

ADDENDUM



MARINERS CENTRE EXPANSION ENGAGEMENT SESSIONS:
WHAT WE HEARD REPORT



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Between November and December 2023, the Mariners Centre conducted a comprehensive community engagement process to gain the community's perspective on the facility's new design and receive feedback on how it could be improved. The engagement process consisted of a broad-based set of in-person and digital feedback opportunities and targeted engagement with various impacted stakeholder groups.

On January 23, a summary of this feedback was released to the public in the form of the Mariners Centre Expansion Engagement Sessions: What We Heard Report. This report acknowledged several common themes identified during the engagement sessions and summarized the specific questions, comments, and feedback relating to each theme.

The Mariners Centre Expansion Board (MCEB) and project committee have since reviewed the January 23 report and identified what changes, based on community feedback, can or cannot be implemented in the final designs based on budget, either/or decisions, or available space. Their responses to this feedback are detailed in this report.

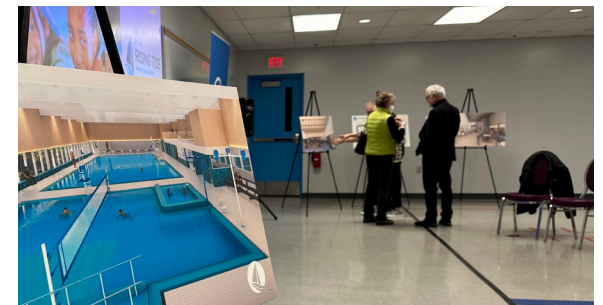
A portion of the feedback collected in the initial What We Heard Report has been deferred to a later date as the project's designs are still within the preliminary design phase of the expansion process. This deferred feedback will be considered once the project enters the midway design phase. During this phase, the MCEB and project architects will be better informed to respond to feedback concerning programming, furniture/equipment, and expansion rollout details.

The Mariners Centre expansion will create a new campus-style community hub for sports, health and wellness, entertainment, and events that will serve our region for the next 50 years. It should be noted that there are plans for future projects to bring in new structures to expand the Mariners Centre's service offerings even further. This means feedback for large-scale additions, such as new spaces not reflected in this expansion design, will still be considered as we continue to build toward our vision of a community hub.

The MCEB would like to acknowledge and thank the many community members who participated in our community sessions. While we are bound by the budget, we have taken the task of having your feedback reflected in the expansion design very seriously.

The Mariners Centre is committed to creating an inclusive environment that welcomes people of all backgrounds and identities, making it a place where everyone feels valued and respected. Our vision is to vastly increase the Mariners Centre's impact on the well-being of our community. With your input and support, we are one step closer to achieving that.

If you do not see your questions or concerns reflected in this report, or if you would like to engage with the MCEB on any item related to the expansion, please contact the Mariners Centre directly at info@marinerscentre.ca.





FROM THE ENTIRE ENGAGEMENT PROCESS, THE FOLLOWING KEY THEMES EMERGED:

FACILITY DESIGN AND FUNCTIONALITY

.....

Throughout the engagement sessions, residents expressed a collective enthusiasm for the upgraded amenities, which include a walking track, an upgraded fitness facility, versatile multipurpose spaces, and a modern aquatics facility.

AQUATICS CENTRE

.....

There was a notable sense of anticipation and excitement regarding the new aquatics centre. Residents expect this facility to be well-designed and capable of hosting various aquatic activities, including regional swimming competitions, swimming lessons, aquatic therapy, and group fitness.

CONCERNS AND OMISSIONS

.....

During the sessions, residents and fitness facility users expressed concerns about the absence of dedicated gym space, acknowledging its role as a core element of the current Mariners on Main offerings. The impact on basketball, volleyball, racquetball, and pickleball was a common sentiment, along with the absence of a sauna and cold plunge elements.

A CAMPUS-STYLE HUB

.....

The community emphasized the Mariners Centre's role in enhancing community well-being and maintaining strong social connections. Residents want a facility that meets current needs and positions Yarmouth as an attractive place for professionals, healthcare workers, and individuals contributing to the local economy.

INCLUSIVITY AND ACCESSIBILITY

.....

