


Philanthropic Feasibility Study Final Report:

Rogers Activity Center Expansion Project



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Fox Advancement
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Fox Advancement partnered with the Roger's Youth Hockey Association (RYHA) to conduct a formal philanthropic feasibility study to test the goal of a proposed \$13M capital campaign.

The feasibility study serves as a risk management tool by collecting candid thoughts from the key stakeholders about the campaign goal and messaging. This information ultimately informs the fundraising strategy and likelihood of success.

To obtain candid feedback about the case for support and campaign goal, Fox Advancement interviewed 24 RYHA stakeholders and attempted to contact 12 additional individuals (see Appendix A). This report provides a high-level overview of the themes that emerged during the process and our recommendations on the next steps.



COMMUNITY SUPPORT

The community is overwhelmingly supportive of including a second sheet of ice with the Activity Center expansion. They feel that it will bring these benefits to the community:

- More opportunities will be available for hockey players of all ages and skill levels to practice and play games. This can lead to increased participation in the sport and foster a stronger community among players and fans.
- A second sheet of ice would alleviate the necessity for families to travel to other communities for ice time. The situation is currently untenable.
- Hosting tournaments and events would become more feasible, bringing economic benefits to local businesses such as hotels, restaurants, and shops. The increased foot traffic from visiting teams and spectators can boost the local economy while showcasing the community as a hub for hockey activities. This strengthens the community by creating job opportunities and fostering a sense of pride among residents.

Investing in a second sheet of ice in the Rogers Activity Expansion is not just about providing spaces for physical activity; it's about building a vibrant community where people of all ages can come together, stay healthy, and form lasting connections through their shared love for sports.

RELATIONSHIP WITH THE CITY OF ROGERS

There remains skepticism surrounding the working relationship with the City of Rogers and the likelihood of seeing a completed project. To address these concerns, reassure stakeholders about the project's progress. Develop a comprehensive communication plan. Here's a suggested outline for such a plan:

- **Identify Stakeholders:** Determine all stakeholders involved in or impacted by the project. This includes community members, local businesses, government officials, project partners, and any other relevant parties.



RELATIONSHIP WITH THE CITY OF ROGERS, cont.

- **Message Development:** Craft clear, consistent messages that emphasize the benefits of the project and highlight the commitment to collaboration with the City of Rogers. Key points may include the project's positive impact on the community, economic benefits, job creation, and the City's role in supporting the initiative.
- **Communication Channels:** Utilize various communication channels to reach different stakeholders effectively. This may include:
 - Public meetings and town halls
 - Press releases and media interviews
 - Social media platforms
 - Project website or blog
 - Email newsletters
 - Direct mailings
 - Community forums or online discussion groups
- **Engagement Events:** Host events or forums specifically focused on addressing concerns and fostering dialogue with stakeholders. This could involve Q&A sessions with project leaders, presentations on the project's progress, and opportunities for stakeholders to provide feedback and ask questions.
- **Transparency and Updates:** Provide regular updates on the project's status, including any developments in the relationship with the City of Rogers. Transparency is key to building trust and credibility with stakeholders. Ensure that information is readily accessible and easy to understand.
- **Feedback Mechanisms:** Establish mechanisms for stakeholders to provide feedback, ask questions, and express concerns throughout the project lifecycle. This could be through dedicated email addresses, feedback forms on the project website, or designated contact persons.

A background image showing soccer players in action on a green field. In the foreground, a player's leg in a blue jersey and bright yellow-green cleats is visible. In the background, other players in orange and green jerseys are blurred.

RELATIONSHIP WITH THE CITY OF ROGERS, cont.

- **Stakeholder Involvement:** Encourage active involvement and participation from stakeholders in the project. This could involve forming advisory committees or task forces comprised of representatives from the community, businesses, and government agencies.
- **Mitigating Concerns:** Address concerns and skepticism directly, acknowledging any challenges or misunderstandings and outlining steps taken to address them. Demonstrating a proactive approach to problem-solving can alleviate doubts and build confidence in the project's success.
- **Continuous Evaluation and Adaptation:** Regularly evaluate the effectiveness of the communication plan and make adjustments as needed based on stakeholder feedback and evolving circumstances. Communication should be an ongoing process, not a one-time effort.

