

NDBAC Lines of Effort (LOE) for Design/Construction and Funding

Design & Construction



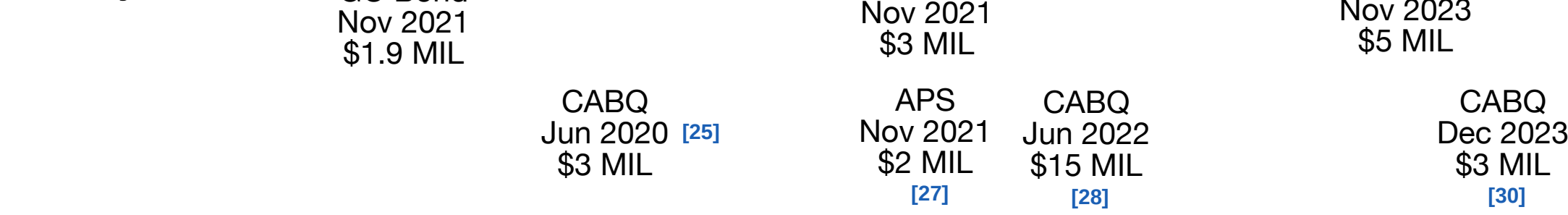
Approx \$62 MIL raised Mar 2026 [15]

Details on price increase & shortage HERE

State & County Funding



City & APS



References

Bracketed numbers on the chart match the list below; each event on the chart and each entry here is a clickable link.

[1] RFP to Design – May 2020 — Huitt-Zollars proposal to the City in response to the NDBAC design RFP (CABQ). https://www.cabq.gov/parksandrecreation/documents/hz_coa-ndb-aquatics-center-huitt-zollars-proposal.pdf

[2] CABQ selected HZ – Aug 2020 — KRQE, “Neighbors organize to push for long-awaited North Domingo Baca Park pool” (May 21, 2021) – notes Huitt-Zollars recommended as architect in May 2020. <https://www.krqe.com/news/albuquerque-metro/neighbors-organize-to-push-for-long-awaited-north-domingo-baca-park-pool/>

[3] HZ proposes options A–D – Jul 2021 — New Mexico Sun, “After nearly 20 years of promises, Albuquerque officials announce aquatic center project at North Domingo Baca Park moving forward” (Sep 6, 2021) – City has four conceptual designs. <https://newmexicosun.com/after-nearly-20-years-of-promises-albuquerque-officials-announce-aquatic-center-project-at-north-domingo-baca-park-moving-forward>

[4] Citizen Review – Jul–Oct 2021 — KRQE, “City pushes forward aquatic center plans at North Domingo Baca Park” (Aug 26, 2021). <https://www.krqe.com/news/albuquerque-metro/city-pushes-forward-aquatic-center-plans-at-north-domingo-baca-park/>

[5] Option C picked – Oct 2021 — City of Albuquerque – North Domingo Baca Park, Aquatics Phase project page. <https://www.cabq.gov/parksandrecreation/featured-projects/north-domingo-baca-park-aquatics-phase>

[6] Community SME input – Nov 2021 — No public source located.

[7] Option C updated to 60M – Dec 2021 — Counsilman-Hunsaker (aquatics consultant) – North Domingo Baca Aquatic Center project profile. <https://counsilmanhunsaker.com/projects/north-domingo-baca-aquatic-center/>

[8] HZ develops Construction Documents – May 2022 — City of Albuquerque – North Domingo Baca Park, Aquatics Phase project page. <https://www.cabq.gov/parksandrecreation/featured-projects/north-domingo-baca-park-aquatics-phase>

[9] Retaining wall work started – Oct 2023 — CABQ, “North Domingo Baca Aquatic Center Swimming Along” (Dec 12, 2023). <https://www.cabq.gov/parksandrecreation/news/north-domingo-baca-aquatic-center-swimming-along>

[10] RFP released – Jan 2024 — City Desk ABQ, “Long-awaited northeast heights aquatic center breaks ground” (Jan 12, 2024). <https://citydesk.org/2024/01/12/long-awaited-northeast-heights-aquatic-center-breaks-ground/>

