

City of Toronto Curling Strategy

Stakeholder Reference Group Meeting
December 15, 2021

This meeting is recorded for note-taking purposes only.



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



Meeting Goals, Introductions, and WebEx Tips



Presentation

- Project overview & work to date
- Curling Strategy Update & next steps



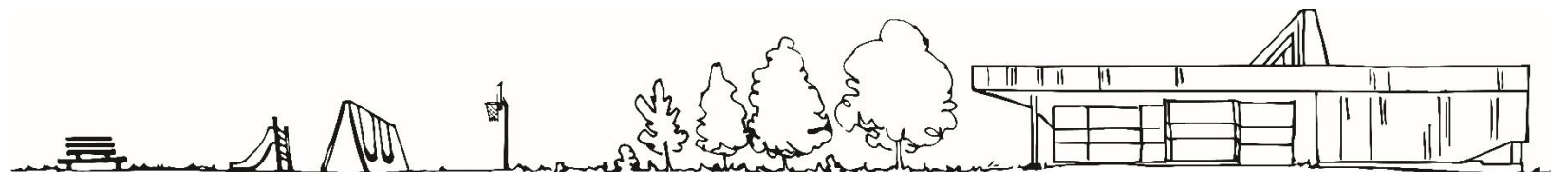
Questions of Clarification and Discussion



Next Steps (review)

thank
you!

Adjourn



Meeting Objectives



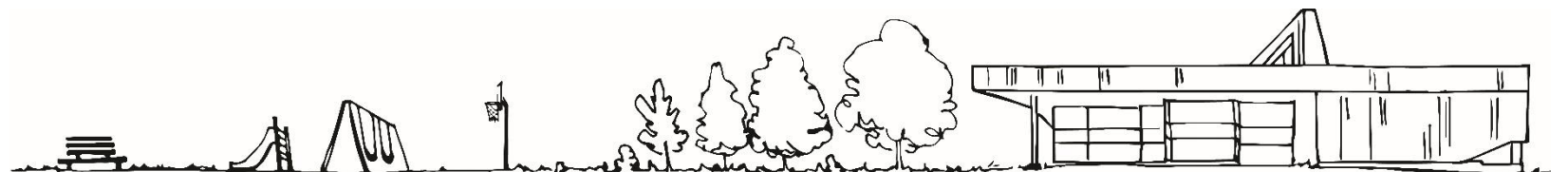
Present and review the process of the curling strategy and consultation to date that informed the outcomes and next steps



Share outcomes, updates and next steps related to the work completed and curling strategy



Hear your thoughts and answer your questions about the curling strategy and next steps



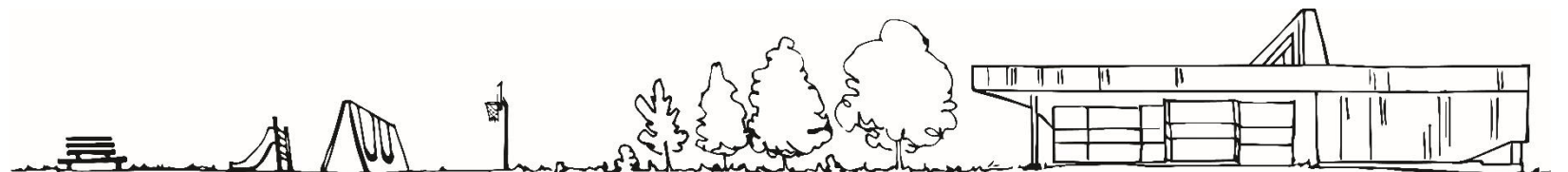
Staff and Stakeholder Reference Group

Staff

Suzanne Coultes – Project Manager, Parkland Strategy
Matt Bentley – Project Manager, Facilities Master Plan
Cathy Vincelli – Manager, Community Recreation
Shafeeq Armstrong - Toronto Urban Fellow Research Associate
Alex Lavasidis (facilitation) – Consultation Coordinator

Stakeholder Reference Group

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)



