Greater Mankato Regional Recreation Facilities 
Assessment Overview & Recommendations

Provided by: Mankato Sports Commission’s Regional Recreation Facilities Steering Committee & Technical Advisory Committee

Preamble/Situation:

Since 2008 there has been formal discussion in the community regarding a need for adequate recreation facilities. More recently, in the 2015 Envision 2020 Community Survey results (refer to Addendum A), sports facilities ranked in the top five most important goals and priorities for the area. This desire accompanies the region’s higher than average concentration of 20 - 39 year olds¹ (representative of young and growing families) and active older adults². Additionally, as an emerging regional destination for business, visitors and families these amenities are believed to have positive economic impact for our region.

Allocating community resources to upgrade existing facilities and build new recreational facilities is linked to a strategy of competitively positioning the region to increase its attractiveness to individuals, families or businesses looking to locate or remain in the area. Many communities such as Rochester, MN and Traverse City, MI have invested in recreation facilities, and our observation is that these efforts increased the quality of life for residents of all ages in these communities providing a competitive edge over the offerings in the Mankato/North Mankato’s MSA.

In addition to community competitiveness, this investment focuses on many driving factors many of which also ranked high on the E2020 Community Survey list as being the top 5 most important goals and priorities including the following:

- business development
- talent attraction/retention
- livability
- maintaining active residents from youth to older adults
- a growing sports economy

Like the rest of the nation, the Mankato/North Mankato MSA’s available talent is not sufficient to keep pace with its growing economy and the retiring boomer generation³. Business members serving on the Steering Committee have unequivocally stated that individuals and families are selecting places to live based on a combination of factors that include the lifestyle available to themselves and their children. Businesses in our region are already finding it difficult to attract additional talent and some are deciding to refrain from growing or are opening “outposts” to secure the talent needed to power their businesses. Additional recreational amenities can be one way to position the regional marketplace to attract the required workforce necessary to sustain and grow the local economy we already enjoy.

As a by-product, these expanded and new facilities represent an opportunity for Greater Mankato to be a destination for regional, national and international sporting events. Such facilities will also be available to the larger community for recreational, competitive and programming uses during the non-peak usage times.

¹ Blue Earth and Nicollet Counties combine to have the highest rate of 20-39 year olds (33% of the total population) in Minnesota; which represents the 10th highest concentration among Minnesota counties (32,163) (2014 American Community Survey 5 year estimate)
² AARP Cities to Watch for people age 50 and older (2007)
³ Baby boomers age out of working ages between now and 2030 (U.S. Census Bureau & Minnesota State Demographic Center)
Background

Efforts to garner support for additional regional recreation facilities have risen and fallen over the years. Visit Mankato’s work started more specifically in 2008 with conversations about facility needs according to local sports groups as this organization seeks to grow the sports economy and will do what it can to remove barriers to its growth. This progressed to a commissioned Sports Tourism & Event Study conducted by Jack Kelly with Event Partners, Inc. (Sept. 2009 – Jan. 2010). Mr. Kelly reviewed the current and future potential for the sports tourism climate and hosting circumstances in Greater Mankato and made a series of recommendations. The executive summary is attached as Addendum B.

In September 2011, I & S Group began hosting forums with representatives from numerous sports organizations, elected officials, city staff and community recreation facilities. These meetings lead to the decision to hire a consultant to more formally assess the facility needs (Phase 1) and determine the feasibility of facility development (Phase 2). Funding was provided by the All Seasons Arena Board to hire Don Schumacher, Executive Director of the National Association of Sports Commissions, to conduct the assessment. He visited with sports groups and community members in April 2013. At the same time Ed Hruska, Executive Director of the Rochester Sports Commission, met with same groups as ground work to develop the Mankato Sports Commission. Phase 1, the facilities assessment, was completed and submitted to the ASA Board in November 2013. Phase 2, the feasibility analysis, was completed by All Seasons Arena for an additional sheet of ice, but no other financial feasibility has been completed for other upgraded or new recreational facilities. The executive summary is attached as Addendum C.

In March 2014 the Mankato Sports Commission was introduced and officially launched in October. A subcommittee of Sports Commission, the Sports Facilities Committee, had its first meeting in November 2014 and began developing a plan to support regional recreation facility development in Greater Mankato. This included supporting the extension of the local option sales tax as one funding mechanism for facilities.

In the spring of 2015, community members were recruited into two teams, the Technical Advisory Team (TAT) comprised of staff leadership who manage large recreational facilities and the Steering Committee comprised of Sports Commissioners, elected officials and community leaders. The Mankato Sports Commission will work with them to develop a plan for 1) facility enhancements/developments; 2) provide support for the extension of the local option sales tax; and 3) gain support of the local electorate for the sales tax extension.