[11] NDBAC Ground Breaking – Jan 2024 — CABQ, “Diving into Construction at North Domingo Baca Aquatic Center” (Jan 10, 2024). <https://www.cabq.gov/mayor/news/diving-into-construction-at-north-domingo-baca-aquatic-center>

[12] Bradbury Stamm awarded contract – Apr 2024 — CABQ, “Construction Update at North Domingo Baca Park” (Aug 2, 2024). <https://www.cabq.gov/parksandrecreation/news/construction-update-at-north-domingo-baca-park>

[13] Base Bid work started – Jun 2024 — City Desk ABQ, “North Domingo Baca Park pool construction moves forward” (Aug 2, 2024). <https://www.krqe.com/news/albuquerque-metro/millions-still-needed-for-aquatic-center-at-north-domingo-baca-park/>

[14] Natatorium Building work started – Sep 2025 — Change.org update, “Indoor Aquatic Center Construction Progress Update” (Oct 2025). <https://www.change.org/p/build-indoor-olympic-pool-first-at-north-domingo-baca-park/u/33950256>

[15] \$62M raised / price increase & shortage — NDBAC Cost Increase Talking Points – appended to this PDF beginning on page 2. (internal link – see page 2)

[16] 54th/2nd NM Legislative Session – 2020 — NM Legislature, Capital Outlay Projects by County w/ Governor’s Actions – HB 349 (2020), p. 2 – ALB N Domingo Baca Aquatic Ctr. https://www.nmlegis.gov/Publications/Capital_Outlay/Projects%20By%20County%20with%20Governors%20Actions%20-%20HB%20349,%202020.pdf#page=2

[17] 55th/1st NM Legislative Session – 2021 — NM Legislature, HB 285 Capital Projects by Sponsor w/ Governor’s Actions (2021), p. 38 (first of several sponsor entries). https://www.nmlegis.gov/Publications/Capital_Outlay/HB285%20Capital%20Projects%20by%20Sponsor%20with%20Governor%20s%20Actions.pdf#page=38

[18] 55th/2nd NM Legislative Session – 2022 — NM Legislature, SFC Sub SB 212 by Sponsor w/ Governor’s Actions (2022), p. 9 (first of several sponsor entries). https://www.nmlegis.gov/Publications/Capital_Outlay/SFC%20SUB%20SB212%20by%20Sponsor%20with%20Governors%20Actions,%202022.pdf#page=9

[19] 56th/1st NM Legislative Session – 2023 — NM Legislature, HTRC Sub HB 505 Projects by Sponsor WGA (2023), p. 1 – Governor’s \$5M NDB Aquatic Ctr. https://www.nmlegis.gov/Publications/Capital_Outlay/HTRC%20SUB%20HB505%20Projects%20by%20Sponsor%20WGA%2041723.pdf#page=1

[20] 56th/2nd NM Legislative Session – 2024 — NM Legislature, SB 275 Funded Projects by Sponsor WGA (2024), p. 25 (first of several sponsor entries). https://www.nmlegis.gov/Publications/Capital_Outlay/SB275%20Funded%20Projects%20by%20Sponsor%20WGA%2024.pdf#page=25

[21] 57th/1st NM Legislative Session – 2025 — NM Legislature, HB 450 WGA Projects by Agency (2025), p. 22 – ALB N Domingo Baca Aquatic Ctr. https://www.nmlegis.gov/Publications/Capital_Outlay/HB450%20WGA%20Projects%20by%20Agency.pdf#page=22

[22] 57th/2nd NM Legislative Session – 2026 — NM Legislature, SFC/SB 240 Funded Projects by County w/ Sponsor (2026), p. 18 – ALB N Domingo Baca Pk Aquatic Ctr. https://www.nmlegis.gov/Publications/Capital_Outlay/Chart%20Funded%20Projects%20by%20County%20with%20Sponsor.pdf#page=18

[23] County Commissioner \$1M given back – Nov 2022 — Albuquerque Journal, “Far Northeast Heights still waiting for our aquatic center” (2022) – confirms the County’s \$1M contribution. <https://www.abqjournal.com/2475243/far-northeast-heights-still-waiting-for-our-aquatic-center.html>

