

City of Toronto Curling Strategy

Stakeholder Reference Group Meeting
June 24, 2021



Land Acknowledgement

I'd like to begin by honouring the land that I'm on. If you are not currently in Toronto, I encourage you to learn about the lands you're on.

We acknowledge the land we are meeting on is the traditional territory of many nations including the Mississaugas of the Credit, the Anishnabeg, the Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee and the Wendat peoples and is now home to many diverse First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples. We also acknowledge that Toronto is covered by Treaty 13 with the Mississaugas of the Credit.

Agenda



Welcome, Meeting Goals, Introduction, and WebEx Tips



Presentation

- Project overview & Recent work
- Review of survey & meeting results
- Introduce draft principles for shared use or conversion



Questions of Clarification and Discussion



Next Steps

thank
you!

Adjourn

Meeting Goals

- Review the results of our consultations with Etobicoke Arena Users
- Introduce and gather feedback on draft principles for shared use or conversion
- Answer questions of clarification
- Share next steps

Meeting Participation



All participants are currently muted for the presentation.



You can ask questions and give your feedback through both the **raise hand and chat** features following the presentation.

Staff and Stakeholders

Staff

Suzanne Coultes – Project Manager, Parkland Strategy
Matt Bentley – Project Manager, Facilities Master Plan
Alex Lavasidis (facilitation) – Consultation Coordinator

Stakeholders

Toronto Curling Association
CurlON
Curling Canada
Rocks and Rings (sport development)
West End Curling Committee
York Urbanist Curling Design
Special Olympics
JAM! (Toronto Sport and Social Club)
Parasport Ontario
High School Curling
Ontario Recreation Facilities Association (ORFA)

Do you have any curling-related announcements or news to share with the stakeholder reference group?

Recap of work to date and current status

Facilities Master Plan and Council Direction

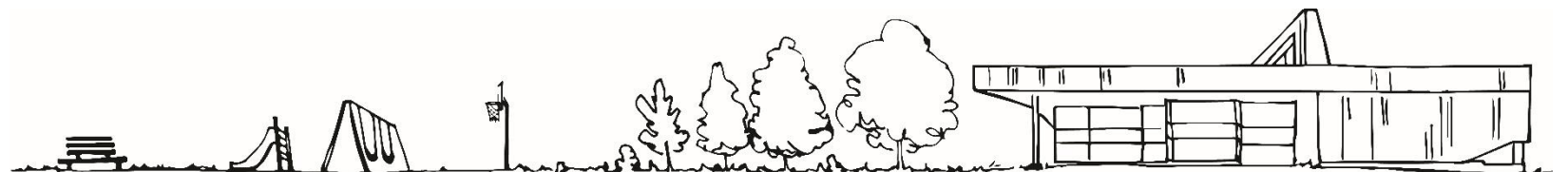
The Parks and Recreation Facilities Master Plan(FMP) 2019-2038 is a 20 year plan that guides recreation investment in the City.

The FMP originally found Toronto's per-capital supply of curling sheets was adequate and no new curling facilities were recommended.

