

SOUTH SIOUX CITY, NE
Less than 50,000
The Siouxland Y – An Extraordinary Success of Cooperation

PROJECT SUMMARY

When the indoor city pool was deemed unsafe for competitive swimming, the City of South Sioux City, building upon a 31-year positive history of cooperation, embarked on a unique public/private partnership with the South Sioux City Community School District and the YMCA to develop a regional \$10,000,000 recreation center.

When the YMCA Board approached the City of South Sioux City about a regional YMCA facility, a deal was struck making sense for all involved.

- The city to provide the land along the Missouri River as it helps the Riverfront Redevelopment Program and fits the city vision.
- The city and school to contribute \$1,500,000 in non-property tax funds towards the project that helps kick off the Y campaign.
- The city would no longer need to subsidize the indoor pool.
- The Y would get excellent visibility from the interstate and be centrally located for access.
- The school would be able to use the old pool for needed classrooms.
- The city would add the Y to our wireless security camera system.
- The flat land would be ideal for handicapped accessibility and for ample parking.
- A site that is accessible from the tri-state trail system, by the regional transit system, or automobile.
- City employees, as part of the deal, would get to use the Y free of charge for 5 years, for our wellness program.
- The city and school would have a new \$10,000,000 recreation facility to use in lieu of a refurbished 1968 pool.
- The Y would become part of our community image program.
- The site would enable swimmers to move from the outdoor pool into the Y when weather was bad; while Y users are able to swim indoors or outdoors.

As noted by Mayor Bob Giese, “*South Sioux City is blessed with a community of innovation, cooperation, and caring. Our future is brighter as a result of this positive community attitude. The YMCA recreational project is an exceptional example of a city, school and non-profit cooperative venture*”.







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PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Building a long and positive history of cooperation, the City of South Sioux City embarked on a unique public - private partnership to develop a superb recreational center.

“South Sioux City is blessed with a community of innovation, cooperation, and caring. Our future is brighter as a result of this positive community attitude. The YMCA recreational project is an exceptional example of a city, school and non-profit cooperative venture”. Bob Giese, Mayor of the City of South Sioux City

Objectives

-  To provide a recreation center that is safe, accessible, and affordable for all residents to enjoy. To increase recreation opportunities consistent with the city vision of “being a recreational center of the Midwest”.
-  To advance the revitalization of an area declared slum and blighted.
-  To provide for a convenient and affordable wellness program for city employees.
-  To reduce the property tax subsidies for operations of the city swimming pools.

History of Cooperation – Setting the aura and trust for innovation.

“Open communications and trust is essential for developing positive agreements for all involved. That happens here.” Bill McLarty, Dakota County Commissioner

The City of South Sioux City, Dakota County, and the South Sioux City School District have the oldest joint meeting of major property taxing bodies in the United States. For 31 years, these entities have forged partnerships that improve governmental services, build on the skills of our employees, share programs, buildings, and land. As noted on page 9 of this submittal, South Sioux City has entered into many pioneering agreements with other public entities and non-profits. As a result, in the last 5 years, the city has received 31 state and 17 national awards.



Background – The Pool Dilemma from the city and school’s perspective

“As chairperson of the city leisure committee and a member of the city finance committee, the need for a new pool facility was in direct conflict with what we could afford.” Sandy Ehrich, South Sioux City Leisure Committee Chairperson

In 1968, the old indoor city pool was constructed adjacent to the high school for convenient use by the general public and the school system. On November 11, 2001, the National Federation of State High Schools Association (NFHS) issued a directive - “Effective immediately for the 2001-2002 swimming season, the NFHS has eliminated the option for high schools to use 18 inch starting platforms in pools with water depth from 3½ feet to 4 feet.” This resulted in our local school team and city club team to not be able to use the pool for practices or meets.