[24] City GO Bond – \$1.9M — City of Albuquerque, 2019 G.O. Bond Summary & Scope by Purpose. <https://www.cabq.gov/municipaldevelopment/programs/2019-g-o-bond-program>

[25] CABQ – Jun 2020 \$3M — KRQE, “Millions still needed for aquatic center at North Domingo Baca Park” (Feb 19, 2020) – \$3M set aside. <https://www.krqe.com/news/albuquerque-metro/millions-still-needed-for-aquatic-center-at-north-domingo-baca-park/>

[26] City GO Bond – Nov 2021 \$3M — City of Albuquerque, Parks and Recreation Bonds (2021 G.O. Bond) – “North Domingo Baca Aquatic Center \$3,000,000”. <https://www.cabq.gov/municipaldevelopment/documents/3-parks-and-recreation-bonds-1.pdf>

[27] APS – Nov 2021 \$2M — CABQ Council District 4, “Councilor Bassan Asks for Support of APS Bonds” (2021). <https://www.cabq.gov/council/find-your-councilor/district-4/news/city-councilor-brook-bassan-asks-for-support-of-aps-bonds-at-municipal-election>

[28] CABQ – Jun 2022 \$15M — KRQE, “City council passes \$1.4 billion budget for Albuquerque in 2023” (Jun 2022). <https://www.krqe.com/news/politics-government/albuquerque-city-council-passes-1-4-billion-budget-for-2023/>

[29] City GO Bond – Nov 2023 \$5M — Albuquerque Journal, “Election 2023: Albuquerque-area voters approve eight bond measures”. <https://www.abqjournal.com/news/election-2023-albuquerque-area-voters-approve-eight-bond-measures/358359>

[30] CABQ – Dec 2023 \$3M — CABQ, “North Domingo Baca Aquatic Center Swimming Along” (Dec 12, 2023). <https://www.cabq.gov/parksandrecreation/news/north-domingo-baca-aquatic-center-swimming-along>

[31] City GO Bond – Nov 2025 \$5.5M — City of Albuquerque, 2025 Parks and Recreation Bonds. <https://www.cabq.gov/municipaldevelopment/documents/2025-parks-and-recreation-bonds.pdf>

North Domingo Baca Aquatic Center

At a Glance: Cost, Funding & the Path to Completion

This is a one-page summary for quick reference. Full supporting data, sourcing, and methodology follow on the pages after this one.

\$30.6M

2021 Original Estimate (Design C)

\$68.7M

Original April 2024 Bid (Base + Alt. 1 + Alt. 2)

~\$98M

Total Projected Project Cost (inflation adjusted daily) (Base + Alt.1 + Alt.2 + Retaining Wall + Design Fees, Testing & Inspection)

~\$6.7M

Gap vs. Original 2024 Bid (had it been the full, final cost)

~\$36M

Funding Gap That Continues to Escalate Until Fully Funded

\$7.6B

Unspent NM Capital Outlay Statewide (6,400 projects)

Six Points for the Public Conversation

- 1. **This is inflation, not scope growth.** The cost increase tracks documented national and New Mexico construction cost inflation. The original 60-meter pool is intact, with a 50-meter competitive course configured inside that footprint — value engineering has been used to control cost, not to shrink the project.
- 2. **New Mexico's market ran hotter than the nation.** National construction costs (Turner Index) rose ~20% (2021–24); New Mexico public projects saw 60–138% increases in the same window, per the Legislative Finance Committee.
- 3. **Funding has been pursued consistently, not neglected.** Roughly 15 separate legislative, bond, and city/APS actions since 2019 have secured ~\$62M — funding kept pace with a project whose cost kept climbing.
- 4. **This mirrors a national pattern.** Campbell County, Wyoming's aquatic center saw a comparable ~93% cost increase over a similar 3-year window — and NDBAC is the larger, more complete facility of the two.
- 5. **Waiting costs more than acting.** The funding gap now stands at approximately \$36 million against the full project cost, and it will continue to grow the longer the remaining construction stays un-contracted.
- 6. **The state can afford to close this gap now.** New Mexico holds \$7.6B in unspent capital outlay funds statewide — NDBAC's remaining gap is less than half a percent (0.47%) of that backlog, and the project is being built in phases that are shovel ready!



