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Item No. 15.1.2
Halifax Regional Council
May 9, 2023

TO: Mayor Savage and Members of Halifax Regional Council

Original Signed

SUBMITTED BY:

Cathie O'Toole, Chief Administrative Officer

DATE: March 25, 2023

SUBJECT: **Revitalization of the Sackville Sports Stadium**

ORIGIN

Halifax Regional Council Motion (Item 12.1) on June 29, 2021, MOVED by Councillor Paul Russell, seconded by Councillor Lisa Blackburn

THAT Halifax Regional Council request a staff report on the current status and recommend options for potential revitalization of the Sackville Sports Stadium. The report should review the existing assets to consider:

- a. Current accessible, structural and design challenges of the facility;
- b. Creation of Emergency shelter space, including support systems;
- c. Addition of Indoor track/court/gymnasium/field space;
- d. Addition of a water or pool feature;
- e. Programming opportunities on First Lake;
- f. Improvements to inclusive/accessible spaces and services; and
- g. Creation of an accessible/centralized entrance to the facility.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

Halifax Regional Municipality Charter

Section 7A

the purposes of the Municipality are to

- (b) provide services, facilities and other things that, in the opinion of the Council, are necessary or desirable for all or part of the Municipality

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Regional Council direct the Chief Administrative Officer to add the revitalization of the Sackville Sports Stadium (SSS) to the 10-year Capital plan for consideration starting in fiscal year 2027/28 and have a formal revitalization plan drafted with a focus on public safety, accessibility and inclusivity with the following to be explored within the scope of work:

RECOMMENDATION CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

- a) Public space and parking lot improvements;
- b) Redesign of change rooms and public washrooms;
- c) The creation of a primary, centralized entrance to the facility;
- d) The addition of an indoor walking track;
- e) The addition of a full size gymnasium;
- f) The development of a greenspace and water access to First Lake, including a floating dock and boat access;
- g) Identification of funding from other orders of government and other sources.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Sackville Sports Stadium (SSS) was built in 1989 by the community and was operated by the Lake District Recreation Association (LDRA). The facility expanded in 2000 to include tenant space and a six-sheet curling club. In 2003, Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM) assumed operational control of the facility from the LDRA and in 2016, Regional Council directed the retention of SSS as an HRM operated facility within Parks & Recreation. The facility is a recreation hub facility in an area of strong population growth.

Staff have analysed the potential revitalization of the site including consideration of:

- changes required to meet accessibility standards set by the municipality's Accessibility Strategy Task Force and the Province's Accessibility Act;
- current offerings, and recreation and functional needs related to the SSS and First Lake, as identified through community consultation, Council approved plans and staff analysis; and
- safety, security challenges and needs including use of the site and lake in emergencies.

Based on the above, proposed components for inclusion in a revitalization project include:

- accessibility improvements including widened passageways, accessible and inclusive washrooms/changerooms, parking lot improvements, and improved amenities to meet accessibility standards;
- building upgrades for improved energy efficiency;
- addition of a walking track and a full-size gymnasium and provision of public lake access; and
- design improvements such as centralizing access to a single point of entry.

The proposed enhancements to the facility align with the Long-Term Aquatic Strategy, the Long-Term Arena Strategy, and the Community Facilities Master Plan 2 (CFMP2).

The full scope of the proposed revitalization is not currently part of HRM's 10-year capital plan however, aspects of the proposed recommendations were previously approved. The potential revitalization projects are anticipated to cost \$30,450,000, with \$2,250,000 already in the capital plan for the SSS. Should Regional Council approve the recommendation, the remaining funding of \$28,200,000 would be considered for addition to the municipal capital plan beginning in fiscal year 2027/28. The projects currently approved for the 2027/28 allocation in the 10-year capital plan exceeds available funding thus the addition of the SSS expanded project scope will increase pressure on the municipal budget. The planned mechanical upgrades have been secured through federal grants and are fully funded. Staff will pursue additional opportunities through federal and provincial grants to offset municipal funding obligations.

BACKGROUND

History of the Facility

The Sackville Sports Stadium (SSS) is a Multi-District Facility (MDF) constructed in 1989 through community fundraising and was originally managed by the Lake District Recreation Association (LDRA). It serves as a multi-purpose facility that offers programs and services in the areas of fitness, sport, wellness, arts, crafts, outdoor recreation, and general leisure programs to the residents of HRM and beyond. The two-level facility was constructed with an arena, a leisure pool, and a six-lane 25-metre pool with changing

rooms in the lower level, a fitness centre, studio spaces, food court and main entrance on the main level. There have been a variety of small modifications over the years and one large addition made to the facility in 2000, which was community funded through a campaign overseen by the LDRA. This addition comprised of a six-sheet curling facility, expanded fitness centre, and tenant space. SSS is similar in age (30+yrs) to other MDFs across Nova Scotia and Canada, which required significant facility enhancements to make them current, relevant, and financially stronger.

The primary mechanical equipment of the facility is original and installed in 1989, except for various air handling units which recently required replacement. The pool filtration systems were replaced in 2018, and dehumidification systems were installed in the arena in 2019 and 2020. Through the HalifACT 2050 Climate Action Plan, the municipality has committed to achieving a net-zero impact on greenhouse gas emissions from municipal facilities by 2030. The scope of the plan is the retrofit and future-proof existing municipally owned buildings to meet these standards.¹ Federal funding has been secured through the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program (ICIP) to replace the current oil-fired boilers with condensed propane boilers, install a heat recovery system on the ice plant to heat pool water, install a low temp distribution system, and solar panels. Additional funding is currently being sought through the Low Carbon Economy Fund to replace the remaining air handling units, and other minor mechanical equipment. HalifACT 2050 has funding available to support retrofitting efforts.

The SSS facility houses two private businesses (TanFit and Lifemark Physiotherapy), three not-for-profit organizations (Bedford Sackville Learning Network, Northwood Adult Day Program, along with the Lakeshore Curling Club) and the recently opened Youth Worx Cafe. Youth Worx provides food services to the clients of SSS and the students of Sackville High and provides a space for residents to gather in a safe and welcoming environment. The tenants contribute to the facility financially as well as provide valued services to the community of Sackville, with each looking for ways to grow and expand their service delivery. Lakeshore Curling Club currently operates the curling facility for seven months of the year, under a license agreement with HRM. The remaining five months of the year, the space is converted into an indoor fieldhouse by melting the curling ice pad and installing artificial turf. This space is used occasionally by rental groups between April and June each year, and primarily by HRM's Recreational Programming in July and August, as a home base for summer day camps.

A phased approach changing to direct municipal operations began in 2003, culminating with a motion of Halifax Regional Council, that the facility be retained "...as a HRM-operated facility integrated within the municipal administrative structure."² Daily operation of the facility and its programming falls under the responsibility of the Parks & Recreation business unit. Facility maintenance and security monitoring are provided through Property, Fleet & Environment (PFE). In 2017, after the exit of a major tenant, the south wing was repurposed into recreational space, to expand programs and classes not previously offered, by constructing a yoga studio, multipurpose media room, classroom, and a large activity room. The expanded space allowed for more introductory sport, yoga, art, and social activity programming to be offered. The remaining space is leased to a third-party community service provider, Northwood Adult Day Program.

In 2019, staff completed a security risk assessment and identified deficiencies in the facility's design and access. The assessment concluded that the primary vulnerability was associated with the second public point of entry not having a staff presence. Without a staff presence, it is not possible to verify if patrons entering the facility through this entrance have purchased access to the fitness centre or drop-in program in the south wing, are attending programs held in the south wing or are visiting one of the tenant businesses. This also proved to be a challenge managing access during the COVID-19 pandemic. The security risk assessment recommended the construction of a second security check in, in the South lobby, or the creation of a single, centrally located entrance and the expansion of other security systems.

¹ HalifACT Action Plan: https://www.halifax.ca/sites/default/files/documents/about-the-city/energy-environment/HRM_HaliFACT_vNew%20Logo_.pdf

² [December 13, 2016 Halifax Regional Council Minutes - HRM](#)

Facility Accessibility

The facility parking lot was constructed in 1989 and the original asphalt is still in place. During the south wing expansion in 2000, the lot was expanded with an additional auxiliary parking lot created to accommodate the anticipated overflow traffic related to the added space and programming. Annual patching and repairs to the asphalt are completed to address safety hazards, deficiencies, and seasonal damage, however the entire lot has not been resurfaced since the facility opened. A hill from the original driveway remains and is now in the centre of the parking lot, creating both a natural divide and visual barrier.

While there are 11 accessible parking spaces, with five near the south entrance and six near the north entrance, the current state of the north end parking lot does not meet accessibility standards. The north end parking lot is not level, and the spaces are too close together to accommodate wheelchair access between vehicles. There are also natural springs underneath the parking lot, which break through the asphalt annually, causing challenging conditions in winter.

