stewardship and awareness in facility operations.

#### **INDICATORS OF SUCCESS**

- Short/Mid/Long term plan outlining opportunities for facility and service improvements.
- Monitor and ensure long-term maintenance of ARMS facilities and spaces.
- Utilizing technology to support operations where appropriate.
- Maintain a long-term funding forecast.
- Research, submit and obtain grant funding.

## **ARMS Community Engagement Results Summary – January 2025**

**819 responses were received**

### **Multiplex**

- 97% of respondents indicated that they visit the Athabasca Regional Multiplex
- Those who didn't visit the facility (only 8 respondents), indicated that "admission fees", "not being interested in what the facility has to offer", and "nothing" were the main reasons for not visiting.
- 92% of respondents were either very (55%) or somewhat (37%) satisfied with the Multiplex.
- 99% of respondents indicated that the Athabasca Regional Multiplex is either very (91%) or somewhat (8%) important.
- Respondents were asked if they thought the investment made by the Town and County in ARMS was worthwhile.
  - 90% - Yes
  - 7% - unsure
  - 2% - No

### **Nancy Appleby Theatre**

- 62% of respondents indicated that they visit the Nancy Appleby Theatre
- Those who didn't visit the facility (313 respondents), indicated that "nothing" (33%), "unaware of opportunities" (32%), and "not being interested in what the facility has to offer" (24%) were the main reasons for not visiting.
- 88% of respondents indicated that the Nancy Appleby Theatre is either very (60%) or somewhat (28%) important.

### **General Comments**

Respondents were given the opportunity to share any other comments they had regarding the ARMS. The responses are presented below in themes:

#### **1. Facility Maintenance & Enhancements**

- While many appreciate the multiplex's upkeep, several residents note the need for upgrades:
- "Fitness center needs to be updated. I.e. upholstery on machines is flailing, treadmills squeal, and new equipment is needed."
- "The theatre needs focus and attention. There should be a sub-committee focused on NAT."

Requests for better heating in the arena, additional equipment in the fitness center, and improved sound dampening in event spaces are frequently mentioned.

#### **2. Accessibility & Affordability**

Concerns about pricing and accessibility dominate the feedback:

- "Drop-in costs are too high for myself or my family to drop in for an hour or so."
- "Lower the darn prices! Families are struggling to make ends meet and the prices are too high at the multiplex."

- “Encourage funding model to be evaluated capacity of County is stronger to support ongoing deficit.”

Respondents call for expanded hours, especially on weekends and holidays, alongside more affordable memberships and drop-in fees. Discounts for families and seniors are widely suggested to improve accessibility and inclusivity.

### 3. Expanded Programming & Community Engagement

Community members suggest ways to diversify activities:

- "Athabasca needs more events—book some concerts, comedy nights, and utilize the space beyond just sports!"
- "More movies projected at the Nancy Appleby would be nice."
- "Would love to see a childcare center at the multiplex."

Many want to see more cultural events, such as live music and comedy nights, alongside enhanced family-friendly programs like indoor play areas for children.

### 4. Funding & Governance

Financial transparency and equitable funding distribution are recurring concerns:

- "Deficit will be unmanageable if allowed to continue to grow. Taxpayers should not be expected to continue to subsidize this facility at any cost."
- "It is a beautiful facility, but its long-term viability depends on responsible financial planning."
- "I believe there should be seats on the Board for public members, not just elected officials from both councils."

Many expressed frustrations over financial sustainability, calling for more community involvement in decision-making and increased efforts in fundraising. Additionally, respondents expressed frustration over perceived inefficiencies and a lack of proactive leadership in addressing ongoing issues.

### 5. Community Impact & Future Growth

Despite concerns, respondents recognize the multiplex’s role in strengthening the community:

- "The multiplex is vital to our community. I appreciate all the ways I have seen them engage with the community."
- "These facilities create the heart of a community; they should be fully activated with cultural and sports opportunities."
- "We are lucky to have these facilities, but we need to ensure their sustainability for years to come."

The multiplex is seen as a critical asset that attracts families, supports local businesses, and fosters social connections. Ensuring its long-term success will require thoughtful planning, financial stewardship, and continued responsiveness to community needs.