North Domingo Baca Aquatic Center — Conceptual Design Renderings. Source: Huitt-Zollars / City of Albuquerque Parks & Recreation.

A LEGACY THAT LASTS A LIFETIME

*Most sports fade from our lives after childhood. Swimming does not — it's played and enjoyed at every age, from a baby's first lesson to a grandparent's daily laps. **The leaders who fully fund this facility won't just close a budget line; they will give this community life-saving skills, a lifetime of health, and a regional landmark that draws families and visitors for generations.** Long after a budget cycle is forgotten, voters will remember who made this happen.*

North Domingo Baca Aquatic Center

Supporting Detail: Full Cost, Funding & Sourcing Analysis

Milestone	Amount
2021 Design C Estimate (original)	\$30,557,331
Huitt-Zollars Architect's Projected Cost (Jan. 2024)	\$57,125,026
Original April 2024 Bid (Bradbury Stamm, Base + Alt. 1 + Alt. 2)	\$68,715,392.62
CABQ Updated Construction Cost (Base \$14.04M + Alt. 1 \$56.0M + Alt. 2 \$20.0M)	\$90,040,000
Gap: 2021 Estimate to Original Apr. 2024 Bid	\$38,158,061.62 (+124.9%)
Gap: Original Apr. 2024 Bid to Updated 2026 Cost	\$21,324,607.38 (+31.0%)
<i>Retaining Wall (2023 addition)</i>	<i>\$5,400,000</i>
Design Fees, Materials Testing & Inspection	\$2,560,000
Total Project Cost (Construction + Retaining Wall + Design/Testing/Inspection Fees)	\$98,000,000
Total Funding Secured Through Consistent Effort (as of Mar. 2026)	~\$62,000,000
Funding Gap (Total Project Cost vs. Funding Secured)	\$36,000,000

Figures reflect the Design C estimate (Aug. 2021), Huitt-Zollars' Jan. 2024 Opinion of Probable Cost, the original April 2024 bid evaluation (City Project No. 705286), and the City's updated 2026 construction cost (Base Bid \$14.04M, Alternate 1 \$56.0M, Alternate 2 \$20.0M). The retaining wall (confirmed at \$5.4M by City of Albuquerque Parks & Recreation) and design fees, materials testing, and inspection costs (\$2.56M) are added to reach the \$98,000,000 total project cost. Against the ~\$62,000,000 secured to date, this produces a \$36,000,000 funding gap — a figure directly consistent with a May 2026 KRQE report in which City Councilor Brook Bassan stated the project still needed an estimated \$36 million to finish.

Key Talking Points

- **The gap reflects market conditions, not scope growth.** Comparing the original 2021 Design C estimate (\$30,557,331) to the original April 2024 bid (\$68,715,392.62) shows a \$38.2 million increase (+124.9%) — consistent with documented national and New Mexico construction cost inflation over that period, not a change in the approved design. That trajectory has continued: the City's updated 2026 construction cost — Base Bid \$14.04 million, Alternate 1 \$56.0 million, and Alternate 2 \$20.0 million, totaling \$90.0 million — reflects a further \$21.3 million increase (+31.0%) over the original 2024 bid. Adding the \$5.4 million retaining wall and \$2.56 million in design fees, materials testing, and inspection costs brings the full project cost to approximately \$98 million. Against the ~\$62 million secured to date, that leaves a current funding gap of approximately \$36 million — a gap that will continue to grow the longer the remaining construction goes un-contracted.
- **Value engineering has been used to control cost, not to shrink the project.** The original 60-meter pool is intact, with a 50-meter competitive course configured inside that footprint, consistent with the program the City has described throughout the project. Value engineering was applied elsewhere in the design to manage cost growth, not by reducing the size of the facility or its community programming.
- **National data confirms the timeframe was historically volatile.** The Turner Building Cost Index — a nationwide non-residential construction benchmark compiled from labor rates, material prices, and market competitiveness — shows costs rose roughly 20% between 2021 and 2024 (8% in 2022, 6% in 2023, ~4% in 2024).
- **New Mexico-specific data shows the local market ran even hotter than the national trend.** The state Legislative Finance Committee (LFC) — which compiles data from actual New Mexico public capital projects,

cross-referenced with national producer price indices and industry labor data (including sources such as the Associated General Contractors of America) — documented a 60% increase in New Mexico nonresidential construction spending between 2021 and 2022 alone, the second-highest rate of any state in the country.

