

**To: David Creery, Chief Administrative Officer**

**From: Brian Connors, Director of Parks & Recreation**

**Re: Community Sport and Recreation Infrastructure Fund Grant Applications**

---

**AIM**

To obtain Council’s approval for project applications with the Community Sport and Recreation Infrastructure Fund (CSRIF) grant.

**BACKGROUND**

The CSRIF provides funding to municipalities, Indigenous communities, and non-profit organizations. The fund will invest up to \$200 million over 3 years to support Ontario’s sport and recreation infrastructure deficits and the growing need for new recreation facilities in the province. This fund has two streams. The first is for repairing or upgrading existing sport and recreations facilities. The application deadline for this stream is October 29<sup>th</sup>, 2024. The second stream is for building new and transformative sport and recreation facilities. The application intake for this stream is ongoing until all funding has been allocated. Each municipality can only apply for one project in each stream.

City staff have reviewed the Recreation Facility Needs Study and the capital budget forecast for upcoming recreation projects. Staff have also participated in consultation sessions with the Regional Development Advisor to review potential project suitability as funding under both streams will be extremely competitive. According to the Financial Accountability Office of Ontario, the estimated Provincial recreation infrastructure deficit has grown from \$5 billion in 2007 to \$9.5 billion in 2021.

**COMMENTS**

Stream 1 – Repair & Rehabilitation

The first stream of the CSRIF program includes repair & rehabilitation projects.

Project options that can be considered under this stream include:

- Southside Pool changeroom expansion – included in 2025 capital forecast with an estimated cost of \$1.5 million
- Cowan Sportsplex Indoor Turf replacement – included in 2025 capital forecast with an estimated cost of \$990,000 (current estimated cost has increased to \$1.57 million)
- Lions Pool rehabilitation

The preferred project to move forward in this category is Southside Pool changeroom expansion which is currently in the architectural design development stage. The capital budget included \$50,000 in 2024 for design work and \$1.5 million in 2025 for construction. This project would be the highest need under Stream 1 as the changeroom space is overcrowded, old and difficult to clean. The lack of changeroom space is one of the major hurdles in providing more swimming lessons which has been capped at 11 instructor teaching blocks during learn to swim times. The current project cost for this project is \$1.5 million but

this estimate could change depending on the architectural design given the difficulties inherent to Southside Aquatic Centre such as poor soil conditions east of the aquatic center.

The Cowan Sportsplex indoor turf replacement would be another potential repair and rehabilitation project which is included in the capital budget forecast for 2025. The indoor turf sees usage from various soccer and football clubs who use this field on average 40 hours a week during Fall, Winter and Spring. Other uses include City camps, birthday parties, an indoor playground in the fall, winter and spring, and other recreation programs. The estimated cost of this project is \$1,570,000.

The other potential project that has been suggested is rehabilitating Lions outdoor pool. This would provide City residents with outdoor water in July and August which they are currently lacking since the pool closure at the end of August 2022. The total estimated cost of this project is \$2,000,000. This would not be the preferred option as Lions pool would continue to have the same parking issues. The pool would also be projected to have the same low usage it has had over the last 10 years. Adding more outdoor water would also not address the learn to swim pressures that are beginning to build at Southside Aquatic Centre as Summer swimming lessons are the least busy season for swimming lessons. Repairing and reopening Lions pool would not reduce the timing for the need to build a new indoor pool but would provide outdoor water to residents. City Council referred the concerns regarding public swimming amenities to the North Woodstock Recreation Facility Study for consideration at their August 15<sup>th</sup> meeting.

#### Stream 2 – New Builds/Signature New Builds

The second CSRIF stream includes grant funding for new buildings/facilities. The most appropriate project under this stream will be certain elements of the new North Woodstock Recreation Facility. This facility would include a new indoor arena to replace a retired Civic Centre arena, and possibly a new indoor pool and another arena to address increased ice demand. Other recreation amenities could also be included. Monteith Brown, has been hired to develop recommendations for project scope, conceptual design, and costing and a report will be coming to Council this year with a target of early November.

Projects that receive funding under this stream must be complete by March 2027. An application for a project of this magnitude will likely need to be phased such that the replacement arena be started first to meet this funding condition.

The work being completed by Monteith Brown will provide City Council with the information to determine if the City should proceed with a funding application for this project.

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

That Woodstock City Council approve the grant application for Southside Pool changeroom expansion for Stream 1 of the Community Sport and Recreation Infrastructure Fund.

*Authored by: Brian Connors, Director of Parks and Recreation*

*Approved by: David Creery, M.B.A., P.Eng., Chief Administrative Officer*