

*Cabinet
du Maire*



*Office of
the Mayor*

New Community and Recreation Centre

December 2016

Dear fellow Montreal Westers,

I am writing to seek your input on an important decision we must make together as a community. The Town of Montreal West is facing a major challenge with the deteriorated state of our existing arena, swimming pool and soccer field. Because of the significant amount of money required to address these problems, we need your input and support before proceeding with a solution.

The arena, built in 1965, requires major investment to bring it up to date and correct its many deficiencies, and to expand its usage beyond an ice rink in order to accommodate a range of community and recreation needs. In April 2015, Town Council mandated consultant architects to evaluate the specific investments needed to update the current arena, and their report illustrated the facility would require approximately \$7.5M of renovations over 10 years just to maintain it. Our pool, constructed at the same time, also needs significant investment in the short to medium term. Furthermore, the soccer field suffers from a dangerously hard surface that cannot be easily remedied without a proper drainage system.

In addition, many of our other municipal buildings are now being used for recreation and community activities but are ill-suited to their current uses. The Community Centre (a converted private home) provides space for small groups only and has virtually no handicapped access. The Town Hall contains our administrative offices which are incompatible with many recreational programs. The chalet at Davies Park is poorly ventilated and not well laid out for multi-purpose seasonal usage. The adult library (another converted residence), serves a largely senior population, yet has no elevator.

Because of these deficiencies and the urgent need to address the costly problem with our arena and because of new grant programs created by the federal government, Council has been exploring the possibility of constructing a multi-purpose, multi-generational Community and Recreation Centre on the space where our current arena and pool now stand.

To this end, after receiving the architects' report on the arena, we held a Town meeting on December 15th, 2015, to inform residents of the scope and costs involved in refurbishing the existing arena. Their report illustrated the need to invest approximately \$7.5M just to update the current arena. On January 7th, 2016, we held a second public consultation (with over 200 residents in attendance) to hear residents' views regarding the future of our existing arena and to initiate the discussion about a new recreation centre.

Further to these consultations, we engaged an architectural firm to develop a concept for this new multi-purpose, multi-generational Community and Recreation Centre, and we are returning to you now to share our proposed plans regarding:

- how to mitigate some of the concerns expressed during the consultation meetings
- what components the new Community and Recreation Centre might include
- where it would sit on Hodgson Field
- how much the Town would need to invest to build the Centre

Please note that this concept design does not represent the final appearance and floor plans of the new Centre. That would come only in the later design stage. There will be further consultation with residents before any design is finalized.

It is important that Council's decision is based on hard data, and does not just reflect the opinions of those who show up at Town Hall meetings. This information package will also be delivered to every door in Montreal West with an accompanying survey. We will ask you to complete the survey after having reviewed the important information contained in this document. We believe it answers many of the questions you may have about the project. As the project progressed and other questions arose, we will endeavor to answer them as well.

The survey will be anonymous and will be conducted by a polling firm independent of Town Council. There will be two ways to complete the survey:

- 1) Answer the questionnaire sheet that will accompany the printed version of this information package delivered to your door and return it to the polling firm in the self-addressed envelope that will be included in the package

OR

- 2) Complete the survey online using the PIN number included on the questionnaire sheet. (This online method is somewhat less costly to the Town)

This is an exciting time for our Town. However, as I have always stated, this project cannot go forward without strong support from our residents and from the provincial and federal governments. Now is your chance to express your opinion on this important project, one which will shape the future of our Town.

Sincerely,

Beny Masella
Mayor

Existing Community and Recreation Facility Deficiencies

The Town of Montreal West's Community and Recreation facilities consist of our arena, pool, soccer field, basketball court, community centre, Davies Chalet, adult library, and space in our Town Hall.

While the arena, pool, basketball court and soccer field are centrally located, the community centre, adult library and Town Hall are located at the south end of the Town. Although they are all easily accessible, a more central approach for recreation and community facilities is ideal – benefitting from economies of scale and accessibility.

Furthermore, the use of the facilities at Town Hall (namely the Music Room and the Assembly Hall) for community and recreational activities are often at odds with the administrative use of the same building. The community centre is a former home that was not designed for public use. The chalet at Davies Park is poorly-ventilated and poorly insulated. The adult library building (also a former residence) had a furnace oil spill a few years ago that has left an unpleasant odour that permeates the building. As well, the library would need to be relocated should the Town decide to sell the library lot and adjacent vacant lot for development. Our Urban Plan identifies the development of this area as an important way to expand our tax base and lessen the load on individual residential tax payers.

While some of the buildings offer limited universal accessibility, they are far from the norm for public buildings. None of our buildings have easily accessible entrances and elevators.

Existing Arena Deficiencies

We have been living with our current arena since its construction in the mid-1960s. It was designed as a single-purpose building with an under-sized ice surface. As well, it was never designed with much regard for the comfort of players or spectators.