Legislation to extend the local option sales tax was introduced in the 2015 legislative session and remains in conference committee limbo due to the failure of the state legislature to negotiate and pass a tax bill. The TAT and Steering Committee have continued to work and are preparing additional information to support the case for inclusion in any tax legislation to be passed in the 2016 session.

In summer 2015, staff from both cities met independently with user groups of existing facilities to learn additional specifics of their needs for facility enhancements and development.

Regional Recreation Facilities Development Timeline:

[Diagram showing timeline and key events related to the development of regional recreation facilities.]

DRIVING FACTORS

Community Competitiveness • Business Development • Talent Attraction/Retention • Livability • Active Residents • Sports Economy
Analysis

The sales tax extension legislation being sought by Mankato and North Mankato would authorize an additional $63 million in borrowing to 2038 broken down as following:

- $9 million for North Mankato
- $54 million for Mankato ($29 million for existing facilities + $25 million for new facilities)

Of the $63 million, the respective city councils have designated approximately $23 million to non-recreational infrastructure investments:

- North Mankato
  - $4 million for purposes that may include regional parks/rec, but could also include downtown redevelopment, library, etc., consistent with their existing statutory authorization
- Mankato
  - $5.1 million for Flood Control
  - $2.7 million for Public Safety Communications
  - $5 million for Water Quality Improvements
  - $6.4 million for Transportation

That leaves approximately $40 million that could be dedicated to existing and new regional recreation facilities.

Existing “Core” Facilities Improvements

Through their parks planning process, Mankato has identified $9.5 - $12 million that will be necessary to make “core” capital improvements to existing regional recreation facilities (refer to Addendum D).

New & Existing Facilities Expansion

The TAT and Steering Committee agree with the findings of the NASC/ASA study that interest in the community exists for development of new recreation facilities and expansion of existing facilities. Mankato has identified expansion opportunities concerning existing facilities, which can be referenced on Addendum D. In addition, North Mankato’s parks plan has a recently added addendum with recommendations concerning expansion of Caswell Park (refer to Addendum E).

Through the facilities development process, the TAT and Steering Committee considered potential capacity expansions to existing facilities as well as new facilities (refer to Addendum F), estimated the associated capital costs and potential funding partners. In summary, a total of $45 - $62 million worth of capacity expansion and new facility projects was identified. However, approximately $28 - $30.5 million is available in sales tax dollars for such projects. Partnerships that can leverage non-sales tax dollars will be a necessity.

The types of facilities identified as options for addressing the time, space and availability needs of various sporting and community groups are listed below in no particular order:

- Field House that would either include court space or open up capacity on court space at other venues
- Indoor swimming/aquatics facility (competition caliber)
- Sports bubble/dome with turf
- Indoor ice
- Indoor tennis courts
- Expansions of various other existing assets, such as but not limited to, Caswell Park, Franklin Rogers Park, Tourtellotte Pool, Prairie Winds Middle School and Community Fields at Rosa Parks

At this time the majority of our local youth and adult sports organizations, as well as other groups, cite a lack of facilities as an ongoing concern or detriment to their improvement or growth. Facilities are used for day to day activities and practice as well as for events and tournaments which generate revenues local groups rely on to keep the financial barriers to participation as low as possible for our local citizens.
Tournaments and events also translate into significant dollars being spent in the local economy by out of town visitors. The ability to host more tournaments for any group will also reduce the amount of travel to an extent for our local residents thus keeping more of our dollars in our economy.

The ASA sidebar provides an example of what is happening within our community with many other facilities and recreation activities/sports. Facility availability is at such a premium that local residents are driving to surrounding communities for practices and even to host their own tournaments. All are hosting less tournaments than they are capable of and willing to simply due to the lack of facilities. Gustavus is being utilized by local swimming organizations and classrooms are being emptied and put back nightly so mats can be rolled out for wrestling practices. Organizations such as LEEP are competing for facility use with many others and all are finding themselves in a position of their groups not being able to practice more than once per week and in some cases much later into the evenings than is ideal for our youth. In addition, other communities have shown many uses beyond sports in their facilities including older adult recreation, day care activities during the day, and afterschool programming, as well as many others.

The Steering Committee and Technical Advisory Committee believe these issues could be affecting the competitiveness of the region in regards to livability for individuals, families and businesses. As stated earlier, employers have already alluded to the lack of facilities playing a factor in recruiting and retaining talent. A lack of action on facility development may compromise the region’s ability to grow and stay competitive.