A prevalent theme is the community's appreciation for the commitment to inclusivity and accessibility. The desire for a facility that adheres to contemporary environmental and physical accessibility standards is a shared priority among residents.

FUNDRAISING

.....

Community members expressed a keen interest in understanding the fundraising efforts made to date and the allocation of funds to the project from all levels of government.



INTRODUCTION

The Mariners Centre expansion project is quickly approaching the exciting milestone of breaking ground on the expanded facility. Before we do so, we have gone through a series of public engagement processes to better understand the wants and needs of the community, and ensure these elements are reflected in the final design.

On January 22, the Mariners Centre What We Heard Report was publicly released on the Mariners Centre website and Facebook page. This report summarized the feedback received through the engagement process and highlighted key questions and concerns relating to the design.

Since the release of the January 22 report, the architects, in consultation with the Mariners Centre Expansion Board, have reviewed this feedback and other vital factors before making a final decision on the building's design. These decisions and the rationale behind them are detailed throughout this report.





HOW WE GOT HERE

In October 2022, a substantial portion of the funding for the Mariners Centre expansion came through a federal allocation of \$15.9 million, designated explicitly for recreational infrastructure. The money was earmarked for the Mariners Centre expansion and cannot be redirected for other purposes.

The provincial government allocated \$4 million to the project, while the collaborative efforts of the three municipal stakeholders – the Town of Yarmouth and the Municipalities of the District of Yarmouth

and Argyle – resulted in a combined contribution of \$10 million.

Despite the work of the engineering and design team in aligning the project with community priorities, there has been a significant shift in the cost landscape. Initially conceived as a \$30 million expansion, the project's price tag has now been adjusted to \$36 million due to increased inflation, the cost of materials, and labour shortages. To address this increase and ensure that no features are compromised due to inflationary pressures, a local

community fundraising committee has pledged to raise \$6 million.

The fundraising committee aims to surpass this target by raising \$10 million to match the local contribution from the municipal units. This effort is geared towards securing the necessary resources to successfully realize a modern and expanded Mariners Centre.





.....

CHANGE RECOMMENDATIONS



AQUATICS CENTRE



Ensure the pool deck is deep enough to add tiles.

Evidently, there was previously a pool planned in Nova Scotia that did not allow for tile thickness in the concrete design, leaving the depth less than required for swim meets. The architects are aware of this issue and will ensure that this is not repeated. We are thankful for this feedback and the opportunity to learn from past mistakes in other jurisdictions.

Consider the addition of an enclosed kiddie pool.

The designs for the aquatics centre were guided by the priorities established in the March 2021 survey, which included a leisure pool and six-lane competitive pool. Beyond space limitations, adding a new swim area is cost-prohibitive, and the MCEB therefore shall not be adding a kiddie pool.

However, consideration has been given to kid-style water play, which will be provided through a water slide and other programming opportunities in the leisure pool area. There will also be an area dedicated to swimming lessons for children to the left of the leisure pool steps. We feel the existing infrastructure plan will sufficiently accommodate child-related play.

Review the location of fun features and seating so spectators do not get wet.

This concern has been considered and accounted for. We are confident there is sufficient space between the fun features and the seating area.

Prioritize accessible seating on the viewing deck.

Prioritizing accessible seating was a strong consideration while designing the aquatics centre. The current design offers a lift to the second floor, where all viewers shall have equal access to seating. Alternatively, there is a barrier-free seating option on the main deck (not directly on the pool deck).

Consider a separate room for swimming teams.

Unfortunately, there will be no additional space for the swim team due to cost control and the existence of an alternate location. We will have storage space for swimming teams in the lifeguard area. Otherwise, they will have access to storage facilities in the universal change area, much like other facility users.

Consider the addition of a wave pool.

Based on the priorities highlighted in the March 2021 community survey, it was determined not to add this feature in favour of a swim lane pool, hot tub, and leisure pool. Adding a wave pool is



estimated to be in the \$1 million range and would require additional aquatic square footage.

In doing an assessment of use, we leaned on aquatic professionals and interviewed other recreation facility leaders on what aquatic features were used most. This analysis concluded that a wave pool would not be used as often as the other amenities we propose, and it is a costly item to maintain. As a result, our conclusion is to not proceed with a wave pool.

Review the number of pool windows – too many increases the cost of operations and other issues.

