



GREAT FALLS
ICE PLEX

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WHO OWNS AND OPERATES THE GREAT FALLS ICE PLEX?

The Great Falls Community Ice Foundation, a 501c3, owns and operates the Great Falls Ice Plex. The foundation was established in 2007 after the ice rink in the municipal Four Seasons Arena was closed. The current Ice Plex opened in 2008 and is operated by the foundation with a volunteer board. The staff includes one full time rink manager and several part-time staff who work during public skating, hockey games and help prepare the rink to open each fall.



GREAT FALLS COMMUNITY ICE FOUNDATION

The Great Falls Community Ice Foundation's mission is to provide affordable hockey, figure skating and recreational skating for the greatest number of citizens, young or old, and for all skill levels.

The Great Falls Ice Plex is home to a large youth hockey program, adult leagues for men and women and the Great Falls Figure Skating Club, which includes skaters of all ages and skating abilities. The Foundation also partners with Eagle Mount Great Falls for their sled hockey program and hosts special events for curling and broom ball.

The Ice Plex serves Great Falls and the surrounding area. The foundation has also worked to increase community awareness and opportunity by hosting Community Day events to invite the public to the rink, many for the first time, including those from Malmstrom Air Force Base.



After more than 10 years in our spartan facility, we have developed a master plan to help guide the implementation of significant improvements not only to keep what we have going, but to continue growing ice sports, improve access and increase our value to the Great Falls area community.

In this packet, we hope to provide you with some background information about the Great Falls Ice Plex and our master plan. This plan is designed in such a way that will allow the improvements to take place over time and tailored to funding available.

THE IMPROVEMENTS CAN ONLY HAPPEN WITH A SUCCESSFUL CAPITAL CAMPAIGN. WE ARE LOOKING FOR CORPORATE SPONSORS, GRANTS, PRIVATE DONATIONS, TEAMING OPPORTUNITIES, AND WHATEVER ELSE IT WILL TAKE TO ELEVATE THIS FACILITY TO BECOME A DESTINATION ICE FACILITY.

Best Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Teresa Gunn', written in a cursive style.

TERESA GUNN, GFCIF BOARD PRESIDENT



GREAT FALLS ICE PLEX MASTER PLAN

The Great Falls Community Ice Foundation is excited to present the Great Falls Ice Plex master plan, which lays out improvements to the facility that will be made over the next several years. Five phases to the project are proposed, prioritized by need and approved by the Board of Directors. The improvements laid out in this master plan will make the Great Falls Ice Plex a preferred destination for hockey tournaments, skating competitions, and year-round events including concerts and expositions, making the facility a truly multipurpose sports complex! The total estimated cost is \$6 million to \$6.5 million. Fundraising and donations are paramount for this master plan to become a reality, so please consider a contribution to this incredible Great Falls area community asset!

PHASE 1

Estimated \$1.3 million

Replace Ice Sheet Refrigerant System

This upgrade will involve excavating the existing under-ice refrigerant system currently installed in a sand bed and replacing with a new system cast into a reinforced concrete slab. This new slab will add the Ice Plex to the list of Great Falls facilities that can host events such as concerts and trade shows in the off season. It will also greatly reduce the time and cost associated with putting in the ice at the start of the season, and have long-term benefits by reducing utility costs for the Ice Plex.

Construct New Locker Rooms

When the small, unheated locker rooms were constructed at the south end of the rink over 10 years ago, they were meant to be temporary. They do not meet sanctioned standards to host tournaments and ice shows. A full complement of (at least) 5 locker rooms is essential to operations. The completion of this 1st phase will lay the groundwork for the execution of future phases by constructing three new locker rooms. Each locker room will have its own shower and restroom in a comfortably, conditioned space. This phase also includes a much-needed entry/exit vestibule airlock at the north entrance to keep our Great Falls weather at bay.