The driveway and parking lot serve as an access road to Sackville High School and connect to Kingfisher Way. Despite having two stop signs with marked pedestrian crossings, a posted reduced speed limit, and speed bumps, traffic speeds along this route have created a safety concern with crossing this path to enter the facility. Current design does not have an accessible pathway from Glendale Drive to the main building for pedestrian traffic. A gravel footpath is present and is maintained by the municipality with winter maintenance posing regular challenges. The walkways in front of the facility have accessible ramps from the parking lot incorporated at the entrances and provide a wide walkway along the length of the facility.

Facility entrances have accessible controls installed, as do the entrances to the facility's changing rooms, fitness centre, and pool deck. Elevators are in each wing of the building to provide access to the lower level of the facility. Washrooms have accessible stalls and counters but are tight spaces with narrow entrances. Some of the facility hallways are not wide enough to allow two wheelchairs to pass, and facility studios and meeting spaces are not equipped with accessibility aids.

First Lake

First Lake is a natural freshwater lake located directly behind the SSS. The lake is surrounded by a provincial park, residential housing and commercial / recreational land operated by the LDRA, Kinsmen Club of Sackville, Sack-a-wa Canoe Club, and the municipality. The lake water is tested regularly with weekly testing in the summer months for bacteria levels near Kinsmen Beach, and resulted in the beach being closed to swimming every summer between 2010 and 2018. In 2018, lifeguarding services at the lake ceased due to the frequency of the bacteria related closures. Public access to recreation space remains possible on the north end of the lake through Kinsmen Park, beach, and splash pad. A walking trail encompasses most of First Lake (accessible from Glendale Drive, Sucker

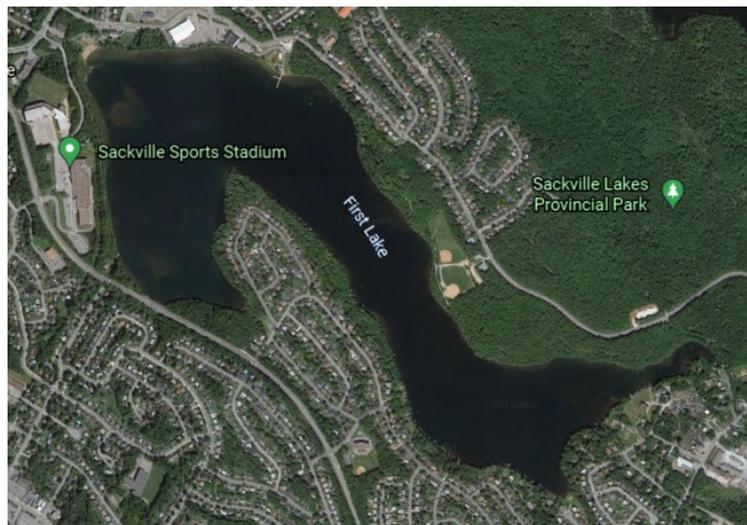


Fig. 1: First Lake

Brook Road, and First Lake Drive) and is maintained by the Friends of First Lake Society (FFL). A public boat launch, located near the southern end of the lake (off MacIntyre Lane) was also maintained by the FFL. However, landowners in the area advised that the launch access runs adjacent to and encroaches on the cemetery of the Cobequid Road United Baptist Church, which prompted the restriction of access to the

launch in 2021. The FFL are currently searching for an alternate location to provide a public boat launch.³ Sack-a-wa Canoe Club have a private boat launch at their facility and a floating dock. Many private residences around the perimeter of the lake also maintain private docks adjacent to their properties and partake in recreational activities, on and in the water, regularly throughout the spring and summer.

Out of a growing concern over the water quality of First Lake, the FFL established a Water Stewardship Committee in 2020 to investigate the overall health and safety of the water. Water testing started over a six-month period in 2021 with findings presented through Atlantic Data Stream⁴. This is an open access platform developed by the Gordon Foundation for sharing information on freshwater health which allows users to access, visualize, and download full water quality datasets collected by monitoring groups from Newfoundland and Labrador, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, and Nova Scotia.⁵ Preliminary findings from the data collected identified bacteria levels to be within the safety limits at all locations, except for locations near water ingress points - specifically in the north-western corner of the lake where a small brook and stormwater drain feed the lake (beside Kinsmen Beach), and the stormwater drain along Glendale Drive, near the bottom of Pinehill Drive. All other points tested were under the safety thresholds for E-Coli and other bacteria levels.⁶

Community Facility Master Plan 2

The Community Facility Master Plan 2 (CFMP2) report defines the structure and organization of recreational facilities using a “Hub & Spoke” model. This model clusters recreational facilities in defined regions, together in the philosophy of a united approach to providing recreation to residents. Using a clustering model, facilities can provide a more well-rounded experience to residents than can be provided on an individual centre basis. This approach encourages residents to utilize multiple local facilities to fulfil their recreation and leisure needs. The SSS was identified as one of six major recreational “Hub” facilities operating within the municipality. Of the six, the SSS is the only facility that is not operated by a community board, rather it is HRM operated. Within the cluster of facilities associated with the SSS, all but three of the “spokes” are independently operated by community organizations.

The large MDF hub facilities host major events, attract families to participate in a wide variety of recreational activities, provide services that better serve the public by being located within communities, improve access, and reduce cost by co-locating services and building infrastructure. These facilities range from 4,500 to 15,000m² in size and serve a population of 60,000 to 80,000 from a combination of districts. They represent significant municipal investment and can play a role in city-building by strengthening the community’s access to recreation as a community focal point. MDFs enhance this by providing the most desired recreational amenities and act as a hub for service delivery and activities that can support and engage all demographics in positive leisure opportunities.

The CFMP2 provides the long-term strategy for municipal facilities, the amenities available, and identifies deficiencies in current services. It identified that there is sufficient supply of pools and ice surfaces to accommodate recreational demand, and a detailed inventory of indoor gymnasiums was to be developed, including assets owned by the Halifax Regional Centre for Education (HRCE). It further recommended working with the HRCE to develop an approach to make gyms more available and accessible to the public, outside of school hours. A service exchange agreement was approved by Council in 2017 with HRCE, which formalizes, among other things, that HRCE provides access to schools to the municipality and community, and HRM provides access to its facilities, including fields and sports courts to HRCE.

Evening access to gymnasiums is provided to HRM but subject to a number of exclusions including a set number of school dates that are not available, a number of schools for which no access is permitted and a

³ Friends of First Lake Society: Boat launch, etc.

https://firstlake.ca/faq/?doing_wp_cron=1655473996.2744190692901611328125

⁴ Water Stewardship | First Lake | Sackville | Nova Scotia | CANADA

https://firstlake.ca/waterstewardship/?doing_wp_cron=1655477107.0941181182861328125000

⁵ Atlantic DataStream: <https://atlanticdatastream.ca/en/>

⁶ Friends of First Lake Society. 2022-03-08. "Friends of First Lake Water Quality Monitoring Data" (dataset). 1.0.0. DataStream. <https://doi.org/10.25976/may9-2452>.

number of schools with limited access due to lack of availability of custodial staff. Due to these restrictions, gymnasium availability in schools is limited under the agreement to after school hours and can be further limited depending on the location. Weekend access can also be restricted based on the availability of custodial staff. These restrictions to availability reduces the viable use of some school by potential users as the availability of remaining time is not sufficient to suit their needs or access varies on a weekly basis, limiting the ability to offer reoccurring programs. HRCE operates 28 schools with gymnasiums within the geographical catchment area of the SSS including Sackville High School (the only school in the municipality with three gymnasiums). In the 2019/20 fiscal year, 50% of the available gymnasium time in these schools (excluding the summer season) was used by third party rentals and HRM's Recreation Programming division. The remaining available time was comprised of shoulder time around booked rentals that was not able to be used, or unsold time (Attachment A).

Recreational programs are offered in 39 school gymnasiums throughout the municipality, including in five schools in the Sackville area:

- A.J. Smeltzer Junior High
- Sackville Heights Junior High
- Leslie Thomas Junior High
- Cavalier Drive Elementary
- Harry R. Hamilton Elementary

This programming ranges from structured, registered youth recreational sport programming to drop-in adult programming. Programming options are limited to the resources staff can transport to these locations and the permanent structures already established in these gymnasium spaces. Currently, the closest full-size gymnasiums to the SSS, for day-time recreational activities, are Gordon R. Snow Community Centre in Fall River, closely followed by the Bedford Hammond's Plains Community Centre in Bedford or the St. Margaret's Centre in Tantallon.

DISCUSSION

The 2021 Canadian census results indicate the population in the service area of the SSS has increased 11.4% since 2016, raising the serviced population to over 87,000 residents. This increase is 2.3% higher than the municipality as a whole since 2016⁷ The SSS is one of two municipally owned and operated recreation centres within the specified geographical area. In addition to these two municipal centres, there are many community-run facilities within the catchment area.

