



# ULTIMATE GUIDE TO DESIGNING A RINK



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## KEY ASPECTS

Welcome, And thank you for downloading this Ultimate Guide to Designing a Rink.

We've created this guide with a goal to help organize your thoughts, and help you get a rink project off the ground.

In my 30+ years as an architect I have partnered with hundreds of clients to help them turn their dreams into reality. This workbook will help you get started with your project by having you start to think through five key aspects of your project. These five keys will come together to form the overall vision of your new rink. Once you have completed the guide, our recommendation is that you take this information to an experienced rink architect who can help you make this vision a reality! At HTG we have a proven process for this exact purpose. The first step in this process is called InVision, and it is designed to help you plan your future.

As you navigate these pages, we'll introduce you to each concept and follow it up with an exercise to help you apply the concept to your unique vision. By the end, you will have a more detailed understanding of what success might look like for your rink.

If you have any questions or comments regarding any part of this guidebook please feel free to call or shoot me an email. I am here to help!

Sincerely,  
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# 01 ELEMENTS

Lets start by putting together a list of the “pieces of the puzzle” that will form your new rink. Below you will find a listing of several of the typical project elements that go into a rink. Take a minute to indicate which elements apply to your project:

## RINKS

The number and size of rinks you include depends on your specific projected use level. One note to consider when determining seating capacity- the number of seats will drive the code required number of toilets and number of parking spaces you need. We recommend sizing your facility for your typical event and **not** for your largest event. This is a more cost effective approach and it really creates that “big game” atmosphere when people need to squeeze in to see the game of the year! We’ve included space here for you to consider three rinks, but feel free to leave some sections blank if not needed.

### RINK A

Rink Size                    \_\_\_\_\_ NHL 85'x200'                    \_\_\_\_\_ Olympic 100'x200'                    \_\_\_\_\_ Studio 60'x120'

Rink Floor                    \_\_\_\_\_ Concrete                    \_\_\_\_\_ Sand

Seating Capacity                    \_\_\_\_\_ Number of Seats

Locker Rooms                    \_\_\_\_\_ Number of Locker Rooms (minimum of 4 is typical per rink)

### RINK B

Rink Size                    \_\_\_\_\_ NHL 85'x200'                    \_\_\_\_\_ Olympic 100'x200'                    \_\_\_\_\_ Studio 60'x120'

Rink Floor                    \_\_\_\_\_ Concrete                    \_\_\_\_\_ Sand

Seating Capacity                    \_\_\_\_\_ Number of Seats

Locker Rooms                    \_\_\_\_\_ Number of Locker Rooms (minimum of 4 is typical per rink)

### RINK C

Rink Size                    \_\_\_\_\_ NHL 85'x200'                    \_\_\_\_\_ Olympic 100'x200'                    \_\_\_\_\_ Studio 60'x120'

Rink Floor                    \_\_\_\_\_ Concrete                    \_\_\_\_\_ Sand

Seating Capacity                    \_\_\_\_\_ Number of Seats

Locker Rooms                    \_\_\_\_\_ Number of Locker Rooms (minimum of 4 is typical per rink)



# ELEMENTS

## TURF OR COURT SPACE

A number of rink facilities are expanding their offerings with turf or court space. Some owners will switch a rink to turf on a seasonal basis. Court space is always in demand and a large open space can be programmed for many different uses.

Surface Size                    \_\_\_\_\_ 120'x215'                    \_\_\_\_\_ Other

Seating Capacity            \_\_\_\_\_ Number of Seats

Locker Rooms                \_\_\_\_\_ Number of Locker Rooms (minimum of 4 is typical per rink)

## PROGRAMS

You want to attract as many customers as possible to your rink to help fill the ice time. In addition if you can add off ice training activities you now become a full service facility. Take some time to consider who your rink currently serves and what might that look like in the future.

