# Township of Scugog Staff Report

| | |
|---|---|
| **TO** | General Purpose and Administration Committee |
| **DATE** | May 4, 2026 |
| **DEPARTMENT** | Public Works and Recreation |
| **REPORT TITLE** | **Blackstock Arena Refrigeration Plant Replacement** |
| **REPORT NUMBER** | PWR-2026-020 |

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to seek Council approval for the purchase and installation of a permanent ice refrigeration plant to replace the R22 plant at the Blackstock Arena.

### KEY FINDINGS

- The revised quotation for the permanent refrigeration plant specifications provides the most financially viable solution to support the future of the Blackstock Arena.
- The Blackstock Arena Planning and Development Committee and Township of Scugog partnership has been endorsed by Council through a Memorandum of Understanding.
- On March 14, 2026, Blackstock celebrated national recognition, after being named Ontario's provincial winner in the 2026 edition of the Kraft Hockeyville competition.
- The Blackstock Arena Planning and Development Committee have agreed to contribute the $50,000 award towards the replacement of the refrigeration plant at the Blackstock Arena in conjunction with their 20% fundraising contribution commitment.

### STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

Approving the purchase and replacement of the permanent ice refrigeration plant at the Blackstock Arena supports:

- **Strategic Direction #1 – Infrastructure**: Leverage and improve roads, transportation, facilities, equipment, and other assets.
    - Objective #2: Enhance recreation facilities

## RECOMMENDATION

1. **THAT** Report PWR-2026-020, Blackstock Arena Refrigeration Plant Replacement, be received for information; and,

2. **THAT** Council approve the purchase and installation of a Permanent Refrigeration Plant to replace the existing Freon Refrigeration Plant at the Blackstock Arena; and,

3. **THAT** funding, not to exceed $980,000.00 for the new permanent refrigeration plant, be funded from the Major Facilities Reserve Fund.

## BACKGROUND

At the General Purpose and Administration Committee meeting on November 10, 2025, Council requested further information prior to making a decision to purchase a permanent refrigeration plant at the Blackstock Arena:

> *THAT staff be directed to report back to Council as soon as possible with a proposed priority plan addressing the scope, timing, and cost of all anticipated repairs for the Blackstock Recreation Centre to ensure that it remains a viable facility for the community.*

At the General Purpose and Administration Committee meeting on February 2, 2026, PWR-2026-007, Blackstock Recreation Complex Truss Repairs and Roof Replacement Design Award was approved by Council:

> *THAT Council award P2025-19, Blackstock Recreation Complex Truss Repairs and Roof Replacement design assignment to Sense Engineering (GTA) Inc. being the highest scoring proponent at a cost of $25,800 inclusive of net of HST rebate; and,*
>
> *THAT staff proceed with tendering the design and awarding construction subject to coming within available budget and advise Council based on the outcome.*

At the General Purpose and Administration Committee meeting on April 13, 2026, PWR-2026-017, Memorandum of Understanding with the Blackstock Arena Planning and Development Committee was approved by Council:

> *THAT the Mayor and Clerk be authorized to sign and execute the Memorandum of Understanding with the Blackstock Arena Planning and Development Committee in the form appended as Attachment 1 to Report PWR-2026-017.*

On March 14, 2026, Blackstock celebrated national recognition, after being named Ontario's provincial winner in the 2026 edition of the Kraft Hockeyville competition. Each of the 13 provincial and territorial winners received $50,000 towards arena upgrades to the facility, $10,000 in brand new hockey equipment from the NHLPA Goals and Dreams and the

NHL/NHLPA Industry Growth Fund and a donation of approximately 10,000 pounds of Kraft Heinz products to the local food bank.

The Blackstock Arena Planning and Development Committee have agreed to contribute the $50,000 award towards the replacement of the refrigeration plant at the Blackstock Arena in conjunction with their 20% fundraising contribution commitment in the Memorandum of Understanding.

The following are the previous reports advising Council of the refrigeration plant deficiencies:

- Report PWR-2025-009 – Blackstock Arena Remediation Options – Follow up Report
- Report PWR-2025-001 – Blackstock Arena Remediation Options
- Report CAO-2025-008 – Blackstock Arena Refrigeration Plant Replacement Update
- Report COMS-2025-013 – Blackstock Arena Refrigeration Plant Replacement

**DISCUSSION**

Staff have collaborated with the Blackstock Arena Planning and Development Committee to find solutions to replace the freon refrigeration plant at the arena.

