

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

TO: Shane Bourke, City Manager	DATE: July 22, 2025
FROM: Patricia Bailey, Chief Strategy Officer	MEETING: Investment and Strategy Committee
REPORT WRITER: Chenoa Esau, Community Connections Manager	
SUBJECT: Legion Field Design Update	

RECOMMENDATIONS

That Committee receive this report for information.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL / COMMITTEE DIRECTIONS

On April 11, 2023, the Public and Protective Services Committee directed Administration to work with the school boards and Peace Country Wolves and bring back information to Committee on an updated design for the jumping terrain.

BACKGROUND

The Legion Field facility consists of an outdoor running track, football field, locker rooms and washrooms. The scoreboard, lights, and media tower were previously owned by the Football Booster Club prior to their dissolution and were assumed by the City in 2021.

The facility hosts numerous events in the spring and summer months, including a number of track meets for schools within the City and region, as well as club practices. The interior field is used for football and soccer practices.

The project was on hold until further direction on the site location for the proposed indoor recreation facility, which is now confirmed and the Legion Field project has resumed.

ANALYSIS

The changerooms and washrooms are in relatively good condition, installed in 2000 for the Alberta Summer Games. The scoreboard was installed in 2001, with lights installed in 2004 and both still in good working condition. The track was last resurfaced in 2012, with a typical life cycle of 10 years.

A number of improvements to the site have been requested by user groups, and evaluated based on overall needs of all users, consideration for budget, and the space surrounding the existing facility.

- **Jumping Terrain** – The high jump and javelin areas will be designated within the multi-use court space, with potential expansion to accommodate drop-in recreational activities such as basketball and school programming. The long jump will be relocated to the south field, adjacent to the walking path.
- **Media Tower Repairs** – The media tower 3rd floor is currently inaccessible due to damage to the wood exterior stairs. The facility was initially constructed in 1992 and requires significant upgrades to meet code and safety requirements.
- **Fencing** – Improve site functionality and accessibility by relocating and repositioning the fencing to align with the revised layout of the jumping terrain and multi-use areas.
- **Track resurfacing** – As assessment of the track condition was conducted in April 2024, with a recommendation of resurfacing within ~ 1- 4 years to maintain the integrity of the track. 2024 estimate for this project was \$255,000.
- **Turf Infield** – User groups identified upgrading the existing sod to turf, to eliminate concerns with the existing irrigation system, however, this is not within current budget or the intent of the original project, so is not recommended at this time. The field is not a regulation size football field as the track surface impedes all 4 corners of the field.

Relationship to City Council's Areas of Focus / Strategic Priorities

Quality of life, Economic Readiness

Environmental Impact

None.

Economic Impact

Upgrades to the facility will enhance the City’s ability to host sport tourism events at a Provincial level.

Social Impact

This project enhances access to outdoor recreation opportunities, particularly for school aged youth, and strengthens community connections through sport.

Relevant Statutes / Master Plans / City Documents

Recreation and Culture Strategy (2024)

Risk

There is risk of the amenities further deteriorating if the project does not proceed, and this is the only certified athletics facility in northwestern Alberta.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

A targeted stakeholder engagement session was held in early May to gather input and ensure the project reflects the needs of key user groups. Participants included representatives from local school divisions, football clubs, physical education teachers, and the Wapiti Striders Track Club. The session provided an opportunity for stakeholders to share their perspectives on current facility usage, identify safety concerns and infrastructure gaps, and discuss future programming potential. Feedback from this session directly informed the updated design elements, including the reconfiguration of jumping areas and considerations for multi-use recreational space.

BUDGET / FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The 2022 and 2023 Capital Budgets allocated \$1.22 million toward improvements at Legion Field. This funding supports repairs to the media tower, replacement of the long jump runway, expansion of the high jump radius, resurfacing of the high jump court area, and repositioning of perimeter fencing to accommodate the updated site layout.

The timing of the track resurfacing will be assessed by Administration over the course of this season. A 2024 assessment estimated the remaining useful life of the track as 1-4 years. The track's rehabilitation is currently in the capital plan for 2028 for \$255,000. If assessments of the track indicate a more urgent need for rehabilitation, Administration will bring forward an accelerated timeline for Council's consideration.

Although initial upgrades were scheduled for 2024, the project was paused due to uncertainty about the adjacent indoor recreation facility (the "dome") location. Now that the dome siting has been confirmed, the Legion Field improvements have resumed.

The facility is showing signs of wear consistent with its age and high usage. For example, components of the jumping terrain are in need of realignment to better support safe use by multiple disciplines, including high jump and javelin. The media tower, constructed in 1992, currently has limited access to the upper floors due to aging exterior stairs. This affects functionality for larger events, as the tower provides access to the score clock and public address system used for calling races and coordinating heats.

Previously maintained by the Football Booster Club, the media tower and scoreboard were transferred to City ownership in 2021 after the booster club dissolved. The scoreboard (2001) and lighting (2004) remain functional, but the tower now requires accessibility upgrades.

The proposed budget of \$1.22 million, drawn from 2022 and 2023 Capital Budgets, consolidates key infrastructure needs. This includes repairs originally approved separately—such as media tower upgrades—into a single integrated project for operational efficiency. Several enhancement requests from athletics user groups were evaluated and ultimately removed to keep the scope focused on essential needs.

Legion Field remains the only certified track and field facility in northwestern Alberta and is vital for hosting sanctioned events, including Alberta Schools' Athletic Association (ASAA) provincials. While the intent was to complete upgrades before hosting Special Olympics events, the dome project delay pushed timelines. Temporary adaptations are being made for current events, but a full upgrade is needed for long-term viability.

An RFP is planned for Fall 2025, with construction targeted for Spring 2026. Parks and Engineering have been involved throughout the planning process to ensure alignment with broader infrastructure and site design requirements.

SUMMARY / CONCLUSION

Assessing the track resurfacing project in the Fall provides an opportunity to align this critical upgrade with ongoing improvements at Legion Field, maximizing efficiency and minimizing disruption to users. Given the facility's regional significance as the only certified athletics track in northwestern Alberta, timely investment is essential to maintain safety standards, extend the lifespan of the infrastructure, and support continued access for school, club, and community use.

Coordinated upgrades will also enhance the City’s ability to attract and host sport tourism events, supporting strategic goals related to quality of life, youth development, and economic readiness.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A – Site Map