



PROJECT SUMMARY

The **Grand Casino Center Arena Complex**—comprised of the **Xcel Energy Center Arena**, **Roy Wilkins Auditorium**, and **Saint Paul RiverCentre**—stands as the most prolific driver of economic activity in Saint Paul. Each year, the Arena Complex attracts over **2.1 million visitors and brings in \$383 million in spending annually for the City of Saint Paul**. Last year, the complex **hosted nearly 400 events**.

Now in its 25th year of its 25-year lifespan, a renovation is required to preserve the city-owned facility and maintain its status as an exceptional local and statewide destination. If funded, construction on the multi-phase renovation project could begin as early as 2026.

The City's \$162.5 million will be used on improvements on **infrastructure & safety at the complex**. Corridors, Guest Services, Restrooms, Locker Rooms, Outdoor Patio/Market, escalators and elevators, HVAC and the roof. **Public funding is focused on the nuts and bolts of a public asset.**

The Grand Casino Arena Complex has not undergone any major renovations or updates since 2014 when the mid-ice screen and stadium seats were replaced.

A REGIONAL AND STATEWIDE ASSET

The Arena Complex project is a catalyst for economic growth and development, driving tourism and generating revenue for local businesses. Throughout the year, the Arena Complex hosts:

- Minnesota Wild and Minnesota Frost professional hockey teams
- Nationally touring concerts and performances
- Cultural events, citizenship ceremonies, and graduations
- State High School League athletic tournaments
- Exhibitions and trade shows

Economic Impacts

The complex will generate \$30.3 million in tax receipts between sales, lodging, and income taxes; \$17.3 million of that are annual state tax revenues.

The renovated and expanded complex will employ over 5,000 people in St. Paul.

During construction, renovations will generate almost \$100 million in additional activity in St. Paul, and \$379 million in Minnesota and employ 2,300 full time equivalent employees.



ARENA COMPLEX FUNDING BREAKDOWN

To maintain its status as an exceptional local and statewide attraction, the City of Saint Paul is seeking \$200 million to renovate the Grand Casino Arena Complex.

| PROJECTS | STATE | CITY | TEAM | TOTAL |
|---------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| Xcel Energy Center Arena | \$125,000,000 | \$162,500,000 | \$162,500,000 | \$450,000,000 |
| Roy Wilkins Auditorium | \$75,000,000 | \$0 | \$0 | \$75,000,000 |
| Roy Wilkins Auditorium Phase II | \$0 | \$75,000,000 | | \$75,000,000 |
| TOTAL COST OF PROJECT | \$200,000,000 | \$200,000,000 | \$200,000,000 | \$600,000,000 |

Note: Phase II is to be funded between City and a private partner (preferably the Team)

HISTORY OF MINNESOTA ATHLETIC COMPLEX FUNDING

The Twin Cities has world-class athletic complexes, however, Saint Paul has historically received less state support these projects. *Allianz Field*, the home of the Minnesota United professional soccer team was funded entirely by private dollars.

| PROJECTS | STATE | CITY/COUNTY | TEAM | TOTAL |
|---------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|-----------------|
| U.S. Bank Stadium | \$384,000,000 (35%) | \$150,000,000 (14%) | \$572,000,000 (52%) | \$1,100,000,000 |
| Twins Baseball Park | \$0 | \$260,000,000 (67%) | \$130,000,000 (33%) | \$390,000,000 |
| Target Center | \$0 | \$74,000,000 (60%) | \$49,000,000 (40%) | \$123,000,000 |
| CHS FIELD | \$27,000,000 (43%) | \$27,500,000 (44%) | \$11,000,000 (17%) | \$63,000,000 |



Northern Midwest Regional Council of Carpenters

Tom Lutz, EST

Mike Barnwell, President

April 21, 2026

Dear Co-Chairs Davids and Gomez and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of the Northern Midwest Regional Council of Carpenters, I am writing to express strong support for HF 4248, which would extend the City of Saint Paul's half-cent sales tax authority from 2042 through 2060. This extension is vital to maintaining and growing the economic strength of Saint Paul and the broader region along with maintaining the funding of the STAR program.

