



SUBJECT: Seeking project endorsement for Community Sport and Recreation Infrastructure Fund (CSRIF)

TO: Committee of the Whole

FROM: Recreation, Community and Culture

Report Number: RCC-17-24

Wards Affected: 5

Date to Committee: December 2, 2024

Date to Council: December 10, 2024

Recommendation:

Direct the Director of Recreation, Community and Culture to work with government relations to apply to stream two of the Community Sport and Recreation Infrastructure Fund (CSRIF) for the re-development of the west side of Sherwood Forest Park as outlined in recreation, community and culture report RCC-17-24.

PURPOSE:

Vision to Focus Alignment:

- Designing and delivering complete communities
 - Providing the best services and experiences
 - Protecting and improving the natural environment and taking action on climate change
 - Driving organizational performance
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Executive Summary:

The purpose of this report is to seek Council's endorsement to apply for the new [Community Sport and Recreation Infrastructure Fund \(CSRIF\)](#) offered through the provincial government. [Stream Two](#) of the grant is intended to support new builds and signature builds. The grant is a 50/50 cost share for up to \$10M on a first come first serve basis. The grant criteria includes a set target date for project completion of March 31, 2027 as well as project endorsement by each municipality's Council.

In alignment with the priorities set out in the [Live and Play Plan](#) and the development of the Major Transit Station Areas (MTSA), staff are recommending an application that will enable the redevelopment of the west side of Sherwood Forest Park. Over the years, the renewal of this site has been delayed due to competing priorities, like Bateman and Skyway Arena however, with the forthcoming residential developments in; the time has come to prioritize the needed renewal of this MTSA park by addressing the deteriorated asphalt from the old Joint Venture Tennis Courts to be repurposed for a splash pad. The delay of this park renewal has provided staff the ability to consider new emerging needs, as outlined in [RCC-12-24](#). Cricket has been growing rapidly over the last few years and the current outdoor amenities do not support the requirement of the sport. As such, staff are proposing that the re-development of Sherwood include Burlington's first official cricket pitch.

Background and Discussion:

On August 19, 2024, the provincial government announced the Community Sport and Recreation Infrastructure Fund (CSRIF). The fund is for investments in new, transformative community sport and recreation assets. There is available funding of \$200M through a 50/50 cost sharing model up to \$10M. There are two streams of fundings:

1. Repair and Rehabilitation (Applications were due October 29, 2024)
2. New Builds/Signature New Builds (projects are being considered in a first come, first served basis until the funding has been allocated)

Staff evaluated various approaches to determine the most strategic projects for the city. After careful consideration, the decision was to focus on submitting a strong application for CSRIF stream 2 funding and opt out of stream 1. This approach was informed by a thorough review of City priorities, ongoing and planned projects with potential for completion by Q1 2027, and emerging community recreation needs outlined in the Live and Play Plan.

Cricket emerged as a top priority due to the City's lack of full-size cricket fields. Given the large green spaces required for cricket pitches, options for suitable locations are limited; however, the west side of Sherwood Forest Park meets these spatial needs. The planned revitalization of this area will also incorporate integrated design elements that connect with the MTSA boundary and surrounding developments. Design efforts are already underway for Phase 1, making this the ideal time to prioritize a new cricket pitch.

Recognizing the urgency and community demand.

Benefits of proposed project:

- **Integrates multiple enhancements:** By building a new lit cricket field, adding lights to the existing rugby field, adding a splash pad, and building new supporting amenities for the park. The City can maximize the project's scope and community impact.
- **Aligns with strategic priorities:** This project directly addresses the needs highlighted in the Live and Play Plan, ensuring our funding request is grounded in comprehensive community assessment.
- **Leverages funding:** The 50/50 cost-sharing model allows us to optimize our budget effectively, providing a solid financial foundation for the proposed investments.

Strategy/process/risk

Staff reviewed the results from the Live and Play Plan and evaluated the list of the priorities listed based on:

- service level deficit and geographical needs,
- community need and trends; and
- asset lifecycle

The lack of a dedicated cricket field is a significant gap in our recreational offerings. Currently, cricket is being played in a shared space between two baseball diamonds at Central Park, limiting access and scheduling. The existing arrangement is challenging given the limited space and duo use. There has been a significant increase in cricket field enquiries, the city is only meeting 20% of the incoming requests.

A purpose-built facility at Sherwood Forest Park would allow for one fully dedicated cricket facility in Burlington and help to address and allow access to a full-size field of play and enhance the overall recreational landscape.

The timing aligned with the proposed 2025 capital budget and work program as staff are already in the design phase for the re-development of Sherwood West to meet the project completion date.

