

# THE MUNICIPALITY OF LAMBTON SHORES

**Report CAO 12-2024**

**Council Meeting Date: December 17, 2024**

**TO:** Mayor Cook and Members of Council

**FROM:** Steve McAuley, CAO and Ashley Farr, Director of Community Services

**RE:** Grand Bend Community Centre Update

**RECOMMENDATION:**

**THAT** Report CAO 12-2024 regarding the “Grand Bend Community Centre Update” be received; and

**THAT** staff be directed to initiate online public engagement for the proposed facility design.

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**SUMMARY**

This report presents an update for the Grand Bend Community Centre design, and identifies next steps in the process for Council consideration.

**BACKGROUND**

At the September 10, 2024 meeting, Council passed the following resolution:

**THAT** Report CAO 08-2024 regarding the “Grand Bend Community Centre Feasibility Study” be received; and

**THAT** staff be directed to meet with Lambton County Cultural Services Division to discuss partnership opportunities for including a Library branch in a Community Centre in Grand Bend; and

**THAT** the proposal from Skinner & Skinner Architects Inc. in the amount of \$75,000 for preliminary design of the Grand Bend Community Centre be approved; and

**THAT** the proposal from Skinner & Skinner Architects Inc. be funded from Working Funds; and

**THAT** staff be directed to prepare an application to the Community Sport and Recreation Fund; and

**THAT** staff report back to Council at the December 17 meeting with a preliminary design for the facility, proposed location and estimated construction budget.

Further, Council passed the following resolution at a Special Meeting on December 2, 2024:

**THAT** an application to the Community Sport and Recreation Infrastructure Fund for the construction of a Grand Bend Community Centre be approved; and

**THAT** the Grand Bend Community Centre construction project be undertaken subject to funding received through the Community Sport and Recreation Infrastructure Fund.

Council will recall that the Feasibility Study for the Community Centre in Grand Bend considered if a community centre could be justified in Grand Bend based on a number of factors including current population, anticipated growth, expected use and gaps in recreational amenities and services. To determine this, the consultant conducted a community scan, reviewed existing municipal documents, and conducted a robust public consultation that included the following:

- 1) Community Open Houses: approximately 220 attendees collectively across two open houses
- 2) Online Public Survey: 893 responses
- 3) Community Group Workshops: 18 organizations attended
- 4) Municipal Council and stakeholder interviews: 12 interviews conducted

The Feasibility Study process was overseen by the Grand Bend Community Centre Ad-Hoc Advisory Committee, which was comprised of 3 members of the public and 4 members of Council. The findings of the study concluded that a community centre in Grand Bend was justifiable and that the following core amenities should be included:

- A large and flexible multi-purpose space designed with a sufficient floor area, high ceilings and kitchen/storage amenities so that community events and leisure/sports activities can be offered.
- A minimum of one multi-purpose program room that is oriented to meetings and selected programs, designed to allow for meetings, group fitness classes and active living programs, space conducive to arts and cultural programs and events, and other general interest programs, etc.
- An intergenerational space that can be shared by different age groups at different times.
- An indoor walking track.

The study suggested that the following optional amenities could be considered:

- A Library Branch contingent on continued exploration with the Public School and Lambton County Library.
- Building the aforementioned multi-purpose space to be larger and higher quality that exceeds a typical municipal design standard.

- A dedicated group fitness studio or equipment-based fitness centre if an agreement can be negotiated with a third party who would operate and/or contribute capital to such spaces.
- Space for other agency, institutional, and/or private sector partners including but not limited to, daycare/childcare, employment and social service providers, etc.

Council will recall that preliminary planning and design for this project has started so that the Municipality could take advantage of available funding through the Community Sport and Recreation Infrastructure Fund. The Fund can provide up to 50% of total costs to a maximum of \$10 million to support development of new sports facilities in Ontario. The sections below provide an update on the project to date.

### **Conceptual Facility Design**

Municipal staff have met with Skinner & Skinner Architects Ltd. on numerous occasions to finetune the conceptual design and ensure that the recommendations of the Feasibility Study were incorporated into the design.

