

Online open house underway for draft Aquatic Facilities Strategy

Feb. 2, 2021 — Residents can now review the draft of the City’s Aquatic Facilities Strategy, engage staff on the document and provide their feedback with the launch of an online open house.

The development of an Aquatic Facilities Strategy will guide the City’s development of aquatic facilities such as outdoor pools, indoor aquatic centres and splash pads over the next 10 years. Building on prior community surveys, demographic projections and an in-depth examination of current facilities the draft points to increased demand for aquatic facilities in the decade ahead as the City grows by a projected 13,000 residents.

“As a City we are growing, and with that growth comes increased demand for residents to get in the pool, be it to cool off, exercise or participate in programming,” said Manager, Programs and Culture Services Lori Mambella, adding, “we’ve always prided ourselves on being the city where everyone can play and a new strategy will help us continue that by providing a roadmap for future investments to meet that demand and create truly inclusive facilities and programs.”

The draft contains three possible implementation strategies — balanced, refocused and status quo — to address future needs to varying degrees.

Under the balanced strategy the City would invest \$25 million to \$31 million to build a new indoor aquatic facility and redevelop Lion Dunc Schooley Outdoor Pool. The other two outdoor pools would be closed. Additionally, three splash pads would be built, providing a splash pad for each Ward, resulting in a complement of seven splash pads, one outdoor pool, and two indoor aquatics facilities for the city. This strategy would provide substantially greater programming capacity to meet increasing demand.

Following the refocused strategy, the City would build a new indoor aquatics facility and close all three of its outdoor pools. Additionally, three splash pads would be built, providing a splash pad for each Ward, resulting in a complement of seven splash pads and two indoor aquatics facilities for the city. These changes would represent a \$19 million to \$22 million investment. This strategy would provide some increases in programming capacity, although outdoor swimming programming would be eliminated.

With a status quo strategy the City would maintain its current inventory of outdoor pools, indoor aquatics facilities and splash pads with no new facilities. This strategy would create no increased capacity for facility access or programming, even as demand increases. This strategy still presents a considerable cost to the City, \$11 million to \$16

million, as all three outdoor pools present a need to be completely redeveloped, not only to ensure their continued operations but also to meet new requirements under the Access for Ontarians with Disabilities Act.

The public can find more information, ask questions and provide feedback at engagestc.ca/AquaticsStrategy. The open house runs until Feb. 23, 2021.

The development of the Aquatics Facilities Strategy supports several actions in Council's strategic plan, including the development of a 10-Year Capital Infrastructure Plan that includes all major investments to address City needs, priorities and growth; and establishing area-specific plans for the redevelopment of key sites in the City to promote strong, compatible, connected neighbourhoods that enhance the quality of life.

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