



City of Richmond

Report to Committee

To: Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Committee **Date:** June 29, 2023

From: Keith Miller, Director, Recreation and Sport Services **File:** 11-7025-09-002/2023-Vol 01

Re: **Richmond Sports Facility Needs Assessment – 2023 Update**

Staff Recommendation

That the prioritized sport facility and infrastructure list be received and endorsed for consideration in future corporate facility or park plans as outlined in the staff report titled “Richmond Sports Facility Needs Assessment – 2023 Update” dated June 29, 2023, from the Director, Recreation and Sport Services.

Keith Miller
 Director, Recreation and Sport Services
 (604-247-4475)

REPORT CONCURRENCE		
ROUTED TO:	CONCURRENCE	CONCURRENCE OF GENERAL MANAGER
Finance Department	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Parks Services	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Facility Services & Project Development	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
SENIOR STAFF REPORT REVIEW	INITIALS: 	APPROVED BY CAO

Staff Report

Origin

At the September 24, 2019, Parks, Recreation and Culture Services Committee meeting staff received the following referral:

That Staff work with the Richmond Sports Council and other stakeholders to develop a City of Richmond sport facility and infrastructure priority list for consideration in future corporate facility or park plans;

At the September 28, 2021, Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Committee meeting staff received a secondary referral:

That East Richmond and Hamilton areas be included as potential sites for sport amenities in the Sports Council Facility Priorities Task Force.

At the June 10, 2019, Council meeting, staff received the following referral:

That the proposal and supporting documents from the Richmond Tennis Club be referred to staff to be considered with the City's Long Term Facility Plan.

The purpose of this report is to present a prioritized sport facility and infrastructure list along with recommended next steps for Council's consideration. In response to the referrals mentioned above, this report includes consideration of the Richmond Tennis Club proposal and a review of projects that could be considered for the East Richmond and Hamilton areas.

This report supports Council's Strategic Plan 2022-2026 Focus Area #4 Responsible Financial Management and Governance:

Responsible financial management and efficient use of public resources to meet the needs of the community.

4.2 Seek improvements and efficiencies in all aspects of City business.

This report supports Council's Strategic Plan 2022-2026 Focus Area #6 A Vibrant, Resilient and Active Community:

Vibrant, resilient and active communities supported by a wide variety of opportunities to get involved, build relationships and access resources.

6.1 Advance a variety of program, services, and community amenities to support diverse needs and interests and activate the community.

6.2 Enhance the City's network of parks, trails and open spaces.

This report supports the following action from the City of Richmond Wellness Strategy 2018-2023:

Foster healthy, active and involved lifestyles for all Richmond residents with an emphasis on physical activity, healthy eating, and mental wellness.

This report supports the following action from the Recreation and Sport Strategy 2019-2024:

Active People and Vibrant Places: 4. Provide inclusive, safe and welcoming facilities and spaces for recreation and sports programs and services.

Background

Richmond's parks and open spaces, and recreation and sport facilities play an essential role in the community. They are safe places for people of all ages and backgrounds to get active, learn new skills, and strengthen social connections and belonging.

The City is committed to working with its partners, community sport groups and residents to enhance the provision of sport facilities and spaces, which will be of benefit to all who live, work and play in Richmond.

The Richmond Sports Council has a long history of representing and working for the collective interests of sports in the Richmond community. In 1988, The Richmond Sports Council was officially registered as a not-for-profit organization.

In January 2018, a Facility Review Committee (the Committee), appointed by and composed of 10 members from the Richmond Sports Council, polled their member organizations to understand the needs of the Richmond-based sport organizations that make up the Richmond Sports Council. At a General Purposes meeting in June 2018, the Richmond Sports Council presented the "Richmond Sports Council's Sports Facilities Needs Assessment 2018," which summarized a list of requests and recommendations received from the 17 organizations that participated in their survey.

Initial assessment of the list showed that a number of the items required further review to understand the need and the priority of each item. Furthermore, it was identified that in order to develop a comprehensive prioritized list of sports facility and infrastructure requests that meet both the current and future needs of the sport community, a more fulsome assessment was required.

Analysis

To ensure a fulsome evaluation was completed, the process for reviewing and prioritizing community sport facility and infrastructure projects involved an expanded stakeholder engagement, the development of a Sport Facility Prioritization Framework (the Framework) for the ranking of identified projects, a review of sport participation and population demographics, trends and best practices, and completion of high level facility cost estimates to inform the ranking of each project.

