

Request for Proposals

JULY 2024

CONSULTANT SERVICES FOR
SOUTH ST. PAUL COMMUNITY POOL
FEASIBILITY & DESIGN STUDY

PARKS &
RECREATION

Contact:
Shannon Young



South St. Paul
PARKS & RECREATION

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

SECTION 1. GENERAL GUIDANCE

All Correspondence regarding the Request for Proposal (RFP) and the proposed services must be addressed to:

SHANNON YOUNG
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Acceptance of Proposed Contents, the contents of this RFP and the proposal received will become contractual obligations if a contract ensues. Failure of the Consultant to meet these obligations may result in cancellation of the award. All information in the proposal is subject to disclosure under the provisions of Minnesota Statutes Chapter 13-Minnesota Government Data Practices Act.



SECTION 2. PURPOSE OF REQUEST

The City of South St. Paul is seeking to enter into a contract with a qualified consultant to conduct a feasibility and design study to develop a community consensus regarding the future of South St. Paul's aquatics program. This study will build off of work done in 2024 to update the Parks Master Plan.

The City wants to do at least three things as part of this study:

1. Analyze and refine the two concept plan alternatives for aquatic facilities at Northview Park and Lorraine Park that are presented in the 2024 Parks Master Plan. Provide capital and operating cost estimates and revenue generation assumptions for each of the two alternatives.
2. After the cost estimates and revenue generation assumptions are prepared, conduct community engagement to reach consensus about which of the two concept plan alternatives voters prefer and are willing to financially support. Determine what level of overall financial support voters are willing to provide.
3. After documenting the community's consensus, the consultant team will give a recommendation regarding which alternative should move forward and provide an implementation strategy. The recommendation should include information that will help local leaders understand the service area of the pools, potential users, an appropriate fee schedule, economic development/business partnerships, and any other revenue opportunities or other opportunities that may help offset the cost of investing in new aquatics facilities.

SECTION 3. BACKGROUND

Status of Existing Facilities

The City of South St. Paul currently has two aquatic facilities, a full-sized swimming pool at Northview Park and a splash pool for young children at Lorraine Park. The aquatic facilities have a rich history and have served many generations of families within the community. They have served as gathering places and recreational hubs and are a very important community asset. The pools are popular in the summer months with open swim, aquatic classes, swimming lessons, and summer camps. The pools also provide summer employment for high school and college students. Both the Northview pool and the Lorraine Park splash pool are embedded into larger parks and complement other park amenities.

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Northview Pool is a box-style pool which was constructed in 1956. The bathhouse structure is still the original and includes concessions and locker rooms. The bathhouse structure is showing its age but has been given cosmetic upgrades in recent years. The pool depth varies from 3' to 12' and the pool features a diving board and climbing wall. Due to the depth of the pool, it primarily serves youth ages 6 and up. There was a small kiddie pool next to the box pool that was demolished in 2009 after the Minnesota Department of Health declared it unsafe.

The box pool at Northview Park is almost 70 years old and appears to be near the end of its useful life. The pool's mechanical system is still original and could fail at any time. The pool leaked roughly 12,000 gallons of water each day in 2023 but this leaking was temporarily resolved prior to the start of the 2024 pool season with the patching of surface cracks. The City Council authorized \$45,000 in short-term repairs in early 2024 and announced that the box pool would reopen during the summer of 2024 for "one last hurrah." The box pool is tentatively set to be retired after the 2024 season. This has sparked an outcry from some residents who would prefer to see the City attempt further short-term solutions to keep the pool running indefinitely until its mechanical system gives out or it suffers some other type of catastrophic failure and is shut down by the Minnesota Department of Health.