PHASE 2

New Main Entry Concourse

This phase constructs a major addition to the Ice Plex and puts an iconic “face” and identifiable main entry to the building. The new glass entry will light up like a beacon at night and open into a large concourse area for concessions, ticketing and rentals. A space large enough to congregate in a heated environment will surely be welcomed when lacing up your skates, and during intermissions at games. A viewing area of the rink will allow spectators to watch the action on the ice from within the heated concourse. The area between Phase 1 and the new entry will construct shelled space for indoor dryland training space for warm-ups and athlete conditioning. Once construction is completed, the parking lot will be paved, and curbs and landscaping will be installed.

PHASE 3

New Referee Locker Rooms

The relocation of the concessions facility in the 2nd phase opens up an area that can be dedicated to our referees, giving them access to both men’s and women’s changing, shower and restroom facilities separate from the main locker areas.

PHASE 4

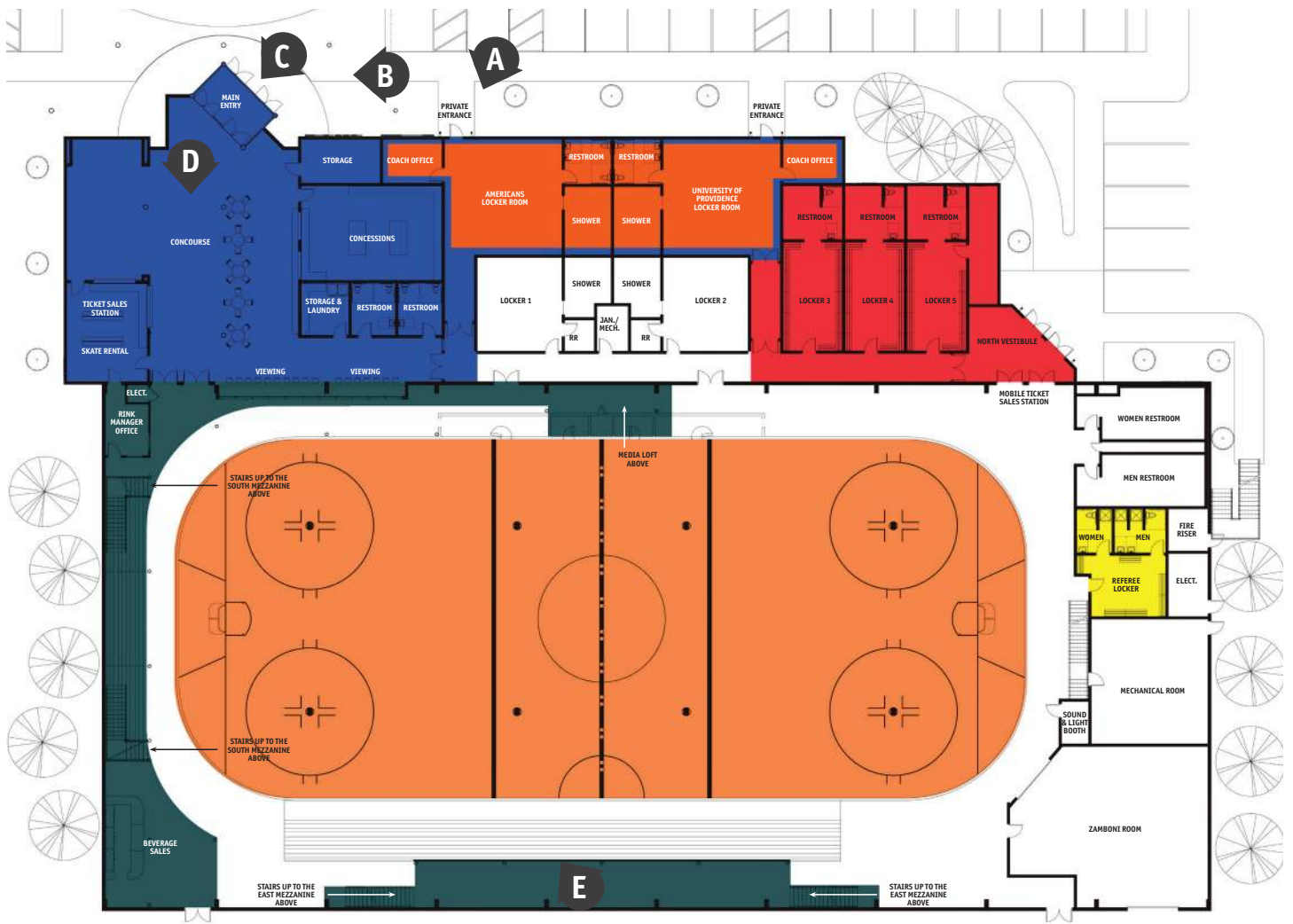
South Mezzanine

Where the current south locker rooms reside, two sets of new stairs will access prime ice viewing on a new mezzanine. This mezzanine will also access a secure catwalk to an elevated center-ice media and announcing facilities.

PHASE 5

Great Falls Americans and University of Providence Locker Rooms

This final phase completes the shelled space constructed in Phase 2 for a dedicated home for our hometown hockey teams! The completion of this phase eliminates the need for the inadequate and very temporary mobile locker rooms currently in place now. Each locker room will have a dedicated coach’s office along with individual player lockers for their gear, shower and restroom facilities.





“I was the mascot for the Americans hockey team when I was 3-years-old in 1942. Uke Ukrainetz lifted me on his shoulder after I did my routine.” -Donna Delaney

WHAT'S THE ESTIMATED ECONOMIC IMPACT OF THE RINK, ITS USERS AND ACTIVITIES?

BASED ON AVERAGE OVERNIGHT HOTEL STAYS, THE RINK GENERATES MORE THAN \$305,000 IN LOCAL ECONOMIC IMPACT (ACCORDING TO GREAT FALLS MONTANA TOURISM'S FIGURE OF IMPACT OF \$277 PER PERSON PER NIGHT) , WITHOUT FACTORING LOCAL SPENDING AROUND RINK EVENTS FROM THOSE IN THE AREA WHO DON'T STAY THE NIGHT.



QUICK FACTS

Who are the main users of the Great Falls Ice Plex?

- **The Great Falls Americans, NA3HL junior hockey team:** 32 players; six support personnel; more than 20,000 spectators for the 2020-2021 season
