

Four-rink arena to be built in Bedford

By AMY PUGSLEY FRASER City Hall Reporter

Local hockey and ringette players and skaters will think they're walking on water.

Or four sheets of the frozen kind, at least.

The city's long-standing rink shortage will soon be alleviated now that council has endorsed a new four-surface "quadplex" for a site off Hammonds Plains Road.

"It's a very positive move forward," Mayor Peter Kelly said in an interview late Tuesday night.

Council unanimously supported negotiating with the proponent of the quadplex, which would be located on Gary Martin Drive behind Research in Motion's new building on Innovation Drive.

"We now know that a quadplex is underway," Mr. Kelly said.

Council spent the better part of Tuesday afternoon behind closed doors discussing a shortlist of locations for the rink. Other possibilities included Dartmouth Crossing and Rocky Lake Drive in Bedford.

The secrecy was necessary, the mayor said, because the discussions included contract and land issues.

But now the secret is out.

"We have chosen the vendor and we have chosen the location, and now we move forward to bring back the proposal to council for ratification," he said.

Mr. Kelly isn't sure how soon shovels could be in the ground or blades on the new ice.

"It depends upon financing and other potential points . . . but it's a step along the way."

The city will also be looking for money from the federal and provincial governments to get the rink built, he said.

Coun. Tim Outhit (Bedford), whose district includes Gary Martin Drive, called council's move "big and good news."

"This represents a \$33-million investment in infrastructure and facilities for Bedford and

surrounding districts to deal with a significant ice shortage in HRM."

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