

FARMINGTON ARENA TASK FORCE

February 1, 2010

Mayor
City Council Members
Superintendent of Farmington Public Schools
School Board Members
Officers-Farmington Youth Hockey Association

You have directed us to provide a range of options for the future of the Schmitz-Maki Arena and/or arenas in the City of Farmington. It is believed that a local arena(s) enhances the quality of life for local residents. It can provide curricular as well as extracurricular opportunities for all residents.

You have acknowledged that the Schmitz-Maki Arena is now in need of major repairs to keep it operational. We are acutely aware that major capital expenditures are a part of all recommendations with the exception of not taking any action. Both the City and the School District have funding options through Lease Revenue Bonds, Lease Levy, as well as others. The Farmington Youth Hockey Association is limited. They currently are sponsored by one Charitable Gaming site but have seen revenue fall from \$70,000 to \$12,000 with the current economic conditions.

Should you decide to further explore one or several of these arena options, it is our recommendation that the finance directors of these bodies meet and further explore the best option to finance the project.

The City of Farmington currently serves approximately 20,000 residents. The School District serves a slightly large area. The Farmington Youth Hockey Association is currently serving 350 families with 430 active participants. The High School provides both varsity and junior varsity programs for boys and girls. The Hockey Association currently rents approximately 800 hours of ice time between October and March while renting another 500 hours of ice time in Faribault, Hastings, South St. Paul and other arenas where ice may be available. The high school hockey teams use the Schmitz-Maki Arena approximately 300 hours annually.

It is with these factors in mind that we explored a multitude of options that are presented in attachments to this summary.

Our committee used a democratic process to prioritize these options and agree that the four (4) listed below would best serve the end users of the facility. The attachments will list the positive and negative aspects of each recommendation.

First recommendation:

Use the Schmitz-Maki Arena for other community activities when two (2) sheets of ice are completed at a new site.

Second recommendation:

Use the Schmitz-Maki Arena for other community activities when one (1) arena is completed on a new site.

Third recommendation:

Repair the Schmitz-Maki Arena and add a second sheet of ice elsewhere.

Fourth recommendation:

Do nothing to the Schmitz-Maki Arena but purchase and store the ice plant required to replace the existing equipment at Schmitz-Maki or to use it for a new arena on another site.

It is hard to assess the economic impact of a local arena (s.) Most arenas operate close to a 'break even' point financially. The 'gain' for the community is in exposure, visitors leaving dollars in the community and raising the 'curb appeal' for the City to potential residents.

We have appreciated the opportunity to assess the options and provide you with the information uncovered. From our prospective, it has been a worthwhile journey.

Respectfully yours,

Craig Kronholm
Facilitator for the Arena Task Force Committee

ATTACHMENT NUMBER 1

Arena Task Force Members

NAME	AFFILIATION
Peter Herlofsky	City Staff
Mike Haley	City Park and Recreation Advisory Commission
Randy Distad	City Staff
Dr. Brad Meeks	School District Superintendent
Jeff Priess	School District Staff
Jon Summer	School District Athletic Director
Nick Gerold	Farmington Youth Hockey Association
Don Johnson	Farmington Youth Hockey Association
Cal Huntley	Farmington Youth Hockey Association
Robin Hanson	Citizen at large
Mike Pierce	Citizen at large
Craig Kronholm	Facilitator

Attachment Number 2

The Options listed in the Executive Summary in order of preference are No. 6, No. 7, and a tie between No. 5 and No.9.

The Task Force explored the following options:

1. Do Nothing

The membership felt that indoor ice enhanced the visibility of Farmington and was needed in the community.

Positives:

None

Negatives:

-With the continued deterioration of the ice making equipment, a breakdown causing loss of ice could doom the skating programs and the potential to add more programming. Youth hockey felt that if this were to happen that their program would not exist because they would not be able to find enough ice time elsewhere to fit their program's needs.

2. Use a temporary/portable ice making system that could be placed directly over the existing concrete floor at Schmitz-Maki.

2a. An option to this would be to include new dasher boards.

2b. An option to this would be to remove the entire slab, raise the sand base and install the piping mats on the sand.

2c. Install the compressors in the existing mechanical room.

Positives:

-This option would allow at least one ice season to occur, which would buy time to construct a new facility.
-With the ice making compressors set up outside, this unit could be moved to another unit in the future.

Negatives:

-Lack of parking is an issue.
-Flood plain issues.
-ADA issues. A discussion with the Building Department determined that by only replacing the ice making equipment along with the rink concrete slab would not trigger any of the requirements for upgrading the ADA requirements.
-Option 2c removes the mobility of the new equipment.

3. Make improvements to Schmitz-Maki Arena.

Would provide a solution to the current situation but doesn't address the desire to have two sheets of ice in Farmington, which would allow youth hockey not to have to travel to arenas in other communities for practice times. It would involve removing the entire rink surface (concrete and piping) and replacing the piping with a roll out mat that serves as the piping.