Over the course of the next 2 years, the citizens’ task force reviewed options including putting a dome over the outdoor pools, building new, or refurbishing the existing pool. With scarce property tax dollars, the committee recommended rejuvenation of the existing pool at a cost of

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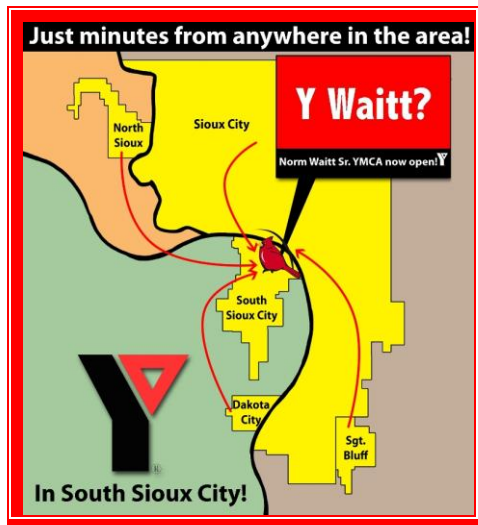
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\$1,931,700 to \$2,178,000. The public school system offered \$500,000 to the city towards this project from funds received through an environmental settlement between an industry and the State of Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality.

Background - The pool dilemma from the YMCA perspective

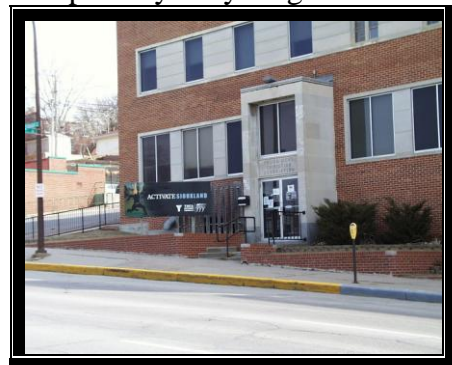
“Our need for a new facility was evident; membership was dropping and the building decaying. Finding a centrally located and affordable site and insuring ease of access for our three-state area were all major issues for the Y Board.” Patrick McKinley, YMCA Board Chairman

The Siouxland YMCA serves the tri-state area of Sioux City, Iowa, North Sioux City, South Dakota and South Sioux City, Nebraska.



The YMCA building had been constructed in 1956 and was plagued with problems. Located on a steep hill with only 18 off-street parking spots for patrons and no nearby parking ramp, this antiquated facility needed to be replaced - as noted in their needs analysis and feasibility study:

- 🔴 Program areas are severely limited and difficult to use.
- 🔴 Program capacity is limited.
- 🔴 The Y is inaccessible to those with disabilities, injured and older adults.
- 🔴 It is a maze of hallways and difficult for kids.
- 🔴 Equipment is old, over-used and failing.
- 🔴 Two floors of the old Y are closed and no longer used.
- 🔴 Parking is limited to the street and is very dangerous – especially for young families.



Old Y building showing the dangerous and limited on-street parking

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South Sioux City Emerges as a city of pride and success

“I was proud to return to my home town as superintendent of schools after seeing tangible results of cooperation among the governing bodies at a level unequalled with anything I have seen.” Steve Rector, Superintendent of Schools

South Sioux City, Nebraska, was always the poor suburb; a city that was located along the frequently flooding banks of the Missouri River. No affluent person would live in this flat land area, when across the river in Iowa, was the protection of the hills. In the 1950’s, the last flood occurred due to the Corps of Engineers constructing a series of dams that removed South Sioux City from the 100 year flood plain. During the subsequent years, South Sioux’s poor image persisted with a high crime rate, impoverished meager houses and inadequate schools, and was noted for being the place for “used cars and bars”.

In 1980, the city and community leaders began a well planned action process to change. One that has resulted in more police, more prevention programs and strong enforcement policies that significantly reduced the crime rates to 1/2 of the urban area rate and well below the national average. Other positive actions include building modern schools, attractive parks, extensive bike trails, and a successful downtown revitalization project, preparing new industrial tracks, developing youth programs, and creating the popular branding campaign utilizing our school team mascot – the Cardinal.



By the year 2002, the city was named an All America City and the Nebraska Showcase Community: the highest honors in the United States and in the State of Nebraska.

