

## For Information Only

### Arena Renewal Strategy - Summary of Community Consultations and Next Steps

Presented To: Community Services Committee

Presented: Monday, Feb 27, 2012

Report Date Wednesday, Feb 22, 2012

Type: Correspondence for Information Only

### Recommendation

For Information Only

### Background

On June 15<sup>th</sup>, 2011, Council was presented with a report that provided an introduction to the Arena Renewal Strategy, including: the terms of reference, timelines, principles and deliverables that would be produced by the initiative.

The deliverables were identified by Council on April 14, 2010 as:

1. *A review of physical and functional condition of existing arenas*
2. *A review of demand for ice time across the City of Greater Sudbury*
3. *Community input/consultation by the CGS Planning Department*
4. *Recommendations on the closure of existing arena(s) if appropriate*
5. *Recommendations on if and where new arena(s) should be constructed*
6. *Explore capital sources of revenue for 2012 budget deliberations*

The current report will provide a summary of the community input.

### Community Consultations

In order to provide the citizens of Greater Sudbury an opportunity to provide input and feedback regarding the state of arenas in the city, seven (7) consultations were conducted throughout the month of September 2011, in several communities in Greater Sudbury. The consultations were designed as a drop-in and open house experience for citizens, with various fact and figures regarding arenas and arena usage posted on

#### Signed By

**Report Prepared By**

Rob Blackwell  
Manager, Quality, Administrative and  
Financial Services  
*Digitally Signed Feb 22, 12*

**Division Review**

Real Carre  
Director of Leisure Services  
*Digitally Signed Feb 22, 12*

**Recommended by the Department**

Catherine Matheson  
General Manager of Community  
Development  
*Digitally Signed Feb 22, 12*

**Recommended by the C.A.O.**

Doug Nadorozny  
Chief Administrative Officer  
*Digitally Signed Feb 22, 12*

“story boards” with staff present to answer questions and provide additional information. Surveys were available to citizens to complete in order to provide more feedback and opinions regarding the direction that could be considered for the renewal strategy (Appendix A). The surveys were also available on-line. The City of Greater Sudbury’s website was utilized to provide information regarding the consultations, as were various social media applications (i.e. Facebook).

The following table illustrates the locations and dates for the consultations, with sites selected based on recommendations by the Planning Section:

**Table 1: Consultation Locations and Dates**

Location	Date
Howard Armstrong Recreation Centre	September 13, 2011
T.M. Davies Community Centre/Arena	September 14, 2011
Garson Community Centre/Arena	September 19, 2011
Centennial Community Centre/Arena	September 22, 2011
Chelmsford Community Centre/Arena	September 26, 2011
Tom Davies Square	September 27, 2011
Lo-Ellen Park Secondary School	September 29, 2011

## Participation

### *The Survey*

The survey was designed according to the deliverables requested by Council at the April 14, 2010 Council meeting. On-line survey was designed and administered via the “SurveyMonkey” web application. Paper copies of the survey were distributed at each consultation session and were also shared via email with various community groups and associations within the City of Greater Sudbury. Surveys were also available on the CGS website and at all Citizen Service Centre locations.

### *Advertising*

The community consultations and survey availability was advertised through the City of Greater Sudbury’s Communications Section, utilizing; social media, local newspapers, the CGS main web page and through the use of posters and print material distributed through user groups and associations.

Approximately 1,277 hits were received on the city’s web page and approximately 679 hits were received on the CGS Facebook page.

The Arena Renewal Strategy survey yielded 433 responses, with the majority of respondents (53.7%) completing the survey electronically. “SurveyMonkey” was also utilized to collect and analyze survey responses.

### *Consultations*

The community consultations, held in various public facilities across the Greater Sudbury area, provided an opportunity for citizens to review the information related to Arena Renewal and to ask questions of city staff hosting the consultations. Citizens were able to view story boards and review Frequently Asked Questions regarding arenas (Appendix B). As a general comment, the consultations that occurred in arenas that were active at the time of the consultation (TM Davies, Garson, Chelmsford Arenas) tended to have a good participation rate, and many excellent discussions were generated. Consultations that were held in

non-arena facilities (Lo-Ellen Secondary School, Howard Armstrong Recreation Centre) or in arenas that were not active at the time of the consultation (i.e. Centennial Arena) had very little participation.

## **Survey Responses**

The surveys generated a considerable number of responses and a variety of comments from the public. The following is a summary of the survey results.

### ***Demographics***

As aforementioned, 433 surveys were completed with the majority of respondents completing the surveys on-line (53.7%). Females completed 58.4% of the surveys and 91.5% of the participants completed the forms on behalf of themselves and not associations.

Respondents indicated that 78.1 % were current ice users as well, and approximately 76% said they would continue to make use of the facilities for more than the next ten years.

### ***Responses Regarding Ice Facilities and Usage***

Regarding the responses received in the survey concerning the current state of arenas and an opinion regarding what the CGS should do, 45.8% indicated that they thought repairs were required and 42.6% indicated that the City should build new arenas.