The preliminary facility design is attached to this report. The facility is proposed as a two-story building with the main level consisting of a public library operated by the County of Lambton, viewing areas, washrooms, change rooms, kitchen, bar and a large multipurpose space that can accommodate large community events (capacity of 400 seated), or sports activities (space for 4 pickleball courts). The upper level includes an elevated walking track surrounding the multipurpose space, space for a limited amount of stationary fitness equipment (e.g., incumbent bikes, ellipticals, etc.), and a large multipurpose room that can be divided into three separate rooms capable of hosting many functions like fitness programs, classes, meetings, and private events (showers, parties, etc.).

The incorporation of the library allows for an intergenerational space that can be accessed by different age groups, and small, private rooms that can provide space for other agencies (e.g., social services, housing, etc.) for interviews with clients/prospective clients without the need to travel to Sarnia. Through an existing agreement, the County would be the operator of the space and provide funding necessary to furnish the library. The library would act as an anchor tenant, and provide some operational support such as providing facility access to renters. Lambton County Cultural Services Division has been consulted on the facility design.

The exterior of the facility includes an outdoor kitchen space that can be used for community events, markets, etc. There is also outdoor space that can have picnic tables, and other seating areas that can be used passively, or can be used for outdoor programming.

## **Proposed Facility Location**

The proposed facility is located at 18 Municipal Drive, Grand Bend (Lion's Park). This property was selected for several reasons:

- The property is owned by the Municipality and therefore no property acquisition is required.
- The property is sufficiently sized to accommodate the proposed facility and required parking.
- The property is centrally located in Grand Bend and is walkable.
- The property presents no significant challenges from a planning/zoning perspective.

The property currently houses a baseball diamond, pavilion, and an outdoor shuffleboard court that will need to be decommissioned to accommodate the facility and required parking. Demolition of the existing Grand Bend Art Centre will also be required to accommodate parking for the facility. This is expected to occur as a last step, which will provide time for consultation with the Art Centre on possible relocation.

It is important to note that there are some limitations on how the property can be developed. There is a floodplain that runs through the property, and approval for development within the floodplain is unlikely (and not recommended). The floodplain primarily surrounds the existing skate park area. The proposed facility has been designed in such a way that it falls outside of the floodplain area and preliminary meetings with ABCA staff have not identified any notable concerns.

## **Estimated Budget**

Skinner & Skinner Architects Ltd. has provided a preliminary budget for the Grand Bend Community Centre. Two options have been considered, the first option without Net Zero Energy options is estimated to be \$17,484,400 and the second option with Net Zero is estimated at \$19,954,400. Both estimates include management and consulting fees, but do not include HST, permits, furniture/equipment, audio/visual, primary site services or generators.

Staff estimate an additional allowance of approximately \$1,300,000 for the items not included, for a total estimated budget of \$18,784,400 without Net Zero and \$21,268,000 with Net Zero.

Estimates were provided for Skinner & Skinner Architects Ltd. by two contractors that have reviewed the draft conceptual designs and have experience with building facilities of similar size to what is being proposed. Any construction work associated with this project will need to be publicly tendered, and therefore the costs are estimates only. The Municipality has applied for the maximum funding amount of \$10 million through the Community Sport and Recreation Infrastructure Fund to support this project.

## **Next Steps**

Per Council's direction, a grant application has been submitted for the Community Sport and Recreation Infrastructure Fund. Timing for funding decisions is not known. As previously highlighted, the construction costs for this project are estimated to be over \$21 million with Net Zero. Staff suggest that no further design work be completed on the project until a funding decision has been made by the province. Once funding is known, staff will report back to Council, and seek direction for the next steps. At that time, staff can also provide options for Council consideration on public fundraising campaigns, recommended fundraising targets, potential for other grants (FCM), and municipal funding source options.

Staff are recommending that online public consultation gauging community opinion on the facility design as presented be initiated in the new year through the Municipal website and social media.

## **ALTERNATIVES TO CONSIDER**

There are no alternatives presented at this time.

## **RECOMMENDED ACTIONS**

This report seeks Council direction to begin online public engagement for the proposed design of a Community Centre in Grand Bend.

## **FINANCIAL IMPACT**

There is no financial impact associated with implementing an online public engagement strategy. Additional reports will be provided to Council once a funding decision from the province is known.

## **CONSULTATION**

Attached:

1. Draft Rendering
2. Draft Floor Plans
3. Draft Elevations
4. Draft Site Plan
5. Draft Budget