

City looking into Dartmouth Sportsplex's future

Consultants asked to submit proposals

By MICHAEL LIGHTSTONE City Hall Reporter
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Halifax Regional Municipality is seeking a consultant to outline a future course of action for the 27-year-old Dartmouth Sportsplex, according to a proposal request recently issued by the city. Though the fitness and recreation centre has been upgraded over the years, the municipality wants to figure out what's best for the site, including the possibility of adding space.

"In addition, it is critical that we engage the community at large in discussions relative to their needs and interests in (the use of) the Dartmouth Sportsplex to ensure the future success of the facility," says the proposal request, which is available on the city's website.

The successful candidate will do a needs assessment and a feasibility study that builds on preliminary work done by Sportsplex staff. Applicants must submit a cost estimate for the research work. Consultants need to submit their proposals by the end of business Oct. 16. A final report is to be completed by the spring of 2010.

The Sportsplex, across the street from the Dartmouth Common, includes two swimming pools, a fitness centre, a 3,000-seat arena, a multi-purpose room, locker rooms, canteen facilities, offices and on-site parking.

Bingo is an integral element of the centre, "although for a number of reasons revenues have decreased over the past several years," the proposal request says.

It says the feasibility study will include a market analysis, a detailed business plan with five and 10-year projections, parking requirements and the impact of a potential construction period.

In the past, the Sportsplex has been pressed into service as an emergency shelter. It was a temporary home to planeloads of international passengers stranded in metro after American airspace was closed following the 9-11 terrorist attacks in the United States.

The Sportsplex isn't the only public place in Dartmouth the municipality is looking at improving. The Dartmouth Common is also in line for a makeover.

There will be a public meeting to discuss the park's master plan on Monday, from 6 to 9 p.m., in the Common Room at the Sportsplex.

Representatives from the municipality and its consultants will present draft recommendations and design concepts, a release says. "The planning team will seek feedback and input from the public," it says.

Parking will be available in the Sportsplex lot.

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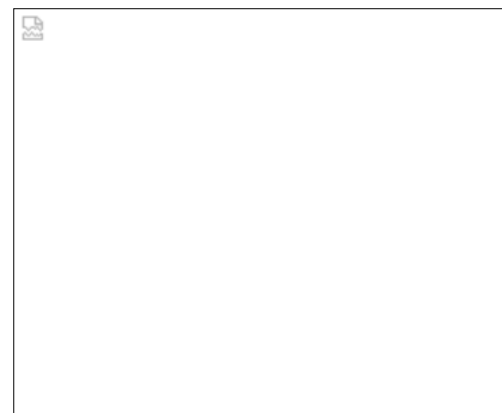
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