

## **II.B. Des Moines, Iowa**

The cities of Madison and Des Moines carry many of the same factors when considering whether or not to build or expand upon the ideas of public pools. Madison currently contains no public pools at all within the city limits. Des Moines a city of about the same size population (Des Moines 198,682 Madison 208,054), climate and geographical features contains two outdoors-public pools. The question then lies why doesn't Madison have any at all? This case study will contain three factors that relate Madison and Des Moines in an effort to compare the cities and lobby for the opening of public pools within Madison. The three factors that the case study will be based on are climate and geography, income, and age. The similarities in these three categories between Madison and Des Moines are strikingly close. By showing the close stature of these two cities and the three categories listed above we can make a good case for Madison to get some public pools in the future.

### Climate and Geography

The climate and geography of certain cities can help us to understand why the need for public pools can be high or low. The geography can also help us see whether or not pools are necessary. If there were numerous sanitary lakes within the city some officials would feel that public pools might not be necessary.

	May	June	July	August
Average Temp.	61.6 F	71.1 F	75.8 F	73.5 F
Average high	72.2 F	81.7	85.9	83.8 F
precipitation	4.3 inches	4.6 inches	4.2 inches	4.4 inches

The figures shown above are very important to the success of a public pool. The months shown are those in which the pool is open during the summer. The pools open in late May and close in late August. These are the only months when people are capable of swimming. Most lifeguards are college or high school students who have to return to school so it makes it hard for the pools to be open on hot days in September. If the weather is ugly the pool also can not be open. Des Moines has a relatively normal rainfall in these four months so this does not hurt the pools opening too much. The average temperatures in Madison are relatively close to the ones in Des Moines for these four months (average high May 57.2 F, June 66.6 F, July 70.9 F, August 68.6 F). The precipitation is also very similar (May 3.7, June 4.5, July 4.2, Aug 4.1). The similarities in the climate here are very close. This leads us to lobby for pools in Madison because if the city of Des Mines with ten thousand less people can support two pools with about the same average temps and precipitation it should not present a problem for Madison ([www.city-data.com](http://www.city-data.com)).

The geography also plays a little bit of role in the pool controversy. The area around Madison and Des Moines is quite similar, low grassland mostly used for farming. This contributes to pollution and unsanitary lakes and rivers for swimming. This is when

the people turn to public pools. In Des Moines it is no problem because they have two of them to attend, but in Madison no one wants to swim in our polluted lakes. With these similarities being so close in proximity the feeling is that Madison should build some public pools ([www.city-data.com](http://www.city-data.com)).

### Income

The income of each household can also play a big role in the public pool debate. Most pools charge money for entry but more importantly they use tax money to be built in the first place. The incomes for a median household in Madison and Des Moines are also very similar. The income of median households in Des Moines was enough for tax money to cover the building and upholding of the two pools that currently exist there. The median income of Madison households is quite similar. If the city of Des Moines can afford to have and uphold pools the difference in the tax money for people in Madison would not be that drastic and they would be able to have public pools built and upheld.

Madison	Median Household Income	\$49,223
Des Moines	Median Household Income	\$38,408

As we see here the average income in Madison is almost \$11,000 higher than that of Des Moines. Des Moines manages to have and uphold two pools and it doesn't cost them hardly a penny. Madison with a higher median income could afford to build and

uphold these pools. The question then still lingers why doesn't Madison have any pools? The problem is not money and from what we see here the city could afford to build pools if the people were in favor ([www.visitmadison.com](http://www.visitmadison.com)).

### Age

The aspect of age also plays a very big role in the use or building of public pools. The median age in Madison and Des Moines once again is very close. The fact is the median age is right around middle thirties. This is the perfect age for people lobbying for pools. People in their mid-thirties are either starting to get married or already are. This is when they begin to have children and that can be a big factor in the pool debate. Parents will take their children to a pool on a hot day and with the median age be right around thirty for both Des Moines and Madison it is perfect for the public pools. Des Moines once again is fine because they have two pools to attend. Madison once again has no where to go. With many middle-aged parents having children the pools if built in Madison would get a lot of use ([www.city-data.com](http://www.city-data.com)).

Madison	Median Age	30.6
Des Moines	Median Age	33.8

One other factor that plays a big role regarding age is the people under the age of 18. The percentages in both cities are similar with Des Moines having a slightly higher population under 18. This can contribute to pool use because on hot summer days kid under eighteen not having to attend school would like to beat the heat at a pool. These

help pools stay a float in most case because most parents are at work and their kids are either being babysat or on there own. Most times on a hot day a good number of teens would attend a pool if it were available to them. Madison however, has no such place for teens to go

Madison	Population Under 18	18%
Des Moines	Population Under 18	26%

([www.e-pmr.com](http://www.e-pmr.com))

In Conclusion the three factors from this case study of Des Moines relate very closely to those of Madison. The pools of Des Moines have been open for several years and are doing enough to survive and stay open. With a similar climate/geography, income, and age Madison should and is asking why they don't have any public pools. The above study is another case for them to compare and show reasons why Madison needs to build some public pools. The cities are very similar and if Des Moines can maintain public pools I think Madison could do so as well.

### Bibliography

www.visitmadison.com

www.city-data.com

www.e-pmr.com