

Township eager to get shovels in the ground for new Rec Centre

By Mark Pavilons, Editor

The recent government funding for King's new recreation complex has accelerated the project, to the point where local politicians are anxious to get the shovels in the ground. An update on the project was provided by Chris Fasciano, King's director of community services. Fasciano noted he's received many inquiries from the public, following the historic contribution and funding announcement. The project began to take life following the creation of the Facility Services Master Plan in 2019. Council and community consultation followed, along with initial design and grant applications. Input from user groups and the public helped shape the current layout of the facility. It will host two, NHL-size rinks and seating accommodation and design are still to be sorted out. The swimming pool is an amazing, six-lane, 25-metre pool, with an adjacent leisure pool. A multi-use field house houses a large turf surface for sports such as soccer, lacrosse, etc. Fasciano said the uses of this field are virtually endless. Other amenities include multi-purpose rooms for meetings, events, seminars and even rental space for private functions. The facility will be state-of-the-art in other ways, too. It will be energy efficient, including natural ventilation, reclaimed waste heat, and a possibility for an open loop geothermal heat exchange system. The building will have a high thermal performance roof and low emissions for surface coatings in the arenas. Provisions will be made for future solar arrays. Fasciano explained that from here, more information sessions will be held with stakeholders and the public. After the design details are finalized, it will go out to tender. He said staff are hoping to move forward as quickly as possible on this. Aside from the modern facility itself, Councillor David Boyd pointed out it will have a near zero financial impact to ratepayers. King's share of the cost - roughly \$14 million - is being largely covered by local developers and corporate sponsors. Councillor Debbie Schaefer was disappointed to have a net zero environmental impact. King needs to send a message that it "walks the talk" and she hopes the Township will exploit all of the available technologies in this regard. She pointed out we only get to build this once, and it has to be done right. Fasciano noted he's confident that all current measures are being explored, and provisions will be made for improvements in the future. "We're working hard to make it as efficient as we can," he said.