

Amateur Sports Commission**Projects Summary**

(\$ in thousands)

Project Title	Rank	Fund	Project Requests for State Funds			Gov's Rec	Gov's Planning Estimates	
			2026	2028	2030		2026	2028
National Sports Center Asset Preservation (Blaine)	1	GO	23,740	20,000	20,000	4,500	4,500	4,500
Grant Program: Mighty Ducks	2	GO	5,000	2,000	2,000	1,000	1,000	1,000
Total Project Requests			28,740	22,000	22,000	5,500	5,500	5,500
General Obligation Bonds (GO) Total			28,740	22,000	22,000	5,500	5,500	5,500

AT A GLANCE

In FY24:

- \$46.1 million was spent at the National Sports Center (NSC) by sports visitors.
- \$70.1 million in Total Economic Impact was generated by the NSC in FY24.
- 4.1 million annual visits to the NSC.
- USA CUP (North America's Largest Youth Soccer Tournament) hosted over 17,000 Athletes in July 2024

PURPOSE

The Minnesota Amateur Sports Commission (MASC) was created to promote the economic and social benefits of sport for Minnesota citizens and organizations. The MASC contributes to the State of Minnesota by:

- Generating economic benefits through sport events.
- Providing increased amateur sport opportunities for Minnesota residents.
- Improving infrastructure through developing new sport facilities and programs.

STRATEGIES

The MASC employs several strategies to achieve the agency's goals and mission to bring the economic and social benefits of amateur sports to Minnesota:

- Develop top class amateur sport facilities in partnership with select Minnesota cities. The Regional Centers are facilities that attract out-of-state visitors and serve many Minnesotans. The Regional Centers are located in Rochester, Marshall, Blaine, St. Cloud, and Biwabik.
- Create and attract new amateur sports programs and events in Minnesota with a focus on the National Sports Center in Blaine.

Chapter 240A of the Minnesota Statutes provides the legal authority for the Amateur Sports Commission.

(<https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/cite/240A>)

AT A GLANCE

- The MASC oversees the operations of the state's amateur sport flagship facility - the National Sports Center (NSC) in Blaine which attracts over four million visitors annually and generates over \$50 million in economic impact.
- The MASC adopted a plan for the creation of additional regional amateur sports centers for the purpose of promoting and increasing sport tourism and participation statewide. The plan identified the following seven locations as potential regional sites:
 - State Headquarters - NSC (Blaine)
 - Northwest Region - Moorhead
 - Southwest Region - Marshall
 - Southeast Region - Rochester
 - Northeast Region - Range Cities
 - Central Region - St. Cloud
 - Metro (Urban) - St. Paul

Factors Impacting Facilities or Capital Programs

Sports tourism is a competitive business, and Minnesota must compete with other states in order to attract out-of-state sports visitors. First, regional sports centers must possess sports facilities that are high quality and have a significant size and efficiency. A soccer family will not likely travel 200 miles to a two-field complex. Second, families are attracted to good hotels and restaurants. These amenities complement a good sport tournament or event. Third, access to shopping and other tourism attractions add value to the sports destination. Finally, the inclusion of a regional sport commission can help develop, market/promote and maintain events and programs.

Approximately 15 million amateur sport families travel over 100 miles to a sporting event annually in the United States (according to "Sports Travel" magazine). This travel reflects \$2.7 billion in economic impact and generates nine million hotel nights annually. While a small percentage will travel 250 plus miles to a tournament, the majority will attend and participate in events that are 30 to 100 miles away from home.

Consequently, by strategically placing a regional sports center in each region of Minnesota, the state will maximize its out-of-state sports tourism dollar. For example, the Minnesota Southeast Regional Center in Rochester attracts sports participants from western Wisconsin, northern Iowa, Illinois, and South Dakota. Likewise, the Marshall Regional Sports Center will attract participants from North Dakota, South Dakota and Manitoba.

Along with the regional and national competition to secure sports tourism events, there are additional components that can adversely affect the ability to foster the sports tourism economic impact, such as changes in the economic climate, national and international social and political events, and health- related issues (e.g., COVID-19).

Self-Assessment of Agency Facilities and Assets**National Sports Center (Blaine)**

The National Sports Center (NSC) in Blaine - the state's amateur sport flagship facility - attracts nearly four million visitors annually. Under the direction of the MASC Board, the NSC has developed the world's largest soccer

complex (52 fields) and the world's largest ice arena (eight sheets) and has focused on two of these big sports - soccer and ice hockey. The NSC in Blaine has proven that the team sport model can be very successful. The plan will now be to place medium sized amateur sports facilities in the regions identified by the MASC Board.