Over the past months, staff have been working closely with our refrigeration plant contractor (CIMCO) to evaluate further cost saving measures with the preferred permanent refrigeration plant. These options have been reviewed by the Blackstock Recreation Advisory Committee (BRAC) and the Blackstock Arena Planning and Development Committee (BAPDC) and their recommendations are included.

**Option #1 – Do Nothing**

The Township can continue to operate the existing refrigeration plant until it fails while applying for grant opportunities as intakes become available. The vision is to apply for a grant to increase the ice surface from its current size (150’ x 53’) to an NHL size rink (200’ x 85’) with new change rooms.

Option #1 would continue to require Operating budget in 2026 and beyond.

**BRAC and BAPDC Comments:**

Members reviewed this option suggesting that the Township continue to operate the existing refrigeration plant until it fails while pursuing grant opportunities for future upgrades. This approach was deemed not viable.

The arena is a critical facility for community engagement, youth development and recreation. Committee members urge Council to immediately invest in the facility.

**Option #2 – Supply and Install a Permanent Refrigeration Plant**

Staff presented this option to Council in past reports; however, a decision was not endorsed due to the cost of the permanent ice plant. In the past months, staff in consultation with the refrigeration contractor have discussed modifications to the original proposal to reduce costs.

A permanent ammonia refrigeration plant would be sized to accommodate the existing ice surface dimensions. Should future grant opportunities arise in conjunction with fundraising efforts by the BAPDC, the plant would be upgraded to accommodate an NHL sized ice surface. Minor upgrades to the plant would be required at an estimated cost of $90,000 (2026 pricing) to upgrade to a plate and frame chiller and upsize the condenser.

Option #2 would cost approximately $980,000 and commence as a Capital Project with a Request for Proposal issued to the public.

**BRAC and BAPDC Comments:**

Members reviewed this option and identified it as their first preferred option, acknowledging the long-term value of a permanent system with some cost adjustments and the fundraising commitment from the community is the most viable.

**Option #3 – Purchase a Portable Ammonia Refrigeration Plant**

At the June 23, 2025, Council meeting, Report COMS-2025-013 discussed the purchase of an ammonia portable refrigeration plant that would only support the existing size ice pad and would replace the need to repair the existing cooling tower and heat exchangers.

This unit consists of a plate and frame chiller, condenser, brine pump, mounted brine expansion tank and is a turn-key solution. The portable unit could be re-purposed or sold at auction if the Township were successful in securing grant funding for a re-build of the arena and ice pad to regulation size.

Option #3 would cost approximately $607,000 and commence as a Capital project.

**BRAC and BAPDC Comments:**

Members reviewed this option and identified it as their second preferred option. The proposed investment is a practical solution that ensures continued operation of the facility without requiring immediate major reconstruction. However, with the cost reduction to the permanent refrigeration plant option, the portable unit is the second preferred option.

**Blackstock Arena Renovation Plan**

Staff will continue to follow the 2023 Building Condition Assessment and recommend facility repairs and improvements through the Capital budget process.

## FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

| Options | Cost | Funding Source | Operating Budget Implication |
|---|---|---|---|
| Option #1 – Do Nothing | N/A | N/A | Operating Budget Status Quo |
| Option #2 – Supply and Install Permanent Refrigeration Plant | $980,000 | Major Facilities Reserve<br>Kraft Hockeyville | Reduction of approximately $12,000 in annual repairs |
| Option #3 – Purchase Portable Ammonia Refrigeration Plant | $607,000 | Major Facilities Reserve<br>Kraft Hockeyville | Reduction of approximately $12,000 in annual repairs |

Funding for this project in the amount of $980,000 has not been previously approved. It is recommended that these funds be drawn from the Major Facilities Reserve Fund and from support by the BAPDC.

## CONSULTATION / ENGAGEMENT

Staff have engaged the two Blackstock Committees; Blackstock Recreation Advisory Committee (BRAC) and Blackstock Arena Planning and Development Committee (BAPDC) in the past year to find a solution to replace the arena refrigeration plant.

The project timelines will be communicated to the ice user groups at the Blackstock Recreation Complex. Further, we will inform them of the delivery and installation timelines, along with the potential for a critical failure in the interim, which could impact ice use bookings during the 2026-27 season.

A news release, website and social media updates will be arranged to highlight the investment in the Blackstock Recreation Complex, ensuring continued use and enjoyment for the community.

## ALTERNATIVE CONSIDERATIONS

Alternative considerations have been discussed in body of this report.

| Authored by: | Approved by: |
|---|---|
| Shawna Cornish<br>Manager of Parks and Recreation | Grant Taylor<br>Director of Public Works and Recreation |

To request an alternative accessible format, please contact the Clerks Department at 905-985-