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facility will fill that gap. "That's why we're doing the project — we're doing it for the community," Grand Forks City Administrator Todd Feland said. "I really want your feedback because when we come back in September, we really aim to go to final design." The facility is estimated to cost \$107.5 million, according to designs presented to the council earlier this week. The facility's construction would mainly be funded by revenue bonds paid for by the 0.75% event center sales tax that Grand Forks voters approved an extension and modification of last fall. That tax has been in place since 1996 and was originally created to fund the construction of the Alerus Center. In the 30 years since, the tax

has funded the debt service of the original Alerus Center revenue bonds and capital construction projects at the facility. November's vote allowed a change to the tax so the city to use the revenue to fund capital costs the Altru Sports Complex in addition to the Alerus Center. The current proposal is to have a third of the tax revenue go towards the Alerus Center capital reserves and the other two-thirds go towards the Altru Sports Complex's debt service and capital reserves. The tax currently brings in around \$10.5 million a year and is projected to grow to \$12 million a year by 2028. The Alerus Center debt service isn't paid off until 2029, but the city could pay off the remaining bonds starting at the end of 2025; there's roughly \$20 million left in debt service.

The City Council will have to decide what financing scenario they want to go down for the new Altru Sports Complex. "(Mike Vatnsdal, city budget officer) has had a lot of conversations with lenders and there is interest out there in the community," Grand Forks Finance Director Maureen Storstad said. "We do have a plan to issue a (request for proposal) for that interim financing mechanism once we do get 100% schematic design." The city finance department has estimated that the city has up to \$100 million in borrowing capacity for the project, but is looking at interim financing scenarios in the transition period as the Alerus Center debt service ends. Discussions are also still ongoing on potentially including the Grand Forks Children's Museum on the site.

That would provide infrastructure savings to the city and would allow the city to concentrate venues and amenities along the 42nd Street corridor. Being closer to the Alerus Center and Interstate 29 could also alleviate potential traffic congestion as compared to the location near South Washington Street and 44th Avenue South. The location would involve a land lease to the children's museum. City staff presented a proposal that would include the Grand Forks Jobs Development Authority owning the land, but the children's museum owning the building. A final decision is expected in September on whether to move forward with the proposal or not. The council has had disagreements about whether to include the children's museum. "I do not think we should be involved at

all," council member Rebecca Osowski said. "I'm very, very concerned about this children's museum and tying it into this project; I think it's going to league us in a bad sport in the future." Council President Dana Sande said that while he does have reservations, attractions like children's museums often add beneficial economic impact to the community. "They do attract so many people to your community — lots of families come to stay in hotels, they spend money," Sande said. "They're spending a lot of time out, trying to get fundraisers trying to raise dollars locally ... I do, however, have concerns about them being able to cross the finish line because every day that goes by the project just keeps getting more and more expensive."

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training to current employees. LifeCare also helps its new American employees with getting the resources they need, like bank accounts, social security, cars, drivers licenses and other things. LifeCare began hiring

Filipinos around the last two to three years, Human Resources Director Lois Slick said, and is aiming to bring in around 13 more. It is the start of a good thing, she said, but it is quite a process to bring them into the U.S. The Filipino employees have saved LifeCare, she said. It is difficult to hire people in a rural area,

such as a long-term registered nurse position that has been open for two years. There are five Filipinos working in LifeCare's lab, and some registered nurses are on the way though the immigration process is slow-going. "Without them we would be in serious trouble," Slick said. "They have saved us."



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