



REQUEST FOR ACTION

Rochester Regional Sports Center, Stadium & Sports Fields (3:30 to 4:30 p.m.)

MEETING DATE:

April 27, 2026

ORIGINATING DEPT:

City Administration

AGENDA SECTION:

Presentation Items

PRESENTER:

**Aaron Parrish, Ben Boldt,
Jenna Bowman, Abby Lohr
and Brittany Borhart**

Report Narrative:

The City of Rochester and Rochester Community and Technical College (RCTC) have had weekly meetings since December 2025 about the future of the Rochester Regional Sports Center, located on the RCTC campus at 851 30 Ave SE and the Stadium/Dome. As both partners continued conversations about their long-standing collaboration, community feedback was sought to help shape how the shared facility may evolve to best support RCTC students, RCTC faculty/staff and the broader Rochester community. As the Council will recall, RCTC has indicated that the Dome will not be put up for the 2026/2027 season.

In February and March, the City and RCTC gathered insights from current users, youth and families, RCTC students and staff, older adults, and residents who may not yet have used the facility. The goal was to better understand how the existing spaces can continue to meet community and campus needs and support the facility's ongoing role as a shared community and campus resource.

RCTC and the City have been exploring potential future maintenance needs and possible enhancements to the existing facility. These conversations include replacing the dome fabric or updating interior spaces; however, no decisions have been finalized, and no commitments have been made regarding timing, funding, or specific improvements. Partners are also discussing whether longer-term ideas, like additional indoor court space or outdoor amenities, should be considered.

In total, about 1,500 residents responded to the digital survey. There were 3 in-person open house events held at RCTC and two held virtually. Emails were sent to the community organization to raise awareness about the engagement opportunity. Overall, the following was gathered through the engagement process:

- Community members are looking for indoor opportunities
- There is a strong desire and need for an indoor turf space
- Respondents noted positive sentiment about the RCTC Sports Center facilities, with a desire to have greater awareness and communication about opportunities to utilize the space
- The most desired time is weekday evenings
- The two most important uses are the turf and the track

The Rochester Regional Sports Center, co-developed by the City of Rochester and RCTC with Local Sales Tax funding, includes an indoor field house with a 200-meter track and multipurpose courts, a performance basketball court, meeting and class spaces, and the Rochester Regional Stadium with a

climate-controlled winter dome. Additional outdoor fields were developed between 1998 and 2011. The facilities, owned and managed by RCTC, continue to serve both the RCTC campus community and residents throughout the region.

Options

In the attached presentation we outline a range of options to meet indoor recreation needs aligned with the feedback we have received through our various engagement efforts. This is not representative of all options we discussed with RCTC over the last five months. For example, we discussed the concept transferring the Rochester Sports Center and Dome to the City and allowing priority use for RCTC. RCTC prefers to continue to own the assets. Material issues that require resolution prior to proceeding with an RCTC and City partnership include:

1. Operations- We have discussed a variety of models including a third party operator and continued management by RCTC. Recently we have come closer to consensus on the potential for a third party operator selected by the Joint Powers Board (created as part of the overall structure consisting of equal representation by both entities).
2. Financial- After the proposed investments, we have discussed splitting any operating deficits and capital improvements equally. RCTC has recently discussed fixing their operating contribution.
3. Ground Lease- To secure the financing and investment being made, we proposed a 75 year ground lease. Recently we were informed that any ground lease over 30 years requires legislative approval. In addition, there is some discussion that MN State may only be open to a 40 year ground lease. We have discussed being open to 50 years.
4. Priority Scheduling- The framework we have established relies on priority scheduling for RCTC which impacts community availability. There are still some issues that need to be finalized in this space.

We have prepared draft agreements which require further refinement and addressing the issues reflected above. While we have been working on the potential partnership with RCTC and being responsive to the survey feedback around losing the Dome, we have also evaluated the potential for a year round dome on the Regional Sports and Recreation Complex site. Further design and evaluation is required, but the team does feel that this option has the potential to be viable. This option and a working recommendation for moving forward is further discussed in the attached presentation as well.

Priorities & Foundational Principles:

Fiscal Responsibility & Sustainability

Prepared By:

Jenna Bowman

Attachments:

[Cover Page](#)

[Presentation - RCTC Rochester Regional Sports Center](#)