



SOUTH ST. PAUL SWIMMING POOL AND AQUATICS CENTER PREDESIGN & DESIGN

Bill #HF 225 | Hansen

The City of South St. Paul is seeking an appropriation of \$500,000 to fund preliminary design, and final design (construction documents) for a new swimming pool and aquatics center in South St. Paul.

South St. Paul has operated a public swimming pool since 1939, with the current pool at Northview Park being in operation since 1956. However, due to its age and wear, the pool faces significant maintenance issues and is beyond its useful life. An independent analysis reveals an estimated \$1.3 million in critical deferred maintenance items requiring repair through 2025, including pool basin deterioration, plumbing issues, and aging filtration systems. This deterioration has led to pool leaks averaging 12,000 gallons per day, which is roughly 5% of the total volume. The Parks & Recreation Master Plan Update in 2024 identified the urgent need to replace the current Northview Pool.

Critical Need for Infrastructure

The current pool's failing infrastructure poses safety risks and limits access to recreation. The cost and scale of repairs support full replacement.

Community Impact

The new aquatics center will serve a diverse community: 25% of residents are people of color, 16.5% are Hispanic or Latino, and 22.5% are under 18. Additionally, 12.3% of residents under 65 live with disabilities, and 9.7% live at or below the poverty level. The new facility will offer safe, inclusive, and affordable recreation.



Economic and Tax Capacity Context

South St. Paul has the lowest property tax capacity in Dakota County and ranks 153rd of Minnesota's 200 largest cities. At the same time, it has the highest tax capacity rate in the county and ranks 38th highest statewide. This limits the city's ability to fund major projects without placing added burden on taxpayers.

Financial Assistance Required

South St. Paul continues to manage the long-term financial impacts of major infrastructure investments made in recent years. While critical to public health and safety, these past commitments limit the City's capacity to fund new capital projects without external support. Given the City's constrained tax base and ongoing infrastructure needs, state assistance is essential to move the aquatics center forward.



Project Design Study

In July 2024, the City issued a Request for Proposals for a Pool Feasibility and Design Study. JLG Architects was selected through a competitive process. The \$89,674 study—funded by the city's general fund—is underway and will guide design and identify funding sources for construction and long-term operations.