

**To:** David Creery, Chief Administrative Officer  
**From:** Brian Connors, Director of Parks & Recreation  
**Re:** Recreation Facility Study

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### **AIM**

To seek Council's authorization to obtain public feedback on a North Woodstock Recreation Facility Study.

### **BACKGROUND**

In April 2015, Council received the first *Recreation Facility Needs Assessment Study*. The purpose of the study is to provide guidance with respect to types of recreation facilities that are expected to be required in the future. This study was conducted by the planning consultants of Monteith Brown. The Study's methodology included research, consultation and feasibility assessment. Market trends, inventory facilities and a demographic review were also a part of the research. A replacement for the Civic Centre Arena was recommended within a medium to longer term timeline (i.e. 5 to 10 years). It was also recommended to continue to monitor ice usage levels to see if a twin pad would be warranted. A gymnasium was also recommended should an indoor ice rink be built. At the time of writing the first report, a second indoor pool was not recommended due to usage levels.

A follow up September 2021 *Recreation Facility Needs Assessment Study* was conducted by Monteith Brown using the same methodology as the 2015 study. This study recommended constructing an addition to the Southside Aquatic Centre and new changerooms to support an increase for indoor aquatic program capacity. It was also recommended to construct a new single pad arena at Cowan Fields to replace the Civic Centre Arena and to also continue to evaluate user levels to see if a second ice pad would be recommended. A gymnasium was also recommended to be constructed at the time of constructing a new arena. The timeline was recommended to be completed within the next 3 to 5 years.

### **COMMENTS**

In 2024, Monteith Brown was engaged to complete a North Woodstock Recreation Facility Study to confirm and refine recommendations from the 2021 *Recreation Facility Needs Assessment Study* and provide some estimated costs for the recommended components. The study recommends a twin pad arena, indoor pool, gymnasium and two community rooms. The optional components that this study also evaluated is a curling facility and additional childcare space.

The estimated cost of these components are as follows:

<b>Core Components</b>	<b>Gross Floor Area</b>	<b>Cost per sq ft.</b>	<b>Cost</b>
Arena	68,420 sq. ft.	\$725 per sq. ft.	\$49,604,500
Gymnasium	9,570 sq. ft.	\$650 per sq. ft.	\$6,220,500
Multi-Purpose Rooms	3,410 sq. ft.	\$600 per sq. ft.	\$2,046,000
Building Services	4,400 sq. ft.	\$500 per sq. ft.	\$2,200,000
Entrance, Lobby, Circulation	10,120 sq. ft.	\$700 per sq. ft.	\$7,084,000
Aquatic Centre	19,210 sq. ft.	\$950 per sq. ft.	\$18,249,500
<b>Total</b>	<b>115,130 sq. ft.</b>		<b>\$85,404,500</b>

The cost estimates for optional facilities:

<b>Components</b>	<b>Gross Floor Area</b>	<b>Cost per sq ft.</b>	<b>Cost</b>
Curling	25,520 sq. ft.	\$550 per sq. ft.	\$14,036,000
Childcare	2640 sq. ft.	\$600 per sq. ft.	\$1,584,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>28,160 sq. ft.</b>		<b>\$15,620,000</b>

The estimated operating cost to run a facility including the recommended core components has been projected to be \$1,000,000 annually. This would include all building hard costs such as heat, hydro and chemicals as well as staffing and building maintenance.

Currently, Civic Centre Arena, one of Woodstock's three existing ice pads, is nearing the end of its lifecycle. If Council wants to move forward with a new ice pad to replace the Civic Centre, there are some timeline concerns that should be noted to avoid expensive fixes to Civic Centre just before retiring the facility. For example, to replace the refrigeration floor, new boards and benches is estimated to cost \$1,000,000 to refurbish, and all are at the end of their lifecycle.

At this stage in the process, it would be beneficial to obtain public feedback on the general direction recommended by the Facility Study as well as on the specific components recommended. Guided by the International Association of Public Participation (IAP2) best practices, staff would develop a public consultation process to gather feedback from the public that will help inform future decisions on the facility. Feedback would be collected through online and paper surveys. It's also important to note that user groups were involved during the study process and their feedback was considered in the development of the recommendations.

Should Council wish to proceed to next steps, a design concept of the Community Centre would be undertaken. Fundraising efforts would also commence should Council desire this process to move forward.

In most municipal facility builds, debt financing is required. It is also a more equitable solution in facility financing as it spreads the cost over the long lifecycle of the facility itself and citizens who are not currently living in Woodstock will share in the cost of the facility if it is financed over a longer period of time. Calculating the interest cost of potential debt financing will need to be completed and will certainly be an estimation as the cost of borrowing is a rate that has a great deal of fluctuations.

**RECOMMENDATION**

That Woodstock City Council directs staff to obtain public feedback on the North Woodstock Recreation Facility.

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

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