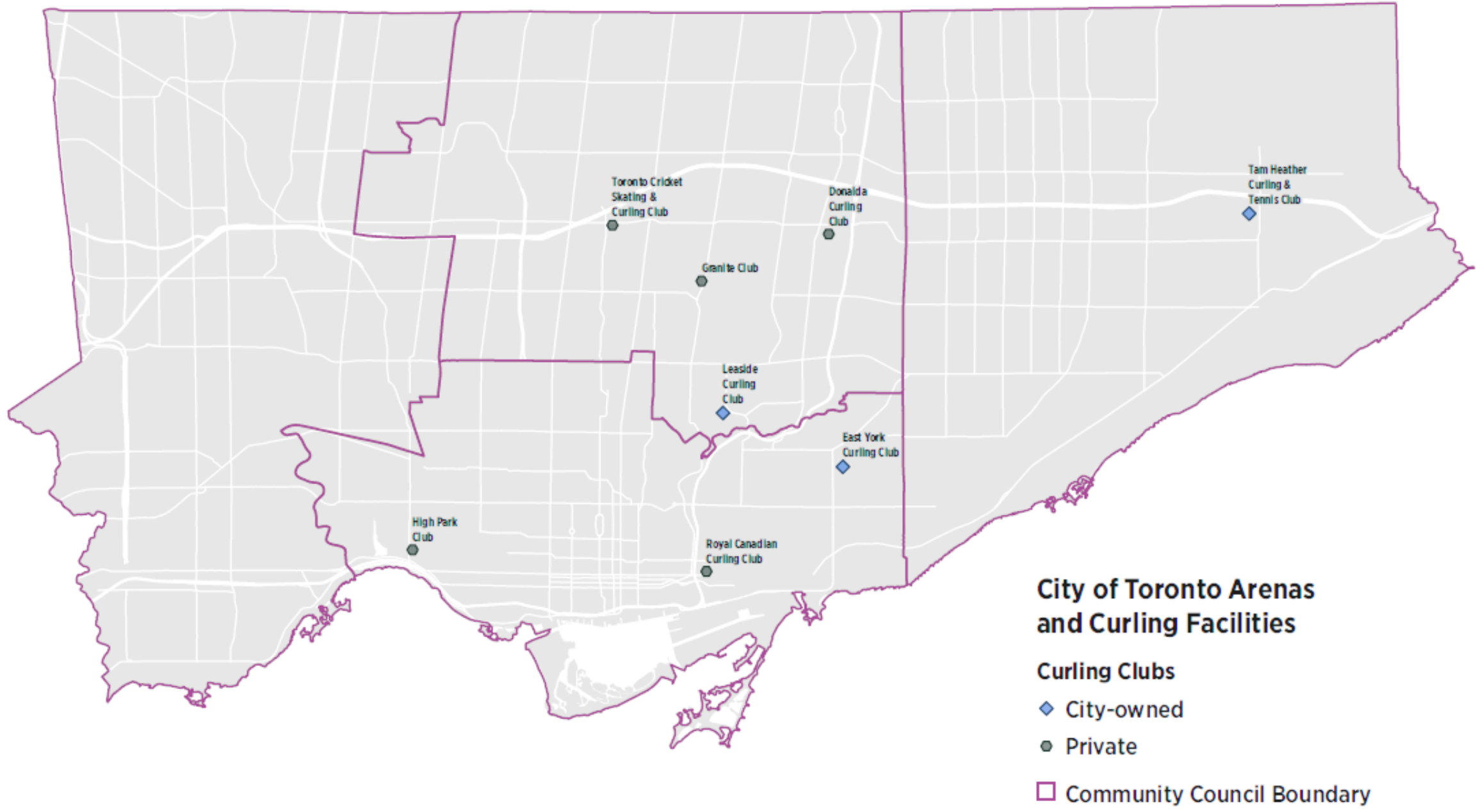
Since the FMP was approved, three privately owned curling facilities have closed (two in Toronto's west end). The principal reason for these was not lack of demand or revenue related to curling. Although specific circumstances differ, each closure related to prioritizing golf activities.

The closures altered the context of curling in the city.

In October 2019 City Council directed staff to assess trends and participation in curling.



Curling Facilities in Toronto



Summary of Phase 1 Results: Supply and Demand for Curling

1. There is unmet demand for curling ice in Toronto, especially in the west end.

- Toronto's supply of City-owned curling ice has not changed and is in line with other jurisdictions.
- The recent closure of 3 privately owned curling facilities, 2 in the west end, decreased the overall supply of curling ice. Demand is stable or growing.
- There is no curling ice in Etobicoke York, demonstrated demand, and little or no capacity at nearby facilities to meet this demand.

2. Curling serves a wide range of ages and abilities.

- Curlers in Toronto range in age from 7 to over 100.
- Specialized programs include youth curling, blind curling leagues, LGBTQ2S curling leagues and wheelchair and stick curling.
- Programming is limited by a available ice, especially transit and wheelchair accessible ice.
- Recent facility closures have caused some programs such as Special Olympics curling and high school teams to end.

3. The delivery model for curling in Toronto presents a barrier to broader participation.

- Most curling ice is used by members of clubs and established leagues.
- Many curling facilities offer programs for new curlers but these are limited by the high demand for ice.
- When these barriers are removed, there is evidence of interest among new participants and a more diverse group of participants.