Respondents were asked to rank the importance of the potential actions (next steps), with “1” being most important and “10” being least important. The most important action was refurbishing current arenas (1.77). The least important was shutting down arenas with little usage (3.95).

When asked to rank which arenas were considered the most important to the respondent, with “1” being most important and “10” being least important, Chelmsford Arena (3.92) was considered the most important to those who responded. The next important arena was the Sudbury Community Arena (4.21). The highest ranking (and therefore the least important to the respondents) was the Capreol Arena (6.57).

The survey asked respondents to rank, in order of importance, where they would prefer that a new arena be located if new facilities were built. The most important ranking was for the New Sudbury area (3.68), followed very closely by the Azilda/Chelmsford area (3.79). The least important location was Capreol (7.47).

*Note: 30.5% of survey respondents identified themselves as being from Azilda/Chelmsford.*

Survey respondents were asked how far they were willing to travel for ice time and 46.9% of those that responded indicated they would be willing to spend up to 30 minutes traveling to an arena.

When reviewing respondents' appetite for increased user fees for new arenas, the majority of respondents indicated that an increase of 1% - 10% would be acceptable.

When asked how to cover the costs incurred if a new arena was to be constructed and given the options of grants & other donations, tax increase and user fee increase, the following responses were obtained;

- 53.3% indicated a combination of grants & other donations, tax increase and user fee increase
- 52.5% responded grants and other donations only
- 18.8% of respondents indicated that a user fee increase should be utilized
- 6.5% selected the option of a tax increase only.

## Comments

In the final section of the survey, respondents were able to provide comment on any issue or concern that they thought needed to be captured. The themes from these comments included:

- Maintaining (not closing) arenas in outlying areas
- A need for multi-pad/multi-use facilities in the City of Greater Sudbury
- Importance of arenas for maintaining a healthy, active lifestyle for young people and the aging population

## Analysis

The results of the Arena Renewal survey and comments from the community consultations suggest that community arenas are still very important to residents. Although there was no overwhelming consensus on which direction the City of Greater Sudbury should pursue regarding arena renewal, it was clear from the responses that from the perspective of the citizens that participated in the consultations, existing facilities within communities should be maintained. The respondents appeared split in their opinion regarding whether the CGS should build new facilities or invest in repairing existing facilities, though anecdotal comments often contained reference to multi-use facilities and the multi-pad facilities in Southern Ontario communities.

It is important to note that 30.5% of the survey respondents reported to be from the Azilda/Chelmsford community. Although this could be a reflection of the community support for the facilities in that area, it also creates a statistical skew in other results. In terms of community participation and engagement, the residents of this area provided the most robust participation. The following table provides the distribution of respondents re: area of residence:

<b><i>Area of Residence</i></b>	<b><i>Percentage</i></b>
Azilda/Chelmsford	30.5%
Downtown/South End	14.9%
Val Caron/Blezard Valley/Hanmer	14.0%
New Sudbury/Minnow Lake	13.9%
Dowling/Onaping/Levack	11.2%
Garson/Falconbridge/Skead	7.2%
Lively/Naughton	3.5%
Capreol	3.3%
Coniston/Wahnapiatae	1.9%
Whitefish/Worthington	0.2%

## **Conclusion and Next Steps**

The current inventory of ice pads in the City of Greater Sudbury is at an all time high, with 16 pads in 14 facilities operating for the 2011-2012 ice season. It is anticipated that the City will be able to acquire important data regarding demand and ice requirements based on the usage statistics from this ice season. A forecast can then be generated, which will take into consideration several variables, including: trends for minor hockey usage, increase in demand for adult ice users and demographic trends.

There is also potential for demand from Laurentian University for collegiate hockey teams. City staff have confirmed that Laurentian University will be developing men's and women's varsity hockey teams, as well as intra-mural programs. They have expressed their intent to have these teams ready as early as the 2013-2014 hockey season. Discussions with a potential private partner have also been initiated by Laurentian University to develop a twin pad ice facility to accommodate the University's ice users and the desire for a potential partnership with the City of Greater Sudbury.

Certainly, the current physical state of the arena infrastructure will require additional analysis. It will be important that building condition assessments are completed to properly identify and prioritize capital requirements and risks with the existing facility inventory. Analysis will include the review of the need/demand for a marquee arena (ie. replacement of the Sudbury Community Arena). Community Development has identified \$80,000 in the 2012 capital budget for a life cycle analysis of municipal arenas and pools. The study will provide a detailed analysis of the capital needs of the facilities along with a cost estimate and a schedule re: implementing capital upgrades. Cost benefit analyses can then be completed regarding the projected ice usage needs and City's ability to meet those needs. Additional considerations, as identified during the community consultations may include: additional dressing rooms, maintenance of dressing rooms and washrooms, accessibility and non-ice usage of arenas.

Potential funding sources will also be examined, which could include expressions of interest from community and private sector partners in the development of new facilities, if it is determined that the need exists. Internal funding and future capital envelopes will also be analyzed to determine capacity to renew or replace facilities utilizing CGS capital funding.



