

Recreation Facility Feasibility Study Final Report

Recommendation

1. **THAT Council receive the Recreation Facility Feasibility Study, dated October 3, 2025, for information;**
2. **THAT Council direct staff to proceed with schematic design for the three recreation infrastructure projects:**
 - a. **Aquatics and Recreation Centre at Hammond Community Park,**
 - b. **Phase 1 of the Multi-Use Community Park at the current site of the Maple Ridge Golf Course, and**
 - c. **Ice Sheets at Albion Fairgrounds; and**
3. **THAT Council direct staff to develop the funding strategy for the projects with the aim of minimizing the impact to taxpayers.**

Report Purpose and Summary Statement:

To provide Council with the outcomes of the completed feasibility study to determine the suitability of Hammond Community Park as the location for a future aquatic and recreation facility.

Previous Council Action:

On April 16, 2024, staff provided Council with the recreation facility feasibility study engagement Phase 1 results and key findings.

On April 22, 2025, Council approved the submission of the non-farm use application to the Agricultural Land Commission for the Albion Fairgrounds.

Funding Source:

A financial model will be developed to inform the funding strategy. The strategy will include the \$15 million identified in the 2024 Financial Plan for recreation facility detailed design and \$25 million in previously approved borrowing and Community Amenity Charges for the arena project.

Strategic Alignment:

Liveable Community; Engaged, Healthy Community

Communications:

A comprehensive communication strategy has been developed and designed to ensure transparency with information that will be shared broadly to maximize reach and accessibility. The approach ensures that residents receive accurate and timely information and enables the City to respond to community questions and build public understanding and excitement for the new facilities.

To: Mayor and Council

Recreation Facility Feasibility Study Final Report

BACKGROUND:

The City is on the verge of making its largest investment ever in community recreation infrastructure with the expansion of recreational facilities, outdoor amenities and accessible green spaces including the Aquatics and Recreation Centre at Hammond Community Park, Phase 1 of the Multi-use Community Park at the current site of the Maple Ridge Golf Course, and Ice Sheets at the Albion Fairgrounds. As tens of thousands of new residents are expected in the coming decades, meeting the needs and expectations of a growing community while providing spaces and places to engage and be active are Council's top priorities.

Guided by the 2023 Parks, Recreation and Culture Master Plan, that identified the need for new amenities like pools and ice rinks, the investments in recreation infrastructure have been developed to meet current and future demand. The Maple Ridge Leisure Centre (44 years old) and Planet Ice Arena Complex (27 years old) are at capacity, and pressures on these facilities continue to increase as the community experiences ongoing residential growth. Additionally, the Hammond Outdoor Pool is at the end of its useful life after 65 years of operation. The thoughtful planning and delivery of new facilities will ensure the City can meet the current needs of the community, minimize service disruptions due to aging facilities, and provide for the future.

Hammond Community Park (HCP) was selected as the preferred location for the feasibility study review from a dozen potential City-owned and private sites. A thorough examination of these sites identified HCP as the most viable option given its sufficient space, service amenities, accessibility via transit and transportation corridors, opportunity to replace existing aging facilities, proximity to future corridor densification and site ownership, and saving the City tens of millions of dollars in land purchase costs.

The potential sites that were considered included existing vacant land parcels, under-utilized school sites, existing park sites, retail/commercial sites, and Agricultural Land Reserve lands. The Albion Fairgrounds site was not included in the evaluation for a new aquatic facility due to the geotechnical conditions of the site, groundwater levels, and its unsuitability for a large aquatic facility with deep below-ground pool tanks. It is however a suitable location for slab-on-grade arena facilities, on a site that has accommodated the existing ice complex for 27 years.

In December 2023, the City contracted hcma Architecture + Design, to facilitate the comprehensive analysis required to determine the feasibility of positioning an aquatics facility at HCP. The project team established the plans to execute the necessary research and analysis, technical assessments, design components, and to implement comprehensive community

engagement to raise awareness and encourage broad participation as the project advanced. An overview of the feasibility study process timelines is provided below:



hcma Architecture’s analysis provides the information needed to determine the feasibility of locating an aquatics centre at HCP and meets the study’s objective. The findings indicate that the site is feasible for an aquatics facility (Attachment A).

