

RECENT HISTORY OF PLANS TO RENOVATE OR REPLACE THE HEATHER FARM AQUATIC FACILITY

11/14/18

2010-11 Aquatic Needs Assessment

ACTIVITY	OUTCOME
<p>The assessment looked at the demographic and market trends, the corresponding future needs for aquatic services, and the program and facility options to meet these needs. The final report stated that a four pool solution at Heather Farm Park could be developed to meet the future needs of the aquatic community, including a baseline of current programming along with opportunities for future growth in areas such as water polo. The facility identified in 2010 to potentially meet all of these needs included the following features:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Replace</u> all three existing pools at Clarke with the three new pools: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A 50-meter by 25-yard all-deep pool ○ A 35-meter by 25-yard pool with movable bulkhead ○ A 6-lane instructional pool • <u>Add</u> a new family recreational pool to serve unmet demand. <p>After a thorough cost analysis was completed in 2011, the possible future facility was estimated to cost \$22,400,000.</p>	<p>In the years immediately following the analysis, several factors contributed to a shift away from the proposed facility:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The costs associated with the construction of a four pool facility exceeded resources available to the City • As a result of the economic downturn, the City sought to reduce the strain on the General Fund. • A new aquatic resource at Northgate High School addressed some of the community demand • Other communities achieved successful partnerships with outside operators that could serve as models for Walnut Creek <p>The initiative was therefore put on hold, pending an improving economy and the identification of partnerships to support the project.</p>

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2013-14 Exploration of Community Partnerships

ACTIVITY	OUTCOME
<p>In 2013, staff presented a summary of the City's aquatics operations as part of the City Council's fiscal sustainability discussions. The Council directed staff to remain in the aquatics business and continue to deliver existing services. The Council also directed staff to explore alternative service delivery models for aquatics at Clarke Swim Center. The focus was to identify partner(s) to potentially share in, or to completely assume, the rebuilding and operation of the pools as a means to reduce City operating support.</p> <p>Two community non-profits, the Walnut Creek Aquatics Foundation (WCAF, made up of swim team and community representatives) and the YMCA of the Central Bay Area (The Y) expressed interest in working with the City to develop and execute a plan for a future aquatic facility.</p> <p>The City brought these groups together in an effort to fulfill the Council's direction.</p>	<p>All parties reached consensus that a two pool aquatic center could meet the needs of the community. The mix of a 50-meter pool and a family/recreation pool would allow all three existing swim teams to continue programs, while allowing for community activities to occur.</p> <p>Capital costs were estimated at \$10 million for both pools, plus \$5 million for the aquatic support facilities. During the capital budget discussions in the summer of 2014, the Council endorsed the allocation of \$1 million toward the construction of a new aquatic facility at Clarke. The Y also expressed their interest in building and operating a separate indoor fitness and wellness facility (without City financial support) to complement the aquatics program.</p> <p>The City, Y and WCAF all expressed sincere interest in the future of the Clarke Swim Center, and worked for some time to identify a viable solution. Despite these efforts, consensus was not reached. Although the Y offered to pay for and operate the indoor facilities and family/rec pool and stated that if the facility was constructed, there would be no public support required for the operation of the indoor facilities or the family/rec pool, the significant sticking points were related to the construction and operation operating cost of 50M pool.</p> <p>The two community groups ultimately had different missions and approaches to how best to serve the needs of the broad aquatics community in Walnut Creek, and the joint partnership did not come to fruition. The City remained interested however in finding a partner to identify a viable aquatic facility and a realistic plan to achieve it.</p>

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2015-16 Exploration of Financial Partnerships

ACTIVITY	OUTCOME
<p>In 2015 Council directed staff to identify a partner to develop the best plan for financing, construction, operation, and maintenance of a new aquatic facility. Council selected architectural and engineering firm HED to develop alternate space and facility programs, including preliminary conceptual construction cost models.</p> <p>In 2016 the Council endorsed HED's recommended two pool facility option that would include a recreational pool and a 25yd x 25m outdoor pool that would primarily serve the local community, instead of large swim teams or as a regional destination. The opinion of construction costs related to this facility option showed a range of \$12 - \$14 million. The Council also had interest in additional space for a 50 meter pool that might be funded through the support of WCAF.</p>	<p>In July 2016, the Council increased the City's capital commitment to \$5 million above the \$1 million already allocated, for a total of \$6 million.</p> <p>Also in 2016, members of WCAF expressed interest in expanding the 25yd x 25m pool to a 50m pool. The WCAF understood that their organization would need to be significantly involved in fundraising and other efforts to make this a reality. A new 50 meter pool was estimated to cost \$5-\$6 million to construct. WCAF expressed a commitment to contribute \$3 million, or 50% of the cost of building a new 50 meter pool.</p> <p>After receiving HED's final work in November 2016, the Council directed staff to issue a Request For Proposals (RFP) seeking two formal designs and cost estimates for a future aquatic center at Heather Farm Park.</p>

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2017 Architect Selection Process

ACTIVITY	OUTCOME
<p>Staff issued the RFP for architectural design services in February of 2017 based on Council direction to prepare designs for a <u>two pool facility</u>. The designs were to include options for one of the pools to provide for a comparative evaluation of facility configuration, size, and the full capital and operating costs of a new Heather Farm Park aquatic facility. The designs for each pool were intended to include the following basic elements:</p> <p>Pool 1 -Construction of a new leisure pool with an area for recreational swimming and amenities for family recreation that may include a river, play structure, zero-depth entry, and slides.</p> <p>Pool 2 - Two separate facility design options were to be provided, and each option was to be differentiated as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Option 1: a 25 meter x 25 yard fitness pool, approximately 23,400 square feet of deck space, and a roughly 8,500 square foot bathhouse. • Option 2: a 50 meter x 25 yard fitness/competition pool, approximately 44,400 square feet of deck space, and a roughly 13,000 square foot bathhouse. 	<p>Nine firms submitted proposals to perform the design work. While staff was narrowing down the finalists to one firm, the City was also updating its long term financial forecast, which projected the City would be facing significant financial challenges in the coming years related to rising pension costs. Staff thus recommended, and the City Council agreed, to defer a decision to execute a contract for design services. In July 2017, the Walnut Creek City Council reallocated \$12.8 million in surplus funds to an irrevocable trust to secure employee pensions. \$5 million of these funds had been earmarked toward the renovation/replacement of the Clarke Swim Center; therefore, no funds are currently set aside for the construction of a new facility.</p> <p>In September 2017, staff presented a Critical Infrastructure Study, which recommended that the Clarke Swim Center be rebuilt. Staff also recommended rebuilding or renovating the Civic Park Community Center, Heather Farm Community Center, and Shadelands Art Center.</p> <p>In October 2017 City Council directed staff to perform a comprehensive review of programming and usage of these facilities to form the basis for the recommended replacement or renovation of all four facilities, including the Clarke Swim Center. This was the start of the “Your Parks Your Future” project.</p>