

The Sunderland Figure Skating Club would like to thank the Township of Brock for the opportunity to have met with township staff to discuss the Sunderland Arena project. We are very excited about the arena improvement project made possible by the ICIP grant and generous contribution from the Sunderland Lions Club, and are happy to provide feedback about what our Skating Club would deem as a priority in the upcoming project.

At the meeting we were presented with the concerns that there is a funding gap, as the presumed budget for the project has outpaced the grant money and Township/Lions Club contributions. It was made clear that the original project with a full 80x200 foot ice surface and 6 dressing rooms was likely not possible and that the Township wished to know if an increased ice surface size versus a greater number of dressing rooms was a greater priority.

The number one priority of the Sunderland Skating Club by a significant measure is for the ice surface to be increased to largest achievable size. This is by far the most important aspect of the entire project in our opinion. A larger ice surface will benefit our club in so many different ways. It will allow us to have a greater number of skaters on the ice when offering our CanSkate (learn to skate) and CanPower (power skating) programs. Our current arena ice size is a limiting factor for a STAR Skate program (figure skating program) for several reasons. For example, when skaters are learning the standard ice dance patterns, the patterns are designed for a larger ice surface. While these patterns are possible to perform on our ice surface, the skater must reduce the length of their steps in order to fit the patterns on our small ice surface. When these skaters then go to other arenas with the intended larger ice surfaces for testing and competition, they are unprepared to adjust their skating to fill the ice space as it is intended, which puts them at a disadvantage for marks on ice space coverage, as well as power in step execution. This same principal applies for free skate program components of the STAR skate program. Conversely, it also prevents our club from ever being able to host a competition, or even guest skaters at our club, as skaters from other arenas are used to a larger ice surface and thus have performance programs that are designed to maximize ice surface coverage. These factors have limited our club from being able to attract and retain skaters as they progress to higher levels of figure skating, as well as attracting more coaches to support higher level skaters.

A larger ice surface would also allow our club in the future to offer programs that our current ice size would not allow. These include higher levels of the STAR Skate figure skating program, Pairs skating, and Synchronized skating. These would be exciting programs to be able to offer our skaters and the community.

Sunderland is a growing community with lots young families and kids looking for recreation opportunities. The Sunderland Skating Club has seen the impact of this in the high number of children enrolled in our CanSkate Programs, and we are very encouraged and excited for the future of the club with this kind of enrollment response. However, to maintain the momentum and interest we have achieved we need to be able to offer a STAR skate program that is robust and able to compete with neighbouring skating clubs, and with the ice at its current size we will always be limited in what we can offer and how much we can grow. A larger ice surface would be by far the single most important factor that will help in our club's future success. This fact cannot be understated. We are confident that this sentiment is echoed by all the other ice users of

the Sunderland Arena. The other components of the project (including an increased number of dressing rooms, storage, etc.), while a nice improvement to our arena, are not even close to being in the same tier of importance. To place the completion of these other aspects, or limiting the project to reduce the amount of time the project takes, ahead of increasing the ice surface size is short-sighted and small picture thinking.

The hard work and success of the 2019 collaborative Sunderland Lions Club-Brock Township application for the ICIP grant is a fantastic once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for our community. We hope that the efforts of all involved parties will be towards maximizing the ice surface and thus ensuring that the Sunderland Arena will continue to be a point of community growth and pride.

Thank you for your consideration,

Sunderland Skating Club