

## Memo related to City of La Crosse Aquatic Facilities

(Season dates: June 8-August 25, 2024; 11 weeks)

This memo has been created to share information and data specific to operations of the 3 municipal outdoor pools in the City of La Crosse. This information is to inform the Common Council on the concerns and struggles the Parks and Recreation Department is facing with these facilities. With the 2025 Capital Improvement request of North Side Pool and current renovation of Erickson Pool, now is an opportune time to make the Common Council aware of this information.

### **North Side Pool** – 2025 CIP request \$900,000

Intended Use – New pool building roof, new pool liner, and replacement of mechanicals.

### **Erickson Pool** – 2024 CIP funding (including Johnson Controls Contract) \$1,100,000

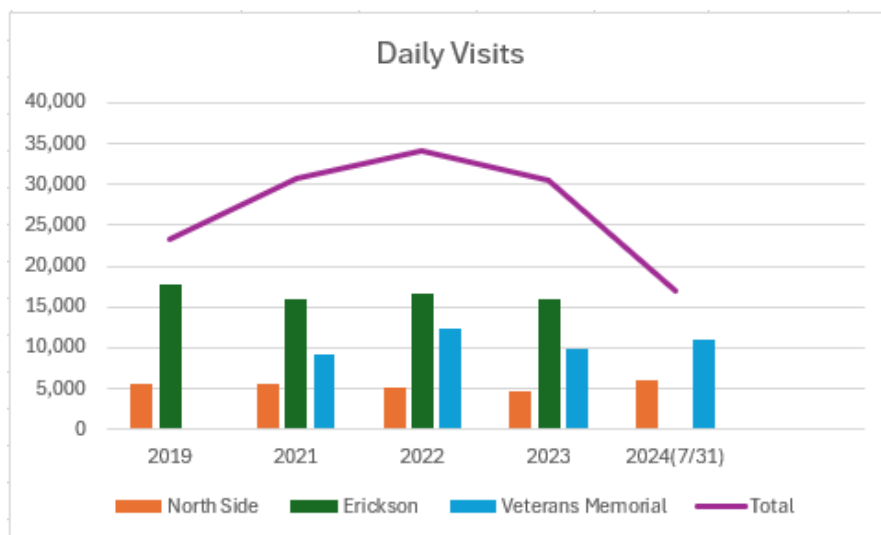
Intended Use – New pool liner, replacement of mechanicals, replacement of surge tank, and reinforcing existing mechanical “pit” walls.

### **Veterans Memorial Pool** – Complete renovation in 2020/2021 for \$3,500,000

Fee Structure for pool entry:

- Daily Pass \$5.00 (increased from \$4.00 in 2024)
- Pool Punch Pass which equates to \$1.00 per punch and 2 punches per person per visit to enter (only available to City residents)
- Pool Memberships Single/Family \$105.00/\$210.00

| <i>Daily Visits</i> | <u>2019</u> | <u>2021</u>  | <u>2022</u>   | <u>2023</u>  | <u>2024(7/31)</u> |
|---------------------|-------------|--------------|---------------|--------------|-------------------|
| North Side          | 5,559       | 5,608        | 5,186         | 4,718        | 5,996             |
| Erickson            | 17,773      | 15,914       | 16,627        | 15,903       |                   |
| Veterans Memorial   |             | <u>9,249</u> | <u>12,316</u> | <u>9,903</u> | <u>10,945</u>     |
| <b>Total</b>        | 23,332      | 30,771       | 34,129        | 30,524       | 16,941            |



Group visits moved from Erickson to the North Side Pool in 2024 due to the closure:

- YMCA
- Boys and Girls Club
- Camp Cathedral
- Parks and Rec Summer Camp
- Multiple Day Cares

*\*These groups make up 20-25% of the 2024 North Side Pool attendance numbers\**

**Feasibility Study conducted by Burbach Aquatics 05/18/2017**



Feasibility Study La  
Crosse Pool 5-18-20

**Staffing Cost** (excluding Parks and Recreation Full-Time Staff and Aquatic Coordinator)

- Current lifeguards pay scale \$12.00/hr-\$14.25/hr
- North Side Pool 2024 - \$76,415
- Veterans Memorial Pool - \$75,836
- Erickson Pool - Closed

| 2023         | Water             | Sewer             | Storm Water       | Telephone         | Electricity        | Contract Services  | Repair and Maintenance | Total               |
|--------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|--------------------|--------------------|------------------------|---------------------|
| Erickson     | \$3,352.71        | \$3,881.43        | \$873.52          | \$1,200.00        | \$13,000.00        | \$20,000.00        | \$15,000.00            | \$57,307.66         |
| VMP          | \$1,314.51        | \$1,880.06        | \$539.00          | \$756.00          | \$6,500.00         | \$17,000.00        | \$6,000.00             | \$33,989.57         |
| NSCP         | \$1,734.72        | \$2,304.25        | \$576.96          | \$600.00          | \$6,500.00         | \$15,000.00        | \$15,000.00            | \$41,715.93         |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>\$6,401.94</b> | <b>\$8,065.74</b> | <b>\$1,989.48</b> | <b>\$2,556.00</b> | <b>\$26,000.00</b> | <b>\$52,000.00</b> | <b>\$36,000.00</b>     | <b>\$133,013.16</b> |

\*Erickson Pool repair and maintenance costs will go down in 2025 with the repairs that are happening in 2024

**Other Expenses 2023** (for full season operation)

Potential reasons for minimized attendance at municipal pools:

- Decrease in youth biking and walking to pools
- Decrease in youth population in the City of La Crosse
- Increase in regional outdoor pool options
- Improvement to Black River Beach
- Increased alternative recreational opportunities (year-round athletic programs)

**Departmental Concerns related to ongoing operations:**

- Filling staff needs
- Operating 2 pools for 2 years and increasing thereafter to 3 pools
- 75% of pool employees are returning
- Departmental general operating expense reduction
- Continued decline in visits at Northside Pool
- The North Side public schools are year-round, which means they are in school most of the summer months

With the understanding that the Parks and Recreation Department strives to maintain and improve all recreational opportunities for area residents, closure of any facility is not an outcome that is appreciated. As the Department continues to maintain 47 parks, 12 ball fields, 3 swimming pools, 3 beaches, 37+ tennis/pickle ball courts, 5 boat landings, 3 marinas, miles of recreational trails, golf course, disc golf course, 2 neighborhood centers, Ice Arena, skate park and 2 pump tracks; resources are spread thin. As the needs of the recreational users evolve, so must the opportunities we provide. This requires a constant monitoring of successful operations and search for improved efficiencies. The City of La Crosse has long prided itself on these recreational opportunities and have blessed this community with a plethora of options adding to residents' quality of life. The Parks and Recreation Department will continue to strive to meet the needs of the community, remaining diligent in holding true to the proud history of parks and recreation in La Crosse. In order to do so, often it falls on staff to bring forward information that creates difficult conversations. These conversations are essential to the ongoing success of our recreational advancement and sustainability.