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**Date** October 18, 2023 **Report No.** 2023-621  
**To** Chair and Members  
Major Sports Team Liaison Committee  
**From** Mae Legg  
Manager of Economic Development and BRC

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### 1.0 Type of Report

Consent Item   
Item For Consideration

**2.0 Topic** **Current and Prospective Teams and Facilities - 2023-621.docx**

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### 3.0 Recommendation

- A. THAT Staff Report 2023-621 titled, “Current and Prospective Major Sport Teams and Local Sport Facilities” BE RECEIVED; and
- B. THAT the Chair of the Major Sports Team Liaison Committee and the Manager of Economic Development and BRC consult with current major league sports teams listed in section 5.1.1 and 5.1.3, gather feedback of their experiences in the City of Brantford; and report back to the Committee; and
- C. THAT staff prepare a report related to the City of Brantford sport facilities listed in section 5.2 and include the following information:
  - i. Seating capacity;
  - ii. Parking review;
  - iii. General overview of the state of the facility; and
  - iv. Future plans for the facility.

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## 4.0 Background

At their meeting on June 27, 2023, Brantford City Council passed the following resolution, titled “Major Sports Team Liaison Initiative”:

WHEREAS sport at all levels provides significant quality of life benefits for both participants and spectators in the City of Brantford; and

WHEREAS the City of Brantford has the good fortune to play host to a number of current and future major sports teams; and

WHEREAS these major sports teams provide high quality affordable entertainment to Brantford residents as well as instilling civic pride; and

WHEREAS the continuation and success of our major sports teams is also important to residents of the City of Brantford; and

WHEREAS maintaining positive and businesslike relationships with our major sports teams ensures retention of our existing teams and serves to attract new teams; NOW

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

- A. A Major Sports Team Liaison Committee numbering a maximum of three (3) Councillors and comprised of: Councillor McCreary, Councillor Carpenter, Councillor Samwell, (Mayor Davis ex-officio); and
- B. THAT the Major Sports Team Liaison Committee be supported by City staff as determined by the CAO; and
- C. THAT the term of the Committee BE ESTABLISHED for the duration of this term of Council with the mandate to:
  - i. Create and maintain positive and ongoing business relationships with our major sports teams and to provide an avenue to take advantage of future opportunities to attract new major sports teams to the community; and
- D. THAT the Major Sports Team Liaison Committee report directly to Committee of the Whole – Planning and Administration; and

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- E. THAT the Major Sports Team Liaison Committee report annually to Committee of the Whole – Planning Administration regarding the progress towards achieving its mandate.

The inaugural Major Sports Team Liaison Committee meeting held on July 17, 2023 concluded with each committee member tasked with compiling a list of current and prospective major sports teams that Brantford could support.

At the meeting, the following resolution was passed:

THAT the following tasks and report back dates, regarding the completion of the committees mandate, BE APPROVED:

- A. Provide a list of current and local prospective major teams above the age of 18 and sports that the committee wishes to engage;
- B. Review of facilities that can accommodate major sports team; and
- C. Liaising and meeting with prospective major sports teams.

## 5.0 Analysis

### 5.1 List of Current and Prospective Teams

At their meeting on July 17, 2023, Chair Councillor McCreary requested that all members provide a list of current and prospective teams they would like to engage via email.

#### 5.1.1 Current Teams Provided by Committee Members

- Intercounty Baseball – Brantford Red Sox.
- Ontario Hockey League - Brantford Bulldogs – Major Junior.
- Ontario Lacrosse League - Brantford Warriors – Junior C.
- Rugby Ontario - Brantford Harlequins Rugby - Senior Men, Senior Women.
- Ontario Junior Hockey League - Brantford 99ers - Junior A.

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- Hamilton and District Cricket League - Brantford Cricket Club.

### **5.1.2 Potential Teams Provided by Committee Members**

- U Sports - Varsity and Intramural Sports – Football, Basketball, Hockey.
- Canadian Junior Football League – Current local teams: Hamilton, London, Niagara, St. Clair.
- Ontario Women’s Soccer League – Semi-Professional - Current local teams: Oshawa, Paris, Guelph).
- Major Series Lacrosse – Senior A – Current local teams: Six Nations, Brampton, Oakville, Cobourg.
- Ontario Junior Lacrosse League – Junior A – Current local teams: Brampton, Burlington, Kitchener-Waterloo, Six Nations.
- National Lacrosse League - Toronto Rock.
- Major sports tournaments.

In addition to the organizations provided by Committee members, Council also directed staff to provide a list of current and local prospective major teams above the age of 18 and sports that the committee wishes to engage.

Staff has provided the following additional recommendations for the Committee to consider:

### **5.1.3 Current Teams Provided by Staff**

- Greater Ontario Hockey League - Brantford Bandits – Junior B (new ownership May 2023).
- Laurier Brantford – Varsity Teams – Cross Country, Indoor Soccer - Women, Men.
- Brantford Bisons Football (Brant District & Football Club) – Football.

