



University of Toronto

CAPITAL PROJECTS DEPARTMENT

TO: Business Board

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DATE: June 7, 2005 for June 23, 2005

AGENDA ITEM: 5(e)

ITEM IDENTIFICATION:

Capital Project - Varsity Centre for Physical Activity and Health

JURISDICTIONAL INFORMATION:

Pursuant to Section 5.2. (b) of its Terms of Reference, the Business Board approves expenditures for, and the execution of, approved Capital Projects.

PREVIOUS ACTION TAKEN:

This is the first time this revised Project is being presented to the Business Board.

Other Board and Committee approvals to-date include:

- Planning and Budget - May 10, 2005
- Academic Board - June 2, 2005

HIGHLIGHTS:

The Varsity Stadium has played an important role in the history of the University of Toronto and the city of Toronto for over a century. The revitalization of Varsity Stadium has been a goal of the Faculty of Physical Education and Health for the past 40 years. The first Users Committee for Varsity Centre was struck in 1998 and since that time a variety of projects have been explored. These projects ranged from private partnerships to the extensive redevelopment of the Bloor-Devonshire sector. Most recently, a proposal discussed with the Toronto Argonauts, in collaboration with Soccer Canada, would have provided a 25,000 seat stadium. This facility would have had an athletics and special event focus, accommodating professional football and soccer in addition to the University athletics programme. The plan required both Site 12 and Site 21 to accommodate the extensive facilities. The increased cost associated with this facility

eventually led the administration, after careful consideration, to discontinue the project. The former Varsity Stadium was demolished in 2001. Since 2001 the existing grass field has continued to be used with temporary stands, change-rooms and storage facilities being erected as requires.

There have been no previous approvals of the current project for the Varsity Centre for Physical Activity and Health. A new Project Planning Committee was established in November, 2004. The Committee, with particularly strong and enthusiastic student representation, has diligently assembled a creative phased plan for Varsity Centre that addresses the specific needs of the students, the University community and the neighbouring community.

The proposed facility represents a major contribution in support of the Stepping-UP initiatives of the University of Toronto.

Following the precise identification of the phased-in plan, a series of informative town-hall meetings and smaller group meetings were held to solicit response and ideas from students, internal university neighbours, members of various Governing Council committees and the community. The Provost was directly involved in each of these meetings and was able to learn first-hand of the likes and dislikes of the attendees. It should suffice to indicate at this juncture that the feedback received from all who attended these information meetings was exceptionally positive; suggestions, as appropriate, have been incorporated into the report.

The recent Varsity Centre 2005 plan will be implemented solely by the University of Toronto and will provide facilities to serve the University and its immediate community. The philosophy of Varsity Centre is that of a physical activity for all facility. The new stadium will contain an artificial surface and both a regulation size football and soccer field. There will be a competitive level running track with fixed seating for 5,000 people. A high tech air supported structure over the playing field will significantly extend the use of the field throughout the winter months. The Varsity Centre will provide indoor training facilities and athletic support space. The Centre will also provide non-athletic student space in the form of a café/student meeting space and a child minding/babysitting space. Renovating and expanding the existing Varsity Arena is also a part of the new Varsity Centre 2005. Extensive community consultation has shown strong community support for this facility.

The Varsity Centre for Physical Activity and Health is to be built in four phases over a number of years and as funding for each subsequent phase is secured. The project can be built as-of-right, that is, without requiring additional zoning approvals from the City (the height of the bubble in Phase 2 being the only possible exception).

Project Phases

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| Phase 1: | A. | Master Design |
| | B. | 5,000 seats, public washrooms, change rooms, media gondola, entrances |
| | C. | Field, track, lights, scoreboard, fencing, landscaping |
| | D. | Foundations and services as required below the field track for the bubble |
| Phase 2: | A. | Bubble installation |
| | B. | Off-site track and field throwing events |

Prior to the commencement of Phases 3 & 4 it will be necessary to address the Electrical Infrastructure expansion on the NE Campus to provide the required power needs for the new Athletics Facility and the Arena Renovation.

Phase 3: New Athletics Facilities (3792 nasm)

Phase 4: Arena Renovation and Upgrade

Project Schedule

The following schedule outlines the best case scenario with respect to project completion dates, but will require that all funds for Phases 2, 3 & 4 are secured for in advance of the formal project approval.

May 2005	Planning & Budget Committee Approval; start of approvals
June 2005	Approval by Governing Council
June 2005	Appointment of Consultants; start of Phase 1A
April 2006	Commencement of Phases 1B, 1C and 1D
Fall 2006	Completion of Phase 1; Phases 2A and 2B, provided funds are in place
April 2007	Commencement of Phases 3 & 4, provided all funds are in place
Fall 2008	Completion of Varsity Centre for Physical Activity and Health

To maintain the proposed schedule, showing completion of Phase 1 by the fall of 2006, the consultants must be appointed by the end of June 2005, coinciding with Governing Council approval of the Project Planning Report. Working within established policy guidelines the architect selection process must begin immediately following the approval by the Planning and Budget Committee. A Request for Proposals (RFP) will be posted immediately with the short-listing of firms anticipated within two weeks following the posting.

FINANCIAL AND/OR PLANNING IMPLICATIONS:

The University has made the firm commitment to contribute the sum of \$14,000,000 to advance the immediate development of Phase 1 of the project. A further clarification, again to accelerate the development of the project, identified that no student levy would be required to complete Phase 1 of the project. This University contribution will provide the new found momentum for the initial phase and serve to generate support and interest from friends of the University to support the subsequent phases and bring the entire project to a successful conclusion.

The Varsity Centre is identified in the Capital Plan with a projected borrowing contribution of \$14 million which will be increased to \$16,386,000, the revised full cost of Phase 1 of the project. All additional phases, i.e. Phases 2, 3 and 4 will require **FULL** funding to be in place prior to the approval of each phase. Of this required total cost, \$14 million will be forthcoming from the operating budget of the University of Toronto. The balance of \$2,368,000 will be provided through a short term mortgage to be paid from the operating budget of the facility.

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT the Vice-President – Business Affairs be authorized:

- (i) to execute the planned first phase of the Varsity Centre for Physical Activity and Health project to allow for completion of the track and field plus the immediate support facilities at a total project cost of \$16,386,000 from the following sources:
 - (a) \$14,000,000 financing (an internal mortgage), amortized over twenty years, to be repaid from the operating budget of the University of Toronto, and
 - (b) \$2,386,000 financing(an internal mortgage), to be amortized over five years, to be repaid from the operating budget of the new facility.