



**TOWN OF BLACKFALDS
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING
REQUEST FOR DECISION**

MEETING DATE: May 28, 2019

ORIGINATED BY: Sean Barnes, Director of Community Services

SUBJECT: Blackfalds Facility Design Review – Feedback Synopsis

BACKGROUND:

Through our 2015 Recreation and Parks Master Plan, it was determined that an additional ice surface was a priority for the community in the next 7 years.

In the Civic Facility Master Plan, it was noted that one of the major priorities was a 12,000 square foot facility to accommodate the Blackfalds Library. In meeting with the Library Board, it was determined that the library should be a part of the Multi-Plex Arena Expansion project. This combined project will give Blackfalds the chance to mix arts and culture with sports and recreation.

On April 9, Administration, along with ACI Architects and RC Strategies, presented a questionnaire that would be presented to the public during the April 17, 2019 open house, which would allow residents and community members a chance to see the final first draft renderings of the arena and the library.

DISCUSSION:

The open house was held on April 17, 2019 and was well-attended with about 60-80 people and included Council and community members. There was a lot of discussion and valuable information provided to Council, Administration and ACI Architects. Generally, most people were positive and excited about the proposed arena/library plans.

Questionnaires were provided to the public through RC Strategies. Many of those in attendance filled out the questionnaire. Questionnaires and presentation boards were also available at the Abbey Centre for three weeks following the open house. The presentation boards were also at schools in Blackfalds for two to three days and were well received from the students, staff and parents. Further, RC Strategies created an online survey for ease of use, which was advertised on the Town's social media platforms, website and by word-of-mouth. The 199 feedback forms from the Community were consolidated into a synopsis, showing that most residents are looking forward to this facility being built.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

N/A

ADMINISTRATIVE RECOMMENDATION:

1. That Council move to accept the Blackfalds Facility Design Review – Feedback Synopsis as information.
2. And further, that Council move to direct Administration to begin the next steps of the Multi-Plex Arena Expansion Project.

ALTERNATIVES:

- A) That Council not accept the Blackfalds Facility Design Review – Feedback Synopsis as information.
- B) That Council not move to direct Administration to begin the next steps of the Multi-Plex Arena Expansion Project.
- C) That Council refer this item back to Administration for further consideration.

Attachments:

- *Blackfalds Facility Design Review – Feedback Synopsis*
- *May 21 Open House Presentation - Review*

Approvals:



CAO Myron Thompson



Department Director/Author



Multi-Plex

Expansion

Public Feedback
Synopsis - Council
Review



Open House (April 17, 2019)

- Very well attended (60-80 people).
- Gathered feedback through a feedback form.
- Met with members of Council, Town Administration, and members of the consulting team.
- Information panels and feedback form were available on the Town's website.
- Presentation boards set up at the Abbey Centre for 3 weeks and also in all the schools for students, staff and parents to provide feedback.
- In total 199 responses!

Information Shared

1

Multiplex Arena Expansion

Welcome!

- Please review the design concepts and provide your comments by completing the feedback form.
- The panels and feedback form will be available on the Town's website (www.blackfalds.com).

What's this all about?

- The 2015 Recreation, Culture, and Parks Needs Assessment and Master Plan identified the need for an additional ice surface.
 - Many similar sized communities have a twin arena.
 - An additional ice sheet would address capacity and demand issues.
- The 2018 Civic Facilities Development Strategy and Master Plan recommended:
 - Planning for an expansion to the Multiplex to include additional indoor ice.
 - Development of a larger library to support a larger and growing community.
- In the development of this facility concept there have been meetings with the Recreation, Culture, and Parks Board; the Library Board; and the Dual Ice Development Society (DIDS).
- Facility tours in Red Deer, Calgary, and Okotoks were conducted with the architect (ACI Architects), Town Council, and Town Administration.
- The Town's 10 Year Capital Plan includes construction for the ice sheet to start in 2021 and the library in 2024.

2

Multiplex Arena Expansion Concept

FLOOR PLAN CONCEPT - LEVEL 1

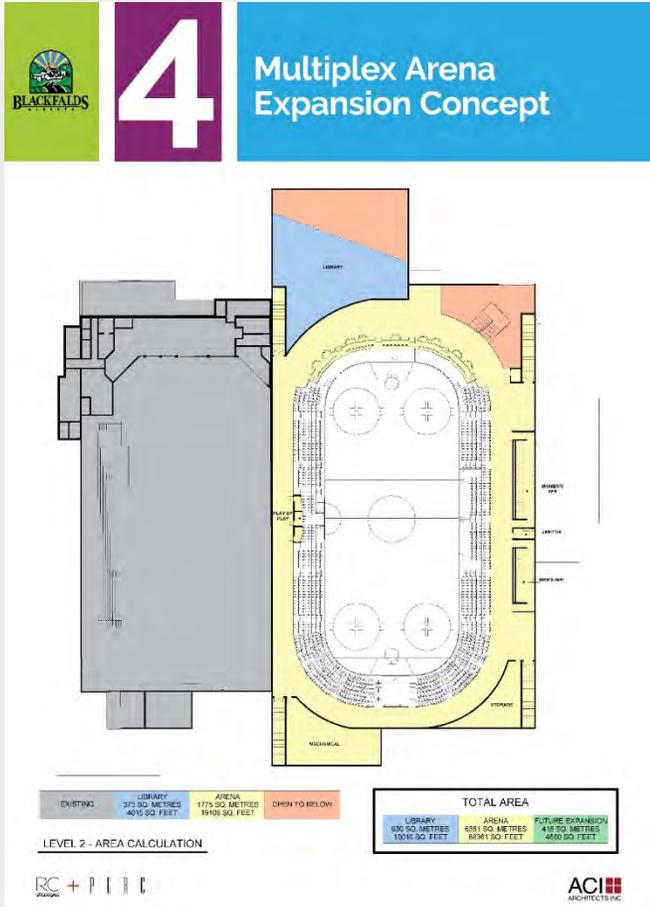
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Multiplex Arena Expansion Concept

