

## **STAFF REPORT**

### **REPORT FROM THE DIRECTOR OF RECREATION AND CULTURE**

Re: Kiwanis Skate Park and Tennis Courts

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

THAT the Report from the Director of Recreation and Culture be received;

AND THAT staff is directed to apply for a donation to contribute towards renovation Option 1

#### **BACKGROUND**

The William Lozier Skate Park opened in 2016 at Kiwanis Park. The skate park was built in the middle of the three tennis courts. The park was built with different non-fixed structures including ramps, half pipes and a few fixed rails. Depending on the brand and company, the non-fixed structures have a life expectancy of 10-20 years. Some pieces that were installed were made of steel and are under a 20-year warranty. Other pieces in the park (the half pipe) is made up of wood, which is best designed for indoors or warmer climates. Over the past few years, the park has been closed for repairs several times as the condition of some fixtures posed a risk of harm to the public. The half pipe was removed from the park in the fall of 2022 and will no longer be a fixture for park attendees. With the addition of a skate park at Kiwanis, the community lost its most playable public tennis court. With the rise of popularity of Pickleball, there has been a strong demand of requests for a playable outdoor facility for the spring, summer and fall months. Nordic park has two courts, but are also in no condition to be playable for tennis nor Pickleball. There is a major need to address both tennis and skatepark areas given their current condition. At this point, we run the risk of the skate park not being safe and usable this coming spring / summer.

#### **ANALYSIS**

The City of Elliot Lake has an encouraging opportunity to apply for a corporate donation from a business with roots in the community for up to \$250,000 that is to be used for something that benefits community youth recreation. A major issue that Elliot Lake has faced over the last few years is the degrading equipment at the William Lozier memorial Skate Park that opened in 2016. Some equipment that was purchased remain usable and are under a 20-year warranty, where other pieces that were purchased and installed have degraded and rotted to the point of being unusable. These pieces are no longer safe to have a part of the park, severely limiting what the park offering. In addition to the non-fixed pieces in the park, the concrete base of the tennis court alone needs major attention and resurfacing.

Currently, the court has faced some wear and tear from use over the years, especially with the insertion of the skate park. There are many cracks, overgrowth, and fixtures from the tennis net pole inserts that raise safety concerns. In addition, the surface of the court is degrading and breaking into pieces, creating uneven levels, making it difficult for Pickleball/tennis or skateboard/wheel sports. The

court would eventually need to be dug up and re-surfaced to make it playable again. In its current state, the concrete continues to split and deteriorate, making it more unsafe each year. There is a large overgrowth on the sides that has increased the moisture in the ground under the court, increasing the deterioration of the once solid court. This is something that will need to be addressed regardless of the type of use. Please see examples of the court/park conditions in the attached photos.

The opportunity to use the corporate donation towards youth recreation could benefit the community in a few different ways. Please see the different options that highlight areas that could benefit the most from the donation:

**Option 1:** Moving the park to the ball diamond and constructing an all-wheels park at Kiwanis park. Moving to the ball diamond provides more space and two options: either a concrete park (estimated lifespan of 30 years) or a park with non-concrete fixtures, similar to the ones we have with 20-year warrant with an all-wheels pump track that surround it. See attached examples of a concrete park, a non-fixture park and a pump track. This project would work in many phases and addresses a few different needs for the community. Phase 1 would be to address the Skate Park needs. Although this option results in the loss of a ball diamond, it does allow us to address the demands for a public outdoor tennis and Pickleball court. The ball diamond at Kiwanis has primarily been used for youth baseball. Currently, the field sees 3 hours of rentals per week. Our plan to ensure that youth baseball still can be facilitated is to put more time into maintaining Burley 1. In addition, we also plan to add lights to the field so games can be played after sunset. Currently, Burley 1 only sees 3 hours of rental time a week as well, primarily for youth baseball. Our goal for this option would be to spend more resources into making Burley 1 the field for youth baseball.

Elliot Lake currently does not have any playable public courts and with the rise of the sport Pickleball, there has been a major demand for facilities to play, especially during the summer months. This option provides the opportunity to address the demands for public tennis/Pickleball courts and improving our current memorial skate park. By investing in the park, we will also make it an all-wheels park, making it an accessible park. The estimated budget for the all-wheel park (phase one) would be \$350,000. The donation would cover 66% of the estimated all-wheel park budget, where the remaining portion would be attempted to be covered through grant opportunities, community fundraising and if needed tax dollars.

The second phase(s) of the project, resurfacing the tennis courts, would require staff to search for alternate funding through grant opportunities to help cover once it is open.

**Option 2:** Rebuilding/rejuvenating the skate park in its current location (on the tennis court). The concrete and fixtures need to be addressed. This donation could be used to either build a new concrete all-wheel park or purchase new fixtures and potentially a small non-fixed pump track around it, or in a different location. This option does not require losing the ball diamond at Kiwanis Park, but provide us with the loss of an accessible tennis court that has washrooms onsite. Without Kiwanis tennis courts as an option, we will be forced to dig up and resurface the courts at Nordic park instead in a different project. This court is one third of the size of the ones at Kiwanis, and does not currently have washrooms accessible. Another issue of the courts location is the distance from the parking lot. An accessible path will be required to be installed from the parking lot to the court. In 2022, the court project alone in this location was estimated to cost \$340,000+ and that does not include the installation of accessible washrooms.

**Option 3:** Use the donation to contribute towards the pool renovations. This option would assist in the large pool costs, but forces us to find alternative funding opportunities to address the safety concerns of our memorial skate park, and the demands for public tennis/Pickleball courts in the community.

## **FINANCIAL IMPACT**

The financial impact of the project will depend on the option that council ultimately selects. The budget for the all wheel park ranges from \$300,000 - \$350,000 depending on size and fixtures. The approx. cost to renovate and resurface the Kiwanis tennis courts is estimated around \$250,000. The estimated rebuild of the Nordic tennis courts is around \$340,000 (not including the installation of washrooms). Both tennis court estimates are preliminary estimates based on the prices of supplies to re-build the courts.

## **LINKS TO STRATEGIC PLAN**

The repairs and renovations to the skate park and tennis courts align with the City's strategic plans through the following:

- Continued investment to infrastructure
- Increase health and community wellness

## **SUMMARY**

With the deteriorating tennis courts and unsafe conditions of the current memorial skate park, staff are seeking direction from council on where to focus the potential corporate donation opportunity that is intended to be used for youth recreation.