- **Comparable New Mexico public projects saw increases at or above this project's rate.** LFC-tracked data shows New Mexico school construction costs rose 138% in 2023, and state higher-education projects went from roughly \$520 to \$1,038 per square foot between the 2022 and 2024 bond cycles — a 100% increase. Individual examples, like two Los Alamos elementary schools, saw estimated costs grow from \$17.5 million each to \$38–40 million in the same window.
- **This means the Turner Index alone was actually a conservative modeling assumption.** Because it is a national average, it likely understated what New Mexico projects were experiencing regionally — so measuring this project only against national data, if anything, understates the pressure the local market was under.
- **A statewide labor shortage compounded material cost inflation.** LFC reporting identified a shortfall of at least 2,000 construction workers in New Mexico in 2023, tightening capacity precisely as this project reached the bid stage — consistent with the thin, two-bidder field this project received.
- **The architect's independent estimate tracked this same trajectory.** Huitt-Zollars' January 2024 professional cost opinion of \$57.1 million — reached using contemporaneous market data — already reflected much of this escalation before a single bid was submitted, and actual bids still landed 17% above it.
- **Taken together, this project's cost growth is consistent with, not exceptional to, the broader New Mexico public construction market during this period.** Multiple other publicly funded projects in the state, tracked independently by the LFC, experienced comparable or greater percentage increases over the same years.

Data Sources & Methodology

- **Turner Building Cost Index** (Turner Construction Company) — a national quarterly index based on labor rates/productivity, material prices, and market competitiveness across the U.S. non-residential construction sector.
- **New Mexico Legislative Finance Committee (LFC)** analysis — compiled from actual New Mexico public capital outlay project data (school, higher-education, and state agency projects), cross-referenced with national producer price index data and industry labor figures.
- **Huitt-Zollars, Inc.** — Architect of Record; Opinion of Probable Cost finalized January 16, 2024.
- **City of Albuquerque Bid Evaluation**, April 29, 2024 (City Project No. 705286) — Base Bid, Alternate 1, and Alternate 2 cost proposals from Bradbury Stamm Construction and Jaynes Corporation.
- **City of Albuquerque 2026 project cost update** — revised Base Bid (\$14.04M), Alternate 1 (\$56.0M), and Alternate 2 (\$20.0M) totals; a design fees, materials testing, and inspection figure (\$2.56M), as relayed; and City of Albuquerque Parks & Recreation confirmation of the retaining wall at \$5.4M.
- **NDBAC Lines of Effort (LOE) for Design/Construction and Funding chart** — project tracking document detailing design milestones, construction phases, and itemized funding contributions from 2019 through 2027, updated through March 2026.

Note on sourcing: The New Mexico-specific figures (60%, 138%, 100%) reflect LFC analysis of real project and spending data rather than a single published index like Turner's. These should be characterized as “state-tracked project data” rather than attributed directly to ABC or AGC as an official index, since neither association publishes its own standalone regional cost index.

Funding Timeline Analysis: A Pattern of Consistent Effort

The project's funding history shows a sustained, methodical effort to secure resources over six years — not a stalled or reactive process. Between 2020 and 2025, funding was pursued and secured across 13 separate legislative sessions, GO Bond cycles, and city/APS allocations, per the project's updated Lines of Effort (LOE) tracking chart (data through March 2026).