The Expansion Project Committee (EPC) staff has examined the number of pool windows with our architects. There will not be any changes made to the number of windows, as there are no concerns with the current number.

Ensure markings on the pool floor and pool depth for flip turns.

We agree with this recommendation and will ensure that it is discussed at the **intermediate design stage**.

Consider adding textured flooring leading to ramps.

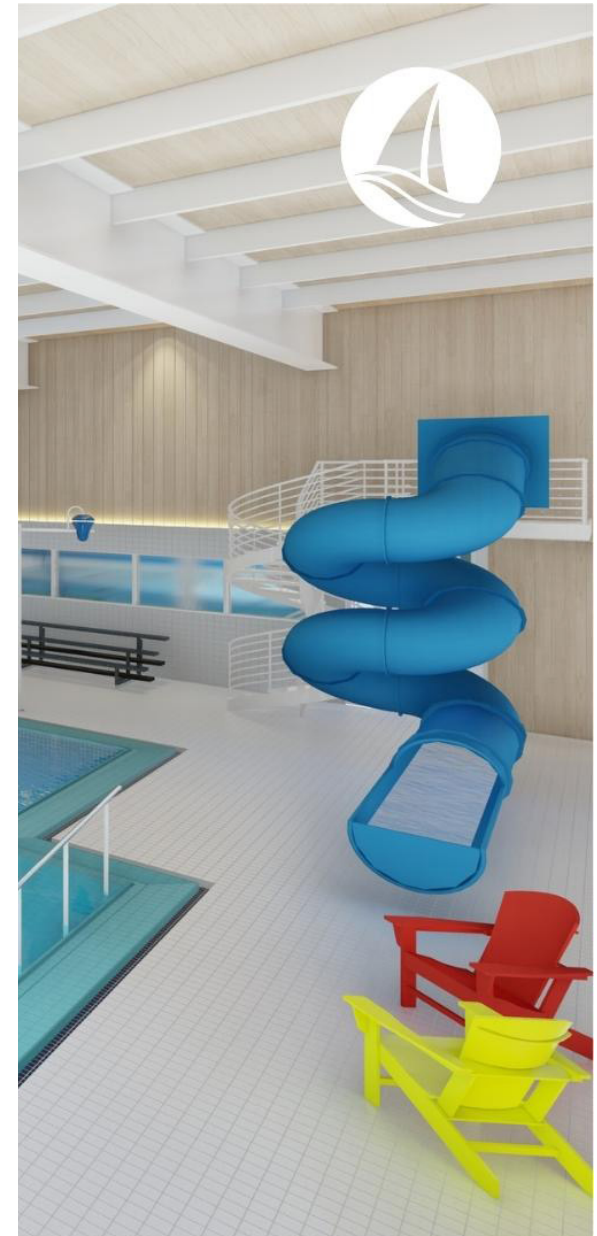
We agree with this recommendation and will ensure that it is discussed at the **intermediate design stage**.

Consider the usefulness of hot/cold therapy.

We understand the popularity and usefulness of hot/cold therapy. Unfortunately, this could not be an addition to the aquatics centre, but would rather have to come at the expense of existing elements established as priorities in the engagement survey. This would also be a costly trade off. For these reasons we will not be implementing hot/cold therapy into the design.

Consider increasing the deck space.

Staff and architects believe the deck space is adequately sized for the activities proposed. We will re-examine the layout to ensure maximum efficient use. Unfortunately, there is no budget for an expanded facility. We consider this item outstanding, and to be re-examined in the **intermediate design stage**.





FITNESS CENTRE



Consider increasing the size of the two fitness studio rooms.

Agreed. The size of both studios has been increased by 20% to allow for greater capacity for fitness classes and other uses.

Consider the addition of a studio partition that moves lengthwise.

Research into other recreational facilities determined this is not a common partition type. A lengthwise partition would be much more costly than widthwise, with no actual increase of usable space. Furthermore, no acoustic issues are associated with this option making it less appealing. While we respect the thinking related to this suggestion, we will not recommend it to the design team.

Ensure the addition of soundproofing to the centre.

We agree with this recommendation and will ensure that it is discussed at the *intermediate design stage*.

Consider the type of flooring in the fitness centre that can accommodate various activities.

