



Report to Council

Department: Community Services
Division: Community Services
Date: February 7, 2022
Prepared by: Doug Sweet, Chief Administrative Officer
Report Number: Community Services-2022-02
Subject: Canada Community Revitalization Fund – Essex Centre Sport Field Funding Application
Number of Pages: 6

Recommendation(s)

The following three (3) recommendations are provided for Council's consideration:

1. That Community Services Report 2022-02 entitled "Canada Community Revitalization Fund (CCRF) – Essex Centre Sport Field Funding Application" be **received**; and further
2. That the following resolution be **approved** by Council for purposes of confirming funding for the Canada Community Revitalization Fund (CCRF) for the development of a portion of Phase 1 of the new Essex Centre Sport Fields.
 - a. That Council **approves** the submission of an application to Canada Community Revitalization Fund (CCRF) for the development of a portion of Phase 1 of the new Essex Centre Sport Fields, and
 - b. That the information contained in the Application is factually accurate; and further,
 - c. That should the Town of Essex be successful in receiving the maximum of 75% of all eligible Canada Community Revitalization Fund costs submitted, up to a

maximum of \$750,000 of the total Phase 1A project (Budget cost of \$1,068,899), that the Town of Essex **confirms** funding for the remaining \$318,899 of the total Phase 1A project cost through the General Contingency Reserve.

Purpose

The Canada Community Revitalization Fund requires that all proposed projects provide a resolution of Council to confirm that Council will commit to funding additional project costs above funds provided through the Canada Community Revitalization Fund.

Background and Discussion

The Town of Essex for several years had been exploring land options to be able to accommodate the outdoor sport field shortage in Essex Centre. Several of the main user groups (Essex Minor Baseball, Essex Minor Soccer, Essex Ravens, and Adult Slo-Pitch leagues) have presented to Essex Council in the past requesting that the Town create additional fields to accommodate their current and future needs. The Town has also received several requests over the past years to host more adult slo-pitch leagues, a minor football program and additional soccer leagues in the Essex Centre area but the Town has not been able to accommodate the requests due to lack of fields.

In 2015, a Parks, Recreation, and Culture Master Plan was conducted, and the plan recommended that the Town look at purchasing property to be able to add outdoor sport fields to accommodate the current needs and potential growth of the community. For example, Essex Centre previously had 9 baseball diamonds and currently there are only four diamonds. The reduction in baseball diamonds occurred when two new elementary schools were built in Essex Centre and the new schools were built where the current sport fields were located.

Essex Centre is also lacking in soccer fields of all sizes for all ages as there are currently only four soccer fields (2 full size and 2 mini fields) which does not meet the demand of current

leagues (youth league, 18+ league, and 30+ league) and requests for new leagues in the Essex Centre area.

In addition, with the expansion of Highway 3, Hanlan Street will become a local commuter road within Essex Centre and the extension of Hanlan Street to County Road 23 (Arner Townline) will go directly through the current soccer fields and this work is expected to occur within the next 2 years.

To start the process on consulting with stakeholders on their needs as well as develop an overall cost for the project the Town hired Bezaire Partners to provide a conceptual layout with enough technical review to ensure a buildable result and a cost estimate. The initial project budget estimate was for \$20,649,659 and Council gave direction for Administration to apply for the Federal Sport Infrastructure grant in 2019 but unfortunately the Town was notified it was not successful in receiving any funding.

Administration continued to work with Bezaire Partners to develop a phased in plan and in 2020 Administration presented an option to Council to phase in the project. The Phase 1 budget would include adding infrastructure to the site, 6 soccer fields and 2 baseball diamonds and the cost to complete Phase 1 of the project in 2020 was \$6,494,184.

In July of 2021, Administration applied to the Canada Community Revitalization Fund (CCRF) to potentially receive up to \$750,000 towards developing Phase 1 of the project. In January 2022, Administration was notified that the Town's application was being reviewed but confirmation was required that the remaining funds for Phase 1 were confirmed.

Unfortunately, no additional funds were allocated in the 2022 capital budget for the project or at this time no Naming Rights or Sponsorship funding has been confirmed. Based on further conversations with the Town's CCRF contact it was suggested that funding would only be approved if the remaining funds for the project could be confirmed. Based on these discussions, Administration worked with Bezaire Partners to develop a Phase 1A plan that would only include amenities that are required in the near future. Bezaire Partners developed a

revised plan (see Appendix A) and budget, and this information was forwarded on to CCRF for further review.

If the Town of Essex is successful in receiving funding, work for Phase 1A would need to be completed by March 31, 2023. Although work could be completed by no later than March 31, 2023, the fields would not be able to be used until the fall of 2023 or spring of 2024 as the soccer fields would need 1 full year to have the grass germinate and be ready for regular play.

Financial Impact

The Canada Community Revitalization Fund (CCRF) can provide up to 75% of the total eligible project costs and only up to a maximum of \$750,000. The Canada Community Revitalization Fund requires that all remaining project costs would need to be confirmed to ensure the project would proceed. The revised Phase 1A plan includes only essential requirements to begin the project and the budget for this work is \$1,068,899. Should the Town receive the maximum allowed funding from CCRF the Town of Essex would be responsible for \$318,899 as per the proposed budget. Administration is recommending these funds come from the General Contingency Reserve.