All sports are not created equal in their ability to be part of a sports tourism strategy. In Minnesota, there are over 100 sports played. However, 10% of the sports account for 80% of the participation. Therefore, regional centers need to focus on the sports with the greatest participation and the greatest propensity to travel. In short, team sports such as soccer, hockey, basketball, volleyball, baseball and lacrosse generate the most sports tourism economic impact.

The Minnesota Amateur Sports Commission conducted discussion and a strategic analysis on the recommended sites for the regional sports centers and the proposed capital projects.

In addition, due to the fact that the NSC does not receive an operating subsidy, and is over 30 years old, it is in need of numerous capital improvements. The infrastructure for the campus and related facilities at the NSC need ongoing replacement and repair.

Mighty Ducks Grant Program

The Mighty Ducks Grant Program was established in 1995 in response to a serious shortage of available ice time at arenas in all regions of Minnesota. This was also a time when girls hockey was experiencing significant growth and increased the need for new and renovated ice arenas to provide ice time access for everyone. During the initial five years of the grant program, communities received 74 grants for renovation of existing arenas and 79 grants for construction of new arenas (producing 61 new sheets of ice). The Mighty Ducks grant program was revived in 2014 with an adjusted mission to meet the demands of aging and changing facilities. The program was designed to assist local communities with improving air quality in ice arenas and to provide financial assistance in eliminating the use of R-22 systems in arena refrigeration. A total of 40 grants was awarded to communities for the improvement of air quality at arenas. By keeping existing arenas healthy and operating, the net result was the same as building new and renovating facilities – keeping access open and equal for all ice sports participants around the state. Unfortunately, there remains still a significant need for grant funds to assist communities with meeting air quality compliance and continued arena operation in a safe and healthy manner.

Agency Process for Determining Capital Requests

MASC Capital Bonding Committee reviews proposed agency bonding requests.

MASC Staff reviews the committee's project recommendations.

Final project recommendations are reviewed/approved by the MASC Commission at official board meetings.

Major Capital Projects Authorized in 2024 and 2025

2025

NSC Asset Preservation: \$5 million (GO)

Mighty Ducks Grant Program: \$1 million (GO)

(\$ in thousands)

National Sports Center Asset Preservation (Blaine)

AT A GLANCE**2026 Request Amount:** \$23,740**Priority Ranking:** 1**Project Summary:** This proposal focuses on the work necessary to replace the NSC Super Rink's refrigerant systems. This high-priority project is necessary to ensure the Super Rink's eight ice sheets are able to continue operations following the nationwide R-22 refrigerant ban. This project has a total cost of \$23.74 million and replaces the many systems and structures in the NSC's Super Rink facility over approximately three years to ensure that it will continue to operate effectively into the future.**Project Description**

The NSC has many competing budgetary priorities, including roughly \$89 million in deferred maintenance, according to the 2025 facility condition assessment report (FCA), but its highest priority is the replacement of the NCS Super Rink refrigerant system. The import and production of R-22 refrigerant was banned in 2020, leaving ice rinks with R-22 systems like the Super Rink vulnerable. To ensure that an unforeseen maintenance event does not lead to stoppage of Super rink operations, which would jeopardize the NSC's economic impact and affect hockey players around the state and the country, the R-22 refrigerant system change is prioritized over other maintenance needs to ensure continuing future operations.

The project for R-22 systems replacement is expected to cost \$23.74 million and take roughly two years. The project involves replacing the central refrigeration plant, which serves the NSC's eight ice sheets by cooling and circulating the refrigerant. Several rinks will require replacement of the rink floor to facilitate changing out refrigerant piping for the new refrigerant; replacing the floor also requires changing out dasher boards during the floor replacement, and new dasher boards are planned to be useable for sled hockey. Finally, rink refrigerant system changes require replacement of dehumidification units for most of the facility.

Project Rationale

The Minnesota Amateur Sports Commission (MASC) is responsible for operating and maintaining the NSC in Blaine. The NSC is a 680-acre campus with the world's largest soccer facility, eight ice rinks, a golf course and other indoor sport facilities. The economic impact from events held at the NSC totals more than \$110 million per year. The MASC does not receive any operating funds from the state of Minnesota. However, it does depend on the state for capital improvements and deferred maintenance. According to the Department of Administration's FCA the MASC has the highest (38.3%) deferred maintenance percentage of replacement value. Buildings and infrastructure are reaching their 20–30-year life expectancy. Buildings have been identified through the FCA where current conditions are in poor to critical categories as outlined by the Department of Administration. In order

to continue operating at current capacity, the MASC needs to maintain the NSC with the requested funds.

Project Timeline

Super Rink work will begin with equipment purchase as soon as funds are available and will continue through an anticipated completion date of Spring 2030. Other National Sports Center asset preservation and maintenance activities will be carried out as soon as practical after funding becomes available, and have varying timelines.

Other Considerations

Impact on Agency Operating Budgets

No impact to the Minnesota Amateur Sports Commission (MASC) operating budget.

