

RESOLUTION R-5704

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF KIRKLAND AUTHORIZING DEVELOPMENT OF THE HOUGHTON PARK AND RIDE PROPERTY INTO A FIRST-CLASS ICEPLEX, RESTAURANT, AND COMMUNITY CENTER, INCLUDING DESIGN, CONSTRUCTION, LEASE, AND FUTURE OPERATION, IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE SEATTLE HOCKEY PARTNERS, WHICH OWNS THE KRAKEN HOCKEY FRANCHISE, AND AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO EXECUTE AGREEMENTS TO FACILITATE SAID DEVELOPMENT.

1 WHEREAS, in late 2023, the Seattle Kraken approached the City of Kirkland with a  
2 proposal to develop a Kraken community skating facility ("Iceplex") and City-run community  
3 center on the former Houghton Park & Ride site through a public-private partnership; and  
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5 WHEREAS, the site is owned by the City and was purchased with park-impact fees,  
6 providing a potentially viable location for a recreational facility; and  
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8 WHEREAS, following negotiations between the parties, the proposed Iceplex will  
9 include two ice rinks suitable for NHL practice use, a full-service public restaurant, and a City  
10 community center, as described in the negotiated agreements; and  
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12 WHEREAS, the City's 2022 Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan identified the  
13 need for expanded multi-use recreational and community facilities and encourages pursuing  
14 public-private partnerships to fund major parks and recreation projects whenever possible; and  
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16 WHEREAS, community feedback, including the failure of the City's 2023 Parks Prop 1  
17 ballot measure, emphasized that future large-scale recreation investments should minimize  
18 new tax burdens and, where feasible, leverage public-private partnership models; and  
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20 WHEREAS, this public-private partnership will advance the City's parks and recreation  
21 objectives and address existing insufficiencies in facility space and will further create Kraken  
22 skating facilities that will draw visitors from around the region and beyond to Kirkland; and  
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24 WHEREAS, the negotiated agreements require a range of public-benefit programming,  
25 including public skate sessions, youth and adult hockey programs, figure skating programs,  
26 and girls' and women's hockey programs, along with low-income grants and discounted access  
27 for disadvantaged users, thereby expanding equitable participation in ice sports and  
28 community recreation; and  
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30 WHEREAS, by partnering with the Seattle Kraken, the City has an opportunity to  
31 leverage private capital and expertise, transfer development risk, and secure a long-term  
32 community asset under public oversight and control, consistent with sound fiscal stewardship  
33 and public benefit, and the partnership will additionally provide the City with a high-quality,  
34 modern community center constructed by the Seattle Kraken, to be operated by the City for  
35 public use; and  
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37 WHEREAS, independent economic and feasibility analysis demonstrates a strong  
38 return on investment and potential economic benefits for local businesses, including increased  
39 sales, tax revenues, tourism, and revitalization of the surrounding 85th Street Station Area,  
40 and, further, the City-commissioned analysis conducted by CAA ICON, an economic

consulting firm, projects upwards of \$7 million annually in economic development benefits for the Kirkland and greater Eastside community; and

WHEREAS, the City Council has previously adopted Resolution R-5645 on September 17, 2024, providing guiding policy for negotiations with the Kraken and has taken subsequent actions—including issuing a Request for Qualifications, selecting the Kraken partnership as developer, and authorizing staff to negotiate the required legal agreements for construction and long-term operation of the Iceplex and Community Center; and

WHEREAS, the legal agreements authorized by this resolution approval accomplish the City Council's negotiation framework objectives set forth in R-5645; and

WHEREAS, these agreements further require that, when visiting NHL teams scheduled to play the Seattle Kraken need an off-site practice facility, the Iceplex will be prioritized for hosting such practices and that the Kraken will use commercially reasonable efforts to bring such teams to practice in Kirkland, thereby enhancing economic activity and Kirkland's regional profile; and

WHEREAS, the agreements further provide that the Professional Women's Hockey League Seattle franchise (PWHL Seattle) may use the Iceplex as its primary training facility, and, if that occurs, PWHL Seattle branding will be incorporated into the Project, including on the team's dedicated exterior entrance, thereby elevating the visibility of women's professional sports in Kirkland and strengthening the community's connection to high-level athletic programming; and

WHEREAS, the City has maintained the site through a temporary "Park and Play" use and will relocate those existing temporary park amenities when project development proceeds in order to preserve community access to these beloved recreational opportunities; and

WHEREAS, under the terms of the public-private partnership, the City will own all buildings and improvements at the conclusion of the agreement term, ensuring permanent public stewardship of these community assets; and

WHEREAS, the City Council finds and declares it is in the public interest to proceed with a public-private partnership with the Seattle Kraken for development of the Iceplex, Restaurant, and Community Center at the former Houghton Park & Ride site; and

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved by the City Council of the City of Kirkland as follows:

Section 1. The City Manager or his designee is hereby authorized and directed to execute on behalf of the City of Kirkland an Agreement to Lease for the Kraken Iceplex, Restaurant, and City Community Center project with the Seattle Hockey Partners, LLC, in substantially similar to that attached to this Resolution as Attachment 1.

Section 2. The City Manager or his designee is hereby authorized and directed to execute on behalf of the City of Kirkland, upon the closing conditions being met, the Ground Lease with the Seattle Hockey Partners, LLC, or another qualified subsidiary of the parent company, Slapshot, Inc., in substantially similar form to that attached to the Agreement to Lease as Exhibit C, and the City Manager is further authorized to, prior to closing, negotiate reasonable provisions in the event the lessee's construction financing lender requires modifications to the mortgage terms.

94        Section 3. The City Council hereby approves of the Development Standards attached  
95 as Exhibit L as the applicable development standards under Section 45.40.090 of the Kirkland  
96 Zoning Code for the development of the leased premises. The City Manager and the Parks  
97 and Community Services Director are hereby authorized to reasonably modify these  
98 Development Standards as they deem necessary to facilitate construction of the facility, with  
99 the final approved Development Standards to be finalized prior to closing on the Ground Lease.

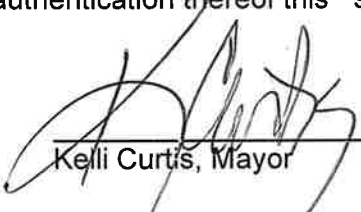
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101        Section 4. The City Manager or his designee is hereby authorized and directed to  
102 execute on behalf of the City of Kirkland all additional agreements necessary to complete the  
103 transactions authorized by this resolution, including the Community Center Lease, a trademark  
104 or licensing agreement, necessary easements or dedications, and other agreements and  
105 documents contemplated or required under the terms of the Agreement to Lease or Ground  
106 Lease.

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108        Section 5. The City Manager shall provide regular updates on the Kraken Iceplex,  
109 Restaurant and Community Center project and related issues to the Council no less than once  
110 per month as part of the Council agenda or in the City Manager Report until such time as the  
111 City Council makes the decision as to whether to purchase the facility.

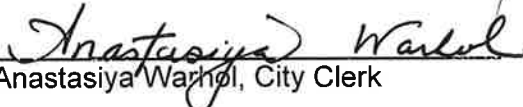
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113        Section 6. The City Manager is directed to return to Council at or prior to substantial  
114 completion of the facility for Council to evaluate whether the City of Kirkland will pursue  
115 purchase of the facility.

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118        Passed by majority vote of the Kirkland City Council in open meeting this 9th day of  
119 December, 2025.

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121        Signed in authentication thereof this 9th day of December, 2025.

  
Kelli Curtis, Mayor

Attest:

  
Anastasiya Warhol, City Clerk