LEVEL 1 - AREA CALCULATION

EXISTING		LIBRARY		ARENA		FUTURE EXPANSION		TOTAL AREA	
630 SQ. METRES	1290 SQ. FEET	557 SQ. METRES	594 SQ. FEET	4275 SQ. METRES	4546 SQ. FEET	1678 SQ. METRES	1793 SQ. FEET	6940 SQ. METRES	7463 SQ. FEET
		ARENA		FUTURE EXPANSION					
		2381 SQ. METRES		4185 SQ. METRES					
		1200 SQ. FEET		4538 SQ. FEET					

Information Shared





6 Facility Renderings



FULL ARENA INCLUDING COUNCIL ARENA



INCLUDING RINK AND RINK CONCEPT ARENA



INTERIOR RENDERING CONCEPT - LOUNGE SEATING



INTERIOR RENDERING CONCEPT - LIBRARY - PHASE 2



7 Conclusions

What's the process?



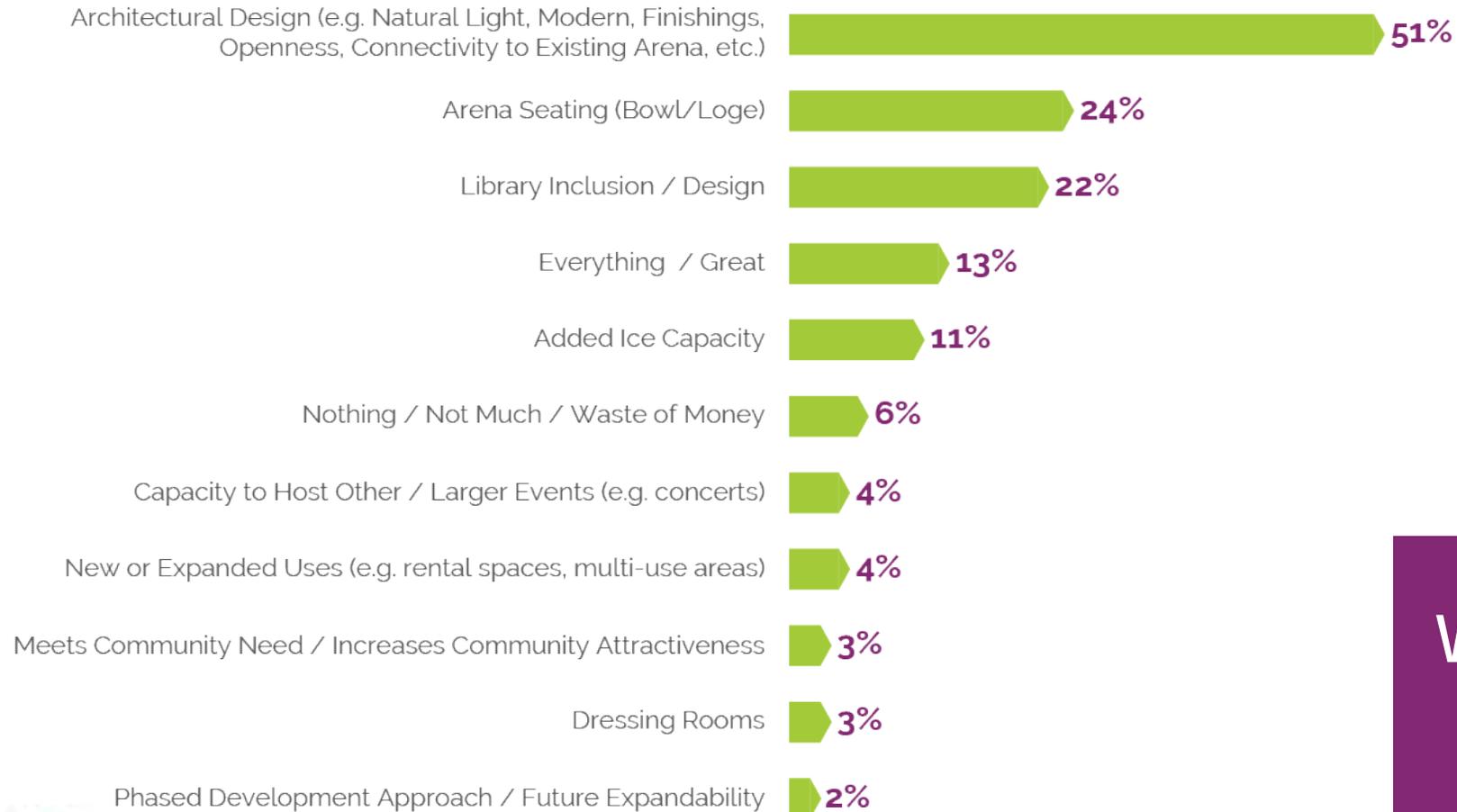
What do you think?

