

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

Re: Community Sport and Recreation Infrastructure Fund Application

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

That Council approve the submission of an application for the Community Sport and Recreation Infrastructure Fund to subsidize the costs for equipment replacement and refurbishment at the Collins Hall;

And that the City's contribution be drawn from the Building and Facilities reserve;

And that signing authority be delegated to the Director of Recreation and Culture to apply and sign for the funding application on the City's behalf.

#### **BACKGROUND**

The Community Sport and Recreation Infrastructure Fund (CSRIF), administered by the Ontario Government, is a key initiative aimed at enhancing the quality and accessibility of community sports and recreational facilities. The Repair and Rehabilitation stream of this fund specifically targets the maintenance and upgrading of existing infrastructure, ensuring that community spaces remain safe, functional, and welcoming for all residents.

This funding stream is designed to support municipalities in addressing urgent repair needs, thus prolonging the lifespan of community assets and enhancing their usability. Eligible projects under this stream include critical repairs, upgrades, and refurbishments that directly impact the community's ability to engage in physical activity and recreation.

After extensive discussions, staff have identified a pressing need for the replacement of the air handling unit in Collins Hall, alongside necessary refurbishment of the flooring. The current air handling unit is outdated and no longer functioning, posing challenges in maintaining a comfortable environment for users. Additionally, the flooring requires refurbishment to ensure safety and enhance the overall functionality of the space.

The Collins Hall has been one of the most resilient and versatile facilities in Elliot Lake. Investing in the retrofitting of Collins Hall is essential to maintaining and enhancing its role as a vital community hub that serves multiple functions, including a sports and recreation facility, events hall, and performing arts center. This facility is more than just a building; it is a cornerstone of community life, fostering social connections, promoting active living, and providing a platform for art expression. To ensure a longer life expectancy and a safe environment, the Collins Hall requires these necessary upgrades so it can continue to offer its diverse programming.

Applying for the CSRIF under the Repair and Rehabilitation stream presents a significant opportunity for our municipality to secure essential funding. This investment not only addresses immediate infrastructure needs but also supports our broader goals of promoting health, wellness, and community engagement through improved recreational facilities. By ensuring that Collins Hall remains a vibrant community hub, we can foster increased participation in sports and recreational activities, benefiting residents of all ages.

## ANALYSIS

The City of Elliot Lake continues to collaborate with Johnson Controls International (JCI) to enhance the energy efficiency and operational effectiveness of its facilities. Among the Facility Improvement Measures (FIMs) identified at Collins Hall by JCI are the replacement of lighting systems, the installation of advanced lighting controls, and the replacement of the air handling unit. The City will work closely with JCI to prepare an application that effectively outlines these FIMs, as well as the critical need to refurbish the hardwood floor at Collins Hall.

**Air Handling Unit Replacement:** The air handling unit at Collins Hall has been non-functional for over two years, significantly impacting indoor air quality and comfort, particularly during the warmer months. This situation is especially concerning given the facility's role in hosting various community activities, including entertainment events, performing arts, and programs such as the YMCA summer day camp. An effective air handling unit is essential for maintaining a safe and healthy environment for all users. By replacing this unit, the City can ensure proper ventilation, regulate temperature, and enhance overall air quality, making Collins Hall a more inviting and comfortable space for participants and attendees.

**Lighting Improvements:** The FIMs identified by Johnson Controls International (JCI) emphasize the necessity of lighting replacements and the installation of advanced lighting controls. Upgrading the lighting will not only improve visibility and aesthetics within the hall but also enhance energy efficiency, thereby reducing operational costs. Well-lit spaces are crucial for safety during sports activities and events, as they help prevent accidents and create a more pleasant atmosphere for performances and gatherings. Improved lighting will also support the versatility of Collins Hall, allowing it to adapt to various functions and events seamlessly.

**Gym Floor Refurbishment:** The condition of the gym floor presents another pressing concern. Many wooden boards are exposed and damaged from years of use, compromising the integrity and safety of the surface. While the floor has served the community well by hosting numerous events, it now requires significant refurbishment to ensure it remains functional and safe. Some boards need complete replacement to prevent injury to users, and the outdated court lines have not been updated in over 20 years. Given the growing popularity of pickleball and other emerging sports, it is vital to redesign the floor markings to accommodate new activities while ensuring proper spacing for safer play. This refurbishment will not only extend the life of the gym floor but also enhance the facility's adaptability to a wider range of sports and community events.

The necessity of replacing the air handling unit, upgrading lighting systems, and refurbishing the gym floor at Collins Hall is critical, as these improvements directly impact the facility's usability, safety, and overall community engagement.

With Council's support to pursue this funding opportunity and the designation of signing authority, staff will work with JCI to prepare and submit an application to the Community Sport and Recreation Infrastructure Fund, aiming to secure the financial assistance necessary to enhance the infrastructure of Collins Hall.

## **FINANCIAL IMPACT**

The Community Sport and Recreation Infrastructure Fund (CSRIF) offers a significant opportunity for the City of Elliot Lake to secure essential funding for the retrofitting of Collins Hall. Eligible applicants can apply for project funding ranging from \$150,000 to \$1 million. Under the CSRIF, the provincial contribution to the project can cover up to 50% of eligible project costs for municipalities. Given the City's anticipated total project cost of approximately \$750,000, this funding could provide up to \$375,000 to support the necessary upgrades at Collins Hall.

It is important to note that the CSRIF operates on a cost-sharing basis, meaning that the City will be responsible for covering the remaining project expenses. Additionally, no other Ontario provincial funding may be utilized for this project, ensuring that the CSRIF is the primary source of funding for the proposed improvements.

In unique circumstances, the Ministry may consider a provincial contribution of up to 70% of eligible project costs for municipalities with populations under 20,000.

## **LINKS TO STRATEGIC PLAN**

This project is linked to the City's Strategic Plan through Infrastructure and Capital Projects and the following action item:

19. The City will be strategic in their approach to making applications for financial grants. Funding applications will focus on projects that are a priority for the community. The City will ensure that its participating contribution is available to complete work.

## **SUMMARY**

The investment in these key improvements at Collins Hall is essential for maintaining its status as a vibrant community hub. By prioritizing the replacement of the air handling unit, upgrading the lighting, and refurbishing the gym floor, the City will enhance the safety, comfort, and functionality of the facility. This strategic investment will support the continued engagement of residents in recreational and cultural activities, ultimately fostering a healthier and more connected community.