



"Parks and Recreation for All Seasons and All People"

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Devil Lake rec center plans revealed as public vote nears

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On January 31, 2018, Park District officials unveiled the concept and plan for the Lake Area Activity & Recreation Center, also known as the LAARC, to local service clubs and members of the public.

A community survey in 2014, along with two recent public input sessions were conducted to gather information and develop the program and scope for the project which has been under development for more than three years. The facility replacement needs of the District were also evaluated including the future decommissioning of an 80-year-old ice arena.

The Devils Lake City Commission selected a sales tax vote as the most affordable option for the community. On March 13, 2018, Devils Lake city residents will vote on a half-cent sales tax that will provide \$19.5 million for a new recreation center.

"This is a really great solution for an even bigger benefit to the region," said Terry Wallace, Superintendent of the Park District. A property tax increase would cost a \$200,000 property an additional \$400 a year. A sales tax increase, however, would only cost \$15/year for a person spending \$3,000/year on taxable goods. In addition to that, over 50% of our local sales come from outside sources."

The 92,000-square-foot recreation center will be located just South of the Burdick Arena, and feature a wide variety of wellness, health, and social services available to the community under one roof. The indoor aquatics center – what would be the community's only public indoor pool – includes a 0-depth entry area for children and the disabled, as well as a lap pool for adults. An adjacent party room will be available for birthdays and other events.

An indoor playground and watch area will provide childcare for parents while they use the facility, and a nearby 800-square-foot community room with views to the outside can be used for morning coffee for seniors or community events. Expanded concessions will be available for food and beverages.

On the activity side, two racquetball courts can serve several games including pickleball, wallyball, and golf simulator. A multi-purpose court can be used for basketball, volleyball, batting practice, and wrestling. The main competition gym will have two full-size courts to accommodate regional sports and

pick-up games. Two studio classrooms will be available for workouts, yoga, and cycling. An indoor walking track surrounds all the activity spaces and is designed for eight laps to a mile.

The facility will also take advantage of the existing ice rink slab and infrastructure that is already on the site. By enclosing this space, the center will be able to incorporate an indoor hockey rink for practices, tournaments, and figure skating. Both general lockers and hockey lockers will be provided.

Architecturally, the design reflects the importance of water, landscape, and recreation in Devils Lake.

“The lake landscape is something that is in constant change and has provided many great resources and activities to the community. Organizing the element of water in the facility (pool and ice) is both functional and a celebration of Devils Lake” said Michael McLean, Architect at JLG. “Practically speaking, these elements work well close together as both need a higher level of humidity and mechanical control. We also wanted to maximize the key views both inside and out of the building to take advantage of the landscape – the water, the plains, trees, and pedestrian path – and make sure everyone in the facility could see and enjoy it as much as possible.”

The rec center will cost \$22.8 million in total. A vote of “Yes” would approve the sales tax to fund \$19.5 million, with an additional \$3.3 million of funding generated from the Park District.

Additional information for the LAARC can be found at <http://www.dlparkboard.org/>

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