



City Council

Agenda Item

Subject: Prairie Lakes Ice Arena Recognized as the Small Cities/Rural Communities Project of the Year, Structure for 2025 by the American Public Works Association

Meeting: City Council - May 19 2025

From: Kristen Bobzien, Interim City Manager/Chief Financial Officer

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The American Public Works Association is a non-for-profit 501(c)3 organization with over 32,000 members globally working to advance the quality of life for all. City of Watertown has been a member as a public agency since 2022. In 1996 the APWA started the Project of the Year program, and this is the first time a South Dakota project has been awarded such an honor, the Prairie Lakes Ice Arena.

Hundreds of submissions are submitted annually and both the Public Works and Parks, Recreation and Forestry Departments are proud to say that Watertown's exceptional facility has earned such an exclusive title. The APWA Public Works Project of the Year Award for Small Cities/Rural Communities category must have a population of 50,000 or less. The project must promote excellence, demonstrate creativity, ingenuity, and efficiency in the delivery of public works projects as well as have a profound impact on the community. Projects must be developed, owned, and maintained by a public agency to be eligible for a nomination. Criteria that projects are judged on include construction process, environmental preservation, creativity of municipal resources, use of alternative materials and ability to meet a perceived community need.

As a winning project the City of Watertown will send a designated representative of the public agency, contractor, and consultant are all presented a plaque at the Awards Recognition Ceremony in August during PWX which is in Chicago this year. Projects will also be featured in APWA publications and on the APWA website as well.

The Prairie Lakes Ice Arena was a long-awaited dream that grew from a \$10 million project to an over \$36 million project in no time. Thanks to the incredible generosity of the community this dream was made possible. With the construction of the PLIA Watertown gained a second sheet of ice, ice year-round, and efficiencies in scheduling ice time even allowing of a new user group to start (curling). It is the largest completed public works project Watertown has seen.

To quote the Head Coach of the Watertown Shamrocks, " The PLIA has become a hub of social activity" and Visit Watertown Executive Director, Anjelica Uthe, "The PLIA is already proving to be a game-changer for our community. It stands as a testament to the pride our community has in investing in quality spaces that enhance our way of life... The economic impact will be substantial, fueling growth and further positioning Watertown as a premier destination for ice sports."

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS:

There will be no financial impact.

OVERSIGHT / PROJECT RESPONSIBILITY:

Dusty Rodek, Parks, Recreation & Forestry Director
Tom Bolin, PLIA Superintendent
Justin Petersen, City Engineer
Laura Moore, Executive Assistant

STAFF RECOMMENDATION / SUGGESTED MOTION:

No motion is necessary.

ATTACHMENT(S):

[Shorten PDF of APWA PLIA Nomination](#)

PRAIRIE LAKES Ice Arena



3015

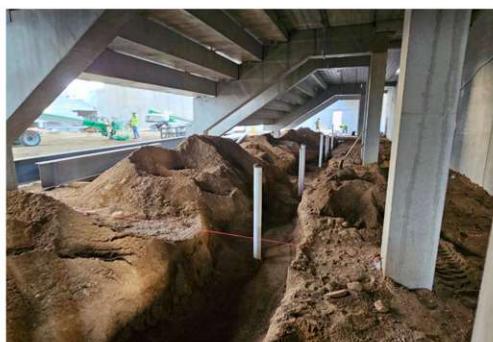
SCRC

2025

PROJECT OF THE YEAR, STRUCTURE

PRAIRE LAKES ICE ARENA
3015 1ST AVENUE NE
WATERTOWN, SD 57201

Construction



**2022 CONSTRUCTION STARTED
24 MILES OF PIPE UNDER RINK
123 TONS OF STRUCTURAL STEEL
218 TONS OF STEEL JOISTS
33,500 SQ. FT. OF INSULATION**



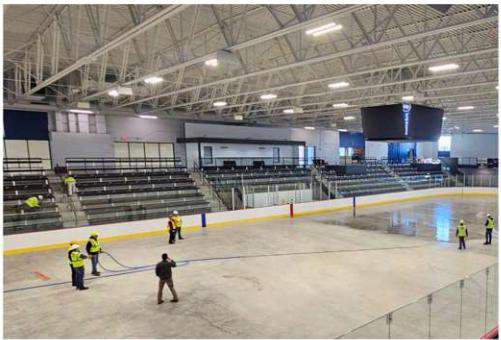
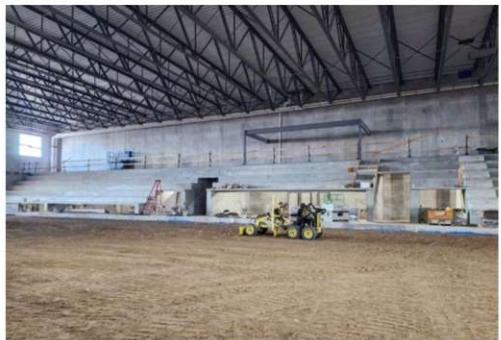
48 TONS OF CONCRETE

