

Moss Park Arena - Governance and Operational Transition Plan

Date: January 14, 2025

To: Executive Committee

From: General Manager Parks and Recreation

Wards: 13 - Toronto Centre

REASON FOR CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION

The attachment to this report deals with personal matters about identifiable persons, labour relations information, and potential litigation that may affect the City of Toronto.

SUMMARY

This report responds to City Council's direction to the General Manager, Parks, Forestry and Recreation, now Parks and Recreation, in collaboration with the City Manager to develop a transition plan to change the governance and operations of Moss Park Arena from a Board of Management to a City-operated arena to come into effect by the end of 2025.

In addition, City Council directed that the Moss Park Arena Board, work with the General Manager, Parks and Recreation to review opportunities for the Moss Park Arena to enhance equitable community access to the Arena's programs. City Council also directed the City Manager and General Manager, Parks and Recreation to report back on options to strengthen local access to programming and enhanced diversity of Board membership within current operating and governance structure of Moss Park Arena.

This report outlines the required actions to facilitate an effective transition, as well as implementation timelines and potential impacts including personnel, clientele and other liabilities and obligations.

The report also provides an analysis of the geographic reach of the Moss Park Arena programs as well as recent efforts to improve access to arena programs, and an update on Board diversity and enhanced local representation through the City's Public Appointments Policy.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The General Manager, Parks and Recreation recommends that:

1. City Council direct that the confidential information contained in Confidential Attachment 1 remain confidential in its entirety, as it pertains to personal matters about identifiable persons, labour relations information and potential litigation that may affect the City of Toronto.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

There are no immediate financial impacts identified as a result of the recommendation.

Should Council direct staff to transition the operations of Moss Park Arena to Parks and Recreation, operating costs are estimated at \$1.0 million gross and \$0.30 million net annually with \$0.70 million in revenue generated from ice rental permits and program fees, based on the most recent service and operational analyses completed.

The transition would not impact the capital budget as the state of good repair of the Moss Park Arena is already the responsibility of Parks and Recreation.

Additional funding from the City may be required to address the Moss Park Arena's liabilities outlined in Confidential Attachment 1.

Table 1: Operating Budget Comparison for Moss Park Arena and City Operated Arena, and projected City-operated Moss Park Arena

<i>All figures in millions (2024)</i>	Moss Park Arena Board of Management	Parks and Recreation Projected Budget for City-operated Arena	City-operated Moss Park Arena (Projected)
Expense	\$1.04	\$0.71	\$1.00
Revenue	\$1.02	\$0.53	\$0.70
Net	\$0.02	\$0.18	\$0.30

The Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer has reviewed this report and agrees with the information as presented in the Financial Impact Section.

DECISION HISTORY

At its meeting on December 4, 2024, The Toronto and East York Community Council appointed Uttam Bajwa, Ahsen Bhatt and April Hodgins to the Moss Park Arena Board for a term of office ending on December 5, 2028, and until successors are appointed, in accordance with the City's Public Appointments Policy.

<https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2024.TE18.36>

At its meeting on June 26, 2024, City Council directed the General Manager, Parks, Forestry and Recreation, in collaboration with the City Manager, to develop a transition plan to change the governance and operations of Moss Park Arena from a Board of Management to a City-operated arena to come into effect by the end of 2025, and report back to City Council by the fourth quarter of 2024 with the transition plan. At this meeting, City Council directed Moss Park Arena Board, work with the General Manager, Parks and Recreation to review opportunities for the Moss Park Arena to enhance equitable community access to the Arena's programs.

<https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2024.EX15.5>

At its meeting on May 22, 2024, City Council directed the City Manager, in consultation with the General Manager, Parks, Forestry and Recreation, to assess the impacts of transitioning the governance and operations of Moss Park Arena from a Board of Management to a City-operated arena; such assessment to include financial impacts, program and operational considerations, and staff planning as appropriate, and report back on this assessment and implementation to the June 18, 2024 meeting of the Executive Committee.