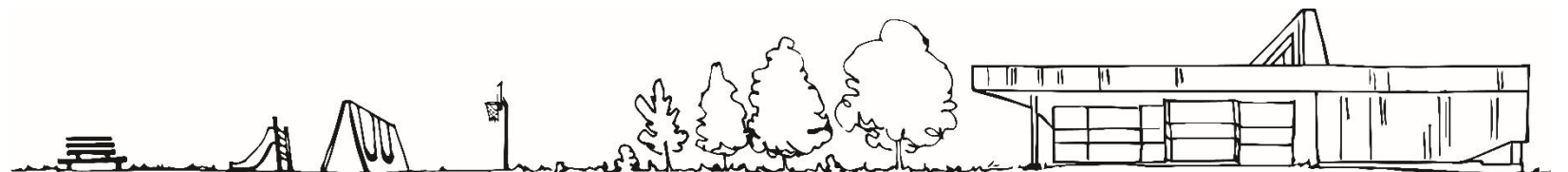
Meeting Participation




All participants are currently muted for the presentation.

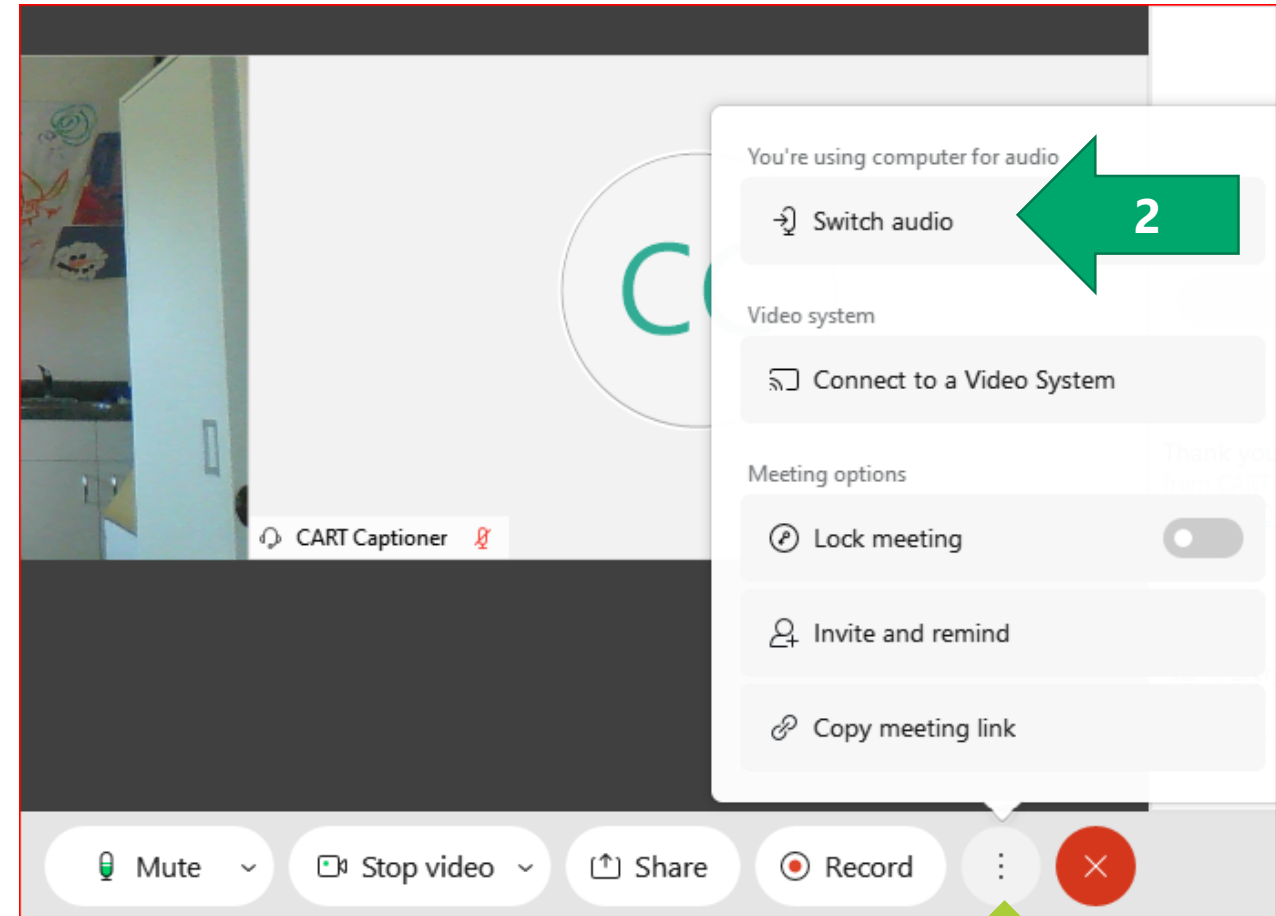


You can ask questions and give your feedback through both the **raise hand and chat** features following the presentation.