Lorraine Splash Pool was built in 1993 and was funded by a voter-approved parks referendum. The pool holds 15,000 gallons of water and includes a large interactive water play feature with zero depth entry on two sides and a large amount of deck space. This pool is tailored towards young children and includes a 3' deep wading pool. The bathhouse structure includes locker rooms, a lifeguard room, and a concession area. The site was once home to the McLain Pool (another full-sized box pool) from 1939-1999 and the bathhouse structure was originally built to serve the box pool. The McLain pool was retired in 1999 after it reached the end of its useful life. Voters rejected a parks referendum in 2001 that would have built a new full-sized swimming pool at Lorraine Park to replace it. Consequently, there is a large green space directly adjacent to the Lorraine Park splash pool which previously held the old box pool. The Lorraine Park splash pool is functional, but its spray feature is out of date and can no longer be fully repaired.

Past Planning Efforts

The City did extensive planning for the future of the aquatics program in the late 1990's. In 2001, the voters rejected a two-part referendum that would have spent \$3.3 million to build a new full-sized pool at Lorraine Park and would have spent \$1.1 million to renovate Northview Pool. Consequently, Lorraine Park no longer has a full-sized swimming pool and Northview Pool has been kept running using short-term solutions on a year-to-year basis.

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In 2005, the City adopted a new Parks Master Plan which called for closing Northview Pool entirely and consolidating pool facilities at Lorraine Park to eliminate the expense and staffing issues that come with operating two separate aquatic facilities with lifeguards. The 2005 Parks Master Plan called for building a new full-sized swimming pool at Lorraine Park next to the splash pool. In the early 2010's, the City began planning for a parks referendum that would allow it to complete outstanding big ticket capital improvement projects identified in the 2005 Parks Master Plan. There was extensive community engagement, and it became clear that the community was not unified regarding the future of the aquatics program. Many community members living on the north end of town near Northview Park were strongly opposed to consolidating pool facilities at Lorraine Park. Other community members felt that the "status quo" was good enough and were not willing to pay additional taxes to support new aquatics facilities. The community engagement suggested that the entire parks referendum would likely be voted down if it included the pools. A parks referendum focused primarily on athletic facilities moved forward in 2014 without including the aquatics program and it was successful.

Current Planning Efforts

In 2023, the City hired the consultant BKV Group to prepare a "Municipal Facilities Master Plan and Needs Analysis" which looked at the status of all existing City facilities and gave recommendations regarding the future of each existing facility. This study was focused on overall space needs and cost effectiveness, and it did not include public engagement. BKV Group delivered their report in March of 2024 and their recommendation is that the City close and demolish Northview Pool and consolidate the aquatics program at Lorraine Park by building new facilities to augment the existing splash pool. Lorraine Park is a much larger park than Northview Park and its central location makes it an ideal spot for consolidating facilities. BKV Group did note, however, that their recommendation is based on financial considerations and space considerations only. They stated that it will be important to conduct community engagement and complete an update the Parks Master Plan before the City makes any final decisions.

During the Summer of 2023, the City hired the consultant group HKGI to assist the Parks and Recreation Department and the Planning Department with an update of the Parks Master Plan. The update project kicked off in July of 2023 and has included a professional analysis of each of the parks and extensive public engagement. A recurring theme during public engagement has been that residents want the City to continue to offer a robust aquatics program. Many residents specifically indicated in their survey responses that the City should "save" Northview Pool. There does not appear to be consensus about what should happen if the existing box pool cannot be saved due to its age and condition, and a new full-sized swimming pool needs to be built somewhere in South St. Paul.

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The new Parks Master Plan has not yet been “officially” approved but draft concept plans for each of the parks were unveiled in February 2024 and the City has been soliciting feedback on each of the concept plans. The proposed 2024 Parks Master Plan avoids taking a definitive stand on whether the City should consolidate aquatic facilities or continue to operate a split system. Instead, it lays out two different alternatives that the City could pursue:

ALTERNATIVE 1: The City maintains the “status quo” by demolishing the Northview Pool and rebuilding a new full-sized swimming pool in the same location. When the splash pool at Lorraine Park reaches the end of its useful life, the City will demolish the splash pool and rebuild a new splash pool at Lorraine Park.