<https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2024.MM18.20>

COMMENTS

The City of Toronto owns 49 indoor arenas, consisting of 37 single-pad arenas and 12 multi-pad arenas, providing a total of 61 indoor ice pads. 41 are operated by the Parks and Recreation division providing recreational programming through the City's delivery of leisure skating and instructional programming and rental opportunities for community youth and adult sports, school groups, commercial operators, tournaments and competition events, as examples. Eight are operated by City Council appointed volunteer Boards of Management as City-owned Agencies or "Arena Boards" under the [City of Toronto Act, 2006](#) and the Council-approved [Relationship Framework](#). Arena boards are responsible for the programming, management and maintenance of these ice facilities and comply with the City's ice allocation policy. Moss Park Arena is one of the eight operated by an arena board.

Transition Plan

As directed by City Council, staff have developed a plan for transitioning the Moss Park Arena from a Board of Management to a City-operated arena, should Council direct to do so. This plan considers actions required to address impacts related to communications, facility operations, budget, staffing, programs, permits, and implementation timelines.

To facilitate an effective transition that minimizes disruptions to current users, Parks and Recreation would require a minimum lead time of six months. The following are key components of that plan:

Communications and Transition Preparedness

A working group would be established to implement the transition and stakeholder communications and engagement plan.

Communications would include engagement with the Arena Board, staff, and permit holders, and provide information on how the transition plan would advance, timelines and any impacts.

Facility Preparedness and Staffing Recruitment

Parks and Recreation staff would be deployed at the time of handover, with responsibility for plant maintenance and program delivery. The division would follow the terms of the Collective Agreement and leverage existing job classifications and expertise in how it assumes the operation of this arena to ensure the facility and its programs comply with city standards and guidelines.

Parks and Recreation Division is already responsible for the capital performance of the arena and would therefore undertake a building condition assessment to determine if there are any immediate maintenance and repair issues to resolve.

Legacy Program Transition and Permit Migration

To mitigate potential disruptions to long-standing user groups and program participants, Parks and Recreation would assume oversight and management of leagues and delivery of programs currently managed directly by Moss Park Arena. After completing a full inventory of these programs and how they are operated, the division has assessed these include co-ed hockey leagues, hockey schools, youth hockey camps, adult hockey camps, women's pick-up, and men's leagues, and represent over 600 participants and 900 hours of ice time annually.

To continue the direct delivery of ice programming offered by Moss Park Arena, Parks and Recreation would employ the required staff to provide oversight and coordination of these leagues and programs. The transition team would work with Moss Park Arena to gather detailed program information to ensure a seamless transition to the City and clear communication with program participants. The objective would be program continuity for at least a one-year period allowing the division an opportunity to evaluate these programs.

Additionally, seasonal, weekly, and one-time permits for ice booking are administered by Moss Park Arena staff. Parks and Recreation currently works directly with arena staff to ensure seasonal permits are issued in accordance with the City's Ice Allocation Policy. If directed to transition, Parks and Recreation would honor the permits for the 2025/2026 ice season, inclusive of days/times allocated to user groups as well as the ice rates the rates charged, where those fees are greater than those charged by the city.

Dissolution of the Arena Board of Management:

City staff would submit the necessary bills to assume powers and dissolve the Moss Park Arena Board in accordance with Ontario Regulation 589/06: Dissolution of and Assumption of Powers of Local Boards, amend the former Toronto Municipal Code chapter that established the Moss Park Arena Board, and make changes to the Relationship Framework for Boards of Management of Arenas. There may be overlap between the time Parks and Recreation assumes operational custody of the arena and the time when the board is dissolved.

The transition plan and required Council direction, if approved, will be completed by August 2025 with the City formally assuming operational responsibilities under Parks and Recreation by September 1, 2025.

The transition team would work over the six months leading up to that date to ensure all aspects of the plan are implemented to ensure a seamless transition and effective communication with all staff, stakeholders, board members and users of the Moss Park Arena.

Financial Impacts and Resource Requirements

The operating budget for a standard City-operated, year-round single pad arena is estimated to be approximately \$0.71 million gross and \$0.20 million net which includes the cost to maintain the facilities to support year-round facility operations and provide instructional and free drop-in skate programs. It is estimated that approximately \$0.5 million would be generated through ice rental permits. This model excludes the cost of direct delivery of programming and management of leagues, outside of the standard Learn to Skate/Leisure Skate model.

