RUNESTONE COMMUNITY CENTER

NEEDS ASSESSMENT - PHASE I

JULY 2014 | JLG 14043

JLGice architects

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I

INTRODUCTION TO THE PROJECT

A. INTRODUCTION

In June 2014, JLG Architects was asked by the City of Alexandria to perform a needs assessment for the Runestone Community Center (RCC) and produce a report that outlines the findings. Through this process, information has been compiled from the primary user groups regarding current usage patterns, potential future growth, planned changes, and other subjective data that has provided an understanding to the current and expected needs for recreational ice usage and dryland events use at the Runestone Community Center. Based upon this data, a summary of these needs has been compiled.

It is important to note that due to the intended nature of the report – basic analysis – the final recommendations are based on the information gathered and an understanding of best practices for the operation of ice arenas / events centers. In order to clearly understand the scope and scale of a project that would addressed needs that are compiled in this report, a conceptual predesign study (Phase 2) is recommended.

B. CONTRIBUTING ORGANIZATIONS

Thank you to all the representatives of the various organizations that contributed to the Needs Assessment process through conversations, focus groups and the workshop. Following is a list of organizations that provided data to this study:

The City of Alexandria, planning and administrative staff
The Runestone Community Center, staff and the RCC Commission
Alexandria Area Hockey Association (AAHA)
Alexandria Figure Skating (AFSC)
Alexandria Blizzard
Vikingland Curling Club
Alexandria District 206 Hockey Program and Activities Department
Alexandria Soccer Association
Fatboys (Adult Hockey League)
Henry's Foods
Douglas County Fair Board

C. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY | INTRODUCTION TO THE PROJECT

Alexandria has one existing ice arena, the Runestone Community Center (RCC). It has two sheets of ice and has a total approximate square footage of 76,000. The main rink can seat 1,200 and is used primarily for games, while the West rink has no fixed seating and used mainly for practices and non-skating uses. The Main rink space is a beautiful example of vaulted glu-laminated wood roof beams and a wood interior ceiling finish. Concrete viewing platform and seating risers are on one side of the rink. This is a classic and familiar ice sport venue in the great State of Hockey and the design team wholly supports the idea of doing what is necessary to retain the main spectator spaces of this wonderful space. However, as this analysis will show, the demand for ice time and outdated support spaces of the facility are such that some kind of update is critical to inject new life into the RCC and provide ice sport and community spaces that Alexandria can use for years to come.

The Main and West rinks of the RCC are currently being scheduled at 114% and 89% of their practical capacity during the primary ice season. The actual demand for ice time is much higher; 154% of the main rink's practice capacity and 118% of the west rink's practice capacity. All organizations that utilize the RCC are experiencing a cap to any further growth due to the inability to schedule more ice time. Following is a summary of conclusions based on the observations of participant numbers:

- The Alexandria Area Hockey Association programs are maximized in their use of available ice time RIGHT NOW. They have dropped two tournaments from their 2013 schedule and limited the number of teams that could have been included in the remaining tournaments if more ice time had been available. More tournaments are expected to be dropped next year.
- Figure skating participants are maximized in their use of available ice time RIGHT NOW. An additional 8 to 10 hours of ice time per week would be rented if it were available to the AFSC.
- Adult hockey leagues are turning away potential participants which are the equivalent of at least one team due to lack of available ice time for league play RIGHT NOW.
- There is not enough locker room space for all those who use the ice.
- Participant attrition is affected by the lack of ice time and current conditions. Simply put, as they progress through the sport, youth hockey players are more likely to quit due to factors such as poor facilities, crowding, coaching quality, program success and so on.
- Younger hockey and figure skating participants are being forced to use ice times that are either too early or too late.
- Dry Floor Events continue to be accommodated and the regular event organizers are satisfied with the facility, but are concerned about loss of dry floor events time due to the growing needs for ice time.
- Economic Impact opportunities are being missed due to the ice being out during ideal off-season hockey tournament time (April-June and August-Sept).

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR NEEDS

Since a majority of the issues currently found with the Alexandria rink are access based (ice time), any solution proposed will need to include additional ice sheets. Based on current usage patterns, the following physical improvements / needs are recommended:

- Add two sheets of ice (NHL size) with seating capacity for events on both. This brings the total number of ice sheets to four.
- Convert the existing West Rink into a dedicated curling facility.
- Provide a connecting concourse to all rinks with separate entrances for daily facility use and events.
- Renovate all locker areas other than those in the connecting link between the current rinks.
- Provide expanded dry land training space
- Provide conference space for 12 people
- Provide dedicated skate sharpening space
- Provide additional dedicated storage space for all the major organizations that utilized the RCC
- Provide additional general storage for the RCC
- Provide office space for all the major organizations that utilize the RCC as well as continue to provide offices for RCC

administration.

- Regrade the site to address access to the RCC for events and to accommodate drainage needs at the south and west sides of the facility.
- Provide parking for up to 500 stalls for RCC use. (it is understood that large events could utilize overflow parking of the fairgrounds).
- Provide a “dry floor” ice deck covering for at least one of the rinks. This will require storage space for non-use times.
- Deferred Maintenance to be addressed:
    - Replace HVAC and dehumidification systems for the two existing rinks.
    - Replace the roofing and address drainage issues with connecting link addition between the rinks.
    - Replace the roofing on the main rink.
    - Rejuvenate openings in the exterior envelope, upgrade doors and hardware
    - Replace the refrigeration system on the west rink

These recommendations will provide for additional 25% to 35% free capacity in the ice schedule during the primary ice season (October through March) and allow for the hockey, figure skating and curling clubs (as well as other groups) to grow their organizations into that capacity. The two additional rinks will continue to allow the RCC to continue to offer a dry floor season to the community as part of its mission while still allowing ice to remain in the facility year around.

Available ice throughout the year is the primary factor to allow the RCC to increase its economic impact for the Alexandria community. For example, both the AAHA and the Vikingland Curling club have plans to host additional tournaments and bonspiels.