The results of the analysis are provided in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Summary of the Feasibility Analysis Findings

Analysis	Result
Phase 1 community engagement	<p>Indicated what residents desire in new recreation facilities and how they would use the facilities. It highlighted desired amenities, spaces and programs the community values.</p> <p>With over 3,200 engagement indicators from 3 surveys, 4 open houses and 17 interest holder sessions, the key engagement outcomes demonstrated the need for more aquatic recreation facilities that prioritize recreation, leisure and rehabilitation/therapy and arenas that increase access for leisure skating, training and competitions and community programs, all the while being welcoming and accessible for all.</p>
Service demand analysis	<p>The analysis utilized the results of phase 1 engagement, demographic data and emerging trends to identify the current and future recreation needs over the next 20 years. Assessing the utilization rate of the current aquatics and arena facilities and future growth projections, an increase in these amenities is needed in the short term to meet projected demand. It also confirms current capacity challenges at the Leisure Centre and Planet Ice and reaffirms the need for additional recreation infrastructure in the short-term.</p>
Building Program Development	<p>Developed by user priorities, service demand results and operational efficiencies to meet current needs and anticipated population growth.</p> <p>As the data analysis progressed, it became evident that the HCP site could not accommodate the full range of desired facility program options and maintain sufficient community park space for the use and enjoyment of residents and the necessary parking. This resulted in the study diverging into two additional related projects: the arena expansion at the Albion</p>

	Fairgrounds site and the multi-use park with baseball fields at the Maple Ridge golf course site.
Aquatics and Recreation Centre at Hammond Community Park	
Geotechnical analysis	Confirmed that the soil conditions support the proposed aquatic facility and outlines future recommendations as the design team progresses towards construction.
Site analysis and approach	Assessed current zoning, land use, emerging policy of the area. Results supported the test-site fit of the facility on the HCP site. A restrictive covenant (charitable trust) exists on one of the three parcels of land. Trusts are enforced by the Crown, through the Attorney General. A variance to the trust requires proceedings through the Supreme Court of BC.
Archeological overview assessment	Preliminary desk-top findings and field assessment to determine archeological considerations at the HCP site. Further field investigation is likely needed.
Traffic impact assessment (TIA)	Findings provide mitigation measures and future considerations for the HCP site, in alignment with the City's Strategic Transportation Plan. A TIA is suggested in the next phase of site planning for the arena expansion and multi-use community park.
Concept design	A mid-sized aquatics and recreation facility, built for today's needs and future population growth. Includes fitness, gymnasium, multi-purpose and social spaces. Inclusion of an active frontage and green space to support informal uses, programs and events.
Arena Expansion at the Albion Fairgrounds	
Site analysis and approach	Assessed the current arena facility and opportunity to maximize space while retaining the fairgrounds character. An application to the Agricultural Land Commission was submitted to seek approval for an increase to the non-farm use of the site.
Concept design	Twin ice rinks designed to support a variety of user experiences and meet the needs of participants, while positioning the City and user groups for successful hosting of large tournaments and events.
Multi-use Park at the Maple Ridge golf course site	
Concept design	Preliminary concept shared with community. An engagement and design process is anticipated to occur in future stages of the park planning and development.
All three projects	

Phase 2 community engagement	Reported phase 1 engagement results back to community and shared building and site design concepts for all three projects. With over 2,700 completed surveys, 8,300 engagement indicators, 6 Open Houses, and 13 interest holder meetings the feedback results indicate overall support for the recreation facility with further refinement anticipated during schematic design development. The multi-use community park site, first tested at this phase, requires a secondary engagement process to refine the design concept.
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ANALYSIS:

Discussion:

The feasibility study and work completed to date provides preliminary evidence and confidence that these sites can accommodate future recreation facilities. The next planning step is to proceed to schematic design for all three projects. A schematic design will:

- Advance detailed technical assessments (zoning, transportation access and parking, utilities, and required off-site upgrades),
- Establish project goals for accessibility, energy performance, greenhouse gas (carbon) emission reductions, and broader sustainability targets,
- Refine building concepts and space programs based on the above, and
- Inform the preferred project delivery strategy.

