



**The Corporation of the
City of Sault Ste. Marie**

C O U N C I L R E P O R T

August 11, 2025

TO: Mayor Matthew Shoemaker and Members of City Council
AUTHOR: Ben Ayton, Supervisor of Aquatics
DEPARTMENT: Community Development and Enterprise Services
RE: John Rhodes Starting Blocks Funding Reallocation

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to request Council approval to reallocate funds from the John Rhodes Pool pump replacement project to the starting block replacement project.

Background

The John Rhodes Pool has three pumps that operate the water circulation for the three pool basins. During the replacement of the facility filtration system in 2024, two of the three pumps were replaced. Leaving the larger pump for the competition pool to be replaced in 2025.

John Rhodes Community Centre (JRCC) is the only eight-lane competitive swim facility between Thunder Bay and Sudbury. It hosts three regional swim meets a year and is home to the Sault Surge Aquatic Team, Soo Masters Polar Bears Swim Team, and Special Olympic athletes. All three groups train extensively using the facility's eight starting blocks, which are also used during the City's lesson programs and open swims.

To support competitive swimming and lessons, the starting blocks need to be replaced, and a backstroke system added. Staff have been researching options for the replacement that can utilize the existing mounting system. The quotes that were received came in higher than the initial budget.

In addition, the Sault Surge Swim Club applied to the Tourism Development Fund and was awarded \$8,000 to go towards the addition of a backstroke start system, which would be mounted on the starting blocks.

Analysis

The John Rhodes Pool is the only full-size short-course competition pool in the Algoma district. This allows the area to run sanctioned competition events that qualify athletes for provincial or national level competitions.

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Council approved funding for the starting blocks totalling \$45,500 in 2023. Staff were unable to complete the purchase as the quotes came in higher than the original estimated amount. The total quote for the replacement is now \$74,592.

The replacement of pool pumps was approved as part of the 2025 budget at \$60,000. The remaining pump was quoted at \$16,962, with installation quoted at approximately \$6,000. This leaves \$37,038 remaining in the budget.

Currently, the total approved budget combined with the funding secured by the Sault Surge is \$53,500. Staff are requesting that \$21,100 of the remaining \$37,038 from the pool pumps be reallocated to support the purchase of new, modern starting blocks.

Financial Implications

There is \$37,038 remaining from the 2025 approved capital budget for the Pool Pump Replacement. Staff are seeking Council's approval to utilize \$21,100 of the funds to complete the Starting Block Replacement.

Strategic Plan / Policy Impact / Climate Impact

This report is linked to the Quality-of-Life focus area. Invest in recreational infrastructure.

Recommendation

It is therefore recommended that Council take the following action:

Resolved that the report of the Supervisor of Aquatics dated August 11, 2025, concerning the John Rhodes Starting Blocks Funding Reallocation be received and that \$21,100 in capital funding from the pool pumps be reallocated to the starting block replacement project.

Respectfully submitted,

Ben Ayton

Supervisor of Aquatics

705.759.7309

b.ayton@cityssm.on.ca