



THE TORONTO CURLING ASSOCIATION

6A-170 The Donway West, Suite 1409

Toronto, Ontario, M3C 2E8

www.torontocurling.com

October 22, 2019

City of Toronto

His Worship Mayor Tory & Toronto City Council Members

The Parks and Recreation Facilities Master Plan 2019-2038 was adopted by City Council In November 2017. The Executive Committee will vote on its implementation on October 23 and City Council will vote on October 29, 2019.

The sports community, particularly curling, has changed dramatically in the interim 2 years. The Canadian culture of curling has changed in the past ten years, and we suggest that your consultant lacked knowledge of the changing sport specific environment. Curling not only keeps city residents physically active and is enjoyed by people with varying degrees of physical abilities, curling is the most inclusive sport available to Toronto seniors. Many curling facilities boast of members over 90 years old.

Golf communities no longer want direct association with curling

Toronto curlers, as your consultant reported, have indeed been served by the private facility providers in prior years. But elitism of the golf community, who were partners in the past with curling, has eroded the partnership. This is documented country-wide. Toronto has been the locus of this phenomenon. The consequent shift that occurred influenced the supply of facilities in Toronto between 2017 and 2019. Three facilities totalling 18 sheets, representing 1,800 players have disappeared from the sporting landscape. The remaining facilities, three of which are owned by the City of Toronto, are operating beyond capacity of 120 members per sheet. The result is Toronto residents are forced to quite the game or look outside Toronto to satisfy their curling passion.

Ice time for curling is unavailable to the public

The Toronto Sports and Social Club have lamented that they cannot find ice time for their 20,000 members who wish to participate in curling on a regular basis. In addition, curling is a sport that corporations use as partnering opportunities for its staff and clients. There is little available 6 hour slots of ice time for them to organize the events that they desire, without going outside Toronto.

Curling is a more visible sport than ten years ago

The sport has grown thanks to inclusion in the Olympic Games in 1998. Indeed, NBC, the US network telecasting the Olympics, had over half its sports airtime dedicated to curling in the last winter Olympics. The growth in the US has been exponential. Viewership in Canada increased so much that in spring 2019, curling on television during one week of the Men's Canadian Curling Championships filled 6 of the top ten viewed sporting events, outpacing ice hockey which filled 3 of the remaining 4 slots.

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The City of Toronto Master Plan states that venues, previously only used for skating, needs “strategic renewal and re-purposing of existing arenas”. Curling needs facilities. It makes sense that the implementation of your master plan should include the re-purposing of skating arenas to become curling venues. The need is particularly acute in Toronto West. The West End Curling Committee organized in 2018 and its members have investigated three such facilities: Lakeshore Arena, Pine Point Arena, and facilities in Centennial Park.

We request that further study as proposed in the Master Plan be directed to these and other city-wide arenas to accommodate new space for the growing sport of curling. We are asking that, as an addendum to the Implementation Plan, you include these changes. We recommend that strategies for accommodating additional curling facilities, particularly in Etobicoke-York, are recommended.

Respectfully submitted,

A square image containing a handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "D. Inglis".

Danielle Inglis, President

Toronto Curling Association