Description of Previous Appropriations

The Amateur Sports Commission received \$5 million in 2025 and \$ 9.6 million in 2023 for National Sports Center asset preservation. There have been no previous state bonding appropriations for the Super Rink project.

Project Contact Person

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Governor's Recommendation

The Governor recommends \$4.5 million in general obligation bonds for this request. Also included are budget estimates of \$4.5 million for each planning period for 2028 and 2030.

Amateur Sports Commission

Project Detail

(\$ in thousands)

National Sports Center Asset Preservation (Blaine)

PROJECT FUNDING SOURCES

Funding Source	Six Prior Years	FY 2026	FY 2028	FY 2030
<i>State Funds Appropriated and Requested</i>				
General Obligation Bonds	\$ 14,600	\$ 23,740	\$ 20,000	\$ 20,000
<i>State Funds Pending</i>				
<i>Non-State Funds Already Committed</i>				
<i>Non-State Funds Pending</i>				
TOTAL	\$ 14,600	\$ 23,740	\$ 20,000	\$ 20,000

TOTAL PROJECT COSTS

Cost Category	Six Prior Years	FY 2026	FY 2028	FY 2030
Property Acquisition	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0
Predesign Fees	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0
Design Fees	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0
Project Management	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0
Construction	\$ 14,600	\$ 23,740	\$ 20,000	\$ 20,000
Relocation Expenses	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0
One Percent for Art	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0
Occupancy Costs	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0
Inflationary Adjustment	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0
TOTAL	\$ 14,600	\$ 23,740	\$ 20,000	\$ 20,000

IMPACT ON STATE OPERATING COSTS

Cost Category	FY 2026	FY 2028	FY 2030
IT Costs	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0
Operating Budget Impact (\$)	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0
Operating Budget Impact (FTE)	0	0	0

SOURCE OF FUNDS FOR DEBT SERVICE PAYMENTS

	Amount	Percent of Total
General Fund	\$ 23,740	100 %
User Financing	\$ 0	0 %

STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

The following requirements will apply to projects after adoption of the bonding bill.

Has the project owner requesting state funds reviewed and agree to meet the applicable capital requirements listed in the “Statutory Requirements” below and in the “Capital Budget Requirements” section of the MMB Capital Budget Instruction documents?	Yes
Is this project exempt from legislative review under M.S. 16B.335 subd. 1a?	No
Predesign Review (M.S. 16B.335 subd. 3):	
Does this request include funding for predesign?	No
Has the predesign been submitted to the Department of Administration?	No
Has the predesign been approved by the Department of Administration?	No
Will the project design meet the Sustainable Building Guidelines under M.S. 16B.325?	Yes
Will the project designs meet applicable requirements and guidelines for energy conservation and alternative energy sources (M.S. 16B.335 subd. 4 and 16B.32)?	Yes
Have Information Technology Review Preconditions been met (M.S. 16B.335 subd. 5 & 6)?	N/A
Will the project comply with the targeted group purchasing requirement (M.S. 16C.16 subd. 13)?	Yes
Will the project meet public ownership requirements (M.S. 16A.695)?	Yes
Will a use agreement be required (M.S. 16A.695 subd. 2)?	No
Will program funding be reviewed and ensured (M.S. 16A.695 subd. 5)?	N/A
Will the matching funds requirements be met (M.S. 16A.86 subd. 4)?	N/A
Will the project be fully encumbered prior to the Cancellation Deadline (M.S. 16A.642): December 31, 2030?	Yes
M.S. 16A.502 and M.S. 16B.31 (2): Full Funding Required	Yes
M.S. 473.4485: Guideway Project	
Is this a Guideway Project?	No
Is the required information included in this request?	N/A

(\$ in thousands)

Grant Program: Mighty Ducks**AT A GLANCE****2026 Request Amount:** \$5,000**Priority Ranking:** 2**Project Summary:** The James Metzen Mighty Ducks Grant Program assists Minnesota local units of government in improving indoor air quality in ice arenas with the purchase of electric ice resurfacing machines and other equipment, and to provide financial assistance in eliminating the use of R-22 systems in ice arena refrigeration. The program requires a 50% match.**Project Description**

The Minnesota Amateur Sports Commission (MASC) requests \$5 million this fiscal year capital request period for the Mighty Ducks program. Funding would allow the agency to continue the administration of the Mighty Duck Grant Program (aka James Metzen grant program) established in 1995 for the purpose of providing funding assistance to local communities for indoor air quality and R-22 refrigerant replacement in ice arenas. The flagship program is called "Mighty Ducks." It was originally authorized to help address gender equity issues related to Federal Title Nine compliance. Since then, it has been used to help facilitate clean indoor and outdoor air compliance through moving rinks away from R-22 and the purchase of electric ice-making machines (Zambonis) as well.

