

HALIFAX

P.O. Box 1749
Halifax, Nova Scotia
B3J 3A5 Canada

Item No. 8.1.6
Halifax Regional Council
May 12, 2020

TO: Mayor Savage and Members of Halifax Regional Council

SUBMITTED BY:

Original Signed by 

Jacques Dubé, Chief Administrative Officer

DATE: April 15, 2020

SUBJECT: Beechville Lakeside Timberlea Community Centre Funding Application

ORIGIN

- January 7, 2020 Budget Committee passed the following motion:

THAT the Budget Committee
Direct the Chief Administrative Officer and staff engage with the Province on funding sources to
construct the new Beechville Lakeside Timberlea Community Centre be added to the parking lot.

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

HRM Charter, Section 7A the purposes of the Municipality are to (b) provide services, facilities and other things that, in the opinion of the Council, are necessary or desirable for all or part of the Municipality

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Halifax Regional Council direct the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) to submit an application to the *Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program* (ICIP) for the Beechville, Lakeside, Timberlea Recreation Centre project, as outlined in this report.

BACKGROUND

The current Lakeside Community Centre was designed as a school to service the community of Lakeside in 1956. The facility underwent a substantial alteration in 1961. On May 7, 1991, Halifax County Council passed a motion to accept the Lakeside School, which had been declared surplus by the Halifax County/Bedford District School Board. On August 20, 1991 the Executive Committee recommended that the former school be retained for use by the County as a community centre. Since that time, very little infrastructure renewal has been undertaken. Most of the building accommodates community-based recreation programming run by Halifax Regional Municipality Recreation. The Lakeside Community Centre is 14,930 sq. ft and has a Facility Condition Index (FCI) of 15% - 20%. The FCI provides an indication of the amount of deferred maintenance to the replacement value. At this FCI, the facility is considered to be in fair to poor condition.

The Lakeside Community Centre is an aging facility that is nearing the end of its useful life. It is not fully accessible, has high operating costs, and requires capital improvements to continue operations. However, with competing priorities in the current and future capital budgets including work required to several recreation facilities, funding for the Beechville, Lakeside, Timberlea Recreation Centre (BLTCC) project is proposed for future years and noted in the proposed 10-year budget. However, at the February 12, 2020 Budget Committee meeting, Councillor Zurawski indicated that he had been informed that it may be possible to obtain funding for the Beechville, Lakeside, Timberlea Recreation Centre project through the Province of Nova Scotia (PNS) and Federal funding programs. As a result, Council requested that the CAO and staff to continue discussions with both the Federal government and the Province on possible funding through the Investing in Canada infrastructure program (ICIP). Preliminary conversations with PNS specifically regarding ICIP indicate that the project is likely eligible for consideration under the program HRM has been encouraged to submit an application. In order to submit the application, Council direction on the project is required.

DISCUSSION

Regional Council adopted the Community Facilities Master Plan (CFMP) in 2004. In 2016 it was updated and became known as CFMP2. The CFMP2 recommendations are intended to provide broad direction for staff to implement the renewal and enhancement of the municipality's recreation infrastructure through to 2025. Lakeside Community Center operates as a recreation space, however, has been slated for replacement based on the information within this report.

The Lakeside Community Centre is slated to be decommissioned and replaced with a new recreation purpose-built facility for the following reasons:

- The facility does not have a gymnasium and the use of Halifax Regional Centre for Education schools in the community is limited;
- The facility does not have adequate programming space;
- The facility is not accessible;
- The facility has insufficient heating and cooling systems;
- Building condition – roof and windows need replacing, asbestos in building;
- The facility is not a recreation purpose-built facility, which limits the programs that can be offered; and
- The Beechville Lakeside Timberlea (BLT) area is has experienced significant residential growth over several decades. Additional schools have been built and school expansions have been required to support the growing area.

Purpose of the new recreation centre

A new accessible recreation facility would allow for expanded sport and fitness programming, increased program and rental revenue, provide more employment and volunteer opportunities for residents in the BLT area and provide community sport organizations a more viable option for games and tournaments.

A replacement building would be purpose built and would allow for various aspects of recreation programming to be provided in a more effective and efficient manner. By utilizing the current universal design criteria for a new build, the facility would be designed for not only the programming requirements, but also for accessibility. It would include energy efficient building systems using current technology that would cut utility costs. Overall, a replacement building would provide improved programming opportunities and customer experience while reducing operating costs and avoiding capital repair costs.

Using the new St. Andrews and Prospect Community Centre as examples, those facility designs provide the most recent style and layout of a recreation purpose-built community centre which meets accessibility requirements. It would result in a building that is welcoming, has multi-use spaces, a gymnasium, community kitchen and gathering spaces for community/users. There may also be opportunity for public Wi-Fi and an indoor playground. The final design would be determined through funding, community input, as well as, HRM staff recommendations.

Beechville, Lakeside and Timberlea Demographics

- BLT's population grew from 9229 to 9552 between 2011 and 2016, an increase of 3.5% (Statistics Canada 2016 census).
- According to the 2014 *Regional Municipal Planning Strategy*, 25% of new housing is targeted within the Regional Centre, 50% within the Urban Service Area and 25% in rural areas. The BLT area is part of the Urban Service Area.
- According to building permit data, there have been approximately 350 units built in the area since 2010; the majority of these are single-unit dwellings within the Brunello development (HRM Internal GIS Database).
- There are almost 3,000 more units that could be built in the area according to currently approved development agreements. (Halifax.ca)
- Most of the population within the area owns, rather than rents, their dwelling (Statistics Canada 2016), however there are several rental units near the area. There appears to be a large proportion of younger families living in the area. Children under 14 make up about 20% of the population, and almost half the households are made up of at least 3 people (Statistics Canada 2016).

