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Strategic Proposal for a New Sustainable Arena Facility in Squamish

1 message

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Dear Elected Officials,

I'm writing on behalf of Squamish Minor Hockey to request that Council prioritize planning for a new, energy-efficient arena facility. While retrofitting Brennan Park was intended as the lower-carbon option, the unintended result of our current and ongoing ice shortfalls is substantial additional driving by families to North Vancouver, Burnaby and Langley, emissions that are not captured in a facility-only analysis. The arena closure and constrained capacity have already required regular inter-city travel for ice times.

Environmental impact

Travel emissions now outweigh "paper" savings.

A typical Canadian light-duty vehicle emits ~0.20 kg CO₂ per kilometre (2.3 kg CO₂/L gasoline × 8.6 L/100 km fleet average).

Using conservative routing assumptions, a single round trip for an ice session is ~126 - 216 km, depending on destination: North Vancouver ~63 km one-way, Burnaby ~76 km, Langley ~108 km. That equates to ~25 - 43 kg CO₂ per trip per vehicle. Even at two trips per week, that's ~50 - 86 kg CO₂ per family per week. If 250 - 400 players are traveling for ice in a given week (a plausible range given program sizes and waitlists), that implies ~13 - 34 tonnes CO₂ per week, or ~300 - 800 tonnes CO₂ over a 24-week season.

By contrast, a new, right-sized, high-efficiency arena (low-carbon materials, heat-recovery plants, electrified systems, and on-site renewables) would eliminate most of these transport emissions immediately upon commissioning and keep them avoided for decades, while also lowering operational emissions versus legacy systems.

Social equity and accessibility

The current travel burden falls hardest on families without flexible jobs, discretionary income, or a second car, effectively rationing access to sport by time and income. Local ice restores equitable access, reduces time poverty (commute hours), and rebuilds volunteer engagement and community life.

Community growth and long-term need

Squamish grew 22.2% from 2016–2021 (19,497 → 23,819), far above B.C.'s 7.6% over the same period. The District projects 36,000+ residents by 2040. One rink can't meet present demand, much less future needs, across minor hockey, female programs (which we currently don't have available ice to implement), figure skating, speed skating

(which we currently don't have available ice to accommodate), public skates, and tournaments (which we currently don't have available ice to host).

Request

We respectfully ask Council to:

1. Initiate planning immediately (rather than in 2029 as scheduled) for a new, multi-sheet, energy-efficient multiplex sized to present and projected demand and designed to accommodate complementary community uses (e.g. indoor racket sports, weightlifting, basketball courts, concession).
2. Evaluate full lifecycle emissions, including transport emissions induced by inadequate local capacity in any comparative "retrofit vs. build" analysis.

Thank you for your consideration and leadership.

Sincerely,

Leah Hodges
SMHA President
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The correspondence in this email is confidential, if you are not the intended recipient, please notify me and kindly delete it, thank you.