



Project Overview and Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) North Platte Recreation Project

Project Overview

The proposed recreation project includes a renovated and expanded Rec Center, enhancements and expansion of Cody Pool, and the Skate Park's relocation.

While the final concepts are still being developed, the proposed facility will have several key components, including an indoor walking/running track, a competition swimming pool, a leisure pool with zero entry and play features, multiple courts for basketball, volleyball, pickleball and tennis, a community meeting room/fitness room, party room with pool access, expanded cardio and weight rooms and the opportunity for 24-hour access to limited areas. The expanded size, additional courts and competition swimming pool will meet the needs of the residents of North Platte, as well as allow tournaments to be hosted in the Rec Center.

The Wellness Alliance considered multiple options, including a stand-alone Rec Center, a stand-alone sports complex and a combination facility. The Alliance decided to move forward with a combination facility that includes fitness and recreation space along with the extra capacity needed to host tournaments. Making improvements to Cody Pool at its current location is also a part of the project, along with relocating the Skate Park to accommodate the Rec Center's expansion.

Management

The Wellness Alliance recommends that the City of North Platte enter into an operating agreement with the Scottsbluff YMCA.

The YMCA of Scottsbluff has expressed interest and willingness; however, a formal agreement has not been finalized.

The YMCA brings a wealth of knowledge and expertise surrounding youth programming, fitness and recreation. They will customize an operations arrangement specific to our community needs, including membership fees and programming.

Cost and Funding

The total cost of the project, including the Recreation Center renovation and expansion, Skate Park relocation and enhancement and Cody Pool revitalization, is approximately \$52 million, plus an additional \$10 million fundraising goal to create a maintenance reserve and affordability fund.

The Alliance plans to bring forward to the City Council a proposal for a half-cent sales tax ballot initiative to fund the construction and renovation of the Rec Center, enhancements to Cody Pool/ water park and relocation support for the Skate Park. The Recreation Alliance will also fundraise and apply for grant funds to supplement the sales tax request.

Timeline

The sales tax would go into effect and begin collections in mid-2023 and would sunset once the construction bond is paid off.

Final concept plans and engineering would begin in late 2022 with the ground breaking in fall 2023.





FAQs

Recreation Center

Q. Are alternative locations being considered for the Rec Center?

A. No. After much discussion and research, the current site was selected due to youth access, safety and the best use of resources by expanding the existing building.

Q. Who are the primary users of the facility?

A. The primary users are residents of North Platte. It may also be used by travelers who purchase a day pass, sports tournament participants and those living in North Platte temporarily.

Q. Does the design take into account new trends in wellness and fitness?

A. Yes. We have engaged with multiple recreation facility professionals on the concepts, features and design. The inclusion of pickleball and tennis courts and an outdoor classroom make the facility relevant to today's expectations.

Q. Will there be 24-hour access?

A. The current design concept includes 24-hour access to portions of the fitness equipment.

Q. Will there be indoor practice fields?

A. The final concept is still being developed. However, a field turf area is included in the initial design.

Q. Have security features and measures been considered?

Yes, control points are planned, and security measures can be integrated to fine tune the security and set the tone for the culture of the facility.

Q. Will there be concessions and vending machines?

A. Yes, the concept includes concessions and vending options, much as we have in place today.

Q. Will the current parking lot be expanded?

A. Yes, the concept adds 35% more parking spaces, and further work is being done to advise on additional spaces.

Q. Will the baseball fields be relocated?

A. One T-ball field will be relocated and remain in Centennial Park.

Q. Do we know that a renovation and expansion of the existing building is less expensive than building new?

A. Yes, a new location requires land purchase, and infrastructure development/expansion adds unnecessary costs to the project. The existing building was deemed structurally sound by (BRS) an engineering firm, and offered the best use of resources.





Q. Will the proposed expanded facility accommodate for future growth of the community? Is there an opportunity to grow even more in the future if the need arises?

The current concept does take into account future growth of the community using projections from the Sports Facilities Advisory feasibility study. However, the current design concept does include the ability to expand if future growth surpasses projections.

Q. Will local contractors be utilized?

A. The project will be bid out much like other City of North Platte projects.

Q. How long will the renovations take?

A. The estimated timeframe for complete construction is 24 months.

Q. Will the Rec Center remain open during the remodel?

A. Yes. Portions of the facility will close due to safety and OSHA regulations. However, as much of the facility that can safely remain open will remain open during construction.

