



REPORT | INFORMATION REPORT TO COUNCIL

PRESENTED: March 7, 2017 **REPORT:** 17- 017
FROM: Resort Experience **FILE:** 8516
SUBJECT: ARTIFICIAL TURF FIELD PROJECT UPDATE

COMMENT/RECOMMENDATION FROM THE CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

That the recommendation of the General Manager of Resort Experience be endorsed.

RECOMMENDATION

That Information Report to Council No.17-017 regarding an update to the artificial turf field project be received.

REFERENCES

Appendix A – Artificial Turf Field - Needs Assessment Presentation, Committee of the Whole, December 6, 2016

Appendix B - Artificial Turf Field – Conceptual Site Development Scenarios

PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with a work-in-progress update to the artificial turf field project. Topics include a summary and key findings from the needs assessment phase, a site suitability analysis, artificial turf health and recycling considerations, more refined capital and operating budget estimates, and external funding opportunities. This information is provided in consideration of the larger municipal budget process currently underway.

DISCUSSION

In response to community discussion and the Recreation and Leisure Master Plan, the RMOW began investigations into an artificial turf field in 2015. Initially an indoor multi-purpose field based recreation facility was considered, but it became apparent that capital and operating costs were significant - the focus of the project turned to a simpler and less costly outdoor artificial turf field. This summary was presented to Council at a December 2015 Committee of the Whole meeting.

In 2016 an outdoor artificial turf field needs assessment was undertaken and presented to Council at their December 6, 2016 Committee of the Whole meeting. Since then, staff have advanced various aspects of this project. These are discussed in this report for information purposes.

Needs Assessment Summary

The purpose of the assessment was to confirm the need for an artificial turf field facility. Key findings are summarized below, and a copy of the Committee of the Whole presentation is appended to this report as Appendix A.

Locally, regionally and nationally the popularity of soccer is increasing. Regionally, the popularity trajectory is thought to be positive because of:

- soccer's ongoing growth and popularity
 - Youth soccer 23% growth over last five years
 - Whistler Secondary Community School's soccer academy
 - Vancouver Whitecaps' Sea to Sky Soccer Academy
- relatively low cost to participate
- gender equity
- racial diversity
- increased media profile
 - Success of Canadian Women's National Team
 - Three Canadian Major League Soccer franchises

Locally, there is real demand for additional local hours primarily in early and late season, a poorer weather and earlier darkness timeframe. Evidence of demand includes:

- Whistler's existing grass fields are typically not ready to play until mid to late May, and close in mid-October. The late outdoor season start relative to the Lower Mainland or Squamish leagues that Whistler teams play in puts Whistler teams at a competitive disadvantage. Playing in an interior league with a similar outdoor field availability schedule to Whistler is not practical;
- Adult soccer is capped at eight teams due to field unavailability;
- Youth soccer has reduced programs despite membership growth and relocated some activities elsewhere;
- Whistler rep teams' home fields are in Squamish;
- Continued growth in youth membership;
- Booking conflicts; and
- Other traditional user groups are being turned away.

The Myrtle Philip fields are the preferred choice for soccer users because of their size, Class B quality and their central location. The two fields provide a critical mass of efficiency and foster a sense of social community. However the fields are at or very near maximum use during peak times, and keeping the fields in playable condition has proven to be challenging. Historically these fields have been overused - horticultural standards recommend a 250 hour per season limit and soccer itself has exceeded 500 hours of use per season in the past. The 500 hours does not include use by the School District whose property the fields are upon, or casual use.

Other rectangular fields with capacity elsewhere in the resort community are not used for quantitative and qualitative reasons. These include small size, poorer quality, lack of ancillary facilities, increased volunteer effort to utilize, and lack of a critical mass to foster a positive social atmosphere.