8 TONS OF STEEL REBAR IN RINK FLOOR

450 YARDS (525 TONS) OF SAND IN SUBFLOOR

9.7 MILES OF HIGH-DENSITY POLYETHYLENE PIPE FOR SUB-SOIL PER RINK

APPROX. 17,280 SQ. FT. RUBBER FLOORING WEIGHING 42,000 LBS.



417,000 SQ. FOOT LOT

90,800 SQ. FOOT BUILDING

34,000 SQ. FOOT TOTAL OF ICE

ICE IS APPROX. 1 INCH TO 1 ½ INCHES THICK

APPROX. 700 GALLONS OF CEILING PAINT USED

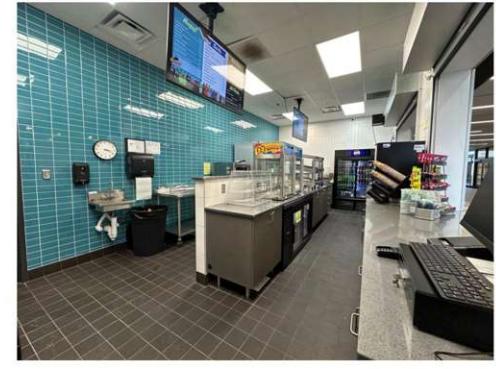
APPROX. 1,200 GALLONS OF REGULAR PAINT USED

312 PANELS OF GLASS (180 DASHER BOARDS)

156 PIECES OF GLASS PER RINK

2,997 TOTAL SEATS (PREMIER RINK = 1,600, DRISCOLL RINK = 460)

1,208 SQUARES OF DECKING



TOP ROW: MAIN ENTRANCE, MAIN LOBBY, ENTRY TO PREMIER RINK
MIDDLE ROW: CONCESSIONS STAND & LOUNGE, SKATE RENTAL WINDOW, KITCHEN
BOTTOM ROW: ENTRY TO DRISCOLL RINK, 1 OF 2 COMMUNITY ROOMS LOOKING INTO THE DRISCOLL RINK, ADDITIONAL SEATING BY CONCESSIONS



TOP ROW: VIEW OF RINK FROM MEDIA PLATFORM, LOGO UNDER ICE
MIDDLE ROW: WATERTOWN FIGURE SKATING CLUB SKATER, WATERTOWN FIGURE SKATING CLUB ANNUAL SHOWCASE, FANS AT SHAMROCKS GAME
BOTTOM ROW: ADULT HOCKEY LEAGUE, SCOREBOARD, LAKER HOCKEY GAME