Funding Stream	Consistent Effort (2020–2025)
State Legislative Sessions (7 sessions, 2020–2025)	~\$23.6M
City of Albuquerque, APS & GO Bond Contributions (8 actions, 2020–2025)	~\$38.4M
Total Secured Through Consistent Effort (as of Mar. 2026)	~\$62.0M

- **Funding was pursued proactively and continuously, not reactively.** The project drew on every available mechanism — state legislative appropriations, county support, GO Bonds, and direct City/APS contributions — in nearly every funding cycle available between 2020 and 2025, reflecting sustained institutional commitment rather than gaps in effort.
- **Updated city cost figures push the funded share down, but the story is the same: strong effort against a moving target.** Measured against the original April 2024 bid total of \$68,715,392.62, the ~\$62M secured through consistent effort as of March 2026 represented roughly 90% of that amount. Against the City's updated 2026 total project cost of \$98,000,000 (construction, retaining wall, and design/testing/inspection fees), that same ~\$62M represents roughly 63% funded, leaving a current gap of approximately \$36 million.
- **The funding secured, ~\$62M, exceeds the original 2021 estimate** (\$30,557,331) by a wide margin — demonstrating that the funding strategy was sized appropriately for the project as originally scoped, and that the remaining shortfall is entirely attributable to construction market escalation, not insufficient fundraising effort.
- **The city continued pursuing full funding even after the cost increase became apparent**, securing an additional \$5.5M GO Bond in the November 2025 election and two further legislative appropriations in the 57th Legislature (Mar. 2025) totaling \$8.7M — evidence of ongoing, active efforts to close the gap rather than abandoning the funding strategy once costs rose.
- **One County Commissioner allocation of \$1M (Nov. 2022) had to be returned** due to federal fund requirements — a documented, external constraint on available funding that is unrelated to project management and outside the city's control.
- **Only the Base Bid and retaining wall are currently funded and fully under contract.** Alternate 1 and Alternate 2 — together now totaling \$76 million — remain the primary un-contracted scope. Continuing to delay full funding risks further cost escalation beyond the current \$98 million total project cost, a pattern already reflected in the \$21.3 million increase between the original 2024 bid and the City's 2026 update.

Source: NDBAC Lines of Effort (LOE) for Design/Construction and Funding chart, tracking State legislative sessions, GO Bond cycles, and City of Albuquerque/APS contributions, 2019–2027, data through March 2026; City of Albuquerque 2026 project cost update for Base Bid, Alternate 1, and Alternate 2.

The Case for Full Funding Now

- **New Mexico is sitting on historically high reserves — this is the moment to convert that surplus into lasting community investment.** The state's General Fund reserves reached roughly \$3.55 billion heading into FY2025, with recurring revenue growing from \$7.8 billion in 2019 to a projected \$13.7 billion — levels state officials themselves have called “historically high.” Closing NDBAC's current ~\$36 million gap represents a modest draw against a surplus built for exactly this purpose: durable public infrastructure that serves generations of New Mexicans, not just a single budget cycle.
- **Delay has already proven costly, and further delay will too.** The \$21.3 million increase between the original April 2024 bid and the City's 2026 updated construction cost is direct evidence that time is not free — every year the remaining scope goes un-contracted, the price to finish tends to climb. Full funding now, while reserves remain historically high, avoids adding further cost to a gap that is already substantial.
- **Full funding now is an investment in attracting and keeping residents, and in growing the tax base that sustains the state's future.** A completed, full-scale aquatic center strengthens Albuquerque's competitiveness

for families and workers choosing where to live, supports property values in the surrounding area, and expands the community's recreation and economic footprint — generating returns in property and gross receipts tax revenue that continue long after the reserves that funded it are gone. With approximately 63% of the current total project cost already secured through years of consistent effort, delaying the final push risks losing more value to construction inflation while the state's current fiscal strength is available to act.

Statewide Capital Outlay Backlog: An Opportunity for Reallocation

New Mexico's own Legislative Finance Committee has documented a \$7.6 billion backlog of unspent capital outlay funds across roughly 6,400 active projects statewide — money the Legislature has already appropriated but that has not been put to work. NDBAC stands in direct contrast to that trend.