Summary of Phase 2: Facility Options Analysis

The following facility options for curling were identified by stakeholders and through a jurisdictional scan:

- **Convert an existing arena to curling ice**
- **Shared use of an existing arena (hockey/skating + curling)**

**Potentially
feasible**

- **New stand-alone curling facility**
- **New co-located curling facility (part of a CRC)**
- **Add curling facility onto an existing arena building (three-wall addition)**

Not recommended based on
Capital Budget pressures

Next Step From March Meeting: Broader Stakeholder Engagement

Work to date has identified a number of challenges and opportunities related to providing curling ice in Etobicoke York:

- There is need for curling ice in Etobicoke York. The City does not have available funds to build a new curling facility.
- Etobicoke York has the highest provision of arenas in the Toronto and there may be opportunity to improve current utilization.
- Arenas are currently used for hockey, skating and community use. Impacts to current users must be considered and consultation is necessary to better understand those impacts.

Staff are seeking input from current arena users on the possibility of introducing curling ice at an existing City-owned single pad arena in Etobicoke York.

Etobicoke Arena Users Consultation Feedback

Overview of Engagement with Arena Users

- Arenas are currently used for hockey, skating and community use.
 - As part of assessing potential to introduce curling to an existing City-owned arena, impacts to current users must be considered and consultation is necessary to better understand those impacts.
 - **Consultation is not focusing on recommending a specific arena.** Topics include:
 - Key needs of hockey and skating users.
 - Pros and cons of a shared use model between hockey/skating and curling.
 - Potential opportunities to consolidate current use.
 - Any other considerations that may inform this work.
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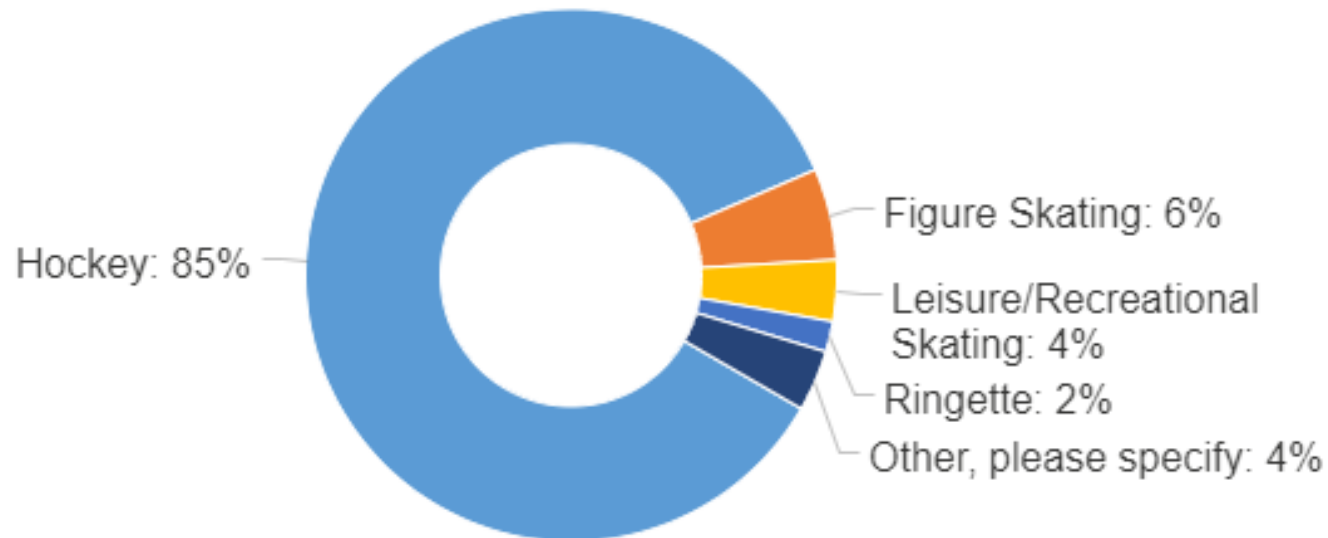
- **Staff hosted:**

Etobicoke Arena Users Online Survey
May 18 – 31

Etobicoke Arena Users Virtual Meeting
June 17

Survey Results Overview

- Survey Live: May 18 – 31
- Sent To: Etobicoke Arena permit holders (130)
- Responses: 53
- User Group of Respondents:



Concerns Related to a Shared-Use Model

- **Scheduling**

- Maintain existing/consistent time slots/locations
- Existing users want more ice time
- Time slots lost to conversion process

- **Ice quality**

- Lowered/inadequate ice quality
- Additional lines on ice confusing

- **Off-ice amenities**

- Inadequate storage
- Crowding of facilities

- **Change rooms**

- Maintain change room times and shower use for existing users
- Separate children and adults

- **Other**

- Separating leagues from arenas they have fundraised to improve
- If hockey ice time is reduced, this could suggest to observers that hockey is losing popularity
- Allocation of ice should reflect demand

Suggestions for a Shared-Use Model

- **Timing:**

- Fill unused ice time slots (e.g. days /off-peak times)
- Convert for one full day a week in an arena to reduce time spent on ice conversion

- **Arena Selection:**

- Consider only those arenas primarily used for practice spaces (e.g. not those used as home ice by leagues)
- Convert a single pad in a double pad arena

- **Other:**

- Create bubbled outdoor rinks to make room for new users
- Provide new school curling programs

Opportunities of a Shared-Use Model

- Access to curling for new participants: Youth, existing arena users, local communities.
- Potential to add curling components to existing arena leagues/associations.
- Potential to improve off-ice facilities.
- Potential ice quality improvement (shared between figure skating and curling as opposed to figure skating and hockey).

Concerns Related to Conversion & Relocation of Activities

- Lost membership and/or reduced program/team viability due to :
 - Programming moving further away from members' homes.
 - Splitting programs across various arenas.
 - Losing existing time slots.
 - Losing ice time (especially smaller permit holders).
- Less ice time access (currently unmet demand).
- Losing connection to:
 - The association's namesake arena.
 - Long-standing local neighbourhood ties.

Opportunities of Conversion & Relocation of Activities

- Depending on the relocation some organisations could be closer to their members.
- Potential for improved arena facilities.
- Curling program access for students.
- Amalgamation of rinks could provide associations with access to more players.

Suggestions for Conversion & Relocation of Activities

- Work with permit holders impacted to select the least disruptive time slots/ relocations.
- Ensure clear and transparent communications throughout this process and maintain open dialogue between arena users and the City.
 - Once identified, share what arenas are being considered for conversion or a shared-use model.

Virtual Meeting – High Level Feedback

- Demand for ice (especially in prime-time) continues to be high.
 - Arena users indicated that reducing available time can force leagues to permit private ice (at greater cost) which will further increase the costs of participation for children and youth.
- Users felt that if there is a need for curling ice that additional facilities should be built to support the sport, not create a conflict between hockey and curling.
- Some users questioned the demand for curling vs the demand for additional hockey ice time.
- If a shared use model is considered it should be prioritized when the ice is currently not being permitted (daytime, late evenings etc).

Draft Principles for Shared Use or Conversion

Draft Principles for Shared Use or Conversion (*for Discussion*)

1. Maintain open dialogue and transparent communications between arena users and the City
2. Allocate ice time based on the demand for each activity (adjusted over time)
3. Maintain safe and good quality of ice for all users
4. Minimize impacts on existing user groups by:
 - Filling unused ice time slots (e.g. off-peak times) before other actions are taken
 - Minimizing any reductions to existing ice permit hours
 - Maintain existing permit time slots and permit locations whenever possible
 - If required, work with permit holders to select the least disruptive time slots changes and/or relocations
5. Ensure off-ice amenities are not overcrowded and are safe for all users
6. Do not create gaps in programming provision for existing user groups (e.g. skating, ice hockey, etc.)
7. Support sport development for all ages and abilities

Next Steps

Next Steps

- Refine principles based on your feedback and feedback from Arena User stakeholders (June)
- Host a public meeting and an online survey to gather additional feedback on the principles (Summer)
- Apply the principles to develop staff recommendations (September)
- Report back to Council (October - TBC)
- Any further steps to be determined by Council

Q&A and Discussion

Q&A and Discussion

- Do you have any questions of clarification?
- Do you have any comments about the draft principles?
 - Is anything missing?
- Do you have any preference between the two options (Shared-Use or Arena Conversion)? If so, why?
- Do you have any additional feedback?

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THANK YOU