Implementing a robust communication plan that emphasizes transparency, engagement, and partnership can effectively address skepticism and build support for the project's success.

FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Given the breakdown of financial contributions from various stakeholders and the community's response during interviews, considerable support for the project is evident. However, there are some limitations in terms of larger philanthropic commitments. Therefore, it will be important for RYHA to develop a strategy for soliciting gifts from a diverse group of prospects in the community.

Since the City is now in favor of moving forward with the project and has agreed to provide \$10M, we recommend that RYHA work collaboratively with the City instead of building a separate facility. With the \$7M commitment from RYHA, there is a \$3M gap in funding. Our recommendation would be to secure this funding through these sources:

\$3M COMMUNITY FUNDRAISING PLAN

- **\$1M: Major Donor Engagement:** Our comprehensive interview process identified the potential to raise up to \$1M from a select group of major donors. We identified a subset willing to contribute between \$500,000 and \$1M with the right cultivation.
- **\$1M: Corporate Sponsorships and Grants:** There is an opportunity for RYHA to cultivate support from corporations and foundations to drive this fundraising forward. Corporations, however, are more inclined to support the effort compared to foundations because of two specific activities in which RYHA is engaged. Foundations typically shy away from supporting nonprofits engaged in grantmaking or gambling activities, which RYHA is a part of. By strategically aligning with corporations that share the values and vision, you can secure the necessary resources to propel RYHA's mission and create a lasting impact in the community. See Appendix B for a list of potential prospects.
- **\$1M: Broad-Based Community Campaign:** Given the range of contributions mentioned during interviews (\$100 to \$10,000), a broad-based community fundraising campaign should be the third pillar of fundraising. This could include crowdfunding initiatives, direct mail appeals, fundraising events, and online donation platforms to solicit support from a broad cross-section of the community.

Donors at all levels should be offered recognition opportunities to acknowledge their contributions and foster a sense of ownership in the project. This could include naming rights for facility components, commemorative plaques, VIP experiences, exclusive events for major donors, and public acknowledgment and appreciation for all contributors.

By leveraging the City and RYHA contributions as foundational support and mobilizing the community through strategic fundraising efforts, it's possible to bridge the funding gap and ensure the successful realization of the second sheet of ice project in Rogers. Effective communication, community engagement, and stewardship of donor relationships will be vital in achieving fundraising objectives and securing the necessary financial support. See Appendix C for a sample \$3M gift chart.

APPENDIX B: CORPORATE AND FOUNDATION GIVING PROSPECTS

FUNDER	OFFER SPONSORSHIPS
TEGNA Community Grants	No - but checking in w/ local employee may help
Allianz Life Insurance Company	No - but checking in w/ local employee may help
Fingerhut Family Foundation	Unknown - contract foundation
Carmax Foundation	Yes - Home Office grant program
Clif Family Foundation	No
Deutsche Bank of Americas Foundation	Unknown - reach out to foundation or local employee
The Amcor Cares Foundation	Yes
3M Foundation	Yes
Minnesota Power Foundation	Yes
Patagonia	No event sponsorships - campaign unknown
Hormel Foods Corporate Charitable Trust	Yes
Midcontinental Foundation	Yes - through local employee connection
The Luther Family Foundation	Unknown - reach out to foundation
The Toro Company	Yes - with employee connection or product donations
Mckesson Foundation	No - but checking in w/local employee or office may help
Mosaic Company Foundation	Unknown - reach out to foundation or local office
Deluxe Corporate Foundation	No - but checking in w/local employee or office may help
The Comcast NBC Universal Foundation	Yes - through local affiliate
Century Link - Clarke Williams Foundation	Yes - through employee match or connection
Chubb Charitable Foundation	Yes - through employee connection
AT&T Foundation	Yes - through local store or employee

APPENDIX C: \$3M GIFT CHART

GIFT LEVEL	# OF GIFTS	# OF PROSPECTS	AMOUNT
\$500,000	1	3	\$500,000
\$250,000	2	6	\$500,000
\$100,000	4	12	\$400,000
\$50,000	8	24	\$400,000
\$25,000	16	48	\$400,000
\$10,000	32	96	\$320,000
\$5,000	64	192	\$320,000
\$1,000	160	480	\$160,000
Total Raised			\$3,000,000