



Adult bathhouses and sex venues: Amusements Amendments

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Historical Background

- Pre-ban — Bathhouses were gathering spaces mainly for LGBTQ+ folks; several raids occurred unprompted.
- December 1979 — the largest raid on an adult bathhouse in U.S. history occurred in Minneapolis.
- 1987 — Ban on "high risk sexual behavior" despite research indicating that closing bathhouses had no effect on slowing HIV transmission.
- 1988 — Bathhouses formally banned in Minneapolis.



Letters to the Editor in the Minnesota Star Tribune about the bathhouse ban in the Tretter Collection archives at the University of Minnesota. Sam Stroozas; MPR News, 2026.

Legislative Background

- 2023 — former Council President Jenkins and Council Member Payne authored amendments removing stigmatizing language from the High-Risk Sexual Conduct Ordinance.
- 2024 — Council received a Policy & Research report and presentation on Regulations of Adult Bathhouses and Sex Venues.
 - Report delineated City codes to be amended and created to regulate and legalize adult bathhouses/sex venues.
 - Report outlined a landscape analysis of other U.S. cities that have and regulate adult bathhouses and sex venues (ex. Chicago, San Francisco, Duluth, Dallas, etc.)

What these amendments do

- Moves building standards and related definitions developed for adult entertainment venues from the High-Risk Sexual Conduct Ordinance into the Places of Adult Entertainment code.
- Maintains protections for employees of adult entertainment venues.
- Creates a pathway to a regulatory framework centered in a public health approach.



Why these amendments are important

- Allows for the development of a formal adult sex venues business license and regulatory framework.
- Maintains protections developed for employees of adult entertainment centers.

