

## Edmonton Arena Study Sets Pricetag on New Facility

Written by Bill Johnson  
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In a report released this week by the committee empanelled to assess the feasibility of a new hockey arena in Edmonton, a 750,000 square foot, 18,000-seat rink could be built for approximately \$450 million. [As reported by Susan Ruttan](#), raising that kind of money will require focused cooperation between both government and private sectors.

Edmonton mayor Stephen Mandel, the commissioner of the study, was pleased with the result, but placed responsibility for the next step squarely on the Oilers. In an address to a local business organization, he observed, "It's up to Northlands and the Oilers to see what they can put together. If at the end of the day they need to come for other kinds of government support ... we'll go from there."

The new arena would succeed Rexall Place arena, current home of the Oilers. The older facility is only 500,000 square feet, and seats 16,680.

Edmonton has a rich legacy in the NHL, but constructing a new facility will require a unified effort among builders, financiers, politicians and voters.

Darryl Katz, prospective new owner of the team, has committed \$100 million, and at least another \$30 million can be raised privately.

One of the research committee members, Charlotte Robb, observed that a realistic government contribution, in conjunction with the private resources, might add up to a total of \$270 million, leaving the additional 40 percent to be funded "from where?"

Loans and bond issues are the most likely, but the debt incurred would eventually need to be repaid.

Several city council members believe the report is too thin on detail and too long on optimism.

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A copy of the report may be downloaded from the

[Edmonton Journal website](#)

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