

City of Mississauga Corporate Report



<p>Date: January 15, 2021</p> <p>To: Chair and Members of General Committee</p> <p>From: Shari Lichterman, CPA, CMA, Commissioner of Community Services</p>	<p>Originator's files:</p> <hr/> <p>Meeting date: February 24, 2021</p>
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Subject

Proposal for Indoor Tennis Facility at Churchill Meadows Sports Park

Recommendation

1. That the Commissioner of Community Services be authorized to negotiate an agreement with Premier Racquet Club to construct and operate an indoor tennis facility at Churchill Meadows Sports Park, as outlined in the Corporate Report dated January 15, 2021, from the Commissioner of Community Services and in a form satisfactory to Legal Services.
2. That staff consult with the tennis community during the negotiation period to receive feedback on the proposal and report back to Council with the final agreement and a summary of feedback received.

Report Highlights

- The sport of tennis is experiencing its most significant growth since the 1970's, bolstered by the international success of Canadian tennis players including Mississauga's Bianca Andreescu. Mississauga has met the demand over the years for outdoor tennis courts but has not invested in indoor tennis facilities.
- With the rapid increase in interest for the sport of pickleball, the demand for indoor and outdoor courts has grown, and residents have expressed a need for the City to address this. The City has done so by lining all renovated public outdoor tennis courts with pickleball lines and by expanding indoor programming through the use of gymnasiums, however demand still exceeds supply.
- A number of residents and tennis clubs have recently contacted the City to encourage investment in an air-supported structure over tennis courts, in order to allow for year-round play. This type of facility has not been identified in the Recreation or Parks and Forestry Future Directions Master Plans and is not in the capital budget at this time. While there is community interest in this amenity, there has been no offer of community or tennis club investment in it.

- The City has received an unsolicited proposal from Karl Hale of Premier Racquet Club to partner on an indoor tennis facility, supported by Tennis Canada. Mr. Hale proposes to fund part of the cost of the facility and would operate it year-round under a ground lease.
- The business plan for this facility identifies opportunities to ensure affordable public access to tennis and pickleball, and also supports sport tourism events, generating a local economic impact.
- After reviewing existing tennis court locations in Mississauga, staff and Premier Racquet Club have identified the planned tennis courts at Churchill Meadows Sports Park (Park 459) as the best location for this facility. The courts are part of Phase 2 of the park project.
- Staff recommends entering into an agreement with Premier Racquet Club to develop this indoor tennis facility, with his investment supplementing the City's plans for the tennis courts to fund the expanded amenity, including additional courts, air-supported structure and clubhouse.

Background

The sport of tennis is experiencing its most significant growth since the 1970's, bolstered by the international success of Canadian tennis players including Mississauga's Bianca Andreescu. Mississauga has met the demand over the years for outdoor tennis courts but has not invested in indoor tennis facilities. The primary indoor tennis facility in the City is the privately-owned, membership-based Ontario Racquets Club.

The City has a long history of partnering with community tennis clubs to operate outdoor tennis courts. These partnerships typically require City capital investment with operation and basic maintenance provided by the tennis clubs. A number of residents and tennis clubs have recently contacted the City to encourage investment in an air-supported structure over tennis courts, in order to allow for year-round play. This type of facility has not been identified in the Recreation or Parks and Forestry Future Directions Master Plans and is not in the capital budget at this time. While there is community interest in this amenity, there has been no offer of community or tennis club investment in it.

With the rapid increase in interest for the sport of pickleball, the demand for indoor and outdoor courts has grown, and residents have expressed a need for the City to address this. The City has done so by lining all public outdoor tennis courts with pickleball lines and by expanding indoor programming through the use of gymnasiums, however demand still exceeds supply.

Present Status

The City has received an unsolicited proposal from Karl Hale of Premier Racquet Club to partner on an indoor tennis and pickleball facility, supported by Tennis Canada. Karl Hale is currently Tournament Director for the Rogers Cup – the largest one-week professional tennis

event in the world, President of the Professional Tennis Registry, and a former Davis Cup and Fed Cup coach.

Comments

As proposed, the facility will be operated as a year round tennis and pickleball centre with covered courts for 12 months. The new facility will offer a variety of affordable, competitive and recreational programs that will serve tennis enthusiasts and attract new players from all social and economic backgrounds. The proposal's plan is to offer programming in the form of lessons, leagues and tournaments at an accessible rate. It is expected that this facility would service 800 to 1,000 frequent players, as well as thousands of other participants through schools' programs, tournaments, clinics and special events. Through a combination of membership dues, user and programming fees there will be no requirement for annual City provided subsidies for this facility.

Currently there are many active tennis players in Mississauga who are seeking a facility for their recreational enjoyment and for competitive play. Therefore, this facility will directly benefit those who currently play tennis and will accommodate many new players who wish to be introduced to the game or play tennis year round. The facility would offer a variety of programs for all ages and abilities.

Some of these programs include:

- Junior and senior team tennis
- Under 8, under 10, under 12 and under 14 provincial programs
- Recreational grass roots programs
- Elementary school programs
- Sanctioned tournaments and organized leagues
- Pickleball leagues and tournaments

Sport Tourism and Tennis Canada

Mr. Hale's proposed facility plan is supported by Tennis Canada, the national governing body for tennis. The plan calls for a number of Tennis Canada sanctioned tournaments which aligns with the City's Sport Tourism Strategy and will have an economic impact from a tourism perspective. The facility will serve the needs of recreational and competitive players in the community and also provide opportunities for hosting provincial, national and international events that will bring visitors to showcase the talent in Mississauga.

Churchill Meadows Sports Park Location

City staff reviewed a number of existing tennis court locations for the proposed facility, which would have six tennis courts with lights covered with an air-supported structure. Air-supported structures can have a significant aesthetic impact on a neighbourhood, and many existing tennis courts are located in communities closely surrounded with single-family homes and parkland. In addition, adding the structure to the site generates significant parking requirements as well as fire access – most existing tennis court sites cannot meet these requirements.

After reviewing existing tennis court locations in Mississauga, staff and Mr. Hale have identified the planned tennis courts at Churchill Meadows Sports Park (Park 459) as the best location for this facility as it meets the site requirements for parking, setbacks and washroom facilities, there is already an air-supported structure on the nearby soccer field, and there are funds in the Parks capital budget for tennis courts at this location.

Phase 1 of the project includes an air-supported structure over one of the two artificial turf soccer fields, along with a multi-use trail and other park amenities. The tennis courts are part of Phase 2 of the park project and initial plans were to fund two unlit courts on the site for public use.

Financial Impact

The proposed terms of the agreement are as follows, subject to negotiations and final costing.

The Parks capital forecast is currently carrying a committed budget of \$1.664M for the tennis courts in Phase 2 of Park 459 in 2022-2023. The Premier Racquet Club proposal would fund the incremental cost to increase the facility from 2 to 6 courts, add lighting and an air-supported structure currently estimated to be \$2.65M.

The proposal includes operating the facility year-round under a long-term ground lease at Premier Racquet Club's expense.

Conclusion

Tennis and pickleball are both growing sports in Canada and demand locally is growing for affordable indoor facilities for these sports. A partnership that is endorsed by Tennis Canada and aligns with Mississauga's Sport Tourism Strategy will benefit the City and its residents.



Shari Lichterman, CPA, CMA, Commissioner of Community Services

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