

2001 DECEMBER 13

**TO:** CITY MANAGER

**FROM:** DIRECTOR PARKS, RECREATION AND CULTURAL SERVICES

**SUBJECT: TABLE TENNIS PROGRAM - BONSOR RECREATION COMPLEX**

**PURPOSE:** To provide Council with information regarding correspondence received from Ms. Winnie Hui about the table tennis program at Bonsor Recreation Complex.

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**RECOMMENDATION:**

1. THAT this report be received for information purposes.

**REPORT**

At its meeting of 2001 November 19, Council received correspondence from Ms. Winnie Hui regarding recent changes to the table tennis program at Bonsor Recreation Complex and referred the letter to the Parks, Recreation and Culture Commission for consideration.

At its meeting of 2001 December 12, the Parks, Recreation and Culture Commission received the above noted report and adopted the two recommendations contained therein.



Kate Friars  
DIRECTOR PARKS, RECREATION  
AND CULTURAL SERVICES

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Attachment  
p:\data\council\PK-TABLE TENNIS PROGRAM - BONSOR RECREATION COMPLEX

## SUBJECT: TABLE TENNIS PROGRAM - BONSOR RECREATION COMPLEX

### RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. THAT a copy of this report be forwarded to Council for information.
2. THAT a copy of this report be sent to Ms. Winnie Hui.

### REPORT

Appearing as correspondence on this agenda, is a letter from Ms. Winnie Hui regarding the change of location of the table tennis service at Bonsor Recreation Complex, forwarded to Commission from Council.

#### Background

Shortly after Bonsor Recreation Complex opened in 1988 a single table tennis table was located on the lower floor in the west portion of the lobby outside the racquet courts and gymnasium. Initially the table was placed in this area for casual play by patrons waiting to participate in activities. Participation in table tennis expanded and a second table was added in the same area in 1992.

Over the years there has been an increase in the calibre of play and number of people using the tables. There are approximately 100 current users of the tables who come from all over the Lower Mainland.

In 1993 there was an expansion of the original weight room into the east portion of the lower floor lobby due to increased demands for weight room services. This expansion reduced the available lobby space on the lower floor. In the fall of 2000, the racquetball court facing the west lobby area was converted into a cardio exercise space. This conversion further reduced the lobby space on the lower floor due the creation of an access corridor and stretching area outside the cardio exercise space (Attachment #1).

The majority of the remaining lower floor lobby space is currently occupied with the two table tennis tables that are cordoned off with portable fencing units. The tables are available for use anytime the centre is open. The use of the tables draws patrons from all over the Lower Mainland who pay an annual fee of \$ 5.20

#### Rationale for Relocation of Table Tennis Service

The lower lobby area was never intended to be used as a continuous play space and was not designed for this purpose. Initially the table tennis service was located there because the levels of participation and services offered on the lower floor were substantially less than that existing today. Participation has grown in most programs and services on the lower floor. Most notably, participation levels in the gymnasium programs, weight room, and cardio exercise space have increased considerably. Participation in the complex has grown from 860,000 visitors in 1998 to 1.1 million visitors in 2000.

With the reduction of available lobby space and increased participation levels on the lower floor the problems of congestion and patron complaints have grown.

The nature of these complaints can be characterized as follows:

- There is insufficient space and seating for parents and children waiting for programs and services to commence or finish.
- There have been collisions with zealous table tennis players who are playing very competitively or chasing after stray table tennis balls.
- Patrons have been struck with paddles and balls as they walk or gather around the perimeter of the table tennis activity area.
- Conflict situations have arisen between patrons waiting in the aisle and table tennis players competing for the same space.
- The portable fencing reduces the aesthetic appeal of the services on the lower floor.

#### **Proposed Solution and Group Meeting Process**

Staff met with 25 members of the table tennis group on 2001 November 05 to explain the challenges that the centre is experiencing. The meeting was promoted for two weeks through signs and verbal notification.

Staff proposed that the table tennis activity be moved to a racquetball court that has experienced a decline in use. Certain times would be designated for drop-in table tennis play and other times for racquetball bookings. The existing \$5.20 annual fee would be maintained for this designated drop-in service. In addition to the designated drop-in times, players could pay the racquetball court fee and have exclusive use of the court to play table tennis.

