



History of the Elk River Ice Arena and Recreational Facilities

- **1971:** Elk River Youth Hockey Association (ERYHA) constructs and opens the first single sheet of ice called “The Barn.”
- **1985:** ERYHA updates the locker rooms and adds new bathrooms and a lobby to the south end of the building.
- **August 1993:** A citizens Task Force forms to look at community center needs in Elk River.
- **January 17, 1994:** The Task Force identifies the need for a civic center with the focus on an ice arena, with the recommendation to the City Council that construction be adjacent to The Barn vs. a new facility near City Hall.
- **August 25, 1994:** The Task Force recommends hiring Mr. Brad Lemberg as construction manager.
- **November 23, 1994:** City Council hires RSP Architects as the architectural firm for design services.
- **April 1, 1996:** City Council passes Resolution 96-15 approving the ice arena expansion, project financing, and a joint powers agreement governing the ownership, operation, and maintenance.
- **October 21, 1996:** City Council approves Ordinance 96-25 creating the Ice Arena Commission whose purpose is to make recommendations to City Council on the development and management of the City of Elk River Ice Arena Complex.
- **January 13, 1997:** The new second rink, “Olympic Rink,” and other improvements to the ice arena are complete. The staff report on 3/4/97 states construction costs exceeded the budgeted \$2.65 million.
- **October 2007:** City Council reviews a concept for ice arena expansion for \$1.5 to \$1.8 million. Council directs staff to come back with funding options and firm numbers.
- **April 2008:** At an Ice Arena Commission meeting, staff reports they have firm construction numbers but with the Public Works Facility expansion Council hesitates to add another building expansion at this time.
- **January 14, 2009:** With the downturn in the economy, the finance director asks all departments to hold off on any projects, if possible.
- **February 14, 2011:** City Council approves 292 Design Group to prepare a conceptual drawing for an ice arena addition/renovation.

- **April 2012:** Skyline Building Envelope Consultants, Hallburg Mechanical/Electrical Consulting, Stevens Engineers, and Lindau Companies provide reports detailing the structural and mechanical needs of the arena.
- **November 13, 2012:** In a work session, City Council discusses four options for ice arena renovation ranging from \$4 million to \$10 million; no action is taken.
- **November 2012 – 2013:** Ice Arena Commissioners, City Council, and finance department discuss different ways to fund and update the pressing mechanical issues at the ice arena.
- **November 18, 2013:** City Council hires HKGi to complete a Parks and Recreation Master Plan to guide the investment and operation of the entire park system into the foreseeable future.
- **June 15 2015:** City Council adopts the Parks and Recreation Master Plan which identifies the need (p. 65) to complete a comprehensive facility study to evaluate the Activity Center, Ice Arena, Lions Park Center, and Trott Brook Barn to determine if they should be renovated, replaced on the current site, or consolidated into a centrally-located facility.
- **June 15, 2015:** City Council is presented an update on the Olympic Ice Rink detailing repairs and the refrigerant (R-22) phase out schedule for the United States. Council discusses the need for facility planning. The city administrator identifies the Activity Center issues and stating it might be “more economical to build a new comprehensive structure at one time that will be good for 30-40 years.”
- **November 2, 2015:** City Council reviews the draft Capital Improvement Plan for 2016-2020 which includes \$75,000 in 2016 for a recreation facility study.
- **December 7, 2015:** Based on the recommendation from the Parks and Recreation Master Plan, City Council enters a contract with JLG Architects to complete a comprehensive facility study of the Ice Arena, Lions Park Center, and Activity Center. All three buildings are in need of significant structural and mechanical improvements due to their age and use.
- **December 7, 2015:** City Council appoints a *Steering Committee* to work with JLG Architects to develop an outline of critical issues, concerns, and objectives to be presented in a final Feasibility Study.
- **January 20 & 21, 2016:** JLG holds community engagement sessions requesting input from stakeholders, community organizations, and recreation staff regarding existing facilities and future needs.
- **February 18, 2016:** City holds a community input session to gather public comments about existing and future community center needs.
- **July 18, 2016:** City Council approves the Multipurpose Community Center Feasibility Plan presented by JLG Architects.

Additionally, Council approves the proposed site location of Orono Park/Dave Anderson Athletic Complex and directs staff to move forward with a general election referendum ballot for November for a 25-year general obligation bond to fund a multipurpose community center.

- **July 23, 2016:** Star News publishes a front page article announcing the upcoming referendum.
- **August 15, 2016:** City Council passes a resolution to issue a general obligation bond not to exceed \$30 million and calls for a general election referendum.
- **September 3, 2016:** Star News publishes a front page article advising voters of the referendum.
- **October 2016:** A mailer goes to all Elk River mailing addresses outlining the referendum options. The flyer states *“the city will have to spend the \$10-12 million even if the referendum fails to keep the building viable for use by the community with no service enhancements or improvements.”*
- **November 5, 2016:** Star News features a front page article about the upcoming vote. *“...Mayor John Dietz stated in the Elk River Current, the city’s newsletter, that without these new structures the city will have to spend a considerable amount of money to refurbish old facilities.”*
- **November 8, 2016:** Referendum ballot question fails by 818 votes. Star News front page article states the referendum did not pass. Article lists the issues at the current facilities and quotes an estimated cost for short-term improvements at \$10-\$12 million.

WHERE WE ARE NOW

- **January 17, 2017:** Following failure of the referendum, the City Council holds a work session to discuss the referendum and options for the three facilities. The Council expresses consensus to not hold another referendum and to not “kick the can down the road” by only performing the minimal mechanical/structural improvements.

