



Staff Report PRC2026-01

Council 2026-03-30

Amendments

Submitted To: Committee of the Whole | Council
Submitted By: Karen Cubitt, Director of Parks, Recreation and Culture
Ashley Kulchycki, CEO, Collingwood Public Library
Prepared By: Ashley Kulchycki, CEO, Collingwood Public Library
Subject: Arts Centre & MURF Location Assessment Update

Recommendation

THAT Staff Report PRC2026-01, Arts Centre & MURF Location Assessment Update, be received;

AND THAT Council direct staff to continue the necessary location evaluation studies for the Arts Centre and Multi-use Recreational Facility sites selected for further investigation on December 8, 2025;

AND THAT Council authorize the spending of up to fifteen thousand dollars (\$15,000) from the MURF reserve to access environmental studies and other professional services as deemed necessary.

Amendments

None.

1. Executive Summary

At the December 8, 2025 meeting, Council directed staff to undertake the necessary steps to further evaluate five shortlisted sites for the proposed new multi-purpose recreation facility (MURF) and Arts Centre. A comprehensive workplan is now underway to gather insights concerning the sites' environmental impacts, building restrictions, and financial implications. To complete the current assessment phase, unbudgeted funding

from the MURF reserve will be required; staff believe an estimated fifteen thousand dollars (\$15,000) will be sufficient. The results of this work will provide Council with the information needed to make a well-supported decision on the future of these significant capital projects.

Staff are applying a location-centred approach, ensuring that site realities guide feasibility and decision-making. Professional consultants are being engaged to complete detailed studies to define buildable areas and refine development potential. This work is paired with further research on acquisition costs and the creation of a financial strategy.

Integrated Project Delivery is being explored as a possible delivery method. An information session will be provided to support Council's understanding of this methodology on March 30, 2026.

The MURF Steering Committee remains engaged, with updated Terms of Reference reflecting their role extending beyond the initial feasibility phase. The Arts Centre Steering Committee is being kept apprised of the current process and that work continues to progress on the vision of an arts centre.

Staff anticipate returning to Council in Q2 with a final report and recommended next steps.

2. Analysis

Background

Following a detailed review and evaluation process, staff brought forward the top-ranked sites for both an Arts Centre and MURF location. At their December 8, 2025 meeting, Council directed staff to do further research on five potential locations for these significant projects. A detailed workplan has been developed to guide staff through this next phase of work, which has key deliverables that include examining environmental impacts, refining the building envelope, determining the associated costs to proceed with the site development, and a financial strategy.

Project Overview

As work has continued on these projects, staff have taken a location-centred approach. This allows decisions to be guided by the realities of the sites – constraints, opportunities, long-term potential – rather than forcing a predetermined design onto the land. Staff across departments contemplated a number of approaches to environmental assessments that could be delivered with the project timeline and budget and still provide sufficient analysis to understand the buildable areas on the selected sites. This work includes Nottawasaga Valley Conversation Authority (NVCA) review, Natural Heritage Constraints Analysis, as well as site orientation planning studies. The results of this information, paired with a financial strategy, will better equip Council with making a confident decision on the future of these projects.

Working with a professional realtor, staff have reached out to the designated property owners to hold exploratory discussions concerning the sale of their properties to the Town of Collingwood. These discussions remain ongoing and formal offers to purchase will be necessary to clarify seller interest, as well as to set definitive property costs.

The Property Acquisition Committee was assembled to review the short-listed sites and provide insights and feedback on each site's project suitability, potential challenges not previously identified, and potential uses outside of a MURF or Arts Centre.

Staff commenced research of fundraising firms and professionals for future consideration.

A variety of project delivery methodologies are available, each offering distinct advantages and presenting their own challenges. One option worth considering is integrated project delivery, which emphasizes collaboration and shared responsibility. Staff researched and interviewed IPD experts to provide more information to Council on this methodology. A consultant from Stok will be providing an information session on this approach to Council on March 30, 2026.

