

## 2025 Ontario 55+ Games Hosting Opportunity

Presented To:	Community and Emergency Services Committee
Meeting Date:	August 12, 2024
Type:	Managers' Reports
Prepared by:	Meredith Armstrong Economic Development
Recommended by:	Chief Administrative Officer

### Report Summary

This report provides a recommendation regarding an opportunity for the City of Greater Sudbury to submit a bid proposal for hosting of the 2025 Ontario 55+ Games.

### Resolution

THAT the City of Greater Sudbury submits an official bid proposal to host the 2025 Ontario 55+ Games;

AND THAT pending the Ontario Ministry of Sport's selection and approval of the City of Greater Sudbury as host of these Games, the City delegates authority to the Chief Administrative Officer to enter into the hosting agreement with the Province for hosting obligations and financial support;

AND THAT if selected as host of the 2025 Games, the City of Greater Sudbury direct staff to provide the in-kind contributions for staff time and venue access as outlined in the report titled "2025 Ontario 55+ Games Hosting Opportunity" brought forward at the August 12, 2024, meeting of the Community & Emergency Services Committee.

### Relationship to the Strategic Plan, Health Impact Assessment and Climate Action Plans

This report relates to the City's objectives under Economic Capacity and Investment Readiness as well as Community Vibrancy in the *Strategic Plan 2019-2027*. Sport tourism, conferences, meetings and conventions are an important part of Greater Sudbury's tourism economy. Attracting these activities have a large impact on our economy and create awareness for the City of Greater Sudbury to continue to attract large-scale events, tournaments, and conferences with particular focus on the sport tourism portfolio.

## **Financial Implications**

The total cost for hosting the event is estimated at \$485,000 including a \$45,000 contingency fund. These costs will be funded through the Ontario Ministry of Sport Hosting Grant (\$235,000), Greater Sudbury Development Corporation's Tourism Development Fund (\$90,000), registration fees (\$90,000), sponsorship (\$20,000), and the Tourism Event Support Program (\$20,000). The remaining \$30,000 is expected to be funded from the Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corporation (NOHFC) as well as FedNor upon successful application to available grants. The City is responsible for covering any shortfalls resulting from hosting expenses. Support from the City of Greater Sudbury would also take the form of in-kind contributions of staff time as well as access to City facilities and venues.

At the conclusion of the games, the City would commit any remaining funds within a legacy fund which can be used to support investments in the City's sport and leisure infrastructure and programming, to be determined as part of the Legacy Plan developed in coordination with the Games Organizing Committee to be established by the Host Community.

If Greater Sudbury is selected as Host Community, some City facilities may need capital upgrades or repairs. Based on preliminary information, staff have determined that capital requirements may be minimal and incremental in nature, using existing facilities. These details will be reviewed as more information is received on venue requirements and any additional capital requirements would be reviewed for inclusion as part of the 2025 Budget update process; staff will also explore alternate sources of funding for capital upgrades required such as the GSDC's Tourism Development Fund, since some repairs may also present new opportunities for future event hosting.

## **Background**

Designed to attract amateur athletes and participants, the Ontario 55+ Games were established in the early 1980's with a mission to provide social and active-living opportunities for Ontarians above the age of 55. The goal is to promote an active and healthy lifestyle regardless of age, gender or ability, with a diverse selection of events accessible to anyone 55 years or older and residing in Ontario.

The Ontario 55+ Games will welcome approximately 1,200 participants over the course of three days in August of 2025. The second week of August is being considered and will be confirmed based on selection of Host Community and the finalized event logistics, anticipated in September 2024.

The City of Greater Sudbury hosted the 2010 Ontario Summer Games, and it is in part based on the our successful hosting of that event that has caused the Ministry of Sport to solicit a Hosting Bid from the City of Greater Sudbury to host the 2025 Ontario 55+ Summer Games.

This opportunity has also been facilitated through the work of Tourism & Culture and Leisure staff collaborating on sport tourism events, as well as relationships fostered with the event rights holders at business conferences including the Canadian Sport Tourism Alliance's annual Sport Event Congress.