Youth Hockey Associations	( Y )	( N )
High School Hockey Programs	( Y )	( N )
Boy's (Varsity & JV)	( Y )	( N )
Girl's (Varsity & JV)	( Y )	( N )
Division I or III University/College Programs	( Y )	( N )
Men's	( Y )	( N )
Women's	( Y )	( N )
Juniors Hockey Team	( Y )	( N )
Weights and Condition Programs	( Y )	( N )
Dry Floor Activity Rooms	( Y )	( N )
Others _____		







# ELEMENTS

## FIGURE SKATING

Its not always just about hockey! Many rinks have a strong figure skating community that are critical to filling off peak ice rentals. Having a separate locker room or warm up room can make your rink more attractive to figure skaters. Separate

Locker Room Facilities	(Y)	(N)	Number ( )
Warm Up Room	(Y)	(N)	

## WHAT IS, OR WILL BE, YOUR MARKETS (PERCENTAGES) FOR THE ICE RINKS:

Hockey	_____ %	School District	_____ %
Figure Skating	_____ %	Open Skate	_____ %
Park/rec	_____ %	Major Tenant	_____ %
Other?	_____ %	Curling	_____ %



## WHAT OTHER PRODUCTS AND SERVICES WILL YOU PROVIDE RELATED TO THE ICE RINKS?

Equipment Rental	(Y)	(N)	Restaurant/ Snack Bar	(Y)	(N)
Skate Sharpening	(Y)	(N)	Offices	(Y)	(N)
Separate Girls Locker Rooms	(Y)	(N)	Donor Wall / Honor Wall	(Y)	(N)
Party Rooms	(Y)	(N)	Fireplace Seating Area	(Y)	(N)
Concessions	(Y)	(N)	TV, Video, Sound Systems	(Y)	(N)
Trade Shows	(Y)	(N)	Vending	(Y)	(N)
Meeting Rooms	(Y)	(N)	Automated Video Filming	(Y)	(N)
Fitness/Track for walking	(Y)	(N)	Video board / Scoreboards	(Y)	(N)
Retail/ Pro Shop	(Y)	(N)			

Others: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Proposed Refrigeration Type:  Freon       Ammonia       CO2       Other \_\_\_\_\_



## 02 SITE

Too many rinks have been, and are still, being built in the wrong locations. Unlike many of the other concepts in this workbook (which are made up of various smaller decisions) choosing the site for your rink is a single decision that carries a lot of weight. Rinks built in a poor location can easily fail, but on the other hand, rinks built in a great location are set up better for long-term success.

At the end of the day, rinks that are conveniently located are going to attract more customers. If you are hidden away, it's very easy to forget about you and all your facility has to offer. It follows that "out of sight, out of mind" mentality.

Speaking of mentality, there's a perception by some facilities that location doesn't matter. Folks who need ice will find their way to you, right? But, consider this: if your rink is in a well-traveled area and surrounded by other attractions (think shopping malls, movie theaters, other forms of recreation) your customers get built in 2-for-1 activities. Mom can shop while dad and Susie go skate and Johnny hits the movie with his friends. Positioning your rink in the right environment will make a big impact for you and your costumers.

### HERE ARE SOME QUESTIONS TO THINK THROUGH:

We have an existing site	(Y)	(N)	Good access is a priority	(Y)	(N)
We are looking for a new site	(Y)	(N)	Visibility is a priority	(Y)	(N)

Is your rink (or future rink) located in an area experiencing economic growth? (Y) (N)

Describe: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Are your location options and your ideal customer demographics aligned with your business plan? (Y) (N)

Describe: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

What words describe your ideal location?



→ \_\_\_\_\_      → \_\_\_\_\_  
 → \_\_\_\_\_      → \_\_\_\_\_  
 → \_\_\_\_\_      → \_\_\_\_\_

What amenities are nearby that will be a benefit to your customers?



→ \_\_\_\_\_      → \_\_\_\_\_  
 → \_\_\_\_\_      → \_\_\_\_\_  
 → \_\_\_\_\_      → \_\_\_\_\_



HOCKEY CENTER

## 03 IMAGE

For far too long, the experience of being at an ice rink has been sub-par. Unfortunately many rinks have fallen victim to father time, becoming less and less maintained, cold and—let's be honest—smelly. Frankly, if you were to rate your experience versus the price you pay to participate in the sports at a rink, you would see there is a large gap.

