



# **Wauwatosa, WI**

## **Board of Parks and Forestry**

### **Commissioners**

### **Meeting Agenda**

7725 W. North Avenue  
Wauwatosa, WI 53213

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**Friday, October 24, 2025**

**12:00 PM**

**Zoom Only:**  
**<https://servetosa.zoom.us/j/89630023532>,**  
**Meeting ID: 896 3002 3532**

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#### **Special Meeting**

#### **VIRTUAL MEETING INFORMATION**

Members of the public may observe and participate in the meeting via Zoom only at the link above. To access the Zoom meeting via phone, call 1-312-626-6799 and enter the Meeting ID.

#### **CALL TO ORDER**

#### **ROLL CALL**

#### **NEW BUSINESS**

1. Approval of a Usage Agreement for the operation of Heat Haven Sauna Park at Hart Park

**[25-1881](#)**

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

#### **NOTICE TO PERSONS WITH A DISABILITY**

Persons with a disability who need assistance to participate in this meeting should call the Department of Public Works office at (414) 471-8422 or send an email to [tparks@wauwatosa.net](mailto:tparks@wauwatosa.net), with as much advance notice as possible.



# Wauwatosa, WI

7725 W. North Avenue  
Wauwatosa, WI 53213

## Staff Report

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**File #:** 25-1881

**Agenda Date:** 10/24/2025

**Agenda #:** 1.

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Approval of a Usage Agreement for the operation of Heat Haven Sauna Park at Hart Park

**Submitted by:**

Alex Krutsch - Parks and Forestry Superintendent

**Department:**

Public Works

**A. Issue**

Approval of a usage agreement for Heat Haven Sauna Park at Hart Park

**B. Background/Options**

Heat Haven Sauna Park, in cooperation with Discover Wauwatosa, is proposing to establish a winter wellness destination at Hart Park to include wood-fired barrel saunas, cold plunges, fire pits and movement classes. Heat Haven is proposing that the experience operate from Mid-November through April. Heat Haven's full proposal is included in the agenda packet for the board's convenience.

Hart Park was selected as the preferred location due to its central location within Wauwatosa and the greater metro-Milwaukee area. The park also offers ample room, a tranquil setting, convenient parking, nearby restrooms, and indoor spaces to host movement classes such as yoga.

As shown in the proposal, the sauna experience would be located in a lawn area immediately south of the Muellner Building. This location allows easy access to restrooms and the Muellner Building where it is proposed that movement classes be held in the Garden Room. In addition, a temporary concessions booth would be operated in the area by Pour Inc. Staff worked with Heat Haven and Pour Inc on the site selection and is in support. Staff has also had conversations with Senior Center leadership and Curling Club leadership to help minimize potential impacts to our existing users.

**C. Strategic Plan (Area of Focus)**

Priority Area 5: Quality of Life

**D. Fiscal Impact**

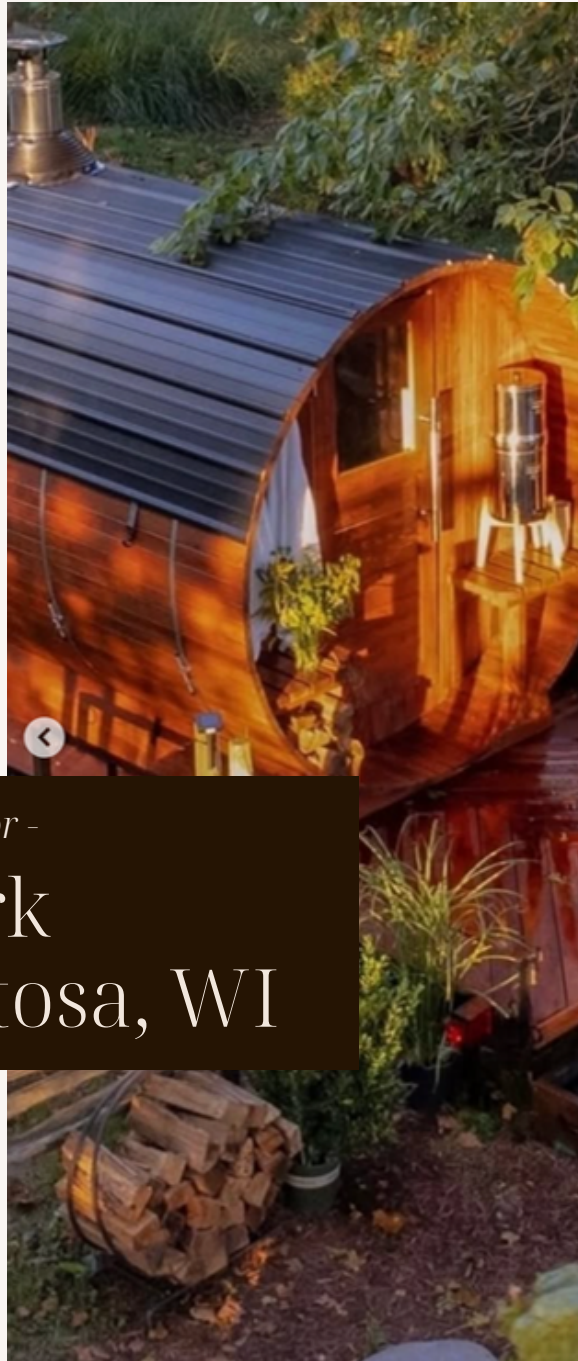
The Heat Haven proposal offers a new source of revenue for the park system. This includes a use fee of \$1,050/month for the outdoor space and a rental rate of \$50/hour for the Garden Room to host movement classes.

