

June 12, 2017

Good afternoon Mayor Crouse, councillors, and administration staff. I want to take this opportunity to thank Diane and Kevin for their work on the Dynamyx Facility Needs Report. It was well received and we look forward to the discussion it will promote.

We come today to advocate once again for the sport of gymnastics. We come to hear what administration has learned in their needs assessment and what councils response will be. We come expecting a YES to the Memorandum of Understanding for Joint Gymnastics Planning.

As a gymnastics club we know the need for a new facility. We face it each day. Our athletes are over crowded while training in an old facility that is not ideal. We know the need as during registration week we struggle to register every athlete with a class as we ensure appropriate training space and safety. Gymnastics is a sport that is all season, all weather, and all abilities. A gymnastics facility allows for other sport organizations to cross train and with our multi purpose dance room we have been able to offer opportunities to other, non related, recreational activities. At any given time, weekdays or weekends, you will see our facility with children enjoying being active. The need is real, the need is now, and the need needs to be acknowledged.

We have done our homework. We have followed through with the ask of council and engaged with St. Albert Gymnastics Club, they have chosen to not join with us on this advocacy for gymnastics in St. Albert. Administration has done their part and now it is councils turn to take the next step; To ensure that the future council will not have to go through these preliminaries, that we, the advocates for activity, specifically gymnastics, do not have to come to council again and start all over.

We ask today that you do not make this need any bigger than it already is. We want an opportunity to engage in conversation and explore other needs that could be within a Multi-purpose Hub facility. We want equal and fair acknowledgement for the sport of gymnastics. We want gymnastics to be built into the Recreation master plan, a gap that has been long overlooked.

We ask that you take today to continue the move forward for a new gymnastics facility in St. Albert. We ask that you consider what other municipalities are doing, we challenge you with their movement to support gymnastics. Be challenged not only by the need being real, but by how other municipalities are supporting the sport of gymnastics. Grande Prairie, Airdrie, Red Deer, Spruce Grove, and Fort Saskatchewan are some that have shown support and provided funding in various ways. It has become our reality as we travel for competitions and see these facilities far exceeding anything offered in St. Albert and it is this that continues to push us further to advocate for gymnastics for our city.

Support gymnastics, as you support so many other sports. Gymnastics needs to be acknowledged just as other sports are. Take the challenge today to step up and say yes to an MOU, to the future of gymnastics in St. Albert.

As said in past presentations, we are asking city council to plan for the future of gymnastics as they have planned for the future of so many other recreational venues, Riel park, Servus Place, Fountain Park Pool, Akins Arena, SASA soccer fields, tennis courts, just to name a few.

We know that we can run a gymnastics club independent of the city providing ongoing funds, and we know we can also afford a fair lease. As a not for profit in good standing with the Societies Act, we cannot provide the facility that is needed for this sport and for the City of St. Albert.

Let's be sure we continue to grow our city and our sense of connected community. Let's be sure to continue building St. Albert as a liveable, sustainable, and inclusive community.

We want to be a part of the City's future in recreation. We want to engage and share in the resolution to the need. Your vote of YES to moving this forward is our ask today, let's plan for the future and take the opportunity to explore the benefits of working together for the citizens of St. Albert.

Cathy Schwer, President Dynamyx Gymnastics Club