

July 16, 2026

Richard Henning
Director of Leisure Services
City of Weyburn
Weyburn, Saskatchewan

RE: Weyburn Aquatic Planning – Engagement Program

Dear Richard,

As the City of Weyburn advances the planning for a community aquatic facility, we understand that questions have been raised regarding the community engagement process for the Feasibility Study and the validity of the results obtained. Given the significance of this project and the substantial capital investment that ultimately will be required, it is important that Council, contributors, and the community have confidence in both the process undertaken and the findings generated.

As project manager (along with Mike Roma) and engagement lead for this project, I am pleased to provide this summary outlining our professional assessment of the engagement program and the resulting data.

Commitment to a Rigorous and Ethical Engagement Process

From the outset, the Aquatic Feasibility Study was designed to be grounded in sound research and informed by meaningful community input. The engagement program was developed to align with internationally recognized best practices, including the principles and values of the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2), as well as ethical guidance established through the ARECCI framework.

Central to the process was a commitment that all participants would be treated respectfully, that their perspectives would be valued, and that their input would be collected, analyzed, and reported in a manner consistent with the purpose for which it was gathered. Equally important, the public was only asked to provide input on matters where their feedback could meaningfully contribute to the feasibility study and future decision-making process.

The engagement approach was intentionally structured to provide clarity regarding how public input would be used, what decisions remained within the authority of Council, and what limitations existed within the study process. This transparency is a key principle of credible public engagement and was maintained throughout the project.

Achievement of Engagement Objectives

The engagement program was designed to achieve both content-related and process-related objectives.

From a content perspective, the engagement sought to understand:

- Community expectations regarding aquatic experiences and services;
- Current and future amenity needs and demands;
- Existing barriers and challenges related to aquatic participation; and
- Community values regarding aquatics and recreation more broadly.

From a process perspective, the engagement program sought to ensure:

- Multiple opportunities for participation;
- Clear communication regarding how input would be considered;
- Accessible opportunities for residents to share their views;
- Adherence to project timelines; and
- Identification and mitigation of participation barriers wherever possible.

Based on our review, these objectives were successfully achieved through the engagement process implemented by the project team.

Strong Community Participation

One of the clearest indicators of the success of the engagement program was the level of participation achieved.

The resident survey generated **1,166 responses**, representing approximately **10% of the community's population**. In municipal engagement projects of this nature, response rates are frequently in the range of **3% to 5% of the population**. As a result, the participation achieved in Weyburn significantly exceeded what is typically experienced for civic planning initiatives.

The high participation rate reflects both strong community interest in aquatic services and the City's effective efforts in communicating engagement opportunities and encouraging residents to participate. The City should be commended for its extensive outreach efforts, which helped ensure broad awareness of the study and opportunities to contribute.

Additionally, **82% of survey respondents were Weyburn residents**, and among those residents, **83% had lived in Weyburn for ten years or more**. This level of long-term residency provides valuable insight from individuals with extensive experience using and observing community recreation services over time.

As documented in the WWH report, the demographic composition of respondents closely aligned with the broader community population. This alignment provides a high degree of confidence that the results reasonably reflect the perspectives of Weyburn residents and are not disproportionately influenced by any single demographic group.

Confidence in the Quality and Integrity of the Survey Data

We have also reviewed concerns regarding potential duplication, manipulation, or inappropriate influence within the survey results.

Based on both the survey platform controls and our independent review of the data, we found no evidence of duplicate submissions, organized manipulation, or irregular activity that would compromise the integrity of the results.

The project utilized **Alchemer**, a professional survey platform that includes robust safeguards against duplicate submissions. These protections include:

- Cookie-based duplication prevention measures;
- IP address tracking and validation protocols;
- Automated identification of repeat submissions; and
- Monitoring tools that flag unusual response patterns or anomalies.

Specifically, Alchemer applies a 90-day cookie to survey respondents, which flags multiple submissions from the same browser while also tracking IP information to provide an additional layer of verification while maintaining respondent privacy.

Beyond the automated safeguards built into the platform, our team actively monitored incoming survey data throughout the collection period. This ongoing oversight allows for the identification of unusual trends, suspicious submission patterns, or anomalies that may warrant further investigation. No such concerns were identified during the fielding period.

As a result, we have a high level of confidence in both the integrity of the survey data and the findings that emerged from the analysis.

Conclusion

Public engagement is one important component of a broader feasibility planning process. It is intended to help decision-makers understand community needs, priorities, and perspectives while complementing technical, operational, financial, and facility assessments.

Based on our professional assessment, the engagement program undertaken for the Weyburn Aquatic Feasibility Study was comprehensive, well-communicated, ethically conducted, and consistent with recognized engagement best practices. Participation levels exceeded industry norms, respondent demographics closely reflected the broader community, and the survey data was collected through a platform and review process specifically designed to protect against duplication and manipulation.

Accordingly, we are confident that the engagement results provide a reliable foundation to inform the feasibility study and support future discussions regarding aquatic service delivery and facility investment in Weyburn.

We appreciate the City's commitment to ensuring that the voices of residents are incorporated into this important planning initiative and commend Council, Administration, and community members for their participation in the process.

Sincerely,



Meaghan Carey, MPA
Partner
RC Strategies

Cc/ Mike Roma, Managing Partner, RC Strategies