Cody Pool

Q. Why are Cody Pool improvements a part of this project?

A. Cody Pool was built over 70 years ago, with the last significant renovations in the 1980s. Because it is owned and operated by the City Recreation Department, it has been included in the overall proposal.

Q. Can the outdoor pool be brought over to the Rec Center area?

A. It is important to our community to retain Cody Pool in its current location. Cody Park is a destination in our community and has the space for an enhanced swimming pool/water park.

Q. What improvements are planned for Cody Pool?

A. The pool will remain competition size for lap swimming. Additional improvements include a lazy river, splash pad, zero-depth entry, water play features for small children and water slides for multiple age groups.

YMCA

Q. What is the proposed fee structure for membership?

A. Membership structure can range from monthly to annual with various categories, such as single, family, and senior. The affordable pricing will be based on the North Platte market, and a scholarship program will be in place. The YMCA philosophy is Y for all.

Q. Will the hours of operation change?

A. The hours will be determined based on member needs, program timing and staff availability.

Q. Will the YMCA also operate Cody Pool?

A. The operating agreement has not been finalized; however, the discussion regarding the operations of Cody Pool is underway.

Q. Will the Rec Center employees be employed by the Scottsbluff YMCA?

Many of the current Rec Center employees are likely to choose positions with the YMCA. However, some may choose other positions within the City of North Platte operations.

Q. Will there be a local Rec Center/YMCA board?

The governance of a North Platte branch will have two components. The first component being that the branch will fall under the YMCA by-laws and articles incorporation. There will be two to three North Platte representatives added to the Scottsbluff YMCA Board of Directors.

The second component would consist of a North Platte based advisory board that ideally would include a Scottsbluff YMCA board member, Scottsbluff YMCA executive staff, and an additional two to three North Platte representatives. This board would serve as the guiding force of North Platte operations.

Q. Does the YMCA offer afterschool programs, kids' activities and summertime programs for kids?

A. Yes, the YMCA offers many programs that strengthen communities through youth development and programming. Programs for North Platte will be determined based on our community needs, capacity and staffing.

Q. Will the City of North Platte continue to pay a subsidy to the Rec Center?

A. Yes. The City of North Platte will maintain ownership of the rec center building and support the operation with maintenance staff and other basic maintenance services.

Q. Will the City maintain any control with regards to operations?

A. The City will negotiate an operating agreement with the Scottsbluff YMCA that is best for the people of North Platte. City leadership intend to keep our residents' best interest at the forefront by holding at least two seats on the Scottsbluff YMCA board. In addition, the agreement will include a 180 day contract 'out clause' in the event the YMCA no longer meets the best interests of the residents.

Cost & Funding

Q. Does the additional sales tax require a public vote?

A. Yes, the City Council must vote by super-majority in favor of allowing the sales tax initiative on the ballot. If the Council approves the ballot initiative, it will be on the November 2022 General Election ballot for the public to decide.

Q. Why an additional sales tax, and what does that mean for me?

A. A sales tax is the fairest form of taxation. It allows us to capture dollars from visitors, those passing through, and those commuting daily to our community – those using our services and not otherwise paying for them. This means that for every taxable purchase made in North Platte, one-half cent will be explicitly collected to pay for the recreation project. For example, for every \$100 spent, .50 cents will go towards this project. Many communities in Nebraska and neighboring states already have this

type of sales tax that we are paying when we make purchases in those communities. Outside residents pay 25% of the sales tax generated in the City of North Platte, so visitors would be contributing to this project and pay a quarter of the total cost.

Q. How much would a half-cent sales tax generate?

A. Based on 2021 revenues, a half-cent sales tax would generate approximately \$3.2 million annually and is trending upwards. Since 2006, North Platte's city sales tax revenues have increased an average of 2.98% annually.

Q. Would the additional sales tax apply only to North Platte city limits?

A. Yes. The additional half-cent sales tax will be a city tax and apply to all taxable purchases made within the city of North Platte.

Q. Will this impact my property taxes?

A. No, the initiative is strictly a sales tax.

Q. What additional funding avenues are being explored?

A. In addition to the half-cent sales tax, fundraising will include a capital campaign, local business sponsorship and naming rights campaign, grants and individual gifts, and Newburn funds.

Q. Will the school district be putting any funding towards the competition pool?

A. The City and the School District intend to enter into an interlocal agreement to provide annual funding for the use of the competition swimming pool for swim team practices and competitions.

Q. What if the sales tax ballot initiative fails? Is there a plan B?

A. If the sales tax initiative fails at the ballot box in November 2022, the Recreation Alliance will regroup and bring it back in 2024 for another vote as is allowed by state statute.