Membership to the facility is one of the primary factors associated with the success of the SSS. The facility currently maintains a monthly average of 1,700 members, as operations return to normal following the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions and closures, with demand continuing to grow. Pre-COVID-19, memberships were steadily growing with the monthly total members reaching more than 1850 members in February 2020. Memberships grant access to the facility's services, including drop-in group fitness classes, pool access, and the fitness centre. The fitness membership industry is a competitive market serviced by municipal, not-for-profit, and for-profit facilities. Municipal memberships provide access to recreational services to residents within the community who may not be able to access private or for-profit offerings due to financial or other barriers. Memberships at SSS provide a single location to access and to develop fundamental movement skills and to stay active. The services provided by the municipally remain in-demand with expectations that these services are routinely updated to remain current and relevant. Membership sales are pivotal to maintaining the facility, contributing 28% to the facility's annual revenue generation.

⁷ Statistic Canada Census Profile, 2021 Census of Population <https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2021/dp-pd/prof/index.cfm?Lang=E>

SSS memberships and recreational services are provided to residents of all ages, with physical well-being and recreational enjoyment being the prominent reasons to join. Within 10km of the SSS, there are 26 separate facilities offering access to fitness centres of varying sizes. It is a highly competitive and growing market, with each service provider focusing on either the recreational, amateur, or professional fitness enthusiast. Three major facilities from outside the 10km radius service the aquatic demand of the same catchment area (Canada Games Centre (CGC), Zatzman Sportsplex (ZSP) and East Hants Aquatic Centre (EHAC)). Each of these facilities and their aquatic features have been constructed or renovated since 2010. A driving factor in each facility's success is the ability to maintain a modern facility with updated amenities and equipment.

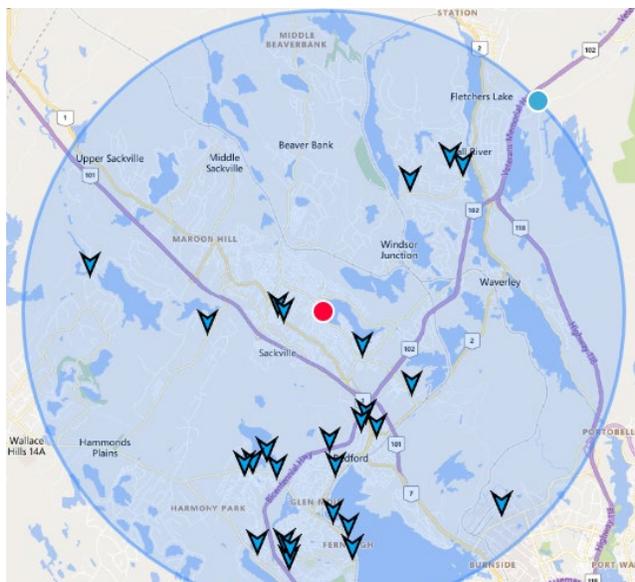


Fig. 2: Fitness Centre locations within 10km of SSS

There are 18 multi-service recreational facilities that offer similar services to the SSS across Nova Scotia (Attachment B). These centres are either municipally or university funded and provide a variety of services to their surrounding communities. Each offers a combination of services ranging from fitness centres, aquatic services, gymnasiums, and arenas to specialized services like athletic therapy, racquet court sports, and pool amenities (i.e., waterslides). The facilities were built between 1967 and 2020 - 13 of which either opened or received significant renovation since 2011. Amenities added have included indoor sports fields, gymnasiums, modernized fitness spaces (including studio spaces and fitness centres), specialized training spaces, exterior features, and pool amenities. Facility accessibility and inclusion issues were also addressed by widening pathways and installing additional inclusive equipment. Of the HRM centres built prior to 2011, two have not been revitalized or modernized: Cole Harbour Place (CHP) and the SSS.

Accessibility, Safety & Energy Efficiency

The *Accessibility Act* (the Act) has recognized accessibility as a human right and has set a goal of an accessible Nova Scotia by 2030. The primary goal in the Act is that persons with disabilities in Nova Scotia have equitable access to goods and services, and facilities in which Nova Scotians live, work, learn, and play. The municipality's Accessibility Strategy Task Force has identified action items to address current deficiencies in HRM facilities, including adopting the Rick Hansen gold certification and CSA B561-18 standards for current infrastructure, including street infrastructure, owned by HRM⁸. SSS will require enhancements and upgrades to all areas of the facility to meet this certification standard. Hallways and passageways will need expanding, and washroom/change room facilities will need expansion with amenities updated to conform to accessibility standards. Existing facility amenities such as elevators and door controls will need to be updated to meet gold certification standards. Studio and meeting room spaces will need accessible controls added or have barriers removed.

Exterior access from Glendale Drive currently is not accessible and will need to be addressed. The grade of the parking lot will also need to be addressed. A switch-back pathway from Glendale Drive to the parking lot level would resolve access to the facility from the road, along with an identified path to the facility through the parking lot. Diversion of the existing natural springs will need to be explored to address the existing ice issues in the winter. A redesign of the current layout would allow for a safer parking area intended for greater accommodation to persons with a disability and enhanced traffic calming measures.

The HALIFACT Climate Action Plan is the municipality's commitment to reducing emissions, switching to

⁸ <https://cdn.halifax.ca/sites/default/files/documents/city-hall/regional-council/220503rci10.pdf>

clean and reliable energy sources, and demonstrating leadership from local government. Part of this plan includes the design and actioning of deep energy retrofits for municipally-owned buildings; retrofitting them to include alternative fuel usage, heat recovery systems, LED lighting, demand-controlled ventilation, rooftop solar panel systems and more.⁹ The SSS has been identified as one of the municipally-owned buildings in need of these upgrades, with plans already in place to convert the facility from oil-fired water boilers to more fuel and energy efficient systems in order to maintain a state of good repair. The installation of rooftop solar panels is also under investigation to reduce the facilities power demands. Additional mechanical components and facility features will need upgrades and replacement to bring the facility to a full net-zero for 2030.

Recreational Needs

Based on the feedback received from facility staff, regular facility renters, tenants, the local Councillor, and the residents through community engagement, expansion of the facilities assets to include a walking track, gymnasium, access to First Lake and modifications to the existing facility were identified as changes needed to continue the SSS's success.

The physical layout of the facility has proven to be confusing to patrons due to the two entrances and has been identified as a safety and security concern by staff. The creation of a centralized point of entry and the existing entrances altered to become emergency fire exits would allow these issues to be addressed. Security issues are present from the second point of entry and would be eliminated through a central service entrance.

The Sackville area has an abundance of walking and hiking trails throughout the community promoting healthy, active lifestyles. In the winter, the trails are regularly snow and ice-covered creating potentially unsafe conditions. Exterior walking trails and sidewalks potentially present inhospitable conditions for seniors or those with decreased physical, sensory, and cognitive abilities. Indoor walking tracks provide a low impact exercise and a safer environment with fewer obstacles. Access to safe walking spaces within a community are in high demand and encourage healthy living and community growth. An indoor walking track does not exist in the catchment area of the SSS. The only available indoor tracks for this region are located at the CGC, Dalplex, and ZSP. A walking track is the highest demanded asset to be added to the SSS.

Access to a public gymnasium has been identified as a need in the Sackville area by the community. Of the available gymnasiums in the SSS catchment area, full size gymnasiums are available in the 28 HRCE operated facilities and the Gordon R. Snow Community Centre. There are limits on the availability of gymnasium access as noted in the background section and while staff continue to work with HRCE to request additional gymnasium time, demand will likely continue to exceed supply. Further, daytime access is only available at Gordon R. Snow Community Centre, limiting the opportunities for daytime gymnasium-based programs. Daytime access to programs like pickleball, badminton, basketball, and other low impact physical activities have seen a surge in popularity and demand for services that address this need are anticipated to rise.

Gymnasium based programs and activities can be provided to the public requiring minimal financial commitment from participants and the facility. They have broad participation amongst all age groups and demographics and promote healthy activities with minimal barriers to participation. They create the opportunity to develop physical literacy or adapt programs to be inclusive of disabilities by modifying curriculum to accommodate within sufficient space.

The Long-Term Arena Strategy identified that the municipality has a sufficient supply of arenas to address the trending demand for the service. The RBC Centre in Burnside was constructed on the recommendation in this report and four single-pad arenas - the Devonshire, the Gerald B. Gray, the Bowles, and the Gerald J. LeBrun (LeBrun) Arenas, were identified for closure.¹⁰ These arenas were closed, sold, or repurposed

⁹ <https://www.halifax.ca/about-halifax/energy-environment/halifac-2050-acting-climate-together>

¹⁰ [Long Term Arena Strategy \(halifax.ca\)](#)

except for the LeBrun arena which remains operational. The Sackville Arena is also one kilometer from SSS at 91 First Lake Drive. It is privately operated in conjunction with the Sackville Bingo Hall / TASO Gymnastics facility by the LDRA and receives grants from the municipality to support its operational budget. The construction of an additional ice surface at the SSS is not warranted based on declining usage, and it is outside the scope of the approved arena strategy.

The Long-Term Aquatic Strategy, approved in 2019 provides guidance for aquatic facility planning. Based on the municipality's population, anticipated growth, and benchmarking, a reduction in the current indoor recreational pool inventory was not recommended. The construction of a new aquatic centre, to replace the aging Needham Centre, was recommended and is currently in development. Providing an additional facility was not expected to be required within the Strategy's 15-year time frame, however, planning for a net new facility or examining the potential for the future expansion of nearby existing facilities was anticipated to occur within the time frame.