A proposed schedule of table tennis drop-in playing times for the racquetball court was presented (Attachment #2). Some members of the group expressed concerns regarding the tighter space restrictions of the racquet court space, cooler air temperature of the court, increased noise levels due to echoing, and restricted hours available for play.

Additionally, players would have the option to develop a community table tennis club that would operate during designated daytime and/or evening hours on an allotment basis in the gymnasium or multi-use activity space. The group could acquire additional tables and be able to accommodate more players during their allotted time period. The allotment opportunity would be structured similar to the volleyball and basketball sport allotments that currently exist in the centre. The allotment fee would be \$ 14.35/hr or \$ 18.85/hr depending on the room booked.

While the table tennis participants are used to a minor annual fee of \$ 5.20, this is not in keeping with table tennis clubs that charge \$2.00 - 3.00 per two hour session per participant. The unlimited access and very reasonable prices of the service at Bonsor has also contributed to its popularity.

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A follow-up meeting was held on 2001 November 20 to update the group on suggestions provided at the previous meeting. One suggestion presented by a group member was to improve the space, temperature and noise levels by removing the glass entrance to the racquetball court. It was explained that this could be considered at a future time if racquetball participation declined to the point that the service was no longer viable. Currently this is the only remaining racquetball court at Bonsor and both services would need to be accommodated on this court. Staff also explained how a table tennis community group would function and provided a schedule of available times and room rental information (Attachment #3).

In order to allow the table tennis players time to organize as a community group the relocation from the lobby has been postponed until the new year. Staff will be assisting the group with promoting and organizing this group initiative.

### **CONCLUSION**

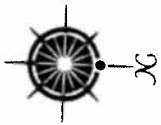
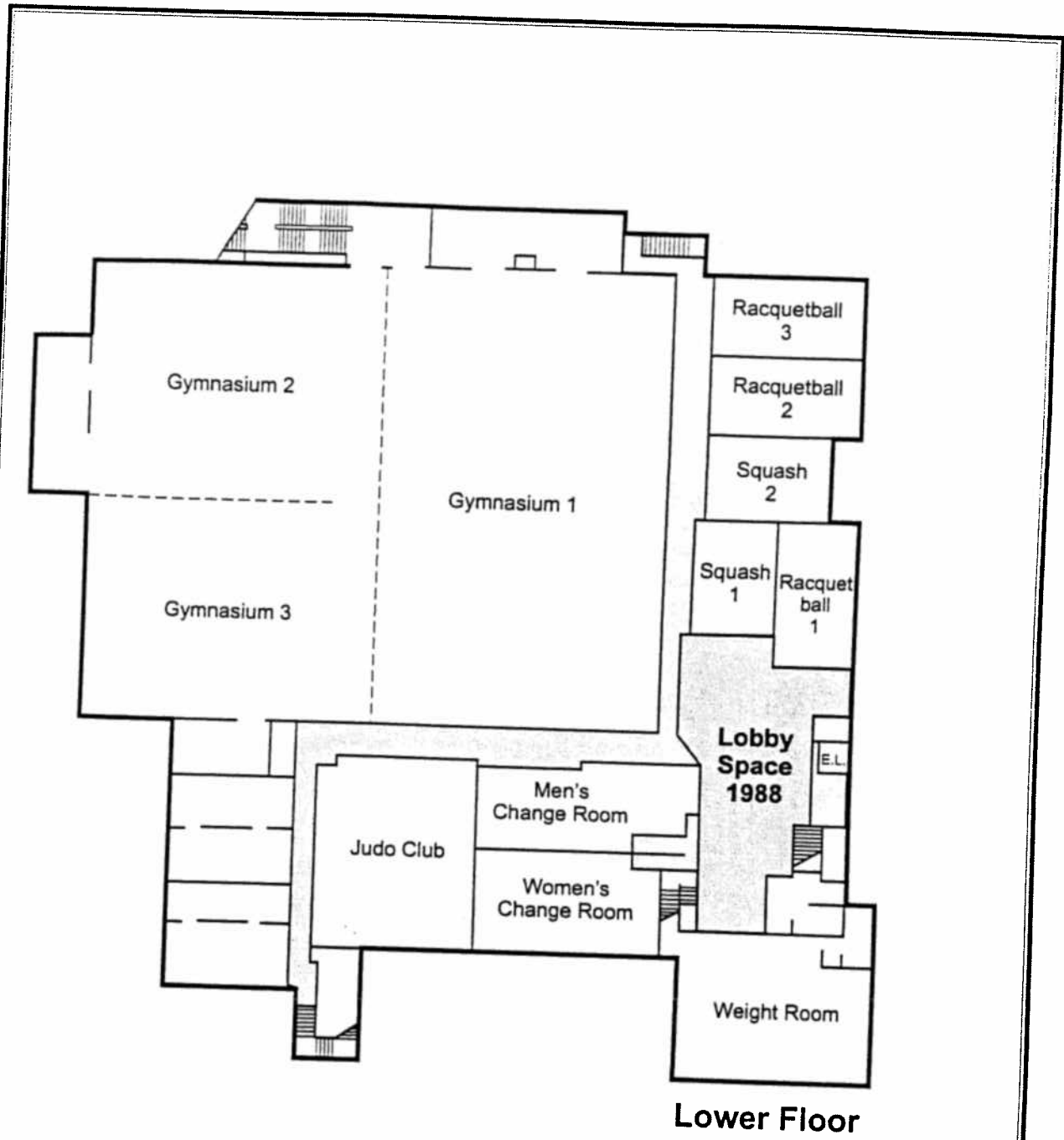
The lower floor lobby space at Bonsor Complex was never intended or designed to be an active play space. Due to the increased participation levels and congestion on the lower floor it was decided that the table tennis service should be relocated to a more appropriate location.