If developed, an artificial turf field with lights would:

- Provide a field-of-play standard comparable to and expected from most other jurisdictions;
- Provide certainty around poor weather;

- Lengthen the available season from 21 to approximately 35 weeks (40%) adding 250 of prime time and 1150 non-prime time hours;
- Remove 420 hours from existing grass fields to reduce wear and allow for other users;
- Allow return of 85 hours of youth soccer programming cancelled due to lack of field availability;
- Transfer 80 hours from out of town play to Whistler;
- Add 30 to 40 hours to meet capped adult league demand;
- Add 30 to 40 hours of anticipated third party programming;
- Transfer 120 hours from indoor to outdoor; and
- Extend existing youth programming by 230 hours.

Illumination of an artificial turf field would fully leverage the investment. Illumination adds approximately 440 hours over half of which would be during the early and late season prime time hours. Providing a new lit grass field, while increasing available hours is not playable in the early and late seasons, which is the primary need. Lighting an existing grass field would not result in additional available hours because over use is an ongoing challenge.

In summary, additional field space will be required to accommodate growth, participation levels are currently constrained by lack of hours, demand is primarily but not solely focused on spring season, there are limited opportunities for other user groups, field overuse is an ongoing challenge, and demand is anticipated to continue to increase over time.

Site Suitability

Six potential sites have been considered for a rectangular shaped artificial turf field. These include the four sites identified in the 2015 *Whistler Multi Use Recreation Facility - Investigative Study*, as well as two additional sites for full study consideration purposes. The six sites are:

- Whistler Community Secondary School - the existing large sized field;
- Meadow Park - the area of the existing ball diamonds;
- Spruce Grove Park - the area in front of the existing field house as well as the space temporarily occupied by the Whistler Waldorf School;
- Myrtle Phillip Community School - one of the two larger and lower fields;
- Cheakamus Crossing - a brownfield site below Bayly Park accessed off of Jane Lakes Forest Service Road; and
- Bayly Park – the area of the existing gravel soccer field.

With regard to the Bayly Park site, its location overtop of the former municipal landfill has previously excluded it from consideration because of a differential settlement risk. However, new information about the landfill's settlement rates as well as the artificial turf field's ability to address localized repair now makes it a candidate site, with the knowledge that a localized repair(s) is likely. More information about this is provided below.

Each of the six potential sites has its own set of unique challenges and opportunities which impact neighbourhood fit, usability, potential partnerships, and capital and operating costs. For the purposes of this phase of work, each of the six sites has been evaluated against the following criteria:

- Land ownership - while several sites are operated by the RMOW, two are owned by School District 48, and three have Provincial Crown interests;
- Fit - within resort community, neighbourhood, site and or co-facility, parking, illumination, security, noise, available hours;
- Environmental considerations;

- Geographic considerations - field orientations, annual snowfall, solar exposure;
- Future development potential and resort community needs;
- Other sport development opportunities; and
- Partnership potential.

To better compare sites relative to one another a matrix was developed. Note that the criteria are not weighted.

CRITERIA	HIGH SCHOOL	MEADOW PARK	SPRUCE GROVE	MYRTLE PHILIP	CHEAK XING	BAYLY PARK
Land Ownership	B	A	A	B	B	A
Land Purchase Required	A	A	A	A	B	A
Site Centrality & Highway Traffic	B	B	A	A	C	C
Neighbourhood Traffic Impact	B	B	B	B	B	B
Parking Availability	C	A	A	C	B	A
Illumination Impact	B	B	B	B	A	B
Noise Impact	A	A	B	A	A	A
Physical Site Fit	A	A	A	A	A	A
Existing Site Synergies	A	A	A	A	B	A
Future Devel / Expan Potential	B	C	C	A	A	C
Adds to Soccer Field Inventory	C	A	A	C	A	C
Displace Other Uses	A	C	C	B	A	A
Site Safety/Security	B	A	A	C	A	A
Daytime School Use Conflict	C	A	A	C	A	A
Tree/Habitat Loss	A	A	B	A	A	A
Riparian Encroachment	B	A	A	A	A	A
Snowfall, early season use	C	B	B	B	A	A
Utility Services Connection	C	A	A	B	C	A
Maintenance Risk	A	A	A	A	A	C
Extraordinary Devel Cost	B	A	A	A	C	A

Table 1: Site Suitability Matrix. A/Green = best. C/Red = worst.

