



City of Richmond

Report to Committee

To: Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Committee
From: Kate Sparrow, Director, Recreation & Cultural Services
Re: **Submission from Richmond Arenas Community Association**

To Parks, Rec & Culture: Mar 28, 2006
Date: March 7, 2006
File: 01-0060 - RACA1

Staff Recommendation

1. That the 2005 – 2015 Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Master Plan include a reference that there are no plans to replace or eliminate Minoru Arenas in the next decade; and
2. That the current schematic for the Minoru Park Vision be modified to include the Minoru Arenas facility; and
3. That RACA be advised of the approved amendments to the 2005 – 2015 Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Master Plan that includes consideration of RACA’s submission and feedback; and
4. That the Richmond Olympic Business Office consider RACA’s interest in being involved in oval programming when the various options for a governance and operational model are developed; and
5. That RACA be invited to participate in the Service Planning Group for Sports, as well as the process to develop system wide policies, including a Pricing Policy.

K. Sparrow

Kate Sparrow
 Director, Recreation & Cultural Services
 (4129)
 Attachments: 1

FOR ORIGINATING DIVISION USE ONLY					
ROUTED TO:	CONCURRENCE	CONCURRENCE OF GENERAL MANAGER			
Richmond Olympic Business Office	Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>	<i>[Signature]</i>			
REVIEWED BY TAG	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>	REVIEWED BY CAO			
<i>[Signature]</i>		YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>			

Staff Report

Origin

The Richmond Arenas Community Association (RACA) was a delegation at the November 29, 2005 Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Committee meeting. The Committee adopted the following resolution:

That the submission from the Richmond Arenas Community Association be forwarded to staff for inclusion in the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Master Plan and that staff report to Committee on the following three recommendations:

- a) Revision to the Master Plan report to include planning for arenas;***
- b) the involvement of RACA in oval programming;***
- c) a re-balancing of the PRCS budget to reduce the financial burden to arena users.***

The purpose of this report is to address the recommendations outlined in the above resolution.

Analysis

Recommendation a) Revision to the Master Plan report to include planning for arenas;

In a letter to Committee dated November 23, 2005 (Attachment 1) RACA identified several areas of concern re the proposed Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Master Plan for 2005 – 2015.

The first area of concern is the lack of clarity regarding the future of the Minoru Arenas facility. RACA wants assurances that the Richmond Oval's legacy design, that includes two international size ice rinks, is an addition to the arena facilities in Richmond and not a replacement of the Minoru Arenas.

The second question relates to the fact that although Minoru Arenas is an aging facility, there is no reference to major capital spending for this facility during the 10 year Master Plan framework, and the facility is not specifically mentioned in the report. RACA is concerned that this may mean that there are plans to eliminate Minoru Arenas, especially since the facility is not included in the Minoru Park Vision schematic.

The third area of concern is the need for additional arena facilities in Richmond. RACA notes that the current facilities are running at close to maximum capacity during prime time, and that accommodating new user groups such as the Richmond Rockets Speed Skating Club places further pressure on a finite amount of facility space. RACA also questions whether the addition of two new rinks in the Oval's legacy design is sufficient keep pace with this community's population growth.

In order to address these concerns, it is recommended that the Master Plan include a reference that there are no plans to replace or eliminate Minoru Arenas in the next decade. Although an aging facility, it has been well maintained and there are no significant upgrades required at this

time. The facility continues to serve as a key community gathering place for Junior Hockey and other spectator events. It is also recommended that the current schematic for the Minoru Park Vision be modified to include the Minoru Arenas facility.

The submission from RACA was just one piece of considerable public feedback related to the Master Plan. Staff are recommending that the draft Master Plan be amended to incorporate an analysis of current Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services facilities, and that a Facility Evaluation Framework be developed to assess current facilities and identify planning timelines for new facilities. It is also recommended that the public feedback and consultation comments be incorporated into the Master Plan.

Recommendation b) the involvement of RACA in oval programming;

RACA believes that, once the two international rinks in the legacy phase of the Oval are available, there should be a coordinated approach to programming and allocating space for all ten community sheets of ice in Richmond. Since RACA currently has that role for the Richmond Ice Centre and Minoru Arenas, the Association believes that this should naturally extend to the two new sheets.

The Richmond Olympic Business Office is researching different governance models and operational options, and has been advised of RACA's interest in a coordinated programming approach to Richmond's arenas. It is recommended that the Richmond Olympic Business Office be made aware of RACA's interest in being involved in oval programming when the various options for a governance and operational model are developed.

Recommendation c) a re-balancing of the PRCS budget to reduce the financial burden to arena users.

Under the current operating agreement between the City and RACA, all operating revenues go directly to the Arenas Association. The majority of the operating expenses are the responsibility of the City. Each year the parties negotiate what amount of these revenues RACA will pay the City (\$2.22 million in 2006) to help offset the operating costs. Since this negotiated amount generally increases on an annual basis, RACA has needed to increase arena fees and charges over the past several years. RACA believes that it is unfair for the City ask for a significant financial contribution from arena users, while many other sport groups currently do not have to directly contribute towards the City's operating expenses.