GO Bonds are for R-22 change outs and HVAC replacements. General fund cash is for air quality improvement equipment such as electronic Zambonis and Edgers and any R-22 changeouts municipalities had to take on due to equipment failure since the last allocation was awarded but prior to this request.

Project Rationale

MASC has developed an expertise assisting communities in completing projects for amateur sporting activities. The MASC grant funds help ensure the completion of submission for Mighty Ducks, Mighty Kids, and Skate Parks Grant Programs. MASC was created in 1987 by the Minnesota Legislature to promote the economic and social benefits of amateur sports. In the years since, MASC has become a role model for creating innovative and stable programs and events that have benefited Minnesota residents financially and socially. R-22 production was banned by the EPA in 2020, however, it is a refrigerant still utilized by 20-30% of public and private ice rinks across the state. Changing from R-22 to a new refrigerant can cost upward of \$1.5 million for older rinks, as they often must change out corresponding infrastructure such as piping and floors. There is a 50% match required by local government units. By funding Mighty Ducks, the legislature will help to continue Minnesota as the State of Hockey for boys and girls.

Project Timeline

N/A

Other Considerations

N/A

Impact on Agency Operating Budgets

No impact to the Minnesota Amateur Sports Commission (MASC) operating budget.

Description of Previous Appropriations

This would be a continuation of an existing grant program for which funding has been previously appropriated or multiple occasions. The most recent appropriation was \$1 million in 2025.

Project Contact Person

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Governor's Recommendation

The Governor recommends \$1 million in general obligation bonds for this request. Also included are budget estimates of \$1 million for each planning period for 2028 and 2030.

Amateur Sports Commission

Project Detail

(\$ in thousands)

Grant Program: Mighty Ducks

PROJECT FUNDING SOURCES

Funding Source	Six Prior Years	FY 2026	FY 2028	FY 2030
<i>State Funds Appropriated and Requested</i>				
General Obligation Bonds	\$ 3,000	\$ 5,000	\$ 2,000	\$ 2,000
<i>State Funds Pending</i>				
<i>Non-State Funds Already Committed</i>				
<i>Non-State Funds Pending</i>				
TOTAL	\$ 3,000	\$ 5,000	\$ 2,000	\$ 2,000

TOTAL PROJECT COSTS

Cost Category	Six Prior Years	FY 2026	FY 2028	FY 2030
Property Acquisition	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0
Predesign Fees	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0
Design Fees	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0
Project Management	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0
Construction	\$ 3,000	\$ 5,000	\$ 2,000	\$ 2,000
Relocation Expenses	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0
One Percent for Art	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0
Occupancy Costs	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0
Inflationary Adjustment	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0
TOTAL	\$ 3,000	\$ 5,000	\$ 2,000	\$ 2,000

IMPACT ON STATE OPERATING COSTS

Cost Category	FY 2026	FY 2028	FY 2030
IT Costs	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0
Operating Budget Impact (\$)	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0
Operating Budget Impact (FTE)	0	0	0

SOURCE OF FUNDS FOR DEBT SERVICE PAYMENTS

	Amount	Percent of Total
General Fund	\$ 5,000	100 %
User Financing	\$ 0	0 %

STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

The following requirements will apply to projects after adoption of the bonding bill.

Has the project owner requesting state funds reviewed and agree to meet the applicable capital requirements listed in the “Statutory Requirements” below and in the “Capital Budget Requirements” section of the MMB Capital Budget Instruction documents?	Yes
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Predesign Review (M.S. 16B.335 subd. 3):	
Does this request include funding for predesign?	N/A
Has the predesign been submitted to the Department of Administration?	N/A
Has the predesign been approved by the Department of Administration?	N/A
Will the project design meet the Sustainable Building Guidelines under M.S. 16B.325?	N/A
Will the project designs meet applicable requirements and guidelines for energy conservation and alternative energy sources (M.S. 16B.335 subd. 4 and 16B.32)?	N/A
Have Information Technology Review Preconditions been met (M.S. 16B.335 subd. 5 & 6)?	N/A
Will the project comply with the targeted group purchasing requirement (M.S. 16C.16 subd. 13)?	N/A
Will the project meet public ownership requirements (M.S. 16A.695)?	Yes
Will a use agreement be required (M.S. 16A.695 subd. 2)?	Yes
Will program funding be reviewed and ensured (M.S. 16A.695 subd. 5)?	N/A
Will the matching funds requirements be met (M.S. 16A.86 subd. 4)?	Yes
Will the project be fully encumbered prior to the Cancellation Deadline (M.S. 16A.642): December 31, 2030?	Yes
M.S. 16A.502 and M.S. 16B.31 (2): Full Funding Required	Yes
M.S. 473.4485: Guideway Project	
Is this a Guideway Project?	No
Is the required information included in this request?	N/A