**ASA SIDEBAR:**

The first sheet of ice at ASA was built in 1973 with the second added in 1998. At the time of the first sheet was built our MSA population was 76,800. When the second sheet was added it was 84,771 and our most recently reported numbers for 2014 show the MSA at 98,478.

But it’s not just the growing population that needs to be a consideration when looking at this example. In 1972 federal legislation called Title IX was passed. This legislation aimed to and has increased opportunities for girls in sports. At the time the first sheet at ASA was built the primary use by girls was for figure skating or open skating. By the time the second sheet was constructed girls hockey was just getting off the ground in Minnesota and locally. The first ever MSHSL girls hockey season was played in 1994-1995 with 24 participating teams in Minnesota. Today there are 107 participating girls hockey programs in the MSHSL.

This is also a reflection of what hockey is like among girls at the local level and youth levels. In the 1990’s, girls who wished to play hockey did so on the boys teams and in limited numbers whereas now MAHA has teams for girls that were not in existence in 1998.

While ASA may have been adequate in terms of the number of ice hours available in 1998 and into the early 2000’s, it simply is not today.

The TAT and Steering Committee came up with the following scoring categories that they felt should be considered when analyzing future projects.

1. **Leverages Partner Funds** - Percentage of outside partner funding (i.e. clubs, grants, private support, etc.) for initial costs and ongoing operational costs, other than sales tax and tax levy contribution from governmental partners.
2. **Community Benefit/Accessibility** - Will the proposed improvement be broadly supported, benefit the general population, fill a current or expected void or offering not currently available, serve underserved populations, and include a significant percentage of the space/time available for general community usage? Will the proposed improvement result in increased utilization of the facility or space throughout the year?
3. **Economic Impact** - Amount of estimated community economic impact from possible usage from those outside the community and characteristics of spending habits. Will it improve or attract tournament hosting capabilities?
4. **Operational Sustainability** - Operational costs should be sustainable and operating budget should be balanced, including replacement and depreciation costs.
5. **Leveraged Existing Capacity** - Presents opportunity to maximize usage of existing facilities and/or space.
6. **Community Competitiveness** - Sets the community up to be competitive with top competitors, especially concerning livability and employee recruitment/retention.
Conclusion & Recommendations

In conclusion, the work completed thus far has been done in an effort to ensure the Mankato/North Mankato MSA continues to be positioned for a prosperous future. It is believed that by investing in regional recreation facilities through the local option sales tax and matching private investment, our community will be able to:

- Increase our community’s competitiveness
- Further business development by incorporating community amenities that will address livability needs thereby assisting with talent attraction and retention
- Provide additional opportunities for active lifestyles for residents of all ages
- Spur additional economic development through the growth of the sports economy

Key community leaders with support from the Sports Commission and Greater Mankato Growth staff are positioned to support these efforts and submit the following recommendations:

Recommendation #1:
The Cities of Mankato and North Mankato should place extension of the current ½ cent local option sales tax to 2038 on the general election ballot on November, 2016.

While it is anticipated and expected the Legislature will adopt the extension requests by each city, should the community not gain approval by the Legislature in the 2016 session, this important vote should take place in 2016 to better position our communities for the 2017 session. Securing voter authority first is a common practice among many cities who have successfully secured sales tax extensions.

Recommendation #2:
The Mankato Sports Commission, with support from the Facilities Steering Committee, Greater Mankato Growth and Visit Mankato commit to spearheading a campaign in support of the sales tax extension that will educate the public on the entire package of projects being proposed by both cities including the recreational and non-recreational components and will make a clear and convincing case for why they should cast their votes in favor.

While the bulk of this report has focused on regional recreation facilities, it is understood the other components in the legislative request are of great importance and will be supported as well.

Recommendation #3:
Because the total estimated cost to complete upgrades to existing facilities and construct new facilities that are of interest to the community, successful implementation will require financial participation from multiple partners including key individuals, businesses, sports organizations and public and private entities. While the TAT and Steering Committee fully support and acknowledge the basic core infrastructure needs among existing recreation and non-recreation facilities, they support ensuring sufficient funds remain to secure maximum leverage of partner funds.

