



**Crichton Community Council (CCC)**

New Edinburgh Park Fieldhouse  
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Re: New Edinburgh Park Fieldhouse Improvements

Cindy and Sean,

This past June we signed a memorandum of understanding confirming that our organizations share a desire to ensure that funds the City of Ottawa had invested in 255 MacKay Street would be reinvested in public infrastructure within New Edinburgh following the sale of Nectar's property. Further, we agreed that this investment of \$250,000 is to be used in its entirety for capital improvements to the New Edinburgh Park Fieldhouse.

At the CCC meeting on November 18, members of the CCC reviewed, prioritized and confirmed recommendations for improvements to the Fieldhouse and the surrounding New Edinburgh Park. The CCC recommends the following improvements to address the needs of current users and in the interest of making improvements to better serve future users.

## **Recommended improvements to the Fieldhouse:**

### **1. Rubber Flooring**

Rubber floor mats covering a concrete floor protect skate blades from damage and are less slippery to walk on in skates than bare concrete. During the 4 month skating season the main room the Fieldhouse is used as a skating change area every day and evening. Skaters using the Fieldhouse to change must walk between the exterior doors and interior seating on thin and narrow rubber mats. The existing rubber mats do not provide complete coverage of the floor and have edges that roll up, creating a tripping hazard. These mats are heavy to move and are difficult to keep clean.

A thicker permanent rubber floor surface installed throughout the Fieldhouse would be easier to maintain, provide better protection, reduce hazards and improve the acoustics inside the Fieldhouse.

### **2. Room Partition**

Despite being a relatively large building, the Fieldhouse can only accommodate one user group in the space at any one time. For example, throughout the winter months, when the building is open as a changing space for skaters, the main room is not a good place for community group meetings. The commotion associated with changing in and out of skates disrupts quieter uses.

The installation of a movable partition wall (e.g. accordion style wall or sliding wall panels) would allow for the concurrent use of the Fieldhouse by otherwise conflicting user groups. At times when there is demand for a larger space, the partition could be easily removed. A temporary partition wall that could be used to subdivide the existing space would increase the use of the building in all seasons.

### **3. Sound Attenuation**

The Fieldhouse interior is a wide open, hard surfaced space that create very poor acoustics. When the main room is used by larger groups (i.e. more than 15 people) echoing sound inside the hard surfaced space makes it very hard to hear inside the building. Neighbourhood user groups such as the neighbourhood choir

and the ukulele group will not use the Fieldhouse because of the existing acoustic characteristics.

The installation of sound dampening surfaces on the ceiling and walls would improve the building's usability.

### **Recommended improvements to New Edinburgh Park, outside the Fieldhouse:**

#### **1. Improved Outdoor Lighting**

Outdoor lights mounted on a pole illuminates the west ice/lawn of the building from above. These lights do not illuminate the playground or the east ice/lawn. Outdoor lights mounted on the south and east wall of the Fieldhouse provide limited light to the east ice/lawn, but do so from an angle that can be blinding for users of the space. Lighting projected horizontally from the building also extends light pollution into the surrounding residences.

The playground and the ice/lawns around the Fieldhouse are used by children in all seasons. Lighting makes the use of outdoor spaces during the dark evenings of fall, winter and spring safer. Lighting also discourages vandalism and provides users with a greater sense of security.

The installation of overhead lighting to illuminate the playground area and the east ice/lawn would make the use of these areas during the winter safer and more enjoyable. This need could be addressed in part by adding one additional street light on the north side of Stanley Avenue, east of the Fieldhouse. This need could also be addressed in part by adding additional overhead lights to the existing pole on the west side of the Fieldhouse.

#### **2. Bike Repair Station**

The City of Ottawa has located bike repair stations that include a tire pump and essential bike tools at various locations around the City. Bike repair stations provide a convenient service to cyclists and serve to encourage this alternative mode of transportation. The closest bike repair station to the Fieldhouse is at the Beechwood Fire Station.

New Edinburgh Park is a weekly meeting point for bike clubs from across the region who begin and end their rides next to the Fieldhouse. On many summer evenings up to 30 riders might leave the Fieldhouse at once on rides along the Rideau River Eastern Pathway (i.e. the bike path) or the Cartier Parkway.

The Fieldhouse would be an ideal location for a cycling hub that provides enhanced services that include a repair station, a water fountain and washrooms.

### 3. Outdoor Water Fountain

There are no outdoor water fountains along the Rideau River Eastern Pathway (i.e. the bike path) or anywhere else within the neighbourhood. The Fieldhouse's indoor water fountain is only available when the Fieldhouse is unlocked.

An outdoor water fountain would provide users of the playground, users of the lower athletic facilities (tennis, basketball, soccer and baseball) and passing pedestrians or cyclists with water at all times.

### 4. Animal Proof Waste Receptacles

Waste in the existing open containers gets distributed around the play area by animals. Existing waste containers are not always sufficient to meet the demands placed on them, especially when the collection schedule is extended. This is unsightly and is especially hazardous for children and animals.

The installation of covered waste receptacles, preferably with options for recycling, would increase the likelihood that waste generated in this public space would stay in its place.

### 5. Baseball Backstop Extension

The baseball field is frequently used throughout the summer, also a peak use time for the playground. Balls from the baseball diamond often fly over the existing backstop and land in the playground. Incidents of children being hit or almost hit by balls are not uncommon.

The installation of an extension to the existing fence backstop would reduce potential for a playground user to be hit by a ball.

6. Bike Path Link

The only break in the entire length of the Rideau River Eastern Pathway (the official name of the paved bike path that runs otherwise continuously between Rideau Falls and Hogs Back Falls) is the 150 metre stretch of Stanley Avenue between the bend (at Dufferin Road) and the Fieldhouse. The uncontrolled intersection of bicycles and motorized vehicles on Stanley Avenue is a longstanding public safety issue.

A grade separated bike path link should be constructed between between the truncated ends of the existing bike path at Dufferin Road and at the playground. The bike path link should be constructed between existing street trees and the road edge, not on land traditionally used for winter ice skating or summer events.

The CCC looks forward to receiving your feedback on these recommendations. We hope that our organizations can achieve consensus around a list of recommendations for improvement to the Fieldhouse before the next CCC meeting on December 9. I trust that a joint proposal from Nectar, NECA and CCC could be ready for consideration by our neighbours before the new year, followed by our City Councillor, then City Staff early in January.

Best regards,



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