Staff considered flooring types in the studio location and multipurpose room and agreed to give the same consideration to the fitness centre. We will

bring this to the attention of our architects at the *intermediate design stage*.

Consider appropriate air circulation at the track/Consider appropriate temperature/humidity control.

We agree with this recommendation and will ensure it is discussed at the *intermediate design stage*.

Ensure appropriate access to washrooms in the gym.

Washrooms and dry change rooms were considered in the fitness room design. They are not universal, but rather individual rooms including one barrier-free washroom, a standard washroom, and a dry changing room. All three rooms may be used for changing. This represents an alternative use of change/washroom space to the universal changeroom for fitness users. We will further consider this suggestion at the *intermediate design stage*.



BUILDING, MULTI-PURPOSE SPACE, AND PARKING



Consider additional accessible parking on either side of the new building.

The final parking plan was not available at the time of community input. The plan shall have accessible parking on either side of the new building, along with several amenities, including bike racks, larger truck/bus access, and traffic flow measures.

Ensure there is appropriate insulation for the new building.

Appropriate insulation is one of many preconditions of a net-zero-ready construction, which is a condition of our federal funding. This will be considered in the design and construction.

Consider the addition of indoor storage.

Storage is a vital and ongoing discussion. As in any design, there is never enough storage, and storage is more square footage and more cost. The decision was made to allow for storage in various locations, including next to the Multipurpose Centre, in the fitness centre, and in the pool mechanical area. We are confident that through discussions with operations staff, architects, and assessments of previous and existing spaces, this need has been considered in a way that does not negatively impact project costs.

Consider garage door access to the pool mechanical room.

Operators raised this concern on appropriately sized doors accessing the mechanical room. Our final design recommendation shall likely include a double door instead of a garage door, as there is considerable heat loss in the garage door option. We agree that the space needs to be sufficient for product delivery and access.

Consider adding gentle and dimmable lighting options.

This item is appreciated and has been considered in prior design conversations. It will continue to be a consideration as design plans are finalized.

Consider adding solar panels to the expansion.

Adding solar panels is currently in our costing estimates. As we mentioned in an earlier comment on insulation, the building must be net-zero energy ready, and adding solar is an efficient use of the roof space. We are confident the final tender will include a solar array.

Add a peer review for the construction company.



The community and staff share the concern to ensure we hire an appropriate contractor for the job. Staff have engaged Colliers Project Leaders to act as a third-party assessor of the tender document. The purpose of the review is to ensure the tender package is written comprehensively, and to ensure it is developed to encourage as many contractors to bid as possible. More bids increase the likelihood of competitive pricing and will enable post-bid interviews with potentially more contractors. Any evaluation of the construction company will be included in elements of the tender document.

Consider pitched roofs.

This idea was considered and eliminated primarily due to the proximity to the Yarmouth International Airport flight path. This fact restricts the pitch of the roof at the expansion site location. Flat roofs historically have had a bad reputation for some due to leaking and other issues. The design will consider this.

Consider the use of existing gravel parking for expansion.

The existing gravel parking is an important area for excess parking during the Yarmouth Mariners games and is the location for RibFest and other community activities. We have not contemplated additional work at this location currently, as it is outside the scope of the project. This may be a future consideration.

Consider the addition of a café or food service in the expansion.

The existing design allows for a limited café station, as well as food warming and preparation for special events and birthdays. This service may be expanded but is limited due to the building's square footage. We have concluded that anything larger would not be financially viable. We are optimistic that added traffic and use could attract a new, privately run café or food service.

Ensure good access to pool lighting for repair and replacements.

Good access to overhead lighting is a great comment. Staff will bring this to intermediate design discussions.

Consider appropriate acoustics, including those with sensory and auditory needs, as well as surface finishes to reduce echo and reverberation.

It should be noted that the 2030 accessibility legislation requires certain design changes to consider users with certain barriers.

Consider the addition of tactile indicators.

We agree with this recommendation and will ensure that it is discussed at the intermediate design stage. See comments on accessibility above. While it is a

slightly different barrier consideration, the same legislation and consideration shall apply.

Ensure all doors are sliding and/or sensor activated.

This item will be examined by the architects, as we consider the pros and cons. We will ensure that it is discussed at the intermediate design stage.