Parks will also receive 15% of concessions sales as specified in the City's prior agreement with Pour Inc.

Since this is a first-year program revenue generation is difficult to forecast, but it is expected that the park system could generate \$1,500 -\$2,500 per month.

**E. Recommendation**

The Heat Haven experience is in line with the park's values of providing outdoor recreation opportunities that promote community health and wellbeing along with promoting year-round physical fitness and recreational opportunities. For these reasons, along with the opportunity for increased revenue generation, staff recommends approval of the Heat Haven use proposal for 2025.

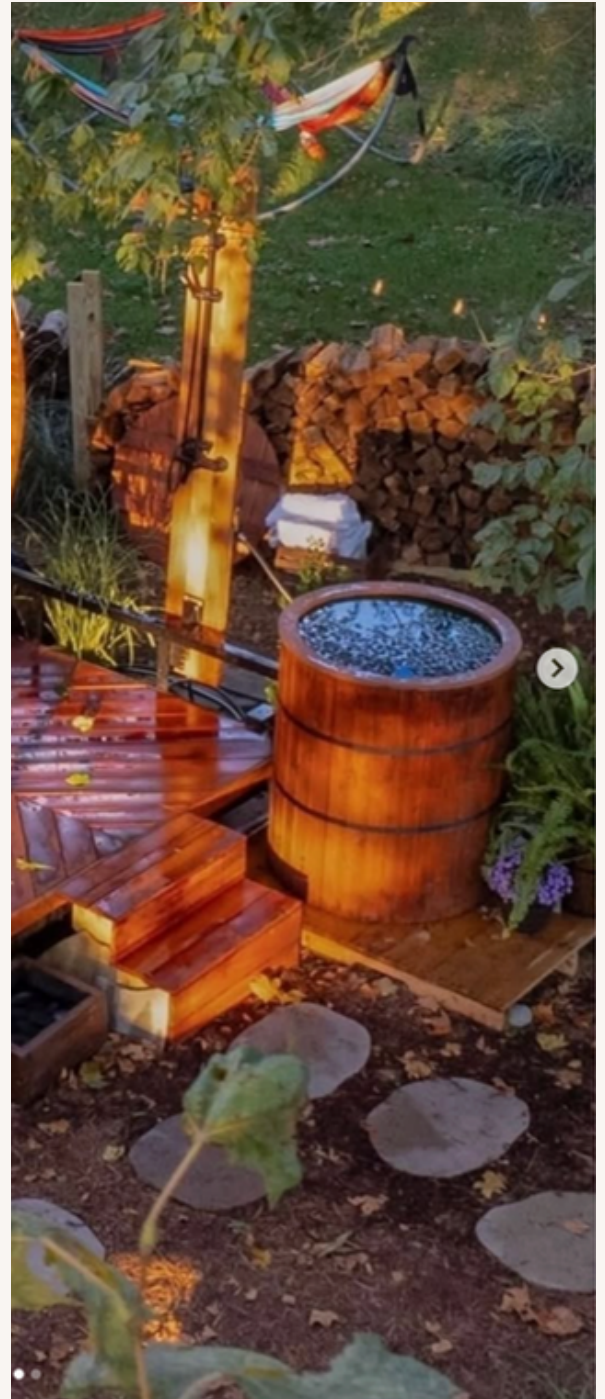


*project proposal for -*

# Hart Park Wauwatosa, WI

Presented by:  
Heat Haven Sauna Park  
Jesse Hieb, Co-Founder

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# Introduction –

Wauwatosa has a unique opportunity to become one of the first U.S. cities to brand itself as a **winter wellness destination**. Heat Haven Sauna Park is more than a relaxation space—it's a **community anchor, tourism driver, and economic catalyst** that redefines how people experience winter in Wisconsin.

Our mission is to create spaces where people can prioritize health, connection, and restoration through authentic sauna culture set in the beauty of the outdoors. We're seeking to partner with **Discover Wauwatosa and Hart Park** to host Heat Haven as a seasonal installation running six-plus months each winter.

Each Heat Haven experience features **wood-fired barrel saunas, cold plunges, fire pits, soft lighting, movement classes, and local musicians**, all curated to foster warmth and community in the colder months.

Beyond wellness, the activation delivers measurable economic impact—drawing visitors who dine, shop, and explore nearby businesses. By supporting Heat Haven, Discover Wauwatosa and Hart Park can:

- Boost tourism during slower winter months.
- Attract new visitors who spend locally.
- Strengthen the city's reputation as **vibrant, innovative, and community-minded**.

Heat Haven Sauna Park isn't just a trend—it's a lasting experience that positions Wauwatosa as a destination for year-round wellness and connection, with Hart Park being at the center of it all.



# A Unique Opportunity

## **Why Saunas? Why Now?**

Wauwatosa has the opportunity to lead Wisconsin by embracing one of the fastest-growing global wellness trends: public sauna parks. Across the U.S. and worldwide, these experiences have become powerful drivers of tourism, community engagement, and local spending.