Key venues such as the Grand Casino Arena, Saint Paul RiverCentre, and Roy Wilkins Auditorium play a major role in driving the city's economy. Continued investment in these facilities would ensure they remain competitive, attract high-profile events, and accommodate the millions of visitors who contribute to local businesses each year. Upgrading and modernizing these spaces will enhance their appeal while creating sustained demand for skilled construction professionals.

These improvements also present a meaningful opportunity to generate high-quality union jobs that support working families. The projects will employ skilled tradespeople, open pathways to stable middle-class careers, and deliver long-term economic benefits to communities.

Furthermore, the projected \$110 million increase in annual local spending—raising total economic impact to approximately \$600 million—will provide a significant boost to local businesses and job creation across multiple industries.

Importantly, HF 4248 builds on a funding approach that has already proven effective. Rather than introducing a new tax, it extends an existing mechanism that has supported critical initiatives. This dependable funding source allows Saint Paul to continue investing in infrastructure that strengthens both its economy and workforce.

Without action, these facilities risk falling behind competing markets, potentially resulting in lost events, jobs, and economic opportunities. By extending this authority, Saint Paul can remain a leading destination while supporting thousands of workers and their families.

We respectfully ask for your support of HF 4248 and appreciate your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Richard Kolodziejski
Political Director MN/ND/SD



Greater Saint Paul Building Owners & Managers Association

370 WABASHA STREET NORTH, SUITE 690
SAINT PAUL, MINNESOTA 55102 O PHONE: 651.291.8888

April 21, 2026

Representative Maria Isa Pérez-Vega
5th Floor Centennial Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

Senator Sandy Pappas
2113 Minnesota Senate Bldg.
St. Paul, MN 55155

Representative Athena Hollins
5th Floor Centennial Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

Senator Clare Oumou Verbeten
2101 Minnesota Senate Bldg.
St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear Sen. Pappas, Sen. Oumou Verbeten, Rep. Pérez-Vega, and Rep. Hollins:

On behalf of the Greater Saint Paul Building Owners & Managers Association (BOMA), I am writing in support of your legislation extending the City of Saint Paul's half-cent sales tax and providing critical funding for improvements to the Grand Casino Arena and Roy Wilkins Auditorium.

Greater Saint Paul BOMA represents more than 300 members from across the commercial real estate industry, along with the service partners who support it. Together, we are committed to fostering a strong, vibrant built environment that serves the needs of buildings and businesses throughout the East Metro.

Our organization is deeply invested in the future of Saint Paul. As an active member of the Saint Paul Downtown Alliance (SPDA), we support the implementation of its Downtown Investment Strategy, which is focused on revitalizing the urban core. A key component of that strategy is sustaining public investment in critical, publicly owned assets like the Grand Casino Arena and Roy Wilkins Auditorium.

Investments of this kind are essential to attracting and retaining employers and employees, strengthening downtown vitality, and stabilizing the city's tax base. We appreciate your leadership in advancing this important effort and your commitment to Saint Paul's long-term economic health.

Sincerely,

2026-2027 OFFICERS

Kori L. De Jong, CPM, *Chairperson* • Joe Holman, *Secretary/Treasurer*

DIRECTORS

Jill Hocking • Bill Huepenbecker • Crystal L. Pingel, CPM, PCAM • Elisa Rasmussen • Angie Wishard-Thomas • Jean Paul Yohannes
Tina Gassman, *President*



400 N Wabasha Street, Suite 240
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55102

April 21, 2026

RE: Support for HF 4248

Dear co-chairs and members of the House Taxes Committee,

On behalf of the Saint Paul Port Authority, I write in strong support of HF 4248, which would extend the City of Saint Paul's existing local sales tax authorization through 2060. Along with the continued funding of the city's STAR grant programs, this extension will allow the city to invest in the long-overdue renovation and ongoing maintenance of the Grand Casino Arena, Roy Wilkins Auditorium and Saint Paul RiverCentre without raising property taxes on residents or businesses.

