

## **Approach to a Comprehensive Aquatics Review**

Presented To:	City Council
Meeting Date:	February 21, 2023
Type:	Managers' Reports
Prepared by:	Jeff Pafford Leisure Services
Recommended by:	General Manager of Community Development

## **Report Summary**

This report provides a recommendation regarding an approach to a comprehensive aquatics review which will guide decisions around facility rationalization and modernization.

## **Resolution**

THAT the City of Greater Sudbury City Council approves the recommended approach as outlined in the report entitled "Approach to a Comprehensive Aquatics Review" from the General Manager of Community Development, presented at the City Council meeting on February 21, 2023

AND THAT the City of Greater Sudbury approves funding of \$150,000 from the Tax Rate Stabilization Reserve for completion of the comprehensive aquatics review.

## **Relationship to the Strategic Plan, Health Impact Assessment and Community Energy & Emissions Plan (CEEP)**

This report supports Council's Strategic Plan in the areas of Asset Management and Service Excellence, Climate Change and Creating a Healthier Community. The proposed approach to a comprehensive aquatics review will incorporate asset management considerations and will guide decisions on investments in infrastructure to support community recreation with a focus on quality of life.

The report supports Council's Community Energy & Emissions Plan (CEEP) as considerations for modernized, efficient facilities will form part of the comprehensive aquatics review.

## **Financial Implications**

If approved as presented, the \$150,000 required to complete the comprehensive aquatics review will be funded through the Tax Rate Stabilization Reserve.

## Background

At the Finance & Administration Committee of April 19, 2022, Council directed staff to conduct a comprehensive review of aquatic facilities in Greater Sudbury. Full resolution as follows:

WHEREAS the City of Greater Sudbury's Strategic Plan calls for optimizing asset service life through the establishment of maintenance plans while retiring old, costly, uneconomic assets;

and WHEREAS facility rationalization supports the strategic goal of Asset Management and Service Excellence through the identification of opportunities to decommission or suspend operations of under-utilized assets while improving use of other facilities;

and WHEREAS the majority of aquatic recreation facilities operated by the City of Greater Sudbury are 50 years old or older;

and WHEREAS the current pools do not meet AODA requirements and were not built with modern amenities in mind; and WHEREAS the community's desired aquatic amenities have changed over time and there is a mismatch with the current provision;

and WHEREAS the requirements to recommend closure of facilities or change of service provision require in-depth analysis;

and THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Council of the City of Greater Sudbury directs staff to bring a report by the end of Q1 in 2023 on next steps to begin a comprehensive aquatics review that would rationalize and modernize aquatic recreation facilities in Greater Sudbury.

## Recommended Approach to a Comprehensive Aquatics Strategy

Council has directed staff to undertake a comprehensive aquatics review to rationalize and modernize aquatic facilities in Greater Sudbury. As aquatic services are provided through five municipal indoor pools, supervised beaches and splash pads, it is recommended that the scope of this review include these amenities.

This is consistent with the approach used by other communities who have undertaken a comprehensive aquatics review including the City of Vancouver (VanSplash Aquatics Strategy) and the City of Courtenay Aquatic Strategy. To assist with understanding the current state of the City's aquatic costs and services, Appendix A includes a summary of the utilization, operating costs and capital requirements of City of Greater Sudbury pools and Appendix B provides details on other City lead aquatic services.

There are several other aquatic related projects and initiatives that have been commenced by the City of Greater Sudbury including the Lionel E. Lalonde Centre Therapeutic/Leisure Pool, Kalmo Beach 10-Year Plan and the work of the Lively Recreation Advisory Panel. Updates on other aquatic developments in the community are provided in Appendix C. A comprehensive aquatics strategy will ensure that these developments are considered as part of the larger delivery of aquatic services across the community.