**ARMS Membership Survey – January 2026**

**300 responses were received (288 fully completed)**

68% (204) of the respondents had a membership at some point

32% (96) of respondents did not have a membership

1. Type of Membership (could answer more than one type) (members answered only)
  - a. 138 Adult – 68.3%
  - b. 57 Family – 28.2 %
  - c. 24 Student – 11.9%
  - d. 15 Child – 7.4%
  - e. 15 Senior – 7.4%
  - f. 5 Other – 2.5%
2. What Area of the Multiplex do you use most often (ranked) (all respondents filled out)
  - a. Pool and Fitness Centre were the top 2 ranked arenas
  - b. Fieldhouse was 3<sup>rd</sup>, Arena 4<sup>th</sup> and Curling Rink 5<sup>th</sup>
3. How long did you have a membership for (members answered only)
  - a. 1 month – 18 people – 8.9%
  - b. 3 months – 23 people – 11.4%
  - c. 6 months – 26 people – 12.9%
  - d. 1 year – 46 people – 22.8%
  - e. 1-2 years – 27 people – 13.4%
  - f. 2-5 years - 43 people - 21.3%
  - g. Over 5 years – 17 people – 8.4%
4. How satisfied were you with your membership (members answered only)
  - a. Very Satisfied or Somewhat Satisfied – 155 people – 76.7%
  - b. Neutral – 32 people – 15.8%
  - c. Dissatisfied or Very Dissatisfied – 15 people – 7.4%
5. Do you feel the membership benefits are with the cost (members answered only)
  - a. Strongly Agree or Somewhat Agree – 138 people – 67.6%
  - b. Neutral – 31 people – 15.2%
  - c. Disagree or Strongly Disagree - 35 people – 17.2%
6. Are you currently a member at the Multiplex (members answered only)
  - a. Yes – 108 people – 52.9%
  - b. No – 96 people – 47.1%
7. If you do not have membership, do you still use the Multiplex (non-members answered only)
  - a. Yes – 85 people – 88.5%
  - b. No – 11 people - 11.5%
8. What is the main reason you are not a member? (Select all that apply) (non-members only)
  - a. Membership prices are too high – 44 people – 46.3%
  - b. I don't use it often enough – 54 people – 56.8%
  - c. Membership doesn't offer good value – 4 people – 4.2%
  - d. I moved away – 1 people – 1.1%
  - e. Other - 10 people – 10.5%

9. Are you aware of what our memberships include?
  - a. Members
    - i. Yes – 164 people – 82.4%
    - ii. No – 35 people – 17.6%
  - b. Non-Members
    - i. Yes – 75 people - 78.1%
    - ii. No – 21 people – 21.9%
10. If membership fees increased by 3% in 2026, would you consider cancelling your membership?  
(members answered only)
  - a. Yes – 70 people – 35%
  - b. No – 74 people – 37%
  - c. Maybe – 56 people – 28%
11. Do you currently attend any programs at the Multiplex? (e.g., Aquafit, Yoga, Spin Class, AquaSpin, AquaPole, Masters Swim Program)
  - a. Members
    - i. Yes – 37 people – 18.8%
    - ii. No – 160 people – 81.2%
  - b. Non-Members
    - i. Yes - 14 people – 14.9%
    - ii. No – 80 people -85.1%
12. Would you like to see more programs offered at the Multiplex?
  - a. Members
    - i. Yes – 142 people – 73.6%
    - ii. No – 51 people -26.4%
  - b. Non-Members
    - i. Yes – 74 people – 79.6%
    - ii. No – 19 people -20.4%
13. Would you be willing to pay a fee for these programs?
  - a. Members (142)
    - i. Yes – 94 people – 66.2%
    - ii. No – 48 people – 33.8%
  - b. Non-Members (74)
    - i. Yes – 56 people – 75.7%
    - ii. No – 18 people – 24.3%
14. What would you consider a reasonable fee for a 1-hour program?
  - a. Members (94)
    - i. \$5 or less – 13 people – 13.85%
    - ii. \$5-\$10 – 57 people – 60.6%
    - iii. \$10-\$15 – 21 people – 22.3%
    - iv. Free – 3 people - 3.2%
  - b. Non-Members (56)
    - i. \$5 or less – 8 people – 14.3%
    - ii. \$5-\$10 – 32 people -57.1%
    - iii. \$10-\$15 – 15 people -26.8%
    - iv. Free – 1 people – 1.8%

15. If you don't currently have a membership, would 24-hour access to the Fitness Centre encourage you to purchase one?
- a. Members
    - i. Yes – 45 people – 52.9%
    - ii. No – 40 people – 47.1%
  - b. Non-Members
    - i. Yes – 25 people – 26.9%
    - ii. No – 68 people – 73.1%