Consider the addition of audible signal light indicators throughout the building.

We acknowledge that barrier-free construction should consider all practical options for improvement. We cannot confirm whether this will be added to the final construction, but the MCEB is committed to considering accessibility in aspects of the design. We will ensure that it is discussed at the intermediate design stage.



UNIVERSAL CHANGE AREA



We appreciate your feedback regarding the proposed universal change rooms at the new, expanded Mariners Centre facility. We understood from our public engagement sessions that there was a sense of apprehension and confusion about the universal change areas from some members of the community.

Extensive research and consideration went into all aspects of the design decisions, with insight from both architects and the MCEB. The universal design was analyzed and compared to traditional gendered spaces, including interviews with recreation and other leaders with experience in universal designs.

Our priority is to finalize a design that will provide the best service and safety for our members, while also considering a space that is inclusive and welcoming. It was concluded by the MCEB that a universal design best meets these priority areas and objectives.

Universal change areas have become the standard across North America, including in Nova Scotian urban centres. There are already examples in southwestern Nova Scotia as well, wherein 2020, Kejimikujik National Park underwent renovations to update their facilities to universal changerooms. Still, we recognize that this is a newer concept for our community, and some members are engaging with the concept of a universal change area for the first time.

Universal change areas are, first and foremost,

public spaces with individual, private rooms. We want to be very clear that a universal change area will not have men and women changing together. The design of universal change areas incorporate individual changing cubicles to enhance privacy, and users may only change or remove clothing in private stalls. Clear rules, education and enforcement mechanisms will be established to maintain a secure environment. We are striving for inclusivity and access for all while creating privacy where most needed to enhance comfort.

Gender-designated change areas lack privacy and accessibility for many users, including those who have personal health requirements or mobility challenges, those who are transgender or transitioning, and those who may require assistance from someone of a different gender – including children and older adults. The Mariners Centre is seeking to create a hub for sport, health and wellness, entertainment, and events that will serve our community for the next 50 years. If we are not forward-thinking with our approach today, designs that prioritize gender-designated spaces may require future renovations and additional costs as community needs evolve over time.

The MCEB supports its original decision to offer a universal design, and we trust that this explanation of the process and benefits provides clearer insights and reasoning on why this option was selected. There are still concerns within the universal design that will be considered as we finalize designs and implement our education campaign and security/



safety measures. We thank you for the specific feedback below.

Include an area with separate gendered washrooms, along with the universal design, OR include a space for women for safety, security, and cultural purposes.

While developed to be as inclusive as possible, a universal change area design may not meet all cultural and religious sensitivities or the general comfort level of some users. It is for this reason that the Mariners Centre expansion will also include alternate washrooms and changeroom facilities in the fitness areas, and a larger universal washroom off the lobby that can be used privately to accommodate those with differing religious beliefs and safety concerns.

Include an educational component to how the universal changerooms and washrooms will operate.

We see the educational component of the universal change area as incredibly important. As part of our interview process with recreation and other leaders with experience in universal designs, education and signage were highlighted as critical to the proper workings of the space. It was also noted that once a better understanding of the space was received, members' appreciation for the space grew. With that in mind, we will be undertaking an educational campaign both in the lead up to the expansion and once the new space is operational.

