

## **City Support for 2022 Curling Canada Events**

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| Presented To:   | Finance and Administration Committee       |
| Meeting Date:   | September 21, 2021                         |
| Type:           | Managers' Reports                          |
| Prepared by:    | Meredith Armstrong<br>Economic Development |
| Recommended by: | Chief Administrative Officer               |

### **Report Summary**

This report provides a recommendation regarding the 2022 Curling Canada events being hosted in Greater Sudbury.

### **Resolution**

THAT the City of Greater Sudbury approves the in-kind contribution of \$100,000 in the form of reduced ice rental costs for the 2022 Curling Canada events to be held at the Gerry McCrory Countryside Sports Complex in March 2022 as outlined in the report entitled "City support for 2022 Curling Canada Events", from the Chief Administrative Officer, presented at the Finance and Administration Committee meeting on September 21, 2021.

### **Relationship to the Strategic Plan, Health Impact Assessment and Community Energy & Emissions Plan (CEEP)**

This report refers to the strategic attraction of meetings and sport hosting opportunities for the City of Greater Sudbury as noted in the Community Economic Development Strategic Plan *From the Ground Up* as well as the *Tourism Strategy 2019-2023*. The event hosting opportunity also aligns with the GSDC's *Economic Recovery Strategic Plan* and its objectives related to supporting recovery of the tourism industry locally.

### **Financial Implications**

According to fees outlined in User Fee By-law and the number of hours and days required by Curling Canada to host the three events in March 2022, the City would receive revenues from this ice rental of approximately \$130,000 if full costs were applied.

As part of the City's contribution to the event hosting, this request is for the City to subsidize these ice rental costs to reduce the expenses to the local Curling Clubs to \$30,000 for the use of Countryside Arena. This in-kind contribution from the City toward the national event represents an impact of \$100,000 to the revenues for that facility. To manage this investment and loss of revenue to a maximum of \$100,000, Community Development and Arenas will budget with this lower revenue target for 2022, which may in part be offset by increased revenues resulting from displaced users rebooking ice time at other arenas.

## **Background**

On August 4, 2021, Curling Canada announced that it has selected Greater Sudbury to host three consecutive national curling events from March 15 to 27, 2022, including U-Sport/CCAA, U-15 and Canadian Mixed Doubles.

The 2022 Host Committee is comprised of three local curling clubs: Curl Sudbury, Copper Cliff Curling Club and Coniston Curling Club. Historically, this will be the first time the three clubs have worked together to host a large curling event. In support of the hosting efforts, SportLink Sport Council and the City of Greater Sudbury's Economic Development and Leisure Services staff are providing support for the committee, including staff from Tourism & Culture and Arenas. Staff are also providing assistance with funding applications to leverage resources from all three levels of government.

All three events will be held at the Gerry McCrory Countryside Sports Complex using both ice pads. The three events are as follows:

1. U-Sport / CCAA - March 15 to 19, 2022
  - a. 160 Athletes, 40 Coaches
  - b. Estimated number of hotel room nights: 700
2. U-15 - March 20 to 21, 2022
  - a. 128 Athletes, 36 Coaches
  - b. Estimated number of hotel room nights: 384
3. Canadian Mixed Doubles - March 22 to 27, 2022
  - a. 64 Athletes, 36 Coaches
  - b. Estimated number of hotel room nights: 1,300

### **Economic Impact**

The 2022 Curling Canada events in Greater Sudbury are expected to result in:

- 352 players and coaches
- 2,400 spectators, including 950 non-local
- 2,384 hotel rooms nights over the course of the event
- An estimated economic impact of \$1.3 million in local spending, based on the anticipated number of participants and spectators, hotel room nights and average spending data

Canadian Mixed Doubles will also be a nationally televised event which will feature a Sudbury-specific 30-second advertisement to play every commercial break; it is estimated that the ad will air 350-400 times throughout the week. The major network will also do a profile piece on Greater Sudbury during the broadcast.

The Host Committee will work with the City's Tourism & Culture staff to develop itineraries and opportunities for all participants, officials and parents to experience Sudbury and to visit our local attractions including Science North, Dynamic Earth as well as many local restaurants and retailer as part of the player and fan experience events that the Host Committee is organizing.

The potential carry over effect that this will have for the local tourism sector is significant, as the event will provide a vehicle to promote the City of Greater Sudbury as a unique tourist destination to groups from as far away as British Columbia and Newfoundland and several provinces in between.

### **GSDC Support**

At their regular meeting of August 11, 2021, the Greater Sudbury Development Corporation (GSDC) passed Motion 2021-059 approving a contribution of \$40,000 from the 2021 Tourism Development Fund to assist with costs associated with the 2022 Curling Canada championships with particular focus on marketing and

hospitality expenses.