Site Suitability Discussion

Whistler Secondary Community School (High School) – existing larger rectangular field

An artificial turf field at the Whistler Secondary Community School site fits within the space occupied by the existing grass field and would be a significant improvement. There is good compatibility of uses with the high school in general and the Schools' soccer academy program specifically. There is limited future expansion of related uses on the smaller adjacent field. Inclusion of a 400 metre running track around the artificial turf field while possible would likely impact the adjacent forest and may have riparian considerations. There may be partnership opportunities with School District 48.

The site is not centrally located within the resort community. Parking is limited and in higher demand because of non-school hour programming. There is little room for expansion of parking. The existing railcar style bridge over a watercourse would need to be upgraded to accommodate construction and emergency vehicles. This site requires a significant extension of underground services from the school, even to provide a basic flush washroom. This site receives the highest snowfall of the six possible sites, meaning it will be the last of the sites to be playable without mechanical snow removal.

The extent of visual impact of lighting has not been modelled, but it is thought to have some impact on the Alpine Meadows, Nicklaus North, Rainbow and Baxter Creek neighbourhoods.

Meadow Park - existing ball diamonds

An artificial turf field at Meadow Park fits rather well upon the site and would add another rectangular field to Whistler's inventory. Parking is readily available, and washrooms are nearby. Servicing requirements are minimal. There is an opportunity to provide direct pedestrian connectivity with the Meadow Park Sports Centre. The extent of visual impact of lighting has not been modelled, but it is thought to have some impact on the Alpine Meadows and Nicklaus North neighbourhoods. The light poles themselves may be a visual detraction to the viewsapes at this location.

Developing a rectangular field at this site would obviously eliminate the two existing soft ball diamonds. Use of the diamonds has been steadily increasing over the last five years – in 2016 each diamond accommodated approximately 230 hours of use. These hours are difficult to transfer to another diamond as the diamonds at Spruce Grove are not designed for soft ball and are at capacity on weekday evenings and weekends. There are also operational and programmatic synergies and efficiencies when same facilities are located together, like the two existing ball diamonds at this location, the three at Spruce Grove Park, or the two rectangular fields at Myrtle Philip. One possible compromise option at Meadow Park would be to overlap one diamond with a rectangular turf field at additional cost. This option is included in Appendix B Conceptual Site Development Scenarios appended to this report, as well as capital budget estimates below.

Three additional items should be noted about this site:

- The existing underground drainage and irrigation systems in Meadow Park are near the end of their useful lifespan and consideration should be given to their replacement.
- During the planning phase of the 2010 Games, the ball diamonds site in Meadow Park was identified as the most logical and operationally efficient location for an second indoor ice arena, should a second facility every be required in the resort community. While the ball diamonds are some distance from the existing ice arena, there are real reasons why a new ice arena could not be located closer to the existing sports centre, without introducing significant costs and environmental concerns. The Recreation and Leisure Master Plan suggests protecting space for a future second ice sheet should it ever be required in the community's distant needs.
- Meadow Park, in comparison to Rainbow, Lakeside, Lost and Alpha Lake Parks is less intensively used in Whistler's busy summer months. There may be redesign opportunities that increase family programming in the park, potentially reducing demand at other parks.

Spruce Grove Park - Waldorf area plus existing parking

Like Meadow Park, an artificial turf field fits rather well upon the site. In fact the 1996 Parks Visions Master Plan identified a multi-sport field generally in this location, and the servicing installed for the existing field house anticipated this future field. This centrally located site does require a greater scope of site reconfiguration including the replacement of approximately 35 parking spaces. A somewhat underutilized 60 vehicle overflow parking area exists nearby, and in the short term project costs could be reduced by not immediately building the 35 replacement stalls. The compatibility with the tournament quality ball diamonds is excellent, and offers some multi-sport use potential. The extent of visual impact of lighting has not been modelled, but it is thought to have some impact on the Spruce Grove neighbourhood.