With the anticipated replacement of the facility, in the fall of 2017, the Beechville Lakeside Timberlea Community Consultation Committee (CCC) was formed. The Municipality has been working with the CCC to ensure that they are engaging with residents, hearing their thoughts and ensuring that their input is taken into consideration for the development of the new recreation centre. The committee includes 15 representatives of the community from different areas, that reflect varied community interests.

The CCC formed for the following purpose:

- An advisory body to HRM, working in cooperation with the Recreation department;
- A forum for ongoing dialogue between community representatives on the Committee;
- A forum for HRM to disseminate information, consult with community members and obtain advice on local issues related to the design, construction and operation of the facility;
- A conduit for residents to bring ideas and issues of concern; and
- A forum for discussion of community interests associated with the project, such as:
 - siting;
 - amenities and features;
 - hours of operation;

The CCC's mandate included:

- Proactively engage with the local community to gather and consider its "wants and needs" for the facility, and to make recommendations to HRM;
- Establish multiple accessible and meaningful opportunities for members of the community to "have a say" in their Recreation Centre.

Site selection

In consultation with HRM staff, the CCC completed a site evaluation process reviewing six site locations in Beechville, Lakeside and Timberlea and then presented their findings to HRM.

The recommendation is to remain at the existing site for the following reasons:

- Central Location
- Access to transit
- Walking Access from a number of areas
- Proximity to BLT Rails to Trails
- Available Parking

HRM owns the two parcels of land upon which the building and outdoor amenities are currently located. The land where the playground, parking, and building area is 3 acres; the ball diamond and courts are 3.16 acres. A preliminary site assessment has been completed to determine what outdoor amenities are required on the site. Current outdoor assets on the site include: playground, court, class D ballfield and a community garden. Given that the courts/playgrounds are nearing the end of their useful life, the assets may be able to be reconfigured to include a splash pad (*Long Term Aquatic Strategy*) as part of a new recreation centre design. Additional public consultation may be required to determine if the current outdoor assets meet the needs of the community or if changes to the assets are required.

Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program

Canada's Long-Term Infrastructure plan developed the *Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program (ICIP)*. The Government of Canada has a plan to invest more than \$180 billion over 12 years, starting in 2016, in five main infrastructure priorities:

- Public Transit Infrastructure
- Green Infrastructure
- Social Infrastructure
- Trade and Transportation
- Rural and Northern Communities

ICIP recognizes that municipalities own 60% of all infrastructure within Canada. The *ICIP* has identified that sport and recreation facilities are in the poorest conditional of all Canadian asset categories. The current Lakeside Community Center falls within the poor condition rating, which will allow the Municipality to apply to one of eight Social infrastructure Steams – the Community, Culture and Recreation (CCR) investment stream. The overall objective of the CCR stream is to build stronger communities and improve social inclusion. CCR provides the potential cost sharing opportunities to a maximum of 40% federal funding and no less than 33.33% provincial funding for municipal projects with the allocation to Nova Scotia at a maximum of \$51.2M.

By recommending that the CAO move forward with an application to *ICIP*, the BLTCC project could be advanced to replace the current Lakeside Community Center with an updated facility, providing an accessible building to a fast-growing area within the municipality. Since the current project is outside the proposed three-year capital budget, detailed design for the facility has not been completed. However, as

noted, comparable facilities have been constructed in other similar sized communities and detailed design for a new BLTCC would be able to be based on those recently built facilities. Should the *ICIP* application be approved, it would provide funds from the other orders of government, which would lower the contributions required by Halifax Regional Municipality and enable HRM to advance the project sooner.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

If the recommended project is approved by the Provincial Government and the Government of Canada for funding, staff will return to Audit and Finance with the required changes to the capital budget with options and considerations for funding to support this project.

As noted, the Beechville Lakeside Timberlea Recreation Centre project is currently proposed in the 2020-2030 10-year capital plan as follows:

- 2025-26 – 1M for potential land purchase;
- 2027-28 – 3M for design; and
- 2028-29 – 10M for construction

With the ongoing work to re-forecast the 2020/21 capital and operating budgets, as well as the fact that the BLTCC project is currently evaluated and prioritized outside the proposed three-year capital budget, confirmation of any amount of additional funding would inform a new timeline and municipal funding requirements for the project, if cost sharing from the other orders of governments was approved.

RISK CONSIDERATION

Associated risks with the recommendation rates low. This has been determined through assessment of financial, operational and reputational risks. The application to the funding program may result in approved funding to support a new facility, which would reduce HRM required funding. However, should the application for funding from ICIP be approved, HRM would be required to provide the municipality's portion of the funding sooner than the proposed in the 2020-2030 10-year capital budget. This risk is mitigated by requiring confirmation of funding prior to moving the proposed municipal funding to an earlier budget year.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Community engagement has been ongoing in BLT since 2017.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

None

ALTERNATIVE

1. Regional Council could direct CAO to not apply for the government funding and adhere to the plan as proposed in the 2020-2030 10-year capital budget.

ATTACHMENTS

None

A copy of this report can be obtained online at halifax.ca or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 902.490.4210.

Report Prepared by: Angela Green, Manager, Recreation Programming 902.490.3883
