



City of Saint Paul Capital Budget Proposal

Funding years 2022-2023

Thank you for your interest in the Saint Paul Capital Improvement Budget. Through the capital improvement budget process, we strive to reflect and uphold the values of our community. Our funding decisions are guided by the principles of equity and inclusion, strategic investments, and fiscal responsibility.

Please respond to each question listed below as it applies to your project. Please do not submit your proposal until the application is complete.

Before proceeding with the application, please read and indicate your awareness of the following requirements.

ADA requirements available at: <https://www.ada.gov>

I am aware of ADA requirements.

CERT requirements available at: <https://cert.smwbe.com/>

I am aware of CERT requirements.

Saint Paul's public art ordinance available at: <https://www.stpaul.gov/departments/financial-services/public-art-ordinance-program>

I am aware of the City's public art ordinance.



Contact Information

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Project Overview

1. Project Title:

North End Community Center (former Rice Recreation Center)

2. Brief (1-2 sentence) Summary of Project:

The scope of work includes phased construction of a new building and park amenities called the North End Community Center, a project that is shovel-ready for construction.

3. Project Location:

1025 Rice Street, Saint Paul, MN 55117

4. Affected Ward(s): See the [Saint Paul District Council and Ward Lookup](#)

- Ward 1 Ward 5
- Ward 2 Ward 6
- Ward 3 Ward 7
- Ward 4

5. Affected Neighborhood District Council(s): See the [Saint Paul District Council and Ward Lookup](#)

- District Council 1 District Council 6 District Council 11 District Council 16
- District Council 2 District Council 7 District Council 12 District Council 17
- District Council 3 District Council 8 District Council 13 Citywide
- District Council 4 District Council 9 District Council 14
- District Council 5 District Council 10 District Council 15

6. Estimated Project Completion Date:

Construction to begin in 2022 and completed in 2024

7. Submitting Department:



Parks and Recreation Design and Construction

8. Department Priority (numerical priority out of total submitted projects, ex. 3 of 6):

Construction of North End Community Center is a high priority for Mayor Carter, Council President Brendmoen, and for the Department of Parks and Recreation. Subsequent CIB funds are needed to complete construction on the new community center to be construction at the corner of Rice Street and Lawson Ave.

9. Which category best describes your project?

- Buildings
- Streets and Utilities
- Residential and Economic Development
- Parks and Trails
- Other

Project Description

10. Please describe the project including a physical description of the project noting important sub-elements and information on project timing and/or phasing.

This project is to construct, furnish, and equip a new state of the art community center with corresponding site improvements along Rice Street reflecting innovation, sustainability, and community pride for all ages, backgrounds and abilities.

The 25,000 square foot building program includes a full-size gymnasium, multipurpose community rooms, a teaching kitchen, a teen room, space for after school programs, a fitness room, and a dance/yoga room.

The outdoor facilities are anticipated to include a multi-use synthetic turf athletic field, new play areas, speak takraw courts, basketball court and other site improvements including lighting, furnishings, plantings, and opportunities to gather in the shade.

The project has received \$1 million in CIB funds to complete construction documents and an additional \$3 million in 2021 towards construction. The funding request for 2022 and 2023 CIB is an \$5.5 million each year for construction of the new facility and site improvements. This was a similar funding approach for the recently completed Frogtown Community Center where subsequent CIB funds are needed to complete project construction.

Purpose and Justification



11. Please provide pertinent information on the purpose and justification for this project. Please consider the following questions in your response:

- Why is this project important? (eg. opportunity for collaboration, condition, significant need, etc.)
- What problem is this project trying to solve?
- What benefits does it provide to residents or users? What is the historical context of this project?
- Is this a new project, an improvement or expansion project, or maintenance on an existing asset?
- Does this project address any specific health and safety concerns?
- Does this project address an inequity or otherwise support diversity and inclusion?

Rice Recreation Center was constructed in 1924 and has gone through several iterations throughout its lifetime. Currently, Rice Recreation Center occupies a space inside the Paul and Sheila Wellstone Elementary, the former location of Saint Bernards High School.

The facility is difficult to locate as the user is required to enter the school first, then proceed to the recreation center. Because of the school's status as a charter school, many of the students at Wellstone Elementary live outside of the neighborhood, and as a result, many community members are unaware that Rice Recreation Center exists at its current location.

The interior spaces at Rice Rec are too small for neighborhood gatherings, so recreational program offerings are very limited, and the building mechanical operations systems are out of date. In addition to lack of usable space for flexible programming, the existing facility does not provide quality user comfort or updated opportunities for health and wellness, as a contemporary recreation center must. The new building will comply with current accessibility regulations and safety requirements. Currently, the ADA accessible route is difficult to navigate, and as a result, prevents some members of the community from being able to participate in the center's offerings.

