



NORTH VANCOUVER RECREATION COMMISSION

Commission Report to City and District Councils

March 13, 2008

SUBJECT: Recreation Needs Assessment and Indoor Recreation Facility Plan

BACKGROUND:

In 2005, the North Vancouver Recreation Commission (NVRC), supported by City and District Council, approved a staff recommendation to conduct a North Vancouver-wide recreation Needs Assessment and to develop a long-term indoor recreation Facility Plan. In January 2006, after a public request for proposal process, Professional Environmental Recreation Consultants (PERC) was hired to complete the project.

The Needs Assessment results and Consultant's draft Facility Recommendations were widely circulated for public and stakeholder review and input in May and June, 2007. The Commission received the final recommendations from the consultant in the summer of 2007. Staff reviewed PERC's final recommendations and submitted a report to the Commission on September 13, 2007. The Commission tabled the September staff report in order to provide an opportunity for stakeholder input at the October Commission meeting.

At the October 11 Commission meeting, eighteen stakeholder representatives and interested community members presented their views on PERC's Facility Plan. The meeting also attracted approximately eighty-five interested residents. The Commission requested that staff review the written and verbal submissions and provide any additional comments in a staff report for the November Commission meeting.

The Commission discussed the recommendations at the November Commission meeting and determined that the consultant's reports should be submitted for information to the City and District and discussed at the joint meeting with Councils which was held in late November. The Commission then held a workshop in early February 2008 to consider each of the Consultant's recommendations along with the related public input and staff comments and subsequently made decisions at the February 14, 2008, meeting related to each of the recommendations.

DISCUSSION:

The principles developed through the Needs Assessment and Indoor Recreation Facility Plan project as the basis for facility planning are:

- Future facility decisions will be based on projected needs, not wants.
- Services will be distributed as equitably as possible through a Community Recreation Centre (CRC) within 2 km of the vast majority of residents.

- Recommendations will be consistent with the City's and District's sustainability goals.
- Utilization of community assets and facilities will be maximized.
- Facility decisions for the City and the District will be integrated.

It was identified at the outset of the project that the status quo is not an option. Facility assessments have shown clearly that many existing recreation facilities are approaching the end of their functional lifespan. Minor retrofits will not suffice to keep them cost effective and to meet changing needs. If facilities are to be replaced, it is important to replace them with facilities that meet future needs, not simply replicate what has been done in the past or to respond to expressed wants or desires. The Commission believes that the recommendations within this report represent the best approach for meeting future needs in the most cost effective manner possible.

The Needs Assessment was a very important first step in this facility planning project. The assessment completed by the Consultant outlined the following priority recreation needs for North Vancouver residents:

HIGH

- Use of North Shore mountains
- Use of urban trails
- Sports field activity
- Fitness services
- Indoor aquatics
- Inline hockey and rollerblading
- Gymnasium sports
- Performances and rehearsals

MEDIUM

- Outdoor sports tournaments
- Indoor sports tournaments
- Indoor ice sports
- Indoor tennis
- Unstructured recreation for teens

LOW

- Gymnastics
- Track and field activity
- Indoor lawn bowling
- Arts and crafts activities

The first three needs, as they are related to outdoor recreation, were referred to other processes. The needs for indoor recreation activities drove the recommendations for future facility planning. This plan looks at the needs of residents in both the City and the District and advises that the two municipalities continue to work together to provide seamless, cost-effective recreation services for their residents. The needs were identified based on participation patterns, trends, demographic changes and best practices.

The Consultant's recommendations and Commission decisions made at the February 14, 2008, Commission meeting are outlined below:

Arenas

Consultant's recommendation

Construct a three-sheet ice facility on the West Side, replacing the single sheets at Karen Magnussen and Harry Jerome

Considerations

- Consolidation of multiple sheets in one location is desirable (either a combination of three sheets each at two different locations or four sheets at one location and two at another).
- Public provision of some of the arena services is desirable.
- The timing of this decision is important to ensure services are not disrupted and to ensure plans for facility development are not impeded.