By including an ice deck for one of the rinks, dry land events can be accommodated during the ice season. While the ice deck does not solve the problem of ice scheduling capacity, it does extend the duration of dry floor season into the ice season and vice versa. Additional ice rinks address the ability of ice usage to grow, an ice deck only addresses flexibility between dry floor and ice usage.

II

BACKGROUND AND FACILITY CONDITION

A. DESCRIPTION OF ALEXANDRIA

Alexandria, Minnesota is a small sized city in the central part of the state with an area population of approximately 36,500. People come from surrounding smaller communities to use the only ice arena in the area, the Runestone Community Center. Alexandria is also in the exact middle between Fargo/Moorhead and the Twin Cities, which makes Alexandria an ideal location for youth hockey tournaments, youth camps, and bonspiels. But the current RCC facility cannot provide enough time or space to fit these types of events.

B. EXISTING FACILITIES

RUNESTONE COMMUNITY CENTER

Runestone has two sheets of ice located just west of downtown Alexandria. The RCC opened its doors in 1977 to the public. Runestone's main rink can seat up to 1,200 people, while the west rink is mainly for practicing, it cannot seat any spectators for events; it is standing room only. The arena is used for a large amount of different programs: hockey, curling, figure skating, junior hockey games and more. According to the youth hockey directors, this arena is capable of hosting some of the best tournaments in the area; it just needs more ice and more adequate space for teams.

PHYSICAL SPACE CONDITIONS

Of primary importance is the lack of ice sheets to meet the usage demands. In addition to the primary needs for more ice, the RCC has a limited number of lockers and their size being too small for tenant teams; for example the average locker room size for a junior hockey team is about 1,200 square feet, the Blizzard have a locker room that is about 850. As a comparison, the rental locker rooms at the Ralph Engelstad Olympic Arena in Grand Forks, ND are approximately 850 square feet in size! There is a lack of overall storage space. There is also a need for designated spaces for the curling club. There is virtually no room for youth hockey, soccer association, or figure skating offices. Also, there are no designated meeting or conference rooms. And finally, there are not enough showers and a lack of usable space for dryland training.

The condition of the RCC is dated to original construction of the facility in 1977 and the original construction of the West rink and the connecting link in the mid 1990's. There have been no substantial upgrades to the finishes of spaces since the original construction of each phase. Although the spaces are well maintained, the finishes are dated and upgrades especially to the public spaces are recommended so as to best represent RCC and the community of Alexandria to the public.

BUILDING ENVELOPE

The exterior envelope is in adequate condition for weather tightness with the exception of the roofing. The roofing of the connecting link between the rinks is in poor condition and needs replacement. Drainage and ponding are also concerns for the connecting link roof that need to be addressed. The roof over the main rink is beyond its warranty period and will need replacement in the near future. Although with continued maintenance, its life may be extended for a few more years.

MECHANICAL SYSTEMS

The existing HVAC equipment for these facilities lacks sufficient dehumidification capabilities. Fog forms above the ice when the building experiences ambient conditions with high relative humidity, such is common with early spring snowmelt, mid-summer mugginess, and late autumn rains. The formation of fog on the ice reduces the usable ice time available.

The current ventilation distribution and control methods are obsolete. A modernized ventilation system will ensure occupant comfort during peak occupancy rates, such as during ice tournaments and dry floor conventions. Updated demand controls will greatly decrease facility operational costs by modulating back the system during low occupancy conditions, such as during hockey practice. Proper ventilation in the maintenance areas also needs to be provided, specifically in the repair workroom where welding occasionally occurs.

The existing heating and air movement equipment is near the end of its service life. The original equipment manufacturer is defunct, so service support is not available. The current boilers are also subject to frequent flame blow-outs during the winter. An upgrade of equipment will provide reliable and efficient heat during the playing season with available manufacture service support.

The facilities currently have shortcomings with floor and roof drainage. The floor in the Zamboni maintenance room does not have consistent pitch towards the drain pit, resulting in significant water pooling. The flat roof receives runoff from the adjoining arch roofs and has insufficient primary and secondary drainage capacity. Standing water and leaks are an issue, especially during snowmelt.

SITE

The site is bounded by property that is leased to the Douglas County Fair Board. Any expansion will need to address an adjustment in land between the City and the Fair Board. At this time, both parties are amenable to such negotiations and see mutual benefit to the improvement of the RCC. A new entrance from County 82 on the west side of the RCC is a consideration that may work for both organizations. Site drainage will need to be addressed as currently the runoff from the midway area of the fairgrounds drains along the south edge of the RCC property and then drains to the north along the west side of the RCC property.

ICE SYSTEMS

The facility is served by two separate ice systems (refrigeration system and ice rink floor). The ice system for the West rink was installed about 14 years ago. It is a commercial grade R-22 system with a life expectancy of approximately 20 years. This system has served the facility well but is starting to show its age with some leaks in the PVC header pipes for the rink floor and one compressor was replaced.

The ice system for the East Rink (main rink) was replaced in 2009 with an industrial grade R-22 refrigeration system with a life expectancy of 25 plus years for the refrigeration system and 40 plus years for the concrete rink floor. The system was sized to serve a second ice sheet with the intent to serve the West rink when that refrigeration system failed or required replacement. Waste heat recovery systems use the heat off the system for needs in the facility maximum its energy efficiency.

C. SIMILAR MARKETS

MARKETS AND INFLUENCES

In order to understand the balance of participants, facilities, and population we can look at similar markets in other regional cities. Due to lack of information obtained from regional Minnesota communities, this report will reference the following communities for which the design team have data access: Bismarck, Grand Forks, Minot, and Fargo, ND. As with real estate appraisals, even larger or smaller markets can be used to temper the totals and give an overall view. Fortunately Bismarck, Minot, and Grand Forks are all close enough in size to give a good comparison of participant numbers. While Fargo is much larger, it is included for a comprehensive discussion.