ALTERNATIVE 2: The City consolidates the aquatics program at Lorraine Park and builds a new full-sized swimming pool next to the splash pool. The City demolishes the Northview Pool and replaces it with a new set of park amenities. In the draft concept plan, Northview Park would receive a splash pad or similar water feature that would be shallow enough that it would not need to be staffed with lifeguards.



SECTION 4. THE FUTURE OF THE POOLS

As previously stated, the City has completed a municipal facilities study and is in the final stages of updating its Parks Master Plan. The Parks Master Plan process included community open houses, online social pinpoint feedback forms, and community surveys. Many third and fourth generation families reside in South St. Paul and these families have strong ties to the existing aquatics facilities. Many residents strongly prefer the status quo even though it does not make as much sense financially. It is not common for a city the size of South St. Paul to offer multiple pools. Having two large pools in South St. Paul doubles the City's hiring needs when it comes to concessions staff and lifeguards and labor shortages have made this even more challenging in recent years. There is also duplicated effort when it comes to maintenance, testing, energy, and building repairs.

Historically, geography has factored in heavily to discussions about the aquatics program. There are historical divisions between neighborhoods which are reinforced by the layout of the road system and the location of significant topographical features. The Northview Pool is located on the north end of South St. Paul, and it is a rite of passage for middle-schoolers living on the north end to be able to walk or ride their bikes to the pool independently. Families living on the north end have consistently expressed that they feel that they are losing something of value if the City consolidates pool facilities at Lorraine Park. Many voters living on the north end strongly prefer the “status quo” and may be unlikely to vote for improved aquatic facilities at Lorraine Park if they believe that there is still a way to salvage the existing box pool at Northview Park and keep it running indefinitely.

The chosen consultant will work with City Staff to conduct community engagement and determine whether the community is more likely to support Alternative 1 or Alternative 2. The chosen consultant must prepare refined concept plans as well as capital and operating cost estimates for both alternatives before the City begins public engagement. If the community desires Alternative 1 (the “status quo”), it is important that they understand that it may come with a significant negative financial impact and Northview Park is a relatively small park that can only support certain types of pool designs.

Options to Explore:

Maintain the Status Quo: Aquatics facilities are rebuilt with substantially the same location and footprint as today but with improved handicapped accessibility and some modern features.

Consolidate: Lorraine Park ends up with a consolidated aquatic facility which can serve families of all ages at one site. This includes a full-sized swimming pool with zero depth entry.

New Play Features and Pool Amenities: Building a new swimming pool in either park presents an opportunity to provide new play features and amenities to make the pool more special

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and increase attendance. However, premium pool amenities can increase the cost of a project and may erode community support if they seem out of alignment with local needs. Community engagement and conversations with the Parks Advisory Commission can help refine ideas about what amenities should be provided.

New Splash Pad or Wading Pool at Northview Park: If Alternative 2 is selected, Northview Park will receive a splash pad, wading pool, or other water amenity so north end residents continue to have a walkable option for cooling off in a water feature. Importantly, this water feature needs to be designed to not require lifeguards.

The City of South St. Paul is seeking a pool design expert with credible experience and references in designing, engineering, repairing, and planning for the installation of public outdoor swimming pools to conduct a feasibility study and explore alternative solutions.

Long – Term Goals for the City’s Community Pool

The City Council has not yet determined if, or to what extent, it supports any specific future aquatics facility. This study is intended to assist and guide the City in reaching that decision, facilitate a deeper conversations with the community, and explore the range of facility options and operating models. Any decision regarding new aquatics facilities must be consistent with the following goals:

- Ensure the pool is accessible to all residents, including those with disabilities, through improved facilities and services.
- Be a place to offer swimming lessons, fitness classes, rentals and recreational activities. Provide a place for all abilities to enjoy.
- Provide a safe and welcoming environment.