- Please complete the feedback form to share your thoughts about the facility concept.
- These panels and the feedback form can be found on the Town's website (www.blackfalds.com).
- Please limit your feedback to one submission.
 - » Comments will be collected until May 1st.

Thank you for your interest!

What did people say?

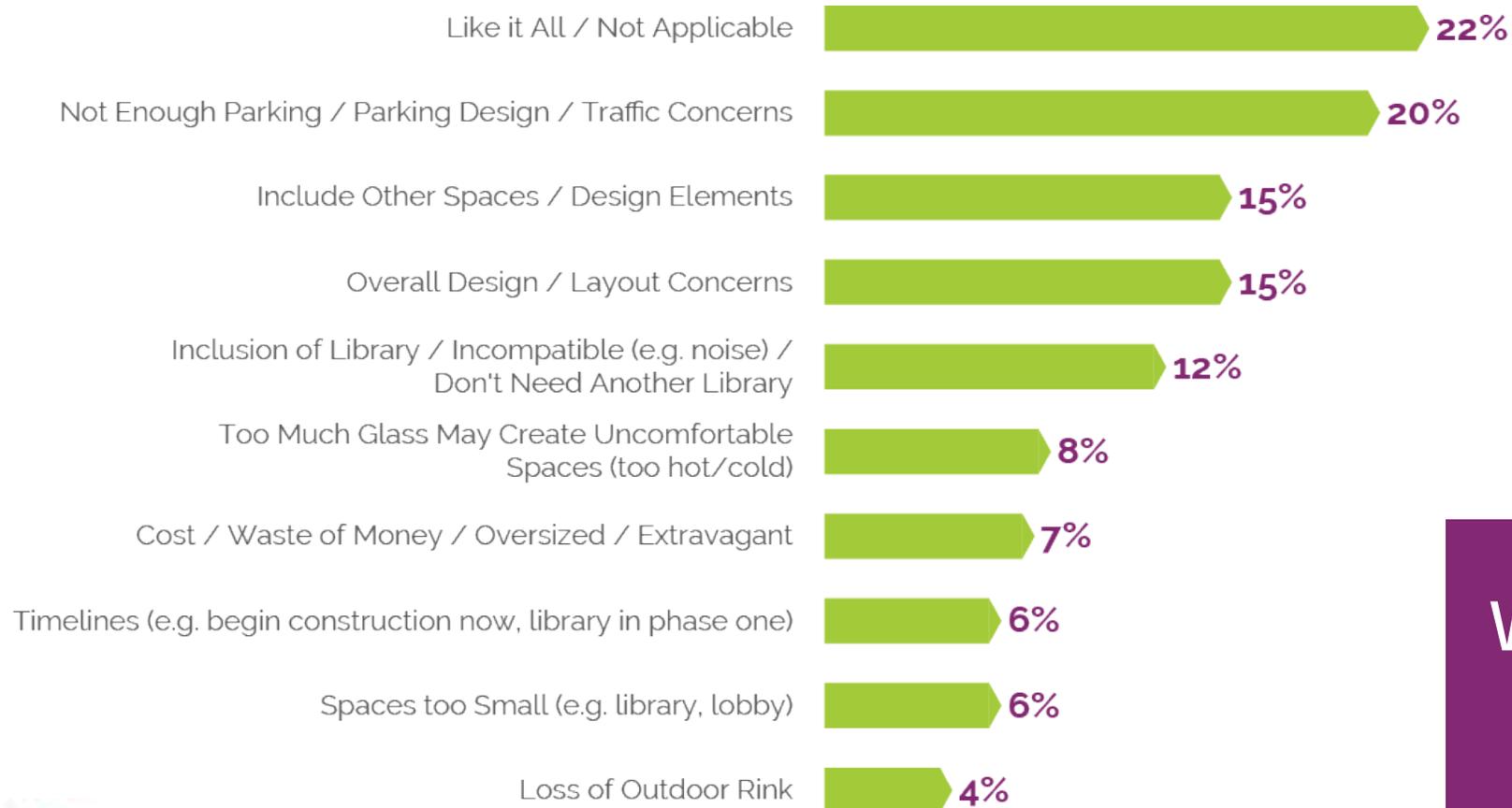
What do you like about the facility design?



What are your thoughts?

What did people say?