These similar markets are not to be directly compared, however. The numbers alone do not tell the entire story, as other factors affect participation and to some extent, physical ice availability. For instance, the Red River Valley cities of Grand Forks and Fargo have had higher participation ratios and generally more of an interest in ice sports. This may be due to the presence of high-profile college teams such as in Grand Forks, and to some degree the presence and influence of competitive Minnesota programs across the Red River in Moorhead and East Grand Forks. We must stress that these are intangibles but may have influences on slightly higher participation numbers for youth. Both Bismarck and Minot have established junior hockey teams which enjoy moderate to high levels of attendance which in turn can affect interest in

programs. Successes of boys and girls high school programs also have a positive influence on participation. Alexandria depends on its ice facilities to act as the only kind of community center in town. All of these intangibles have an effect on how the community feels about the facilities they have. Successful and popular ice programs equate to more interest, which in turn drives higher participation, and is often furthered by an increased need for adequate ice facilities to support this growth. Numbers used in these comparisons are through the 2012-2013 season unless indicated otherwise.

MINOT, ND

This community has a population of approximately 42,000 people and currently 2 active ice sheets and a third under repair. Minot's youth programs are at 539 and projected to grow by more than 75 for the next season. Youth participation has fluctuated in a seemingly random range for the last thirty years, but has shown growth for the last ten years. The projected jump for 2013-2014 would mark the first time above 600 youth skaters since 1984. Figure skating has approximately 350 participants, boys and girls high school teams at 3 teams/55 players, adult leagues [1], and the Minot Minotauros - North American Hockey League junior team. Finally, the Minot State University mens and womens teams use the ice in Minot for practice and home games. With approximately 1,200 users not including the MSU teams split among (normally) 3 rinks, Minot's user ratio is one sheet for every 400 users. There has been planning in place for the addition of at least one more ice sheet at the MAYSA complex as well.

GRAND FORKS, ND

With 52,600 residents, Grand Forks has one of the higher ratios of rinks to population in North Dakota, but due to the use of the local college rinks this is not completely cut and dried in terms of available ice time. Including the privately-owned ice sheets of the Ralph Engelstad arena complex there are currently 6 ice sheets in the community. Blue Line Club organizers are fundraising for another complex with multiple ice sheets, which will focus on tournaments and alleviating need for ice time. Participants in youth hockey number approximately 670, with 105 in high school teams, over 400 figure skaters, and well over 400 adult players. All totaled Grand Forks' 6 ice sheets support about 1,00 users in the programs listed. Thus there is one ice sheet for every 266 users in public or high school programs and figure skating. Add the demands of the University of North Dakota's mens and womens programs, local private youth teams, and adult rentals that are not within an organized program and the availability of ice time is dropped significantly.

FARGO, ND

Fargo's 7 indoor ice sheets serve a growing population of 107,000 and are a mix of public and private rinks. Participation numbers approach 800 in the youth hockey programs each year. Figure skating is a bit harder to pin down, due to the fact that it is a combined program with Moorhead, MN and the skaters share ice in both communities. High school hockey is split between three high schools, each with a boys team, and the city has two girls teams at this time. Adult hockey has several organized teams that play in separate weekly leagues (Wednesdays and Sundays), as well as some beginner league members. Park programs and high school, combined with figure skating make up about 1,600 users. Therefore the large number of rinks at seven amounts to one rink per 228 users - the lowest ratio among the cities observed in North Dakota. However it is also the larger metro area that Fargo shares with Moorhead, MN and West Fargo, ND which help provide a lot more ice than the other communities as well.

BISMARCK, ND

Bismarck, North Dakota is a medium sized city in the central part of the state. As the state capital and Burleigh County seat, it is one of four historically largest population centers in ND. Population grew at a high rate into the early 1980s, around the time when Schaumberg Arena , a single ice sheet, was built. With the VFW All Seasons arena's first ice sheet in 1986, the generation of young ice sports participants then had two arenas to use. Demand for ice forced the addition of VFW Rink #2 in 1999, resulting in a total of three indoor ice rinks in Bismarck. The community's three ice sheets serve a total of 887 users, giving the community a ratio of 296 users per sheet. They are actively looking into expanding more ice for exactly the same reasons as Alexandria.
The Capital City Curling Club – formed in 1982 and added artificial ice in 1986 at VFW. Due to their dedicated facility, curling ice use does not directly conflict with other ice users. However, the four existing lanes do limit participants and the Club (CCCC) reports having to turn away potential participants. Within their rink are limited viewing areas and amenities, and the Club must rely on temporary use of other Bismarck area facilities to host bonspiels, mostly due to spectator seating needs. If their numbers grow, curling may need to consider adding lanes. Alexandria, with the 2 ice sheets at the Runestone Community Center, has approximately 697 ice users. Therefore the ratio is currently 348.5 users per ice sheet.

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1 Numbers for adult participation and teams were not available to JLG at the time of this report.

III

USAGE PATTERNS

A. CURRENT USERS

The RCC has dozens of program uses in a given year. These activities ensure that the facilities themselves, as well as staff, are heavily (if not over-)utilized. Some of the programs and uses have maximized in terms of numbers of participants due to lack of ice time for practical time slots. The current users of the rinks are as follows:

BASIC SKATING

Teaching classes for beginning skaters
Family/open rink sessions

HOCKEY

- Youth (thru Bantam), practices, games, tournaments – boys and girls.
  - Mites
  - Squirts
  - Peewees
  - Bantams
  - U8
  - U10
  - U12
  - U14
- High School – practice and games, boys and girls
  - Alex High School, both boys and girls, Varsity and JV
- Junior Hockey – practices and games
  - Blizzard
- Youth Hockey Tournaments
- Adult Leagues
  - 5 teams, could easily add one or two more

FIGURE SKATING – ALEXANDRIA FIGURE SKATING CLUB (AFSC)

- Private club, participants of all ages

CURLING

- Has no dedicated sheet.