Clearly the development of this site necessitates the relocation of the Whistler Waldorf School that currently occupies the site via a municipal lease arrangement.

Myrtle Philip Community School – lower rectangular field

Located on School District 48 property, this centrally located site is a relatively good fit and easy build for an artificial turf field. There is obvious compatibility with the other grass field as bundling similar amenities together offers operational and programmatic advantages. Development of an artificial turf field at this site improves an existing field as opposed to adding a new field to Whistler's inventory. By doing this, the full value of the investment would not be realized in that the maximum number of hours would be less than if an entirely new field were developed elsewhere.

An improved field at this location would generate additional traffic and parking demands to the school property and Balsam Way residents, and there is little opportunity to expand parking. This may also introduce personal security concerns to SD48 and students. Existing washrooms located in Balsam Park are small and located some distance from the potential artificial turf field. There is a real cost to provide more immediate washrooms to the possible site. The existing small ball diamond facility would need to be relocated to the upper field. The extent of visual impact of lighting has not been modelled, but it may have some impact on the Tapley's neighbourhood.

Cheakamus Crossing - Jane Lakes Forest Service Road

Located at the southern end of the resort community, this site is a rather flat brownfield site. It receives considerably less snowfall than the sites further north, and consequently is snow free earlier in the spring. Development of this site would offer a new field to Whistler's inventory, and there is potential for expansion for related athletic facilities. There is good use compatibility with the Athletes' Centre operated by Whistler Sport Legacies located in nearby Cheakamus Crossing.

However this site possess significant constraints. Through the 2010 Games Legacy Agreement it is available to the municipality for resident restricted housing purposes only. Developing a sport field would require negotiation with the Province to amend the existing covenant. Consideration would need to be given to highest and best use of the site and whether displacing employee housing is warranted. The necessary utility services tie in points are located a long distance from the site, meaning it is expensive to provide these services. Lastly the access road is a Forest Service Road likely requiring upgrade or other costs to the municipality.

Bayly Park – existing gravel rectangular field

This option would be significant upgrade to the existing underutilized gravel field. As an upgrade with easy construction access, the amount of site disturbance is relatively small. Utility services are located in the adjacent Legacy Way roadway. Parking can be easily expanded at low cost. This site receives the least amount of snowfall when compared to the other sites, and because of its solar and wind exposure is by far the earliest to be naturally snow free. There is good use compatibility with other Park uses as well as the Whistler Sport Legacy's Athletes' Centre across the street. There is some expansion potential either by oversizing the field on one side or end, as well as additional space to the south. However, inclusion of a 400 metre running track or second field is not possible.

Possible constraint to this site is it not being centrally located within the larger resort community. This however is somewhat offset by the size of existing and potential residential population within the Cheakamus Crossing neighbourhood. The extent of visual impact of lighting has not been modelled, but would have some impact on the neighbourhood, in particular the buildings closest to the field.

Settlement Risk – Bayly Park

The largest constraint of this site is a risk of differential settlement due to its location overtop of the closed municipal landfill. Previously this risk was one concern which precluded development of a grass soccer field at this site. What has changed is a better understanding of the settlement rates and knowledge regarding the ability to repair any localized differential settlement at the surface.

Previous studies have identified a potential landfill membrane settlement of up to 1.75 metres over a 35 year period, starting from landfill closure in 2006. The same amount of settlement is anticipated at the surface.

Site excavation in 2011 revealed that the membrane had settled between 0.4 and 0.9 metres, meaning that approximately half of the anticipated settlement had occurred. Presumably additional settlement has occurred since 2011. Additional settlement is expected over the next 25 years through to 2041.

Settlement risk cannot be mitigated by pre-loading the site because of the landfill's waste decomposition process and weight sensitivities with the landfill's membrane. Settlement risk can be partially mitigated by adapting the artificial turf field construction methods and choice of materials. Another portion of settlement risk can be addressed when the turf product is replaced at the end of its 10-15 year useful lifespan. At that time typical practice is to re-level the turf's subsurface, and this would occur at Bayly Park.