The municipality has not added a net new indoor pool to the inventory for the past 30+ years but has focused on recapitalizing (including replacing) existing facilities. This approach helps meet current needs and broadens utilization without adding to the inventory. The continued recapitalization of all other existing indoor pool facilities to upgrade major building components and facility features, as needed, was recommended.

The strategy did highlight that the province's two 50-metre pools (Dalplex and Centennial Pool) are located within the municipality and both facilities are aging. They do not meet the requirements for hosting national level competitive swimming events. Sackville Waves Aquatic Team (SWAT) is a competitive swim team which uses the SSS as their home pool and have expressed the need to address the state of competition level pools in the region, and their interest and support is in seeing the SSS pool expanded to accommodate that need.

The provincial government has an established mandate regarding higher level sport development and sport hosting through its support of provincial sport organizations and partnerships with Sport Canada. The municipality's primary mandate is ensuring that the public has aquatic access, to be safe in and around the water, to learn to swim, and to benefit from lifelong participation in healthy active lifestyles. Given that elite-level sport development is not the municipality's primary mandate, the Long Term Aquatic Strategy speaks to the importance of partnerships with other orders of government or organizations when it comes to consideration of a 50-metre competition pool. Regional Council has requested a report to explore the potential replacement of Centennial Pool with a new 50-metre pool.¹¹ Consideration to potential locations for a 50 metre pool will be made through discussion with potential partners.

While the Sackville Sports Stadium will be considered along with other municipal aquatic facilities when exploring option for the replacement of the Centennial Pool, there are expected to be considerable challenges at this location due to available space and the anticipated costs associated with modifying the existing 25-metre pool infrastructure.

First Lake Access

Access to First Lake with a dock and boat launch would provide SSS with an opportunity to offer programs and services not currently possible from other MDF locations. Lake access would allow the expansion of canoe and kayak loan programs currently offered through the St. Mary's Boat Club, while bringing introductory Learn to Canoe and Learn to Kayak programs to the Sackville community. Adding a floating dock and a publicly accessible boat launch at the SSS location would resolve the current dispute with the Cobequid Road United Baptist Church, addressing the community's interests in being able to access the water safely, while respecting the concerns expressed by the landowners.

Halifax Regional Fire & Emergency (HRFE) have also identified support for the installation of a public boat launch. At present, HRFE is provided access to the launch at the Sack-a-wa Canoe Club as required. While

¹¹ <https://cdn.halifax.ca/sites/default/files/documents/city-hall/regional-council/220628rc-draftmins.pdf>

this location provides access to the lake, when firefighters require the boat launch for training or emergency lake access, at times there has been a need to manage the congestion at this busy location. In addition, it is a privately owned site with no long-term assurance that this access will remain in place. A boat launch at the SSS could provide faster access, security, and assurance that future development will not remove emergency access to First Lake. HRFE is currently undergoing a review of various water programs, including water rescue, ice rescue, and lake boat deployment. The SSS site with enhancements such as a boat launch would be beneficial to the training division and ongoing emergency response programs.

Emergency Shelter Services

In April 2021, an emergency generator was installed at the Acadia Centre at 636 Sackville Drive, Lower Sackville. This location houses the Sackville Public Library, “The Den” multi-service youth centre, and other municipal offices. It is equipped with washroom facilities including showers, kitchen space, and common areas capable of accommodating large groups. This location was identified, in a January 2021 report to the Executive Standing Committee, along with 10 additional locations where generators are scheduled to be installed between 2020 and 2023.¹² Additional communities throughout the municipality remain without generators and the Emergency Management Office prioritizes communities which are not already serviced by existing locations that can be used as comfort centres in case of emergency. The Acadia Centre addresses the need for a comfort centre in the Sackville area.

Conclusion

After reviewing accessibility requirements, current offerings, recreational and functional needs including as identified through feedback from the community, municipal strategies previously established for recreational facilities, and safety and security considerations, staff have identified a list of potential facility advancements and upgrades (Attachment C). These updates and additions to the facility would maintain state of good repair and enhance the access to programs and services for the community. They would improve the SSS’s ability to continue to remain a viable and relevant component of the municipality’s open and accessible recreational services moving forward, while remaining fiscally and environmentally responsible.

The addition of these proposed amenities would increase access and improve opportunities for marginalized citizens, youth, people living in poverty, seniors, and immigrants. The proposed features would provide access to learn and develop the fundamental movement skills while providing access to services currently not available in the community.

With no significant upgrade or operating model redesign, SSS could suffer from decreasing levels of customer use and satisfaction as it continues to age. Failing to be responsive to changing demographics and recreation facility re-design could reduce interest in the SSS for existing and new customers. To achieve a more inclusive and accessible delivery model that will continue to grow and service the municipality, the facility requires significant upgrades in multiple systems and in program delivery areas.

To maintain a state of good repair for this facility, the Building Condition Assessment identifies several major updates required in the next 10 years. In addition, as part of the goal to meet Net-Zero municipal operations by 2030 (HalifACT Climate Action Plan), HRM has received Federal and Provincial funding from the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program’s climate mitigation stream. These funds will support the replacement of the oil boilers with condensing propane, utilize heat recovery from the ice plant for pool heating, installation of a low temperature distribution system and installation of a solar array. Additional work is required to reduce the carbon footprint to net zero.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The scope of the proposed project is not part of HRM’s 10-year capital plan however, aspects of the proposed recommendations have been previously approved. The recommended projects are anticipated to cost \$30,450,000 with \$2,250,000 already in the capital plan for the SSS. The remaining \$28,200,000

¹² <https://cdn.halifax.ca/sites/default/files/documents/city-hall/standing-committees/210125escinfo2.pdf>

would need to be added to the municipal capital budget. Potential external funding opportunities would be explored to help support the project.

The existing portfolio of capital projects identified for the 2027/28 fiscal year exceeds Council-approved levels of available funding therefore an additional \$28.2M in investment would need to be balanced with all other corporate priorities. As project readiness progresses for all projects in the portfolio, staff will work to balance optimal scheduling and sufficient funding for prioritized projects within Council's fiscal direction.

HALIFACT 2050 identifies economic stimulus funding will be available for building retrofits as part of its climate action plan with funding identified for retrofits. Investment in improving the facility's infrastructure to lower the carbon footprint will further generate savings resulting from avoided energy costs, avoided operations and maintenance costs, avoided carbon pricing costs, and increased energy generation. Opportunities may be available through federal and provincial grants to secure funding for the revitalization of community infrastructure.

RISK CONSIDERATION

There are no immediate risk considerations related to this recommendation report. Without a revitalization of the facility to meet future needs, the Sackville Sports Stadium may suffer from decreasing levels of customer use and satisfaction, as it continues to age.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Staff hosted a public engagement session, interviewed key stakeholders and regular facility rental groups, and offered a public engagement survey, which garnered 2,144 completed responses (Attachment D). Ninety-seven percent of respondents supported municipal investment in the SSS revitalization. The highlighted rationale for this support identified that the Sackville, and surrounding, communities are growing quickly and the SSS needs to be modernized to accommodate the growth that the surrounding communities are experiencing. With growing pressure on recreational infrastructure, residents expressed high importance for facilities to be up to date and to have modern recreation facilities to give residents of all ages the opportunity to stay healthy and social.

Many respondents believe the layout of the facility is odd and difficult to navigate and that it has many heavy doors to traverse. Participants explained they must walk a far distance through the arena to get to the fitness centre and fitness studios. Respondents expressed the need for better wayfinding and more obvious routes from the front entrance to the fitness centre, studios, and multipurpose room. Survey respondents and staff also noted that there is a lot of wasted lobby space throughout the building due to the ad-hoc additions over the years. The main entrance was identified as needing modernization, and that the view of the lake is a positive asset but could be more prominent with new and larger windows and entrances on the backside of the building as possible improvements.

The addition of an indoor walking and running track was identified as the highest priority for the largest number of respondents. New pool features, such as a slide, and a full-size gymnasium were the second and third highest priorities for new recreation features. Adding spray features to the pools and expansion to offer services in or on First Lake received the least amount of prioritization, yet interest was expressed for a floating dock and a small boat loan program.

Fifty-five residents expressed interest in expansions not highlighted by the survey. Interest was expressed in a larger pool, a second ice rink surface, the addition of an indoor field space and expansion to the curling club space. Many respondents explained that they access facilities outside of the Sackville area, such as the East Hants Aquatics Centre or Canada Games Centre, over the SSS for the better pool features those facilities provide and their modern amenities. A desire to have space capable of accommodating year-round access for Lacrosse and a full-size 50m competition pool capable of hosting national events was expressed. A formal request from Lakeshore Curling Club was received for consideration to be given to a new lounge

and/or viewing space overlooking the curling shed in any future development of the SSS. Sackville Minor Basketball Association (SMBA) also voiced strong support for the addition of a community access gymnasium in Sackville, citing their lack of a proper home gymnasium for their organization, difficulty in securing gymnasium access in Sackville for their programs, and the lack of gymnasiums in Sackville with equipment capable of accommodating all age groups.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

The environmental impacts of the proposed revitalization would be minimal. Installation of modernized equipment would reduce the environmental impact of the facility by reducing the community energy consumption through daily operations. Land around the SSS is already cleared and access to First Lake would follow a path already created by Halifax Water as a service access right of way. The area is already heavily used by the local community and would not be displacing or disrupting any known habitats. Providing access to First Lake would not introduce foreign contaminations not already present, as the lake is already used for recreational purposes. Access to a boat launch into First Lake is already present and will not introduce further negative environmental impact.