PROJECT SCOPE

Because Northview Pool is at the end of its useful life, it is not possible to maintain the “status quo” using the existing facilities. If the community wants to maintain a strong aquatics program, now is the time to make big decisions about the future of the system. At a minimum, the scope of this feasibility and design study shall include the following:

Task 1: Refine Concept Plan and Develop Cost Estimates

Analyze and refine the two concept plan alternatives for aquatic facilities at Northview Park and Lorraine Park and prepare renderings, graphics, and other images that will support community engagement, education, and awareness. Prepare capital and operating cost estimates and revenue generation assumptions for both concept plan alternatives.

Task 2: Public Engagement

After the capital and operating cost estimates and revenue generation assumptions are prepared, conduct community engagement to reach consensus about which design alternative is more likely to get voter support. Determine what level of overall financial support voters are willing to provide. *The City anticipates that designing and performing community engagement will a collaborative effort between City Staff and the chosen consultant.*

Task 3: Provide Recommendation and Implementation Strategy

After documenting the community’s consensus, the consultant team will give a recommendation regarding which alternative should move forward and will provide implementation steps. The recommendation should also include information that will help local leaders understand the service area of the pools, potential users, an appropriate fee schedule, economic development/business partnerships, and any other revenue opportunities or other opportunities that may help offset the cost of investing in new aquatics facilities.

A parks referendum is the most likely primary funding source for a new aquatics facility. The chosen consultant must be mindful of this and must undertake the project in a manner that will start to build support for a future referendum. The City will only consider this project a success if we can conclusively identify a preferred alternative that has the highest potential for getting voter support and being successfully implemented.

If the City decides to move forward with a parks referendum, the chosen consultant may be asked to assist with designing a referendum question or assisting the City in identifying a new consultant who can assist with this task. This will be considered an “add-on” and is outside the scope of this initial project.

REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

- [2005 Parks Master Plan](#)
- [2024 BKV Study Excerpt Regarding Swimming Pools](#)
- [2024 Parks Master Plan Update Draft Park Concepts](#)

SECTION 5. PROPOSALS

Proposals shall contain the responses to the information summarized below. Additional information is allowable provided it is directly related to the proposed project. We ask that you limit proposals to no more than 30 pages.

Project Approach

Provide the specific approaches and methods that will be utilized to complete the project as outlined. South St. Paul values unique thinking and community engagement, so Consultants are encouraged to propose approaches that would support community engagement, produce easy to read and visually appealing reports, and/or better meet the needs of the city, its pool facility, and the community.

Include your philosophy and approach to evaluating and designing aquatic facilities. Explain why the Consultants firm should be selected to perform the services for this project, particularly what makes the firm stand out, and how your work has had a positive, long-term impact on other communities. We welcome your insights as to what makes for a successful planning process.

Project Team & Experience

- Name of firm, address, and contact information.
- Name of responsible firm member and project manager
- Names, qualifications, experience, project roles and availability of key personnel assigned to the project. Team expertise should include:
 - Aquatic center planning, schematic design, and engineering expertise
 - Market demand analysis
 - Aquatic facility capital and operating cost estimating expertise.
 - Site evaluation capabilities and experience, including any required transportation and traffic impact expertise.
 - Business planning

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- Broad knowledge of similar aquatic facilities' costs and performance characteristics.
- Project experience portfolio, including at least three projects in a northern climate completed in the last five years. Include:
 - Process approach.
 - Proposed and final project budget, offering a brief description of reasons for overages or changes in approach.
 - Lasting impact on the community
- Listing all sub-consultants and their qualifications, key personnel, and project portfolio.

Schedule

Provide a proposed timeline with projected completion dates. The City's expectation is to have fully completed this project no later than September 30, 2025

Fee Quotation

Proposals shall include the total cost for completion of the project based on a not to exceed contract amount. The cost should include detailed estimates of the number of hours, hourly rate, and assigned team members. A cost estimate summary for each of the work items outlined in this RFP shall be included. The estimate shall identify any additions, overhead, and reimbursable expenses.

