

July 14, 2020

Temporary City customer service centre opening at the Recreation Centre on Wednesday

The following Q&A is in regards to the creation of a temporary customer service centre at the Recreation Centre to allow residents to complete in-person bill payments and other in-person service offerings that have been limited since City Hall closed in March due to COVID-19.

1. When did City Hall close, and why?

City Hall closed on March 24 to protect staff and citizens and prevent the spread of COVID-19 and in accordance with guidelines from Alberta Health Services.

2. Where will the new temporary customer service location be?

A new, temporary City customer service centre will open at the Recreation Centre on Wednesday, July 15 for residents who need to conduct business and pay bills in person. Online and remote options for working with The City are still the best way to work with us, and we encourage residents to continue to work with us through those methods while the temporary customer service facility is in place.

The Recreation Centre is located at 4501 - 47A Avenue.

3. How long will customer service be offered at the Recreation Centre?

The temporary customer service will remain at the Recreation Centre until we are able to safely open City Hall to public and staff again. The City is fast-tracking renovations that were budgeted, approved and slated to take place at City Hall over the next four years in order to ensure the health and safety of staff and visitors. The main floor of City Hall needs to be modified to ensure safe interaction with staff and visitors. Other renovations include window replacement and HVAC upgrades that were previously approved.

4. What kinds of services are offered at this temporary location?

Services residents are able to perform in-person at this new facility include:

- Utility bill payment
- Property tax payment
- Parking inquiries and parking ticket payment
- Re-loading parking cards
- Accounts Receivable invoice payment
- License and permit application and payment
- Inspections
- Special event permit payment
- Other miscellaneous fee payment (*Transit pass purchase available at Sorenson Station only, MyRide reload stations available at Bishop's Rexall pharmacy and Petro Canada South*).

5. Can I still do business with The City online and over the phone?

Online and remote options for working with The City are still encouraged, and are the best way for residents to work with The City. Visit reddeer.ca for the details, or call us at 403.342.8111.

6. What kinds of safety precautions are you taking at the new temporary location?

New policies and procedures will be in place at the Recreation Centre to ensure public health orders are followed. This includes physical distancing, increase sanitization and capacity restrictions. In order to manage capacity restrictions, use of the facility will be limited and controlled. This include pre-booking for meetings or services you may have been able to walk-in and receive before.

Please do not visit the customer service centre if you are not feeling well. Security staff will be onsite ensuring physical distance and capacity controls are in place and properly adhered to.

7. Why are City Hall renovations happening right now?

The City took the opportunity to utilize pre-approved and budgeted dollars to expedite building upgrades and enhancements including window replacement and HVAC system upgrades that were planned to happen over the next several years, to do now while the facility is vacant. There will be significant savings to the budget performing the work now, rather than spreading it out over the next several years. The City will utilize those savings to perform the health and safety requirements on the first floor of City Hall to be able to welcome visitors back.

Other renovations will occur at this time in order to limit visitors to the first floor of City Hall, when previously visitors would be able to access other floors within City Hall.

8. I want to be able to go to City Hall now, why do I have to go to another facility to do what I used to do at City Hall?

In order to safely serve the public at City Hall, we need to make several changes to how City Hall is set up, and how we previously worked with the public. These changes will take several months to put into place, so a temporary Customer Service centre was established in order to fill the gap that keeping City Hall closed would create.

Many City services are still available online and by phone, and we encourage residents to continue to engage with us using those tools.

9. Do I have to pay for parking at the Recreation Centre?

No, parking is free in the lot in front of the Recreation Centre. The parking lot is shared by the Red Deer Museum and Art Gallery, the Golden Circle and often utilized by patrons of the Blue Grass Sod Farm Central Spray and Play.

10. Does this mean other amenities at the Recreation Centre will be opening as well?

No, the amenities within the Recreation Centre will remain closed for the time being. We continue to assess and understand demand for facilities, program and services as part of this phased approach to opening. As previously announced, the outdoor pool will remain closed for the season.

11. Can I access Recreation customer service services, such as program registration from this location?

No. At this time customer service staff at the Recreation Centre are limited to the services previously available at City Hall. If residents require assistance with program registration or inquires, they are asked to do so online at reddeer.ca.

12. Where can I find out more information?

Visit www.reddeer.ca for the latest information in regards to The City's response to COVID-19, and how to work with The City at this time.