ALTERNATIVES

1. Regional Council may choose to direct the Chief Administrative Officer to not proceed with an inclusion of a revitalization of the Sackville Sports Stadium in a future Capital plan and not prepare a formal revitalization plan.
2. Regional Council may choose to direct the Chief Administrative Officer to prepare a plan for the Sackville Sports Stadium that has a reduced scale and scope for consideration in a future capital budget.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A – Gymnasium Tracking Data

Attachment B – Jurisdictional Scan of Nova Scotia Multi District Facilities

Attachment C – Proposed Sackville Sports Stadium Capital Plan

Attachment D – What We Heard Report

A copy of this report can be obtained online at halifax.ca or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 902.490.4210.

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School Gymnasium Usage Within Geographical Catchment of Sackville Sports Stadium

School	Hours Booked Per Season				TOTAL 2019/20 Fiscal Year	Available Custodial Hours in School Year	Percentage of Time Used
	Spring 2019	Summer 2019	Fall 2019	Winter 2020			
A. J. Smeltzer Junior High	223	0	379	242	844	1540	55%
Ash Lee Jefferson Elementary School	110	0	146	141	397	1540	26%
Basinview Drive Community Elementary School	126	18	1126	610	1862	1540	121%
Beaver Bank Kinsac Elementary School	73	0	20	3	96	640	15%
Beaver Bank Monarch Drive Elementary School	74	114	205	176	455	940	48%
Caudle Park Elementary School	33	0	79	61	173	940	18%
Cavalier Drive Elementary School	121	0	234	186	541	1340	40%
Charles P. Allen High School	0	597	1461	968	2429	3080	79%
Dutch Settlement Elementary School	6	0	10	0	16		
Georges P. Vanier Junior High	278	72	314	284	876	1540	57%
Hammonds Plains Consolidated Elementary School	110	0	149	138	397	1540	26%
Harold T. Barrett Junior High	197	0	262	162	621	1540	40%
Harry R. Hamilton Elementary School	118	0	230	155	503	1540	33%
Hillside Park Elementary School	72	0	108	99	279	1140	24%
Holland Road Elementary School	32	0	35	28	95	640	15%
Kingswood Elementary School	112	0	316	269	697	1540	45%
Leslie Thomas Junior High	161	0	225	197	583	1540	38%
Millwood Elementary School	118	0	149	121	388	1540	25%
Millwood High School	284	0	397	262	943	1540	61%
Oldfield Consolidated Elementary School	6	0	9	0	15		
Rocky Lake Elementary	127	0	180	201	508	1540	33%
Rocky Lake Junior High	231	0	463	408	1102	1540	72%
Sackville Heights Junior High	181	167	372	305	858	1540	56%
Sackville High School	815	0	1157	994	2966	3080	96%
Smokey Drive Elementary School	49	0	67	57	173	940	18%
Sunnyside Elementary School - Eaglewood Drive	12	0	131	104	247	1140	22%
Sycamore Lane Elementary School	12	0	14	3	29	640	5%
Waverley Memorial Elementary School	150	0	181	251	582	1540	38%
Totals	3831	968	8419	6425	18675	37620	50%

Facility	Year Opened	Revnovated/ Expanded?		Work Completed?	Membership Fee: 1 Adult per Year	Fitness Centre	Gymnasium	Walking Track	Arena	2nd Ice Surface	Field House	Raquet Court	Studio Spaces	Meeting Space	Amenities Offered					
		No	Yes - Year												Gender Neutral changerooms?	Competition Pool (50m)	Lane Pool (25m)	Leisure Pool	Water Slide	Alt. Pool Feature
Sackville Sports Stadium	1990		2000	South wing expansion added Curling Club, additional tenant space later converted into program space	\$ 440.00	✓			✓		✓/X		✓	✓			✓	✓		Diving Board, tarzan rope, in-pool water feature, small slide
Zatzman Sportsplex	1983		2018	Gymnasium addition, renovated fitness centre, pool deck and amenities, meeting spaces, improved accessibility and inclusion	\$ 685.00	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	Diving Board, tarzan rope, rockwall, hot tub, on-deck water features
Cole Harbour Place	1989	X			\$ 678.00	✓			✓	✓		✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	
Canada Games Centre	2011	X			\$ 650.00	✓	✓	✓			✓		✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	Diving Board/platforms, in-pool water features, on-deck water features, tots pool, Sauna, hot tub
Pictou County Wellness Centre (YMCA)*	2012	X			\$ 720.00	✓		✓	✓	✓				✓			✓	✓		Lazy River, in-pool water feature, steam room, hot tub, small slide
Rath Eastlink Community Centre	2013	X			\$ 582.45	✓		✓	✓	✓			✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	Diving Boards
Lunenburg County Lifestyle Centre	2013	X			\$ 259.00				✓				✓	✓			✓	✓		
Dalhousie University - Dalplex**	1979		2018	Hardwood floor in fieldhouse, lighting, pool bulkhead replacement, safety and accessibility upgrades, indoor climings spaces, throw rooms universal change rooms, new expanded fitness centre	\$ 729.84	✓	✓	✓			✓		✓	✓		✓		✓		Bulkheads allow 50m pool to become 2 25-m pools with 8 lanes each
Centennial Pool	1967		2012											✓			✓			
St. Margarets Centre	1988		2005	2nd ice surface added			✓	✓		✓			✓	✓				✓		Outdoor pool
YMCA Halifax*	2020	X			\$ 728.00	✓	✓						✓	✓		✓		✓		Steam room, sauna
East Hants Aquatic Centre	2020	X			\$ 559.13									✓			✓	✓	✓	Lazy River, in-pool water feature, hot tub, rockwall
East Hants Sportsplex	1993		2011	Second ice surface, entire second floor with meeting rooms and canteen space. Office space, front desk and Fieldhouse Dome and attributed mechanical equipment added				✓	✓	✓	✓			✓						
Port Hawkesbury Civic Centre	2004	X				✓		✓	✓				✓	✓						
West Hants Sports Complex	2020	X						✓	✓		✓			✓		✓				
Acadia University - Athletics Complex	1988		2008/2011/2012/201	Front desk relocation, improvements to gymnasium, expanded fitness centre, athletic therapy space, improved turf field	\$ 448.00	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓			✓			
St.FX univeristy - Keating Centre / Oland Centre	1967		1979/2000/2017-ongoing	Pool added/expanded fitness centre, 2 arenas, conference space/updated gymnasium and facility bleachers, physical & Athletic therapy studios, upgrades to outdoor field space/new public change rooms, an expanded fitness centre and auxiliary gym	\$ 478.26	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓			✓			diving board
Cape Breton University - Cape Breton Health and Recreation Complex	2010	X		Plans to replace Dome			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓						

*YMCA does not offer an annual membership - value determined from biweekly fee

** Community monthly fee only. Racquet courts converted to climbing and throwing studios in recent renovation. Arena with community recreation facility is currently in development; slated for a 2023 opening.