- **University of Providence NAIA D2 Hockey Program:** 28 players; two coaches plus athletic trainers; an average of 800 spectators per home game, and some games have sold out
- **Youth Hockey:** The program has about 115 players, aged 6-18. The organization hosts about 80 home games annually, with non-COVID era attendance in the range of 80 spectators per game. The program president estimates the program generates about 800 overnight hotel room stays in Great Falls during the season
- **Womens/Co-Ed League Hockey:** League play includes about 40 adult skaters and three minors; two soaker co-ed hockey festivals involve more than 50 participants; 2-14 teams per tournament with 15-20 players who typically stay for two nights in local hotels; annual curling event brings more than 200 participants to the rink
- **Great Falls Figure Skating Club:** About 20 active members, annual competition in non-COVID years brings in about 20-30 competitors from the region
- **Mens Hockey League:** Average number of skaters for three years is 45
- **Silver Foxes:** Average number of players is about 18 per night with about 50 total throughout the season
- **Eagle Mount Sled Hockey Program**
- **Learn to Skate Program:** At least 100 people participated in during the 2019-2020 season; about 65 participated during the 2020-2021 season
- **Public Skate-general public users:** For the 2020-2021 season, there were 2,114 tickets sold for public skate session, and at least 330 were unique skaters. In non-COVID seasons, there are typically 150-200 skaters per Sunday public skate session
- **Broomball:** The rink hosts an annual tournament with 30-50 participants, three-quarters of whom travel from out of town
- **Community Events:** The rink also hosts a number of community events in the off-season, including remote control car races and participates in community events such as farmers markets, and Cruisin' the Drag and the July 4 parade when our Zamboni is on display

“When I was 8-years-old, my brother had already been playing hockey and one night I decided to give it a try. Ever since my very first practice it has been my favorite sport to play. I definitely couldn't have played hockey without the rink we have today. The rink has fueled my hockey experience with all the games and tournaments that I've played and the memories of wins and losses. All of the games that I've watched and experienced with my friends and family can never be matched.” -Ryan G., 13

