

City of Mississauga
Corporate Report



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| <p>Date: April 2, 2024</p> <p>To: Chair and Members of General Committee</p> | <p>Originator's files:</p> |
| <p>From: Jodi Robillos, Commissioner of Community Services</p> | <p>Meeting date: April 24, 2024</p> |

Subject

2024 Sauga Summer Pass for Youth

Recommendation

That the expansion of capacity for the Sauga Summer Pass program and program extension to Labour Day as outlined in the Corporate Report entitled "2024 Sauga Summer Pass for Youth" dated April 2, 2024 from Commissioner of Community Services, be approved.

Executive Summary

- The Sauga Summer Pass (SSP), formerly the Freedom Pass, has been delivered by the City since 2014. It provides an opportunity for youth to access MiWay and recreation services for free during July and August.
- The current program capacity is 10,000.
- In 2023, Council approved the expansion of the age eligibility for the program to youth ages 12-16 as well as the addition of free access to fitness amenities in community centres across the City for youth aged 14-16. With these modifications, the program reached capacity for the first time since 2014.
- For 2024, staff recommend that the program capacity be increased to 11,000 with the same service offerings for youth ages 12-16 and to extend the program from August 31st to Labour Day in September.
- This limited increase is recommended to ensure a positive customer experience and manage customer demand given facility closures. Staff will continue to monitor program usage and recommendations for future program capacity.
- While there is a value to youth to access these services for free, the revenue impact to the City is not substantial as it is assumed that youth may not have accessed these services if they had to pay for them.

Background

The Sauga Summer Pass (SSP), formerly known as the Freedom Pass, was established in 2014 to encourage youth to participate in recreation by eliminating barriers to cost and transportation during the summer months. Additionally, the program is intended to provide youth with an incentive to use and experience the benefits of the City's public transit services, encouraging them to become future customers.

The SSP not only provides the means to access free recreational programs and a way to get there, it also provides the means for youth to access the City's extensive outdoor park amenities (including multi-sport courts, parks, and trails), as well the City's libraries, cultural facilities and events offered throughout the community.

The program has run continuously, with a break due to the pandemic, providing youth aged 12-14 with access to free fun swims at City indoor and outdoor pools and free rides on MiWay during July and August. In the past, the annual program capacity of 10,000 adequately met demand and in 2022, the program was rebranded as the Sauga Summer Pass.

In 2023, Council approved the expansion of the age eligibility for the program to youth ages 12-16 as well as the addition of free access to fitness amenities in community centres across the City for youth aged 14-16 (Corporate Report, March 29, 2023). With these modifications, the program reached capacity for the first time since 2014.