Heat Haven Sauna Park would give residents and visitors a restorative, memorable reason to enjoy winter—drawing people who linger longer and support nearby restaurants, shops, and hotels. This isn't about replacing Wauwatosa's vibrant food and beverage scene, but about adding a complementary attraction that strengthens winter tourism and diversifies what the city offers.

## **The Wellness Tourism Boom**

- The global wellness tourism market is projected to reach \$9 trillion by 2028, growing more than 10% annually (Global Wellness Institute).
- Wellness travelers spend more and stay longer, seeking immersive, health-focused experiences.

## **Saunas as Social Wellness Hubs**

Modern saunas are more than heat rooms—they're social, accessible, and shareable experiences. In cities like New York, Toronto, and Minneapolis, sauna houses have become year-round gathering spots that attract both locals and tourists. Typical sessions are affordable (\$30–\$40), inclusive across age groups, and deliver the kind of memorable, photo-worthy moments that naturally promote the destination far beyond its borders.

# Who is Heat Haven?

Heat Haven was founded by Jesse Hieb and Ryan Bingham, two Wisconsin natives who share a love of community, wellness, and the restorative power of sauna culture. Both of us have experienced saunas across the United States and while traveling abroad, and we believe Wisconsin — with its long winters and strong sense of community — is the perfect place to bring that culture home.

The idea began when Jesse returned to Wisconsin after four years of traveling. Facing another harsh winter, he knew he couldn't endure it without the warmth and connection of a sauna. After discovering Drip Sauna in Asheville — a lively communal space that brought people together in joyful and restorative ways — it became clear that this was an experience too good not to share with the people of Wisconsin.

Heat Haven was born out of that realization: a desire to bring people together, encourage wellness, and help our community not just survive the winter, but truly enjoy it. At its heart, Heat Haven is about hospitality, connection, and creating a place where memories and friendships are made.

Wauwatosa has the chance to be among the first U.S. cities to position itself as a winter wellness destination. Heat Haven Sauna Park offers more than relaxation: it's a community anchor, a tourism driver, and an economic catalyst.

