

IN EARLIER NEWS

Toronto Blue Jays Spring Training Facilities and Development

Posted 1/16/19: Player Development Complex Construction Community Meeting

On Wednesday, January 16, 2019, the City of Dunedin, along with the Toronto Blue Jays and Gilbane Building Company, held a general public community meeting regarding the Toronto Blue Jays Player Development Complex (PDC) construction process for the residents who live near Louis A. Vanech Recreation Complex who wish to find out more about the project construction and how it may directly affect them. The meeting was held at 6:00 pm at the Dunedin Community Center located at 1920 Pinehurst Road, Dunedin.

[View "Construction Game Plan" PowerPoint Presentation](#)

Posted 12/20/2018:

Construction Begins at Toronto Blue Jays Training Complex. The City of Dunedin entered into an agreement with the Toronto Blue Jays in November 2017 for the Toronto Blue Jays to keep their Spring Training and Minor League operations in Dunedin for the next 25 years. In addition, the agreement outlines and provides for renovations to the Dunedin Stadium and the expansion of the Blue Jays Player Development Complex into the Louis A. Vanech Recreation Complex located at [3051 Garrison Road](#). The details related to the project construction, park amenities and recreational programs at the Player Development Complex are outlined below:

- **Project Construction:**
Construction at the Louis A. Vanech Recreation Complex is scheduled to begin at the end of February. This follows some preliminary field lighting demolition in December. The contractor, Gilbane Building Company, will mobilize onsite mid-February to install perimeter safety fencing and construction trailers. At that time, the Complex will be closed to the public and City staff will begin salvage operations. The new training complex (the Player Development Complex or PDC) includes baseball and agility fields, a new 2-story, approximately 100,000 sq. ft. training center and various outbuildings such as batting tunnels, maintenance structures and irrigation pump house. The entrance to the new PDC will utilize the existing entrance to the Louis A. Vanech Recreation Complex. [View Rendering](#)

Construction traffic is expected to travel from Solon Avenue on the south side of the PDC to Garrison Road. You can expect construction traffic, occasional dust and associated noise. One or more temporary road closures may be necessary during construction. The public will receive advanced notice for any non-emergency closures. Construction is scheduled to take place at the end of February. Hours of operation are from 7:00 AM to 7:00 PM Monday through Saturday. However, extended or early morning hours may be necessary on occasion to address large concrete placements or to recover days lost to

weather or other unforeseen circumstances.

We apologize in advance for the inconvenience and ask for your understanding during this exciting time. The City of Dunedin, the Toronto Blue Jays and Gilbane Building Company are committed to being good neighbors and to address your concerns in a timely manner should they arise. A project website will be established and contact information will be provided for ongoing communication purposes. (Construction dates and schedule subject to change.)

- Dog Park(s):
Happy Tails Dog Park was built at Louis A. Vanech Recreation Complex in November 2003. The dog park has served the community well for many years; however it will permanently close mid-February.

The City of Dunedin and Achieva Credit Union joined together to expand and bring new improvements to the Achieva Paw Park located at [1659 Virginia Street](#). Construction for the Paw Park expansion began November and the park is scheduled to reopen in January.

The City of Dunedin Parks & Recreation staff continues to look for and identify a second location for a future, city-owned dog park.

- Playground:
The Vanech Playground will be relocated mid-February to the Dunedin Community Center located at [1920 Pinehurst Road](#).
- Softball:
Dunedin Parks & Recreation continues to offer youth softball programs through [Dunedin Little League](#). The Adult Softball League program has been discontinued; however, Dunedin softball players have the opportunity to join a league in surrounding cities such as City of Clearwater and City of Oldsmar at the resident rate.
- Garrison-Jones Elementary School:
City staff has met with the Administration staff of Garrison-Jones Elementary. The school has communicated to the parents through their monthly newsletter that the student drop-off/pick-up area would no longer be available for use and is constructing a new drop off route.

Posted 12/13/2018:

The City of Dunedin issued Bonds for the Blue Jays Spring Training Facilities Improvements. The City of Dunedin issued \$20,250,000 of Taxable Non-Ad Valorem Revenue Bonds, Series 2018A and \$12,310,000 (par amount) of State Sales Tax Payments Revenue Bonds, Series 2018 to fund a portion of the cost of the additional improvements to the Player Development Complex and the Blue Jays Stadium. This funding represents a significant portion of the total \$81.5 million project, and provides funding relating to the Blue Jays Club contribution of \$20.0 million and the State of

Florida's \$14.1 million contribution to the project. The remainder of the project funding will come from Pinellas County (\$41.7 million) and the City (\$5.7 million).

Posted 12/02/2017:

The City Commission approved a 25-year License Agreement between the City of Dunedin and the Toronto Blue Jays for the construction and renovation of the Dunedin Spring Training facilities located at the Vanech Recreation Complex on Solon Avenue and the Dunedin Stadium on Douglas Avenue.

Posted 12/20/16:

The Pinellas County TDC 2016-17 Capital Projects Funding Application was submitted by the City of Dunedin.

Posted 09/26/16:

A City Commission Workshop was held from 6-9:00 pm at City Hall. This was the first time in two years that discussions and negotiations regarding the Toronto Blue Jays were discussed publicly with the City Commission and residents. Representatives from the City of Dunedin, Toronto Blue Jays, Populous Architects, Bonn Marketing Research Group and Nielsen Sports were on hand to provide presentations on possible stadium and training facilities, economic and media impact, traffic, parking and environmental protection, along with projected costs, timelines and funding. An open house for the public was held on Tuesday, September 27, 2016 from 5:30-8:00 pm at the Hale Activity Center, 330 Douglas Avenue, where these experts were again on hand with display boards and to answer the public's questions.

Since September 2014, City staff has been in discussions with the Toronto Blue Jays under a confidentiality agreement. The unique atmosphere in Dunedin, intimate feel of the stadium, and large contingent of Canadians that attend games, have made it one of the "Top 5 Places to Watch a Spring Training Game" according to Sports Illustrated. However, compared to spring training facilities around the State of Florida and Arizona, the facilities are sorely lacking in premium spaces, fan amenities, and player development upgrades. The City's discussions with the Blue Jays have been preliminary and largely "big picture" to this point with discussions focusing on size, space, location, funding and scope of any additional facility construction and renovation that the Blue Jays believe are needed to continue to make Dunedin their spring training home. The current use License Agreement expires on December 31, 2017 and includes two, five-year options at the team's discretion.

For more information, contact Dunedin Parks & Recreation at (727) 812-4531 or [search City Commission videos, minutes and agendas](#).