Commission's recommendation

- **Recommend six sheets of ice in total to serve North Vancouver, requiring the construction of a new multi-sheet arena complex, preferably in the west area to replace the existing sheets at Harry Jerome and Karen Magnussen and to add one new sheet**
- **Request that a staff report go to the City and District along with the recommendation that speaks to the location and timing challenges and that also outlines the options (e.g. fourth sheet at Ice Sports and a two sheet facility elsewhere or inclusion of single sheets at selected CRCs) and implications of options**

Reuse of Karen Magnussen Arena

Consultant's recommendation

Retrofit Karen Magnussen single ice sheet and support spaces into a larger Gymnastics gym to replace the Gymnastics gym at Harry Jerome

Considerations

- The need for provision of year-round dry floor space was identified as a high priority.
- Provision of a dedicated gymnastics facility is not the responsibility of municipal government.

Commission's Recommendation

- **Recommend that the Karen Magnussen arena be converted to a dry floor facility following the construction of new sheets of ice elsewhere**

Harry Jerome Recreation Centre

Consultant's recommendation

Build a new Community Recreation Centre (CRC) to replace the existing Harry Jerome recCentre. This Centre would include the recommended elements of a CRC plus a second gymnasium, a performing arts studio and additional seniors' spaces

Considerations

- The rebuilding of Harry Jerome is inextricably linked to solving the issue of ice provision. A location must be found and a facility built prior to eliminating the ice sheet at Harry Jerome so that service levels are not affected.

Commission's Recommendation

- **Recommend that a Community Recreation Centre (as described in consultant's report) be constructed to replace the existing Harry Jerome facility and that this site incorporates Silver Harbour and an additional performing arts rehearsal space**
- **Recommend that an analysis of the options and implications of provision of aquatic spaces be conducted**

Community Recreation Centre – Capilano Area

Consultant's recommendation

Build a new Community Recreation Centre (CRC) to replace the existing William Griffin and Delbrook Centres. This Centre would include the recommended elements of a CRC

Considerations

- The challenges to find a site further north west may require an assessment of the site potential and facility condition of the Griffin facility.
- Trends and participation rates for squash and racquetball should be revisited when configuring the new facility to determine whether they should be included in the design.
- There are options to the Consultant's recommended allocation of aquatic space across the communities and the potential to include a modest aquatic component in this facility instead of adding a lap tank at Karen Magnussen.
- More information on the condition and feasibility of the sites will be required.

Commission's Recommendation

- **Recommend that a consolidated Community Recreation Centre be constructed to replace the existing William Griffin and Delbrook Recreation Centres and that squash and racquetball facilities be included if the need still exists. Assessment of site capacity as well as the current condition and life span of the existing facilities is required prior to determination of a site**

Note: The results of the aquatic space analysis will help determine the optimum provision of aquatic spaces in this Centre.

Indoor Tennis

Consultant's recommendation

Construct two new indoor/outdoor tennis courts and support spaces on the Grant Connell Tennis Centre site

Considerations

- An Environmental Services report notes that three courts could fit on the Grant Connell site. (Note: The Consultant supports this revision to his recommendation.)
- Desire to also explore feasibility of conversion of outdoor courts at schools and other venues to meet tennis needs in other parts of the community.

Commission's Recommendation

- **Recommend that three new indoor/outdoor tennis courts and support spaces be constructed on the Grant Connell Tennis Centre site**

Tournament Centre at Capilano College

Consultant's recommendation

Build a new Sport Tournament Centre at Capilano College – a partnership between the municipalities, the College and the Province of BC

Considerations

- Construction is subject to Capilano College contributing a significant portion of the Capital costs.

Commission's Recommendation

- **Recommend pursuing a partnership with Capilano College to construct a Sport Tournament Centre at Capilano College**

Karen Magnussen Community Recreation Centre

Consultant's recommendation

Expand the existing Karen Magnussen centre; adding a 25 meter pool tank, additional fitness and multipurpose spaces

Considerations

- Question of the need for an additional lap pool at this site vs. providing it in the consolidated William Griffin/Delbrook Community Centre.

