

King's new recreation complex will be the envy of York Region

By Mark Pavilons

King's planned multi-faceted recreation complex will be a model, and the envy of all other York municipalities.

This model of cooperation resulted in an innovative agreement between King Township and Seneca College. The deal sees Seneca providing a 25-acre parcel on its lands at the northwest corner of Dufferin and the 15th Sideroad, on a 60-year ground lease. King will build and operate the facility.

It's called a Township-wide recreation centre and it promises to be a state-of-the-art facility.

King's Parks, Recreation & Culture department is in the initial stages of planning and designing the complex and it's looking for public feedback into what residents would like to see.

Mayor Steve Pellegrini, who worked hard to broker the deal with Seneca, said the complex will be a "foundational piece," and the partnerships and cost-sharing are simply remarkable.

"It's awesome to know we're going to get it right," he said.

Chris Fasciano, head of Parks, Recreation and Culture, said the consultation process, and looking at other municipal facilities, will help them create an innovative design.

Online and hard copy surveys were distributed throughout King user groups, committees and even schools. So far, staff have 750 pieces of input.

Current feedback from the public revealed that a swimming pool, fitness area, skating/hockey rink and fitness area are priorities.

"Not surprisingly, swimming, fitness and ice usages were at the top of the list," Fasciano said in his report. "We also asked respondents to then prioritize these items. We also asked for innovative, out of the box ideas and received some creative suggestions.

These included rock climbing, obstacle courses, juice bars, indoor parks and places for students to study."

Fasciano said in moving forward, they have to establish a wish list, a needs' list and then decide what's feasible in terms of the physical building and cost.

Staff will take all the feedback and create an RFP for Prime Consulting Services. Staff will present the facilities component of the master plan update in the spring of 2018.

It was previously reported that the estimated cost of the facility is in the neighbourhood of \$30 million. However, roughly 80% of this will be covered by developer contributions.