### **Programming Suggestions**

- Afterschool care or childcare or indoor playground for kids
- More gym equipment
- Members vs non-member fees
- Cheaper memberships with no programs offered vs higher memberships with programs included.
- If there are classes for yoga or other activities it would be beneficial. Also, I would be interested in a gym membership only, I don't need to go to the pool. If the membership is separated so that you can pay separately for the gym or pool and it's cheaper than more people may obtain a membership
- Floor hockey - Ping pong tables
- Pilates, Zumba, more yoga, more spin,
- Spin free. And 24-hour gym access
- Free passes for homeless. Reduce the senior age to 55.
- Include low-income families & people as well as senior lower funded membership benefits & programs.
- Bring in more big-name artists. Dinner and performance. You need to generate revenue. Aka Michelle Wright at 900 tickets sold at \$75 a pop.
- Maybe better public skate time? The hours that are currently offered are not convenient and short.
- I hold a three-month membership as we have a summer cabin on Baptiste Lake. I would be happy to pay a 3% 5% hike.
- Seniors should be free to. The health board through our Alberta health should provide our fitness as a benefit.
- There is nothing for children like other facilities. Other facilities have mini stick areas, fenced off toddler play areas, kids area up in the gym, drop in babysitting(paid), even parks up at the ball diamonds. 98% of the facilities I got too have some of the above things and I go to a lot of facilities for my kid's hockey and baseball! It is really crappy for young families to come and bring their children to do any adult events because it isn't a family friendly facility or there is no entertainment for younger siblings.
- Later summer hours
- Easier way to book swim lessons.
- When paying a certain amount for a membership, you would expect that the classes would be free. It was very disheartening learning that you will have to pay more money outside of the membership in order to attend certain classes (Yoga, Spin, etc.). It would be nice if there was a Zumba class also included with a membership.

### **Service or membership improvements**

- 24-hour gym access.
- Give a discount to members renting spaces.
- Lower membership prices Why haven't you asked if I would buy a membership if fees were lower.
- Don't keep increasing the cost.
- I would love if the corporate memberships could be for families. The fact that they are not makes it more expensive for my family, so I don't get the benefits that I'm entitled to. I also think that if a family with more than 2 adults live in the same house and have the same address, they should be able to be on the same family membership. I also think as a paying year long member a perk like 5% off a field house rental or something even if it's 3 a year would be nice.
- Make them cheaper and expand your hours. Offer more public times for things so I can get the most out of my membership.
- Offer senior rates at age 60, similar to other senior rates. For example, the golf course.
- What I find unreasonable, and shocking is charging for using the track in the multiplex to just go for a walk. Other town offer access to the track for free. There is no wear and tear with just using the track for walking but having to pay a fee is completely ridiculous and unreasonable.
- By lowering the price by like 10%
- I would like to see a siding scale or reduced monthly fees, for those who are on disability, AISH or Alberta Supports.
- Better temperature control in the gym. It's often super muggy and not enough air flow for how many bodies tend to be up there all at once.
- the add on \$5 fee for spin classes is ridiculous. It costs more for that fee than my entire year long membership! why should 1 specific group be targeted to increase your revenue when many others use the bikes at no additional charge? the attendance for drop ins has plummeted because of this and I know others that just go to the fitness room and ride a bike for free.
- Please turn the heat on in the arena. It is extremely uncomfortable for users.
- It's just too expensive for even drop-in rates. Hard to justify taking the family to the pool for an hour when it's \$30 or more.
- I only use the fieldhouse.... perhaps a fee intended for only one area versus all areas.
- I do feel the cost is high for low-income families especially those on the threshold. I wonder if more people would get memberships if they were more affordable.
- The punch pass program is great. I also appreciate locks provided for lockers.
- Scanned card instead of checking in at reception. There can sometimes be a long lineup of people and membership holders could scan and go to their workout.
- Provide a gym/pool combo or gym only, pool only membership.
- I would pay for a membership if it included activities that the multiplex offers.
- I think the multiplex should make drop-in classes (spin, yoga, kick boxing) part of the perks of the annual membership. Annual members should not have to pay an extra \$5 per drop-in class.

**Additional Comments**

- Love that there are more organized events such as laser tag, bubble soccer etc.- great job on those rather than just drop in and find something to do.
- It would be nice if locker rentals could be included with 6mo-1yr memberships.
- Too pricey. Not family friendly
- Honestly, my one and biggest complaint is the lack of child friendly areas and things for them to do, especially considering it is a family facility, and the majority of users (outside of the fitness center) are families.
- Make the fees more affordable. If my child is playing randomly in the field house having to pay 5.25 or 5.50 (can't recall the cost of the top of my head) that's ridiculous. I could understand a toonie possibly but still wouldn't be inclined to access it. A child aged 0-10 in the multiplex is no different than a playground but with no climbing equipment and parents are being charged an exponential fee to access it. We have limited our access to the multiplex as a whole this past year due to the high fee cost.
- it would be great if the indoor walk/run path could have a few hours a day that they aloud dog entry for waling dogs in the winter.
- Use the Multiplex more in fall winter season than summer, also if away for over 30 days can membership be suspended.
- It would be a great option if the cafeteria was open more or more regularly.