

Update on Site Selection for Proposed Tennis Canada Donation

Date: March 27, 2025

To: Infrastructure and Environment Committee

From: General Manager, Parks and Recreation

Wards: Etobicoke Centre – 2

SUMMARY

Tennis Canada has expressed interest in collaborating with the City of Toronto to enhance access to year-round tennis by contributing up to two million dollars towards the installation of community tennis bubble.

This report responds to City Council's direction ([2024.MM18.21](#)) for Parks and Recreation to identify an appropriate site to advance the delivery of an accessible and affordable year-round tennis facility with Tennis Canada. This report identifies Centennial Park as the preferred site and provides an update to Council on next steps.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The General Manager, Parks and Recreation, recommends that:

1. Infrastructure and Environment Committee receive this report for information.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

There are no current financial implications resulting from the adoption of the recommendations contained in this report.

Any financial implications for Parks and Recreation, would be addressed through future budget processes or subsequent reports to Council related to this item.

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 May 22 & 23, 2024 City Council adopted MM18.21 “Partnering with Tennis Canada for Future Facilities” to explore the feasibility of developing an accessible and affordable year-round tennis facility with Tennis Canada, and to identify appropriate sites and locations to advance delivery of such a facility, to capitalize on opportunities to collaborate with Tennis Canada’s private donor capital towards the court in the sum of two million dollars.

<https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2024.MM18.21>

COMMENTS

Opportunity with Tennis Canada

In response to City’s Council’s direction ([2024.MM18.21](#)), Parks and Recreation has engaged with Tennis Canada to explore the feasibility of developing a year-round tennis facility in Toronto.

Founded in 1890, Tennis Canada is a non-profit, national sport association with a mission to lead the growth, development, and promotion of tennis in Canada and a vision to be a world-leading tennis nation. As a national sport organization, Tennis Canada has a mandate to grow the game and participation in tennis for all Canadians.

Tennis Canada has expressed interest in working with the City and has committed up to two million dollars towards the installation of a community tennis bubble. Given the increasing demand for year-round tennis facilities, this initiative presents an opportunity to enhance access to recreational tennis while leveraging external funding to maximize public benefits.

The Parks and Recreation Facilities Master Plan identifies the need for up to 20 new tennis courts over the next 20 years to address growing demand. Toronto currently has over 600 outdoor tennis courts located in 185 parks; 339 of those courts are operated as public facilities, while 263 courts are operated by 61 not-for-profit community tennis clubs. Many of these clubs have extensive waitlists and are not equipped to offer year-round play.

Installation of sports bubbles is an effective way to maximize City assets and expand access to recreational opportunities year-round. The City currently has arrangements in place for operations of six winter tennis bubbles located at Eglinton Flats, Tam Heather, L’Amoreaux, and North York Winter Tennis Club (three bubbled locations).

City Council directed staff to engage with Tennis Canada to identify a preferred site to deliver an accessible and affordable year-round tennis facility. Staff worked with the

donor and other stakeholders and recommend Centennial Park as the preferred site for a year-round tennis facility.

Site Selection

To identify a suitable location for the proposed facility, Parks and Recreation undertook a site selection process considering factors such as:

- available space for six new courts
- proximity to transit
- site conditions to support a tennis facility
- suitability for bubbling
- impact to surrounding/adjacent neighbourhoods
- proximity to support amenities (accessible pathways, parking, washrooms)
- current provision of tennis
- Donor preference (Toronto East York / West Toronto), and
- alignment with the Parks and Recreation Facilities Plan.

Tennis Canada expressed interest in a six-court tennis bubble that has supporting washroom facilities. Sites were reviewed across the city and Centennial Park was identified as the preferred site.

Centennial Park was identified as the most appropriate site to accommodate a six-court tennis bubble based on its size, accessibility, complementary facilities, existing recreational amenities, and alignment with the Centennial Park Master Plan. Siting the facility in Centennial Park would also take advantage of supporting infrastructure including parking and washroom facilities.

The Centennial Park Master Plan envisions Centennial Park as a premier destination for sports and recreation in Toronto, with a focus on enhancing year-round access to high-quality athletic facilities. The addition of a year-round tennis facility aligns with this vision by supporting increased participation in sport and recreation. The courts and bubble could be located adjacent to existing parking and washroom facilities near the new baseball hub.

Next Steps

Following this report, staff in Parks and Recreation and Corporate Real Estate Management will advance negotiations with Tennis Canada on key terms for an agreement, to be brought back for City Council's consideration. Key terms will embed principles of:

- community access
- affordability
- equitable access
- high-quality programming geared toward learn to play, child and youth, seniors, accessibility, and growing the game amongst non-traditional tennis demographics; and
- an operating model that is not commercial in nature.

Donation Opportunity from Tennis Canada

To ensure adequate community support for any proposed facility within Centennial Park, Parks and Recreation will work through the established stakeholder advisory groups that have been struck and consulted through the Centennial Park Master Plan. public consultation sessions will also be held that are inclusive of Tennis Canada, to ensure the terms of any future arrangement reflect the needs of the community. Any additions to Centennial Park will be included as an appendix to the Centennial Park Master Plan.

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SIGNATURE

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