By supporting this project, Discover Wauwatosa and the local business community will:

- Expand tourism during slower seasons.
- Attract new visitors who spend locally.
- Strengthen Wauwatosa's reputation as a vibrant, innovative, and welcoming city.

Heat Haven Sauna Park is more than a trend — it's the next step in making Wauwatosa a place people travel to for memorable experiences.

# Year 1 Partnership Proposal

Heat Haven Inc. proposes a one-year pilot partnership with Hart Park to bring a seasonal winter wellness experience to the community. From mid-November through April, the sauna park will transform under-utilized space into an active, inclusive, and revenue-generating destination that promotes health, relaxation, and community connection.

## 1. Flat Monthly Rental Agreement

To simplify the arrangement and establish clear expectations, Heat Haven proposes a fixed monthly rental fee:

- **Monthly Rent: \$1,050**
- Term: Mid-November through April (approximately 5 + months)

This monthly rate is based on the previously proposed \$35/day rate and provides predictable, consistent revenue for the City.

## 2. Movement + Sauna Experiences (Indoor Room Use)

Heat Haven will pay a fixed hourly room fee to use the Garden Room for the movement portion of Movement + Sauna sessions.

- **Hourly Rate: \$50/hour**
- Frequency: 3–4 classes per week (approx. 12–16 per month)
- Projected Payment to City: \$600–\$800/month

This approach ensures simple accounting and transparency while still generating meaningful revenue from ongoing program use.

### **3. Shared Infrastructure Investment**

Heat Haven and Pour Inc. will split the cost of a shipping container unit that will serve as a functional enhancement to the park space.

The container will:

- Act as a shared operations hub and small concession/bar area.
- Visually anchor the activation zone and support Pour Inc.'s revenue growth (which also benefits the City through their existing vendor agreement).

This shared investment demonstrates both partners' commitment to Hart Park and the community.

### **4. Senior and Community Programming**

To ensure the activation serves all members of the Wauwatosa community, Heat Haven will provide special programming and discounts for seniors and community groups:

- Senior Center Discount: 30% off — 5-pack sauna sessions for \$100.
- Free Senior Days: At least two scheduled days (specific hours) per season for Wauwatosa seniors to use the saunas at no cost.
- Reserved Senior Hours: Designated daytime hours with smaller crowds for a relaxed, social atmosphere.

These offerings align with the City's mission to promote community health, inclusivity, and intergenerational engagement. This comes at a cost to Heat Haven which we are delighted to accept to demonstrate our commitment to the community.

## **5. Operational Responsibilities**

- **Water Access:** Hart Park will provide Heat Haven with access to water as needed for sauna operations and rinse stations. Heat Haven will reimburse the Park based on the number of gallons used, ensuring all water usage is fully covered by the business.
- **Power & Maintenance:** Heat Haven will continue to provide its own power generation for lighting, heating, and water-pump systems.
- **Upkeep:** Heat Haven will maintain and refill rinse-station reservoirs, manage daily operations, and ensure the site remains clean and well-kept throughout the season.
- **City Support:** The City will provide the designated land space, access to bathrooms for guests, and basic parking accommodations. No additional staffing or City resources will be required.

This structure ensures that the City receives consistent revenue without additional operational costs.

## **Summary of Benefits**

- Fixed, predictable income for the City of Wauwatosa.
- Increased winter park activation and media visibility.
- Inclusive senior programming and affordable access.
- No added utilities or staff burden on the City.
- Shared private investment in park infrastructure and amenities.

Heat Haven Inc. appreciates the opportunity to collaborate with the City of Wauwatosa and Hart Park to create a sustainable, inclusive, and community-driven winter experience.

# Hart Park – Wauwatosa: Site Suggestions

Heat Haven proposes to locate the sauna park in an area adjacent to the Mueller Building within Hart Park. This site offers several advantages that make it the most suitable and sustainable location for both operations and guest experience.

The proximity to the Mueller Building provides easy access to bathrooms and indoor facilities, ensuring comfort and convenience for all guests, including seniors and those participating in the Movement + Sauna Experiences hosted indoors with Pour Inc.