Proposed Capital Projects for the Sackville Sports Stadium Revitalization

Capital Project	Description	Projected Cost	Current Budget
Previously Approved Capital			
Arena Joist Painting	Sand blasting and treating the existing arena ceiling joists with corrosion resistant coating	\$ 400,000.00	\$ 200,000.00
Parking Lot Redevelopment	The adjusted entrance to the facility, combined with the ongoing issues (natural springs, surface is not level, safety, etc.) with the existing parking lot will require a redesign of the parking lot. The existing parking lot was identified as a serious concern by residents, citing the size of parking spaces, state of the asphalt, a lack accessibility from Glendale Dr. and the safety of the current layout as the largest areas of concern. A complete redesign of the parking lot to address the above concerns and introduce traffic calming measures is needed.	\$ 1,500,000.00	\$ 700,000.00
Locker room Renovation	The current change rooms and public washrooms have been identified as being outdated, small, and inaccessible. Redesign to include accessible, universal change rooms and universal washrooms will better serve the residents and address their concerns. Accessible equipment including adult change tables, hoist lifts and private changing stalls would address many current accessibility concerns.	\$ 2,000,000.00	\$ 500,000.00
Pool Deck retiling	Pool deck has never been fully redone since the facility opened, and there are significant deficiencies forming in the surface that are becoming difficult to manage as the replacement tiles fail to properly set due to moisture. Full resurfacing of the pool deck and adjoining room floors to be water safe and resistant.	\$ 400,000.00	\$ 300,000.00
Boiler Replacement	Current boilers are oil-fired boilers originally installed in 1989, and have passed the recommended 25-year life span. Replacing existing original oil-fired boilers with condensed propane-fired units. Funding already received through	\$ 1,500,000.00	\$ 1,500,000.00
HVAC Upgrades	Upgrade existing HVAC	\$ 300,000.00	\$ 50,000.00
Solar Panel Installation	Installation of solar panels to generate electricity; reducing operational costs	\$ 150,000.00	\$ -
Heat Recapture System	System designed to retain heat produced by the ice plant to heat pool water	\$ 450,000.00	\$ 450,000.00
		\$ 6,700,000.00	\$ 3,700,000.00
Unscheduled (Proposed) Capital			
Centralized Point of Entry	a new pedestrian walkway run along the front of the facility and a new, primary entrance would be installed in the centre of the facility. The two currently identified entrances to be adjusted to serve as emergency exits exclusively. The additional space located in the associated lobby spaces could be repurposed to better serve current tenants. Security issues currently present from the second point of entry will be eliminated through the central service entrance.	\$ 8,000,000.00	\$ -
Full Size Gymnasium	A gymnasium is an adaptable programming space that can be tailored to a wide variety of programs and activities; it could be programmed and utilized in a much larger capacity compared to alternatives. It would provide a stable home for a rapidly growing pickleball community and give access	\$ 5,000,000.00	\$ -
Walking Track	The proposed placement would be located around the existing arena on the mezzanine level. This proposed location would require either the expansion of the eastern exterior wall to accommodate the walking track or strengthening of the eastern wall to support a cantilevered	\$ 6,000,000.00	\$ -
Boat Launch with Floating Dock	Installation of a floating dock and boat ramp into First Lake. An access road from King Fisher Way would be developed along with a turn around loop; available detour route for pedestrian traffic along First Lake Trail and appropriate	\$ 750,000.00	\$ -
Accessibility	Reducing the accessibility restrictions in the facility by expanding hallways, eliminating barriers, and adding	\$ 1,500,000.00	\$ -
South Wing Roofing	Current roof over the South wing expansion is now over 20 years old, and needs to be replaced	\$ 2,500,000.00	\$ -
		\$ 30,450,000.00	\$ 3,700,000.00

Sackville Sports Stadium Potential Revitalization

What We Heard Report



February 16, 2022

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Background

Engagement Goals

On June 29th, 2021, Regional Council approved a motion requesting a staff report on the current status and recommended options for the potential revitalization of the Sackville Sports Stadium. Community engagement was required so the municipality could better understand the satisfaction rates with the existing design, layout, and amenities of the Sackville Sports Stadium, and to gauge which renovations, additions, or amenities the public would value most, should revitalization take place in the future. Staff were asked to consider the following:

- a. *Current accessible, structural and design challenges of the facility;*
- b. *Addition of Indoor track/court/gymnasium/field space;*
- c. *Addition of a water or pool feature;*
- d. *Programming opportunities on First Lake;*
- e. *Improvements to inclusive/accessible spaces and services; and*
- f. *Creation of an accessible/centralized entrance to the facility.*

Engagement Method

Front Entrance Display

A large poster was placed on display in the lobby of the Sackville Sports Stadium describing the origin of the engagement, opportunities for residents and stakeholders to provide feedback, and contact information to ask questions or provide additional feedback. Those who entered the Stadium could also get a physical copy of a survey and drop it off at the front desk.

Surveys for Members & Non-Members

Two surveys were created: one for current Sackville Sports Stadium members and one for non-members. The surveys were open from October 5th, 2021 to December 1st, 2021 and again from January 4th, 2022 to January 31st, 2022. Online and physical copies were available. The surveys were targeted to those living in the service area of the Sackville Sports Stadium as set out in the Community Facilities Master Plan 2: the communities of Sackville, Beaver Bank, Fall River, Bedford, Lucasville, and Hammonds



Plains. The surveys were advertised at the front entrance of the Stadium, through social media, Councilor newsletters, the Cobequid Community Partners Network, Sackville Public Library, and direct emails to members, tenants, regular rental groups, and other recreation-based groups in the service area.

The surveys asked respondents for the first three digits of their postal codes to ensure the voices of residents living in the area would be prioritized. Residents were asked about:

- Their general satisfaction rate with the Stadium
- What features they use at the Stadium
- Their opinions regarding the design of the building
- Their opinions regarding existing recreation features
- How they would prioritize the potential for new recreation features, such as an indoor track, full-size gymnasium, indoor field space, expanded pool features, indoor spray features, and lake features
- How they would prioritize any new features provided on First Lake, such as a floating dock, boat launch, small boat loans, and swimming lessons
- If they support the municipality investing in revitalization of the Sackville Sports Stadium.

Surveys were completed by 563 current Sackville Sports Stadium members and 1,581 non-members, totaling 2,144 completed surveys.

Staff Tours of the Sackville Sports Stadium

Fourteen staff from the Sackville Sports Stadium and Sackville area recreation programs took part in small group tours of the building and grounds. Throughout the tour, staff were asked to comment on, from their day-to-day experience, what is and is not working and what improvements could be made regarding accessibility and inclusion; aesthetics and design; recreation features; and outdoor opportunities.

Diversity & Inclusion Staff

On January 4, 2022, key advisors from HRM's Diversity & Inclusion Office and African Nova Scotian Affairs Integration Office provided advice and support to ensure the engagement was as inclusive and accessible as possible and they agreed to continue to provide input as decisions regarding the revitalization are made. Representatives of HRM's Diversity & Inclusion Office and members of HRM Recreation Programming's Inclusion and Accessibility team participated in a tour of the facility on May 4th, 2022 to assess the current state of the facilities accessibility.

Public Open House

A public open house was hosted at the Sackville Sports Stadium on November 3rd, 2021 from 6-8 pm. Twenty-three residents attended the open house. They were given the opportunity to read more background information about the Stadium, the engagement approach, and next steps. Residents were asked:

- What isn't working well with the Sackville Sports Stadium?
- What do you like about the Sackville Sports Stadium?
- What changes or improvements would you like to see at the Sackville Sports Stadium?

Staff with diverse expertise (recreation programming, aquatics, facility construction, Stadium management, and community engagement) were available to answer questions.

Meetings with Tenants & Regular Rental Groups

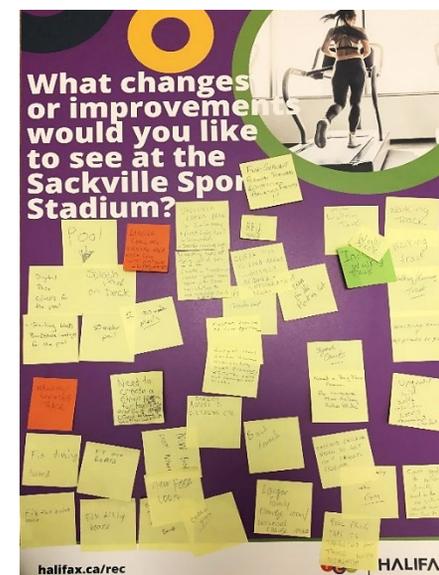
From November 2021 to January 2022, staff had virtual meetings with Sackville Sports Stadium's tenants and regular rental groups. Each meeting took between 30-60 minutes. They were asked:

- 1) How do you currently use the Sackville Sports Stadium? Does the space meet your needs?
- 2) Have you noticed any changing trends when it comes to the participation rate, what participants would like to see, and common complaints or concerns?
- 3) What do you think works well with the current design, amenities and programs offered by the Sackville Sports Stadium?
- 4) What do you think isn't working well?
- 5) What changes would you like to see?

Staff reached out to 18 tenants and regular rental groups. Four groups agreed to an interview and two groups wrote their answers to the interview questions and returned them to staff. Feedback was received from two tenants, three sport clubs, and one community association.

Previous Engagements

In 2016, staff engaged Sackville residents about their experiences with recreation in the area. Staff received 162 completed surveys. The most common comments about the Sackville Sports Stadium, at that time, were the cost being too high and not a great enough variety of programming. The most common comments related to revitalization of the facility were that youth wanted access to a rock-climbing wall and eight people noted the building needed better maintenance and updating.