In the past rinks have been purely driven by function and the bottom line dollar. But in today's world, where there is so much competition for your hard-earned dollars, people want an experience; something that feels new and fresh. With a little thought and careful placement of some key elements, you can really change the perception people have and give them that 'Wow' experience they are looking for when they come to your rink. Make the entrance pop with your signage and amenities. Give visitors a reason to come back time and time again.

### HERE ARE SOME QUESTIONS TO GET US STARTED:

What is the first impression you want people to have as they arrive on your property?

thankful motivated  
hungry  
competitive  
awe excited  
impressed

→ _____	→ _____
→ _____	→ _____
→ _____	→ _____
→ _____	→ _____

What is your brand and is it recognizable and reinforced throughout your facility and in your marketing?

logos brochures  
programming  
facility name  
color scheme  
flyers carpet  
seating taglines  
Banners

→ _____	→ _____
→ _____	→ _____
→ _____	→ _____
→ _____	→ _____

What rinks have you seen that you have liked? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



# IMAGE AND DESIGN WORKSHEET



What words describe the customer experience you'd like your new rink to provide?

energetic  
inaccessible  
quick  
approachable  
sleek  
tech-savy  
enhanced  
streamlined  
airy  
smart  
modern

→ _____	→ _____
→ _____	→ _____
→ _____	→ _____
→ _____	→ _____

How can your rink's exterior represent your brand?

windows  
music  
signage  
colors  
outdoor water  
seating stations  
flags shape  
building  
bike rack  
ample parking

→ _____	→ _____
→ _____	→ _____
→ _____	→ _____
→ _____	→ _____

How do you want customers to feel when they enter your rink's lobby?

welcome  
energetic  
eager  
content  
impressed  
passionate  
loud  
confused  
happy  
nervous  
confident

→ _____	→ _____
→ _____	→ _____
→ _____	→ _____
→ _____	→ _____

# IMAGE AND DESIGN WORKSHEET



What words describe the image of your rink?

functioning  
modern  
conventional  
quaint  
clean  
acceptable  
congested  
dated  
plain  
messy  
popular

→ _____	→ _____
→ _____	→ _____
→ _____	→ _____
→ _____	→ _____

What words do you want to describe your future rink?

attractive  
open  
convenient  
private  
progressive  
classic  
modern  
peaceful  
smart  
value  
common  
sense  
private  
integrated

→ _____	→ _____
→ _____	→ _____
→ _____	→ _____
→ _____	→ _____

What words describe your culture?

energetic  
reliable  
friendly  
business  
casual  
dedicated  
trust  
creative  
welcoming  
collaborative  
fun  
attentive  
peaceful

→ _____	→ _____
→ _____	→ _____
→ _____	→ _____
→ _____	→ _____

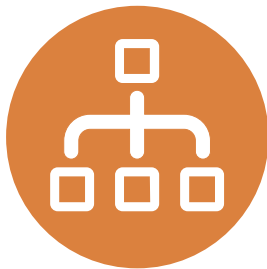


## 04 LAYOUT

A rink's layout carries a lot of responsibility—for both your staff and customers.

Using some of the key design elements, let's rate your rink (1=Low, 10=High)