To be clear, this report identifies the regional recreation facilities that are of interest to the community and their projected costs and potential funding partners/scenarios. It does not identify when or where these projects will be constructed. It is expected that complete realization of these projects will in all likelihood be a process that will see projects mature as funding and operational partnerships are identified and support is secured from the public, City Councils and other key stakeholders. Therefore, the Sports Commission and Greater Mankato Growth in partnership with volunteers from the TAT and Steering Committee will work to ensure active participation and partnerships from all relevant parties throughout the implementation process.
This report is the result of the work conducted by the following community members:

Regional Recreation Steering Committee Members:
- Brett Skilbred, Coughlan Companies
- Julia Corbett, Blethen, Gage & Krause
- Denny Dotson, Dotson Company
- Larissa Egli, MANTAS Swim Club
- Beth Fowler Rohrich, SPX Sports
- Chad Surprenant, ISG
- Dave Wittenberg, Stifel, Nicolaus & Co
- Stephanie Loeffler, Mayo Clinic Health Systems
- Chris Frederick, City of Mankato
- Mark Piepho, Blue Earth County Commissioner
- Jack Kolars, Nicollet County Commissioner
- Mark Dehen, City of North Mankato

Technical Advisory Team Members:
- Pat Hentges/Paul Vogel, City of Mankato
- John Harrenstein, City of North Mankato
- Bob Meyer, Blue Earth County
- Ryan Krosch, Nicollet County
- Audra Boyer, Mankato School District 77
- Marsha Danielson, South Central College
- Jared Larson, All Seasons Arena
- Kevin Buisman, MSU Athletics
- Don Westphal, Bethany Lutheran College
- John Kind, YMCA

Facilitators:
Mark Erickson, MN Amateur Sports Commission
Jonathan Zierdt, Greater Mankato Growth

Staff:
Anna Thill, Visit Mankato
Chris Willaert, Visit Mankato
Patrick Baker, Greater Mankato Growth
Executive Summary of Envision 2020 Community Survey

Survey was completed a total of 585 times, 8 on mobile devices, 134 on paper surveys and the 443 taken online.

People that were involved in phase 1 of E2020
- 91 respondents identified themselves as being involved in phase 1 of Envision 2020.

Rank of Key Performance Areas that are believed to be the most important to our future
- 22% – 378 votes - Livability
- 20% – 344 votes - Education
- 19.6% – 337 votes - Economic Development
- 14.1% - 242 votes - Community Planning & Regional Governance
- 13.8% - 238 votes - Health & Human Services
- 10.5% - 180 votes - Transportation

Top 5 most important goals and priorities
- 759 - Business Development
- 748 - Retain and attract an educated workforce
- 688 - Optimize our existing resources/businesses to support a livable, sustainable and regional economy that supports controlled growth
- 531 - Address affordable housing and the preservation of housing stock
- 501 - Encourage the development of a multi-sport complex

Other Goals and Priorities
- A sizable amount of respondents want a competition level swimming pool.
- Many people want better sharing of resources between Mankato and N. Mankato
- Attract jobs that provide a living wage
- More youth opportunities and limiting activity fees for the youth (Including transportation)
- Issues around poverty, affordable housing and diversity
- Issues pertaining to public safety (i.e. domestic violence, number of police and fire, education)
- Education for all ages (Especially early childhood and lifelong learners)
- Address sprawl and sustainability
- Transportation (i.e. for youth, future, cycling, to and from other regional hubs)
Avenues of how people would like to become involved

- 263 people would like to be a part of focus groups
- 98 people would like to become a KPA team member
  - Below is the breakdown of which KPA people specified they wanted to be a part of
    - 17 – Livability
    - 9 – Transportation
    - 9 – Education
    - 8 – Health & Human Services
    - 7 – Economic Development
    - 7 – Community Planning & Regional Governance
    - 3 – Any KPA
    - 1 – To be determined
    - 37 – Didn’t specify
- 38 people would like to provide some sort of administrative help

Areas in which respondents reside

- 452 respondents reside in Mankato or North Mankato
  - 300 from Mankato
  - 152 from North Mankato
- 115 respondents reside outside of Mankato and North Mankato

Age

- Average age is around 42 years old
- 16 – 24 = 5.5%
- 25 – 34 = 17.6%
- 35 – 44 = 24.2%
- 45 – 54 = 21.8%
- 55 – 64 = 19.8%
- 65+ = 11.1%

Key observations from subjective responses

- Clarification must be made of how E2020 is considered to be a steering organization, rather than a rowing organization. Some respondents were confused why E2020 took credit for some of the accomplishments. Envision 2020 is an engine to raise awareness and apply pressure to organizations that enact change.
- Community Planning & Regional Governance as defined in phase 1 is nearly completed.
- New areas of focus can be applied to these KPAs based on comments from the survey. Areas which KPAs could now include are issue revolving around living wages, affordable housing, community diversity, expanding youth opportunities including transportation and the collaboration of Mankato and N. Mankato for City services.
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF STUDY

For many years, Mankato has been a host for amateur athletic events, collegiate sports events and other sports-related opportunities. Other municipalities have also become and are continuing to become more sophisticated in this area and sports, as an industry, have proven to be a very positive source of direct economic impact. For these reasons, both the community as a whole and the Greater Mankato Convention and Visitors Bureau (GMCVB) have identified sports-related tourism as a specific opportunity area for economic growth.