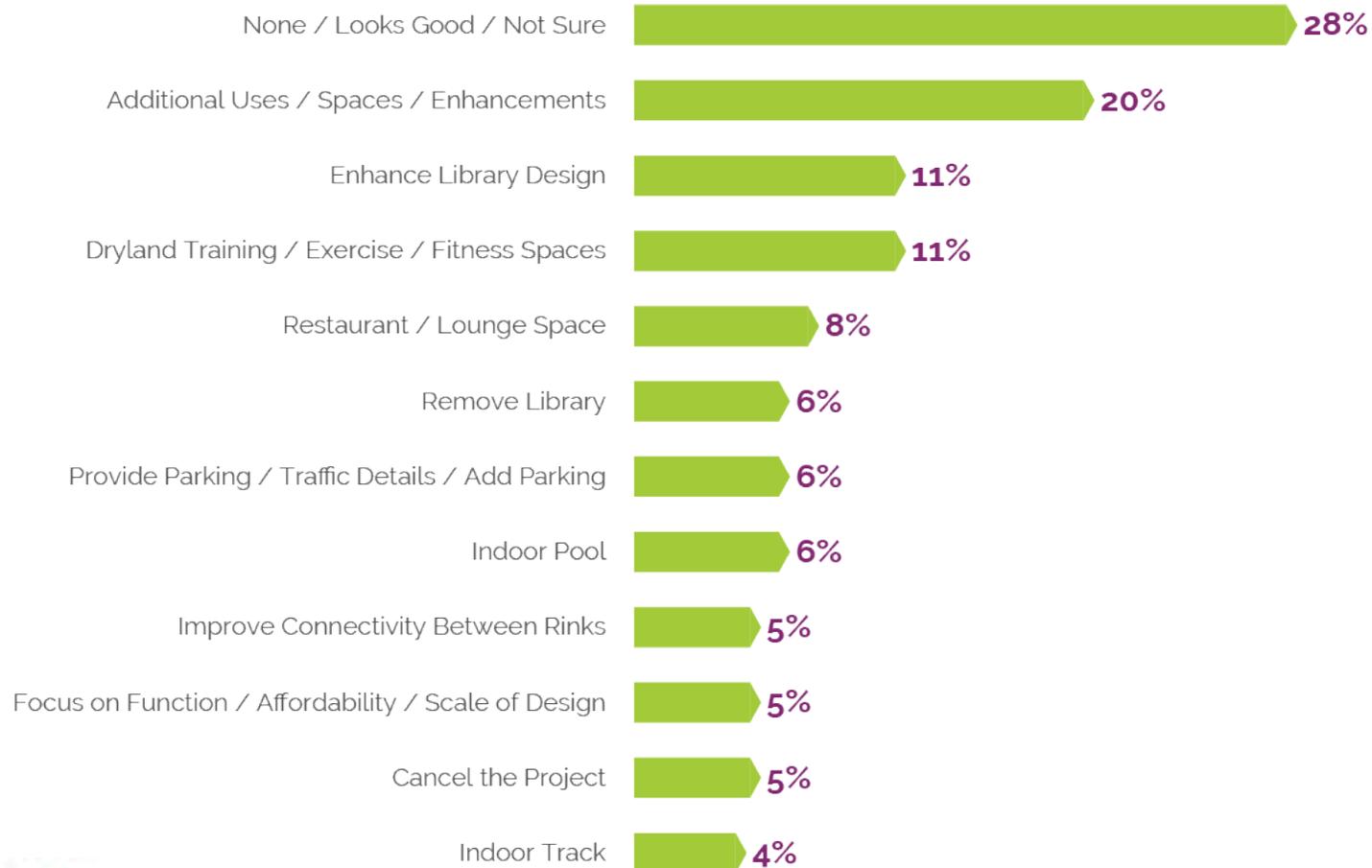
What don't you like about the facility design?



What are your thoughts?

What did people say?

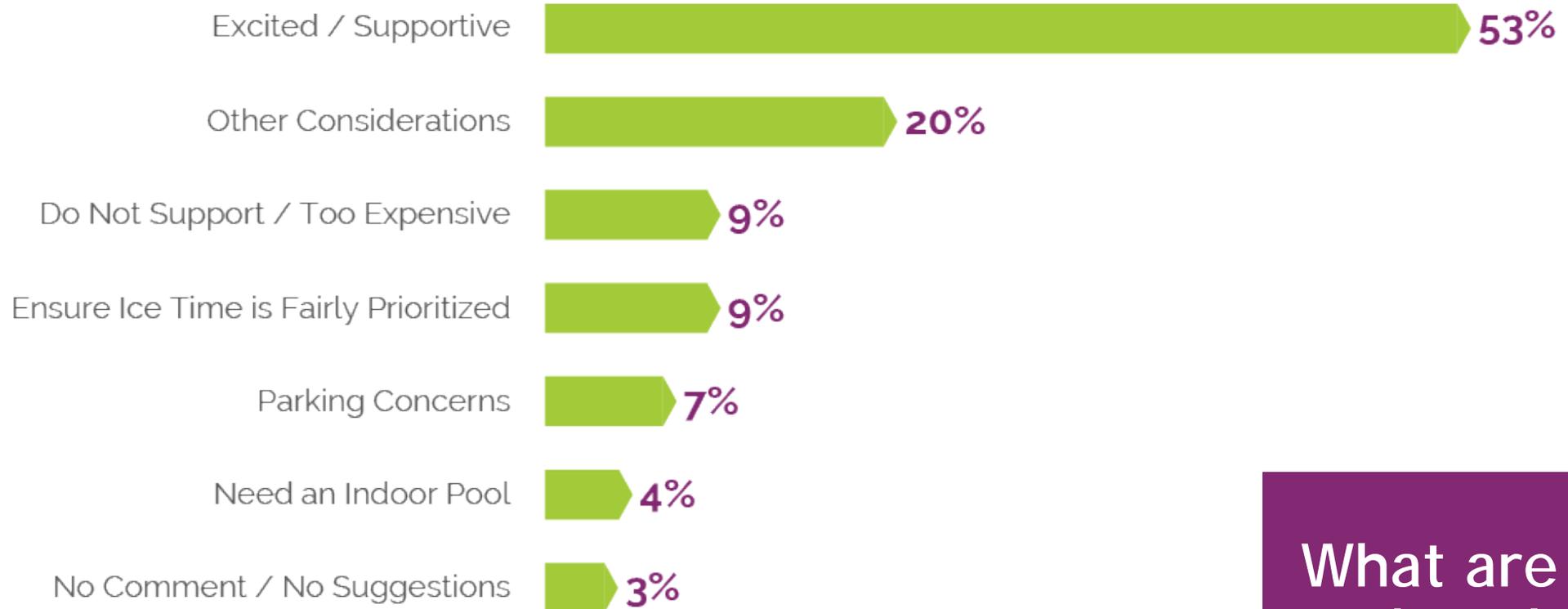
What changes, if any, do you suggest for the facility design?



