

# Improving regional health is worth more than a half percent.

The City of Hermantown is requesting a sales tax increase of 1/2 percent to fund a community recreation initiative. Not only will this will help improve health outcomes in the region, but it will also have a positive economic impact.

The initiative components include the completion of a trail system which will extend beyond our city borders, the re-imagining of a central park with outdoor recreation options, and a new indoor hockey arena with updated outdoor sheets of ice. In all three areas, community needs and current usage have created demand and outpaced current offerings. The cost of the project is \$19 million, which will be paid for through a conservatively-anticipated annual sales tax increase of \$1.4 million.

St. Louis County is currently in the bottom 15 percent of Minnesota counties for health outcomes, but initial strides toward improvement are being made at the Essentia Wellness Center - an incredibly successful partnership and project made possible through an initial focus of sales tax dollars on health. Now we want to give Hermantown's citizens a vote in taking an even stronger stand for our region's health through the community recreation initiative.

This project will create access points for all ages and abilities, extend benefits beyond our city limits, and have a positive economic impact. Those healthy returns make a 1/2 percent sales tax a worthy investment.



## Greater community recreation opportunities are invaluable.