As an organization focused on economic development, job creation, and long-term fiscal sustainability, the Saint Paul Port Authority supports strategic public investments that generate measurable returns. The arena complex generates substantial economic activity for hotels, restaurants, retailers, and service providers throughout downtown and surrounding neighborhoods, supporting both small local businesses and larger employers. Thousands of visitors each year come to Saint Paul specifically because of conferences, conventions, concerts, and sporting events held at these facilities, bringing direct spending and job creation into the local economy, while providing tax revenues that support critical public services statewide.

Extending the local sales tax through 2060 represents a prudent, forward-looking approach that protects local taxpayers, strengthens downtown Saint Paul, and benefits the entire state of Minnesota. We respectfully urge your support for HF 4248 and thank you for your continued commitment to economic vitality and smart public investment.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Todd P. Hurley". The signature is written in a cursive style and is contained within a thin black rectangular border.

Todd P. Hurley
President
Saint Paul Port Authority

Representative Maria Isa Pérez-Vega
5th Floor Centennial Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

Senator Sandy Pappas
2113 Minnesota Senate Bldg.
St. Paul, MN 55155

Representative Athena Hollins
5th Floor Centennial Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

Senator Clare Oumou Verbeten
2101 Minnesota Senate Bldg.
St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear Chair Pappas and Chair Lee:

Dear Sen. Pappas, Sen. Oumou Verbeten, Rep. Pérez-Vega, and Rep. Hollins:

The International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees (IATSE) respectfully submits this letter in strong support of the legislation to extend the City of Saint Paul's half-cent sales tax and to provide critical funding for improvements to the Grand Casino Arena and Roy Wilkins Auditorium.

Our stagehand members are the workers behind the scenes that make marquee concerts and events happen in both the Grand Casino Arena and the Roy Wilkins Auditorium. Both venues are in need of major renovations so they can continue to attract events and concerts that provide good paying union jobs for our members.

These types of investments in public infrastructure are critical to keeping the venues relevant so they can continue to successfully compete for both international and national events.

We appreciate your thoughtful leadership on this issue and your ongoing commitment to maintaining these important statewide assets.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kellie Larson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping underline.

Kellie Larson
Business Agent
IATSE Local 13



April 15, 2026

Senator Erin Murphy
Senate Majority Leader

Representative Lisa Demuth
Speaker of the House

RE: Support for funding Grand Casino Arena, St. Paul RiverCentre and Roy Wilkins Auditorium

Dear Majority Leader Murphy and Speaker Demuth,

I write on behalf of the Minnesota State Building and Construction Trades Council, representing over 70,000 women and men in the construction industry. I'm writing to express our strong support for the renovation funding package for the Grand Casino Arena, the St. Paul RiverCentre, and the Roy Wilkins Auditorium.

This \$600 million project is more than just a renovation—it's a commitment to the future of St. Paul. These facilities have been anchors in our state for decades, hosting everything from world-class sporting events and concerts to community and business gatherings. But as you know, the competitive landscape has changed, and these venues are at risk of falling behind. This investment is a critical step toward keeping St. Paul vibrant, attracting visitors, and ensuring our capital city remains a destination for entertainment, tourism, and economic growth.

We are proud that this work will be done under a project labor agreement. That means 2,300 skilled union construction workers will be on-site—men and women trained in the safest, most efficient building techniques, ensuring that this complex is built to last. And beyond construction, the workers who maintain these facilities will be paid family-sustaining wages with strong benefits, strengthening our workforce and supporting middle-class families in the region.

The Xcel Energy Center was originally built in 1999, and while the arena has outlived its competitive prime, its structural integrity remains strong. That is a testament to the quality craftsmanship of the union tradespeople who built it in the first place.

This project is about more than just an arena. It has the potential to jumpstart additional economic development downtown. A strong, thriving entertainment district fuels local businesses—restaurants, hotels, shops—and makes St. Paul a more attractive place to live, work, and recreate.