The remaining 10-15 year turf lifespan settlement risk is managed through periodic repair to settled areas. Repair involves cutting open the subsided area, filling with gravel, levelling, and stitching the shock pad and turf back together.

This type of repair is not a foreign concept in the artificial turf industry. A 2015 repair to an artificial turf field in the Lower Mainland involved a 2.4m deep sinkhole that formed when subsurface organic waste decomposed and collapsed. The turf in the affected area was removed, additional organics removed from the hole, gravel was used to fill the hole, and the turf was glued and stitched back together. The cost of this repair was in the \$50,000 range.

Differences between this example and what might be expected at Bayly Park is that the depth of hole at Bayly Park would be considerably less given the remaining settlement expected. At Bayly Park the effect of a large sub-membrane decomposition cavity would be partially mitigated by the bridging characteristics of the membrane, a geotextile located above the membrane, and the artificial turf's shock pad.

Given this information, the municipality's retained consultant for the artificial turf project R.F. Binnie and Associates Ltd (Binnie) reports that the site is feasible to accommodate an artificial turf field - but only with the clear understanding that construction of the field and lighting will require a different approach than typical sites, and that it is quite likely that localized settlement repairs will be periodically necessary. The frequency and scope of the repairs is not predictable at this time, but should be budgeted for.

Binnie recommends that the membrane be resurveyed in order to confirm settlement rates and for due diligence purposes.

Conceptual Site Development Scenarios

Graphic representation of all six of the scenarios discussed above are located in Appendix B Conceptual Site Development Scenarios.

Artificial Turf Product - Crumb Rubber Health Concerns

Over the past several years, national media has reported concerns about the human health impacts of “crumb rubber infill” (CRI) commonly used in artificial turf fields. Binnie’s project team includes an elected member to the Board of Directors to the Synthetic Turf Council, an international organization dedicated to serving as an information resource for synthetic turf. Consequently Binnie is well informed to provide research and opinion on this topic.

Binnie reports the following facts:

- Crumb rubber is a recycled vehicle tire product and used to give artificial turf fields properties similar to real grass. It is used in approximately 90% of artificial turf fields in North America, and offers best value of infill products when considering cost and performance.
- In 2014, concerns were raised in Washington State regarding a potential connection between synthetic turf with crumb rubber infill and Washington youth soccer players who had developed various types of cancer.

In response, the Washington Department of Health and the University of Washington School of Public Health formed a project team to investigate possible issues related to soccer playing and cancer. The recently released findings concluded that *“the available research suggests exposures from crumb rubber are very low and will not cause cancer among soccer players. The Washington State Department of Health recommends that people who enjoy soccer continue to play regardless of the type of field surface”*.

- In response to public concern in the United States, the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) initiated a study involving research/white paper review and CRI toxicity testing on 40 fields. Partnering with the EPA are the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Environmental Health/Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (CDC-NCEH/ATSDR), and the US Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC).

The results of the EPA’s study, when complete will be significant for the industry, and will presumably provide additional clarity on the safety of CRI. A status report is intended to be released in 2017.

- In 2015, Vancouver Coastal Health issued a position statement to Municipalities stating that based on their review, they consider there to be no increased human health risk associated with artificial turf fields containing crumb rubber.

RMOW staff note that a 2016 Dutch study conducted by the National Institute for Public Health and the Environment reported that the health risk from playing on artificial turf fields, which are common throughout the Netherlands and elsewhere as low-maintenance alternatives to natural grass, is “virtually negligible.”

Alternatives to CRI exist at a cost premium of \$150,000 to \$200,000 per field. In respect of concerns and the ongoing EPA study, municipal budget estimates include a line item for an alternative to CRI infill product.

Artificial Turf Product – Recycling

At the end of its useful lifespan, artificial turf is typically removed and shipped to a turf recycling depot where the turf fibre is separated from the backing materials, and each material is processed into small pellets or beads and incorporated into other manufactured products including plastic lumber, various household products and other materials.