This location was selected after evaluating multiple factors that align with park operations and community access goals. Specifically, the area offers:

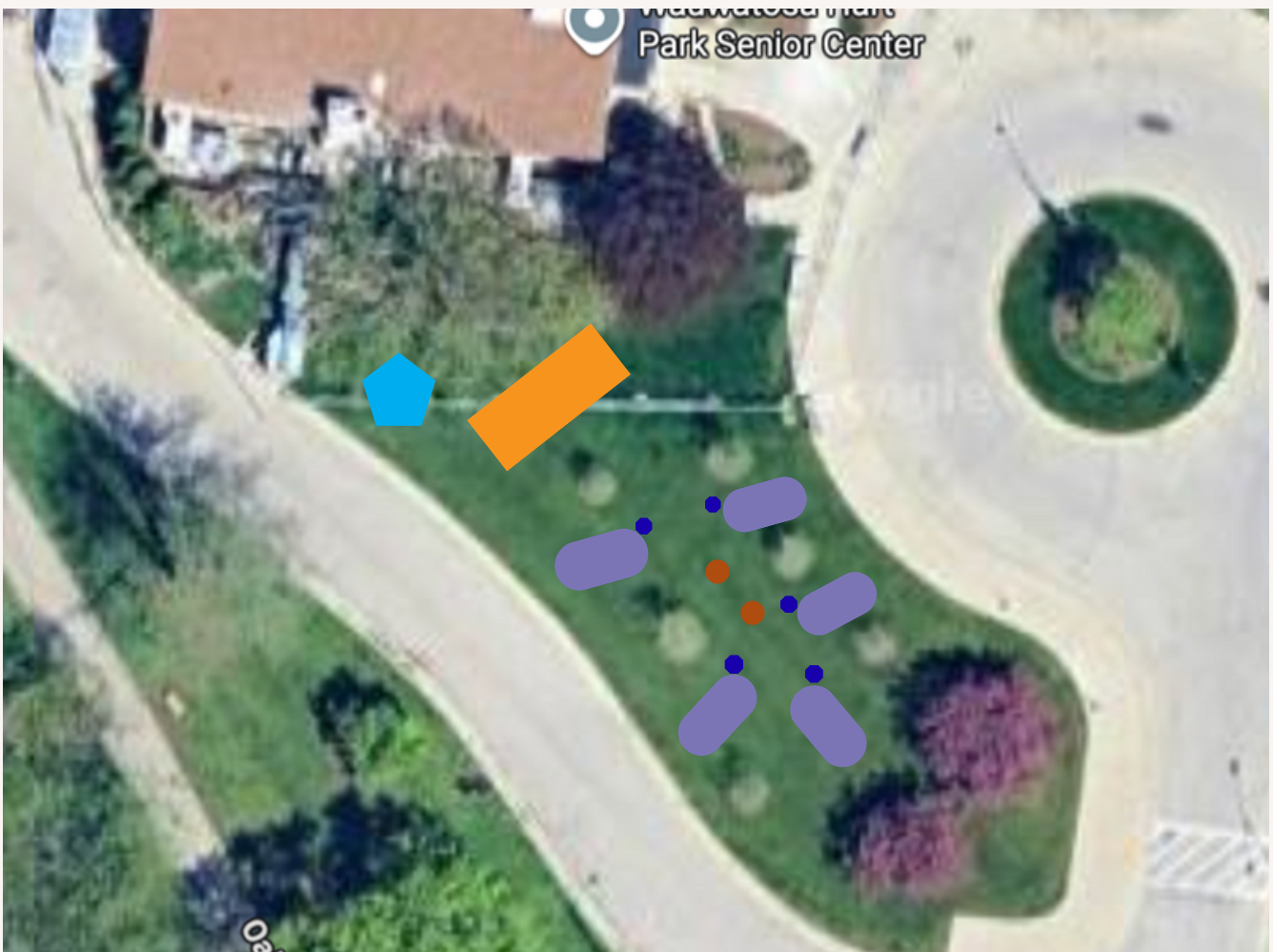
- Adequate open space to safely accommodate the sauna park layout.
- Excellent visibility from key park areas, improving wayfinding and public awareness.
- Convenient parking access for guests.
- Close proximity to senior facilities, supporting accessibility and inclusion.
- Natural tree coverage that enhances ambiance, privacy, and the restorative atmosphere central to the sauna experience.