In great part, this increased interest is because the nature of sports-related tourism results in more total visitors per participant than the broader range of other conventions and meetings as each sports participant generally brings additional family members along with them, particularly for youth sports events. Of further interest, several different pieces of research have shown that youth girl’s events attract many more accompanying members, with the research showing that the average girls event attracts 3.1 additional visitors compared to .9 additional visitors for youth boys events. For all of these reasons a decision was made to assess in greater detail the current status of Mankato in this area and to develop an action plan for increased sports development.

The concept of economic growth through sports is not a new one but is one which has received an increasing amount of attention in recent years. The commonly accepted scenario is one where increased economic value is created and other positive community impacts are generated from hosting events of all types. This increased economic growth and development also helps to create additional related community resources which, in turn, help to attract the next level of events, fueling additional development and so forth.

To assess the community’s current status within the municipal sports marketing industry, and to provide a series of focused recommendations to enhance its position in this area, the City of Mankato retained Event Partners Inc. (EPI), a nationally recognized sports tourism development and consulting firm. EPI was requested to conduct a detailed review of the current sports tourism and hosting circumstances in Greater Mankato, of the future potential for Mankato and to make a series of recommendations.

This detailed review consisted of advance research into Mankato’s recent and planned future sports history, two days of on-site review and meetings with the local sports hierarchy and civic leaders, research for and the drafting of this report to include a series of focused recommendations for Mankato to consider. The effort began in September and October with preliminary meetings extended to an on-site visit and the final report was prepared December 2009-January 2010.

It is necessary for understanding Mankato’s current tourism standing within the industry to begin with a brief review of the status of the sports tourism business in the United States and then to provide commentary and information on the economic and tourism impact from sports in the U.S. as a whole, for Mankato and for other U.S. cities.

This information regarding other U.S. cities is expanded upon by discussing the role of sports development organizations (commissions, foundations, associations, etc.) throughout the U.S. It should also be noted that the formation of a specific organization for Mankato designed to identify, bid on and to host tourism-related sporting events is recommended and that its positive impact can be economically justified.

As one looks at the elements necessary for achieving or maintaining a level of success in the sports marketing area, it becomes clear that the issues and concerns for the Mankato area are more “software”-oriented (organization, process, procedure, objective-setting, etc.) rather than hardware (facilities, tourist infrastructure, etc.).
As is noted, there are a number of advantages for Greater Mankato. The strengths include:

- A good current group of facilities particularly with Mankato’s array of college and university facilities – both current and planned;
- Its central location and relatively easy access from anywhere in the multi-state north central United States area;
- A good regional population base with the sports interest and diversity necessary to support virtually any sport as well as a participatory and spectator history for many sports;
- Sufficient disposable community income;
- A solid sports reputation, particularly for collegiate sports, as well as for specific sports such as ice hockey;
- An adequate tourism infrastructure including 1,000 hotel rooms as well as area “points of interest’ outside of sports.

There are also a number of factors which must be addressed by the community in the sports marketing area industry:

- Significant and increasing competition from other municipalities of similar size for sports tourism development and other recreational dollars;
- The need to schedule around other uses for key athletic facilities although the expressed availability for university and collegiate facilities may be more than in other areas;
- Determining the number and types of locally based organizations available to sponsor and otherwise provide financial and in-kind support to sports events and the overall sports effort;
- The need to ensure that there is a focused and competitive sports tourism marketing type organization acting on behalf of the community. This might be the most important piece of the future effort—whether the organization be a sports “commission” or “tournament task force’;
- The need to coordinate Mankato and North Mankato needs and opportunities.