- **NDBAC has done exactly what state lawmakers say they want to see — spent and put to work every dollar the Legislature has allocated.** While the state sits on a \$7.6 billion backlog across 6,400 stalled projects (74% of them local, per LFC reporting), NDBAC has broken ground, awarded and executed a construction contract with Bradbury Stamm, completed the retaining wall, and begun vertical construction on the natatorium building — with the facility being built in phases as funding allows. This is precisely the kind of “shovel-ready,” actively-progressing project the Legislature's own 2026 reforms (House Bill 247, which limits reauthorization of stalled funding) are designed to prioritize — not another line item sitting idle.
- **A modest, targeted reallocation of the state's unspent capital outlay backlog could fully fund NDBAC and similar near-complete projects many times over.** NDBAC's current funding gap is approximately \$36 million — still less than half a percent (0.47%) of the \$7.6 billion currently unspent statewide. Rather than continuing to reauthorize funds for projects that have shown no progress for years, the Legislature could direct a small share of that backlog toward projects like NDBAC that are ready to be built, short funding, and staffed to finish — turning idle capital into a completed community asset almost immediately.

Source: New Mexico Legislative Finance Committee report (Aug. 2026), as reported by Source New Mexico and KRQE News 13; New Mexico House Bill 247 (2026 legislative session).

Comparable Project Reference: Campbell County, Wyoming

NDBAC's cost trajectory is consistent with a broader national pattern seen in other aquatic center projects built in this same period. The Campbell County School District Aquatic Center in Gillette, Wyoming, followed a similar path from initial estimate to final bid, in a different state, under a different funding structure, with no state funding involved.

Metric	Campbell County, WY	NDBAC, Albuquerque
Initial estimate	~\$20M (2019 budget)	\$30,557,331 (2021 Design C)
Final bid / cost	\$38.5M (Dec. 2022 approved bid)	\$68,715,392.62 (Apr. 2024 bid)
Dollar increase	~\$18.5M	~\$38.2M
Percentage increase	~93%	~125%
Timeframe, estimate to bid	~3 years	~3 years
Final bid pool	Sole bidder (after 2021 bids rejected)	Two bidders

- **Both projects saw budgets roughly double, or more, over a similar three-year window** between initial estimate and final construction bid — reinforcing that this pattern is not unique to Albuquerque or New Mexico.

- **Both experienced an early round of bidding that came in over budget and had to be rejected or re-scoped.** Campbell County's 2021 bids (lowest at ~\$27.5M) exceeded its ~\$20–23M budget and were rejected before re-bidding; a comparable escalation pattern played out in NDBAC's estimate history.
- **Both ultimately drew from a very thin contractor pool** — Campbell County had only one bidder in its final round, NDBAC had two — supporting the point that limited regional competition, not local project management, contributed to upward price pressure during this national construction market period.
- **Important distinction: NDBAC is a substantially more complete facility with more programming options than the Campbell County center.** NDBAC's scope includes both Phase 1 indoor aquatic features and Phase 2 outdoor aquatic features, expanded community and competition programming, and additional site infrastructure (including the retaining wall). The Campbell County facility, while a full-size competition pool, is a single-building school district facility without a comparable outdoor phase or the broader community recreation scope built into NDBAC. This makes NDBAC's higher percentage increase reasonable in context — it reflects a larger, more feature-rich facility, not mismanagement relative to a smaller peer project.
- **Using the updated 2026 city cost figures, NDBAC's total increase over its original estimate grows further.** Against the current total project cost of \$98,000,000 (construction, retaining wall, and design/testing/inspection fees), NDBAC's increase over its original 2021 estimate is now substantially larger than the increase reflected in the original April 2024 bid alone — still consistent with a larger, more complex facility experiencing sustained market pressure over a longer build-out, and further outpacing Campbell County's single-building, single-phase project.
- **Note on comparison scope:** this reference is offered as evidence of a consistent national trend in aquatic center cost escalation, not as a like-for-like facility comparison. The two projects differ in size, scope, funding structure, and ownership (school district vs. municipal), so the percentage gap between them should be read as directional support, not a precise benchmark.

Sources: Gillette News Record ("School board approves construction of \$38.5M Aquatic Center," Nov. 2022); County 17 ("Campbell aquatic center to break ground this spring," Jan. 2023); SwimSwam ("Gillette (WY) Unveils New \$38 Million Facility," Nov. 2025); Gillette News Record e-Edition project history recap.