Heat Haven will begin operations with two to three saunas during the first season, with plans to expand to four or five units as community demand grows. Based on site assessments, the area can comfortably support up to five saunas, with potential for a sixth if interest continues to increase.

This thoughtful site selection ensures that Heat Haven integrates seamlessly into Hart Park's landscape—creating a tranquil, accessible, and inviting destination for wellness, recreation, and community connection.

# Hart Park – Wauwatosa: Site Suggestions

-  Water Tank and Generator
-  Sauna
-  Cold Plunge
-  Fire Pit + chairs
-  Concessions Container



# Proposed Hours of Operation

Heat Haven's goal is to operate on a consistent, community-friendly schedule that maximizes access while maintaining high-quality service, safety, and facility upkeep. However, as this will be our first season at Hart Park, we anticipate a short ramp-up period of several weeks as we finalize systems, refine staff scheduling, and gauge community demand. During this time, hours may be slightly limited before reaching full operational capacity.

## **Target Operating Hours:**

Our intended schedule once fully established is as follows:

- Monday: Closed for maintenance, cleaning, and staff reset.
- Tuesday through Friday: Open 12:00 PM – 9:30 PM, with optional morning hours available for senior programming or private events as demand allows.
- Saturday: Open 8:00 AM – 9:30 PM, providing a full day of sessions, including morning wellness classes and evening gatherings.
- Sunday: Open 11:00 AM – 6:00 PM, offering a relaxed weekend schedule ideal for families and recovery-focused visits.
- We'd like to also reserve the option to operate any morning in the event that there is a high enough demand or private rentals during that time.

Heat Haven plans to host three to four Movement + Sauna Experiences per week, utilizing Hart Park's indoor community room through partnership with Pour Inc.

## **Typical scheduling will include:**

- One weekday afternoon or evening class (Tuesday through Thursday),
- One Saturday morning class,
- One Sunday morning or early afternoon class, and
- A potential fourth class on Friday or Saturday evening, depending on room availability and participant demand.

This structure balances weekday accessibility with weekend peak engagement.

# Sample Daily Schedule

- **11:00am–12:00 PM** – Arrival and setup
- **12:00PM–3:30 PM** – Dedicated Senior Hours (Tuesday/Thursday)
- **3:30PM–9:30PM** – Community sessions
- **5:30PM–7:30 PM** – Movement + Sauna Session

## **Movement+Sauna Session Structure (2–3 hours):**

**Movement Class** (45–60 minutes) – Led by a certified instructor (yoga, Pilates, tai chi, or functional fitness).

**Sauna & Networking** (60–120 minutes) – Participants rotate between saunas, cold plunges, and community gathering spaces.

# Projected Attendance

Based on our proposed operating hours of 12:00 PM to 9:30 PM, and using a community session length of 75 minutes, Heat Haven estimates that we can accommodate a steady flow of guests throughout each day while maintaining a comfortable, safe experience for all participants.

During our first season, we plan to operate with two wood-fired saunas, each designed for up to six people per session. This provides a combined capacity of 12 guests at a time. We can overlap groups efficiently and maintain a smooth guest flow. This structure allows for between 10 and 14 session start times per day, depending on demand and buffer time between groups. At a 45-minute stagger, the site could accommodate around 140–150 guests per day.

For planning purposes, we anticipate a realistic average of 60–75 visitors per day once operations stabilize, with slightly higher attendance on weekends and special event days. This level of attendance ensures the site remains active and vibrant while preserving the calm, restorative environment that defines the Heat Haven experience.

# What We Request From the Park

- Approval to host Heat Haven Sauna Park on-site
- Guidance on permits and required permissions
- Access to bathrooms for participants
- Help light and beautify the area to create a welcoming ambiance.
- Access to an indoor space and a water point.
- Help promoting the experience and driving its success.

## Community Benefits

- Increased foot traffic to the park and nearby businesses
- A **wellness-focused cultural experience** unique to the region
- **Cross-promotion** through Heat Haven's marketing channels, highlighting the host park as a partner

## Revenue Model

Heat Haven manages all operations, marketing, and ticketing. There is no cost to the park system.

- **Ticket Pricing:** \$30–\$40 per Movement+Sauna session, \$20–\$30 for community sweat sessions.
- 60 people per day at an average rate of \$25 per person: \$1,500 revenue per day.

# Contact Information

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