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City Council advances plan for major investments in recreational amenities funded through half-cent sales tax

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To support major investments in the city's recreational facilities, the Plymouth City Council approved a resolution at its Jan. 13 meeting to seek legislative authorization for a half-cent local sales tax.

If approved by the Minnesota Legislature this spring, the proposed projects and the half-cent local sales tax will be presented to Plymouth voters in November.

The proposed sales tax would help fund three major initiatives totaling \$135 million – a \$55 million expansion and renovation of the Plymouth Ice Center, the construction of a \$55 million new year-round Fieldhouse to replace the seasonal dome at the Plymouth Community Center, and a \$25 million new regional sports complex at the former Four Seasons Mall site.

"These proposed improvements are in response to community feedback and requests for more sports and recreational spaces that can keep pace with growing demand," said City Manager Dave Callister. "The plan addresses community needs while sharing the cost with visitors who come to Plymouth to use our amenities – and ensures Plymouth residents have the final say when they cast their ballots in November."

After decades of heavy use, the Plymouth Ice Center and the seasonally inflated Fieldhouse dome at the Plymouth Community Center are due for repairs, replacements and upgrades for safety, accessibility and efficiency. The projects would also address growing demand for year-round recreation space, and the shortage of outdoor athletic fields.

Funding the projects through a half-cent local sales tax would spread the cost between residents and visitors, rather than placing it solely on property owners through a levy increase. A University of Minnesota study shows that about 55% of the sales tax would be paid by people who live outside Plymouth. If approved by both the Legislature and Plymouth voters, the tax would remain in place for up to 20 years, or until enough money is raised to pay for the projects and related financing costs.

A project website is slated to launch in the coming months, and the city will continue to keep residents informed by providing detailed information about the proposed investments, timelines, costs and upcoming opportunities for public feedback.

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