

ITEM #: 30
DATE: 03-26-24
DEPT: P&R

COUNCIL ACTION FORM

SUBJECT: REALLOCATION OF AMES/ISU ICE ARENA CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN (CIP) FUNDING

BACKGROUND:

The Ames/ISU Ice Arena has a radiant heating system which provides heat for the spectator seating area and the lobby area. This system is a critical feature of the Ice Arena and is regularly used when the Ice Arena is open for games and practices. When the radiant heating system is not properly functioning, staff often receives complaints regarding the temperature in the seating area. Without the system, it can be uncomfortable for spectators, especially when the outside temperature dips below 32 degrees.

The radiant heating system (spectator seating and lobby areas) was installed prior to the Ames/ISU Ice Arena opening in 2001 and has lasted 23 years. The life expectancy of the system is 15 years. **In February 2024, staff discovered that the spectator seating radiant heating was malfunctioning.** Staff was able to make minor repairs to keep it functioning, however, these repairs are not a viable long-term solution. After exploring possible repair options, the recommended action is to replace the equipment. Staff explored alternatives to radiant heating such as a forced air system, but determined that this form of heating could conflict with the ice making system. Therefore, staff is proposing replacement of the malfunctioning system with a new radiant heating system. Staff estimates that the cost to replace the radiant heating system is between \$65,000 and \$85,000.

The 2022/23 Ames/ISU Ice Arena program approved in the 2022-2027 Capital Improvements Plan contained \$75,000 for the installation of a women's locker room adjacent the lobby area. The number of girls and women playing hockey is on the increase and a locker room addition is needing to be accomplished. However, in the short term, staff has been working with user groups to utilize dedicated locker room space (ISU Women's Hockey, ISU Men's Hockey, and AMHA High School teams) whenever possible. This is not an ideal solution, but it does marginally address this need.

It remains important to accomplish the Women's Locker Room Project. However, completion of this project is not critical to the Ice Arena's basic operation, whereas a functioning radiant heating system is. Therefore, staff is requesting to reallocate \$75,000 of Ice Arena CIP funding from the Women's Locker Room Project to the Radiant Heating Replacement Project. If approved, staff would evaluate the Women's Locker Room Project for programming into a future CIP.

ALTERNATIVES:

1. Approve reallocation of \$75,000 of Ice Arena CIP funding from the Women's Locker Room Project to the Radiant Heating Replacement Project.
2. Do not reallocate \$75,000 from the Women's Locker Room Project to the Radiant Heating Replacement Project, and provide staff further direction regarding the malfunctioning radiant heating system.
3. Do not proceed with replacement of the radiant heating system.

CITY MANAGER'S RECOMMENDED ACTION:

The radiant heating system at the Ice Arena is critical equipment to the facility. While staff was able to get the system to operate after it malfunctioned in February, the repair is not anticipated to be a long-term solution. The system has exceeded its life expectancy by eight years and is in need of replacement. Therefore, it is the recommendation of the City Manager that the City Council adopt Alternative No. 1 as described above.