Once this overall array of information was reviewed in depth and the trends noted with respect to sports in general in the U.S. and compared to the current situation in Mankato, a series of both general and specific recommendations were provided in two phases as follows:

PHASE I

- Create very specific and measurable overall sports development goals and objectives.
- To assist the above objective development process, conduct several public meetings to allow community members to express their ideas and opinions on possible areas of focus as well as to identify what efforts they may be willing to personally support.
- Consolidate ongoing efforts by establishing a formal sports tourism development component (i.e. Sports Commission) with specific staffing. This function would be under the day to day oversight of the GMCVB but should receive specialized leadership, direction and sports-related oversight from a separate Board of Directors.
- Complete an updated sports facility inventory and infrastructure survey.
- Develop and carefully update and maintain a master sports calendar for Greater Mankato for 2010 and beyond. This will be a key element for the entire process.
- Develop and implement a community and media awareness program for this effort.
- Identify specific sports and events to be targeted. This effort should be based on (1) the existing calendar noted above with logical extensions, (2) projected future hotel and venue availability, and (3) possible targeted events following meetings with event rightsholders.
- Identify key relationships to be developed and nurtured to help attract these events to include the hospitality community, venue owners and event rightsholders.
- Provide management, marketing and other assistance to existing events as well as to new events coming in.

DRIVING FACTORS
- Community Competitiveness
- Business Development
- Talent Attraction/Retention
- Livability
- Active Residents
- Sports Economy
Following a period in which the enhanced sports development efforts demonstrate their value to the community and build a foundation for the future, Phase II of the recommendations should be considered. This may come fairly quickly.

**PHASE II**

- Update the organization and consider additional full-time staffing.
- Expand sports tourism marketing objectives to include short-, mid- and long-term objectives based on the same factors noted above but with more focus based on experience.
- Review and reassess sports organization governance and funding to ensure its permanence and the optimum functioning of board structure.
- Develop and put into place programs to identify and solicit community resources (financial and otherwise) to enhance these efforts.
- Update and ensure a long range update process for venues and infrastructure.
- Enhance/expand media and public awareness program(s).
- Improve and institutionalize the process to target and solicit events to possibly be hosted and/or created using the factors noted in Phase I.
- Develop and update a target series of sport organization relationships and ensure that these relationships are maintained.
Market Analysis for Proposed Regional Recreational Facility

Prepared for All-Seasons Arena Board
Prepared by the National Association of Sports Commissions
This study concludes community needs do exist for the projects that have been considered so carefully over the past few years. Each can be justified in terms of unmet local needs...the most important measure of need. Funding is another matter. Whether funds to construct a bubble dome, YMCA joint use swimming pool, an additional sheet of ice, and/or indoor multiple courts for basketball, volleyball, tennis and the mat sports can be raised is another matter. The NASC did not find indications that public funding would be available to cover construction costs or years of potential operating shortfalls.

A financial analysis will be needed to help community leaders decide on the best paths to follow.

Adding an indoor track to a proposed multi-court building would raise construction and ongoing maintenance costs. The national championship track at MSU offers everything needed, but availability will always be an issue. An estimate of the higher costs could be part of the financials.

Our research did uncover the need for better infrastructure that will smooth and improve the flow of farm products to market.

The NASC has recently studied the costs of constructing 8 to 10 court indoor multi-sport complexes. Depending on the number of courts they can run between $8 and $12 million for a tournament friendly building.

We have also examined competition swimming venues (short courses) from a low of $9 million to more than $14 million, depending upon the footprint, number of permanent seats, additional meeting rooms, etc.

Each of these proposed facilities must compete with other worthy projects. The projects include the expansion of the Civic Center, The Southern Minnesota Children's Museum, a proposed new seniors program (VINE), and the probable need for additional classroom space. Additionally, the YMCA recently completed a fund raising campaign and could be challenged to launch another to support an aquatics center. If the Civic Center is not expanded, the need for additional ice time would increase because the MSU women's term would remain at All-Seasons Arena.

This study indicates the reasons why new facilities are constructed. They all begin with unmet local needs. As attractive as additional visitor spending can be, the cost/benefit relationship of facilities, operating shortfalls, and increased economic impact must be considered.

We are concluding that it is unlikely that a dome or a multi-court building, or an indoor tennis complex will cover expenses. Every one of these is needed. Each will contribute substantially to the quality of life and the viability of the sports served. It becomes a local issue as to how far to go in terms of additional study. We can only suggest that the rink and pool have the best opportunities to reach a sustainable level of operation.

Sustainability is a major issue in the development of sports facilities. The sports event travel market has received a good deal of positive publicity as a recession resistant industry. This attention is deserved. Our industry has continued to expand over the past ten and more years. Cities are recognizing the benefit of increased economic impact through sports. Attracting visiting teams and their families and friends does produce significant benefit, and this report describes how this occurs. It must also be based upon sports facilities that already exist or on those that can be built and afforded.
There is a boom underway in amateur sports facility development. Some of these projects are going to succeed and others will not. The ones with the best chance of success are those that have been the subject of a feasibility study conducted by individuals that do not have a stake in the outcome. This study is an example of such a process.

