

FAQs for Rink Redevelopment

Q: Where can I see the proposed plans for the rink redevelopment?

A: On the Ramsay Community website at: www.ramsaycommunity.ab.ca/sports.html

Q: Are the architectural drawings (presented at the open house and available on the website) to scale?

A: Yes.

Q: How much will this project cost the community?

A: The community has seed money of \$20,000 for the project and the current funding plan requires no additional capital funds. The rink roof is a community asset that is valued at over \$345,000 and included in the assessment of the community's contribution. In addition, there are countless hours of volunteer time that can be attributed to the project. The other capital costs will come from grants and various fundraising initiatives. Annual operating costs will be covered by rentals.

The rink and recreational area redevelopment committee feels that this project will add great value to our community. We want to improve the facility to increase convenient accessibility to outdoor sports, fun and entertainment. Our goal is to enhance of our sense of community by ensuring this facility becomes a warm and welcoming gathering place. Strengthening our neighbourhood with this amenity will further our community's reputation as a great place to live.

Q: How many rinks will the completed redevelopment have?

A: There will be two refrigerated rinks, the one that is currently under the roof and a refrigerated outdoor pleasure rink that will be located near the existing skate shack where we have one every winter. The skating pathway will be natural ice.

Q: Will the ice be available for use year round?

A: No. The ice will be available during the regular winter season, from November to March. Our facility is still an outdoor rink and average temperatures are above what a refrigeration system like we are proposing could maintain. However the new refrigeration system will provide good quality ice and more reliable ice even with Calgary's erratic winter temperatures. For example, warm wind "chinook" events result in poor ice conditions making traditional outdoor rinks inoperable and negatively impacting programming activities. A refrigerated ice surface would remove heat from the ice sheet allowing it to stay frozen despite the warmer air.

The refurbished surface of the rink area will provide a more usable surface for other hard surface sports and functions that will increase the usability during the balance of the year.

Q: Can we keep the rink as it is now?

A: The original facility was constructed in 1977 with Centennial Funds. The facility is now over 30 years old and is in need of maintenance. Neglecting to make improvements will result in a community asset that will continue to deteriorate, become more onerous to operate and be less attractive for use. A low quality facility where nothing is done will be a liability to the community.

There are a few specific problems. The water envelope of the roof itself requires repairs as well as some wood components which appear to have suffered water damage. The structural members of the roof are still usable and are a great asset to our facility. The asphalt floor beneath the roof also requires attention. It has heaved and slopes towards one end. It drops

by 4” and has gaps at the concrete foundation making flooding difficult as well as posing a potential safety risk. A concrete playing surface would be smooth and flat thereby improving spring-summer-fall programming options and revenue generation potential.

Q: Can we relocate the rink?

A: The suggestion of moving the rink to the green space in front of Lilydale was proposed. The City of Calgary’s legal department stated that this piece of land is not City land but belongs to the Calgary Board of Education (CBE) and therefore, is not an option. In addition, the cost to rebuild a rink with a roof would be considerable.

The roof of the rink is insured for \$345,000 by the City of Calgary, and this would be deemed the minimum replacement value. A new one would likely cost much more. To our benefit, the value of the roof is considered a donation in-kind for grant matching requirements.

Furthermore, the rink is located on designated recreational space. If this land was not used for the rink the City of Calgary has stated that it is likely that it would be used for other recreational activities based on numerous requests from other groups who want space, e.g. rugby, ultimate teams, (extreme Frisbee) etc.

Q: How many hours of rental time can we expect from the rink?

A: The regular schedule of ice time for community based activities like shinny will be maintained. We are required to make the facility available to the general public and we plan to do this during other times through rentals or fee based programming. The community has a licence agreement for the rink space with the City that includes a public use policy, a standard of accessibility that the city stipulates for such facilities to ensure that they are accessible. The Public Use Policy indicates that this can be done providing at least 50% public use through rentals, classes or programming. As some time will be required for ice maintenance between the scheduled time slots the usable time is slightly less than total hours in a day. If the facility was to operate from 7 AM to 10 PM, 15 hours a day, and considering that a possible operating schedule would be 75 minutes of ice with 15 minutes of maintenance the total time per day of usable ice would be 15 hours x 5/6 or 12.5 hours. At least half of that time would be rental or 6.25 hours per day or 43.75 hours a week. This represents 35 rental sessions of 75 minutes each. Time intervals may be adjusted based on user needs and schedule optimizing but this is a reasonable approximation of possible rental time that we would be required by the Public Use Policy to make it available.

Q: Can we designate the new rink for community member use only?

A: The land is designated by the City of Calgary for recreational use. It is public space such as Stanley Park, Fish Creek, Bowness Park, the public libraries, public swimming pools, etc. The rink is City-owned, and therefore open to the public. A Public Use Policy in our License Agreement with the City states that we are required to provide at least 50% use to the general public. It also states that no activity area can be held for an extended period of time by a group for its exclusive use. It is likely that any policy to limit the use to community members only would not be consistent with the objectives or intentions with funding groups and hinder the possibility of receiving capital funding. It is important to note that the rink has been available to all of Calgary up to this point so there is no change to the policy about its use being proposed.

