

Richfield Local Sales Tax

Project Summaries

Project 1: Wood Lake Nature Center

Project Overview: Wood Lake Nature Center (“WLNC”) is a regionally significant source of environmental education and outdoor access for the metro area. The center welcomes more than 100,000 visitors each year. After 51 years, the building needs replacement. The building is not ADA accessible, is infested with rodents and other wildlife and is no longer able to provide the high level of environmental education and immersion needed. The proposed building is 19,000 square feet with modern classrooms, inviting engagement areas and indoor and outdoor learning spaces. It will be fully ADA compliant. Trail improvements around the nature center will help prevent annual flooding and water damage.

Project Cost: The new WLNC is an estimated \$24 million construction project. We estimate \$11 million will be covered by the sales tax.

Wood Lake’s Regional Significance:

- Approximately 65% of program participants and recreational equipment users are from outside of Richfield.
- More than 22,500 people attend programs and events hosted by the center each year.
- Schools come from across the seven-county region, from communities such as North Minneapolis, St. Paul, and Burnsville, to participate in award-winning environmental education programming.
- Hundreds of volunteers complete over 4,300 annual hours of work, representing communities from across the Twin Cities.

Project 2: Veterans Park Complex

Project Overview: The Veterans Park Complex Project (the “Veterans Complex”) would include improvements to the aquatics facility, ice arena, park, trails, band shell, picnic pavilion and mini-golf building. Specifically, this project would revitalize the pool, which was installed in 1961 and is burdened with expensive repairs and maintenance, season after season. Additionally, accessibility improvements would be made at the Ice Arena, including the installation of an elevator.

Veterans Park Complex, continued

Project Cost: This is an estimated \$9 million project.



Veterans Park Regional Significance:

- 35% of annual pool pass holders are from Minneapolis
- The Richfield Ice Arena hosts dozens of organizations from across the area including the Minnesota Whitecaps (which draw over 1,300 people from across the region for home games), Minneapolis Storm Youth Hockey, Jefferson Youth Hockey, Edina Youth Hockey and the Adult Hockey Association of Minnesota.
- The Richfield Farmers Market hosts attendees and vendors from across the seven-county metropolitan area; often experiencing over 2,000 participants per week!

Project 3: Richfield Community Center

Project Overview: The Richfield Community Center Project (the “Community Center”) is a regionally significant place of community meeting and gathering, continuing education and resident support services in the south metro. The Community Center is housed in an outdated county library building constructed in 1961. It requires many upgrades to remain functional. Beyond the needed improvements, the current building only meets a fraction of our community’s needs. The Community Center is a destination easily accessible via transit or bicycle.

Project Cost: This is a \$55 million project. It is estimated that \$45 million will be covered by the sales tax.

Community Center Regional Significance:

- 56% of adult programming participants at the community center are not Richfield residents
- 69% of senior programming participants are from communities outside Richfield
- The Richfield Community Center serves the last communal lunch program for seniors in Minnesota and includes daily participants from across the region.
- The annual tax preparation assistance program has over 600 participants, and the majority are non-Richfield residents.
- There are daily, weekly, monthly, and seasonal program offerings and events for youth, families, seniors, etc., that include attendees from across the region. Most popular include seasonal art boutiques, Fare for All Food Program, youth art classes, kids dance, adult fitness programs, and holiday classes.

Questions? Contact Amy Markle, Recreation Services Director, at amarkle@richfieldmn.gov or (612) 861-9394.