What are your thoughts?

What did people say?

Share other comments about the Multi-Plex Expansion.



What are your thoughts?



Next Steps

What's the process?

Recreation Culture, and Parks Board
Library Board
Dual Ice Development Society (DIDS)

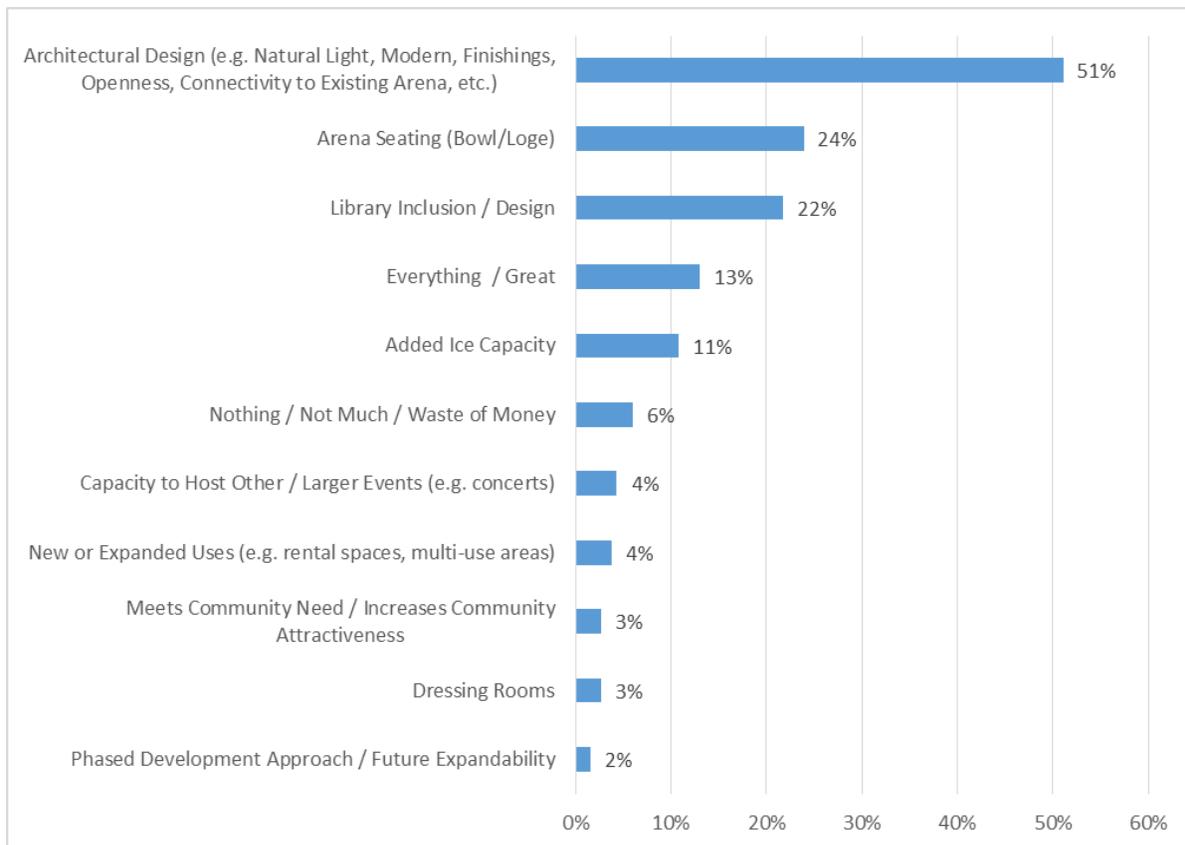


We Are Here

The Town of Blackfalds held an open house event to gather feedback on the proposed architectural design for the expansion of the Blackfalds Multi-Plex. This event was held on April 17, 2019 and was attended by approximately 60-80 people. To gather additional feedback, an online survey was conducted and closed on May 1, 2019. Between the open house and the online survey 199 complete responses were collected. A synopsis of the feedback collected is presented below:

Findings

What do you like about the facility design? (n=184)



More than half of respondents (51%) indicated that they like the architectural design of the facility expansion. Comments frequently mentioned the terms ‘modern’, ‘open concept’ and ‘natural light’. Respondents particularly like how big and open indoor spaces are, as well as that glass and other high-quality building materials such as wooden beams are used throughout the building. Another well-supported area of the proposed design is the arena bowl/logge seating, with around 24% of respondents mentioning this aspect of the design specifically. The inclusion of a library space and its proposed design was also highly mentioned by respondents (22%). Many respondents indicated that they particularly appreciate the Multi-Plex’s proposed design includes social/community spaces and the inclusion of the library space is very-well supported. Several comments indicated that having multi-use spaces will allow several members of their family to visit the facility at the same time (e.g. take young children to the library while older children have hockey practice). Additionally, a notable percentage of respondents (13%) expressed broad general support for the proposed design, often expressing that ‘everything looks amazing’ or that the proposed design is ‘great’.

