

Ice Arena Feasibility Study

Introduction

The Town of Collingwood, through a joint steering committee, has recently completed an in depth analysis of the community's needs in terms of recreational facilities and services. A significant shortfall has long been understood by citizens and user groups and has now been further defined in the concept of a multi-use recreational development. At the centre of this development, major components would include additional indoor ice pads as well as an indoor swimming pool that would meet the requirements of local user groups.

A preferred site for the development has been identified and conceptual layouts have been prepared and adopted, in principle, by the Town Council. The overall project may include a complete renovation of existing parkland that is located centrally in this historic Town. It would not only address the much needed recreational infrastructure, but also would provide the opportunity to build community spaces and incorporate existing amenities resulting in a gathering place for citizens of all age groups, abilities and interests in a central and accessible location.

The anticipated budget for the project as it has been conceptualized is \$35,000,000. This is inclusive of all aspects of the park and existing amenity re-development as well as the cost of relocating existing facilities to other locations but does not include for the purchase of other land for displaced amenities or for potential retrofits that may adjust the purpose of the existing Eddie Bush Memorial Arena. The potential cost of the project is seen by many as being prohibitive and the momentum to move forward is waning.

Background

The Town of Collingwood has recognized that recreational infrastructure must be renewed in order to sustain the public health, overall wellness and livability of the community. A multi-faceted steering committee which included Town staff and a large number of stakeholder groups has recently completed an analysis of options and has provided a detailed report and recommendations. The process included several opportunities for community consultation and the results are understood to be a clear representation of the needs and wants of the community at large.

Although there is strong support for the project, the anticipated cost of the overall redevelopment project as it has been proposed is prohibitive in the current economic climate. The expansion of available ice time for local user groups is of the utmost importance and is seen as one of the most immediate needs for the community.

The Town is interested in identifying and developing creative approaches and ideas to enhance the work that has been completed to date and to enable portions of the project to move forward as standalone entities or as an initial phase of the overall development that has been proposed. A phased approach establishes the existing Eddie Bush Memorial Arena as an important transitional asset that would allow the overall Central Park Redevelopment Project to be completed over many years if necessary. This project is intended to examine the feasibility of alternative construction techniques as well as phasing of the project with an initial additional Ice Arena while retrofitting the existing Eddie Bush Memorial Arena to extend its life expectancy and expand its functionality for various uses.

Terms of Reference

The Central Park Redevelopment Steering Committee has explored the community's needs in detail and has engaged the public and stakeholder groups in the development of a preferred conceptual design for Central Park. The overall cost of the project, as it has been presented, creates a significant challenge for the Town of Collingwood and the current stakeholders. The findings represented by the proposed project continue to be extremely valuable and help to clarify the priority issues facing the community.

The Town would like to explore the feasibility of moving forward with specific components of the project in the preferred location of Central Park either as a stand-alone or interim project or as the initial phase of the overall Redevelopment Project. Further, this approach requires that the cost to retrofit the existing Eddie Bush Memorial Arena to extend its life expectancy for at least another ten (10) years be fully investigated. The addition of a year round Ice Arena at Central Park provides the opportunity to transition the existing arena towards a winter ice facility and a year round venue for other events that will add new and vibrant activities to the downtown core.

The feasibility of several options should be examined in terms of a comparison to the overall Central Park Redevelopment Project scope. This will allow the costs and benefits of various opportunities to be compared directly while also enabling the preparation of operating estimates and the exploration of anticipated social improvements.

The retrofit of the Eddie Bush Memorial Arena may be a candidate for funding under the federal Community Infrastructure Improvement Fund (CIIF) program. This may provide some impetus for the project to move forward on its own or in conjunction with other opportunities. Applications for this funding must be submitted by August 24, 2012. The cost of potential improvements must be well documented to enable the preparation of the application.

In addition to the deadline for the CIIF program, the feasibility of each of the options considered must be presented to Council on August 27, 2012. The Town is requesting a draft report by no later than August 15, 2012.

The following scenarios are to be considered as a minimum. Alternatives may be provided should they enhance the opportunity for part of the project to forward.

Proposed Central Park Redevelopment Project Components (as presented)	Initial Phase of Single Pad Arena, necessary park improvements with future option to combine into overall redevelopment concept	Standalone Single Pad Arena with potential to twin in the future, minimal park improvements, no automatic path to proposed concept	Upgrade of the Eddie Bush Memorial Arena (EBMA) beyond ten (10) years and expand utilization
<i>Description</i>			
<p>Complete Community Recreation Centre</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Twin pad arena • New six lane 25m pool • Adapt existing pool for therapeutic and warm water programs • Curling club upgrades • Integrated common space • Family oriented park uses • Integration of Lawn bowling • Park and Site Development • Redevelopment of 3 ball diamonds 	<p>New year round Ice Arena in Central Park that may be phased into the broader concept. Options may include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First phase of proposed Recreation Centre • Fabric Membrane over a new Ice Arena (Sprung, or equivalent) • Other affordable structure over a new Ice Arena • Moderate spectator seating <p>The placement of the Ice Arena may enable retention of the existing outdoor arena pending further development</p> <p>Identify displaced amenities and costs associated with redevelopment</p> <p>Engineering costs may be delayed to some extent until future phases</p> <p>Park and Site development shall be on an as needed basis in conjunction with the various phases</p>	<p>New year round Ice Arena in Central Park that minimizes the disruption to the existing amenities. Options may include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fabric Membrane over a new Ice Arena (Sprung, or equivalent) • Other affordable structure over a new Ice Arena • Moderate spectator seating <p>The placement of a new Ice Arena would enable retention of the existing outdoor arena</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Alternatively, the existing outdoor arena may be covered to provide for year round use. Design would allow for dressing rooms, washrooms, etc. Options may include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fabric Membrane (Sprung, or equivalent) • Other affordable structures • Minimal spectator seating <p>Identify displaced amenities and costs associated with redevelopment</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Park and Site development shall be on an as needed basis minimizing displacement of existing amenities</p>	<p>Upgrade of the existing Eddie Bush Memorial Arena for continued use as a community Ice Arena as well as improvements to encourage and develop alternative uses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Replace dasher boards • Dressing room and lobby ventilation system • Improve emergency egress • Upgrade refrigeration room • Replace chiller • Upgrade electrical distribution • Renew mechanical systems • Upgrade ammonia alarm system • Replace roof • Lighting replacements and improvements • Replace exterior doors and frames • Change room upgrades • New concrete floor • Washrooms upgrades • Accessibility issues • Improvements to accommodate special events (concerts, trade shows...) • Upgrade seating • May require additional lands

Potential Implications/Benefits

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Displaced ball diamonds require new location • Allows complete repurposing of the EBMA • Addresses all identified community priorities at one time, with a long term strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides additional space to accommodate ice demand in a shorter time frame with less capital investment required • Displaced ball diamonds require new location • Does not address indoor pool requirement at this time • Delays Curling Club upgrades • Delays YMCA partnership • Ensures the continuance of the EBMA as a winter Ice Arena • Fabric Membrane structure may be repurposed in the future • May increase operating costs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides additional space to accommodate ice demand in a shorter time frame with less capital investment required • Displaced ball diamonds require new location • Does not address indoor pool requirement at this time • Does not address Curling Club upgrades • Fabric Membrane structure over a new Ice Arena or the existing outdoor arena may be repurposed in the future • May increase operating costs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extending economic life of the facility • Improved access for persons with disabilities • Improved energy efficiency • Decreased operational or maintenance costs • Increased staff and public safety for the facility • Increases utilization of Central Park facility • Improves facility use for regional tourism events
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