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Halifax, Games get \$40.5m rec centre

Province, Ottawa contribute \$12m each for primary venue for 2011 Canada Winter Games

By AMY PUGSLEY FRASER City Hall Reporter

Major funding for a \$40.5-million regional recreation centre — the primary venue for the 2011 Canada Winter Games — was announced Wednesday.

Representatives from three levels of government were in Halifax for the morning announcement at the Keshen Goodman Public Library, which is next door to the Clayton Park site for the Mainland Common Recreation Centre.

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Both the province and the federal government will contribute \$12 million each for the centre, which will include competitive and warm-up pools and a field house with gymnasium space and a 200-metre indoor track. The city and some fundraising will provide the remaining \$16.5 million.

"Today's announcement is good news, not only for the community but for the entire province and region," said Premier Rodney MacDonald.

"Investing in the new centre is part of the province's commitment to encourage more Nova Scotians to live healthy and active lives. This resource will be a great legacy of the 2011 Canada Winter Games," he said.

Peter MacKay, minister of the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, was on hand, representing Lawrence Cannon, minister of transport, infrastructure and communities, because the funding comes from Building Canada, Ottawa's long-term infrastructure plan.

"This project will provide an important facility to benefit athletes across the province and Canada, while generating important economic benefits for the Halifax region."

The state-of-the-art centre will be equipped to host a variety of future provincial, national and international competitions, the city said in a release.

A community area will also allow for other sports activities and provide classroom space and meeting rooms.

After the 2011 Canada Winter Games, the facility will serve to develop and train high-performance, competitive athletes.

The establishment of the Canadian Sport Centre Atlantic within the Mainland Common centre will help the facility to achieve this mandate by attracting athletes to the facility and providing them with a range of specialized services, the city said in a release.

"The centre will be the heart of the Mainland Common, serving as a sports destination for HRM and the entire province as well as providing a venue for building a strong, closely linked community," Mayor Peter Kelly said.

Wednesday's announcement also included money to improve an older pool on the Halifax peninsula.

Centennial Pool on Gottingen Street will get an upgrade with a \$1-million investment from the province.

The province's contribution, with additional funding from the city, will provide residents with a high-performance swimming facility for the next 15 to 20 years, Health Promotion Minister Barry Barnet said Wednesday.

"A revitalized Centennial Pool, together with the Mainland Common centre, are excellent additions to the sport and recreation facilities currently in our province," said Mr. Barnet.

Renovations at the pool will include upgrades to the ventilation system, changing rooms and the pool facility.

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