Consultations

Canada Community Revitalization Fund Development Officer

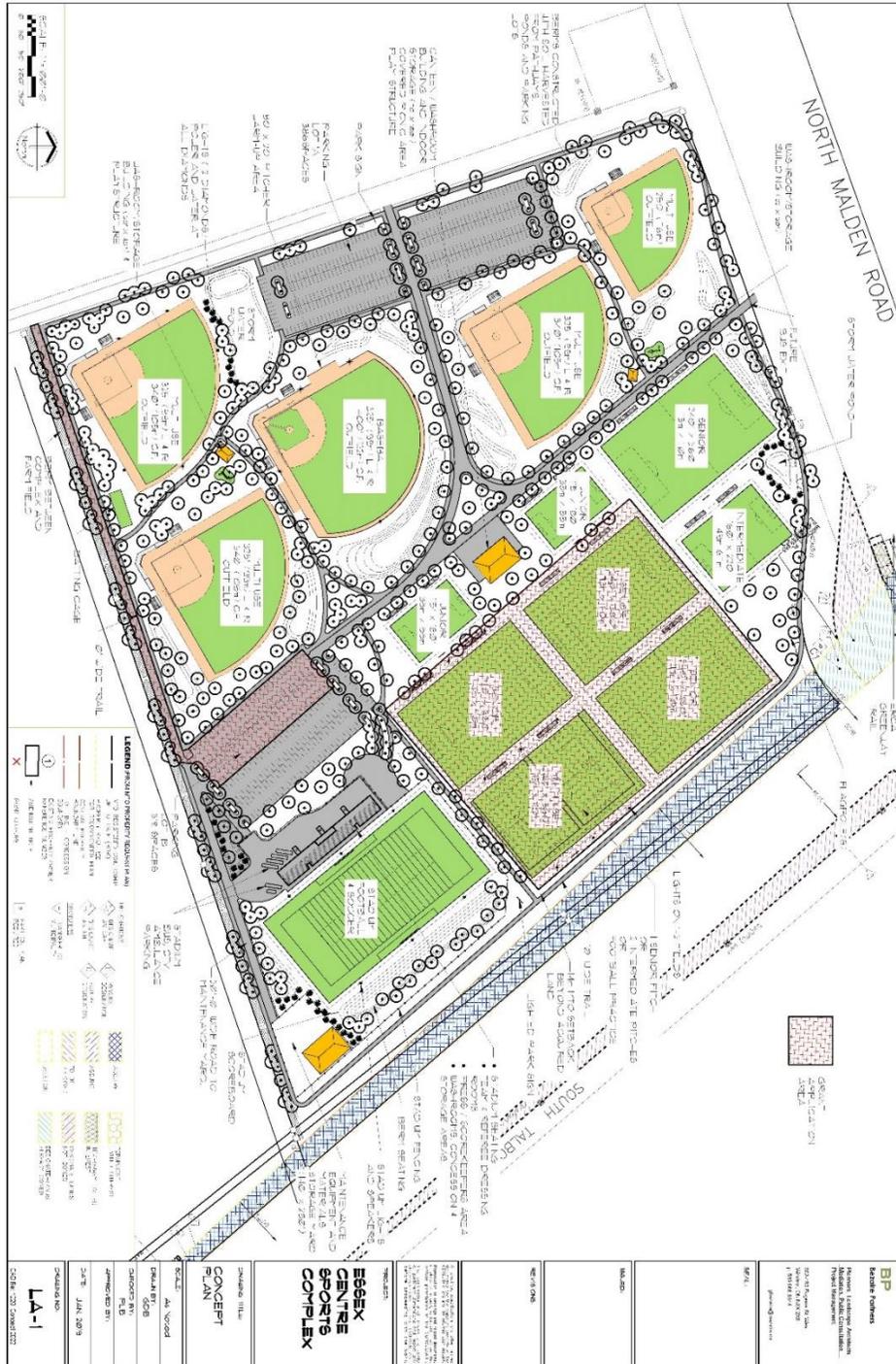
Bezaire Partners

Director of Infrastructure

Director of Corporate Services

Manager of Parks and Facilities

Appendix A – Essex Centre Sport Fields Phase 1A Layout



Link to Strategic Priorities

- Manage, invest and plan for sustainable municipal infrastructure which meets current and future needs of the municipality and its citizens.
- Create a safe, friendly and inclusive community which encourages healthy, active living for people of all ages and abilities.
- Provide a fiscal stewardship and value for tax dollars to ensure long-term financial health to the municipality.
- Manage responsible and viable growth while preserving and enhancing the unique rural and small town character of the community.
- Improve the experiences of individuals, as both citizens and customers, in their interactions with the Town of Essex.
- Improve the Town's capacity to meet the ongoing and future service needs of its citizens while ensuring the corporation is resilient in the face of unanticipated changes or disruptions.