The outdoor park amenities have poor site lines from the building due to a significant grade change. Negative interactions between teenagers and the elementary school students are common. The play area is heavily used by the elementary school students and is in need of an update. This park has nearly 2 city blocks of athletic fields which includes 6 baseball diamonds; however, baseball is no longer a primary athletic interest of the community.

The existing teen center, which was designed to complement the high school, is now out of place, disconnected, and underutilized in its current location as many students and community members prefer the Rice Street Library for their social and technological connections. The new facility will provide a versatile new Teen Space with state-of-the-art technology.

A new facility, with expanded programming, will create a true *Community Center* in an underserved location in the City. Furthermore, an improved connection to the library will increase pedestrian safety at the Rice Street and Lawson Avenue intersection. This adjacency to the Rice Street Library will increase opportunities for shared and expanded programming



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between the two buildings. A new North End Community Center will provide greater recreational and social engagement experiences to one of the most ethnically diverse communities in Saint Paul.



Funding Request

Anticipated Funding Source*	Prior 5 Years	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	5-Year Total
[Eg. Grants]	\$4,035,000						
[Eg. Bonds]		\$5,500,000	\$5,500,000	\$5,000,000			
Total	\$4,035,000	\$5,500,000	\$5,500,000	\$5,000,000			\$20,035,000

Anticipated Expenses*	Prior 5 Years	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	5-Year Total
[Eg. Design]	\$1,035,000						
[Eg. Construction]	\$3,000,000	\$5,500,000	\$5,500,000	\$5,000,000			
Total	\$4,035,000	\$5,500,000	\$5,500,000	\$5,000,000			\$20,035,000

***Add rows if needed.**

Additional comments regarding funding request:

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Fiscal Responsibility

12. Have grants or other matching funds for this project been secured?

- Yes
- No

If yes, please explain: No grants received to date, but we plan to reach out to Ramsey County, Capital Regions Watershed District and Xcel Energy for potential partnerships due to reconstruction of Rice Street by Ramsey County and "green energy" approach of the building.

13. How does this project further City goals of fiscal responsibility? As applicable, include details such as:

- Status and timing details of grants applied for and/or secured or other non-City funding sources.
- Estimated annual increase or decrease in operating costs for this project.
- How operating cost increases or decreases were determined (include details such as personnel costs, materials, maintenance, contracts, energy savings, etc.).
- If new infrastructure, how the department will pay for the increased operating costs.
- Whether the project is currently underway.
- If/how the project prevents a measurable financial loss or reduces future expenses.
- If/how the project contributes to growth in the City's tax base.



This project has been phased to maximize timing and financial resources to get the project shovel ready. The \$1,000,000 received in CIB funds in 2019 and 2020 have been used to complete construction documents and conduct testing on site. \$3,000,000 in 2021 has been allocated for construction. Future funding in the amount of \$5,500,000 in years 2022, 2023 and 2024 is needed complete construction of the building and surrounding outdoor space.

The building is in a lower mobility area where a community center is needed for safe social and physically active programming

A new building will comply with the City of Saint Paul Sustainability Building Policy. This project strives to be a sustainable leader in the region with energy efficient technology that includes solar panels mounted on the gymnasium roof and a geothermal well field beneath the park. This will lead to significant savings in energy costs over the life of the building.

Improvements to the neighborhood's recreation center will increase property values and will expand recreational and social gathering opportunities for all who live in the neighborhood. The building was intentionally designed to engage with Rice Street, the Rice Street Library and create a "campus" environment with the elementary school connected by green space in between.

Condition

14. Facility/Pavement Condition Index: Current Rice Recreation Center is disconnected from the community and in poor condition. It has a facility rate index of 14%.

15. Expected useful life of the project: 50 years

16. Please elaborate on any issues relating to condition. Consider things such as:

- Whether/how this project remediates health or safety issues that pose a danger to users.
- Whether/how this project addresses code violations or other mandates or legal requirements.