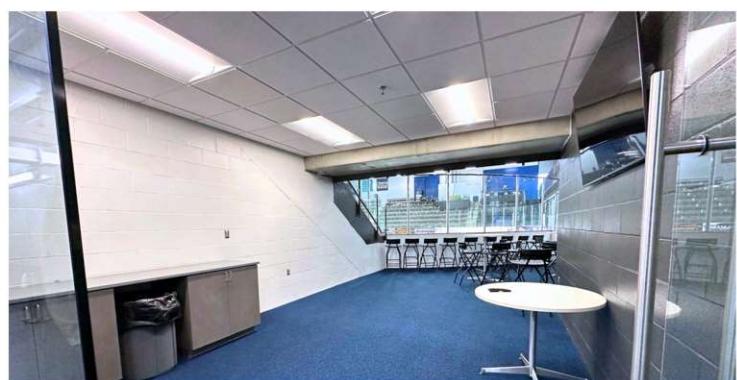
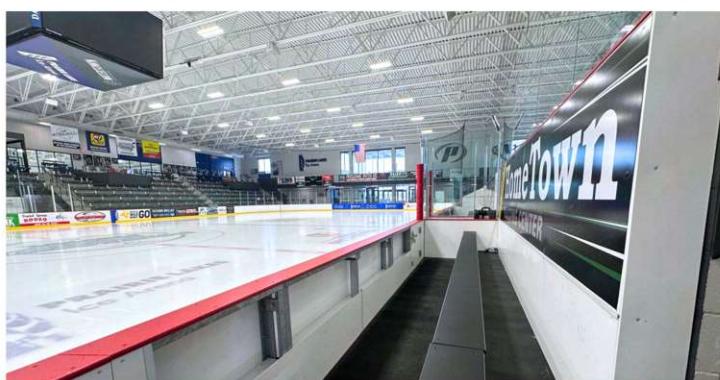
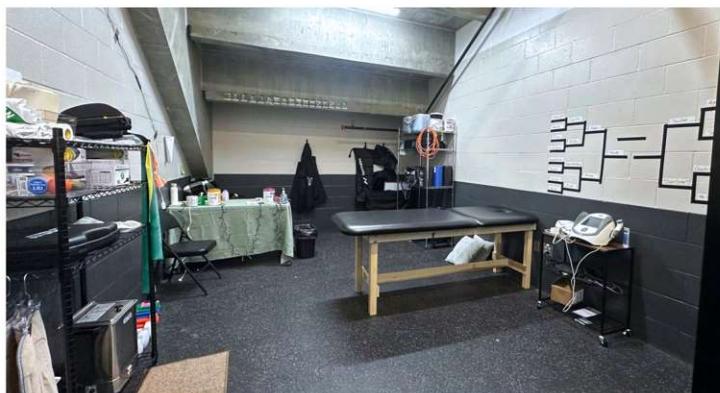


TOP PHOTO: VIEW OF RINK FROM SECOND LEVEL OF THE PREMIER RINK
MIDDLE ROW: ADULT SKATING LESSONS, PUBLIC OPEN SKATE, LEARN TO CURL EVENT
BOTTOM ROW: STORAGE FOR CURLING SUPPLIES, ZAMBONI WITH LASER LEVEL SYSTEM,
STAIRWAY TO MEDIA/IT ROOM

BEHIND THE ICE



Shamrock locker room photos provided by Kyle Boyer with Athletic Edge, Pivotal Health Solutions.



TOP ROW: SHAMROCKS LOCKER ROOM

MIDDLE ROW: PHYSICAL THERAPY ROOM, LAKER HOCKEY ROOM

BOTTOM ROW: PLAYERS BENCH ON PREMIER RINK, PRIVATE PARTY ROOM ON PREMIER RINK



Jodi Driscoll being awarded the only key to the City that Mayor Holien has given.



PRAIRIE LAKES Ice Arena

THE \$10 MILLION DONATION WALL BUILD IT NOW – IT'S MORE THAN ICE

The Prairie Lakes Ice Arena is the largest public works project in the history of Watertown. More notable, however, is that \$10 million dollars were raised through private donations to make this complex a reality. Wherever the money came from—from city government or local businesses or devoted individuals—this shows how all of Watertown was willing to invest in itself because we know what a wonderful place this is. This building represents our shared belief that Watertown is worth it. May this ice arena stand as a lasting symbol of the pride we have in our community, and the belief that our best days are still ahead of us.

Sincerely, Ried Holien, Mayor

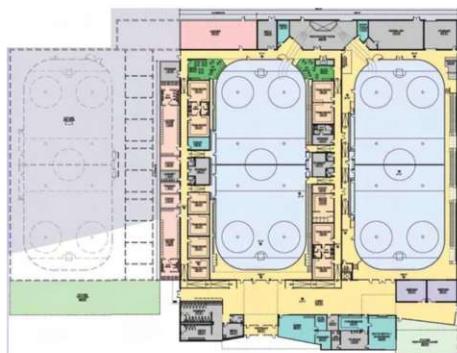
"It is more than about the ice, it's also about the experience for parents dropping kids off, the spectators coming to the arena and I think that's what is going to probably blow people away more than anything when they step into this building."

Tom Betti

Designer, 292 Design Group



Prairie Lakes Ice Arena Ribbon Cutting



Rendition showing ability to add a third sheet in future.



Shamrock's owner speaking at grand opening.

The message left of the donor wall in main lobby.



"The Prairie Lakes Ice Arena has become a hub of social activity in Watertown. The arena is sold out every home weekend, creating an energetic environment, and the support the community has given us has made Watertown a special place for players to play."

Casey Kirley
Head Coach, Shamrocks





● PROJECT LINKS ●



Tegra Group



JLG Architects



RJM Construction