We believe this is the right investment at the right time. It puts skilled tradespeople to work, ensures quality jobs in the long term, and positions St. Paul for a brighter economic future. On behalf of the Minnesota Building and Construction Trades, I urge you to support this critical funding package.

Sincerely,

Tom Dicklich
Executive Director

April 20, 2026

Representative Greg Davids, Co-Chair
House Taxes Committee
2nd Floor Centennial Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

Representative Aisha Gomez, Co-Chair
House Taxes Committee
5th Floor Centennial Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

Re: St. Paul Area Chamber Support for HF 4248 - Saint Paul Half-Cent Sales Tax Extension

Dear Co-Chairs Davids and Gomez and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of the 1,600+ members and affiliates of the St. Paul Area Chamber, I write in support of HF 4248, extending the City of Saint Paul's half-cent sales tax authority from 2042 to 2060. This legislation supports long-term investment in downtown assets that drive economic activity in Saint Paul.

The Grand Casino Arena, Saint Paul RiverCentre, and Roy Wilkins Auditorium anchor downtown Saint Paul's economy. Together, the complex draws roughly 2 million visitors each year across more than 150 nights of sports, concerts, conventions, and cultural events. Maintaining that level of activity requires facilities that meet modern expectations. The proposed renovations will strengthen the visitor experience, support additional events, and reinforce downtown's role as an economic center.

Projected impacts reflect that opportunity. Renovations are expected to generate an additional \$110 million in annual local spending, bringing the total economic impact to roughly \$600 million each year. That growth translates into more jobs, increased foot traffic, and stronger support for the restaurants, retailers, and service providers that depend on a healthy downtown.

HF 4248 maintains a stable and proven funding mechanism to make these improvements possible. This proposal does not create a new tax. It extends a long-standing tool that also supports Saint Paul's STAR grant program, which funds capital and cultural projects throughout the city. This legislation ensures the City can meet its share of the investment with a reliable funding structure in place.

Extending a sales tax is not a position we take lightly. The alternative—allowing a critical economic driver to fall behind—would carry far greater consequences for Saint Paul's businesses and downtown revitalization. The St. Paul Area Chamber remains focused on a strong and competitive downtown. HF 4248 advances that goal, and we urge your support.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



B Kyle
President and CEO
St. Paul Area Chamber





April 21, 2026

Representative Maria Isa Pérez-Vega
5th Floor Centennial Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

Senator Sandy Pappas
2113 Minnesota Senate Bldg.
St. Paul, MN 55155

Representative Athena Hollins
5th Floor Centennial Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

Senator Clare Oumou Verbeten
2101 Minnesota Senate Bldg.
St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear Sen. Pappas, Sen. Oumou Verbeten, Rep. Pérez-Vega, and Rep. Hollins:

On behalf of the Saint Paul Downtown Alliance, I am writing in support of your bills extending the City of Saint. Paul's half-cent sales tax and funding for upgrades to the Grand Casino Arena & Roy Wilkins Auditorium.

The Saint Paul Downtown Alliance is a nonprofit organization that represents downtown businesses, government entities, residents, and entrepreneurs to build a strong and vibrant downtown.

In a post-pandemic era, all downtowns are grappling with the challenge of how to attract and retain downtown visitors, businesses and residents. To help address that challenge, the Downtown Alliance, in partnership with public and private stakeholders, has developed, and just released, a comprehensive Downtown Investment Strategy to revitalize our downtown. This strategy includes supporting State investments in renewing these publicly owned facilities.

These two facilities are in need of major renovations and are not only vital to Saint Paul but also serve as statewide assets. The arena complex draws over two million visitors to Saint Paul each year and is a major driver of economic activity.

These types of investments in public infrastructure are vital as we try to attract and retain visitors, residents, employers and employees.

The Saint Paul Downtown Alliance appreciates your support for these important statewide assets.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Joe Spencer". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal line extending from the start of the name.

