

Reimagine Memorial as a 'fieldhouse'

(May 16, 2018 – Penticton) – Residents are invited to see an early concept of how Memorial Arena could be transformed into a fieldhouse, capable of supporting lacrosse, tennis, basketball, pickleball, roller derby and more. The concept was developed as part of the work on a [business case](#) to determine the feasibility of the [vision](#) for Penticton's arenas recommended by the Arena Task Force and endorsed by Council last July. The vision proposes a new twin surface multi-sport facility on the South Okanagan Events Centre campus, renewing Memorial Arena as a dry floor facility and eventually decommissioning McLaren Arena.

"If it doesn't make sense to have ice in Memorial Arena, this is a great option to give new life to the building, preserve its history, and extend its usefulness for another few decades," says Mayor Andrew Jakubeit. "Penticton is fortunate to have this unique and iconic building with a high ceiling that can accommodate a wide range of sports and uses. It is really an asset and could be a major attraction for the city year round."

The concept will be available for viewing on May 29 and 30 between 5 pm and 7:30 pm at Memorial Arena during the scheduled lacrosse practices and games. Representatives from several user groups as well as the public provided input into the concept at two focus groups held in January. Display materials will be posted to [shapeyourcitypenticton.ca](#) for comment following the events.

"We needed the concept to determine the costs and potential revenue from converting Memorial into a dry floor facility," says Bregje Kozak, Recreation and Facilities Director. "It's one more step in the City's process to determine the future of arenas in the city."

Business case progressing

Work is proceeding on the business case on other fronts as well:

- In February, the City learned its application for a grant was successful earning [\\$6 million](#) towards the project. Work to identify other funding sources such as local philanthropists, sponsorships, additional grants and other innovative funding arrangements is now getting underway.
- Earlier this month, the City [exposed the arches](#) at Memorial Arena to test the condition of the wood beams and determine what repairs may be required as well as the costs. Results from this study are now being compiled and will be communicated when they are available.
- This summer, the City is planning to update the parking study completed for the SOEC to gather current data about available parking and parking needs at the South Okanagan Event Centre complex.

- A full review of the costs to operate the facilities and potential revenues over the life of the project is also underway.

The plan is to complete the business case in the next few months with the goal of sharing the results early this fall.

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Memorial Arena is heavily used for lacrosse today and could become home to many more dry-floor sports if converted to a 'fieldhouse' as proposed in the vision for the future of Penticton's arenas. The City is currently working on a business case to determine the feasibility of the vision.