Positives:

-Allows the current programs to remain intact with the limitation listed above.
-Negates the cost of a complete new structure.

Negatives:

-See the negatives listed in No. 2 above. Flood plain and ADA issues could potentially extend the timeline to make changes significantly.
-The cost to update likely would be a significant portion of what a new arena would cost and you would still have a dated facility.

4. Repair Schmitz-Maki Arena and add a second sheet of ice on the Schmitz-Maki Arena site.

This option also would not meet the parking needs as required by City Code although a variance could be requested in order to address the parking requirements.

Positives:

-It provides the two sheets of ice that meet the current and future demands of skating programs.

Negatives:

-All of the negatives listed in Nos. 2 and 3 above.
-This option has some unknowns about what kinds of regulatory requirements would need to be met from a flood plain standpoint and the impact it would have on the Vermillion River, which has been designated as a trout stream by the DNR. The cost of this option would be affected by having to fill in the flood plain.

5. Repair Schmitz-Maki Arena and construct a second sheet of ice somewhere else.

Positives:

-It provides the two sheets of ice that meet the current and future demands of the skating programs.
- It would allow Schmitz-Maki to have a shorter season from November to February.
- It provides a facility for late fall and early spring that could be rented by youth and adult sports groups to use for training purposes. These sports could include lacrosse, soccer, batting cages for baseball and softball, tennis, etc.

Negatives:

-Two sites demands two operating budgets along with two ice resurfacing machines (Zambonis.)
-Two sites still makes hockey tournaments unlikely due to the transportation between sheets.
-While this is neither a negative or a positive, this would require the purchase of a turf product that could be rolled out on top of the concrete indoor tennis, soccer, etc. to occur.

6. Use Schmitz-Maki Arena for other purposes and construct two sheets of ice somewhere else.

This option addresses the long term solution to having ice in Farmington. This would require that Option #2 would have to be considered in order to make sure that ice is provided until the new two sheet facility could be constructed and opened for use. The advantage of the high school site over the Fairgrounds site was that it could be used in the school curriculum for physical education classes.

7. Use Schmitz-Maki Arena for other purposes and construct one sheet of ice somewhere else.

This option allows one new sheet with the potential of another sheet to be added to the site.

8. Replace the area of the Schmitz-Maki Arena that is known to leak.

Positives:

- Allows the existing arena to operate with the least amount of dollars expended.

Negatives:

-The facility still has rink piping that will fail in the near future leading to incorporate one of the other options.

9. Do nothing to the Schmitz-Maki but purchase all of the mechanical equipment required to keep Schmitz-Maki Arena operational should a total breakdown occur. This provides the equipment that can be moved to a new arena.

ASSOCIATED COSTS

Option	Description
Option #2	Replace the existing slab, raise the sand base and place ice making equipment on the exterior of the building \$600,000 Place mat in a new 5" concrete slab (removes the mobility of the system).....+ \$83,000 Add a new dasher system Steel frame+ \$180,000 Aluminum and fiberglass+ \$219,000
Option #2c	Same as above, but install the compressors inside the current mechanical room \$580,000
Option #8	Replace the area of Schmitz-Maki that is known to leak..... \$50,000

There are several arena facilities currently being constructed. Today's pricing for a double sheet arena without any unusual amenities is approximately \$135 dollars per square foot. This amounts to \$8,500,000 - \$9,000,000

A single sheet arena is currently priced at approximately \$150 dollars per square foot. This amounts to \$6,000,000 - \$6,500,000.

SITE

Possible sites discussed for a new sheet (s) sheet of ice were the Dakota County Fairgrounds and the new Farmington High School site. There seemed to be a consensus that the high school site would be better because it would allow the physical education classes to use the arena if it were constructed next to the high school. Parking is already provided so the amount of land required would not be as great.

The City also has 42 acres of land located north of 195th Street and Diamond Path intersection. This was received from Fairhill Development as part of the park dedication process.

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

No. 1	Do nothing	No Cost
No. 2	Install a temporary system at Schmitz-Maki	TBD
No. 2a	Add new dashers (The boards/glass system)	\$180,000-\$219,000
No. 2b	Remove existing slab and install new piping and concrete	\$683,000
No.2c	No. 2b but install the compressors inside S-M.	\$663,000
No. 3	Remove the existing slab, install mats, mount compressor outside	\$600,000
No. 4	Repair S-M and build a new arena on-site	Unknown
	ADA and flood plain requirements are as of yet unknown	
No. 5	Repair S-M and construction a new arena off-site	Approx. \$7.5 million
No. 6	Construct a double sheet arena at a new site	Approx. \$9 million
No. 7	Construct a single sheet arena at a new site	Approx. \$6 million
No. 8	Repair the existing leaks at S-M	\$50,000 and up
	The leaks are believed to be in one area but the piping is old and subject to new leaks	
No. 9	Purchase and store a complete ice making system	\$352,000