

Cost for Leisure Complex renos, centre, set to rise again

By Brock Weir

The proposed cost of extensive renovations at the Aurora Family Leisure Complex (AFLC) to refresh the building and make way for a 'Community Space for Youth' continue to rise this week as Council is poised to approve a tender to begin construction.

Councillors are due to consider a nearly \$6 million contract to Jasper Construction this week which, if approved at the committee level, will receive final sign-off next Tuesday. The tender to the contractors for undertaking the extensive work on the building clocks in at \$5,994,000, but Al Downey, Aurora's Director of Parks and Recreation, is calling for Council approval on an additional \$20,000 for LED lights for the new gymnasium, \$25,000 to 'restore' the Complex's driveway, and a further \$100,000 for 'furniture, fixtures and equipment.'

He also requests Council increase the entire budget of the project by \$59,940 'or 1 per cent of the entire project budget' 'in principle to support public art.'

'The scope of work for this tender includes a single storey 9,300 square foot addition and 18,400 square foot renovation to the existing two-storey Aurora Family Leisure Complex,' said Mr. Downey in his report before Councillors this week. 'The addition includes a new fitness room, program spaces, climbing wall, control desk, office spaces, new entry driveway and drop off area, parking, landscaping and outdoor skateboard park. Renovation includes work in existing gymnasium [and a] suspended track, gym, pool change rooms and fire exit corridors.

'Staff are recommending that \$20,000 be added to the tender for the lights in the gym to be converted from metal halide to LED for conservation of energy purposes. This was identified as an additional item and subject to Council approval. Staff are recommending \$25,000 be added 'for the replacement of the asphalt drive entering the AFLC. This portion of the driveway was not replaced as part of the previous contract and staff are recommending that these works be completed upon completion of the renovation.

'Staff are recommending an increase 'of \$100,000 for the provision of furniture, fixtures and equipment that will be required upon completion of the renovation works.'

If the recommendations are carried as-is this week, and ratified on November 12, work on the Aurora Family Leisure Complex is expected to start the very next day on November 13, and is tentatively scheduled to be complete on October 12, 2014. In the intervening year, much of the programs and activities at the AFLC will be moved elsewhere, with most of the programs finding new space at the Stronach Aurora Recreation Complex. (SARC)

These provisions, however, have yet to come up with an alternative for the track, a shortcoming which has some regular users of the track up in arms. The Community Space for Youth, or 'Youth Centre', will be within the newly revamped Aurora Family Leisure Complex, and will include a dedicated youth space, a teaching kitchen, and other activity spaces, including a climbing wall and, of course, the new skate park.

For some Councillors, finally breaking ground on the 'youth centre' has been a long-time coming, recommended years ago in Aurora's Youth Needs Analysis. Other Councillors, however, are adamantly opposed to the 'youth centre' as proposed. In their view, although they support the concept of a youth centre, what is proposed does not fit the bill of a dedicated space where young Aurorans can hang out and do their own thing.

'Tender results for this project are reasonable and reflect a clear project scope and competitive pricing due to the narrow range of prices,' concludes Mr. Downey. 'Staff are satisfied with the results and are recommending proceeding with the project.'

13 companies picked up the contracting tender for the AFLC renovations. Seven companies placed a bid, two were deemed non-compliant, and bids ranged from the recommended \$5,994,000 to \$7,090,105.