The Master Plan proposes to address this concern by developing a system-wide Policies in the areas of Access, Use and Pricing, as well as Service Plans for key service areas. In the case of arenas, these operations will be captured in a Service Plan for Sports. The Service Plan process will include an assessment of the current reality for all sport groups and will address areas such as pricing strategies and financial responsibilities in order that all sport groups contribute to the City's fiscal sustainability. Work is also well under way to develop a process and schedule for the implementation of natural turf playing field user fees for next fall season.

It is recommended that RACA be invited to participate in the Service Planning Group for Sports, as well as the process to develop system wide policies, including a Pricing Policy.

Financial Impact

No financial impact.

Conclusion

The Richmond Arenas Community Association has been an active and interested participant in the lengthy process to develop the 2005 – 2015 Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Master Plan. Their recent delegation and written submission to Committee provided meaningful feedback on the Draft Master Plan document. This input, combined with significant feedback from other community organizations and residents, has resulted in recommended amendments to the Master Plan. The specific recommendations in this report will help to address RACA's questions and concerns, and will provide them with an opportunity to be involved in the implementation of the Master Plan.



Dave McBride
Manager, Aquatic and Arena Services
(5355)



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November 23, 2005

City of Richmond
6911 No 3 Road
Richmond, B.C. V6Y 2C1

Attention: Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services Committee
Mr. Harold Steves, Chair

Dear Mr. Steves:

Re: Minoru Park Vision
Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services - Master Plan

The board of directors of the Richmond Arenas Community Association reviewed and discussed the new PRCS Master Plan (Minoru Park Vision) document circulated on November 10th and the draft of the complete plan dated July 2005 that is posted on the City's website. The Board has the following questions and comments:

1. The initial reports announcing the Olympic Oval project made several references to the oval being a replacement for the aging Minoru Arenas. As you can imagine, there was great concern by all those using arena facilities that the oval was being considered as a "replacement of" instead of an "addition to" the arena facilities in Richmond.

Since that initial report, City staff and politicians have assured the board that the oval project and Minoru are not linked. The oval facilities would become an additional asset and Minoru Arenas would continue to be utilized, pending additional long-term planning.

2. The Places and Spaces section of the new PRCS Master Plan document circulated on November 10th makes no reference to Minoru Arenas in the major capital funding priorities for 2011-2015 nor in the major parks capital plan 2005 to 2010.

It would appear that nothing is being planned for Minoru Arenas and it would seem reasonable to think that the arena would continue in its current form and function. On the map of existing site conditions and opportunities, both the aquatic centre and the arenas are pictured. On the Minoru Park Vision diagram, the arenas are, mysteriously, not pictured.

If there are no plans for Minoru Arenas in the 2005 to 2015 period, then they should be pictured in the Park Vision. If the plan is to eliminate the arenas, then this fact should be mentioned in the body of the document.

Mr. Harold Steves
November 23, 2005
Page 2

3. In the facilities profile section in the book of attachments to the PRCS report on the website, there is a page about Arenas. On page B18, the following point is made: "Minoru Arenas built in 1965 and 1984 with upgrades in 2000; current replacement value \$11.5 million; \$600,000 in upgrades identified."

From this statement it is apparent that the arena is a valuable asset and that certain planning has been done. Why isn't this work acknowledged in the new document? Minoru Arenas are conspicuous by their absence in the new report.

4. There is an extreme need for additional arenas in the City of Richmond. The current facilities are full and are running at maximum capacity. The Board has just approved the Richmond Rockets Speed Skating Club to use Richmond Arenas for their short track speed skating program. We see tremendous potential that will build for the Olympics and is compatible with post Olympic plans for the oval. There is great excitement.

There is, however, a problem. They are requesting a modest three hours of ice per week. To provide them with this resource, we will have to compromise existing users. This could push a minor hockey team to a later time, cause an additional early morning practice or even bump an adult team entirely. It must be recognized that adults are paying approximately \$10 to \$12 per person for ice rental for the privilege of playing late night hockey. Teenagers on minor hockey teams are practicing till 11:30 at night and then getting to bed much later than that. Arena staff have prepared a report with more details about arena usage that is available upon request.

On behalf of all arena users, the Richmond Arenas Community Association would like to make a presentation to the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Committee as soon as possible. We would like to be heard before the PRCS report is presented to City Council. Our presentation would bring the committee up to date about our affairs, urge the committee to recommend amending the PRCS Master Plan report and Minoru Park Vision to include planning for Minoru arenas and arenas generally.

I look forward to receiving confirmation as to when we can make our presentation to Committee.

Sincerely,

Richmond Arenas Community Association



Frank Claassen, Chairman

cc: Mayor Malcolm Brodie
All City Councillors