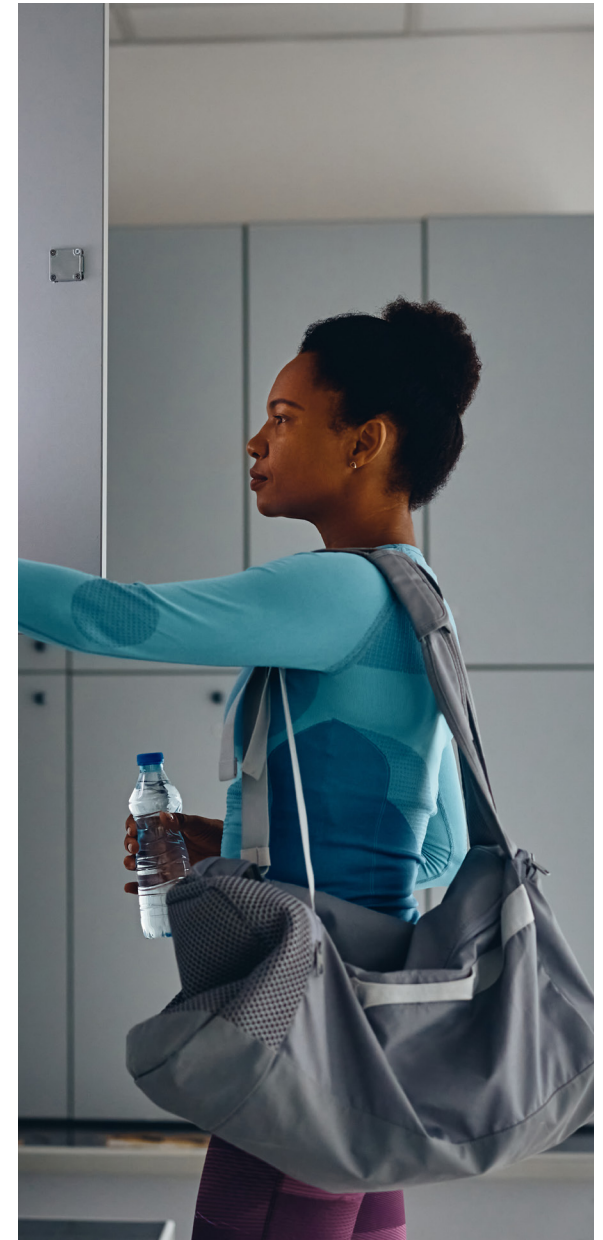
Add stools for children/people of short stature to access the sinks.

We agree with this feedback, and this is already considered in the current design.

Ensure doors for changing cubicles are sealed at the top and bottom to eliminate the possibility of recording individuals who are changing.

We agree that this is an important element in the final product, and full-height doors are currently reflected in the designs.

The Mariners Centre expansion will be proceeding with a universal change area design. However, we want to continue to address concerns surrounding this space and encourage any comments or questions to be directed to info@marinerscentre.com, or submitted through our anonymous feedback submission box at marinerscentre.com/expansion.





FUTURE CONSIDERATIONS AND OTHER CONCERNS

Loss of gym and court space is a reduced service – especially for youth.

With any project planning, there are elements that people use or are accustomed to seeing at a previous location, for example, at MOM. It is true that the new expansion will not have an interior gym or court space like it has at the existing location. We understand this is seen as a reduction of options, especially for our youth.

Our priorities were informed by the March 2021 regional surveys and ongoing conversations. It should be noted that the YMCA was closed before this survey, so our local residents felt the impact of having no pool facility in the County. This motivated the residents to push municipal units to put an aquatics centre at the top of the list. Residents want an aquatics experience. This local priority comes at a considerable cost to the project. The other two priorities included an updated fitness centre and a walking track.

Also influential in this decision was the fact that we have 12 gym spaces and more outdoor court spaces available to residents in the County. The municipalities are committed to working with schools and other organizations to increase access to these facilities for our youth and youth at risk.

There appears to be no dedicated youth space, only multipurpose space in the design.

The only dedicated space in our new expansion is use-related, not age or demographic-related. The concept was to build a facility where all could find their place in the expanded space. The existence of the yoga studio, aquatic space, fitness facility, and multipurpose space is for all ages. The operation of youth-related activities shall be a priority for the operators of the new facility, and we wish to note that this location also allows the youth to find their place in the existing Mariners Centre facility. The existence of space in the HV Anthony Pavillion, as well as other exciting announcements for the location, provides hope and confidence that youth, both current and future, will continue to find their place and space here.

Consider site drainage for future expansion, circular drop-off area for users, access from Starrs Road.