## **Economic Impact**

It is estimated that the Ontario 55+ Games will generate an economic impact of \$1.5 million, based

on number of participants, length of stay and average tourism spending data provided by the Ontario Ministry of Tourism. A significant portion of the local spend is generated by the 3,000+ hotel room-nights anticipated for the three-day event.

The demographic profile of the participants and athletes indicates high disposable income and a higher propensity for visitor spending as these visitors travel to Greater Sudbury. It is expected that these visitors will experience local attractions, restaurants, and ancillary events, with potential for longer stays and increased local spending; these participants also often bring additional family members for the Games, further increasing potential local spend.

The opportunity to bring the Ontario 55+ Games to our community further enhances Greater Sudbury's hosting resume and increases our opportunity to host national- and international- level events in future. Building our event portfolio is crucial for attracting additional sport tourism events and preparing to leverage the City's investment in the future Event Centre downtown. If Greater Sudbury is successful in its bid to host the 2025 Ontario 55+ Games, the city will be competitively positioned to bid on more and larger events going forward.

### **Inclusivity, Attraction and Retention**

As indicated by recent Statistics Canada census data, Greater Sudbury's population is growing and becoming more diverse; the City's *Strategic Plan 2019-2027* also emphasizes objectives related to talent attraction and retention, in addition to tourism priorities. The Ontario 55+ Games provides an opportunity to welcome visitors who are part of a demographic range with potential for relocation for work or retirement.

The Ontario 55+ Games has a mission to attract diverse participants through inclusive events and cultural experiences. Should our community be selected as hosts, Greater Sudbury has a unique opportunity to celebrate our cultural diversity and would propose a showcase of Indigenous and First Nation heritage as part of the Official Opening and Closing Ceremonies along with other Games components. In addition, our community's vibrant Francophone heritage will be an important consideration for the Games organizers as event programming would be offered in both official languages. The Games hosting strategy will also incorporate other opportunities to highlight the City of Greater Sudbury's multicultural offerings throughout the Games.

### **Bid Proposal and Logistics**

The City of Greater Sudbury's bid proposal demonstrates the capacity required to host the Games in terms of sport technical, coordination, financial, governance and event hosting experience.

The Games will require 250-300 volunteers for the duration of the event, and volunteers would be recruited with support from SportLink Sport Council along with other community organizations and established contacts.

Staff will coordinate accommodations with local hotels and post-secondary residences to secure 900 rooms for the participants. Staff will also negotiate accommodation discounts or special offers with a variety of attractions, culinary and culture partners for the athletes and their families to experience while visiting or extending their stay.

The Ontario 55+ Games includes sports such as cycling, tennis, swimming, predictive walking, carpet bowling, shuffleboard, pickleball and slo-pitch. Other programming also includes bowling, cards, bocce, pool, darts and golf.

The Games will utilize both City and private facilities to accommodate various events. Private venues such as hotels, community halls, golf and tennis clubs and related businesses would also be engaged for hosting events. City facilities would include arenas, tennis and pickleball courts, Delhi Dozzi Cycling Track, and Sport Complexes including Terry Fox, James Jerome and Howard Armstrong. Staff in Tourism and Culture and Leisure Services have collaborated to ensure that the competitions are held at the most suitable venues that meet all bid requirements. In some cases, venues will require capital investment in preparation for the Games which has not been included in the Preliminary Budget.

The role of City staff will be to manage the event logistics, hotel logistics, venue locations, opening and closing ceremonies, food and beverage for participants, volunteer recruitment and logistics, sponsorship, and community engagement. The City's existing Major Events Development Officer would be assigned to the Games, and two additional contract positions would be secured to support Games logistics within Leisure Services. As part of the bid proposal, staff have developed a staffing resource plan for the months leading up to the event in 2025.

Should Greater Sudbury be selected as Host Community, staff will establish a Games Organizing Committee to support the requirements for the event. Support for the Games will require assistance from various departments at the City of Greater Sudbury and community partners, including as representatives on the organizing committee. Community partner relationships and support will be integral to delivering support for Games logistics, and will also help leverage enhancements to local attractions, special ticket packages and top-notch culinary experiences.