“Without a city that took actions to reduce crime, build new schools, revitalize the downtown, establish its identity through a branding campaign, and provide for a quality of life, this project would have never reached fruition.” Mayor Bob Giese City of South Sioux City

Riverfront Revitalization – A work in progress

“Having been in the devastating flood of 1952, I saw first hand the damage that the Missouri River can inflict. Today, we are witnessing a revolutionary development of demolition of old structures, the resurrection of a neighborhood and new private sector development in what was once the poorest area in the city.” Ron Rapp, South Sioux City Planning and Zoning

The riverfront area was facing continual decay in property values, no private sector investments, no community parks, poor streets, insufficient street lighting and safety concerns. The city, with the FULL support of the county and school district, (because of our positive relationship) established the Riverfront Tax Increment Financing District that resulted in neighborhood parks, improved streets and street lighting and new private sector investments of over \$17,000,000. Without this effort, the Y would have never considered our community.

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The Partnership Emerges – a win/win project for all

“An unbelievable transformation is obvious in terms of physical appearance and attitude. The community is to be congratulated and energized to continue this remarkable progress.” Arlan Kuehn, Chairman of the South Sioux City Area Chamber of Commerce

When the YMCA Board approached the City of South Sioux City to see if they had a site for the proposed Y; within an hour the basics of the deal were struck. It made sense to all involved.

- 🔴 The city to provide the land along the Missouri River as it helps the Riverfront Redevelopment Program and fits the city vision.
- 🔴 The Y would get excellent visibility from the interstate and be centrally located for access.



View of the new YMCA looking across the Missouri River from the Iowa side

- 🔴 The city and school to contribute \$1,000,000 in non-property tax funds towards the project that helps kick off the Y campaign. Later when the Y plan was enlarged, the contributions by the school and city went to a total of \$1,500,000.
- 🔴 The city would no longer need to subsidize the indoor pool.
- 🔴 The school would be able to use the old pool for needed classrooms.
- 🔴 The city would add the Y to our wireless security camera system.
- 🔴 The flat land would be ideal for handicapped accessibility and for ample parking.
- 🔴 A site that is accessible from the tri-state trail system, by the regional transit system or automobile.
- 🔴 City employees, as part of the deal, would get to use the Y for our wellness program, free for 5 years.
- 🔴 The city and school would have a new \$10,000,000 recreation facility to use in lieu of a refurbished 1968 pool.
- 🔴 The Y would become part of our community image campaign.
- 🔴 The site would enable swimmers to move from the outdoor pool into the Y when weather was bad; while Y users are able to swim indoors or outdoors. In August of 2005, the city and school entered an agreement for the Y to run our outdoor pool, as a prelude to this new project.



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Action plan and players

“We must look during difficult times at leaders that seek to implement innovative solutions to our problem. I am proud to be part of this process in South Sioux City, an All America City.” Randy Lanning, Chairman of the South Sioux City Community Development Agency



With the decline of the indoor pool and continuing maintenance problems, the city knew it was going to be facing a difficult decision to dump a lot of money into an old facility to meet the changing rules and regulations for the high school swim team, pull out and replace heating/air circulation units that were failing, dealing with old pipes and pumps circulating the pool. The Parks and Recreation Department started with a joint meeting and forming an indoor pool committee with representatives from all the players involved- Dolphins, High School Swim team coaches, school board members, parks & recreation board members and staff, aerobics staff and patrons that used the pool. The first meeting was held on August 7th, 2003, to discuss options on what to do with the pool and 3 options were discussed. The first, restoring the current facility; the second, building a new facility on our own; and thirdly, closing down the facility all together. Soon after the YMCA approached the city about their situation, the City Administrator invited the YMCA Board to the next committee meeting. Discussions were held regarding the needs of each group for a pool; and how to fund the project started to take shape. The committee played a significant role in the planning and selling of the concept because members from the committee also sat on the School Board, School Administration, Community Development Agency, Community Foundations, City Council, Parks & Recreation, and Tree Boards and with other various boards and businesses in the Siouxland area when the YMCA was brought on board.