Another important recommendation is to expand the number of locally controlled events that attract visiting teams. This is obviously most effective for sports that are well served. Softball at Caswell Park is one example. The park has been a successful host of softball tournaments that are putting people in your hotels and restaurants. To the extent that more events can be created that use your existing facilities the better it is for everyone. Local clubs earn money, facility rentals are paid, and visitors leave behind dollars that circulate in your economy.

The new youth baseball complex at Rosa Parks School is an example of what can soon be accomplished with baseball. This is an excellent complex.

There are opportunities in youth soccer. The Mankato United Soccer Club has been an active participant in the development of new fields. Without their support far fewer fields would exist. Short sided games (6 on 6 or 8 on 8) can take place on multiple fields within the dimensions of a full size field. Certainly an indoor soccer practice facility would reward the hard work and dedication of the MUSC, and on that basis alone you may decide to request financial projections for a dome.

The NASC is pleased with this opportunity to provide information designed to permit good business decisions. Only you can know all of the factors at work. Our job has been to reflect what we have learned during our deliberations.

A complete analysis of whether or not each element of the complex becomes a reasonable community investment should resolve all of the thinking and planning that went into construction of the wish list for new sports facilities.
LIST OF CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS TO EXISTING FACILITIES IN MANKATO

Expansions or improvements to existing assets
A number of capacity expansion projects were considered by the Technical Advisory Team and Steering Committee as being valuable to the community. The table below summarizes these potential projects for the City of Mankato. Partnership opportunities do exist for a number of the expansion projects.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EXISTING FACILITIES</th>
<th>CORE NEEDS AS IDENTIFIED BY CITY OF MANKATO</th>
<th>FUTURE CAPACITY EXPANSION PROJECTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TOURTELLotte PARK</td>
<td>ADA compliance, upgrade mechanical systems, overall rehab</td>
<td>Consider parking improvements; consider zero depth pool, splash pad, water slide; consider pickleball improvements/ expansion</td>
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<tr>
<td>ALL SEASONS ARENA</td>
<td>Current debt to pay down; mechanical upgrades to ice system needed</td>
<td>Examination of ice sheet addition to existing facility</td>
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<tr>
<td>CURLING CLUB</td>
<td>Ice making, dehumidification, new floor</td>
<td>Collaboration with batting sports on offices, training &amp; storage (MoonDogs, MAYBA, MAGFA)</td>
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<tr>
<td>FRANKLIN ROGERS PARK</td>
<td>ADA compliance, concessions, field drainage, bleachers, parking rehab</td>
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<tr>
<td>THOMAS FIELDS</td>
<td>Creation of girls fastpitch softball facility; reorientation of fields with upgrade</td>
<td>Realign Thomas 1 &amp; 2 into 2 fastpitch size fields</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRAIRIE WINDS MIDDLE SCHOOL</td>
<td></td>
<td>Develop 1 90 foot baseball field (lighted); develop 2 lacrosse fields; develop 2 soccer fields</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OTHER FIELD IMPROVEMENTS</td>
<td>Kiwanis/Land of Memories Park improvements</td>
<td>Provide year round surface to outdoor hockey facilities for bike polo &amp; rink soccer; develop parkland on former MNDOT site; grading community/neighborhood parks multi-use fields; covers and maintenance of outdoor hockey facilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMMUNITY FIELDS AT ROSA PARKS</td>
<td>Additional parking</td>
<td>Play structure &amp; shelter; single full size athletic field (can be split into 2); additional playing field and practice field</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BUSCHER PARK</td>
<td>Grading of rec and athletic fields for soccer/youth football; provide skinned infields &amp; backstops for tee ball program</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THOMAS O. ANDERSON PARK</td>
<td></td>
<td>Consider gate &amp; concessions upgrades; consider more scoreboards; improve grading and drainage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JAYCEES PARK</td>
<td></td>
<td>Upgrade concessions, improve/expand parking, fencing improvements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OTHER ADULT SOFTBALL</td>
<td></td>
<td>Add two adult softball fields to inventory if the Thomas Fields is upgraded with girls fastpitch facility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$9.5M - $12M</td>
<td>AS IDENTIFIED BY CITY OF MANKATO</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
NORTH MANKATO PARKS PLAN ADDENDUM: CASWELL PARK