DRY FLOOR

- Home & Garden Show
- Decoy Show
- Motorcycle Show
- Food Show
- Circus
- Craft Show
- Gun Show
- Garage Sales
- Fairs
- Weddings

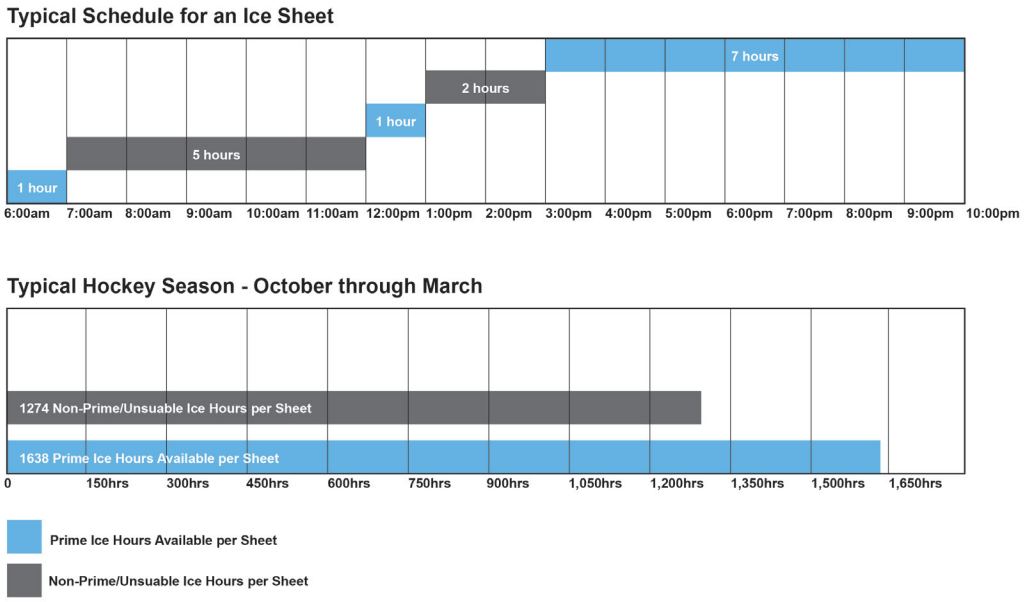
EDUCATION

- Alex High School
  - Hockey Program (boys and girls)
  - Phy Ed
  - Curling
- Discovery Middle School
  - Broomball

A. ICE TIME DEMAND

Additional tournaments are something that the Alexandria Area Hockey Association (AAHA) has identified as an opportunity. They would like to be able to host up to 3-4 more tournaments within the current system, which they cannot do. Therefore, additional rink space and scheduling would allow at least the 3-4 to be added to BHB negotiated ice fees for the season. Not taking into account the additional economic impact to the Alexandria hotels, restaurants, and other businesses (which could be as high as $ 500,000 per 16-team tournament), the added income from entry fees for each 16-team tournament alone could roughly double usual revenue per event.

A typical schedule for prime ice use on a given day is 6-8am, 12-1pm, and 3-10pm, for a total of 9 hours on average per day. The rest of the day, the ice time is considered non-prime due school hours. In practical terms, an average of 7 hours of prime ice scheduling time per day during the ice season is expected. This is due to impracticality of perfect scheduling, the need for ice resurfacing time, etc... does not allow for a consistent usage of all 9 prime ice hours in the day. Below is a list of how many scheduled approximate hours each club uses in a year:



Boys Youth Hockey
– 863.5 hours/year

Girls Youth Hockey
– 474.5 hours/year

Boys High School Hockey
– 156.25 hours/year

Girls High School Hockey
– 159.5 hours/year

Adult Competitive Hockey
– 51 hours/year

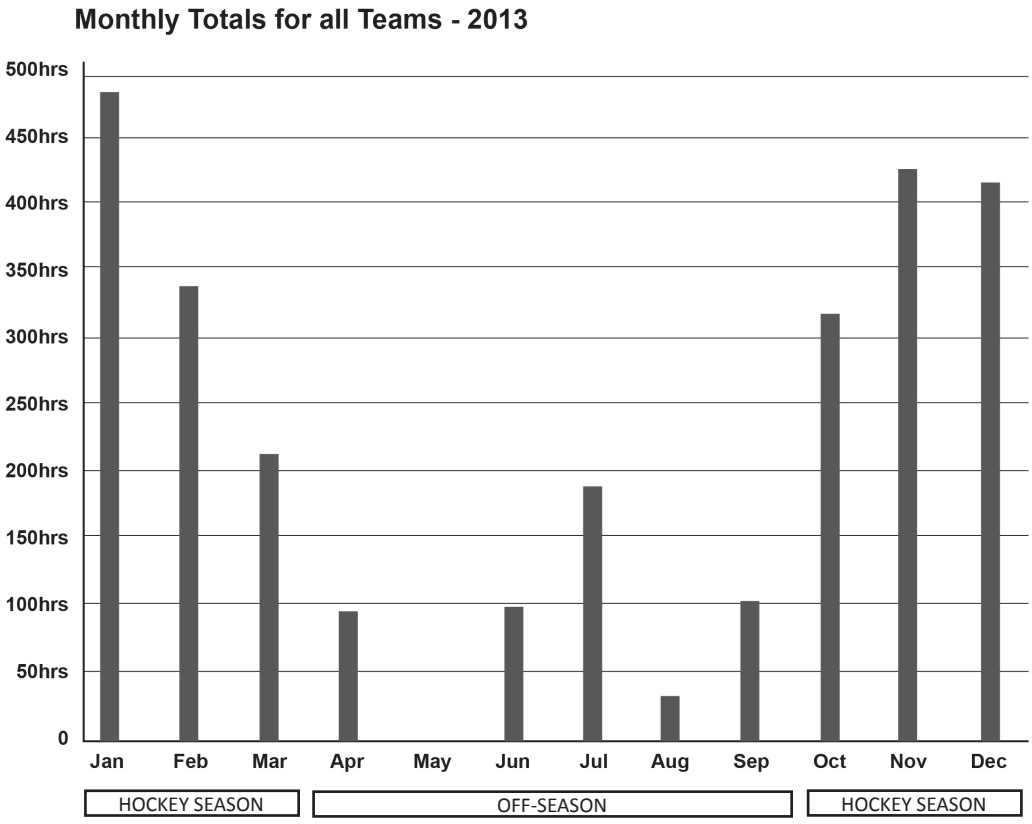
Figure Skating
– 366.25 hours/year

Curling – 139.75 hours/year

Blizzard – 318 hours/year

Adult non-competitive hockey
– 71.75 hours/year

Soccer – 117 hours/year



TOTAL ICE USAGE - 2013 (ACTUAL USAGE AND TOTAL DEMAND)