The YMCA had many community players on board as well in determining their destination including: United Way of Siouxland, Beyond the Bell, Bluff’s Area Family Center, Briar Cliff University, Crittenton Center, Dakota Valley Schools, Downtown Partners, Mary Elizabeth Day Care, Mary Treglia, Morningside College, Sioux City Community Schools, south Sioux City Optimist Club, Siouxland Community Health Center, Siouxland Human Investment Partnership, Siouxland Senior Center, Siouxland Soccer Association, Siouxland Soccer Association, Siouxland Youth Athletics, South Sioux City Schools, St. Luke’s Day Care, Various Area Churches and Western Iowa Tech.



Financing – no property tax dollars








“By sharing resources, all participants benefited; but more over, a region of 120,000 people now have access to an amazing recreation facility.” Merrill Hale, Chairman of the South Sioux City Finance Committee

The total project cost was \$10,000,000 with the city and school district each contributing \$750,000 of non-property tax dollars towards the project. The fund drive raised \$6,800,000 and a loan was secured by USDA for the balance. In addition, the South Sioux City Community Development Agency purchased \$169,000 in property and demolished an old, vacant 4-plex for the Y.

TANGIBLE RESULTS

“It is important that we use our scarce tax dollars wisely and we must make sure to constantly evaluate our investments. This project clearly reflects positive tangible results.” Lance Hedquist City Administrator

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		Before	After
	Membership (after 3 months)	2150	4800
	Size of facilities – square footage	10,400	59,800
	# of persons in health program	3	43
	# of firemen in program	0	13
	Public capital cost	\$2,200,000	\$1,500,000
	Private Investment	0	\$8,500,000
	Hours of operation per week	52.5	113
	Swimming lanes	6	8
	Zero depth	No	Yes
	Kids' water slide	No	2
	Spa	No	Yes
	Sauna	No	Yes
	Steam room	No	Yes
	Family dressing room	No	Yes
	Weights	No	Yes
	Daycare	No	Yes
	Gymnasium	No	Yes
	Family Fun Pool	No	Yes



Pictured above is the Lap/Fitness Pool



Pictured above is the Family Fun Pool



Pictured above is one of the Fitness Classes



Pictured above is new gymnasium

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Successful public/public and public/non profit agreements:

S = School Co = County Ci = other city NP = Non Profit O = other government	
Ci	Annexation – Sharing of property taxes – 1 st in the state
Ci/Co	Economic Development – sharing of property taxes/only agreement in state
Ci	Gas aggregation for entire communities – only cities in United States
O	Water connection for emergency needs with rural water district
Ci	Tri State Drug Task force
Co	1 st county/city sales tax in the state
O	Joint college center - 1 st joint campus for community and state college
Ci	Regional Sewer plant - one system for three state area -6 cities
S	Arboretum – city project on school property
Co	Street Maintenance – county maintaining city roads
Co	Library services – county contributing to library operations
S	Fiber optic network – joint owned by city/school
S/Ci/Co/O	Keep Northeast Nebraska Beautiful – largest chapter in the United States
Ci	Bike path of 16 miles linking communities and states
S	Parking lot striping of school lots saving school money
NP	Baseball field operation and field maintenance
NP	Softball operation in agreement with non-profit
Co/S	Salt purchase by city and shared by other governments
S	Recycled milk jugs for picnic tables with schools
S	Football field construction with city assistance
S	Park Land development on school land
O	Picnic shelters joint with Natural Resource District
NP	15 field soccer complex on city property run by non- profit
O	Rain gardens – joint with the Natural Resource District
S	School bus offices and parking on city property
S	Building exchange – old library for old school
S	Security cameras joint system with school
Co	Law enforcement center – voter approved joint project with county
O	Intelligent transportation joint project with state
S	Youth council – joint project with school
NP	Gang prevention – great project with non-profit
S/NP	Image Committee – lots of players
S/NP	Unique Affinity credit card program
Ci	Housing Assistance – 1 st consortium in country for Home funds
Co/Ci	Emergency services- joint public safety agencies
Ci/Co	Building inspection South Sioux provides inspections for others
O	Electric system 1 st agreement to combine power & city electric operations
O	Tech spec building - 1 st technology speculative building in state
Ci	Economic promotions – regional promotions save everyone money
NP	Bridge light/beautification – a joint project with non-profit
S/O	Constructed the world’s first eco-bike path of recyclables