Present Status

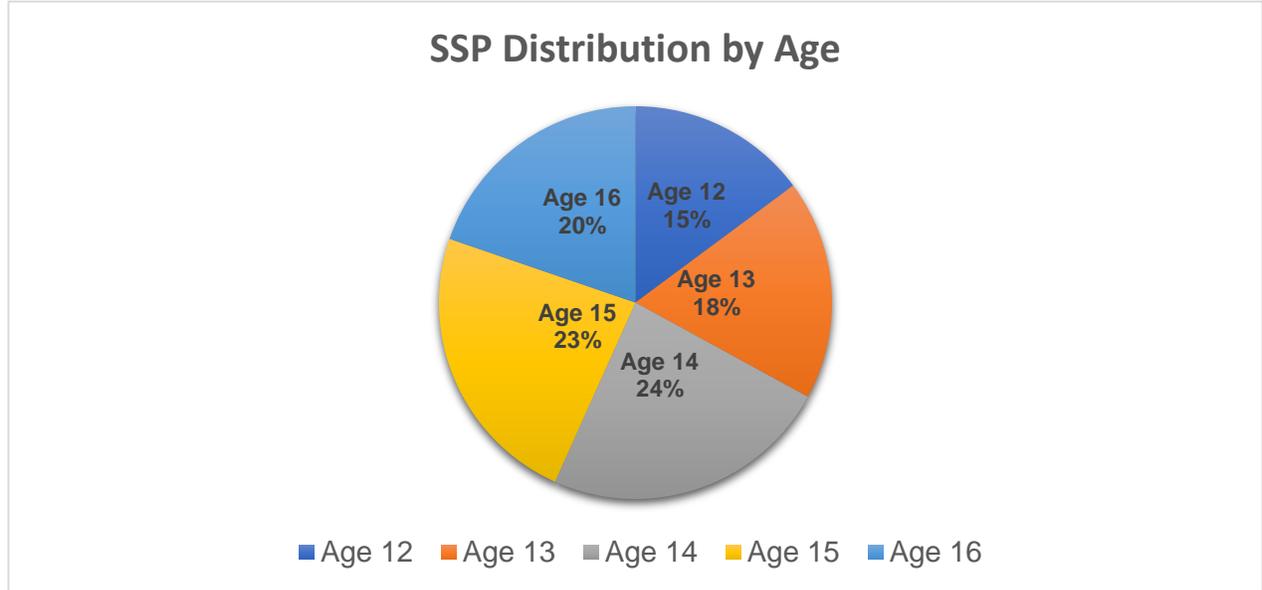
2023 Results

Registration for the Sauga Summer Pass was launched on May 1, 2023 during National Youth Week. A comprehensive marketing communications plan was implemented including e-news, transit media, digital screens & reader boards, and social media in order to foster awareness and encourage registration among youth ages 12 to 16. The program reached capacity by mid-July. Youth who inquired about registration after the program had reached capacity were provided with a complementary recreation pass.

For the most part, in 2023, there was not a substantial cost or revenue impacts to deliver MiWay and fun swim components of the program. However, due to the knowledge and skill required to facilitate safe and enjoyable use of fitness amenities, particularly for first time users, staff supervision of the weight room during SSP access hours was increased resulting in an overall cost of \$30,000 for staffing (approximately \$5,000 per facility where fitness amenities are available). With staff supervision in place, youth were provided with a gym orientation to familiarize themselves with the facilities, equipment, rules and procedures, gym etiquette as well as ongoing support from Exercise Counsellors when using the facility.

Age of participants

In 2023, registration in the SSP was relatively evenly split among all eligible age groups. The pie chart below provides a breakdown of the % of pass holders in each age group:



Usage

All pass holders were eligible to access free fun swims and rides on MiWay. Youth ages 14 to 16 were also eligible for free access to fitness amenities on weekdays between the hours of 11:00 am and 4:00 pm. A total of 4,708 youth ages 14 to 16 completed the additional registration and orientation requirements to access fitness amenities.

Details regarding participation in all three areas of service during July and August 2023 are outlined in the chart below:

| | Total SSP Scans | Value of the Total Scans (based on approved 2023 Rates & Fees) |
|--|------------------------|---|
| MiWay | 123,700 | \$303,065 (\$2.45/ride) |
| Fun Swim | 15,162 | \$51,250.94 (\$3.38/swim) |
| Fitness <small>*note this was only available to 4708 youth (eligible youth ages 14 to 16)</small> | 7897 | \$75,890.17 (\$9.61/drop in) |

The most popular facilities for both fun swim and fitness access were Meadowvale Community Centre (2467 swim and 3057 fitness scans); River Grove Community Centre (1539 swim scans and 2200 fitness scans) and Malton Community Centre (1315 swim scans and 989 fitness scans). A summary of usage by facility is provided in Appendix 1 and 2.

Participant Feedback

A program evaluation survey was sent out following the program to participants who provided a valid email address with an opportunity to win Apple Air Pods. A total of 54 participants responded to the survey and while the response rate was low, the survey did provide some insight regarding the experience of program participants:

- 84.9% of respondents accessed MiWay with 50% of respondents indicating that they used MiWay on a weekly basis and 38.6% indicating that they used MiWay on a daily basis.
- 71.7 % attended a fun swim.
- 32.1% accessed fitness amenities including fitness classes, squash courts and weight rooms.
- 11.1% of respondents purchased a Mississauga Recreation Membership following the completion of the program.
- 96.3% of the respondents purchased a Presto Card following the completion of the program.
- 96.3% of respondents indicated that they would access the Sauga Summer Pass again in the future.