The potential for capital project partners remains viable, with the confirmation of partners as a next step at the conclusion of this stage of work. Staff have been and will remain in contact with neighbouring municipalities, school boards, and Simcoe County as the location assessment process continues. The Town of the Blue Mountains, specifically, formally confirmed their continued interest in pursuing a partnership approach to a MURF and to continue discussions with the Town of Collingwood and other potential partners regarding its development. Collingwood staff have shared with TBM staff the site evaluation tools we developed to assess our list of potential properties, should TBM wish to utilize the same methodology.

Project Steering

As per Council's direction, the Collingwood MURF Steering Committee has remained engaged in the work being done. The Terms of Reference for the Steering Committee have been updated to reflect their commitment extending beyond the initial feasibility phase. At the completion of the assessment process there will be more information to share and review. The Collingwood Arts Centre Steering Committee has been kept apprised of the current process and that work continues to progress on the vision of an arts centre.

Project Continuity

Staff plan to return in Q2 with a final report and recommended steps for Council, however, there may be decisions or actions needed during the lame duck period of Council – August 19 through October 26, 2026. Our CAO holds delegated authority during a lame duck period, permitting certain operational and financial decisions when Council's powers are restricted under the Municipal Act, however the CAO has stated that she would be unlikely to make a strategic decision of this magnitude, unless it was within the scope of a negotiation and financial framework previously directed by Council, as delegated authority is intended as a safeguard to maintain continuity and address urgent items, not as a substitute for Council's strategic oversight. Even with this authority in place, the preferred process is for Council direction to guide major actions

whenever feasible, ensuring decisions continue to reflect the community's elected leadership.

Financial Impacts

In order to complete the location assessment process, unbudgeted funds from the MURF reserve will be needed to conduct environmental impact reports, obtain NVCA approvals, and complete site design studies. Staff estimate that fifteen thousand dollars (\$15,000) will sufficiently cover the expenses associated with the professional teams needed for this stage of the assessment process.

A financial summary of costs incurred to date is being tracked and will be provided in the final report.

Conclusion

Staff are working diligently to complete the location assessment process. The goal is to bring building location insights back to Council in the second quarter of 2026 for a final review. Council members can then make an informed decision on where to best locate the proposed Collingwood Arts Centre and MURF facilities.

3. Input from Other Sources

This staff report was reviewed by Department Heads at their March 17 and March 24, 2026 meetings.

4. Applicable Policy or Legislation

This report addresses a key action in the 2024-2028 Community Based Strategic Plan under the goal to Promote Collingwood as centre for healthy and active living:

- Determine future recreational programming and facility needs and explore creation of a Multi-Use Recreation Facility.

This report also aligns with the objectives of the current PRC Master Plan and Collingwood Public Library Strategic Plan to explore opportunities for infrastructure expansion.

The Municipal Act outlines restricted acts after nomination day, which may limit some actions that Council can undertake.

5. Considerations

2024-2028 Community Based Strategic Plan: Progress towards achieving CBSP Goal

- Sustainable Connected Vibrant Responsible
- Services adjusted if any [Choose an item.](#)
- Climate Change / Sustainability: [Choose an item.](#)
- Communication / Engagement: Public Engagement has occurred
- Accessibility / Equity, Diversity, Inclusion: Consistent with Multi-Year Accessibility Plan
- Registered Lobbyist(s) relating to content: [\[add content and meeting dates\]](#)
- Rights of Indigenous Peoples ([UNDRIP](#)): [\[add content\]](#)

Next steps and future action required following endorsement:

Return to Council with final report and proposed next step in Q2.

6. Appendices and Other Resources

None

7. Approval

Prepared By:

Ashley Kulchycki, CEO, Collingwood Public Library

Reviewed By:

Karen Cubitt, Director of Parks, Recreation and Culture

Ashley Kulchycki, CEO, Collingwood Public Library

CAO Comments:

- Endorsed by CAO Skinner on March 27, 2026 to proceed to Council.