The building is showing its age and is experiencing visible deterioration. The main roof is constructed with asbestos-cement corrugated sheets. As long as they are not manipulated, they cause no risk to users of the building. In 2012, the inside surface of the ceiling began to sprout black spots. A report by Golder Associés confirmed that these black spots were mold and cover 60-70% of the inside surface of the ceiling. We have been conducting regular air-quality tests to ensure that the air quality inside the building is not different or more harmful than the air outside the building. The arena also has ongoing maintenance issues: for example, the refrigeration system has been requiring more frequent and costly repairs.

In April 2015, the Town mandated Menkès Shooner Dagenais Letourneux Architectes (MSDL) to complete a building condition assessment (BCA) report. The goal of this report was to concretely define the problems associated with the existing building and provide

proper estimates regarding the investment required to update the arena and to correct its deficiencies. They were also asked whether it would be preferable to invest in the current building or to erect a new building.

Aside from the serious issues with the roof and ceiling, the BCA report highlighted many **health and safety concerns**:

1. The building does not comply with current standards for thermal insulation;
2. There is a lack of insulation,; air infiltration and exfiltration;
3. There is deterioration of the exterior cladding;
4. Universal accessibility is limited;
5. Firewalls are nonexistent;
6. The circulation area is inadequate causing a public safety issue;
7. Several building code violations were noted;
8. Masonry walls had no metal reinforcement;
9. The roof is fragile;
10. The mechanical systems are sub-standard;
11. The electrical system is sub-standard;
12. The ice surface is under-sized

When defining the costs involved with updating the existing building, MSDL estimated that we would need to invest approximately \$3.82M within 5 years and an additional \$3.64M within 10 years. Notably, this investment of **\$7.46M over the next decade** would result in an updated single-use building still sporting an under-sized ice surface, and does not include the cost of any asbestos removal if even minor repairs on the roof surface should be required. Nor does it address any costs to remove the mold from the ceiling.

In their conclusion, MSDL stated that, though an investment of \$7.46M is less than the cost of a new arena with a single, regulation sized ice surface (estimated to be in the \$12M area, not including cost of demolition), refurbishing the old arena still leaves our Town with a single-use building, under-sized ice surface, a lack of meeting rooms, pro-shop, snack bar and amenities found in most contemporary facilities. For that reason, they recommended that the Town construct of a new arena.

It must also be noted that the report did not address the issues with our existing pool and soccer field. Our pool was constructed around the same time as our arena. There have already been serious issues with cracks in the pool. The filtration system is also becoming more problematic.

Our soccer field is dangerously compacted. Due to an inherent deficiency in the drainage, while we occasionally add topsoil to the field, the soil tends to get soggy and then compact into a dangerously hard surface. Adding proper drainage to a field that size is a very costly venture as well.

The Options

Given the analysis above, Council believes there are 3 options:

1. Tear down the existing arena and not replace it.
 - We did not get full estimates for this option but based on estimates for a new complex, demolishing our existing arena would easily top \$1M
 - We would then have to build a small building to house the pool filtration system (currently located in the existing arena)
 - The problems with the soccer field and pool would remain unaddressed
 - The deficiencies in our other recreation facilities would remain unaddressed
2. Invest \$7.46M in our existing building.
 - We would have a “like new” single-use facility with an under-sized ice surface and none of the amenities found in contemporary buildings
 - The problems with the soccer field and pool would remain unaddressed
 - The deficiencies in our other recreation facilities would remain unaddressed
3. Invest in a new Community and Recreation Centre

The subject of this survey is Option 3, a new multi-use, multi-generational Community and Recreation Centre.

Community and Recreation Centre – The Concept

In order to apply for grants from the different levels of government, Council needed to clearly define a concept and provide cost estimates for a potential new project. We mandated MSDL to come up with this concept. They were provided guiding principles for what was to be included in the project:

- Replacement of the existing arena that incorporates space for our deficient recreational and community facilities
- Space for the adult library
- Replacement of the existing pool
- Refurbishing of the existing soccer field
- Retaining the basketball court
- Office and administrative space for our Recreation department

MSDL was given the whole of Hodgson field to work with but they had to ensure that the project was able to:

- Minimize visible building volume and visual impact for area residents

- Provide sufficient off-street parking
- Minimize loss of green space

The concept MSDL designed includes a new building housing:

- a full size ice surface
- separate dressing rooms for hockey and the pool
- a snack bar
- office space for the Recreation department, CRA, day camp and pool staff
- multi-purpose room (a large room with 2 movable partitions that can be subdivided into smaller spaces)
- space for the adult library
- space for a gym/yoga/fitness room

Also included is a new pool, soccer pitch, basketball court, outdoor jogging/walking track, off-street parking and an off-street drop off area for users of the building

The concept that MSDL developed addresses all of the issues we defined.