Organization	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total Hours/ Program
BOYS													
Mites	28.5	38.25	16.5	4.25		5	15	1.25	12	16	35.75	27.25	**199.75**
Squirts	50.25	28	3			6.25	11.25		6.5	24	42.75	60.25	**232.25**
PeeWees	35.5	42	10.5			5	12.5		6	23	33	38	**205.5**
Bantams	73.5	28	19.75			5	12.5		6	24.5	31	25.75	**226**
GIRLS													
U8	12	8	2			5	15	1.25	6	11.5	8	7.25	**76**
U10	27	16	2			5	11.25		7	20.25	26.75	34	**149.25**
U12	19.75	18.25	2			5	11.25		6	25.25	18.75	15.5	**143.75**
U14	19.75	17.5	2						7	23	15	21.25	**105.5**
Boys HS	33.5	24.5				7.5	10	1.25		7.5	42.25	29.75	**156.25**
Girls HS	27.5	11				8.25	12.5			22	40.75	37.5	**159.5**
Adult	12	6								12	9	12	**51**
AFSC	37.25	31	80.25	11		27.75	37		32	36	35.5	38.5	**366.25**
Curling	24	24	7.75			9				17.5	34	23.5	**139.75**
Blizzard	50.5	33	24			5	34	28	10	52.5	45	36	**318**
FatBoys	10.5	7.5	6	1.5		3.75	6.5		4.5	12	10.5	9	**71.75**
Soccer			42.5	74.5									**117**
Actual Total Hours/Month	483.5	333	218.25	91.25		97.5	118.75	31.75	103	327	428	415.5	**2717.5 hours**
													2205.25 Total Oct - March Hours
Hours Dropped due to Schedule Conflicts													
AAHA	99.5	99.5	74	34					26	115.5	99.5	99.5	
AFSC	30	30	30			30	30		30	30	30	30	
Curling	24	24	12			12				24	24	24	
2013 Total Ice Usage Demand	637	486.5	334.25	125.25		139.5	218.75	31.75	159	496.5	581.5	569	**3,779 hours**
													$3,104.75 Total Oct - March Ice Demand Hours

2013 LOST REVENUE

The difference between actual ice time and the reported ice demand for 2013 is 1,061.5 hours of ice time. If it were available to capture these lost rental hours, it would have generated an additional $159,225 at a rate of $150/hour.

If given space and scheduling, RCC and other facility user groups would consider adding some other programs or uses, including:

- Broomball
- More Open Skate
- AAA Hockey
- Additional youth hockey tournaments
- Extended hockey camps and other training for ice sports

Due to the varied scheduling of these types of events, putting an exact number to them in terms of time slots or schedule hours would be difficult at this time. Clearly the inclusion of some of these activities would drive up ice usage dramatically.

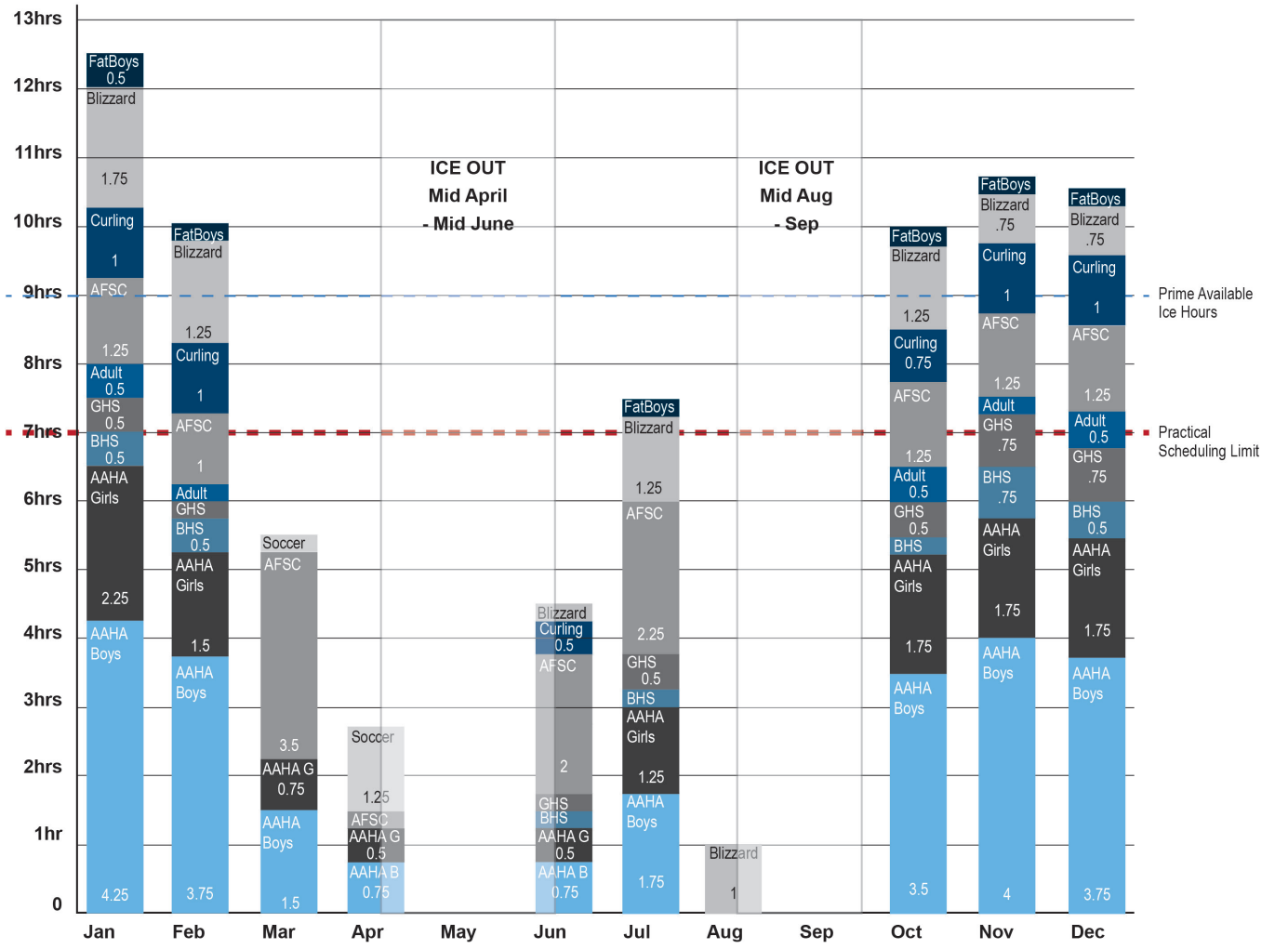
Physical issues Include:

- Have serious locker room conflicts – one permanent team (Blizzard) and high school teams, figure skating, curling, and youth hockey. Simply there is just not enough locker rooms nor enough room inside existing.
- Problems with meeting space, no designated room
- The West rink is undersized for seating for larger events, and could use regular and premium seating areas for patrons.
- There is not enough adequate space for coaches/ trainer offices, lockers and instructors off ice.
- Lacks dryland training space which is requested by all hockey programs, and could be used as ballet room for figure skaters
- Not enough locker rooms available to run an event.
- Need more storage space, currently using locker rooms as storage.

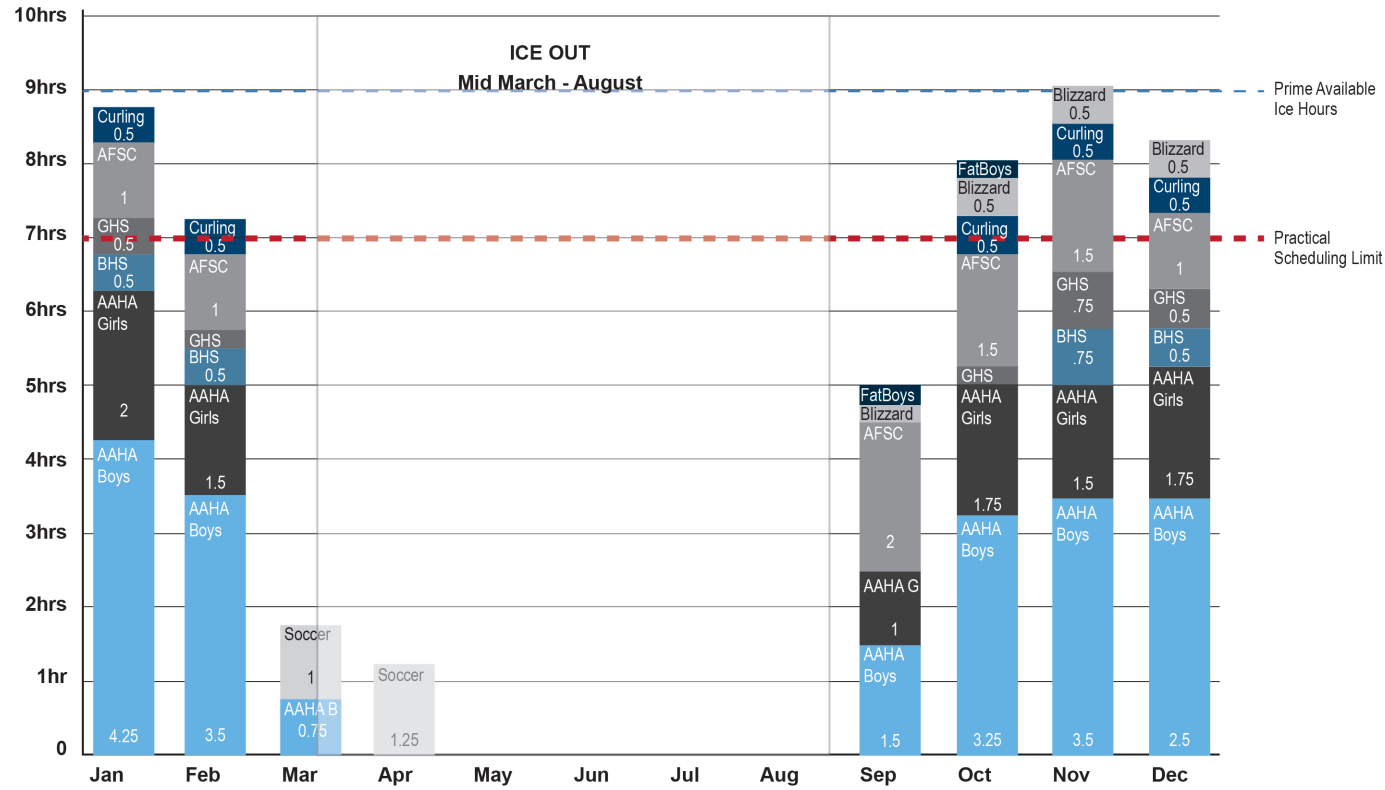
Scheduling issues and Programming issues include:

- The Figure skating club has been contracting similar time slots for the past few years. They are forced to take some undesirable times such as late nights.
- The AFSC cannot add more skaters due to limited ice time available.
- The AFSC cannot grow their programs and offer different/more types of variation due to limited ice time available.
- The adult hockey league uses what they can for leftover ice time within the rink schedule, as they get pretty low priority.
- Youth teams (those under Bantam level) have had to use early mornings as early as 6 a.m. as well as late evenings as late at 9p.m. Such time slots are detrimental to these age groups for several reasons: their reliance on others for transportation creates inconvenience for families; and the late evenings can conflict with school, sleep and other needs.
- Adult leagues cannot add any more skaters or teams due to lack of available ice time. They are currently turning away the equivalent of one full team from the main competitive league.
- They cannot schedule any more hockey tournaments than they do because of lack of ice time and the conflict a tournament causes with scheduling for other ice users. They would like to add 3-4 more tournaments a year.