Proposal Package

Consultants are encouraged to submit proposals electronically, in a format that can be easily shared amongst the review team. Email files are limited to 35 MB. If a consultant chooses to submit paper copies, we request at least 10 copies. Proposals should be clearly marked as "South St. Paul Pool Feasibility & Design Study"



SECTION 6. CONSULTANT SELECTION PROCEDURE

Selection Process

The purpose of this RFP is to determine Consultant qualifications for this project while reviewing each firm's technical and community-centered approach. Proposals will be reviewed and evaluated by a review team on the following criteria on a 100- point scale. The review team will consist of city staff and members of the Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee.

Timeline

The process and schedule for procurement of consulting services shall be:

1. RFP released & published on website - July 31, 2024
2. Submissions of proposals by 4:30 p.m. - Aug. 27, 2024

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3. Evaluation and review of RFP's including Interviews if needed - Aug. 28- Sept. 6,
4. Selection and notification of successful firm – Sept. 9, 2024
5. City Council approval of contract – Sept 16, 2024
6. Work Begins – immediately following contract approval
7. Task 1- Refine Concept Plan and Prepare Cost Estimates- Completed by Jan. 31, 2025
8. Task 2- Public Engagement- Completed by July 31, 2025
9. Task 3- Provide Recommendation- Completed by Sept. 30, 2025