Conceptual drawing of Community and Recreation Centre

There are 40 off-street spots. That's in addition to 16 on-street spots adjacent to Hodgson field. The on-street spots will be converted to a traditional parallel parking configuration which is much safer than backing out of the perpendicular spots now adjacent to Hodgson.



Conceptual drawing of the Community and Recreation Centre



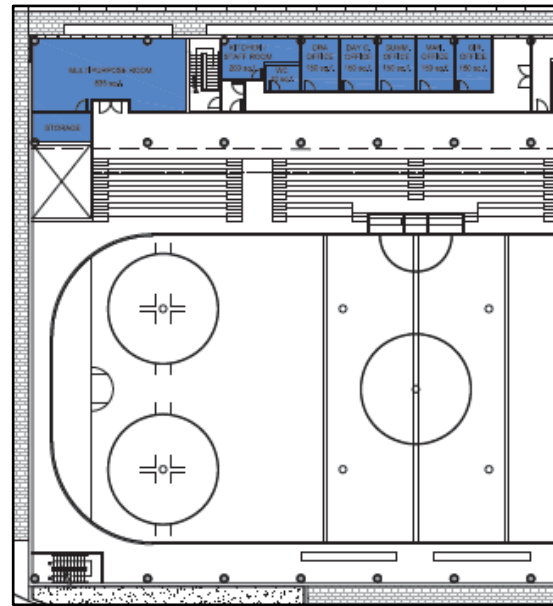
The concept also includes a green buffer of trees along Bedbrook to visually and acoustically help insulate the homes from the building and activities on the park.



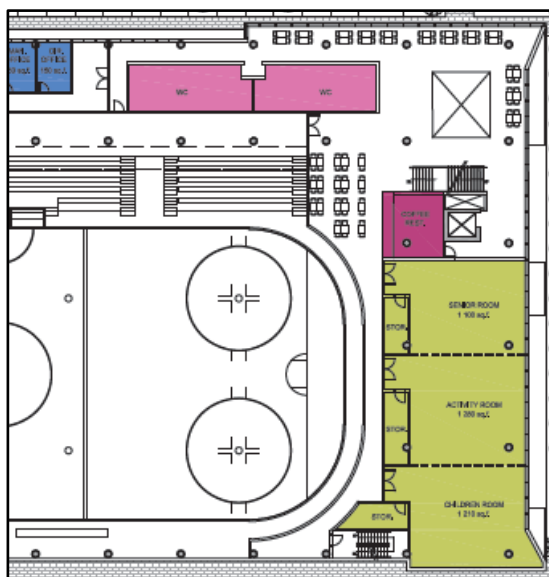
In the off-street parking area, the concept includes a drop-off area. This is inherently safer than dropping the kids off on the street.



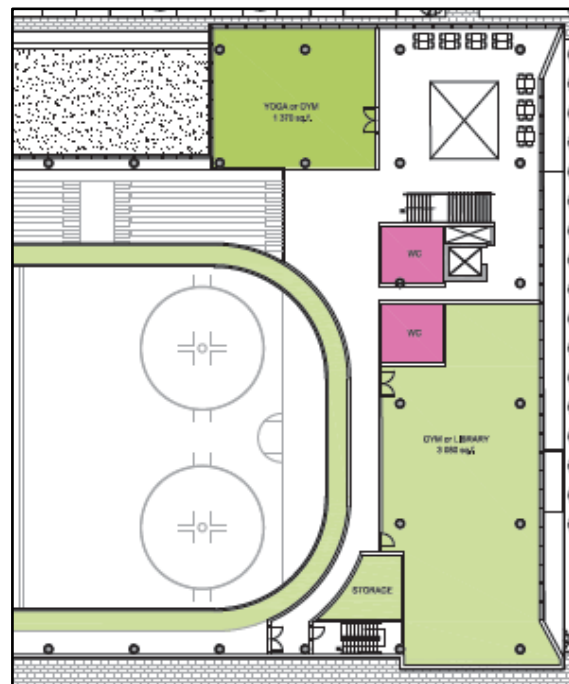
1st floor: Space for pool offices and dressing rooms, hockey dressing rooms, elevator



2nd floor: All offices and administrative space for the Recreation department



2nd floor: Coffee shop, multi-purpose room that can be divided into 3 smaller spaces



3rd floor: gym/yoga room, adult library

Costs and the Effect on Our Taxes

As Council has stated numerous times, this project will not go ahead without significant government funding. As it stands, the new program under which we have applied generally provides a grant of 66%. That means the Town (and by extension, we the taxpayers) would have to absorb 1/3 of the cost.