Comments

To date, close to 50,000 youth have benefitted from this program since its inception. The changes made in 2023 have been effective in maximizing program capacity and providing value to youth for these free services during the summer months. The cost savings varies based on the frequency of use by the individual, where in some cases youth were accessing fitness amenities and fun swims 5 days a week over an 8 week period.

For 2024, staff recommend that the program capacity be increased to 11,000 with the same service offerings for youth ages 12-16, including free access to MiWay, free fun swim at all City indoor and outdoor pools, and free access to fitness amenities during off-peak hours. Additionally, staff recommend extending the program until Labour Day to align with the summer break.

Due to a variety of contributing factors impacting the overall program capacity, a limited increase is suggested for this year. Historically, the SSP operated leveraging unused capacity in existing transit, fun swims and fitness centres during the summer months. However, over the past year, both MiWay and Recreation have experienced an increase demand for services and

thus “unused capacity” is lower than previous years. The redevelopment closures underway at Carmen Corbasson Community Centre and South Common Community Centre are expected to increase utilization in neighbouring fitness centres. To ensure a positive customer experience and manage the demand, a limited increase is recommended. Staff will continue to monitor program usage and customer experience for future capacity recommendations.

Based on the 2023 usage, the estimated service impacts of increasing future program capacity are as follows:

| | 2023 scans per person with capacity at 10,000 | Estimated impact to keep capacity at 10,000 | Estimated impact to increase capacity to 11,000 |
|----------------|---|---|---|
| MiWay Rides | 123,700 | 126,000 | 139,000 |
| Fun Swim Scans | 15,162 | 15,886 | 16,610 |
| Fitness Scans | 7897 | 8,649 | 9,400 |

While the SSP is only available for youth ages 12-16, there are other initiatives in place to support older youth. For example, discounted fitness memberships are available for youth and students, youth aged 13 to 19 receive a discounted fare price when using a PRESTO card, benefits from the PRESTO loyalty program, and the MiWay U-Pass is available for University of Toronto Mississauga students. Fee assistance of up to \$275 per year through the Active Assist Program is also available to support access to recreation for youth in low income.

A comprehensive communication campaign will be implemented throughout the duration of the SSP to highlight opportunities for youth of all ages to be active and engaged in their community. Youth will be encouraged to explore parks, trails, outdoor sports courts and fitness installations available across the City; participate in drop-in programming; join the 50th Anniversary History Hunt coordinated by the Museums of Mississauga; and to attend festivals and events organized by community organizations all summer long.

Strategic Plan

The SSP aligns with the Youth Plan for Recreation, the Transportation Master Plan, and the Move and Belong pillars of the City’s Strategic Plan.

Financial Impact

The overall program capacity of the SSP will be increased to 11,000 spaces. The increased estimated usage of an additional 1,000 pass holders can be accommodated within the established service levels. The costs associated with program delivery for the fitness component estimated at \$30,000 annually can be accommodated with minimal financial impact on the Recreation & Culture operating budget.

It is assumed that the SSP will engage youth who may not access swimming, fitness and transit services if they had to pay for them. Considering that some SSP users may already be existing customers, providing this service for free in July and August may result in some reduced revenue. For example, the total estimated cost to MiWay could be up to \$368,000 and reflects the calculated transit revenue from the estimated free trips for 11,000 SSP pass holders. This estimated lost revenue can be accommodated within the existing MiWay Revenue budget (Cost Centre 23506). However, participant feedback also signals that SSP participants will continue to access MiWay and Recreation services after the program ends.

Opportunities for sponsorship and other supporting partnerships will be explored to support future implementation and sustainability of this initiative.

Conclusion

The SSP supports positive development for Mississauga youth by supporting their growing need for independence and overall health and well-being. It provides an opportunity for youth to explore the City and to familiarize themselves with the City's recreation and transit services and become future customers.

Appendix

Appendix 1: 2023 Total Sauga Summer Pass Swim by Facility

Appendix 2: 2023 Total Sauga Summer Pass Fitness by Facility



Jodi Robillos, Commissioner of Community Services

Prepared by: Jennu Baskaran, Community Development Coordinator