There are several safety concerns of users of the Rice Recreation Center. The facility shares a parking lot with Wellstone Elementary school, and this parking lot is part of the vacated Marion Street between Cook and Lawson Avenues. Although this route has been designated as one-way parking for several years, vehicle signs are often ignored, and the parking lot is commonly used as a cut-through route for vehicles traveling on Marion St. north or south of the designated parking area. Recreation Center users and elementary school students need to cross this vacated street several times a day to access the outdoor recreation space. In addition, the ADA accessible path is challenging because it includes a long ramp leading to the front door of the existing facility. The elevation change, combined with the lack of internal paths to navigate it within the park, requires those with disabilities to either take a much longer path to the city sidewalk, or park their vehicle closer to Rice Street, far from the building. This arrangement prohibits those with disabilities from experiencing the facility equally to those without physical



disabilities. Site lines from the building to the outdoor recreation space are also poor and several negative interactions with teenagers are on record taking place in the “blind spots” that are out of view from staff. The building is not air conditioned and there is little shade relief outdoors on hot days. Students and recreation center users are required to walk nearly 3 blocks from the current facility to use the Library on Rice Street. This emphasizes the need for traffic calming measures to help provide a safer pedestrian crossing at the Rice-Lawson intersection.

Usage

17. Describe the current and potential usage of this project, using the following questions as a guide:

- If this is an existing asset, who currently uses it?
- How is it used?
- Who might use it if this project is funded?
- How will this project/improvement meet the needs of the surrounding community/those who do or will use it?

The primary goals for the project include providing spaces to accommodate youth, teen, adult, and senior activities. The building will be sustainable, safe, welcoming, and approachable for all, with strong visual connections within the building and to exterior spaces. Replacing the Rice Recreation Center, a new North End Community Center has the potential to make a significant positive impact to many people throughout the community by providing more opportunities for social connections, health and wellness activities, and access to technology. This facility will be a place of pride for the North End community.

Equity and Inclusion

The City of Saint Paul and the Capital Improvement Budget Committee are committed to advancing equity and inclusion in Saint Paul.

Economic Impact

18. Describe the economic development impact of the project, using the following questions as a guide:

- How does this project create jobs?
- How does this project promote business opportunities?
- How does this promote economic development in underserved or underdeveloped neighborhoods?

Rice Recreation Center and Park is located in the North End community of Saint Paul. Census data indicates the neighborhoods adjacent to the park have a higher rate of poverty, lower mobility, and higher than average ethnic diversity when compared to the City as a whole. Majority ethnic groups for this area include 36% Asian or Pacific Islander, 23% Black or African American, and 11% Hispanic or Latino. 46.6% speak a language other than English as their primary language

A new larger building will increase job opportunities with increased programming and staffing needs.



A new community Center will provide local women and minority owned businesses opportunities to provide services for construction and furnishing the new facility.

The new community center will attract more users to the park and increase the foot traffic to neighboring businesses along Rice Street. Interior spaces can be used for training, and the new kitchen is designed as a space for cooking classes to teach community members valuable new skills.

Improvements to the neighborhood's recreation programming will help activate Rice Street, increase property values, and will expand access to recreational and social gathering opportunities for all who live in the neighborhood.

Community Impact

19. Please describe the impact this project will have on the community. As applicable, address issues such as:

- Potential to enhance neighborhood stability or quality of life
- Right fit (supports or enhances the cultural characteristics of the surrounding community)
- Proximity to Area of Concentrated Poverty where 50% or more of residents are people of color (ACP50)
- Art/aesthetics
- Unmet need
- Accessibility
- Transportation
- Potential long term positive/negative effects on community
- Historical or cultural significance of asset
- Public safety
- Equitable and inclusive design

The building program evolved from experiences and successes of recently constructed Saint Paul community centers. It includes a full-size gymnasium, a community room, teaching kitchen, teen room, space for after school programs, a fitness room, and a dance room. Each of these spaces is designed to be flexible and adaptable to changing community interests over time. When the North End Community Center is completed the residents of the surrounding area will have a state-of-the-art building and park. It will be a place to gather, socialize, be active, engage and share ideas with others.

Community input guided the design for North End Community Center and Parks and Recreation is committed to delivering the new community center for all residents to use for years to come.



Strategic Investment

20. How does this project further City goals of strategic investment? As applicable, include details such as:

- Collaborative arrangements with outside project partners, including who they are and what their role is with the project.
- Collaborative arrangements with other City departments for this project (example: bundling materials).
- How this project promotes innovation (incorporates new technology, uses resources strategically, etc.).
- How this project takes climate change/environmental sustainability/energy efficiency into account.
- How this project complies with a need or goal identified in an adopted City or neighborhood plan.

The proposal is to construct a new community facility and relocate services from the existing recreational center within Wellstone Elementary. While the increase facility size will add additional operating expenses, these systems will be energy efficient and result in reduced maintenance costs. Securing funding in a timely manner is critical as the annual cost escalation rate is just under \$500,000 each year the project is delayed.

Other

What else you would like to tell us about this project that was not addressed in the questions above?

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