Estimates for the whole project (building, pool, soccer field, basketball court, demolition costs, landscaping and professional fees) come in at \$20M after sales tax recovery. We specifically asked that the estimate ensure there are substantial contingencies for unforeseen expenses. That means we would have to fund approximately \$7M outside government grants.

Therefore, to finance this project, if we do not raise any of that \$7M from private sources or use any of our accumulated surplus, the net effect on the average Montreal West tax bill (property valuation of \$608K in 2016) would be approximately \$230 per year in a “special tax” over 25 years. If we are able to fundraise \$1.5M privately and use \$1.5M of our accumulated surplus the net effect on the average tax bill would be approximately \$130 per year in a “special tax” over 25 years.

	Grants at 66%		Grants at 66%		Grants at 66%		Grants at 66%		Grants at 66%		Grants at 66%		Grants at 66%		Grants at 66%		Grants at 66%	
Cost		\$19,134,594		\$19,134,594		\$19,134,594		\$19,134,594		\$19,134,594		\$19,134,594		\$19,134,594		\$19,134,594		\$19,134,594
GST		\$956,730		\$956,730		\$956,730		\$956,730		\$956,730		\$956,730		\$956,730		\$956,730		\$956,730
TVQ		\$1,908,676		\$1,908,676		\$1,908,676		\$1,908,676		\$1,908,676		\$1,908,676		\$1,908,676		\$1,908,676		\$1,908,676
Total Cost		\$22,000,000		\$22,000,000		\$22,000,000		\$22,000,000		\$22,000,000		\$22,000,000		\$22,000,000		\$22,000,000		\$22,000,000
GST Recovery	100%	-\$956,730	100%	-\$956,730	100%	-\$956,730	100%	-\$956,730	100%	-\$956,730	100%	-\$956,730	100%	-\$956,730	100%	-\$956,730	100%	-\$956,730
TVQ Recovery	50%	-\$954,338	50%	-\$954,338	50%	-\$954,338	50%	-\$954,338	50%	-\$954,338	50%	-\$954,338	50%	-\$954,338	50%	-\$954,338	50%	-\$954,338
Net Cost		\$20,088,932		\$20,088,932		\$20,088,932		\$20,088,932		\$20,088,932		\$20,088,932		\$20,088,932		\$20,088,932		\$20,088,932
Private Donations		\$0		-\$500,000		-\$500,000		-\$1,000,000		-\$1,000,000		-\$1,500,000		-\$1,500,000		-\$2,000,000		-\$2,000,000
Payment from Surplus		\$0		\$0		-\$500,000		-\$500,000		-\$1,000,000		-\$1,000,000		-\$1,500,000		-\$1,500,000		-\$2,000,000
Net Loan By-Law		\$20,088,932		\$19,588,932		\$19,088,932		\$18,588,932		\$18,088,932		\$17,588,932		\$17,088,932		\$16,588,932		\$16,088,932
LTD Service																		
Interest Rate		3%		3%		3%		3%		3%		3%		3%		3%		3%
Amortization (years)		25		25		25		25		25		25		25		25		25
Annual Payment		\$1,140,317		\$1,111,935		\$1,083,554		\$1,055,172		\$1,026,790		\$998,408		\$970,027		\$941,645		\$913,263
Government Grants																		
Grant	66%	\$13,258,695	66%	\$13,258,695	66%	\$13,258,695	66%	\$13,258,695	66%	\$13,258,695	66%	\$13,258,695	66%	\$13,258,695	66%	\$13,258,695	66%	\$13,258,695
Interest Rate		3%		3%		3%		3%		3%		3%		3%		3%		3%
Amortization (years)		25		25		25		25		25		25		25		25		25
Annual Grant		\$752,609		\$752,609		\$752,609		\$752,609		\$752,609		\$752,609		\$752,609		\$752,609		\$752,609
Net Increase LTD Service		\$387,708		\$359,326		\$330,944		\$302,563		\$274,181		\$245,799		\$217,417		\$189,035		\$160,654
Impact on Tax Bill																		
\$500,000 evaluation		\$187		\$173		\$160		\$146		\$132		\$119		\$105		\$92		\$77
\$608,000 evaluation		\$227		\$211		\$194		\$177		\$161		\$144		\$127		\$110		\$94
\$750,000 evaluation		\$280		\$260		\$239		\$219		\$198		\$178		\$157		\$136		\$116
\$1,000,000 evaluation		\$374		\$347		\$319		\$292		\$264		\$237		\$210		\$183		\$155

Next steps

We need your feedback and encourage you to complete the survey when it is delivered to you. The results should be ready by the end of January at which time we will share them publicly. If they are positive, we must then wait for a decision from the government to see if our grant was approved.

Once we are granted the funds, we can start the development process, hiring architects to fully define the project design. Then, after residents have had a chance to weigh in on the design, the architects and engineers will create the document with which we will go to tender.