The infill material is reclaimed with the end use dependent on the type of infill. The most common infill material, crumb rubber, can be reused in rubberized asphalt, as infill for artificial turf fields, as ground cover for equestrian facilities, or returned to the crumb rubber manufacturer where it is returned to the crumb rubber market.

At this time municipal staff are not aware of any adaptive re-use of artificial turf field product.

Capital Budget Estimates

As mentioned previously the opportunities and constraints of each site impact capital development and operating/maintenance costs. The table below provide a higher “Class D” level of budget estimate for each of the sites as well as the two options at Meadow Park.

	HIGH SCHOOL	MEADOW 1	MEADOW 2	SPRUCE GROVE	MYRTLE PHILIP	CHEAK XING	BAYLY PARK
Construction	3,100,000	2,900,000	3,700,000	3,100,000	3,000,000	5,000,000	2,100,000
Consulting 10%	310,000	290,000	370,000	310,000	300,000	500,000	210,000
Contingency 20%	620,000	580,000	740,000	620,000	600,000	1,000,000	420,000
TOTAL	\$4,030,000	\$3,770,000	\$4,810,000	\$4,030,000	\$3,900,000	\$6,500,000	\$2,730,000

Table 2: Class D Capital Budget Estimates

At the December 6, 2016 Committee of Whole meeting the projected capital costs were stated as a range between \$4.2 and \$6.2 million depending on which site was developed, and did not consider Bayly Park as a possibility. The updated information presented in this report demonstrates that several cost options below \$4.2 million exist. The reason for the reduction at this end of the range is because of the inclusion of Bayly Park, a reduction in underground servicing needs, and more detailed cost information. By comparison the capital construction cost of an irrigated sand based field comparable to the Spruce Grove softball fields (but without lights, fencing, utility servicing, consulting fees and contingency) is in the range of \$600,000.

It should be expected that the artificial turf product be replaced every 10-15 years depending on intensity of use and UV exposure. The cost for this is approximately \$800,000 and includes re-leveling. Current municipal practice is to carry lifecycle replacement costs within the capital budget process. This turf replacement figure is excluded from the figures above.

Operating Budget Estimates

In general terms the annual costs to maintain an artificial turf field is approximately \$25,000 to \$35,000 which includes hydro for illumination costs. The exception to this would be the Bayly Park site where the anticipated periodic settlement repair is expected and would increase operating costs, but not necessarily on an annual basis.

Typical operating costs can be partially or fully offset by charging user fees. As part of the project engagement process all groups expressed a willingness to pay increased fees to use an artificial turf facility. This includes youth groups who are currently exempt from paying municipal sport field user fees as per Council policy I-06.

For reference purposes, the municipality's existing rectangular natural grass fields cost approximately \$20,000 each per year, a portion of which is offset by user fees. By comparison, the ice arena at the Meadow Parks Sports Centre is subsidized approximately \$600,000 per year by municipal taxpayers.

Potential External Funding Opportunities

Through the engagement process for this project a number of potential external funding opportunities have been anecdotally mentioned. Securing external funding typically is more successful when a project advances to a point if being viewed as 'real' which usually includes confirmation of a location and design development drawings. This project is not yet at that stage.

WHISTLER 2020 ANALYSIS

W2020 Strategy	TOWARD Descriptions of success that resolution moves us toward	Comments
Built Environment	Continuous encroachment on nature is avoided.	All of the possible scenarios use existing developed or brownfield sites.
Natural Areas	Developed and recreation areas are designed and managed to protect as much of the natural environment within and around them as possible.	All of the possible scenarios use existing developed or brownfield sites.
Partnership	Partners work toward aligned budgeting processes that leverage limited resources for increased effectiveness and efficiency	There is partnership potential both in terms of capital and operating costs.
Recreation and Leisure	Residents and visitors of all ages and abilities enjoy activities year-round that encourage healthy living, learning and a sense of community.	Provision of an artificial turf field will extend the playable season by 40% offering increased recreation opportunities.
Recreation and Leisure	Recreation and leisure are part of the Whistler lifestyle and all community members are able and encouraged to participate.	Whistler continues to diversify its scope of recreational offerings.
Recreation and Leisure	Local and regional stakeholders use a collaborative and comprehensive approach to developing amenities and offerings, and to resolving user conflicts.	This project has used an inclusive and regional stakeholder engagement process.
Recreation and Leisure	Recreation and leisure infrastructure and practices minimize the degradation of natural areas and are transitioning toward sustainable use of energy and materials.	All of the possible scenarios use existing developed or brownfield sites. An artificial turf removes requirement for potable water. Artificial turf products are recyclable.
Water	All potable water is used sparingly and only used to meet appropriate needs.	An artificial turf removes requirement for potable water.