Q: Is there a caveat to what the land can be used for?

A: There is no caveat, conditions or covenant relevant to that piece of land and what it can be used for on record with the city or identified by the committee despite specific inquiries to the

city on this matter. The City land to the north of the rink includes a street plan that subdivides it into 40 home lots as shown on the plot plan. If a community facility and park did not exist it is possible the city would consider developing this land into residential.

The community has a license to operate a recreational amenity as outlined in the RCA's License agreement between the City and the CBE. The land use designation for the licence agreement lands is designated as Special Purpose – Community Service under the 1P2007 land use bylaw. Outdoor recreation area, community recreation facility, and utility building are all identified uses under this designation.

Q: Is the playground staying?

A: Yes. The playground is simply being relocated to the centre of the proposed skateway/running track to integrate into the community meeting area. Its location in the middle of the running track will allow parents the option to utilize the track while keeping an eye on their children.

Q: What will happen with the ball diamonds and tennis courts?

A: The larger, regulation-sized ball diamond on CBE land will stay, i.e. south diamond. The small diamond to the north will be removed (replaced with the skate/running track). One ball diamond will amply fill demand. The tennis courts were recently resurfaced by Parks and are used regularly.

Q: How much green space will be lost due to rink improvements?

A: The loss of green space will be minimal. The new change facility will be built along the north side of the covered rink on existing green space. However, we'll offset this loss by returning the old skate shack parking lot area to green space.

The new parking area will require some asphalt in the center portion and turn-around circle, but the parking spaces themselves will incorporate an innovative use of "green" pavers which is essentially a semi-permeable surface that allows the native grasses to grow through it. The parking lot itself is strategically located and uses the topography to ensure it is not visible to Ramsay Street and Alexander Street residents. The Burns Avenue lot entrance will be screened with landscaping features to minimize the impact to residents there.

Q: How will the new parking lot compare to the old?

A: The new parking lot will accommodate 60 cars and the current lot has a capacity of 5 cars. The availability of off street parking will significantly reduce the "on street" parking volume. The new parking will include some asphalt, but most of the surface will be porous "green" pavers that allow grass to grow through, and water to drain, while supporting the weight of cars. This is a very eco-friendly initiative and an attractive option to conventional parking lots. The existing parking area will be returned to green space.

Q: How much traffic can be expected as a result of the rink redevelopment?

A: Baseline traffic counts prior to any re-development were 150 vehicles per day (vpd) for Ramsay Street (March 2009) and 460 vpd for Burns Avenue (July 2009). From the July 2009 business plan, anticipated Phase III daily volumes range from 135 to 330 vpd. It is likely that this estimate represents 'worst case' and over-estimates actual volumes considering not all

rentals will be 2-teams with each person driving their own vehicle. Rather, it is more likely that practice rentals would be approximately half the volume, some users will car pool and some programmed events will have smaller groups, e.g. figure skating.

For Phases 1 and 2, it is likely that traffic will use 6th Street, Ramsay Street and Burns Avenue whereas for Phase 3 it is likely that the majority of vehicles will use Burns Avenue given that the parking lot entrance is roughly one block west of Spiller Road. It is anticipated that Spiller Road, 8th Street and 21st Avenue will be used to connect with Burns Avenue.

Ramsay Street, Burns Avenue and 6th Street are classified as 'residential streets' under City policy and have an 'environmental capacity' of 500 to 1,500 vpd. Therefore, assuming 100% of the vehicles use Burns Avenue, this equates to approximately 595 to 790 vpd, and lies at the lower end of the City's environmental capacity range. Generally, it is expected that Ramsay traffic volumes would further increase by about 3% per year based on the overall growth of the City of Calgary and the ensuing effect on inner city communities such as Ramsay.

Q: Will Ramsay Elementary School benefit from the redevelopment?

A: Yes, the extended ice season will provide more opportunity for healthy and positive after-school activity for Ramsay school children. The school is supportive of the project and is interested in learn-to-skate programs for the children. During warmer months the facility could be used for gym-type activities in a covered outdoor environment.

Q: When will the business plan be completed?

A: There is a great deal of information to gather and data to process in constructing a business plan. At present the rink redevelopment committee is putting finishing touches on the plan and we have no timeline for completion. The work is being done according to the availability of volunteers; we hope to have it available to the community soon at an open-house meeting and on the Ramsay website.

Q: What has the community response been so far?

A: At the last open house (March 19 & 21, 2009), there were 61 surveys completed with 54 in favour and 5 not in favour with 2 undecided. This represents greater than 90% support for the rink and recreational area redevelopment project.

Subsequently, the committee has attended several community events to ensure everyone has an opportunity to hear about the project and comment on the proposed plans. An additional 22 feedback forms were completed and all were in favour of the redevelopment.

The Ramsay Board of Directors hopes those community members who still have questions, concerns and comments will continue to come to community meetings, to share their thoughts and ideas and work to a positive end for the entire community. The best way to have your opinions and concerns expressed is to engage the community association directly either through the rink redevelopment committee or the Board (bod@ramsaycommunity.ab.ca)