

## Expanded digs finally a reality

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There are certain projects that are on the drawing board for such a long time you wonder whether they'll ever come to fruition. There's no doubting they'd be valuable additions to the community, but due to a variety of obstacles, funding being the primary one, they never quite get off the ground.

For a number of years there, the Delta Gymnastics Society's quest for more space for its ever-growing operation looked like it had fallen into that category, joining other well-intended initiatives like a new museum or a community theatre. Yes, there was most definitely a demonstrated need, but several factors, including a fire at its South Delta Recreation Centre home, held the project back.

Given the dedicated folks that run the gym club and the absolutely astounding participation figures (more than 4,500), it seemed like it would only be a matter of time before bigger digs were realized. However, year after year local gymnasts still found themselves shoehorned into inadequate space in Tsawwassen.

When the proposed expansion of the recreation centre wasn't included on Delta's initial list of shovel-ready projects vying for senior government funding last year, it was another setback, and it looked like the undertaking was doomed a fate like so many other worthy initiatives.

Thankfully that wasn't to be the case as not long after Delta Gymnastics did indeed secure federal money. Then came news out of municipal hall that instead of expanding in Tsawwassen, civic staffers were proposing a new stand-alone building in Ladner.

Construction of the Delta Sport Development Centre will begin later this month, and when it opens a year from now, it will provide gymnasts throughout the municipality with a state-of-the-art home.

A side benefit to the project is the space that will be vacated by Delta Gymnastics in Tsawwassen will allow for other uses. The community centres, at least those in South Delta, lack drop-in opportunities, so hopefully this revamped space will help rectify that situation.

I've taken my son to shoot hoops or play floor hockey in the gym at Sungod Recreation Centre in North Delta, but that's not an option down here, which is really a shame. I was heartened to hear Coun. Robert Campbell say the Tsawwassen centre will soon follow the Sungod model.

It would certainly be a bonus if local gymnasts weren't the only ones to benefit from the new building.

soon to join the civic precinct landscape.

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