Sport Facility and Infrastructure Identification

To build upon the work completed by the Richmond Sports Council in 2018, a key initial step involved expanding engagement with local sport organizations and user groups. A survey was sent to 89 local sports organizations, with 51 of the groups responding. In addition, a series of stakeholder meetings were conducted. These engagement activities allowed staff to identify gaps in the list of sport facilities and infrastructure previously provided.

The items from the Richmond Sports Council's Sports Facilities Needs Assessment 2018 and the items identified through the expanded stakeholder engagement process were compiled, resulting in 14 sport facility and infrastructure projects for further assessment. Each of these projects were then subsequently evaluated through the Framework.

The process also identified maintenance items and minor improvements, which staff continue to address in coordination with local sports organizations, including, a review of seeding schedules and minor field repairs.

It should be highlighted that several significant amenity replacement or improvement projects identified through the process have been completed or are in progress since this data was collected. Completed projects include synthetic sport field upgrades at multiple parks, the installation of nine pickleball courts, upgrades to sand fields, the resurfacing of Clement Track at Minoru Park, and the purchase and upgrade of the Richmond Curling Club. In addition, the Bowling Green Community Activity Centre project is in progress and the Hugh Boyd Community Facility and Fieldhouse was approved by Council as a Phase 2 Major Facilities Project for the period of 2016–2026.

Sport Facility Prioritization Framework

To provide transparency and objectivity in the evaluation process, projects are ranked on 10 weighted criteria that together provide an overall indication of the demonstrated need for a project. The Framework was developed with input from the Facilities Task Force that included members from the Richmond Sports Council, Richmond Sport Hosting office, and Richmond School District No. 38 staff.

The Framework criteria include:

- *City Policies and Strategies*: considers whether the project aligns with City strategies and community goals.
- *Multifunctional and Accessible*: considers whether the project is multipurpose, contributes to an equitable provision of services and facilities, and is accessible to the majority of community members as well as community sport groups.
- *Net Cost Impact*: considers the net cost impacts of providing the project to the community.
- *Demonstration of Market Need*: considers sport participation levels and the needs of the local sport community and sport user groups for the project.
- *Demographics and Population Growth*: considers Richmond's demographics, projected population growth and whether the project will provide an adequate level of service moving forward.

- *Sport Event Hosting*: considers whether the project would expand and enhance the City's current sport hosting capacity.
- *Trends and Leading Practices*: considers whether the project aligns with trends and leading practices such as those addressing physical inactivity and National Sport Organization guidelines.
- *Regional Sport Amenity Inventory*: considers the project against provisions offered in the region to avoid duplication and oversupply of sport amenities that should be offered regionally.
- *Municipal Comparisons*: considers the project against the sport amenity provisions of contextually comparable communities to better align amenities that should be offered locally.
- *Partnerships*: considers existing partnerships related to the project that could enhance service levels and more efficiently leverage public funds.

Research was undertaken to gather data and information specific to each of the Framework's criteria. The estimated cost was determined through a Class D costing exercise, which has a potential variance of up to +/-50 per cent. Project costs will also vary as the scope and program for each facility is confirmed.

Evaluation of each project through the Framework provides two pieces of information: first, it provides a score of the overall community need for each project and second, it provides a comparative ranking when multiple projects are evaluated concurrently.

Each of the 14 identified sport facility and infrastructure projects was assessed using the Framework and supporting research described above. The results of the assessment are summarized in Tables 1 and 2 below. The priority order of the projects has been endorsed by the Facilities Task Force.

Sport Facility and Infrastructure Prioritized List - Priority Projects

Projects that are experiencing increasing participation rates, are demonstrating growth in demand, are multipurpose in nature, meet the needs of multiple sport and community groups, and may also offer opportunity for unstructured use benefiting the overall community ranked higher. Those projects that ranked highest are prioritized in Table 1 and are recommended by staff to move forward in future corporate facility or park plans in the one to ten year timeframe.

Table 1 – Sport Facility and Infrastructure Prioritized List – Priority Projects

Rank	Project	Description	Estimated Cost (Class D Estimate)
1.	Outdoor Pickleball Courts	An outdoor pickleball venue holding nine courts with lighting, including court surfacing, lining and netting.	\$1.43M
2.	Athletics Track and Field Facility	A rubberized track facility with amenities to support athletic events and community sport, and recreation needs, including lighting.	\$13.5M
3.	Synthetic Turf Infield	A synthetic turf baseball and softball infield with a portable mound, full size backstop, and fencing.	\$520K
4.	Covered Lacrosse Box	A covered lacrosse box for year-round use with a sport court surface and lines for multiple activities (lacrosse, ball hockey, soccer, pickleball, tai chi), lighting, boards, team and officials benches, and movable bleacher seating.	\$8.4M
5.	Synthetic Turf Sport Field	A synthetic turf field for soccer, football and other field sports, including perimeter and end zone fencing, team benches, officials’ area and lighting.	\$4.3M
6.	Steveston/London Field Softball Diamond	A softball diamond at the north end of Steveston/London field with gyro infield, backstop, dugouts, lighting and seasonal fencing. Includes shifting existing soccer and football field to the southern end of the park.	\$2.3M