**\*Note: We strive for all 10's in our new rink design**



Ease of flow for  
your customers

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10



Safety

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10



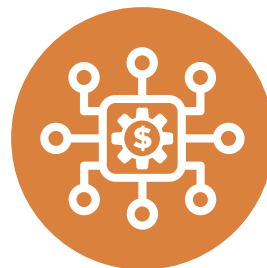
Efficiency for  
your staff

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10



Efficiency of design  
to help control  
construction costs

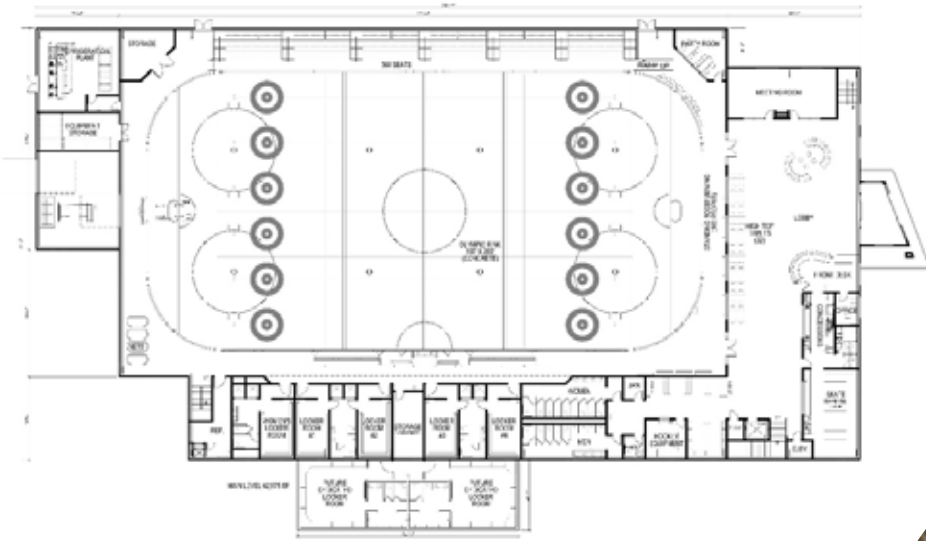
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10



Efficiency of design  
to help control  
operating costs

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10





## 05 REVENUE

While your facility is host to all the fun and games, it is also a business that relies on generating revenue where ever possible to maintain and operate the building at a high level. When designing a rink, it is important in the very beginning to plan where your revenue will come from so every aspect of the building can be designed to support it.

Where will the majority of the operating revenue come from?

---



---

How can we grow and maximize this revenue source?

---



---

How many people will it take to operate the facility?

At peak times? \_\_\_\_\_

At low times? \_\_\_\_\_

Who is operating the building and maintaining it? \_\_\_\_\_

### IDEAS FOR ADDITIONAL REVENUE:

- |  |  |   |
|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pro-shop          | <input type="checkbox"/> Vending Machines  | <input type="checkbox"/> Fitness Center                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Equipment Rental  | <input type="checkbox"/> Laundry Service   | <input type="checkbox"/> Dedicated Locker Room Facilities |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Restaurant        | <input type="checkbox"/> Party Rooms       | <input type="checkbox"/> Coaches Offices                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Concessions       | <input type="checkbox"/> Arcade – E-sports | <input type="checkbox"/> Storage Rooms                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Beer/Liquor sales | <input type="checkbox"/> Dryland Training  | <input type="checkbox"/> Other Sports                     |

# NEXT STEPS



Hopefully you found our Ultimate Guide to Designing a Rink helpful in organizing your thoughts. At HTG our InVision Process is specifically designed to help you take the next step. Our InVision process includes two steps:

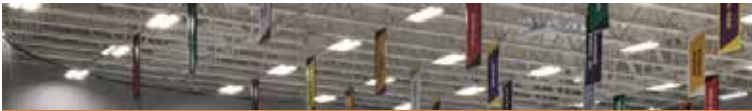
**Step 1 is a programming session.** This guide will serve as a great foundation to our programming session. Based on your responses to the exercises above, we dive deeper into each of the 5 elements, adding our knowledge and expertise to help you more completely define your vision for a successful rink.

**Step 2 is the feasibility study.** In Step 2 we take the program created in step 1 and develop the concept using a site plan, floor plan, and 3D renderings. We also develop a schedule and budget to help you understand the scope of making your vision a reality.

When you are done with InVision, you will have a clear picture of your rink with costs and schedule. This will give you the info you need to seek approvals, or start fundraising.

We are here to help! Hope to hear from you soon.

Tom



**DAKOTAH ICE CENTER**  
PRIOR LAKE, MN



**ICE GARDENS**  
SACRAMENTO, CA



**ICE IN PARADISE**  
NORTHERN, CA



LEAVENWORTH, WA



**SNO-KING**  
SEATTLE, WA



**PAGEL 2**  
MINNETONKA, MN



