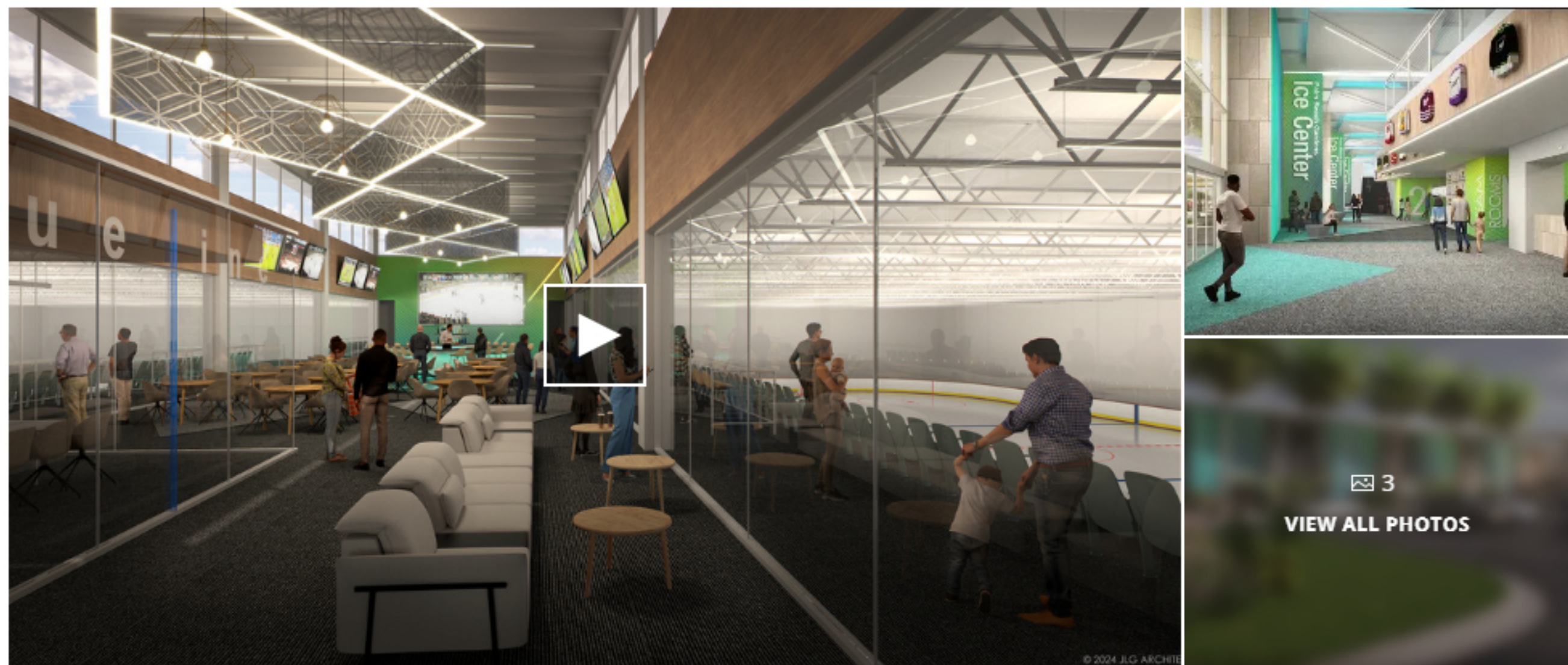


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Wayne Gretzky to nurture budding talent at new \$40M Palm Beach Gardens ice rink facility

by Skyler Shepard | Fri, April 5th 2024 at 5:04 PM
Updated Fri, April 5th 2024 at 5:35 PM



The Palm Beach Gardens City Council approved the new \$40 million ice rink facility on Thursday. The non-profit group, the Palm Beach North Athletic Foundation (PBNAF) is heading the construction of two National Hockey League (NHL) size rinks utilized for youth hockey, figure skating, public skating, adult leagues, curling, and sled hockey. (JLG Architects)



TOPICS: WAYNE GRETZKY PALM BEACH GARDENS ICE RINK HOCKEY NHL PBNAF FLORIDA GRETZKY HOCKEY SCHOOL



PALM BEACH GARDENS, Fla. (CBS12) — Legendary hockey player Wayne Gretzky is lacing up his skates in support of a new venture in sunny South Florida.



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But the real headline grabber is the Great One, who has lived in Palm Beach County with his family for quite some time. He will lend his expertise to develop future hockey stars at the rink.

Gretzky plans to utilize the new ice-skating facility to host the Gretzky Hockey School, one of the premier hockey schools in the world founded by Gretzky and his son Ty.

“Together with my son, we’re honored to expand the reach of our hockey school to more residents in Palm Beach County,” said Gretzky. “Hockey has the power to unite communities, and we are thrilled to be a part of bringing that unity to even more people to cultivate a new era of hockey enthusiasts.”

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The news comes as a boon for hockey enthusiasts in Florida, a state traditionally known more for sunshine and beaches than slapshots and face-offs. Gretzky's reputation as a hockey icon is unmatched, and his presence is sure to attract aspiring young athletes from all over South Florida.

See also: Delray Beach Pickleball Tournament draws players from around U.S.

Ty Gretzky spoke to CBS12 News about why he and his father back the new ice-skating facility.

"There's a really good team behind it," Ty said. "Having my dad be in the backyard, the whole family living so close it all just worked out perfectly. With their hard work, they were able to successfully get the plans approved and everything ready to go and build the rink in Palm Beach Gardens. We're super excited. Everyone's fired up about it, there's more rinks closer to home now."

The need to be on the rink was passed down to Ty's two daughters. He says it will be nice to take his daughters figure skating closer to home.

The facility will also feature a full-service restaurant and sports bar, a retail store, a training space, an academy space, and a dedicated medical space sponsored by the Hospital for Special Surgery (HSS), the PBNAF said.

The facility will be built on Plant Drive Park. Construction will take a few years, but they hope to open in the summer of 2026. For more information on the project visit the PBNAF [website](#).

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Gretzky is a Canadian former professional ice hockey player and former head coach. He played 20 seasons in the National Hockey League from 1979 to 1999, and has been widely acclaimed as the greatest ice hockey player of all time by numerous writers, players, and the NHL. To this day, Gretzky holds the record for most career goals, assists, and points scored in NHL history. Upon his retirement in 1999, he held 61 NHL records and was inducted into the Hockey Hall of Fame.