This contribution was based on the review and recommendation of the GSDC's Tourism Development Committee, which includes representation from local hotels and accommodations, retail, hospitality, culture and attractions including Science North. The Committee was established by the GSDC to provide advice and recommendations on investments to strengthen the tourism sector, including investments of the GSDC's portion of the Municipal Accommodation Tax (MAT), which funds the Tourism Development Fund.

### **Previous Bid Effort**

Previously, the City of Greater Sudbury and the Idylwylde Golf & Country Club partnered to bid on the 2020 U-18 National Curling Championships, and were the successful proponents. As the COVID pandemic prevented this event from proceeding, the City continued conversations with Curling Canada directly to secure future events when it was safe to do so. Based on this ongoing discussion, Curling Canada has selected Greater Sudbury to host three consecutive national curling events in 2022.

### **Impact on Existing User Groups**

Countryside Arena is the busiest and most frequently used facility of the City's arenas. March is generally a month that sees peak usage during the year as many community groups and sports clubs make use of the ice.

This means that Countryside Arena relies on the revenue generated during this time as part of budget projections to help offset ongoing operating expenses. In addition, a number of stakeholders will need to consider alternate arrangements for their programming in spring 2022 since Countryside will not be available. While ice time is in great demand at all arena facilities in March each year, many groups may be able to make use of ice bookings available at other arenas, adjusting their programming to factor in different travel distances and time slots for their participants.

Ice time for the three Curling Canada events is approximately \$130,000 as advised by Arenas staff. Should Council approve the City's in-kind contribution of \$100,000 to offset ice time costs, the 2022 Host Committee will be responsible for approximately \$30,000 in expenses associated with their use of Countryside Arena. Community Development and Arena staff have confirmed that 2022 budget projections would be adjusted to reflect this lower revenue target, which may be partly offset by increased revenues resulting from displaced users able to rebook ice time at other arenas.

Nevertheless, the Curling Canada event provides an opportunity for significant return on the City's investment. In addition to immediate economic impacts estimated at \$1.3 million, as well as national coverage and exposure for Greater Sudbury, the 2022 national curling events bring economic benefits to the local tourism and hospitality sector which have been severely impacted by COVID, and by providing future opportunities for Greater Sudbury to host national-level events.

### **Event Budget**

The City's Economic Development staff continue to work closely with the Host Committee, including representation from the three local curling clubs, together with Sportlink Sport Council, in order to develop the event budget and explore opportunities for funding, sponsorship and revenue generation.

| EXPENSES                   |                  |
|----------------------------|------------------|
| Facility Rentals           | \$130,000        |
| Marketing and Promotions   | \$40,000         |
| Event Logistics            | \$116,000        |
| Hospitality and Volunteers | \$30,000         |
| Legacy Fund                | \$30,000         |
| <b>TOTAL</b>               | <b>\$346,000</b> |

| REVENUES  |              |                |                  |
|---|--------------|----------------|------------------|
| FUNDER NAME                                     | FUNDING TYPE | FUNDING STATUS | TOTAL FUNDING    |
| City of Greater Sudbury                         | In Kind      | Pending        | \$100,000        |
| Curling Canada Grant                            | Cash         | Confirmed      | \$18,000         |
| Provincial-NOHFC/Ontario Sport Hosting Grant    | Cash         | Pending        | \$55,000         |
| FedNor  | Cash         | Pending        | \$25,000         |
| Event Revenue – ticket, sponsorship, merch, etc | Cash         | Pending        | \$108,000        |
| GSDC – Tourism Development Fund                 | Cash         | Confirmed      | \$40,000         |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                                    |              |                | <b>\$346,000</b> |

Funding applications have been submitted to federal and provincial funding partners. The GSDC has approved a contribution of \$40,000 to support marketing and hospitality-related expenses. As part of funding application and the hosting agreement requirements, the Host Committee (which includes representation from Coniston Curling Club, Copper Cliff Curling Club and Curl Sudbury) has provided a letter stating that they will guarantee any and all deficits related to hosting the event.

### **Strategic Alignment**

The City's Community Economic Development Strategic Plan From the Ground Up includes Goal Seven – One of Ontario's Top Tourism Destinations:

7.1.3 - prioritize attraction efforts for meetings, conferences, sporting and other events/business to the community.

The event hosting opportunity also aligns with the GSDC's Economic Recovery Strategic Plan and its objectives related to supporting recovery of the tourism industry locally.

Greater Sudbury Tourism Strategy includes objectives as follows:

- 1.2 Aggressively pursue meetings, conventions, sporting and other events/business to the community
- 1.4 Investment in the enhancement and capacity building of festivals, tournaments, events, etc.

### **Future Opportunities**

Greater Sudbury has been granted a significant opportunity to host national-level sports and reintroduce major events in 2022, tying into recovery efforts for the local tourism industry.

This event and partnership will serve as a catalyst to grow the game of curling in this part of Ontario, strengthen the community's experience in hosting national events and further increase our competitive advantage.

### **Attachments**

1. Greater Sudbury Development Corporation Board Resolution 2021-059