

A. Reimagine Romkey Park – Update



# Park Advisory Board Memorandum

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November 26, 2024

**SUBJECT:** Update on Reimagine Romkey Park Project

**RECOMMENDATION:**

The Park Advisory Board is asked to receive information on the Reimagine Romkey Park Project.

**BACKGROUND/KEY POINTS:**

The City is working to complete the Reimagine Romkey Park Project which includes a 25 meter pool, pool building, zero-entry wading pool, splash pad, basketball courts, soccer field, pickleball courts, skatepark, playground, and other park amenities. The total project cost is estimated at \$11.3M. The City of Moorhead has received a \$5M matching grant from the Department of Interior with the Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership (ORLP) Program.

The City of Moorhead has contracted with YHR Partners Ltd for design services and Gast Construction Company for construction services. The team has worked diligently with community user groups and City staff for project input. A Groundbreaking Celebration was held August 15, 2024 with many dignitaries in attendance. The news articles are attached.

On August 12<sup>th</sup>, 2024 the City Council approved the Guaranteed Maximum Price (GMP) for the demolition of existing pool and installation of new foundations. Demolition of the existing pool and pool house began September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2024. The installation of footings and foundation is complete with the fall construction on schedule.

The project design and construction documents have been completed. The project documents were released for competitive bids which are due December 9<sup>th</sup>, 2024. After bids are received and reviewed, a construction phase Guaranteed Maximum Price (GMP) will be developed and taken to the Moorhead City Council for Approval.

Construction will continue Spring 2025 with the scheduled completion allowing for the opening of the 2026 pool season.

**FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS:**

The total project cost is estimated at \$11,300,000. The project documents are released for competitive bids and cost estimates are within the project budget.

**Submitted By:**

Paul Fiechtner, Public Works Director  
Holly Heitkamp, Parks and Recreation Director

**Attachments:** Groundbreaking News Article

# Moorhead celebrates beginning of Romkey Park renovation with words from leaders, free pool admission

While a groundbreaking event was canceled, Moorhead is still celebrating a project to renovate Romkey Park. Admission to the Moorhead Municipal Pool will be free on Aug. 16.



*Speakers at the Reimagine Romkey Park Groundbreaking ceremony held at the Hjemkomst Center on Aug. 15, 2024. From left: Sarah Wennerberg, Minnesota DNR, Senator Tina Smith, Senator Amy Klobuchar, Moorhead Mayor Shelly Carlson, and Holly Heitkamp, City of Moorhead Parks and Recreation Director. The groundbreaking was moved from Romkey park to the Hjemkomst due to rain. Chris Flynn / The Forum*



By [Ingrid Harbo](#)

August 15, 2024 at 5:59 PM

MOORHEAD — The kickoff to an \$11.3 million project to renovate Moorhead's Romkey Park was rained out, but Moorhead is still celebrating the final days of the Moorhead Municipal Pool and Romkey Park as it exists today.

As the pool closes for the summer, the [Reimagine Romkey project](#) to replace the pool and add new park amenities begins. Plans call for Moorhead's only all-ages, public outdoor pool to be closed through 2025 and reopen in 2026.

The city planned to hold a groundbreaking event for community members on Thursday, Aug. 15, but canceled the event due to rain.

However, the community will still be able to celebrate the last day of the Moorhead Municipal Pool on Friday with free pool admission, a bouncy house, yard games and free food. Activities on Friday will start at 1 p.m. when the pool opens.



*A goose hangs out at Romkey Park in Moorhead on Thursday, May 9, 2024. Alyssa Goelzer/The Forum*

While the festivities on Thursday were canceled, local, state and federal leaders gathered at the Hjemkomst Center to mark the start of the project to revamp the park and pool.

Romkey Park opened in 1956, and the Moorhead Municipal Pool opened in 1958. It is the city's only all-ages, outdoor public pool.

The pool hosts more than 400 swimming lessons each year and 250 swimmers each day, Mayor Shelly Carlson said.



“For many children, not just in this neighborhood, but in this entire city, Romkey Park is more than just a park — it's a haven,” Carlson said.



*A timeline of Romkey Park's history displayed at the Reimagine Romkey Park Groundbreaking at the Hjmekomst on Aug. 15, 2024. Chris Flynn / The Forum*

The city received a [\\$5 million federal grant](#) for the project from the Department of the Interior/National Park Service as part of the Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership. Funding is intended to support recreational opportunities in communities that have historically been economically disadvantaged.

Sen. Amy Klobuchar, D-Minn., told The Forum seeing how the federal funding will be used in Moorhead is exciting.

“Here you can really see the stories of the kids that want to use the pool, the staff that have worked on this for so long and the idea that sometimes a park can make a whole area, a whole neighborhood, feel good about where they live,” Klobuchar said.



*U.S. Sen. Amy Klobuchar, D-Minnesota speaks during at the Reimagine Romkey Park Groundbreaking at the Hjemkomst on Aug. 15, 2024. Chris Flynn / The Forum*

The grant program also required a local match of \$5 million. Along with the required \$5 million match, the city of Moorhead [approved an additional \\$1.3 million](#) for the project to ensure a highly requested splash pad could be included in the project.

Finalized park plans call for the swimming pool to have diving boards, a water slide and a wading pool. The splash pad will be outside pool fencing, free for people to use and open later into the summer than the swimming pool.

The surrounding park will include play features like a traditional playground, natural playground and sledding hill. There will also be a skate park, basketball courts, pickleball courts and soccer field.

Other planned amenities include a community room, picnic shelter, a food forest and new trails and sidewalks.

As rain fell outside the Hjemkomst Center, Sen. Tina Smith, D-Minn., made light of the weather in her remarks about the park.

“We’re all here because we believe that everybody deserves a delightful place for their families to get outside, to play and to make memories, and that is exactly what this park renovation is all about,” Smith said. “So today we are literally — although actually today we are figuratively — digging into an investment for the people of Moorhead, and I can’t wait to see how it turns out.”



*U.S Sen. Tina Smith, D-Minnesota speaks at the Reimagine Romkey Park Groundbreaking at the Hjmekomst on Aug. 15, 2024. Chris Flynn / The Forum*



**By [Ingrid Harbo](#)** Ingrid Harbo joined The Forum in March 2024. Harbo reports on Moorhead and Clay County news. Readers can reach Harbo at 701-241-5526 or [iharbo@forumcomm.com](mailto:iharbo@forumcomm.com). Follow her on Twitter [@ingridaharbo](#).