Infrastructure Canada collects statistical information on the inventory, condition, performance, and asset management strategies of public infrastructure owned or leased by various levels of Canadian government, including culture, recreation, and sports facilities. Based on Canada's Core Public Infrastructure Survey for 2020 the average expected useful life of a new publicly owned aquatic facilities are as follows:

- 25-meter indoor pools - 46 years
- 50-meter indoor pools (or longer) - 40 years
- Indoor leisure pools – 32 years
- Outdoor pools – 32 years
- Outdoor spray parks/splash pads/wading pools – 23 years

Given the average life expectancy for indoor pools and other aquatic facilities ranges from 23 to 46 years, it is suggested that the review have a vision for aquatic services for at least the next 25 years for our community.

## Recommendation

The following objectives, methodology and timelines are recommended by staff to guide the approach to be taken in the development of a comprehensive aquatic strategy to ensure the review results in a long-term vision for aquatic facilities and programs for Greater Sudbury.

### Objectives

The purpose of the City of Greater Sudbury Aquatics Review is to develop a 25-year vision for aquatic services that:

- Recognizes aquatic programming and services contribute to **Creating a Healthier Community**, improving the quality of life for residents.
- Models **Asset Management and Service Excellence** through recommending investments in physical aquatic physical infrastructure that maximize return on investment and ensure reliable services.
- Incorporates **Climate Change** considerations, ensuring modernization and rationalization of physical assets assist with the City's Climate Energy and Emissions Plan objectives.
- Includes extensive community engagement to inform the vision for future aquatic service delivery.
- Reviews the condition, effectiveness, and performance of the current City of Greater Sudbury aquatic service delivery system.
- Studies non-municipal facilities and provides recommendations on how they should contribute to an overall aquatic service delivery system for the community.
- Considers other aquatic developments such as the Lionel E. Lalonde Centre Therapeutic Pool, Kalmo Beach 10-Year Plan and Lively Recreation Advisory Panel work and provides recommendations as part of an overall aquatic service delivery system.
- Expands on the existing recommended service provision level of one aquatic facility for every 25,000 residents with the development of new metrics to guide and measure future service delivery including considerations for geographical distribution.
- Further defines and prioritizes aquatic uses, based on community and stakeholder engagement, which in turn informs the type, location and number of physical assets required to meet future City-wide aquatic service delivery.
- Explores and recommends new and innovative directions to meet City-wide indoor and outdoor aquatic service delivery.
- Considers current aquatic services with a future vision for a 25-year time frame, accounting for population growth, growth centres in Greater Sudbury and industry/aquatic trends.

### Methodology & Time Frames

It is proposed that work be carried out in two phases as follows.

#### Phase One (March 2023 through November 2023)

- Review current state of City of Greater Sudbury aquatic services including facility condition assessments, utilization data, provision standards, etc.
- Engage non-municipal aquatic service providers to review facility condition assessments, utilization data, provision standards, etc.
- Review of emerging aquatic projects including the Lionel E. Lalonde Centre Therapeutic Pool, Kalmo Beach 10-Year Plan and Lively Recreation Advisory Panel work.
- Conduct industry analysis relating to aquatic trends, provision standards, best practices, and innovation.
- Undertake initial community engagement session to help residents better understand current aquatic services and challenges with existing aquatic infrastructure. The first phase of community engagement will seek public feedback on topics such as:

- Satisfaction with current aquatic services
- Barriers to participating in existing aquatic programming or enjoying existing aquatic facilities
- The uses or services that are priorities in the aquatic delivery system
- The innovative aquatic experiences that residents want to see in the aquatic delivery system
- What are viewed as reasonable travel distances to access aquatic services
- The community engagement session will be comprised of the following:
  - Meeting(s) with stakeholders including members of Council, user groups, swim clubs, other aquatic providers, facility staff, and school board representatives
  - Targeted surveying of individuals registered in swimming lessons and programs.
  - Pop up engagement sessions at supervised beaches and splash pads.
  - Opportunities for public feedback through the City's Over to You engagement portal. Printed feedback forms also available at aquatic facilities. 311 to take feedback over the phone for those unable to access other options.
- Provide preliminary findings to City Council by November 2023 which would include:
  - Summary of strengths, challenges, and opportunities with the existing aquatic delivery system
  - Summary of industry trends, best practices, and innovative approaches to aquatic delivery
  - Summary of the community engagement sessions and feedback received
  - Priority services that need to be prioritized in the City-wide aquatic delivery system
  - Updated service level provision targets and metrics for the delivery of aquatic services across the City, including geographical considerations
  - Initial recommendations on the type of aquatic facilities and amenities required to support the future service delivery for aquatics in Greater Sudbury.

