

To: Safety and Facilities Services Committee

From: Adam Grant, Commissioner,
Safety and Facilities Services Department

Report Number: SF-25-09

Date of Report: February 5, 2025

Date of Meeting: February 10, 2025

Subject: Feasibility of Incorporating a Full-Size Cricket Field within
Ritson Fields

Ward: Ward 1

File: 03-05

1.0 Purpose

The purpose of this report is to respond to the following direction of Council on October 28, 2024:

“That staff investigate the feasibility of incorporating a full-size cricket field within the Ritson Fields, specifically the area of the existing side-by-side soccer fields located on the North East corner of the site; and,

That in addition to the feasibility of adding a full-size cricket field at Ritson Fields, staff investigate potential program options that continue to meet the needs of existing user groups and potentially accommodate local cricket organizations; and,

That should the staff report confirm the incorporation of a full-size cricket field at the existing Ritson Fields is feasible and Council approves the recommendation, investigation of a fully lit facility be considered as part of a future Capital Budget.”

Attachment 1 is a map of the area identifying Ritson Fields and the proposed cricket field and pitch location.

2.0 Recommendation

That the Safety and Facilities Services Committee recommend to City Council:

That Report SF-25-09 dated February 5, 2025 concerning incorporating a full-size cricket field within Ritson Fields be referred to the Mayor to be considered as a future capital budget project.

3.0 Input From Other Sources

- Commissioner, Community and Operations Services
- Engineering Services
- Legislative Services
- Legal Services

4.0 Analysis

4.1 Background

Ritson Fields, located in north Oshawa (Ward 1), just north of Taunton Road East and east of Ritson Road North, is a roughly 25-acre parcel featuring a single soccer field, a baseball diamond, and a twin-pitch soccer field.

While the Ritson Fields location is regularly used for baseball, soccer and other activities, there has been an increase interest to explore the potential opportunity for a cricket pitch.

The evolution of recreational needs to support Oshawa's growing and diverse population was also recognized in the Parks, Recreation, Library and Culture (P.R.L.C.) Facility Needs Assessment, completed in March 2024. Recommendations noted in the P.R.L.C. identified a preferred location for a playing surface is on the north side of the city.

Cricket is one of the fastest-growing sports in Canada, driven by the increasing number of immigrants from countries where cricket is a major sport. In Oshawa, the sport has gained considerable traction, with local cricket organizations and residents expressing strong interest in dedicated facilities. This proposal aligns with broader municipal efforts to foster inclusivity and provide recreational opportunities that reflect the City's cultural diversity. Supporting cricket programs can enhance community engagement, promote physical activity, and encourage cross-cultural interactions.

4.2 Design Considerations

A full-size cricket field generally varies between 130 metres and 150 metres and is oval in shape. As close as possible to the centre will be an area of grass designed, maintained and marked for the cricket pitch.

Staff investigated the potential of incorporating a cricket field into the existing soccer fields located at the east side of the land parcel. Although these fields are regularly used for community soccer programs during peak hours, staff have explored the opportunity to provide limited cricket programming at this location.

Staff considered overlaying a cricket field on top of the existing soccer fields by way of line painting and site regrading.

The proposed overlay involves the following key components:

1. **Line Painting:** Cricket-specific field markings can be added to delineate boundaries, crease lines, and other required areas. The layout would be designed to ensure minimal interference with the soccer field lines.
2. **Artificial Cricket Pitch Installation:** A durable artificial cricket pitch would need to be installed at the field's center between the two soccer fields. This pitch would provide a high-quality playing surface for batters and bowlers, ensuring an authentic cricketing experience.
3. **Earthworks and Ground Preparation:** Earthworks would be required to ensure a flat playing surface that meets both soccer and cricket requirements. Drainage infrastructure may be required in order to accommodate the cricket pitch.

The proposed cricket field will be oriented in a north-south direction in an effort to minimize sunlight interference for players and optimize field usability.

4.3 Programming and Field Management

To ensure efficient utilization and maintenance of the fields, Recreation Services staff will oversee scheduling and programming. Key considerations include:

1. **Designated Off-Hours for Cricket:** Cricket programming could be scheduled during times when soccer fields are not in use. The scheduling strategy would need to be confirmed with the Facility Booking Office.
2. **Field Recuperation:** To preserve the quality of the turf, staff would continue to implement mandatory rest periods for the fields. This approach ensures that the fields remain in good condition for both soccer and cricket activities.
3. **Collaborative Scheduling:** Staff will work closely with local soccer and cricket organizations in an effort to develop a mutually beneficial schedule. Regular reviews will be conducted to address any emerging challenges and optimize usage.

4.4 Limitations

The existing field has elevation challenges between the twin soccer fields, which will require earthworks and a detailed design to establish the most cost-efficient way to achieve the overlay of a cricket field and incorporate the cricket pitch. The current review has been based off existing projects of similar scope and work and therefore a detailed estimate would need to be completed in order to confirm the total cost of the earthworks based on the design.

Additionally, due to the extensive programming consumed by the soccer clubs, the field would be limited to recreational cricket play only with minimal availability. The estimated time available as identified by Recreation Services, would be limited and would not be sufficient for official league play or tournament play.

5.0 Financial Implications

Cricket Pitch Overlay: Staff have evaluated the proposed overlay against other City projects involving similar types of construction and estimate the cost of the overlay to be approximately \$250,000. As noted, there are concerns raised with the elevation variance of the twin soccer fields, which will require regrading, and drainage infrastructure considerations that may increase the overall cost.

Lighting: Staff have evaluated the installation of field lighting against similar projects involving similar types of construction and estimate the field lighting to be a cost of \$650,000.

6.0 Relationship to the Oshawa Strategic Plan

This report responds to the Oshawa Strategic Plan Priority Area “Lead: Governance and Service Excellence” with the goal to provide transparent, efficient, and responsible fiscal stewardship and use of resources.



Randy Garey, Director,
Facilities Management Services



Adam Grant, Commissioner,
Safety and Facilities Services Department