Sports Facility and Infrastructure Prioritized List – Projects for Future Consideration

Projects that ranked lower on the list are outlined in priority order in Table 2 below and not recommended by staff to move forward at this time. Staff will work with the sport groups associated with each project below to provide support in other ways. This could include assistance with grant applications, promotion and advertising, and/or exploration of local or regional partnerships or affiliations. Staff will also continue to monitor and review these projects and sport participation levels. Should factors change, such as an increase in sport participation levels, or partnerships or funding opportunities be identified, staff will re-score the project and if merited, present it along with the most recent evidence to Council for consideration.

Table 2 – Sports Facility and Infrastructure Prioritized List – Projects for Future Consideration

Rank	Project	Description	Estimated Cost (Class D Estimate)
7.	Richmond Tennis Bubble	A seasonal covering for two existing outdoor courts for fall and winter use.	\$5.0M
8.	Rugby Change Room Facilities	A replacement change room facility to support rugby league play.	\$700K*
9.	Wrestling Mat Space	An indoor multi-purpose space for wrestling with appropriate storage for wresting mats.	\$4.0M
10.	Gymnastics Centre	A replacement facility, double in size, with large floor, foam pit and apparatus areas, with kitchen area, change rooms, reception, administration, and viewing area to support recreational and high performance gymnastics.	\$2.65M – \$5.3M**
11.	Multi-Sport Fieldhouse	A multi-sport indoor field house with indoor playing surfaces, multi-purpose space that supports year round use by a variety of sports and community recreation activities, including tournaments and community events.	\$88.0M – \$142.0M
12.	Richmond Tennis Clubhouse Renovation	Renovation of the existing tennis clubhouse to replace aging infrastructure and improve accessibility for recreational and competitive use.	\$1.12M
13.	Outdoor Archery Range	An outdoor archery range that meets Federation of Canadian Archers standards for event hosting.	\$2.2M
14.	Archery and Air Gun Facility	A replacement facility for air gun and archery training and competition.	\$2.0M**

* A like-for-like modular replacement facility.

** Tenant improvement of a shell space; does not include ongoing lease costs for the space.

East Richmond and Hamilton

Potential projects that could be considered in the East Richmond and Hamilton areas include an athletics track and field facility, a synthetic turf infield and a synthetic turf sports field. Further review, as described in the “Next Steps” section below, will be required to determine recommended project site/locations for Council consideration.

Next Steps

Project scoring is based on current data available at the time of project evaluation. As new information becomes available and/or circumstances change, the scoring and ranked order of the projects could shift. It is also possible that new sport facility and infrastructure priorities emerge as a result of changes in the sport landscape. If either of these occur, staff will score the project using the Framework and if warranted, present the project for Council consideration.

This evaluation is the first step in the planning process. Although each project will have its unique considerations, further detailed planning and analysis will be required for each project to move forward, including:

- Confirmation of sport participation levels, market need and community benefit;
- Program development;
- Site assessment and selection;
- Refinement of capital and operating costs; and
- Public engagement and consultation.

With this information, staff would then bring forward each project for Council consideration through a specific report(s) or capital submission as appropriate for each. As with all capital submissions, any project that moves forward will be further ranked using the Council approved Capital ranking criteria. Depending on the type and size of each facility or infrastructure project, the timeframe for completion could range from approximately one to seven years.

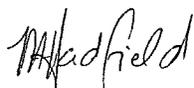
Financial Impact

None.

Conclusion

The continued provision of modern and well-maintained facilities that meet the current and future needs of residents is fundamental to supporting sport and physical activity in Richmond. As the population grows, and as sport and active recreation opportunities in the City continue to evolve and diversify, so do the demands for new, refurbished and diverse sport amenities. A prioritized list of sport facility and infrastructure projects has been identified through a collaborative and comprehensive process utilizing evidence informed criteria.

Participation in sport allows for physical, creative and social opportunities that contribute to building healthy, connected individuals, along with livable and vibrant communities. Continued investment in Richmond's sport facility inventory will contribute to achieving the City's Recreation and Sport Strategy 2019-2024 vision of being a leader in the planning and delivery of recreation and sports opportunities.



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