

Group makes pitch for baseball

By TERRI SAUNDERS, SUN MEDIA

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The Ottawa Stadium group officially submitted their proposal to bring baseball back to the city.

A group of Little League baseball players made their way through city hall Monday afternoon, helping to deliver a message to councillors Ottawa is ready for another turn at bat.

Walking beside them were David Butler and Duncan Macdonald, two members of the Ottawa Stadium Group, carrying copies of a proposal to open the doors of the facility and bring back professional baseball to the nation's capital.

"The stadium would essentially be open year-round," said Butler. "It would host other things than baseball. We're calling it a baseball-plus scenario."

The group would like to lease the stadium and take over operations while attempting to lure a Can-Am baseball team to the city. But the stadium would also be home to concerts, trade fairs and events, if the proposal is successful.

"We're also interested in giving about 100 days back to the community in terms of offering it to Little League and other sporting events within the city of Ottawa," said Butler.

The group wants a long-term lease on the facility, which they suggest needs some retrofit work, with an eye towards taking it over sometime in October.

Butler said the proposal will be at no cost to the city.

Coun. Bob Monette welcomed the group and the Little Leaguers to city hall Monday, most of whom arrived in a trolley car before breaking into a rousing rendition of Take Me Out To The Ball Game.

Duncan Macdonald, another member of the OSG, said the youngsters deserve to play in a real stadium.

"These kids have dreams to play at the next level, whatever level that is and we have a state-of-the-art facility that's being unused," said Macdonald. "We just need to use it for what it's there for."

The proposal will be distributed to city councillors for their review and consideration.

terri.saunders@sunmedia.ca