

Background

The St. James Civic Centre Expansion will provide new multi-purpose program and meeting space, a community kitchen, as well as improvements to the auditorium, building entry, washrooms and parking lot. The project will also provide administrative and shared program space for the St. James Assiniboia 55+ Centre.

Engagement

Phase 1 engagement happened in spring 2023. It included outreach to current user groups, an online survey, and an open house. Phase 1 engagement gathered feedback on the design. The feedback help the City refine the design before construction.

Phase 2 engagement happened in spring 2024. It included outreach to current user groups, and an information session. At the information session, the City:

- Shared the final design
- Explained how feedback from Phase 1 helped refine the design
- Provided information on construction timelines and impacts

Attendees were also invited to complete an exit survey.

Table 1 below provides an overview of all public engagement opportunities.

Promotion

Phase 2 engagement was promoted using the following methods:

- News release – May 2, 2024;
- Email invitations to user groups – May 2, 2024;
- Facebook posts with 40,000+ followers – May 2-5, 2024
- X posts from with 127,000+ followers – May 2-15, 2024.
- Posters and postcards at the St. James Civic Centre, St. James-Assiniboia Centennial Pool, St. James Library, and St. James Assiniboia 55+ Centre – May 2 to 15, 2024;
- Over 3,100 postcards mailed to residents in the project area – May 6, 2024;
- Newspaper advertisement with Canstar – May 9, 2024;
- City of Winnipeg Public Engagement Newsletter with over 5,800 subscribers – May 9, 2024;

Examples of promotion materials are included in Appendix A.

What We Heard

Table 1: Public Engagement Opportunities

Date	Activity	Details
May 2 – 16, 2024	Webpage	936 unique visits
May 16, 2024	Information session	66+ attendees
May 16, 2024	Exit survey (available at the information session)	28 respondents

Attendees were shown the final design at the information session. While the intent was not to gather feedback on the final design, the following positive comments were shared by attendees:

1. Overall design (7 comments):

- Attendees said they were happy with the overall design and that the improvements were well-planned.

2. Pool viewing area (6 comments):

- Attendees liked the new pool viewing area because it will be more comfortable and spacious for spectators.

3. St. James Assiniboia 55+ Centre (3 comments):

- Attendees noted that the new St. James Assiniboia 55+ Centre is a much-needed improvement for senior activities.

4. Pickleball courts (1 comment):

- Attendees were happy about the new pickleball courts and think they will be a great addition to the facility.

The following concerns were shared about the design:

1. Pool area (18 comments):

- Attendees pointed out problems with the pool area, such as poor ventilation, no hot tub, and not enough space.
- Attendees noted the pool changerooms need updates and should be accessible.

2. Changeroom and washroom options (6 comments):

- Attendees expressed concerns about the changerroom and washroom options.

3. Pool viewing area (3 comments):

- Attendees felt there would not be enough seating in the new pool viewing area.

The following comments were shared about the expansion and renovation:

1. Construction impacts (14 comments):

- Attendees were concerned with closures during construction, and the impacts on sports teams and regular users.

2. General maintenance (6 comments):

- Attendees noted problems with facility maintenance, like HVAC issues, leaking roofs, and general cleanliness.

Next Steps

The City will hire a construction company in summer 2024. Construction is expected to begin in winter 2024 and finish in fall 2026.

Construction closures and impacts to programming will be determined once a construction company is hired. The City will update the public and users of the St. James Civic Centre about any closures and impacts.

Appendices

Appendix A – Promotional materials

Appendix B – Information session storyboards

Appendix C – Exit surveys