For the City to operate Moss Park Arena and directly deliver the arena's longstanding programs, it is estimated that it would cost approximate \$1.0 million gross and \$0.30 million net, annually. It is estimated that approximately \$0.70 million would be generated through ice rental permits and program fees.

This estimate includes the cost of dedicated staff to oversee and coordinate the arena's legacy programs including adult leagues, youth hockey camps, and adult and youth hockey schools.

To ensure a seamless transition, and if directed to implement the transition plan, any costs incurred in 2025 would be managed within the divisional approved operating budget. Parks and Recreation would request an additional \$1.0 million gross and \$0.30 million net through the 2026 budget process, to support arena operations in 2026 and beyond.

In addition to this financial consideration, the Board would be required to satisfy its liabilities, employment-related or otherwise, prior to dissolution, which may necessitate additional funding from the City to address. Potential liabilities arising from a Council-directed transition are outlined in Confidential Attachment 1.

It should be noted that, when necessary, the City is required to provide financial contributions to ensure arena boards achieve net zero operating budgets. Consistent with other City Agencies, the City may be required to provide the Arena with additional subsidies to cover the operating deficits arising from COVID-19, Ontario Line construction, capital repairs, subject to year-end results. These impacts may also arise if arena operations were transitioned to Parks and Recreation.

Table 2: City Contributions to Moss Park Arena Board

Year	City Contribution
2022	\$115,361
2023*	\$285,485
2024*	\$356,000

*2023 and 2024 are subject to the completion of the year-end audit

Workforce & Employment Management Plan

Parks and Recreation is required to staff any arena it operates and programs in accordance with relevant collective agreements and approved program service levels.

Moss Park Arena currently employs seven full-time staff as well as a part-time seasonal staff to deliver year-round arena operations and programs. These individuals are not considered City employees and are not unionized.

For details related to arena workforce and employment impacts, see Confidential Attachment 1.

Moss Park Arena Programs and Opportunities to Enhance Local Access

Moss Park Arena Board currently provides a wide selection of program offerings that are delivered directly by arena staff or in partnership with other organizations. As the only publicly accessible indoor arena in the downtown core, and with no other indoor arenas within a 4km radius, Moss Park arena provides, annually, over 2000 hours of skating and hockey programming to individuals and user groups as outlined in the table below.

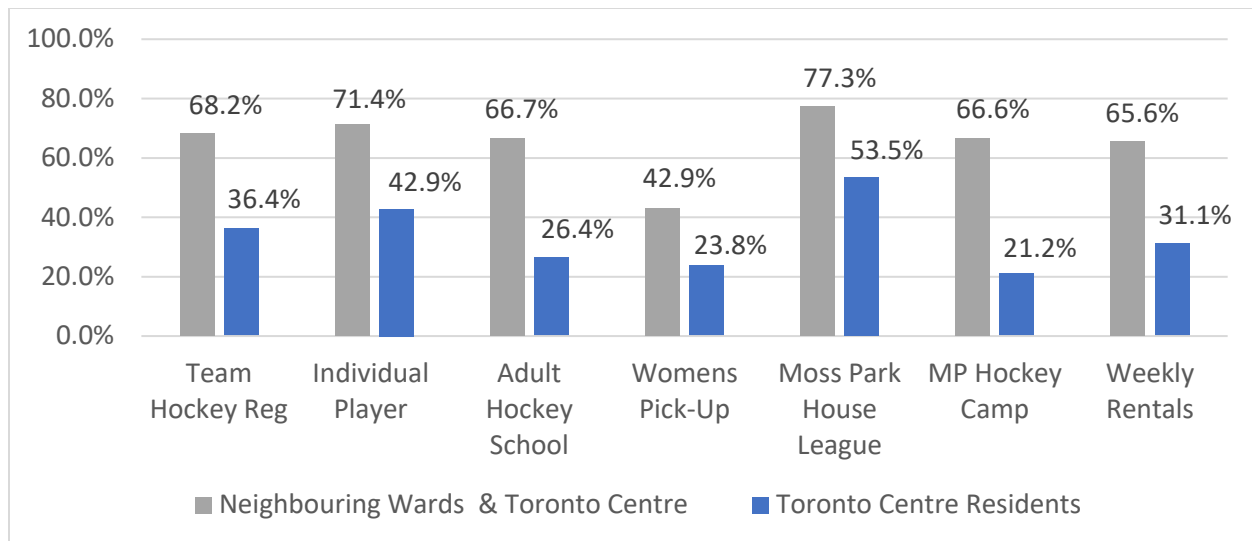
Of note, the Moss Park House League provides free hockey registration and equipment for up to 325 youth. While delivered by a third-party community partner organization, the Arena Board donates over 200 hours of ice time to ensure this program offering continues each year.

