



# STAFF REPORT TO COMMISSION

**DATE OF REPORT** November 14, 2016  
**MEETING TYPE & DATE** Cowichan Lake Recreation Commission of November 17, 2016  
**FROM:** Facilities & Transit Division  
Community Services Department  
**SUBJECT:** Alternative uses and options on converting the curling facility  
**FILE:**

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## PURPOSE/INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this report is to provide the Cowichan Lake Recreation (CLR) commission with possible alternative uses and options on converting the curling facility to provide indoor space for use by other non-curling recreation groups/activities. And to seek approval to amend the draft 2017 budget function 405 to include funding to update the 2005 Professional Environmental Recreation Consultants (PERC) Report – “Cowichan Lake Sports Arena Curling Facility Review”.

## RECOMMENDED RESOLUTION

That the draft 2017 budget function 405 – Cowichan Lake Recreation be amended to:

- 1) Increase the consulting services expense by \$20,000 to allow for the 2005 PERC Report to be updated.
- 2) Increase the requisition by \$20,000.

## BACKGROUND

At the March and April 2016 CLR commission meetings three related items were preliminarily reviewed:

- 1) Alternative uses of the curling rink and discussion on process to begin;
- 2) Review of the 2005 PERC Report;
- 3) Future Public Engagement strategy for alternative uses of the curling rink.

Staff provided general information on each item, and the Commission requested that at the 2017 budget time staff provide further information on alternatives uses and any corresponding costs to convert the curling facility.

At the October 19, 2016 CLR commission meeting when the 2017 CLR draft budget was discussed, staff advised that the report on the alternative use of the curling facility was being developed and would be presented at the November commission meeting. If the Commission wishes to amend the 2017 draft CLR budget to include the recommendation, or revise the recommendation and/or include other items outlined in this report, then an updated Commission resolution will be forwarded to Corporate Services Committee meeting on November 29<sup>th</sup> meeting. Information and options are provided below.

## ANALYSIS

The CLR commission has asked for staff to provide options for alternative use of the curling facility. Staff has reviewed some potential options for use of the curling facility space and they are outlined below, but staff feels it would be prudent to contract a consultant to conduct a review of the operation and programming of the Cowichan Lake Curling facility. This would include community consultation regarding current activity levels, desired programs/activities and recreation trends, which would provide updated information to support various recommended

options.

The last similar review of the CLR curling operation and programming was done by PERC in February 2005, and staff recommends that a similar type review be conducted before any decision is made regarding possibly converting the facility to accommodate additional or other programs.

The following various options are listed in no particular order for the Commission's consideration of use of the curling facility space either all year round or for a portion of the year. For shared uses in the winter season, conversion costs will be required to convert 2 sheets of the curling ice space prior to the installation of ice for the season:

Option A: Freezing only two sheets (1 and 2) of curling ice for the entire season. Total estimated conversion cost = \$15,000 for refrigeration contractor service and a basic safety rail between sheets 2 and 3. This cost does not include any equipment or material that might be required for the activities taking place on the two non-flooded sheets. Project time line for work is two months.

- Install 1" valves on half the brine lines. This allows for the option to freeze two or four sheets at the start of each year.
- Only two sheets of curling ice would be available for curlers. Note, bonspiels and Provincial events require four sheets of curling ice.
- Currently staff prepares four sheets of curling ice for a four sheet draw. If only two sheets are available, two draws (ie. staggered start times) would likely be required which would add more staff time to prepare the ice. Cost for these wages is not included.
- This option does not require additional materials (ie. styrofoam, plywood, ArenaDeck, tarp, etc.) to cover up sheets 3 and 4, it also does not require storage space for the materials, and does not require labor to move the cover up material.
- A safety rail would need to be installed between sheets 2 and 3.

Option B: Temporarily covering two ice sheets (3 and 4) with ArenaDeck ice rink cover: Total estimated cost = \$55,000 for cover product and basic safety rail, but it does not include the additional cost for storage facility/container, as well as any costs for equipment or material that might be required for the activities taking place on the two covered up sheets. Project timeline for the work is four months.

- This option provides flexibility to use two or four sheets of curling during the season.
- 1" panels are recommended for long term ice coverage.
- 115 - 48" x 96" panels would be required.
- Panels are lighter than plywood, which allows for easier lifting and removal.
- Panels will not warp, swell, deform or curl.
- Panels are nonporous, will not absorb contaminants, and allows for quick cleanup for events/activities and storage.
- Storage of 4,500 square feet of ArenaDeck panels will be an issue as current storage space is limited. Location and cost TBD.
- A safety rail would need to be installed between sheets 2 and 3.
- The panels could be removed to allow for four sheets to be used for bonspiels, but extra labor would be required to remove panels and re-install panels. Extra ice preparation would also be required to make the ice curlable after long periods being covered up. Labor cost not included.
- Currently staff prepares four sheets of curling ice for a four sheet draw. If only two sheets are available, then two draws at different times would be required which would add more staff time to prepare the ice.