Staff will continue to work with the table tennis participants to assist them to adjust to the change in location.

GM:mc


Attachment (3)


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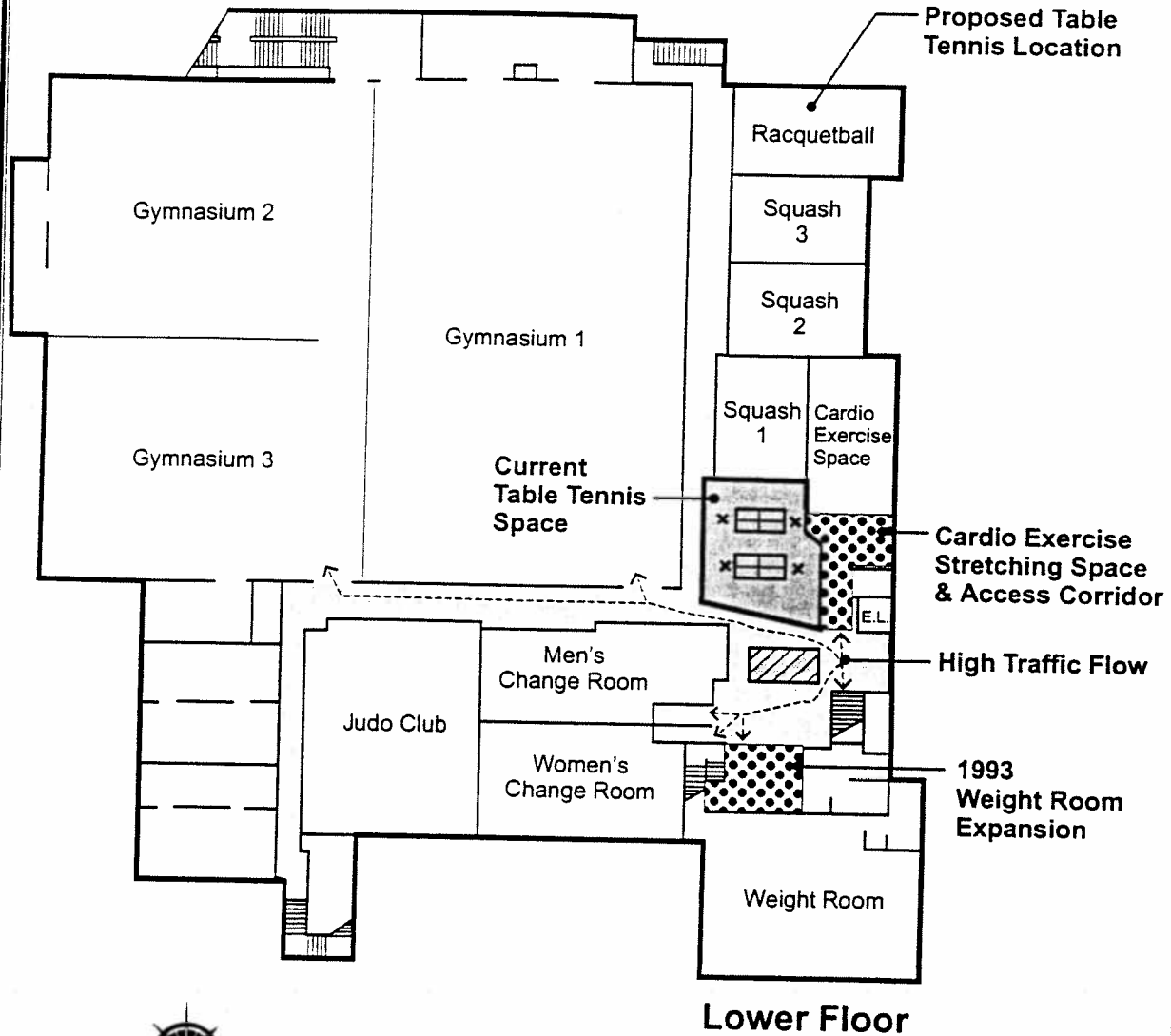