Joe Spencer
President

UNITE HERE

Local Union No. 17

312 Central Avenue, Suite 444
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55414

Phone: 612-379-4730

Fax: 612-379-8698

e-mail: info@here17.org

April 21, 2026

Representative Maria Isa Pérez-Vega
5th Floor Centennial Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

Senator Sandy Pappas
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Representative Athena Hollins
5th Floor Centennial Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

Senator Clare Oumou Verbeten
2101 Minnesota Senate Bldg.
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Dear Chair Pappas and Chair Lee:

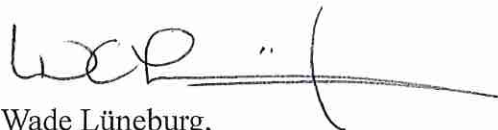
Dear Sen. Pappas, Sen. Oumou Verbeten, Rep. Pérez-Vega, and Rep. Hollins:

UNITE HERE Local 17 respectfully submits this letter in support of your legislation to extend the City of Saint Paul's half-cent sales tax and to provide critical funding to renovate the Grand Casino Arena and Roy Wilkins Auditorium.

UNITE HERE is Minnesota's Hospitality Union! We represent more than 6,000 workers in hotels, restaurants, sports complexes, convention centers, and the airport in Minneapolis, Saint Paul, and surrounding suburbs. We are proud to be a diverse union, comprising workers from many immigrant communities speaking more than 17 languages. Our priorities are to negotiate great contracts for our members, empower workers to have a voice on the job, and organize non-union workers. Through organizing, UNITE HERE Local 17 is helping to turn traditionally low-wage jobs into good, family-sustaining, middle-class jobs.

Over 250 of our hospitality union members are the workers behind the scenes that make marquee concerts and events happen in both the Grand Casino Arena, RiverCentre and the Roy Wilkins Auditorium. These venues are in need of major renovations so they can continue to attract events and concerts that provide good paying union jobs for our members. For these reasons, UNITE HERE Local 17 appreciates your support for these important statewide assets.

Sincerely,



Wade Lüneburg,
Political Director
Unite Here Local 17
Opeiu#12/WL/jh

Representative Maria Isa Pérez-Vega
5th Floor Centennial Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

Senator Sandy Pappas
2113 Minnesota Senate Bldg.
St. Paul, MN 55155



Representative Athena Hollins
5th Floor Centennial Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

Senator Clare Oumou Verbeten
2101 Minnesota Senate Bldg.
St. Paul, MN 55155

Re: Visit Saint Paul Support for Saint Paul Half-Cent Sales Tax Extension

Dear Sen. Pappas, Sen. Oumou Verbeten, Rep. Pérez-Vega, and Rep. Hollins:

On behalf of Visit Saint Paul, I respectfully submit our strong support for your legislation to extend the City of Saint Paul's half-cent sales tax and to invest in critical improvements to the Grand Casino Arena, Roy Wilkins Auditorium and Saint Paul RiverCentre.

Visit Saint Paul is the official convention & visitors bureau for Minnesota's capital city. Our mission is to generate economic growth by effectively marketing the RiverCentre campus, Saint Paul, and the surrounding region as a preferred convention and tourism destination for all cultures and groups.

Strategic investment in the renovation of Saint Paul's Entertainment Complex is essential to advancing this mission. It positions Saint Paul for a future marked by increased capacity to attract significant events, meetings, and groups, translating directly to economic growth and revitalization. This strategy is one of the three tactics outlined in Saint Paul's Downtown Investment Strategy, which underscores how critical such investments are to our collective success.

Creating long-term funding for the renovation and maintenance of these city-owned facilities enables us to enhance the vibrancy and economic resilience of our city, ensuring downtown Saint Paul remains an exciting, welcoming destination for decades to come. Maintaining modern, competitive venues ensures Saint Paul remains well-positioned to attract and host events that entertain, connect and educate attendees from across the state.

Visit Saint Paul appreciates your leadership and support in advancing these important statewide assets.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jaimee Lucke Hendrikson".

Jaimee Lucke Hendrikson
President & CEO, Visit Saint Paul