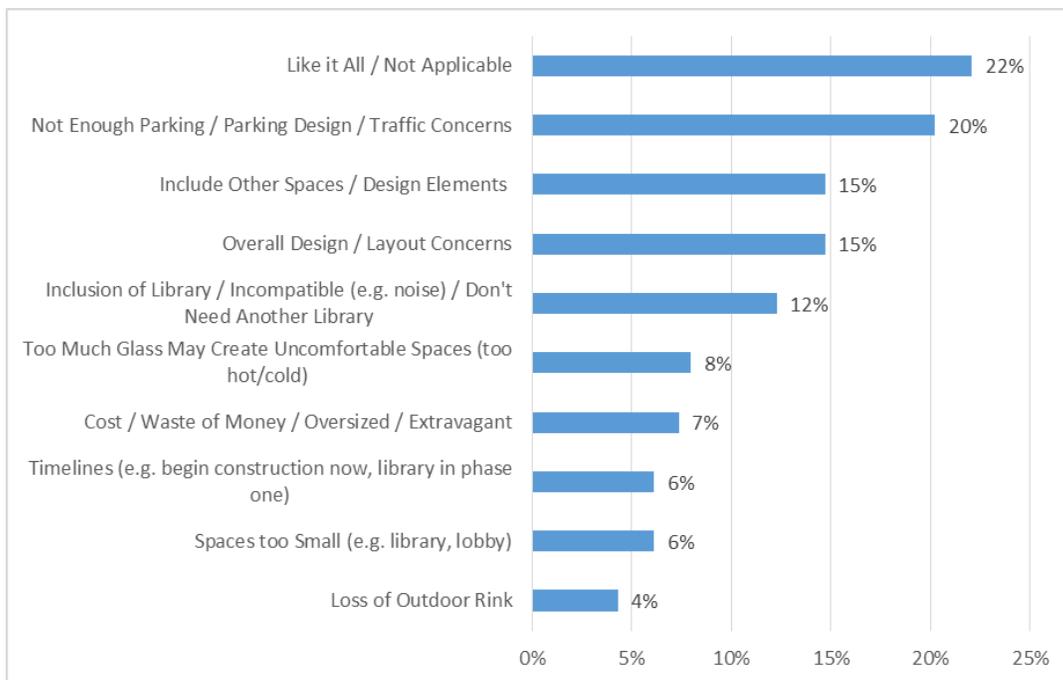
The addition of a second ice sheet to the existing Multi-Plex was also mentioned by several respondents, as well as the additional capacity that the building would add to Blackfalds in terms of capacity to host new/larger events and increasing community attractiveness/supporting economic development. A small percentage of respondents (6%) indicated that they do not support the proposed expansion design, perceiving the building to be either too extravagant or as a ‘waste of money’.

Design elements most-widely supported:

- Overall modern architectural design: open spaces, lots of natural light, multi-use spaces
- Arena design: bowl and logge seating very well supported
- Library: respondents are very supportive of the proposed library design
- Additional ice: several respondents indicated direct support for a second ice sheet

- Miscellaneous: better dressing rooms, capacity to host bigger events, contributes to community attractiveness (e.g. young families), phased approach supported, additional expansion capacity appreciated

What don't you like about the facility design? (n=163)



The most frequent response to Question 2 is that respondents generally like the proposed expansion design, or that 'everything looks good'. Around one-fifth (20%) of respondents expressed that parking is a major concern – that there is already a lack of parking with existing uses and that adding a new ice sheet and other spaces will further exacerbate parking issues. In addition to expressing concern over parking availability, several respondents also indicated that they did not have enough information on parking and traffic flow designs, suggesting that additional detail in this area may be required to address respondent concerns.

Respondents (~15%) indicated that other spaces or design elements should be included in the overall expansion design, including:

- An indoor pool
- A lounge/restaurant space
- Dedicated dressing room/training spaces for hockey teams
- Arts, culture and senior's activity spaces
- Indoor playground and 'party room'
- Walking/running track
- Renewable energy generation

