

June 28, 2010

A dream for a fitter, healthier Calgary

Local star sprinter and disabilities advocate to address city committee on benefits of new field house

If Calgary builds it, the benefits for all Calgarians will come.

That's the message an enthusiastic group of Calgarians is planning to take to the City's Community and Protective Services (CPS) committee meeting on June 30.

“It” is a multisport fieldhouse, part of an ambitious plan for refurbishing and upgrading Foothills and Glenmore athletic parks that will be presented to the committee for approval.

The fieldhouse – which would house an indoor track and provide court and field space for a wide variety of sports – would make year-round training and recreation a reality for all citizens of this weather-challenged city.

It's something the Calgary Multisport Fieldhouse Society (CMFS) has been working toward for a number of years.

“We're very excited about the recreation department's conceptual plan for the athletic parks across the city,” says CMFS vice chairman Donna Dixon, “and we're delighted that the fieldhouse is included in the Foothills plan. It will be the cornerstone of what will be a one-stop shop for sport, recreation and fitness at Foothills.”

The potential benefits to the City of Calgary are significant, she says. It's estimated sport tourism alone can add millions a year to city coffers. In addition, such a fieldhouse will be a major boost to improving the health and wellness of our citizens.

Currently, Calgary is one of the very few Canadian cities that doesn't have a multisport fieldhouse. Based on public input since the conceptual plans were revealed in May, Calgarians would like to see that change and the fieldhouse constructed as soon as possible.

The CMFS will use the June 30 meeting to speak directly to aldermen about the project and its benefits. CMFS chairman, Doug Ratzlaff will be joined by local star sprinter Sam Effah who will speak on behalf of athletes, and disabilities spokesman Bob Yoisten who will outline the benefits of such a facility for the disabled community.

If the CMFS is successful in bringing a multisport fieldhouse to Calgary, it will be the realization of a dream that dates back to the 1960s.

A fieldhouse video and project information are available at www.calgaryfieldhouse.ca

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