Webex Audio Trouble?

1. Click the **More Options** button at the bottom of the screen 
2. Click **Switch Audio**
3. Use the **Call me at** function
 - a) Enter your phone number
 - b) Webex will call your phone (no long distance charges)



Project Overview & Work to Date

Introduction: The 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 in line with or better than other jurisdictions, 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 closure of these private curling facilities had altered the context of curling in the city.

Reflecting the alterations to curling facility provisions in the City since the creation of the FMP, PFR undertook a work program over the last two years, at the direction of City Council, to:

- Assess the trends and participation in curling.
- Consider the current context of curling ice availability.
- Identify opportunities to increase public interest in and access to the sport.

Phase 1 Supply and Demand for Curling: Overview

Timeline: Winter to Summer 2020

In Phase 1:

- City staff assessed the supply of and demand for curling ice in the City, identifying gaps and opportunities

Key Findings:

- 1. There is unmet demand for curling ice in Toronto, especially in the west end.**
- 2. Curling serves a wide range of ages and abilities.**
- 3. The delivery model for curling in Toronto presents a barrier to broader participation.**

Engagement

- **Curling Stakeholder Reference Group (SRG) Meeting 1**
June 2020
- Focused interviews with operators of City-owned and private curling facilities plus additional programming and provision experts

Phase 2 (A) Facility Options Analysis: Overview

Timeline: Fall 2020 to Spring 2021

In Phase 2(A):

- City staff analysed possible facility options, conducting:
 - A jurisdictional scan
 - A review of existing City ice facilities
 - A review of provision models for curling ice
 - A review of sport development opportunities

Engagement

- **Curling SRG Meeting 2**
September 2020
- **Curling SRG Meeting 3**
March 8 2021

Phase 2 (A) Facility Options Analysis: Key Findings

The following facility options for curling were identified :

Potentially feasible:

- Conversion (full-time arena conversion): Convert an existing arena to curling ice
- Shared Use (part-time arena conversion): Shared use of existing arena ice (hockey/skating + curling) that would require **conversion** between curling ice and hockey or skating ice.

Not recommended based on the Capital Budget:

- New stand-alone curling facility
- New co-located curling facility (part of a Community Recreation Centre)
- Adding a curling facility onto an existing arena building (three-wall addition)

Phase 2 (B) Consultation on Facility Options: Overview

Timeline: Spring 2021 to Fall 2021

In Phase 2(B):

- To further investigate potential benefits and challenges of each facility option, staff held multiple public and stakeholder engagement events. The Curling Stakeholder Reference Group (SRG), existing Etobicoke arena users, and members of the public were asked to provide feedback on:
 - Preferences between the two potentially feasible facility options (*full-time arena conversion or a shared use model*)
 - Principles for Potential Conversion or Shared Use
- Councillors were kept updated through this process.

Engagement

- **Etobicoke Arena Users Online Survey**
May 2021 / 53 Participants
- **Etobicoke Arena Users Virtual Stakeholder Meeting**
June 2021 / 40 Participants
- **Curling SRG Meeting 4**
June 2021
- **City-Wide Virtual Public Meeting**
July 2021 / 250 Participants
- **Public Online Survey**
July 2021 / 1,333 Participants

Phase 2 (B) Key Findings: Revised Principles for Potential Conversion or Shared Use