Common Comments from 2016 Survey	Number of Responses
Want a greater variety of programs	23
Too expensive	21
Want a rock-climbing wall	13
Lack of awareness of the Stadium	9
Building needs updating/better cleaning	8

What We Heard

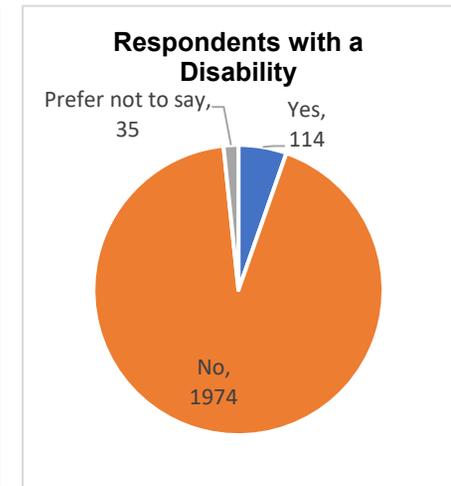
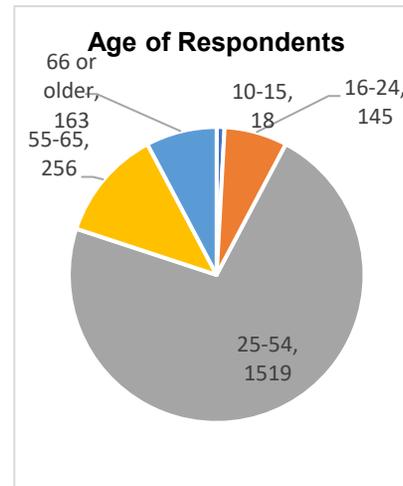
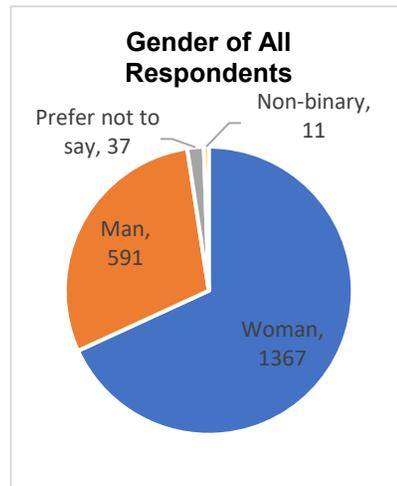
Respondent Demographics

Most respondents who completed a survey come from Sackville, Beaver Bank, Fall River, Lucasville, Hammonds Plains, and Bedford communities.

Women made up 68% of survey respondents. Residents between the ages of 25 and 54 made up 72% of survey respondents. 114 respondents (5%) identified as having a disability.

Survey Respondents		
Postal Codes (with >10 responses)	Current SSS Members	Non-Members of SSS
B4C (Lower Sackville)	181	497
B4E (Middle & Upper Sackville)	67	489
B4G (Beaver Bank)	48	139
B2T (Windsor Junction – Fall River – Oakfield)	38	107
B4B (Lucasville – Hammonds Plains)	27	91
B4A (Bedford)	34	77
B0N (Middle Beaver Bank – Dutch Settlement – Musquodoboit Valley)	N/A	24
B3M (Clayton Park – Larry Uteck Blvd)	N/A	24

Ethnic Identity	Total
Caucasian / White	1858
Prefer not to say	96
African Nova Scotian	32
First Nations	25
Métis	24
African Canadian	13
Other	11
South Asian	9
Chinese	6
Latin American	7
Arab	7
Filipino	3
Inuk (Inuit)	3
South East Asian	3
Korean	2



Structural & Design Elements

Respondents are most satisfied with physical accessibility and entrances, with satisfaction rates of 82% and 80% respectively. Tenants, however, would like to have more prominent entrances or at least easier access to advertising from the main entrance. Respondents also think the entrance (interior and exterior) could be modernized and made more welcoming.

Changing Rooms & Washrooms

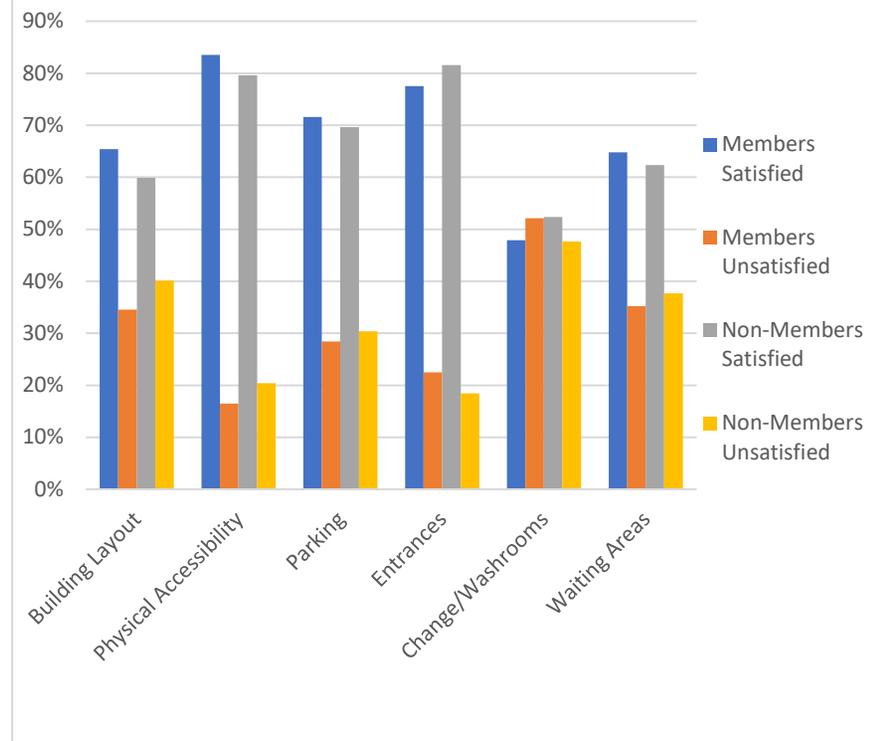
Only 50% of respondents are satisfied with the changing rooms and washrooms throughout the Sackville Sports Stadium. Common complaints are that the changing rooms need to be better maintained and cleaned, they lack privacy, lockers are broken, and the family changing room is too small. Staff believe the family changing room should be the largest changing room, as more users are looking for universal spaces. A few respondents explained that the changing rooms are not accessible for handicapped users. Staff like the new approach to changing rooms and washrooms where there are no doors, but angled entrances.

Building Layout & Waiting Areas

To a lesser extent, respondents are of a mixed opinion on the waiting areas and building layout, with 63.5% of respondents satisfied with the waiting areas and 62.5% of respondents satisfied with the building layout. Many respondents believe the layout is odd and difficult to navigate. There are also many heavy doors to get through. Participants explained they must walk a far distance, through the rink, to get to the fitness centre and fitness studios. Staff repeatedly expressed the need for better wayfinding and more obvious routes from the front entrance to the fitness centre, studios, and multipurpose room. Staff noted that participants must use many winding and narrow



Satisfaction with Design Features



hallways, too many doors, and it feels odd to access more fitness spaces through the rink. One straight hallway on both levels would be ideal. Survey respondents and staff also noted there is a lot of wasted lobby space throughout the building due to the ad-hoc additions over the years.

Décor

Overall, the opinion of those surveyed indicated the Stadium should be refreshed. They believe there is no cohesive décor throughout the building, there are dated carpets, and odd paint colors. Coordinating the décor with the Halifax Rec logo, and generally making the Halifax Rec logo more prominent on signage and throughout the building would be a good direction. Those surveyed believe the main entrance should be modernized; more welcoming, and the lighting could be improved. Respondents also noted that the view of the lake is a positive asset, but could be more prominent, with new and larger windows and entrances on the backside of the building. Staff noted that there is a lack of storage in the classroom style spaces for things like craft materials or games.

Parking & Pedestrian Access

29% of respondents are dissatisfied with the parking lot. Staff agree that the parking lot has several issues:

- Teens from Sackville High School use the parking lot as a cut-through and drive too quickly.
- There are blind spots between the high school parking lot and the Stadium parking lot.
- The asphalt is in poor condition and parking spots are small and poorly designed.
- Pedestrians have the choice of walking down a steep gravel path or a long winding driveway with no shoulder. Both options are nearly impossible for users in wheelchairs, with strollers, or with any mobility issues. Both options are also poor in winter conditions for any level of mobility.
- The accessible parking spots are too far from curb-cuts and in poor shape.
- There is no safe spot for Access-A-Bus to drop off facility users.

Staff believe a safety audit of the parking lot and pedestrian access should be completed.

Noise

Staff explained that there are noise issues between spaces. From the yoga studio, participants can hear curling competitions and court sports. Staff can hear birthday parties, meetings, and swim practice from their offices, as there are no ceilings throughout the space where the party rental and viewing deck are.

Regularly Rented Spaces

The large pool, hockey rink, and curling rinks are used regularly by sport clubs. While each club has specific detailed complaints and suggestions related to their spaces, they share common complaints:

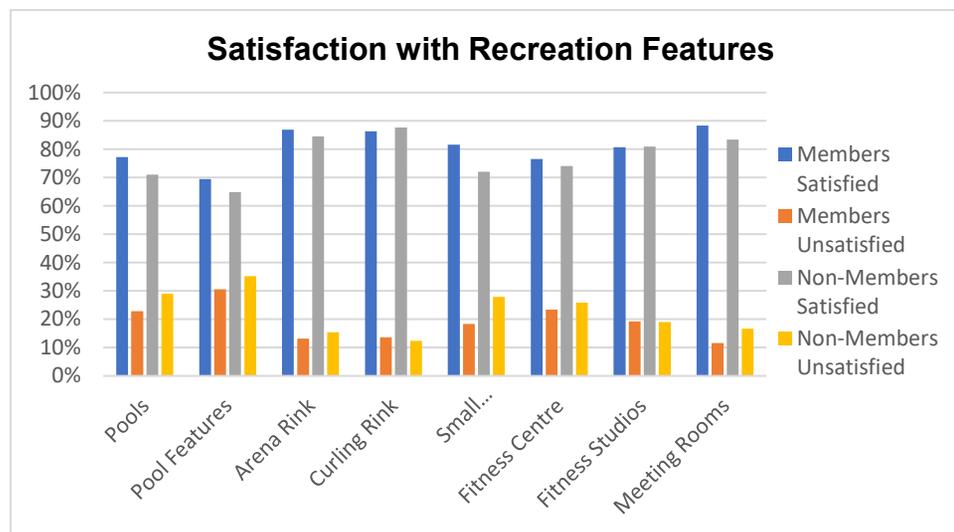
- Their membership is growing and the space they use is no longer big enough. They want to see expansions.
- They want dedicated office and storage space near the recreation feature they use.
- They want the spaces to be modernized to keep up with other facilities.