Option C: Temporarily covering two ice sheets (3 and 4) with styrofoam panels and plywood: Total estimated cost = \$25,000 for product cover and basic safety rail, but it does not include the additional cost for the storage room/container, as well as any costs for equipment or material that might be required for the activities taking place on the two covered up sheets. Project time line for the work is two months.

- This option is similar to option B in that it allows flexibility of using two or four sheets of curling during the season with a lessor initial cost for the cover up product, but it is much more awkward and likely poses more of a safety concern.
- Over time, the non-ice flooring section could become a safety hazard if plywood warps, swells, deforms, or curls.
- Covering the plywood with a tarp or carpet could be a tripping hazard especially if highly active sports are played.
- Storage of 4500 square feet of flooring will be an issue as current storage space is limited. Location and cost TBD.
- Over time the plywood and styrofoam will likely need to be replaced.
- A safety rail would need to be installed between sheets 2 and 3.
- The plywood and styrofoam panels could be removed for bonspiels, but extra labor would be required to remove panels and re-install panels. Extra ice preparation would also be required to make the ice curlable after long periods being covered up. The impact on the condition of the styrofoam panels by repeated moving may be an issue.
- Currently staff prepares four sheets of curling ice for a four sheet draw. If only two sheets are available two draws would be required which would add more staff time to prepare the ice.

Option D: Install a permanent wall divider between sheets 2 and 3 to allow curling on two sheets and another activity on sheets 3 and 4. No budget amount has been provided but this option would require a significant budget including same costs in Option A (\$15,000) to install valves on half the brine lines, plus the expense to provide a sound proofed floor to ceiling wall, with required doors and adjustments to the HVAC system would also be required.

- Only two sheets of curling ice would be available for curlers.
- Should not require additional materials to cover up sheets 3 and 4, does not require storage space for the cover up materials, and does not require a safety rail.
- Likely the most expensive option and would permanently change the room into two long and narrow spaces.

Staff has identified some possible uses of the curling rink space, but with an updated PERC Report it could provide additional options as well as budget amounts.

- A weight room and fitness studio (including spin bikes) – it would have to be determined if this is best suited for a year round or partial year activity. If year round then no conversion (ie ice cover up) cost would be required but program equipment, material and changes to the HVAC system would likely be required.
- A children's climbing facility possibly coupled with a trampoline park – same comments as the weight room and fitness studio.
- Year round pickle ball courts – seems to staff that players prefer to use their community halls, and the outdoor facility is in the process of being built by the Town.
- Reduced curling season - As an alternative to spending funds to convert the curling facility for the winter season, another option at no added cost would be to consider reducing the curling season to approximately half of the current schedule. Ie from September to December or from January to March, that way the facility could be used by

non-curling programs for additional 2+ months. There would be a reduction in curling revenue but this could be offset by the added revenue from the activities using the space when curling is not.

Other considerations:

- Noise distraction could be an issue if curling and other programming was occurring at the same time, unless a sound proofed full wall divider is installed.
- Temperature would likely be an issue for non-curling programs as the entire facility not just the two sheets of curling will be cold.
- The safety rail between sheets 2 and 3 would be built as cost effective as possible and it may look a bit odd.

### FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

The recommendation is to add \$20,000 to the 2017 CLR budget for consulting services funded by requisition. The increase in requisition would be .85% or \$1.13 per \$100,000 of assessed property value. As an alternative, the \$20,000 could be funded by a transfer from reserves.

In addition, the following are estimated costs for the facility conversion options, but there is currently no funding for this initiative included in the draft 2017 CLR budget.

Option 1: minimum estimate \$15,000. Does not include equipment for non-curling activities/programs.

Option 2: minimum estimate \$55,000, plus a storage facility/container, plus extra labor to cover up, take off and store cover up materials. Does not include equipment for non-curling activities/programs.

Option 3: minimum estimate \$25,000, plus a storage facility/container, plus extra labor to cover up, take off and store cover up materials. Does not include equipment for non-curling activities/programs.

Option 4: Not provided as the magnitude of this option was not considered as part of the scope of this report. The budget amount will be significant.

### COMMUNICATION CONSIDERATIONS

If the CLR 2017 budget is amended to include funding to update the PERC Report that initiative will include public consultation and discussion with the curlers who are currently using the facility.

### STRATEGIC/BUSINESS PLAN CONSIDERATIONS

N/A

Referred to (upon completion):

- ☐ Community Services (*Island Savings Centre, Cowichan Lake Recreation, South Cowichan Recreation, Arts & Culture, Public Safety, Facilities & Transit*)
- ☒ Corporate Services (*Finance, Human Resources, Legislative Services, Information Technology*)
- ☐ Engineering Services (*Environmental Services, Capital Projects, Water Management, Recycling & Waste Management*)
- ☐ Planning & Development Services (*Community & Regional Planning, Development Services, Inspection & Enforcement, Economic Development, Parks & Trails*)

☐ Strategic Services

Prepared by:



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Jim Wakeham  
Manager

Reviewed by:

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Not Applicable  
Not Applicable



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John Elzinga  
General Manager