All three of these comments shall be considered in our Site Master Plan for future land use needs and a parking/landscaping plan for the current expansion. A circular drop-off area is not part of the traffic plan, as we want to prioritize pedestrian traffic over too many vehicles circling the entryway, where there will surely be people. Furthermore, our experience

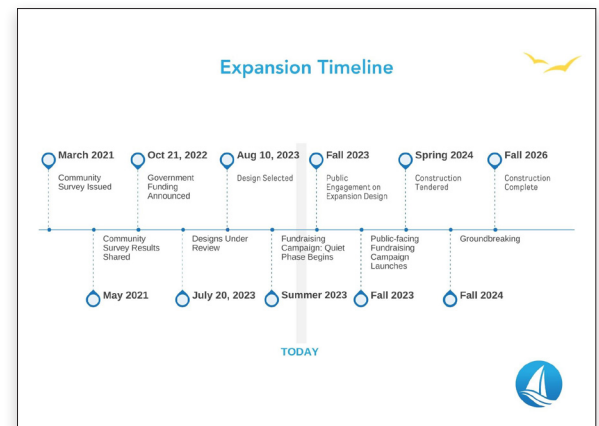
with the current Mariners Centre design is that many vehicles bring people right to the door, which causes congestion and increased safety risks. A well-conceived alternative option shall be developed.

Update the exterior of the existing Mariners Centre.

This comment is noted and something for the MCEB to consider for a future project.

Consider the other side of the Jody Shelley Road for future expansion.

As noted above, this item will be for the MCEB to consider for a future project.





OUTSTANDING QUESTIONS

The following questions are being deferred to a later date, as we are not yet at a point in the design process to provide answers.

As stated above, the expansion project is at the early design phase, and we have used the public engagement sessions to help finalize and move into the next phase. Many of the questions below will be reviewed and addressed during the intermediate design phase. We are thankful to have these suggestions in mind as we head into this part of the planning process and will keep the public informed as decisions are made.

Aquatics Centre

- Consider the addition of rehabilitation programs for chronic diseases.
- Consider additional Lifeguard seats around the pool.
- Promote swimming lessons at an early age and attract instructors and lifeguards.
- Add more public swimming hours.
- Add water exercise bikes.
- Improve code of conduct regulations to prevent bullying and promote inclusivity.
- Add policies or procedures to get wheelchairs out of the pool.
- Consider the addition of pool speakers for music and announcements.
- Consider adding swinging ropes.

Fitness Centre

- Add new and different fitness equipment.
- Add programming time for non-fitness activities.
- Ensure free weights are also added in the studio and fitness centre.
- Ensure digital clocks are added to the facility.
- Ensure there are mirrors.
- Consider adding seating around the walking track.
- Ensure proximity to free weights and plate-loaded machines.
- Consider the addition of a food bar with protein shakes.

Universal Dressing Room

- Ensure space for women, considering safety, security, and cultural needs.
- Ensure an education component on universal changeroom operations.
- Security cameras.
- Consider the addition of panic alarms.
- Ensure a well-defined process for complaints and rule enforcement.

Multipurpose space

- Include couches, café tables, outlets, and homework stalls.
- Mini gym, designated family space, parent/tot activities, childcare.
- Activities for youth, including foosball, ping pong, board games, card games, and video games.

Common Area/Lobby

- Ensure no permanent tables or chairs, or those that are fixed to allow accessibility.
- Ensure some chairs are with arms, and some without.
- Consider the addition of healthy food options.
- Consider adding a PA system for the front desk.



Building

- Include Sports Hall of Fame memorabilia.
- Consult Tri-County Women's Centre to ensure there is trauma-informed perspective to the facilities rules and regulations.
- Consider the time required to evacuate the building and add an evacuation plan.

Parking

- Consider the addition of a bus stop.
- Signage for parking specific to the building i.e. Aquatics/Fitness vs Rinks.

General

- Address/improve daycare options.
- Familiarization session for new Council candidates



NEXT STEPS

We are entering an exciting phase in the Mariners Centre expansion project. As design plans become finalized, we will be issuing a construction tender this spring with the expectation of breaking ground in the fall.

Although our formal engagement on the project is complete, we are committed to maintaining transparency and opportunities to provide feedback as the expansion process continues. We encourage you to stay engaged with the Mariners Centre website's expansion page for updates and new developments on the project. Our feedback submission box on this page will remain active through the summer, and feedback can also be forwarded to info@marinerscentre.ca at any time. We will also be sharing any developments on the project through the Yarmouth Mariners Centre Facebook page. Updates on the outstanding questions listed above will be provided through these channels.

Our website and social channels will also be sharing information on the upcoming fundraising campaign. These efforts are geared towards securing the necessary resources for successfully realizing the expanded Mariners Centre.