It is anticipated that at the conclusion of Phase One of the review, Council will have a better picture of type, location and number of physical assets required to meet future City-wide aquatic service delivery.

#### Phase Two (January 2024 through September 2024)

- Conduct a second round of community engagement. This round of community engagement will review and reaffirm initial findings. Specifically, feedback will be sought on provision level targets and metrics, priority services for the aquatic delivery system and the future type of aquatic facilities and amenities.
- Finalization of provision targets and metrics for the delivery of aquatic services in the community
- Provide design considerations for the future of the aquatic delivery system, with specific recommendations for indoor pools, supervised beaches, splash pads and other aquatic facilities.
- Provide a high-level cost estimate and for recommendations proposed.
- Provide a recommended sequencing of recommended changes and improvements to the future aquatic service delivery system.
- Presentation to Council of a 25-year vision for the provision of aquatic services in Greater Sudbury incorporating future demographics projections, community engagement results and previous research conducted.

It is anticipated that outside resources will be required to undertake a comprehensive aquatic service delivery review as described above. Based on other similar studies undertaken by other communities, it is estimated that \$150,000 would be required for professional services, funded through the Tax Rate Stabilization Reserve.

## **Next Steps**

Upon Council's approval of the approach to a comprehensive aquatics review, staff will issue a procurement process to engage professional services. Staff will report back following each phase of the review as described in the recommended approach.

## Resources Cited

Parks, Open Space and Leisure Master Plan Review (2014)

<https://www.greatersudbury.ca/city-hall/reports-studies-policies-and-plans/report-pdfs/parks-open-space-and-leisure-master-plan-review-2014/>

Lionel E. Lalonde Centre Therapeutic/Leisure Pool OverToYou website

<https://overtoyou.greatersudbury.ca/lionel-e-lalonde-centre-therapeutic-leisure-pool>

YMCA Says Changes Needed to Sustain Downtown Sudbury Location, CBC Sudbury website (January 12, 2023)

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/sudbury/sudbury-ymca-financial-challenges-plan-1.6711906>

Future of Laurentian University's Pool Still Uncertain, The Sudbury Star (January 17, 2023)

<https://www.thesudburystar.com/sports/the-future-of-laurentian-universitys-pools-future-still-uncertain>

Laurentian Provides Update on Long-Shuttered Pool, Sudbury.com (January 31, 2023)

<https://www.sudbury.com/local-news/laurentian-provides-update-on-long-shuttered-pool-6464243>

Splash Pad Update 2020, Community Services Committee (February 10, 2020)

<https://pub-greatersudbury.escribemeetings.com/filestream.ashx?documentid=1063>

Kalmo Beach 10 Year Plan, Community Services Committee (May 16, 2022)

<https://pub-greatersudbury.escribemeetings.com/filestream.ashx?DocumentId=44315>

Lively/Walden: Help Shape Your Future OverToYou website

<https://overtoyou.greatersudbury.ca/livelywalden>

Statistics Canada - Average expected useful life of new publicly owned culture, recreation and sport facilities, Infrastructure Canada

<https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/t1/tbl1/en/tv.action?pid=3410018201>

City of Vancouver VanSplash Aquatics Strategy

<https://vancouver.ca/parks-recreation-culture/vansplash-aquatics-strategy.aspx>

City of Courtenay Aquatics Strategy

<https://www.courtenay.ca/EN/main/city-hall/projects-gallery/aquatic-strategy-1.html>