Staff is directed to do the following:

- a. Begin collaborative discussions with the School District and the YMCA on recreational activities/facilities.
 - b. Contract with JLG for further architectural drawings and estimates to repair the Activity Center and repair/expand the Lions Park Center.
 - c. 292 Design Group is contracted to update architectural designs for ice arena rehabilitation from a design they completed in 2011.
- **April 17, 2017:** During a City Council meeting, JLG Architects review facility concerns, improvement options, and community needs for LPC and Activity Center. 292 Design Group reviewed options for the ice arena design.
 - Reconstruction of the ice arena and providing for further growth encumbers a portion of the high school fast pitch softball field, which would need to be relocated. ISD 728 intends to move the tennis courts as part of their improvements. **Project Estimate is \$21,563.731**
 - Activity Center options include:
 - Provide for needed repairs/improvements and growth to existing space, which includes adjoining property acquisition. **Project estimate is \$3,418,233**
 - Consider moving senior services to the YMCA. **Project costs yet to be determined.**
 - Consider reconstruction of Lions Park Center to include senior and community space and repurpose the existing senior facility for redevelopment.
 - Lions Park Center options include:

- Demolition of the high bay portion of the facility so the area can be used for fast pitch softball field replacement with remaining office space and restrooms improved for locker room, storage, and concession space. **Project estimate is \$1,895,672.**
- Reconstruction for senior/community space as stated earlier. **Project estimate is \$4,307,383.**

City Council consensus was approval of the Ice Arena concept contingent upon the school district's approval of the plan. Council will continue pursuing the idea of senior programming at the YMCA.

- **April – July 2017:** City and school district staff discuss ice arena, parking, and athletic playfield improvements, processes, and timelines.
- **August 7, 2017:** City Council reviews final concepts for arena improvements discussed with school district officials and their architects. This plan includes design for future growth, expansion of ice arena, and community space to replace activities at Lions Park Center. The building footprint encroaches on the high school softball field, requiring the replacement of the fast pitch softball field at Lion John Weicht Park.

Council approves a motion authorizing staff to draft an RFP for architectural services for an ice arena based on this latest design.

- **October 2, 2017:** City Administrator outlines project scope, architect engagement, and project commitment for Council. City Council awards the architectural services contract for the ice arena to 292 Design Group. Council vote is 3-2 with Ovall and Dietz opposing.
- **October 16, 2017:**
 - City council creates an Ice Arena Project Team to assist 292 Design Group in delivering the project on the anticipated project schedule.
 - City Council approves an RFP to solicit a Construction Manager to facilitate the cost exploration, project sequencing, and construction management.
 - Council discusses adding a sales tax or property tax to fund the project but does not provide staff direction.
- **November 6, 2017:** City council directs staff to prepare a MOU with the YMCA to share in exploratory costs to expand the facility and programming to accommodate senior citizens currently using the Activity Center.
- **November 7, 2017:** City staff meets with the Elk River Lions Club membership to update the club on Council action regarding Lion John Weicht Park
- **November 20, 2017:** City Council selects RJM Construction for construction management services in the ice arena and Lion John Weicht Park improvement project.
- **November 27, 2017:** RJM Construction, citing concerns with the construction schedule due to school district activities, proposes a revised design option. With two new rinks they propose to maintain the Olympic Rink availability during construction which would begin after the school year and boys' tennis season. The revised option adds \$1 million to the project, however provides for a 30,000 sf

dryland/field house turf facility in the Olympic Rink with a broader user group reach. The facility would further be available for 3rd ice sheet option when desired with significant (\$3-5 million) cost savings.

- **December 18, 2017:** City council approves final design of the ‘revised’ schematic option. Funding will be discussed at a following council meeting.
- **January 2018:** City enters into Letter of Interest with the YMCA of the Greater Twin Cities to explore Y expansion for senior services.
- **February 5, 2018** – At the request of Council Member Wagner, the City Council agrees to place a pause on work on the facility project to enable further discussion regarding a second referendum for a larger scale project to meet future needs of the city. Council agrees to discuss further on previously scheduled Special Meeting on February 8.
- **February 8, 2018** – The Council Member Wagner motioned, Mayor Dietz seconded, to bring back a multipurpose facility for a November referendum vote without a site-specific location and the Council would lead the effort. The motion passed 3-2 with Councilmembers Olsen and Westgaard opposed.
- **March 5, 2018** – Mayor Dietz and CM Wagner propose separation recreation facility actions. Mayor Dietz proposes a replacement of the Barn Rink and upgrades to the Olympic Rink with locker room additions. CM Wagner proposes Council/community listening sessions. The Council approves a motion to have a Local Options Sales Tax study completed by the UM Extension Service.
- **April 16, 2018** – Elk River Area Chamber of Commerce presents an official statement to the City Council asking them to consider a broader vision and leadership for the long-term best interests of the community.
- **April 17, 2018** – The Ice Arena Commission approves a proposal from Ballard*King to study revenue projections for a facility such as the former Community Center Proposal, the most recent Recreation Facility Improvements, and the replacement of the Barn Rink and improvements to the Olympic Rink.
- **April 18, 2018** – The full Council meets with the Elk River Youth Hockey Association Board at their annual meeting to hear feedback and discuss the association’s concerns.
- **May 2018** – Five Council/Community listening sessions are scheduled throughout the month of May.