

ANOKA RUM RIVER DAM



The City is working to reimagine the Rum River Dam for the next 100 years.



Our vision for the future – result of the 2024 feasibility study

BENEFITS

Infrastructure improvements

Modernize dam function

Replace antiquated, manually installed timber flashboards with automated crest gates.

- » Improve **safety** with automated gates
- » Year-round debris removal
- » Predictive and adaptable water level management



Recreational features

NEW Pedestrian and maintenance bridge

Create a river crossing for the expanding regional trail system.

- » Provide access to remove debris from the dam
- » Provide overlooks for respite, fishing, and taking in nature and historic downtown views
- » Provide access to the river surfing feature

NEW River surfing

A new sport growing in popularity in the United States where surfers, paddleboarders, and kayakers ride a standing wave and tubers can take a leisurely float in a new recreational channel.

- » Make Anoka a unique river recreation tourism destination
- » The first river surfing location in Minnesota
- » More predictable and safer water in a purpose-built channel than in an uncontrolled river
- » Ability to turn off the water to the channel in case of an emergency

NEW Navigation lock

Conversion of an existing structure to allow pontoons and other watercraft to navigate the dam.

- » Allow boats to travel between the Upper and Lower Rum and Mississippi Rivers
- » Assist with the release of flood waters
- » Aid in the passage of native fish species for spawning
- » Allow water draw down for dam inspection and maintenance



A lock is the most cost effective recreational vessel passage to construct, maintain, and operate with best boating experience for multiple boats at a time.

BENEFITS

Regional impacts

NEW

Fish passage

Allows fish to swim along and leap a variety of low steps to travel from one side of the dam to the other.

- » Create an educational feature and integrate with the landscape using nature-inspired design
- » Support spawning and bolster the fishery by increasing access to preferred habitat
- » Easy closure of the passage for maintenance and seasonal flood releases through use of an integrated gate system

NEW

First responder training

- » Create a regional water rescue training venue
- » Simulation of real-life emergency scenarios, providing hands-on experience in a controlled environment
- » Improved proficiency in swift water rescue techniques

NEW

Create a new midwest tourist attraction

- » Bring a focus to the river as a regional amenity
- » Market the community as an outdoor destination
- » Generate direct profits for businesses within the region

Improve the environment

- » Enhance the fishery by connecting the Mississippi River and Mille Lacs Lake to support spawning of native fish
- » Reduce spring flooding and therefore upstream riverbank erosion, impacts to infrastructure, and damage to aquatic habitat

NEW

Navigation Lock

- » Re-establish the connection from the Rum River to the Mississippi River
- » Regional recreation benefit to river patrons in multiple communities



Whitewater park venues have seen economic impacts as high as \$9M per year.

Profits are generated through vendor operations (watercraft and gear rentals, raft trips, lessons) and patronage of regional businesses (restaurants, shops, hotels) by visitors attending river-based events.

FUNDING

Previous allocation:

\$500,000

Feasibility study completed

Current request: \$5.6M

Preliminary design, survey, public engagement/communication, environmental documents for the proposed improvements

Estimated total project cost:

\$51M

In addition to state funding, the City of Anoka is pursuing available federal and state grants.

TIMELINE

1853 — First Rum River Dam built



1935 — City of Anoka begins owning and operating the Rum River Dam



1969 — Rum River Dam reconstructed; the structure in place today



2023 — \$500,000 secured to conduct a feasibility study including design, engineering, and environmental analysis of the proposed dam modifications

2024 — Feasibility study

We are here

2025 — Preliminary design, survey, public engagement/communication, environmental documents

2026 — Final design, geotechnical, complete public engagement/communication, complete grant applications, and solicit non-state funding

2027 — Apply for permits, utility infrastructure/relocation

2028 — Begin construction

2030 — Construction substantially complete



CONTACT THE PROJECT TEAM

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