

NEWS RELEASE



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Community Engagement to Start on New Pool and Arena Feasibility Study

Maple Ridge, B.C. The City of Maple Ridge will launch community engagement in January to explore the feasibility of locating a new multi-use recreational facility with an indoor pool and ice arena in the Hammond neighbourhood.

Hammond Community Park has been identified as the preferred site for the City's second indoor pool and fifth ice sheet - priorities in the Parks, Recreation and Culture (PRC) Master Plan adopted in February. The park is currently home to Hammond Community Centre and outdoor pool, both at the end of their functional lifespans. This site also contains the Hammond Stadium and Larry Walker fields facilities.

The City has awarded the contract for the Feasibility Study to HCMA Architecture and Design who bring a wealth of experience working on similar projects throughout the region. The first phase of community engagement will begin in January with surveys, targeted engagement meetings, an open house and pop up events intended to get a wide range of feedback to shape the initial report back to Council.

This engagement will continue into the early summer with Council reports and a second round of community feedback as the design concepts are refined based on the technical information and public input.

"Delivering new recreation facilities for our growing community is a key priority for Council and we are pleased that this work is moving forward early in the new year," said Mayor Dan Ruimy. "This process will allow us to evaluate all of the important metrics so that we, as a Council and as a community, can make an informed decision on this project as quickly as possible."

Feasibility Study Scope

The study will include:

- Extensive engagement with public and interested parties using a variety of channels,
- Scale and type of facility needed,
- A site analysis, including three to four design concepts,

- Potential additional recreation uses identified as needs in the PRC Master Plan, including fitness centre and indoor track,
- Archeological, geotechnical, parking and traffic assessments, and
- Potential operating models and estimated costs.

The analysis will also consider leading trends, best practices and regional facilities comparisons, along with the extensive feedback collected during public engagement for the new PRC Master Plan and 2017-2018 recreation infrastructure review.

Why Hammond?

City staff reviewed potential private and public locations around the community for a new aquatics and arena facility. The 13-acre Hammond Community Park site met all the requirements as there is sufficient space, it's a fully serviced site, in a developed area with a growing population, accessible by transit and near a major transportation route. Critically, it's also owned by the City, eliminating the cost of buying land to deliver the project.

In addition to the overall site feasibility metrics, the Hammond Community Centre is earmarked for accessibility and building upgrades, and the outdoor pool is nearing the end of its service life. The City approved \$2.5 million to renovate the centre in 2018 but paused this work to consider broader long-term community needs determined through the PRC Master Plan.

Future Steps

Consideration of specific facility uses, designs and programming would follow the delivery of the completed feasibility study and discussion by Council in mid-2024.

If the project were to proceed, the intent is to integrate the existing Hammond Community Centre and pool programming into the new facility. The park's existing baseball fields would be re-constructed in a different location with an enhanced experience recognizing the legacy of Major League Baseball Hall of Famer Larry Walker after whom one of the existing fields is named.

Detailed planning for new recreation facilities will involve extensive engagement with the public and key partners, including Katzie and Kwantlen First Nations, user groups, Maple Ridge Pitt Meadows School District 42, and other groups.

Comprehensive Recreation Planning

The Hammond feasibility study is part of a comprehensive approach to recreation planning that considers growth trends across the community. This work included the opening of the Albion Community Centre last year, and the planning is now underway for the fourth ice sheet at Planet Ice.

In addition to the work on this Feasibility Study, the City is also working with a consultant to develop an implementation plan that will see the prioritization of projects and services identified in the PRC Master Plan, with the results anticipated in early 2024.

To learn more about the PRC Master Plan, visit mapleridge.ca/PRCmasterplan.

More information about the feasibility study can be found at mapleridge.ca/recfacilitystudy.

Follow the City's social media channels for further information and opportunities to share your feedback.