2013 Daily Ice Usage Demands per Month - Main Rink



2013 Daily Ice Usage Demands per Month - West Rink



IV
PHYSICAL/ OPERATIONAL DEFICIENCIES

A. PHYSICAL/OPERATIONAL DEFICIENCIES

Facility management and users have provided some input in terms of comments about the existing ice facilities and needs/desires for new space. These are in no particular order or hierarchy.

- The figure skating club has little to no permanent changing rooms (in order to retain the junior hockey team tenant, the Figure skating club gave up their space).
- AFSC cannot add more skaters due to lack of ice time and facilities.
- AFSC must often use undesirable time slots due to ice scheduling conflicts.
- The concessions are not in a desirable spot for figure skating events.
- AFSC would like a ballet room (combined with dryland training for hockey)
- AFSC would possibly like a skate rental/ pro shop
- A designated skate sharpening room
- AFSC would like more storage space for everything
- All locker rooms are undersized, especially for the Blizzard
- Need more storage overall for RCC miscellaneous items
- Need a designated dryland training area/room
- There isn't enough space for the trainers
- The curlers would like designated sheets of ice, so they can come more than twice a week
- Adult leagues turn away at least the equivalent of one team each year due to lack of ice time
- Adult leagues must turn away incoming teams for tournaments due to lack of available ice time
- Need third or fourth sheet of ice
- Shooting tarp/ warm-up space
- More showers, possibly shared by groups (more dedicated shower/lockers)
- Meeting/ conference space
- Curlers would like a nice viewing area with kitchenette
- Need ice storage for ice shaver/cold storage for rocks
- Curlers need better lighting, possibly down each lane
- Curlers need ventilation and AC control, be able to control humidity for ice
- Curlers would like a camera system
- Curlers need sound deadening
- Curlers would like a hose and electricity nearby, reverse osmosis would be nice
- Blizzard need ability to run secure event to serve alcohol
- Better, bigger press box
- Better screens for viewing
- Blizzard would like a team lounge connected to locker room
- Blizzard need locker room to fit 30 guys comfortably, connected to coach/ trainer office
- A nice heated VIP section
- Blizzard would like a merchandizing space

In General, managers and users enjoy the facilities they have, but common themes throughout discussions with every group was lack of ice time, crowding (lockers), lack of meeting space, lack of dryland space and no ability to grow programs.

V
CONCLUSION AND OPTIONS

A. OVERVIEW

As stated at the beginning of the document this report is intended to be a summary of Needs. Further study (phase 2 – predesign) will be required to determine a concept and budget that addresses the needs listed in this report.

While there have been needs listed that are related to deferred maintenance on the existing facility, the largest need is for additional ice sheets to accommodate the current demand and expected growth in ice time demand. Other critical needs are related to the support spaces in relation to ice activities, such as locker improvements, dryland training facilities, improved spectator space and circulation, as well as administrative areas for organizations and storage. Refer to the executive summary and recommended space program for a complete list of needs.

Unlike some studies for ice feasibility, this effort was not charged with specifics such as rink locations, exact sizes, or detailed operations and amenities. The investigation has uncovered a fairly simple and straightforward need for additional ice in Alexandria. It became clear almost immediately that there is a need for more ice, simply by looking at current use compared to available ice time. Some user groups are being forced to use dramatically less ice time than their counterparts elsewhere in the region and state.

JUSTIFICATION FOR ADDITIONAL ICE

Two additional NHL ice sheets are recommended for the RCC. The rationale for this recommendation is based on the current daily usage ice demand that is above the practical capacity of the two existing ice sheets and also the anticipated growth to the clubs and organizations that would utilize the additional ice time provide by the additional ice sheets. With the additional ice usage and growth of these organizations, increased economic impact will be realized for the Alexandria area. Refer to Appendix A, for a memo organized by the Alexandria Area Hockey Association (AAHA), the Vikingland Curling Club, and the Alexandria Figure Skating Club (AFSC) that lists out the potential economic impact that could be achieved.

The growth of the AAHA has been about 15% in the last three years in spite of the lack of more ice time. If there was not a limit on the ice time available, the AAHA forecasts a future growth of up to 400 participants in the next 5 years. That is about double their current size. Two home tournaments have been dropped from the AAHA's regular season last year, and with no increase in ice availability, they are considering the need to drop their two remaining home tournaments next year. If additional ice were available, not only would the AAHA add back the 4 home tournaments, but they would consider more. These tournaments during the winter months bring crucial economic impact to the community during Alexandria's tourist off-season. The AAHA is planning to add teams to their program next year to meet the demand for hockey options for youth, but no feasible plan is yet in place to adequately handle the ice demand for this.

The Vikingland Curling Club is limited to one night a week currently. With a dedicated ice facility for curling, the lengthy preparation time for switching between curling and skating ice surfaces would be eliminated, thus increasing ice time available to the curling club and to skaters both. The Vikingland Curling Club foresees an exponential growth opportunity in their club by adding a youth program, additional adult teams and multiple bonspiels per year rather than their current single bonspiel.

The Alexandria Figure Skating club as well as the Fatboys (and other adult hockey leagues) would be able to dramatically increase their ice time with the addition of more ice sheets. The AFSC would immediate expect an increase of up to 10 hours per week in additional ice time rental if it were available. Adult Hockey would grow immediately by one or two teams (based on numbers of players turned away) if additional ice were available.

The High School Boys and Girls Hockey program is currently practicing with much less ice time than other Minnesota communities. Additional ice would allow the School District the option of achieving parity in available ice time with their competition.

B. OPTIONS FOR ICE

In order determine the proper amount of additional ice sheets that are needed, four sceneries where studied to see how much capacity for future growth of ice demand is generated by each. Each option outlines the percentage of the 2013 daily ice usage demand that would be handled on each ice sheet. The percent of unused practical capacity would relate to the percentage of growth of all the organizations and clubs that the RCC could readily accommodate under each option. The percentage of practical capacity is measured for the months of October through February, the peak season for ice usage. These months represent the choke point in the year for ice demand.