**Key**

----- High Traffic Flow

 2001 Lobby Space

 Original Lobby Space  
Converted to Weight Room  
and Cardio Exercise Space



**Lower Floor**



**Bonsor Recreation Centre  
2001 Lobby Layout**

C:\data\small plans\bonsor lobby2

Dwg. # O.P. 31-3-118s

Date: Dec. 2001

Scale: nts

Prepared By: HD

Bonsor Recreation Complex

**Proposed Table Tennis Drop-in Times**

Mondays	8:30am - 12:30pm 2:30am - 4:00pm
Tuesdays	8:30am - 3:15pm 6:15pm - 9:15pm
Wednesdays	8:30am - 12:30pm 2:30pm - 4:00pm
Thursday	8:30am - 3:15pm
Fridays	8:30am - 12:30pm 2:30pm - 4:00pm
Saturdays	8:30am - 12:30pm 2:30pm - 6:00pm
Sundays	8:30am - 12:30pm 2:30pm - 4:00pm 6:15pm - 11:00pm

\*\* To play table tennis during these designated times, players must have a valid shoe tag (\$5.20/year). To play table tennis outside of the designated times, courts may be booked at a cost of \$10.45/45 minutes with a valid Sports Reservation Card (\$13.25/year).

## Additional Table Tennis Space Options

1. The listed day/evening times could be available for allotment bookings (ie. we work with you to form a Community Group - The Bonsor Table Tennis Club).
2. The Bonsor Table Tennis Club is allotted space via an allotment contract on a seasonal basis. Each season you would be required to renew your contract through our Allotments Clerk. Allotments are subject to cancellations and room re-allocations to alternative space as necessary. Advanced notice will be indicated on your contract.

### 3. **Additional Options:**

#### Daytime

Mondays 1 - 4 pm SBMC

Tuesdays 8 - 12 pm SBMC  
 1 - 4 pm SBMC  
 \*every 3<sup>rd</sup> Tues./month

Thursdays 8 - 12 pm SBMC  
 \*not available on the  
 3<sup>rd</sup> Thurs./month

#### Evening

Mondays 5 - 7:30 pm Gym #2

Tuesdays 5 - 7:30 pm Gym #2

Sundays 5 - 7:30 pm M.U. 2

<u>Cost</u>	SBMC	\$14.35/hour + GST
	Gym #2	\$18.85/hour + GST
	M.U. 2	\$14.35/hour + GST