Recreation Features

Residents are fairly satisfied with the recreation features at the Sackville Sports Stadium. Residents are most satisfied with the hockey rink and curling rinks, meeting rooms, and fitness studios. Non-members are generally slightly less satisfied with Sackville Sports Stadium's recreation features than current members.

The lowest rate of satisfaction is regarding pool features. Only 67% of respondents are satisfied or very satisfied with the pool features. Common complaints about the pool and pool features are:

- There are no “fun” features (e.g., a big waterslide or a rock-climbing wall) for children to use, so families often choose to go to other facilities instead.
- The pools and decks are showing their age (broken tiles, looking dirty, paint needed).
- The starting blocks need to be replaced and should align with the lanes.
- The pool space needs better lighting.
- The diving board needs to be replaced.
- The pools are too small.
- The steps into the small pool are difficult to navigate for people with disabilities or small children.
- The pool deck is too small.
- The small pool is too cold.
- The accessibility lift is too heavy to move and difficult to use.
- The pool storage and Aquatics staff meeting spaces are too small and poorly ventilated.
- The competitive swimming club wants office and dryland training space near the pool.
- Many people explained that they travel to the East Hants Aquatics Centre or the Canada Games Centre as nicer options to swim with more features.



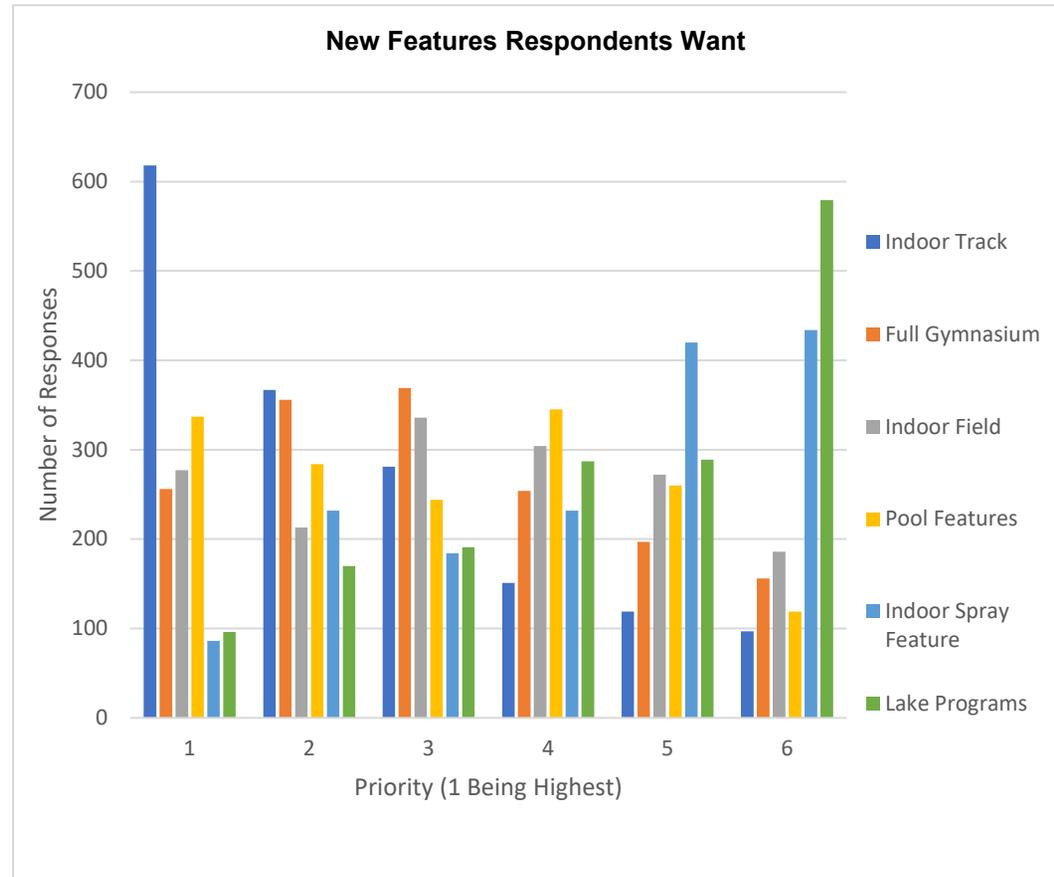
Potential Expansion Opportunities

The addition of an indoor walking and running track is by far the highest priority for the largest number of respondents. New pool features, such as a slide, is the second highest priority. A full-size gymnasium and an indoor field have similar levels of demand.

Lake-based programs and indoor spray features on the pool deck were the lowest priorities for most respondents.

Although respondents were not asked about the potential to create a larger pool, 41 residents expressed that the existing pools are too small for the growing community that the Sackville Sports Stadium serves. Many respondents explained that they take their kids to the East Hants Aquatics Centre or Canada Games Centre for better pool features.

Fifteen respondents expressed the need for another ice pad and eight respondents would like the curling club space expanded.

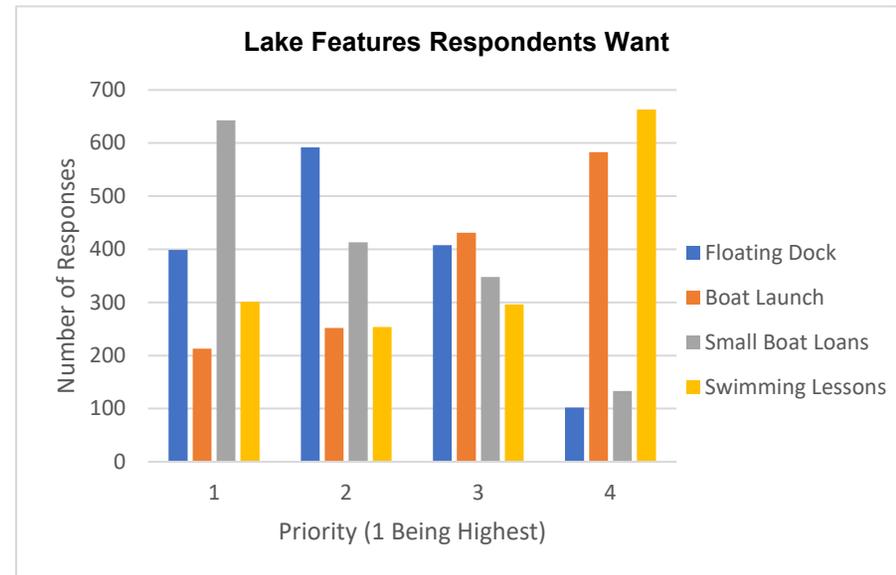


Outdoor Potential

The highest proportion of respondents selected small boat loans as their top priority for new features on First Lake. A floating dock for swimming and small boats was also a high priority. Swimming lessons and a boat launch were less popular priorities to respondents. Many respondents commented on the cleanliness of First Lake and the frequency with which the lake is closed due to bacteria levels, which is why they prefer the idea of small boat loans over swimming lessons.

A few people would like to see the lake used for ice skating in the winter months. Several respondents also noted that they do not want to see motorized boats in First Lake. Several respondents also suggested the grassy space could be used for fitness classes.

Many respondents think the lake is a missed opportunity and like the idea of better connecting the Stadium to the green space, trails, and lake. However, Staff advised that the back driveway is required for emergency vehicle access and that there is a Halifax Water easement between the lake and the Stadium that will need to be addressed should a connection between the Stadium and the lake be explored.



Support for Investment in Sackville Sports Stadium Revitalization

97% (1,645 respondents) are supportive of the municipality investing in the revitalization of the Sackville Sports Stadium. Respondents explained that the Sackville and surrounding communities are growing quickly, and the Stadium needs to keep up with other major facilities throughout HRM and East Hants. Respondents believe more residents would use the facility if it was updated. Residents and staff believe it is important to have modern recreation facilities to give residents of all ages the opportunity to stay healthy and social.

Next Steps

Staff will use these engagement results to guide which aspects of revitalization should be considered to determine cost and feasibility. Once research is completed, staff will prepare a report for Regional Council with recommendations of which revitalization aspects should be prioritized should it be decided to invest in revitalizing the Sackville Sports Stadium.