- A. Maintain open dialogue and transparent communication between Etobicoke arena users, curlers, and the City.
- B. Allocate ice time based on the demand for each activity (potential to adjust over time) and ensure all users have access to ice at various times of the day including prime time (evenings, weekends).
- C. Provide safe, accessible, and high quality ice for all users.
- D. Minimize impacts on existing user groups:
 - i. Fill unused ice time slots (e.g. off-peak times).
 - ii. Minimize reductions to existing ice permit hours.
 - iii. Maintain existing permit time slots and permit locations whenever possible.
 - iv. Minimize ice down time from ice conversion.
 - v. Avoid programming changes to arenas that are home to "anchor programs" such as house leagues or figure skating clubs.
 - vi. If required, work with permit holders to select the least disruptive time slot changes and/or relocations.
- E. Ensure off-ice amenities are not overcrowded, are safe, and reflect the needs of different user groups.
- F. Do not create gaps in programming provision for existing user groups (e.g. skating, ice hockey, etc.).
- G. Prioritize programming and ice access for youth and other equity-deserving groups while supporting sport development for all ages and abilities.

Phase 2 (B) Consultation on Facility Options: Key Findings*

- **Based on feedback from curlers, existing Etobicoke arena users, and members of the public, there is no consensus on a preferred model to introduce curling to an existing City-owned arena.**
- **Curlers much prefer full-time conversion of an arena over a shared use model.**
This is based on the following perceived benefits of full-time conversion:
 - Ensures safe, consistent, high-quality ice that will serve both recreational and competitive curlers.
 - Provides greater availability of curling time (including prime time), less down time from conversion, and improved access for all levels and types of play (including schools & bonspiels).
 - Allows for off-ice (warm) spaces to support social elements of curling, better fosters community, and reduces conflict between user groups.

Phase 2 (B) Consultation on Facility Options: Key Findings

- **Existing Etobicoke arena users prefer a do-nothing approach (neither option).** Key concerns:
 - Either option would reduce ice time for existing programs (particular concern around youth, low-income and/or other equity-deserving group programming) when ice is already in high demand, particularly in prime time. This could push existing users onto more expensive private arenas, or force existing users to travel longer distances for programs.
 - Concern that full-time conversion or a shared use model will negatively impact local arena's sense of community.
- **When asked to choose between full-time conversion to curling or a shared use model, existing Etobicoke arena users prefer shared use,** citing the following perceived benefits:
 - Allows for maximized, flexible, multi-sport use of existing arena rather than single use
 - Is more easily reversible, cheaper, and can be piloted to test demand.
 - Reduced impact on existing arena users, while still providing ice time for curlers.
- Some respondents suggested alternative approaches to either full-time conversion or shared use (e.g. building new facilities, converting other spaces and more)

Curling Strategy Update & Next Steps

Curling Strategy : Intended Phases of Work

✓ Phase 1:

Taking Stock/ Supply and Demand for Curling

Assess supply of and demand for curling ice in Toronto.

Identify gaps and opportunities.



✓ Phase 2A:

Identifying Opportunities/ Facility Options Analysis

Review existing City ice facilities, provision models for curling ice, and sport development opportunities.



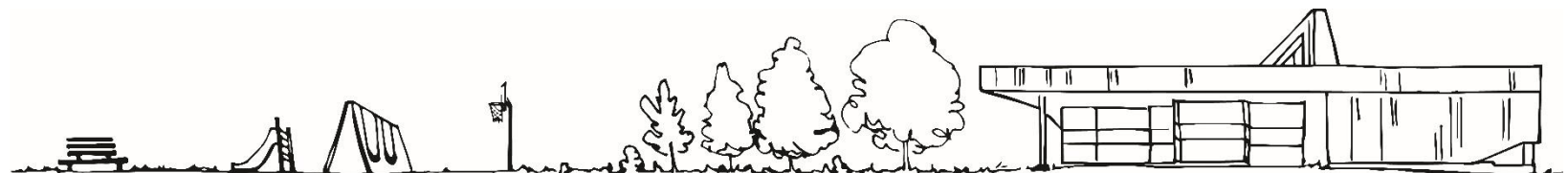
✓ Phase 2B:

Consultation on Facility Options

Seek input from arena users and the public through meetings and surveys



Seek Council Direction on next steps



Outcomes & Next Steps

Phase 1: Supply & Demand for Curling

Ongoing
demand for
curling ice
persists



Phase 2 A/B: Facility Options Analysis & Consultation

Stakeholder engagement underscored the challenge of identifying additional curling ice without significantly impacting other users and illustrated that there is currently **no consensus** on a preferred model to introduce curling to an existing City-owned arena