Commission's Recommendation

- **Recommend expanding the Karen Magnussen Recreation Centre to include additional fitness and multipurpose spaces and, subject to the results of the aquatic space analysis, adding an additional pool tank.**

Maplewood/Ron Andrews Community Recreation Centre

Consultant's recommendation

Construct a new Community Recreation Centre in Maplewood Area if the population reaches 15,000, to replace Ron Andrews when it is at the end of its life span

Considerations

- There is considerable doubt that Maplewood will grow to 15,000 over the next 10-15 years; therefore, consideration of replacing Ron Andrews at the existing site or another site will need to be pursued within that period.
- Consider all options including retrofitting, rebuilding on the current site, Windsor School and a site within Maplewood, at the time Ron Andrews needs to be replaced.

Commission's Recommendation

- **Recommend replacing Ron Andrews with a Community Recreation Centre in the most appropriate location when the existing facility nears the end of its useful life span**

Gymnasiums

Consultant's recommendation

Provide more gymnasium space through the use of schools

Considerations

- Determination of the actual capacity of school gyms and other facilities to meet the demand for gym space needs to occur. Depending on the results of this analysis, additional gymnasiums may be required.

Commission's Recommendation

- **Recommend that Recreation Commission staff work with School District staff and other gymnasium providers to conduct an analysis of the actual capacity of gymnasiums to meet the needs and then, if required, to make further recommendations on meeting needs for gymnasium space**

Lower Capilano/Norgate

Consultant's recommendation

The Commission and its municipal partners work with School District 44 to enhance services in Norgate Elementary School

Considerations

- There is a recognized need for more neighbourhood level recreation services in the Lower Capilano/Norgate area which can be met in part through Norgate School and could best be met through additional community space at Norgate School.
- There is a need for ongoing monitoring of population growth west of Lonsdale, the impact and success of increasing recreation opportunities out of Norgate School and the ability of the rest of the recreation system (e.g. new CRC in Capilano) to meet recreation needs in this area.

Commission's Recommendation

- **Recommend that the Commission, District and City work with the School District to enhance community recreation services in Norgate Elementary School and that continued monitoring of population growth and recreation needs west of Lonsdale occur and subsequent actions be undertaken to meet the needs**

The Commission recognizes that several of the recommendations require further analysis. Permission to carry-over funding into 2008 has been requested of each municipality as a means of funding the work that will be required this year. District approval for this carry-over has been granted and the City decision is anticipated shortly.

The establishment of a steering committee with representation from the Commission, District and City has been proposed as a means to oversee the next steps. The Commission supports this committee in order to enable a joint planning and decision-making process.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS:

The Consultant has estimated that the total cost in 2007 dollars for implementation of all of the Consultant's recommendations is approximately \$152 million. Decisions on capital projects will be included in the applicable future capital budgets.

CONCURRENCE AND COMMUNICATION PLAN:

The Needs Assessment and Facility Plan project has had involvement from City and District staff and informal consultation with Councils has occurred at key stages to provide direction and input. Extensive public and stakeholder group input was also solicited and received at draft and final recommendation phases. Staff have also briefed representatives of CUPE Local 389.

A communication strategy will be developed at the appropriate time in partnership with the City and District.

POLICY/AUTHORITY:

The Commission is responsible for making recommendations to the City and District on Capital priorities, as per the Bylaw. Capital decisions are the responsibility of City and District Council.

CONCLUSION:

The Needs Assessment and Indoor Recreation Facility Plan process has included a great deal of research, analysis and public input. The Commission has spent considerable time in reviewing the Consultant's information and recommendations as well as feedback received from members of the public and stakeholder groups, and have identified actions that they believe will best meet the recreational needs of North Vancouver residents for the next few decades.