For reference, the 2013 actual ice usage took 114% of the main rinks' practical ice capacity and 89% of the west rinks' practical ice capacity. The total 2013 ice usage demand took 154% of the main rink's capacity and 118% of that of the west rink.

OPTION 1 – ADD 3RD RINK (ALL RINKS SHARED)

This option would include just adding one additional NHL rink. All groups would equally share ice time on all rinks, including curling. By sharing all three rinks, there is more available time to all organizations, the practical problem of switching between curling and skating surfaces remains. This would greatly limit the growth of curling.

Main Rink	90% Practical Capacity
West Rink	90% Practical Capacity
3rd Rink	90% Practical Capacity

OPTION 2 – ADD 3RD RINK (WEST DEDICATED TO CURLING)

This option would see the west existing rink dedicated to Curling. This would allow curling to grow unrestricted. But the balance of the current ice demand is still only spread out over two rinks. This equates to very little increase in capacity for the growth of the skating programs. But with the addition of an ice deck, the ice time could still be increased by season duration if not by peak capacity. This would still allow the opportunity of off-season tournaments which would increase economic impact.

Main Rink	151% Practical Capacity
West Rink	Curling Use
3rd Rink	113% Practical Capacity

OPTION 3 – 2 RINKS ADDED (ALL RINKS SHARED)

This option creates the most available room for growth of the skating programs by adding a 3rd and 4th ice sheets. But curling is still limited by having to share ice with skaters as in Option 1. Skating programs and economic impact from tournaments both during the winter season and off season may be realized.

Main Rink	68% Practical Capacity
West Rink	68% Practical Capacity
3rd Rink	68% Practical Capacity
4th Rink	68% Practical Capacity

OPTION 4 – 2 RINKS ADDED (WEST DEDICATED TO CURLING)

This option best meets the needs of the users at the RCC. By dedicating the west rink to curling as in Option 2, the curling club can grow. With 2 additional rinks added to the RCC, hockey and other skating programs are given capacity to grow their size and also provide Alexandria with the additional economic impact benefits of off season and winter season tournaments, as in Option 3.

Main Rink	89% Practical Capacity
West Rink	Curling Use
3rd Rink	89% Practical Capacity
4th Rink	89% Practical Capacity

The addition of two NHL ice sheets is recommended along with dedicating the existing west rink to curling (option 4). In option 4, after the current (2013) ice time demand is met, the leftover capacity is still less than the expected combined growth of the organizations and clubs that use the RCC in the next few years. This is a strong indication that the RCC would not be under-utilized if 2 new rinks were added, but rather the usage would quickly grow to the new ice capacity that the RCC would offer. Since offering availability in the RCC schedule for dry floor events is still part of the intended facility mission, an ice deck is also recommended to balance the dry floor opportunists with the expected growth in ice usage.

C. PROGRAM OF SPACE NEEDS

In addition to the recommendation of two new ice sheets, the functions and spaces listed in the following program of space are intended address the needs pointed out in the Physical / Operational Deficiencies section as well as the deferred maintenance and site concerns listed in the Facility Condition Section. With a combination of remodelled square footage and new square footage, the primary needs of the RCC are addressed. This information is required as the basis of the next phase, predesign. Phase 2 – predesign will generate a concept and a budget that encompasses the needs documented in this Needs Assessment report.

Unrenovated Existing Spaces

Space Name	Current Design	Notes
Storage	2,634 s.f.	
West Rink	14,093 s.f.	Total size minus curling lounge renovation
RCC	28606 s.f.	
Ref. Room	224 s.f.	
Resurfacer Room	1643 s.f.	
Team Room	1,477 s.f.	Four team rooms
Public Restrooms	415 s.f.	Two public restrooms
SubTotal	49,092 s.f.	
TOTAL	**49,092 s.f.**	

Renovated Existing Spaces

Space Name	Current Design	Notes
Locker Room	5,155 s.f.	
Restroom	1,090 s.f.	
Concessions	506 s.f.	
Entry/Lobby	2,613 s.f.	
Admin	944 s.f.	Five admin rooms
Curling Lounge	6,600 s.f.	
Dryland Gym	1,800 s.f.	
Viewing/Circulation	2,157 s.f.	
3rd level	1,800 s.f.	Similar to dryland gym size
Mezzanine	1,598 s.f.	
SubTotal	24,263 s.f.	
TOTAL	**24,263 s.f.**	

New Spaces

Space Name	Current Design	Notes
Rink 1	24,105	
Rink 2	22,033	
Lockers	2,757	Four lockers
Mechanical	800	
Concourse	6,400	320' x 20'
Skate sharpening	200	320' x 20'
Entry	2,000	
Concessions	1,500	
Storage	2,000	
SubTotal	61,795 s.f.	
Circulation	15,449	25% of new s.f.
TOTAL	**77,244 s.f.**	

Proposed New Overall Building Square Footage **150,599 s.f.**

Inc. Magazine
Hire Power Award

Young Professionals
Grow Grand Award

Minneapolis/St. Paul Business
Journal's Top 25 Firms

ZweigWhite Top 100
National Hot Firms

ZweigWhite & *Architecture Week*
Magazine's America's Top 20
Architecture Firms to Work For

National American Institute of
Architects Intern Development
Program Outstanding Firm Award

JLG has been honored with ninety design awards in the firm's 25-year history:

AIA North Dakota Best of Show, Honor, Juror's Choice, Merit, and Unbuilt Awards
North Dakota Ready-Mix Excellence in Concrete Awards
DECI Development of the Year Awards
Education Design Honorable Mentions
St. Paul Heritage Preservation Awards
Minnesota Preservation Awards
Prime Site Awards of Excellence
North Dakota Barrier-Free Design Awards
North Dakota Concrete Products Awards
MC Landscape Design Awards
Mid-America EDC Redevelopment Awards
North Dakota Housing Finance Production Awards
Grand Forks Chamber City Beautification Awards
Grand Forks Chamber Special Achievement Awards
National School Boards Association Awards
Committee on Urban Design and Environment Awards