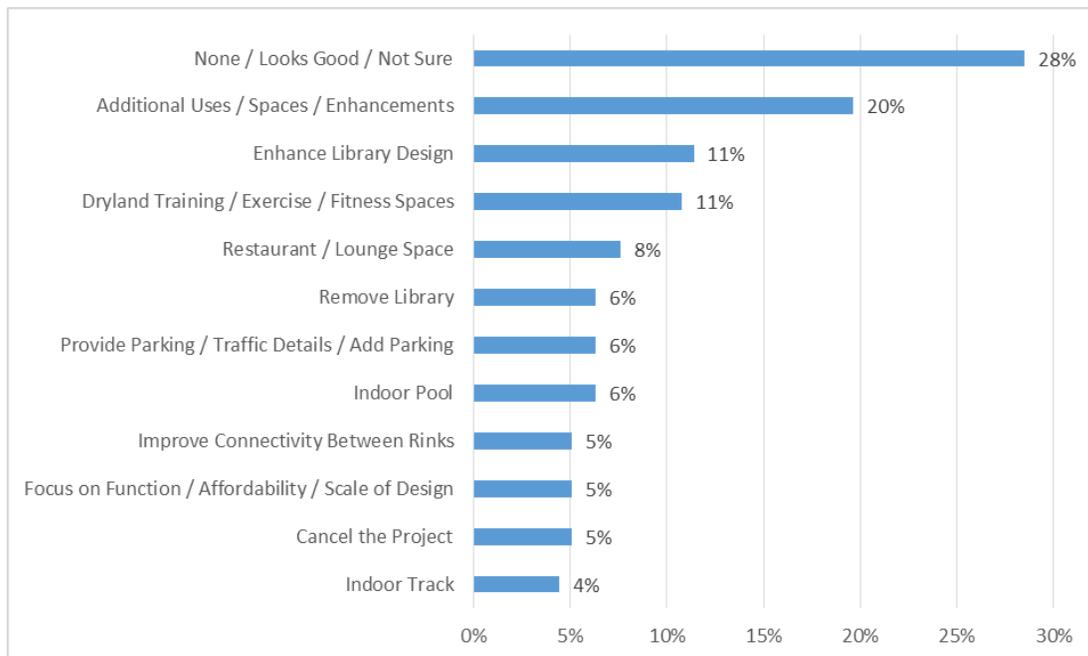
Some concerns over the overall proposed design and facility layout were also expressed:

- Lease spaces are undersized and/or may not be utilized
- New and old building architectural styles do not blend well
- Overall design is too heavily focused on ice sports
- Entrances should be further north and/or in the middle of the two rinks
- Dislike for proposed rink connection design / functionality
- Arena roof may be too low to accommodate concerts/entertainment events

Another notable concern raised by respondents (~12%) is doubt as to whether the library space should be included in the overall expansion. Some respondents suggested that a library space may not be compatible with arena activities (e.g. noise), whereas others indicated that an additional library was not needed in the community. Respondents (~12%) also expressed concern over the widespread use of glass in the facility design, suggesting that its use may create wide seasonal temperature variations indoors (e.g. too hot in summer, too cold in winter) and may not be appropriate for the library space due to potentially making the space too bright (e.g. glare). Providing residents with additional material on potential building materials, including glass with low emissivity coatings to prevent temperature fluctuations, may address concerns.

Around 8% of respondents expressed concern over the potential cost of the Multi-Plex expansion, that the project is a ‘waste of money’ or that taxes are too high, or that the facility is simply too large for the overall community need. At the same time, several respondents (~6%) indicated that they would like the project to begin construction right away, as well as that the library space should be built out concurrently with the rest of the expansion project. Finally, a few respondents indicated that proposed spaces should be larger (e.g. library, lobby space) and that they did not like the loss of the outdoor rink area, as it provides residents and visitors with an affordable and high-quality rink space in the winter season.

What changes, if any, do you suggest for the facility design? (n=158)



Nearly one-third (28%) of respondents had no suggestions for changes that they would like to see made to the facility design. Respondents did make several suggestions for additional uses, spaces or enhancements that they would like to see added to the facility design, including:

- More washrooms / family washrooms / gender neutral washrooms
- Indoor play space
- Add renewable energy generation
- Create permanent spaces for community groups
- Equipment tuning/repair/storage space
- Put dressing rooms between rinks
- Increase size of arena benches to accommodate more players
- Dedicated arts/culture spaces
- Curling rink
- Add more socialization areas
- Add spaces for dance/gymnastics
- Spaces for small businesses
- More lease space / spaces for small businesses
- Add gymnasium or sports courts
- Spaces for adult-only activities
- Provide details on future expansion
- Exercise and fitness areas
- Ensure stroller accessibility
- Build an outdoor park
- Update exterior of older building to match expansion

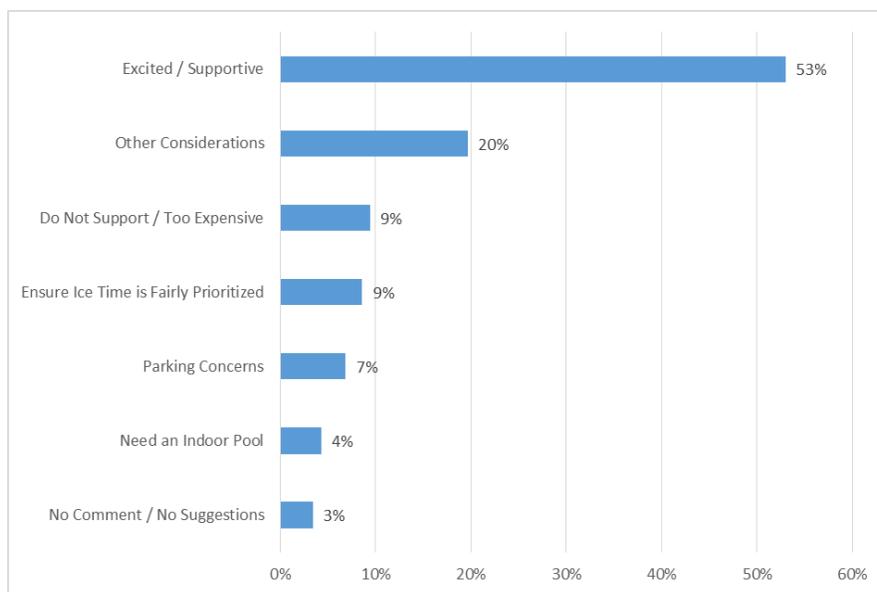
Adding dryland training, exercise and/or fitness spaces for groups was commonly mentioned by respondents (~11%), as well as adding restaurant/lounge spaces (~8%). Several respondents that suggested lounge spaces should be added to the design suggested that such spaces should overlook the arena area. Around 6% of respondents suggested that they would like to see an indoor pool added to the expansion project. Several respondents (~6%) indicated that more parking should be added or that parking design details should be provided. Respondents (~5%) also suggested that additional attention should be focused on enhancing how the existing

arenas will connect, adding more entrances and improving overall connectivity. Adding an indoor track was also suggested by several respondents (4%).