Community engagement during the feasibility study provided detailed input to refine the building program so it better reflects community needs. Ongoing engagement with key interest holders in the schematic design phase will help confirm that spaces and program areas:

- Serve a broad cross-section of residents,
- Balance projected growth and diversity, and
- Deliver accessible and inclusive environments across the aquatics and recreation centre, arena complex, and the multi-use destination park.

The current preliminary design concepts reflect a future-forward approach yet demonstrate a conservative mindfulness in planning for new spaces, which will carry through to the schematic design phase, ensuring that the facilities are right-sized for this community.

Arena Expansion

The non-farm use application for the two additional ice sheets to the east of the existing Planet Ice facility was submitted to the Agricultural Land Commission (ALC) in April 2025. In a decision received by the City on October 24, 2025 the ALC did not approve the City's proposal, citing the need for the City to address drainage impacts on the north parcels of land (private land across from the fairgrounds) and the broader drainage of the Albion Flats. In their decision, the ALC noted that the 2025 application has a larger impact on the site due to the addition of a 5th ice

sheet and an increase in paved parking, in comparison to the 2023 application that was conditionally approved, for a 4th ice sheet on the west side of the existing facility.

Staff have thoroughly reviewed the latest ALC decision, comparing it to previous ALC decisions, ownership of drainage infrastructure and surrounding lands identified within the reports, and recommend that advancing site technical work and schematic design is needed to support a request for reconsideration.

Funding Strategy

During the schematic design phase of work and to ensure the timely and affordable delivery of the proposed recreation facilities, staff recommend the development of a comprehensive funding strategy. Preliminary design work and recent community engagement have confirmed that these facilities will be essential to maintaining equitable access to recreation as the city continues to grow rapidly. A coordinated approach to funding will help align project timing, reduce financial risks, and support long-term affordability for residents.

The funding strategy will evaluate a full range of potential revenue sources and financial tools. This will include an assessment of applicable federal and provincial grant programs, as well as opportunities for corporate sponsorships and partnerships that can reduce capital and operating costs. Traditional mechanisms such as borrowing and reserve contributions will also be considered, along with alternative financing models where appropriate.

By examining each option in relation to project scope, timing, and community benefit, the strategy will identify the most viable and balanced combination of funding streams. This work will ensure that the City is well-positioned to pursue competitive funding opportunities, leverage external contributions, and manage debt responsibly.

Developing this strategy at an early stage will support more accurate cost forecasting, inform future budget planning, and enhance transparency around project financing. Ultimately, a comprehensive funding strategy will help ensure that the proposed recreation facilities can be delivered in a fiscally responsible manner, while meeting the community's demonstrated needs.

Strategic Alignment:

The Recreation Facility Feasibility Study aligns with the Healthy, Engaged and Liveable Community pillars of the 2023-2026 Council Strategic Plan.

Advisory Committee Consultation:

All members of the 2024 Committees of Council were invited to attend interest holder meetings during the phase 1 engagement. In 2025, the advisory committees were restructured and the Healthy, Engaged Advisory Committee and Liveable Community Advisory Committee members were invited to participate in interest holder meetings during phase 2 engagement.

CONCLUSION:

The proposed recreation facility, multi-use community park (phase 1), and arena expansion concepts reflect the City's commitment to embody a healthy and engaged community by providing high-quality recreation facilities to meet the needs of a growing and diverse city. As Maple Ridge's population increases and existing recreation facilities reach their capacity or end of life, planning for and delivering additional recreation facilities is critical to the future health of our residents. The feasibility analysis results provide the assurance that the Hammond Community Park is feasible to continue the planning process for a recreation facility at this site.

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Special Projects

Attachments:

- (A) Feasibility Study Final Report
- (B) Phase 2 Engagement Summary

Report Approval Details

Document Title:	Recreation Facility Feasibility Study Final Report.docx
Attachments:	- Final-Feasibility-Report 2025.pdf - Phase 2 Engagement Summary.pdf
Final Approval Date:	Dec 4, 2025

This report and all of its attachments were approved and signed as outlined below:

Valoree Richmond, Director of Facilities, Parks and Properties

James Stiver, Director of Planning and Building

Stephane Labonne, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer

Scott Hartman, Chief Administrative Officer