Options Considered

Staff have thoroughly reviewed the various options outlined in the Live and Play Plan and assessed their feasibility in relation to the upcoming CSRIF grant application. Here's an overview of the considerations and recommendations:

1. Pickleball Facility at Sherwood Park

- **Current Status:** Several pickleball facilities have recently been developed in Burlington, notably at Palmer and Leighland parks and many private indoor clubs have recently opened such as Blue Zones and B town Courts, Glad Tidings Church opened three courts recently and Skyway Community Centre will have two courts.
- **Priority Assessment:** Given the existing capacity and the City's and the private sector's recent investments in the sport, staff did not prioritize a new facility at this time.
- **Conclusion:** Not a high priority for grant application.

2. Other Top 10 Recreational Needs

- **Project Status:** Many of the other identified needs (e.g., Central Park redevelopment, LaSalle Pool, Event Spaces) are not included in the existing work plan, making it challenging to meet the grant's completion timeline of March 2027 and would require more investment on the City side to match.
- **Conclusion:** Focus should remain on projects that can be advanced within the existing framework, timeline and available resources.

3. Robert Bateman Community Centre (RBCC)

- **Option Considered:** Staff evaluated the potential for phase 2 fit-up of RBCC, for the indoor space.
- **Priority Assessment:** The RBCC project was not prioritized as it did not rank among the top ten recreational needs. Additionally, the need for further community engagement on conceptual designs was recognized.
- **Grant Application Feasibility:** Pursuing this grant would undermine the commitment to engage the community, thus compromising the project's integrity and relevance to residents.
- **Conclusion:** Not recommended for current grant application.

4. Green Space Development at RBCC

- **Conceptual Plans:** Staff have developed two similar conceptual plans for the green space surrounding RBCC, emphasizing:
 - Abundant trees
 - Walking paths for connectivity and fitness
 - Seating areas for gathering

- **Community Feedback:** These plans align well with community desires expressed in the Outdoor RBCC Community Visioning sessions and the Live and Play Plan for passive green spaces.
 - **Cost Estimate:** The projected cost for the green space development, including improvements at Ascension School, is approximately \$3 million.
 - **Recommendation:** This project aligns with community needs and could be a preferred option for the grant application.
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Financial Matters:

Total Financial Impact

Below is a summary of the potential financial impacts of pursuing Sherwood Forest Park under stream 2 of CSRIF. These values are estimates based on total project cost eligibility as defined in the applicant guide.

New Builds/Signature New Builds –Sherwood Forest Park West Development

- Estimated Project Cost: \$6,570,000
- Eligible Funding: 50% of Project Cost
- Maximum Eligible Funding: \$3,285,000

City Contribution

- Prior Approved Funding: \$1,189,000
- Proposed 2025 Capital Budget: \$1,700,000
- Proposed 2026 Capital Budget: \$915,000
- Total City Funding: \$3,804,000

Source of Funding

The estimated total City contribution is \$3.8M. This is a combination of prior approved and forecasted budget. This funding is currently allocated to make changes to the west side of Sherwood Forest Park including a new splash pad, playground replacement, upgrades to utilities/servicing and parking lot improvements. If the City is successful with additional funding from the CSRIF program, additional scope can be added to the project such as a new cricket field and new support amenities.

Other Resource Impacts

Applying for these grants will require a considerable amount of staff time from Public Works, Recreation, Community and Culture, Finance and the CAO's office. If successful workplans will be adjusted to make accommodations for an additional \$3.8M of capital improvements.

Climate Implications:

Park design considerations with a climate lens include park amenities that the community is asking for, like shade, water fountains, seating, and passive green spaces. The proposed Sherwood Forest Park West Side redevelopment proposes the building of a new splash pad in MTSA areas. These features play an important role, ensuring residents can still enjoy our parks system as the climate changes.

Engagement Matters:

Staff completed an extensive engagement for the Live and Play Plan and Robert Bateman Community Centre. Hundreds of residents offered their thoughts and opinions on their recreational needs both in-person at focused engagement sessions, at various events like Food for Feedback and Appleby Line Street Festival and online at Get Involved Burlington.

Conclusion:

The Community Sport and Recreation Infrastructure Fund (CSRIF) presents a significant opportunity for our community to address the pressing recreation needs of the community. Using the recently endorsed Live and Play Plan, the construction of a new cricket field surfaced as one of the top ten recreational priorities. By integrating this potential project with work currently underway, there is an opportunity to leverage resources already dedicated to the redevelopment of Sherwood Forest Park. It would also support the pursuit to achieve the best design outcome including a new integrated site plan with the adjacent development in the Appleby MTSA.

This funding opportunity is not just about enhancing facilities; it's about fostering a vibrant, inclusive community where everyone can enjoy active, healthy lifestyles.

Respectfully submitted,

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Report Approval:

All reports are reviewed and/or approved by Department Director, the Chief Financial Officer and the Commissioner Legal and Legislative Services/City Solicitor.