Just over 11% of respondents made suggestions for how the library space could be enhanced, including suggesting the space be made bigger or multi-floor, that multi-function/multi use spaces be added, that the space be designed for future expansion in mind, that the use of glass be decreased for the library area, that the library should be built first or concurrently with the rest of the expansion and that attention should be paid to ensuring adequate noise barriers between the arena and library space. At the same time, around 6% of respondents suggested that the library should be removed from the expansion project entirely.

Finally, 5% of respondents expressed their belief that the project should not proceed due to cost, lack of need, and so forth. An additional 5% of respondents expressed that the arena design should be scaled back or that greater focus on function and affordability of the facility (i.e. overall facility cost) should take precedence over design considerations.

Other comments about the Multi-Plex Arena Expansion (n=117)



More than half (~53%) of respondents that provided additional comments about the proposed expansion design indicated strong support for the project overall. Respondents indicated that they are excited that the project is moving forward. Many suggested they would like to see the project be built as soon as possible. Respondents generally believe that the project is needed and that there will be many benefits to the community, including adding another destination to Blackfalds like the Abbey Centre and supporting population growth/community attractiveness.

There were many broad suggestions/comments provided by respondents that do not fit into any one response category. Notable and/or other common comments include:

- Need to 'get the design right' in terms of scale being appropriate for current and future needs
- Make the design as best as it can be to enhance the image of Blackfalds like the Abbey Centre does
- Explore ability for year-round uses – e.g. indoor soccer, lacrosse
- Lobby space for library
- Have lots of water bottle filling stations
- Library will need lots of blinds/shade
- Consider impacts on surrounding communities
- Engage with community groups to ensure their needs are being met
- Add staff washrooms (e.g. for concessions)
- Ensure all costs are adequately considered (e.g. refrigeration upgrade)
- Ensure ice prioritization is fair
- Ensure indoor spaces are comfortable in the winter
- Don't build the library

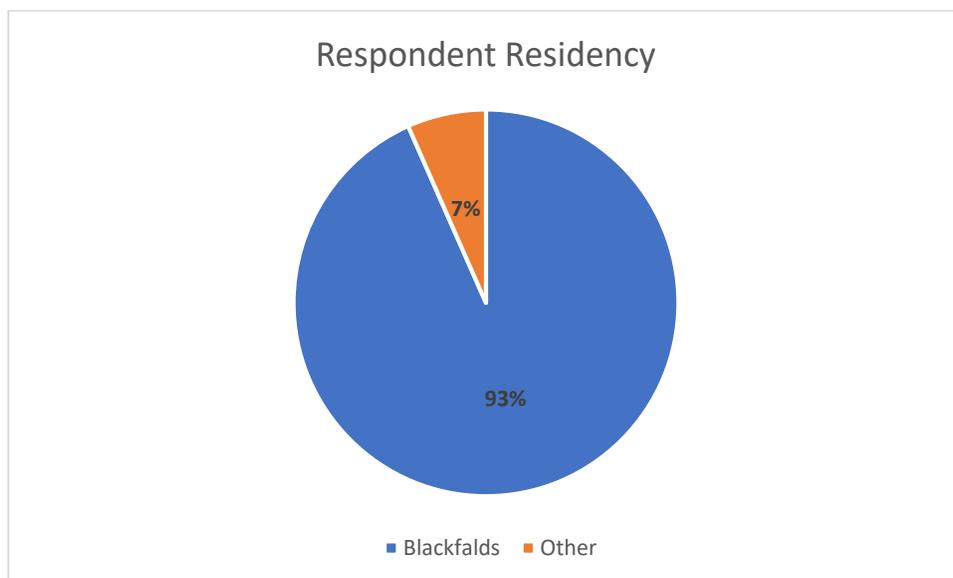
Respondents broadly indicated the importance of 'getting it right' as far as making sure the facility and programmed spaces are appropriately sized to meet current and future needs. A few

respondents expressed concern that future demand may exceed proposed capacity being added through this expansion.

Just under 10% of respondents indicated that they do not support or like the proposed expansion due to anticipated cost, impact on tax rates and that the facility expansion too heavily focuses on ice sports. Other respondents (9%) indicated that how ice time is allocated and prioritized will need to be considered to ensure equitable access between all user groups. Several respondents indicated there is a need for more free/open skate times, particularly for children. Balancing programmed and spontaneous need for ice access should be a consideration.

Respondents (7%) expressed additional concern over parking considerations, suggesting that more parking be added or that locations of parking areas need to account for potential impacts on surrounding communities. Finally, 4% of respondents indicated that there is a greater need to develop an indoor pool in Blackfalds than to add an additional ice sheet.

Where do respondents reside? (n=196)



Other referred mainly to Red Deer or Sylvan Lake.