Table 3: Overview of Moss Park Arena Programs with annual ice time and participant rates.

Program / Organization	Annual Ice Time (Hours)	Participants per year	Delivery Model
Central Toronto Skating Club (Youth & Adult)	443	351 Youth / 270 Adult	Community Non-profit
Co-ed Hockey League	416	120	Direct delivery by MPA Staff
Moss Park House League (Youth)	224	325	Free youth program. Ice time donated by MPA (\$54,000 value)
Women's Hockey Club of Toronto	180	165	Community Non-profit
Moss Park Hockey Camp	172	150	Direct delivery by MPA Staff
Men's C Division Hockey	162	90	Direct delivery by MPA Staff
Adult Hockey School	97.5	225	Direct delivery by MPA Staff
Women's Pick-up	63.5	30	Direct delivery by MPA Staff
Free Public Skating Sessions	56	15-20 per skating Session	Free community skating sessions and local school skates hosted by MPA

*MPA: Moss Park Arena

Parks and Recreation staff have worked closely with Moss Park Arena Board volunteers to review and analyze participant location data to understand how the arena is serving the community. Using postal code information for registered programs delivered by arena staff and community partners, approximately 70% of all participants live in Toronto Centre or a neighbouring ward. The image below highlights the percentage of participants from Toronto Centre and neighbouring wards in programs delivered by Moss Park Arena. The Moss Park Arena Board has maintained their position that they serve the local community and further, are receptive to continued work with city staff on how to create new local opportunities.



As a recent example, and in an effort to further enhance local access to affordable recreation opportunities, Moss Park Arena Board has recently initiated free community skating sessions which currently are offered twice weekly from October to April.

The Arena Board continues to support several local schools by providing free skating field trip opportunities for their students.

Ongoing Collaboration to Enhance Equitable Community Access and Board Diversity

On December 4, 2024, Toronto and East York Community Council adopted staff recommendations to appoint three new Board members to the Moss Park Arena Board.

In preparation for the recruitment process, staff from the City Clerk's Office consulted with the Moss Park Arena Board, Ward Councillor and their staff to discuss board member requirements and current skill gaps. City Clerk's staff conducted outreach to attract diverse, qualified individuals with relevant skills and qualifications, including non-profit experience, finance, and fundraising, and a strong connection to the Moss Park Community.

To attract qualified candidates, City Clerk's staff promoted the opportunity to various professional and community organizations within the Moss Park Arena catchment area. Consideration was also given to ensure diverse representation on the Moss Park Arena Board.

This process successfully ensured the three existing vacancies were filled by individuals who will help the Moss Park Arena Board achieve its mandate and ensure the arena meets the needs of its user groups and surrounding community.

Conclusion

If directed by City Council, Parks and Recreation, in consultation with the City Manager's Office will implement the transition and communication plan outlined in this report to initiate the transition of Moss Park Arena to a City of Toronto-operated facility ensuring a seamless transition for user groups and program participants. This process would require six months lead time and target an operational handover of September 1, 2025.

Moss Park Arena is an important community facility intended to serve variety of participants and user groups annually. The exercise prompted by this review has allowed for constructive dialogue with the Board of Management on how it can more effectively reach local area residents access programs there. The Board has identified additional opportunities in the areas of regular free skates and collaboration with local schools and will continue to work with City staff to identify opportunities for equitable access to arena programs.

Further, the recent appointment of new board members, who bring the requisite skills and community knowledge, will help ensure the arena continues to achieve its Council mandate and meets the needs of its user groups as well as the immediate Moss Park community.

CONTACT

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SIGNATURE

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ATTACHMENTS

Confidential Attachment 1 - Overview of Employment Impacts and Liabilities for Moss Park Arena Board