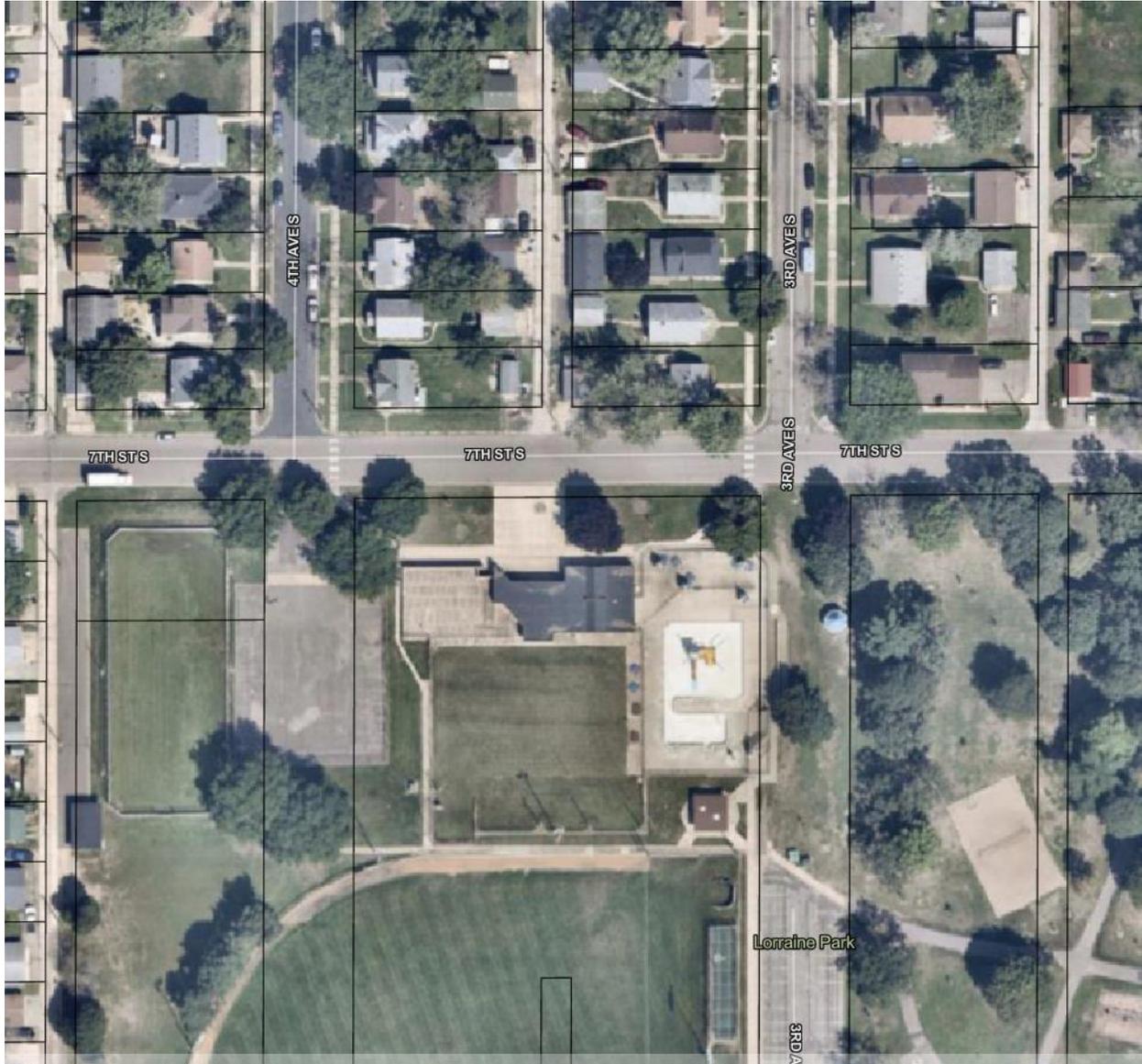
SECTION 7. TERMS & CONDITIONS

Upon selection of a Consultant, a contract shall be entered into by the City and Consultant. It is expected that the contract will provide compensation on a per deliverable, not-to-exceed basis. In addition:

1. Deletions of specific components, such as individual project meetings, will be at the discretion of the City. Payment or reimbursement shall be made based on the delivery and completion of projects tasks plus necessary subcontractor work (as applicable) and out-of-pocket expenses. Billing that exceeds that not-to-exceed amount will not be compensated unless a contract amendment has been approved.
2. If, for any reason, a firm is not able to commence the services outlined in that firm's proposal within 30 days of the award, the City reserves the right to cancel the contract and work with another qualified firm.
3. The City shall not be liable for any expense incurred by the Consultant prior to the signing of a contract including but not limited to proposal preparation or final contract negotiations.
4. The proposal must be signed by an official authorized to bind the Consultant to its provisions. The proposal must include a statement as to the period during which the proposal remains valid. This period must be at least 90 days from the date of the proposal.
5. The City shall retain ownership of all plans, maps, reports, models, and data prepared under this proposal. All materials must be delivered electronically in a final report and as individual native files.
6. This solicitation does not commit the City of South St. Paul to award a contract. The City reserves the right to reject any and all proposals or to request additional information from any and all consultants.

SECTION 8. Appendices

Splash Pool – Lorraine Park



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Northview Pool



Concept Plan (Option 1) - Lorraine Park



LEGEND

- ① Remove existing ice rink and warming house and add new parking lot
- ② Add new swimming pool
- ③ Replace splash pool
- ④ Improve sand volleyball court
- ⑤ Add new playground
- ⑥ Improve play area with horseshoes and bocce ball as well as a small shelter
- ⑦ Expand existing parking lot

Concept Plan (Option 2) - Lorraine Park



LEGEND

- ① Improve warming house
- ② Replace existing parking lot
- ③ Add new entertainment area, including pickleball courts, shuffleboard and bocce ball courts, as well as green open space for lawn games
- ④ Replace splash pool
- ⑤ Improve sand volleyball court
- ⑥ Replace playground
- ⑦ Remove horseshoe courts and plant trees
- ⑧ Expand existing parking lot

Concept Plan (Option 1) - Northview Park



LEGEND

- ① Resurface existing parking lot
- ② Replace swimming pool
- ③ Replace playground
- ④ Resurface basketball court
- ⑤ Improve softball field

Concept Plan (Option 2) - Northview Park



LEGEND

- ① Add new parking lot
- ② Add new skate park
- ③ Add new picnic area and restrooms building
- ④ Add new splash pad
- ⑤ Add new inclusive playground
- ⑥ Add new full-size basketball court
- ⑦ Improve softball field