
A long wait for rec space on Coquitlam's Burke Mountain

Complex could take until 2029 to be completed

[Gary McKenna](#) / Tri-City News

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A major recreation facility that is expected to include a pool, ice rinks and gym space is coming to northeast Coquitlam. But when is the big question.

Photograph By TRI-CITY NEWS FILE PHOTO

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According to the city's draft implementation strategy for the parks, recreation and culture master plan, planning for the new rec complex would begin after 2020, with construction expected to take place between 2025 and 2029.

But several councillors said they would like to see that timeline sped up, noting there is already demand from residents of the rapidly growing neighbourhoods of Burke Mountain for a new facility.

Coun. Craig Hodge told council-in-committee Monday afternoon that he would like to see the project built in phases, perhaps starting with an ice rink before adding a pool and other amenities as they are needed.

"We are building a city of 30,000 people up there," said Hodge, a Burke resident. "That is a city the size of Pitt Meadows [that won't have a recreation facility]."

Coun. Brent Asmundson, also a Burke resident, said he would like to see a new recreation complex in the area sooner but cautioned that the city needs a better understanding of recreation demands before altering the project's timeline. He also noted that building the facility in stages may end up costing more money.

Still, he noted that he was open to changes in the draft document and said it is important that people taking part in the public feedback process understand a certain amount of flexibility is required with long-term planning.

"This is a framework," he said. "It is not set in stone... There are moving parts within this and we will adjust things."

Raul Allueva, the city's general manager of parks, recreation and culture, said staff weighed a number of factors when outlining the timeline for the parks implementation strategy. More immediate work on other projects, including the YMCA community centre in Burquitlam and a new Place Maillardville was a factor, he added, noting that the timing of Port Coquitlam's new recreation facility was also considered. There is also still capacity in the city's recreation system, Allueva noted.

“A key part of optimizing the city’s investments is building something at the right time,” he said. “That means not too early and not too late.”

THE PLAN

The draft implementation strategy presented to council during Monday’s meeting shows how staff plan to execute the city’s parks master plan, providing a detailed list of specific activities over the next five years along with an overview of major projects expected between 2021 and 2029.

The draft plan outlines close to \$460 million in spending over the next 30 years, including \$227.9 million on recreation, \$181.6 million on parks and \$48.3 million on arts and culture.

There are several more immediate projects in the pipeline included in the draft document.

In the next five years, eight sports fields are planned to be added or redeveloped while off-road cycling assets at Leigh Park and in the Riverview forest are expected to be enhanced in the next year. Upgrades to the Coquitlam Crunch are expected in 2018 while completion of a new Place Maillardville and the expansion of the city archives is scheduled to be completed in 2019.

Also in the next five years, staff hope to develop and implement a new cemetery plan, an arena strategy and add gym space.

FEEDBACK

City staff are seeking feedback on the draft implementation strategy and are expected to meet with stakeholders and community groups for input. Residents can weigh-in on the plan by going to www.coquitlam.ca/prcmasterplan and filling out a survey, which will be available after May 24.

gmckenna@tricitynews.com

[@gmckennaTC](https://twitter.com/gmckennaTC)

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