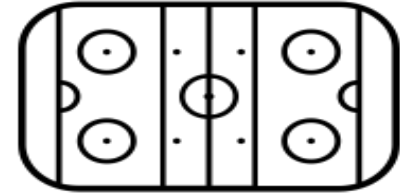
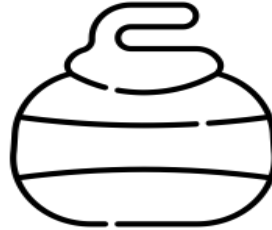
Next Steps

A comprehensive **City-wide Ice Strategy** is necessary to ensure the needs of all ice users are considered in decision making

(The Ice Strategy will be presented to Council)

Publish the **Curling Strategy**, including recommendations related to provision, programming & sport development opportunities

A City-Wide Ice Strategy, beginning in 2022, will include:



- A broader review of all ice provisions across Toronto as part of the FMP five year review including curling as an articulated component/focus
- A framework to prioritize investment and identify programming opportunities across each major ice facility (e.g. indoor arenas, outdoor ice rinks, skating trails and curling rinks) considering the original Facilities Master Plan recommendations and to identify additional ice facility recommendations to best meet the needs of all residents.
- Represents an opportunity to integrate curling into broader City ice objectives

The work undertaken to inform the Curling Strategy will be used to inform the City-Wide Ice Strategy, including:

- Staff analysis:
 - Supply and Demand for Curling
 - Facility Options Analysis
- Stakeholder and public feedback collected through the Curling Strategy Process
- Revised Principles for Potential Conversion or Shared Use

Identifying ice pads/facilities and programming opportunities through the Ice Strategy will consider the feedback we have heard through engagement:

- Safe, consistent and high quality ice that serves both recreational and competitive curlers
- Provides access and availability of curling ice time (including primetime, minimizing downtime from conversion if applicable, and ice time for all levels and types of play)
- Off-ice warm spaces to support social interaction and sense of community between different user groups

Curling Strategy

To be published to the City of Toronto curling webpage early 2022, and will include:

- Reference the work completed to date, stakeholders engaged, including key feedback and insight to improve access to curling
- The City's plan for continued commitment and investment in curling
- How the curling strategy work will be used as a foundation for and integrated into a city-wide ice strategy
- The outcomes and a set of recommendations related to provision, programming, including a Curling Sport Development plan to promote the sport of curling for all age groups.

Curling Sport Development Plan

The Sport Development Plan will include:

- Introduce curling through drop-in try-it curling opportunities at PFR arenas and artificial ice rinks.
- Leverage existing events and City programs to introduce curling to new players; for example, Youth Games and Camps.
- Incorporate the National Coach Certification Program (NCCP) Community Sport Coach modules for curling (i.e. Club Coach, Club Coach-Youth) into PFR's Let's Get Coaching! Program that offers free coach certification opportunities to the public.
- Leverage the community engagement networks of the Community Development and Youth Unit to promote curling opportunities to youth and Adapted & Inclusive participants.
- Engage potential partners including Curling Canada, CurlION, Floor Curl - Rocks and Rings to assist with try-it events at arenas and artificial ice rinks
- Explore funding and partnership opportunities to secure required curling equipment.

PF&R looks forward to opportunities to partner with members of the stakeholder reference group on an on-going basis to deliver and implement this Sport Development Plan.

Next Steps

Next Steps

- **Continued Investment:** The City will continue to invest in the refurbishment and upkeep of the three City-Owned curling facilities, including the Leaside Curling Club, the East York Curling Club, and the Tam Heather Curling and Tennis Club.
- **Early 2022:** Publish the Curling Strategy to the Curling Strategy webpage, begin rollout of curling sport development plan
 - Update Curling SRG members & those signed up for e-updates
- **2022:** Work completed through the curling strategy will be an integral component to shape the City-Wide Ice Strategy

Upcoming Opportunities

The City is committed to supporting curling and the curling community, including providing a variety of opportunities for sport participation and engagement.

As part of the continued sport development opportunities for the curling community, the City will be offering try-it events:

- Monday Feb 22nd at 6 locations City-wide (locations TBD)

Questions & Discussion

Thank You