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#### **5.1.4 Potential Teams Provided by Staff**

- Northern Football Conference – Semi-Professional – Current local teams: Hamilton, Kitchener/Waterloo/Guelph, Sarnia, GTA.
- Canadian Collegiate Athletic Association – Basketball, Soccer, Rugby, Volleyball.
- Arena Lacrosse League – Senior Men’s Semi-Professional Box Lacrosse – Current local teams: Oshawa, Paris, Six Nations.
- Arena Lacrosse League – Women’s Division – Current local teams: Ohsweken, Paris, Six Nations, Oshawa.
- Global T20 Canada – 20-over cricket tournament played in Canada (inaugural event took place in 2018).
- Basketball Super League (Dave Magley, President, announced the formation of a new professional basketball league beginning in Dec 2023. Will consist of teams located in Canada and the US. Current local teams: Kitchener-Waterloo, London, Windsor).
- Canadian Elite Basketball League - Premier Men’s Professional League Current local teams: Brampton, Niagara, Scarborough
- League1 Ontario and Ontario Soccer League (Men’s Semi-Professional)

#### **5.2 List of Sport Facilities**

In addition to the list of current and potential sport teams to engage, Council also directed staff to review facilities that can accommodate major sports teams. The following list has been prepared to respond to this request:

##### **5.2.1 Current Sport Facilities - City of Brantford**

- Arnold Anderson Stadium – 35 Sherwood Dr., Brantford.

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- Brantford & District Civic Centre – 79 Market St. S., Brantford.
  - Wayne Gretzky Sports Centre – 254 N Park St., Brantford.
  - Waterworks Park – Cricket Pitch – 400 Grand River Ave., Brantford.
  - Kiwanis Field, Kiwanis Way, Brantford.
  - Bisons Alumni North Park Sports Complex, 280 North Park St., Brantford.
  - Southwest Community Park soccer field (2026)
  - Southwest Community Park cricket pitch (2026)

The George Jones Field, located at 22 Powerline Rd. in the County of Brant, also currently hosts rugby and could have the potential to host a major sports team.

In order to achieve the Committee's mandate to attract major sport teams, a stronger understanding of what facilities currently exist in Brantford that could accommodate these teams/leagues is essential. Now that this list has been provided, staff recommend that the committee reviews the facilities' seating capacities, parking, a general overview of the state of the facility and any future plans for the facility.

### **5.3 Liaising with Major Sports Teams**

On June 27, 2023, Brantford City Council passed the motion titled, "Major Sports Team Liaison Initiative". A mandate that resulted from this initiative was to create and maintain positive and ongoing business relationships with our major sports teams and to provide an avenue to take advantage of future opportunities to attract new major sports teams to the community.

At the request of the Chair, City staff met with Louis Vilez, President, Brantford Warriors on September 21, 2023. Some of the feedback provided at this meeting included scheduling challenges and increased promotion of the team in the City of Brantford.

The Chair and City staff also met with Connie Pomerleau, Co-owner, Brantford Red Sox on September 26, 2023. Some of the feedback

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provided at this meeting included necessary upgrades to the building and increased promotion of the team in the City of Brantford

Staff recommends that the Chair of the Committee, along with the Manager of Economic Development and BRC, schedule meetings with the current major sports teams listed in sections 5.1 and 5.3 of this report to gather feedback related to their experience with sport hosting in the City of Brantford.

Staff recommends that the Committee Chair and staff liaison consult with the current major league sports teams (listed in section 5.1.1 and 5.1.3 of this report) and gather feedback of their experiences in Brantford.

This information will be compiled and submitted to the Task Force as information, along with recommended next steps, at the culmination of the consultation.

## **6.0 Financial Implications**

There are no financial implications as a result of receiving this report.

## **7.0 Climate and Environmental Implications**

At this time, reviewing current and potential major sports teams and current City facilities to host major sports teams does not have a climate or environmental impact.

However, if new major sports teams are added to the City this could lead to an increase in waste generation, energy consumption, community transportation and vehicle use, and water consumption which will ultimately lead to an increase in both Corporate and community greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.

To accommodate and minimize the potential climate and environmental impacts, the following will be considered if new and upgraded facilities are required in the future:

- If an existing building needs retrofits, the building will be retrofitted with more energy efficient equipment and/or lighting which will lead to reduced energy consumption and GHG emissions
- If an existing building requires the construction/installation of a new facility/amenity (pool, washroom, kitchen, court, etc.), this will lead to an

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increase in energy consumption and GHG emissions. However, energy conservation measures will be implemented to minimize the increase.

If an existing building requires retrofits to an existing facility/amenity, then it will be retrofitted with more energy efficient alternatives to reduce energy consumption and GHG emissions

## 8.0 Conclusion

With the creation of the Major Sports Team Liaison Committee, Brantford's City Council has identified the importance of the continuation and success of our major sports teams and attraction of new teams to the City.

Moving forward, staff recommends that the committee will create and maintain positive and ongoing business relationships with the City's major sports teams and will provide an avenue to take advantage of future opportunities to attract new major sports teams to the community with the implementation of the suggested recommendations.



Mae Legg  
Manager of Economic Development & BRC

Prepared By

Mae Legg, Manager of Economic Development & BRC  
Kara Davey, Manager of Tourism, Culture and Sport

Copy to:

Economic Development, Tourism and Cultural Initiatives Advisory Committee

In adopting this report, is a by-law or agreement required? If so, it should be referenced in the recommendation section.

By-law required  yes  no

Agreement(s) or other documents to be signed by Mayor and/or City Clerk  yes  no

Is the necessary by-law or agreement being sent concurrently to Council?  yes  no