# **Arena Renewal Strategy**

## **Community Consultation FAQs**

**Community Partnerships Section, Leisure Services**

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

- ***What is the Arena Renewal Strategy?***

- As per City Council's request, this strategy will research, investigate and identify the primary challenges and opportunities for the City of Greater Sudbury with respect to arenas.
- This strategy will include:
  1. A review of physical and functional conditions of existing arenas.
  2. A review of demand for ice time across Greater Sudbury.
  3. Recommendations from stakeholders and members of the public.
  4. Recommendations on the replacement of existing arena(s) if appropriate.
  5. Recommendations on the location of new arena(s) if appropriate.
  6. Explore capital sources of revenue for 2012 budget deliberations.

- ***What is the goal of the Community Consultation?***

- To gain insight into the opinions of community members and current arena users to ensure the City of Greater Sudbury is meeting the current and future needs of ice users.
- To gain insight from the community on ice rental costs and ice availability.
- To learn about public opinion on potential arena replacement or construction of new facilities, and to receive suggestions for location(s).
- To give the community an opportunity to provide input on the process of ensuring that arenas are affordable, accessible and equitable in distribution throughout the City of Greater Sudbury.
- To examine other revenue-generating ideas and opportunities to maximize operational potential in our existing arenas.

- ***How will the community feedback from the consultations be used?***

The community's feedback will be used to help develop recommendations to City Council about the future planning and capital funding for all arenas in the City of Greater Sudbury. It will also assist with the review and determination of the future direction for the operation of all arenas.

- ***Where are we in the facility review process?***

- City staff are currently in the data collection stage of the process. Your feedback will form part of this data, which will be incorporated into an information report to be provided to City Council in November 2011.
- All decisions about the future operations of our municipal arenas will take budget and current arena conditions into account, and must be approved by City Council.
- It is important to obtain your feedback now so all community needs can be considered as we address community arenas into the future.

- ***How can I get involved in this strategy?***

Attend a consultation session and complete the survey. The information and survey are also available online at [www.greatersudbury.ca/arena](http://www.greatersudbury.ca/arena) .

- ***Are any arenas going to close?***

The responses from the community consultations and completed surveys will help to give direction to City Council regarding the future operation of our arenas. It is too early in the process to determine how many arenas our community requires and where they should be located.

- ***Is it more expensive to renovate an old facility or build a new one?***

- Due to the age of most City of Greater Sudbury arenas, the initial cost of building a new arena is higher than renovating an old one. New arenas, however, offer increased energy efficiency and current technology, which result in long-term savings. It costs roughly 1.5 times more to build a new arena when compared to general building construction, due to hydro, heat, refrigeration systems, inflation, and construction cost.

- ***How much money is required from the tax base to sustain arena maintenance and operations?***

On average, approximately 62% of arena maintenance and operation costs are recovered through arena revenues. The balance, on average 38%, is funded through the tax base (Council Report, June 15, 2011).

- ***What is the lifespan of an arena?***

The lifespan of an arena has changed in recent years due to rapid developments in technology and changes in user requirements. In the 1980s, the lifespan was approximately 50 years, but now the estimate is 30 years. Currently, the average age of our municipal arenas is 40 years (Council Report, June 15, 2011).



- ***Why does the City not have any public-private partnership agreements for arena management?***

Current statistics indicate that 68% of Ontario residents want municipal governments to own and operate arena facilities (Toronto Sun, August 2011). It should be noted that, on average, public-private partnerships charge between \$80 and \$100 more per hour for ice time.

- ***How many ice pads does the City of Greater Sudbury currently operate?***

The City of Greater Sudbury currently operates 16 ice pads in 14 arenas.

- ***What are the benefits of having two ice pads versus one?***

Incorporating multiple ice pads in one arena facility provides cost savings in the initial construction. Multiple ice pads also offer operational savings, such as staffing and equipment requirements. Double ice surfaces allow for increased tournament potential and flexibility in the use of space, which offers a positive economic impact.

\*It should be noted that in the Parks, Open Space & Leisure Master Plan, it was recommended that the City consider replacing some of the single-pad arenas with multi-pad facilities where appropriate.

- ***What happened with McClelland and Cambrian Arenas and what is the status of these facilities?***

Both arenas are up and running for the 2011-2012 season. Cambrian Arena was renewed over the past two years and McClelland Arena was restored after the fire took place in 2009.

- ***General Points of Interest:***

I.J. Coady Memorial Arena has the lowest usage of all City of Greater Sudbury arenas, and is in good condition.

Capreol Community Centre/Arena has two ice pads, which lowers operational costs for the facility. However, the travel time required for many residents to reach this arena is seen as a barrier.

Chelmsford Community Centre/Arena is in poor condition, and in the near future will require a similar renewal process to that which Cambrian Arena underwent during the 2010-2011 season.

Greater Sudbury residents travel to arenas outside the City of Greater Sudbury (such as St. Charles, Verner and Espanola) for ice time.

**For more information please visit our website at:**

[http://www.greatersudbury.ca/cms/index.cfm?app=div\\_leisureservices&lang=en&currID=11269](http://www.greatersudbury.ca/cms/index.cfm?app=div_leisureservices&lang=en&currID=11269)