**Expansions or improvements to existing assets**
A number of capacity expansion projects considered by the Technical Advisory Team and Steering Committee as being valuable to the community. The table below summarizes the potential expansion of Caswell Park. Partnership opportunities are being explored for this expansion project.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EXISTING FACILITIES</th>
<th>CORE NEEDS AS IDENTIFIED BY CITY OF NORTH MANKATO</th>
<th>FUTURE CAPACITY EXPANSION PROJECTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CASWELL PARK</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Phase 1: Indoor hockey arena</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Phase 2: Aquatic facility or second sheet of ice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Phase 3: Second or third sheet of ice</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
LIST OF POTENTIAL NEW FACILITIES

This addendum contains additional information regarding potential facilities that were identified by the NASC/ASA study as well as the Technical Advisory Team and Steering Committee. This addendum further identifies and explains needs. It is not meant as a feasibility analysis, specific plan or project proposal for any potential facility but rather a summary of some of the thought process, ideas and considerations that went into identifying those potential facilities identified in the Analysis section of this report.

Field House
Many ideas of what a field house should consist of or include were discussed by the Technical Advisory Team (TAT) and Steering Committee in individual and joint meetings. Initially upon mention of the words “field house” most people think of a building with multiple courts such as Myers Field House at MSU. While that is the most typical concept for a fieldhouse there are other variations such as those that include turf as well. There are a number of potential partnerships that exist for such a facility but the overriding need is to either create more court space or alleviate demand on currently existing court spaces in our area. Many of our current court spaces are being utilized by groups that would be considered as non-traditional court space users such as baseball, softball, soccer and lacrosse especially during winter and early spring months. This does have a direct impact on the amount of time that groups such as the Mankato Basketball Association, volleyball and LEEP are able to secure for their programs. Court space in Lake Crystal, Nicollet and Janesville are all being utilized by Mankato area programs and events due to their inability to obtain court time locally and organizations are limiting practices based on the lack of court availability.

A 2-day basketball tournament held in this area such as what the Mankato Basketball Association currently runs one time per year has an estimated economic impact of around $670,000. With appropriate court space they feel they could fill 6 weekends per year with the same format for an estimated economic impact of approximately $4,000,000. This same court space would be able to adequately host various other events with similarly significant economic impact including volleyball and wrestling tournaments that would ensure year round use.

Indoor Swimming/Aquatics Facility
The most recent “competition” pool built in the greater Mankato area was the school district built pool at Mankato East HS in 1973. Renovations to area pools have occurred over the years. However there is currently not a competition caliber pool. The Taylor Pool at the YMCA was built in 2001. However the addition was a family recreation pool and did not increase the capacity of their lap pool. Tourtelotte is the only 50 meter pool in the area but, due to it being an outdoor and community recreation pool, has limited competition use or availability. MSU has a six lane 25 yard pool most recently renovated in 2005 that meets minimum standards for collegiate or high school short course competitions but is not a full service event specific pool. The Mankato Mantas have indicated that with a suitable indoor pool facility they would increase the number of tournaments they host (their annual summer event has an estimated economic impact of $490,000) and when combined with other area school and collegiate programs as well as regional, state and national level competitions that could be hosted, a pool such as this could be providing a positive economic impact year round.

Sports bubble/dome with turf
The TAT and Steering Committee both agree that a sports bubble/dome (turf facility) would be a valuable asset to the community. Currently there is no turf space in our area while many organizations and groups have an interest in and need for such space. This includes sports such as football, baseball, soccer, lacrosse and softball at the youth, high school, collegiate and adult levels. Uses in addition to practices and training facilities for a wide range of groups includes winter soccer, lacrosse and softball leagues as well as wrestling tournaments and conventions such as those held at the Wisconsin Dells Center. The most recently constructed dome in proximity to our area is the Wescott Athletic Complex dome in Austin, MN which was a joint venture
between Austin Public Schools and the Hormel Foundation and opened December, 2015. While this facility
does not include court space it does alleviate some demand on current court space.

Indoor ice – See ASA sidebar in body of report.

Indoor tennis courts
Currently the only indoor tennis facility in our area is the six court Swanson Tennis Center at Gustavus. These
courts primarily serve the Gustavus men’s and women’s tennis teams, their intramural programs and their
faculty/staff and are also currently utilized by MSU and Bethany tennis programs. The Greater Mankato
Community Tennis Association (GMCTA) has mobilized to the point of securing tentative commitments for up
to $2.5 million towards a project that currently projects to cost $5.8 million. Both MSU and Bethany also have
interest in such a facility being constructed in Mankato/North Mankato and are likely tenants. The GMCTA has
presented a business plan, support letters and preliminary building plans for such a facility.