



1 SCHOOL STREET
ST. GEORGE, NB E5C 3N2
p: 506.755.4320 f: 506.755.4329
info@easterncharlotte.ca

News Release

Blacks Harbour Arena Upgrades Update

22 January 2025

BLACKS HARBOUR – 2025 will mark the final year of the multi-year upgrade project for the Blacks Harbour Arena, now official called the Eastern Charlotte Recreation Complex. First signed in 2022, the project received \$380,000 in funding from the Gas Tax Fund. The funding was seeded by just over \$91,500 from local fundraising efforts (\$88,000 Chase the Ace, and \$3,500 Jersey Girls/U15).

By the end of 2023 a number of projects were completed, including: ice plant upgrades (Scada/PLC, machinery overhaul); lighting upgrades in the former curling club area, the dressing rooms and rink main hall; a new score clock which was installed free of charge by staff of J.D. Irving, Ltd. Lake Utopia; a multi-surface play floor on the former curling surface; heating upgrade in the lobby; roof repairs; door replacements, including a complete overhaul of the side entrance to the rink; security cameras; and equipment/accessories such as basketball nets, hockey stick holders and coaching whiteboards. Upgrades thus far have totaled just over \$280,000.

Ongoing work for 2025 includes upgrades/repairs to ice surface doors, rubber flooring and climate control for the former curling area. In addition, the municipality will be taking internal ice surface camera feeds and making it viewable to the public. Final work and the bulk of funds remaining will be utilized for the completion of the outdoor ball court; the old court was removed in the fall of 2024.

“I want to thank the efforts by the local fundraising team for getting this project off the ground,” said Mayor John Craig. “The Eastern Charlotte Recreational Complex, built in the late 1960s, has stood the test of time, continuing to cater to the needs of Eastern Charlotte as a multifaceted venue, suitable for a wide variety of functions and a multitude of recreational activities. This facility enhances both physical and mental well-being, providing an additional incentive to choose Eastern Charlotte as a desirable place to reside and call home. A further benefit of this facility is the considerable economic stimulus it provides to the local economy. In the winter months, it draws families to the area for tournaments, thereby boosting sales for lodging, restaurants, gas stations and retail, during a period of traditionally low demand, thus ensuring these businesses’ success and local employment.”

In addition to the work as part of the Arena Upgrades, the Municipality completed paving of Arena Street in 2024.

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