

Capital Project P.10080 - Archibald Arena Rehabilitation – Budget Adjustment Request

ISSUE

Components of the Archibald Arena (Archibald) have reached the end of their useful service life and must be replaced in order to continue to maintain current approved service levels. A small investment is being made in 2025 to minimize the risk of failure during the 2025-2026 winter season; however, the facility requires a capital investment to maintain current service levels beyond 2026. This report outlines the Administration's proposed strategy for renewal of the facility.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Standing Policy Committee on Environment Utilities and Corporate Services recommend to City Council that Capital Project P.10080-Archibald Arena Rehabilitation be adjusted to account for the design costs of \$775,000 funded from the Comprehensive Civic Buildings Maintenance Reserve (CBCM).

BACKGROUND

Archibald was built in 1972, in the Richmond Heights neighbourhood of Saskatoon, and has served the City of Saskatoon (City) as an indoor arena for 53 years. During the winter, the arena serves as an ice facility for ice sports, including hockey and public skating, and a dryland rental facility in the summer for box lacrosse and other indoor special events. Being a community facility, Archibald serves various groups and is an important community amenity.

At its meeting on January 25, 2023, City Council received the report [Green and Inclusive Community Buildings Program – Round 2](#), requesting approval for the Administration to proceed with a series of federal Green and Inclusive Community Buildings (GICB) program applications. City facilities outlined in the report included the White Buffalo Youth Lodge, the Civic Conservatory, the Forestry Farm Park & Zoo, and Archibald. Specific to Archibald, the report outlined that the facility was beyond its useful life and that the phase out of the current R22 refrigerant was required. Items related to improved accessibility, code compliance, energy efficiency, and building envelope integrity were also identified as areas needing repair or replacement. The report estimated that total potential project costs would be between \$7 million and \$11 million (2023 dollars) and that the project would be a suitable candidate for the GICB program.

At the [March 15, 2023, Governance & Priorities Committee \(GPC\) Meeting](#), Administration provided the 2024 – 2035 Major Capital Project Prioritization report recommending approval of the presented capital project list be used in the development of a future funding plan. Appendix 1 of the report - 2024-2035 Major Capital Project Prioritization - Capital Project Details – described Archibald as being beyond its current

Capital Project P.10080 - Archibald Arena Rehabilitation – Budget Adjustment Request

useful life, and outlined a replacement facility that would include dual rink surfaces, universal/gender-neutral locker, change room, and washroom facilities, multipurpose and meeting room, ice plant and mechanical room, Zamboni room, addressing of accessibility and inclusivity concerns/requirements, and administration and maintenance support spaces. The cost of the project was estimated at \$20 million to \$50 million dollars (2023 dollars) depending on scope of project ultimately selected. The report also noted the possibility of Federal (GICB), Provincial and Private funding opportunities.

At the [August 16, 2023, GPC Meeting](#), the Administration recommended preliminary approval of the funding plan related to various projects including Archibald, scheduled for 2024 – 2029. Projects that had been submitted for other levels of government funding that were reliant on a City contributed share of the total project funds, including Archibald, were prioritized into the first of four prioritization categories which comprised the overall 2024 – 2035 Major Capital Project Prioritization presented at a prior GPC meeting.

Capital Project P.10080 - Archibald Arena Rehabilitation was approved in the 2024-2025 Business Plan and Budget, contingent on GICB approval, at a total cost of \$8,093,000, funded by \$1,000,000 from CBCM, \$6,308,000 from GICB, and \$785,000 from the 10-year Major Capital Funding Plan.

In February 2024, Administration received notice that Archibald was denied GICB funding. Later in 2024, an additional round of GICB funding was announced, and the Administration made another submission for the Archibald renewal project. Confirmation has not yet been received regarding whether the Archibald submission succeeded in its second bid for GICB grant funding.

In March 2025, one of the two ice plant compressors failed leading to the shutdown of the ice plant. This failure occurred near the end of the operational season and did not cause significant programming disruption. The compressor needs to be replaced so the ice plant can operate in time for the 2025-2026 winter season. The estimated cost of the compressor replacement is \$100,000 and will be funded through the CBCM program. This investment will reduce the risk of failure during the 2025-2026 winter season while planning and design work continues for the capital investment in 2026.

DISCUSSION/ANALYSIS

Although regular maintenance has been performed and a renovation occurred in 2005, several critical systems have reached the end of their life. Specifically, the ice plant and its associated systems create a risk of failure (as demonstrated by the recent compressor failure), which would result in facility closure. The facility's current performance deficiencies can be attributed mainly to design practices and technology that were acceptable at the time of the building's construction in the 1970's, but do not comply with current practices including Accessibility Action Plan (AAP) and modern rink design. Deficiencies specific to Archibald include:

- Ozone-depleting R22 coolant used in the ice plant;
- Ice plant compressors are undersized;

Capital Project P.10080 - Archibald Arena Rehabilitation – Budget Adjustment Request

- Ice field slab is both uninsulated and unheated;
- Building envelope has insufficient insulation; and
- Significant air leakage through walls and roof.

While the \$100,000 compressor replacement is planned immediately to reduce the risk of failure during the 2025-2026 winter season, a longer-term solution is required to extend the life of Archibald. The ideal option is that the City is successful in its GICB (round 3) application which would include replacement of the ice plant, ice field, dasher boards, and new electrical service required for the new equipment as well as additions including improved accessibility, code compliance, energy efficiency, and building envelope integrity. The total project value submitted to the GICB program is approximately \$9.8 million and the Federal government would provide 80% funding for eligible costs under this option.

If GICB funding is unsuccessful, to keep Archibald operational beyond 2025-2026, a minimum investment to replace the ice plant, ice field, dasher boards, and new electrical service required for the new equipment is required. The estimated cost is \$8 million and would be solely funded by the City.

While the City has identified funding through the Major Capital Funding Plan for the City's 20% requirement if successful with our GICB application, future reporting and approval will be required if unsuccessful in the GICB funding application to identify a funding source for the minimum investment and/or alternative options.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

To prepare for construction in 2026 of either option, design work is required in 2025. The estimated design cost of the GICB scope is \$775,000 and is recommended to be funded from CBCM. Procurement of the design work will be undertaken to maximize the eligibility of expenses for potential GICB funding and return unused funds to source if the minimum scope of work proceeds.

The 2024 GICB grant application was submitted with a total estimated project cost of \$9,852,219, which included significant funding for accessibility improvements. The City's contribution of \$2,173,719 would be provided by a combination of funding from the CBCM reserve and the Major Capital Funding Plan, with the remaining \$7,678,500 provided by the GICB grant funding. Any portion of work procured prior to GICB approval would be deemed ineligible. Procurement of the design work in 2025 would be done to maximize the eligibility of costs for potential GICB funding and further reporting will be provided to City Council upon notification of the GICB funding, to confirm funding plan for construction in 2026.

NEXT STEPS

The Administration is proceeding with replacement of the compressor to minimize the risk of failure of the ice plant during the 20205/2026 winter season.

Pending City Council approval of this report, the Administration will develop a procurement plan for a consultant to design the minimum scope of work required for

Capital Project P.10080 - Archibald Arena Rehabilitation – Budget Adjustment Request

replacement of the ice field and ice plant and associated renovations, with the option to expand the scope to include the GICB components if funding is successful. Design will proceed in 2025. Once the outcome of the GICB funding request is known, further reporting will be provided to obtain approval of a funding strategy for construction to proceed in 2026.

Report Approval

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