Greater Sudbury has a successful track record of hosting sport tourism events including Curling Canada, Hockey Canada Women's Hockey, Volleyball Canada, Ball Hockey and Lacrosse at both provincial and national levels.

As noted, the Major Events Development Officer (MEDO) will be dedicated to this event; this will impact staff's capacity to attend business and sport tourism conferences and would require more targeted focus on lead generation for future events to make best use of time and capacity. Additionally, it is estimated that between 750 and 1000 hours would be required from existing staff in the service areas of Recreation Facilities and Public Space to support the planning and hosting of the event. Providing these resources for the 55+ Games would also limit hosting opportunity support for other events/conferences that may present themselves in the remainder of 2025, and may also impact the capacity of City staff to address in-year requests from Council and the community.

The Games Organizing Committee would be comprised of municipal representatives and community volunteers, with the mandate to provide support for organizing, managing, promoting and conducting the Games. In order to ensure it is properly reflective of the diversity of the community, the committee would be established with representation from key community groups such as SportLink, the Older Adult Advisory Panel, the GSDC's Tourism Development Committee, the United Way (Volunteer Resource Centre) as well as other cultural and sports groups as appropriate. The communities of Atikameksheng Anishnawbek and Wahnapiet First Nation would also be invited to take part. This group will help support programming and protocols are welcoming and inclusive. The Games Organizing Committee would report, through staff, to Council.

### **Preliminary Budget**

The following budget is based on attracting 1,200 participants to the 2025 Games and has been developed with input and support from Ontario Ministry of Sport, based on the 2023 Games. The

province allows for a maximum of 1,400 participants.

Note that the budget also includes a Contingency Fund of \$45,000, which becomes the Legacy Fund, used to support investments in the community's sport and leisure infrastructure and programming as determined by the legacy plan developed with the Games Organizing Committee.

## Revenues

Provincial Hosting Grant	\$235,000
Participant Registration Fees (\$75/participant)	\$90,000
Greater Sudbury Development Corporation (Tourism Development Fund)	\$90,000
City of Greater Sudbury Tourism Event Support Program	\$20,000
Sponsorship (Corporate and private)	\$20,000
Other Revenue & Grants (NOHFC, FedNor)	\$30,000
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>\$485,000</b>

## Expenses

Administration – Staffing (2 contract)	\$100,000
Administration – Other (Office expenses, administration)	\$25,000
Food Services for participants	\$120,000
Sport Technical (venue rentals, officials, equipment)	\$50,000
Special Events (Opening and closing ceremonies and related programming)	\$75,000
Marketing & Promotion	\$20,000
Volunteers (clothing / recognition / training)	\$15,000
Medical	\$5,000
Transportation	\$20,000
Registration	\$10,000
<b>EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$440,000</b>
<b>LEGACY FUND</b>	<b>\$45,000</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$485,000</b>

## Conclusion and Next Steps

Hosting the Ontario 55+ Games is an excellent opportunity for Greater Sudbury with reasonably low

risks involved, thanks also to support from the provincial government and Greater Sudbury Development Corporation and the Tourism Event Support program combined with the opportunity to secure further funding. The legacy fund of \$45,000 will also have benefits for sport infrastructure over the long term.

These Games are unique in their focus on older adults and make good use of both existing City-owned and private venues. Most importantly, hosting the Games will help build Greater Sudbury's hosting resume and increase our profile in external markets, with benefits for talent attraction and tourism along with competitive positioning for future event bids.

Pending Council's endorsement and commitment of the City's support, the bid proposal will be submitted to the Ontario Ministry of Sport for review and approval. Should Greater Sudbury be chosen as 2025 Games host, the City would enter into the Hosting Agreement with the Province, and the hosting plan would be implemented.

Staff will keep Council apprised of the progress of the bid submission over the coming months.

**ATTACHMENT: LETTER OF SUPPORT FROM GSDC BOARD CHAIR**