W2020 Strategy	AWAY FROM Descriptions of success that resolution moves away from	Mitigation Strategies and Comments
None at this time		

OTHER POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

One of the Key Findings of the 2015 Recreation and Leisure Master Plan (RLMP) is that *“Municipal assets play a strong role in providing easy access to recreation and sport, fostering lifelong activity participation, as well as developing athletes and sport. These are components of Whistler’s identity.”*

Pursuit of an artificial turf field is consistent with recommendations from the RLMP. Specifically, Key Strategy 3.3 of the RLMP states: *“Develop an additional grass or artificial turf rectangular field to reduce unsustainable wear on existing fields and meet growing demand”* as an immediate priority. The RLMP also includes recommendation to continue to facilitate third-party sport training programs and lessons.

BUDGET CONSIDERATIONS

The draft 2017 – 2021 Five Year Financial Plan proposes a budget amount that is an average of the seven different scenarios identified within this report. Should Council wish to advance the project through the budget process a Financial Plan amendment could be considered for a lower cost option.

	2017	2018
Professional Fees	160,000	165,000
Construction	0	3,220,000
Contingency	0	708,000
TOTAL	\$160,000	\$4,093,000
TOTAL BUDGET 2017 + 2018		\$4,253,000

Table 3: Draft 2017 – 2021 Five Year Financial Plan Budget

The 2016 budget for this project was \$150,000 however only \$48,000 was expended. The 2016 expenditures provided topographical survey information, needs assessment and conceptual site planning and costing services.

The \$100,000 of 2016 funds not expended is proposed to be re-budgeted to 2017.

Funds expended in 2015 (\$16,300) provided a preliminary geotechnical investigation of one site and the *Whistler Multi-Use Recreation Facility Investigative Study* report, the latter of which was presented at Committee of the Whole on December 1, 2015.

Staff are optimistic that some external funding will become available to the project, and have noted \$100,000 of revenue in the proposed draft 2017 - 2021 Five Year Financial Plan. External funds would be used to offset municipal costs, unless the donor specifically wishes to fund a project component not currently within the project scope.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND CONSULTATION

Over the course of the needs assessment and planning phases of this project, stakeholders have been directly engaged through a 2016 focus group sessions and ongoing correspondence. This includes both rectangular-shaped field users (soccer, football, rugby) and diamond-shaped field users (baseball, slow pitch, and softball).

Municipal staff have discussed this project in the context of regional implications with soccer and municipal representatives in Pemberton and Squamish. Similar higher level conversations have occurred with representatives from School District 48, Whistler Sport Legacies and the Whistler Blackcomb Foundation.

Three letters advocating for an artificial turf field in Whistler have been received from Whistler Secondary Community School students.

This project is a common topic at the Recreation and Leisure Advisory Committee where resolutions in 2014 through to 2017 have identified it as a top priority.

The project was first presented to Committee of the Whole on December 1, 2015. A number of members of the public attended that meeting. The project returned to Committee of the Whole on December 6, 2016.

SUMMARY

This reports serves as an interim update on the artificial turf field project. Findings from the 2016 needs assessment are provided. Recent efforts on site feasibility, health and recycling of artificial turf products, capital and operating budget estimates and external funding opportunities are presented to Council for information purposes in consideration of the larger municipal budget process.

Respectfully submitted,

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For
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