

To: Weyburn City Council

From: Richard Henning | Director of Leisure Services

Re: WLC Aquatic Facility Feasibility and Cost Review

Date: October 29th, 2025

Background

The Harry Church Indoor Pool, also known as the Weyburn Leisure Centre, opened in November 1990. The facility was unable to open for the 2024/25 winter season due to significant degradation of the pool basin occurring below the tiled surface. The pool basin, hot tub, and pool deck concrete structures have all deteriorated 10 -15 years prior to their expected lifecycle. Facility Assessments conducted in 2024 indicated that there were issues developing, however did not state an end of life, and provided recommendation to have further investigations done within the 2025 budget cycle.

The infiltration of water, chlorine and other chemicals into the concrete has negatively affected the rebar and has resulted in significant delamination and cracking. This reduced the structural integrity of the concrete and resulted in major water loss of an estimated 32,000L per day. Following a ground penetrating radar scan (GPR) and engineering assessment it has been determined that there is no ability to repair the structure and complete demolition, and replacement is required.

During the 2024 facility assessment, it was also noted that mechanical and filtration systems along with pool piping and components are at the end/nearing the end of their life and in need of replacement within the next 1 – 5 years.

The City went to RFP to engage a consultant who specializes in leisure facilities like indoor pools. The successful proponent was RC Strategies. RC Strategies is a consulting company focused on the community services sector coast to coast across Canada.

RC Strategies began the process with a public online survey and user group survey sessions. Based on that feedback they identified what components of a leisure centre are important to the community members. Taking into consideration the various research and engagement inputs generated through this planning process, the following facility program has been developed. This program includes a list of spaces and desired activities that would best meet community needs for indoor aquatics in the City of Weyburn and surrounding area.

Space	Description
Program tank	25 m tank 6 lane, 3m diving board, with considerations of depth for water sport activities and accessible access points
Leisure / therapeutic tank	Zero depth entry shallow area splash and play features with consideration for therapeutic purposes / cold plunge (optional waterside into separate tank)
Waterside	With potential to enter into separate tank
Hot tub	Medium sized (~ 20 capacity) with consideration for therapeutic purposes
Steam room	Standard size
Deck social space	With space for potential seating and social activity
Deck educational space	Space for training and education
Deck storage	Wet storage space
Change facilities	Gender and universal
Lifeguard office and room	Space for desk, storage, locker, change room / shower
First aid	Space for desk, storage, treatment
Mechanical	Pool mechanical
Viewing area	Area off of the main pool with temporary seating (view of full program tank – this is important to client)

Considerations

With the different concepts come different programming opportunities which will impact the overall utilization of the facility.

- Maintaining a waterslide but placing it out of viewer area was important and viewing areas were identified as an area of concern.
- Increasing the leisure aspect of the pool with features such as a larger hot tub, cold plunge, sauna, steam room, etc. help address the therapeutic and inclusive needs of the community.
- The larger changing rooms in all concepts ensure we are offering a safe, inclusive, and accessible environment for all. Maintaining the zero-entry pool is important to ensure we can offer programming to individuals with mobility challenges.
- Offering two tanks, one for competition pool and one for leisure, in one facility allows for additional swimming lessons and recreation programming while competitive training is happening. This addresses the pool availability the survey mentions.
- There are additional operational costs and challenges with having two tanks. Additional guards are required and there are a limited number of qualified lifeguards in our local area. There is additional HVAC load, janitorial efforts and more chemicals needed which all increase operational burden.

Importance of an indoor leisure centre:

Health	Social & Cultural	Economic
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve physical health • Improve wellbeing, support mental health and positive self-esteem • Provide safe environments for re-engaging individuals with physical activity • Develop physical literacy skills and movement in water confidence • Support rehabilitation post illness or injury • Provide water safety education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase social interaction and cohesion for individuals and families • Build community pride • Reduce anti-social and risk behaviours of youth • Provide leadership experiences and training • Be welcoming, universal experiences to support inclusive communities • Support broader community Reconciliation initiatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support growth of the sport, recreation, tourism and event economies • Create new direct and indirect jobs • Increase land values and local government revenues • Serve as important assets to deliver core government services and programs.

Discussion

To fully understand the impacts and costs associated with meeting the proposed facility program, either in whole or in part, four concept options were prepared. These options include:

- 1) Achieving as much of the facility program as possible without expanding the envelope / footprint of the existing facility
- 2) Achieving as much of the facility program as possible with a single tank in an entirely new space
- 3) Achieving the full facility program through a combination of developing new space and renovating space within the envelope / footprint of the existing facility
- 4) Achieving the full facility program through the development of entirely new space

It is important to note that in choosing one of these options, the final product is likely to change to some degree as more detailed design and site planning occurs.

It is important to note that option #1 does not include a competitive pool while the other three options do.

Note: as with all estimates, these costs are not a guarantee as there are too many variables during the preliminary design to be certain of costs. The estimated costs identified below should only be considered for high-level capital budget planning. A +/- between 30% to 50% should be considered for all costs shown.

Option #1: Renovation within existing facility envelope

- Estimated Cost: \$24,671,875.00
 - Maintain the current building envelope
 - leisure pool with zero entry (no competitive 25m tank)

Option #2: New facility construction, 1 tank

- Estimated Cost: \$30,093,750.00
 - Demolition of existing building and construction of new facility.
 - Sunroom remains but converted to pavilion
 - competitive 25m pool with zero entry

Option #3: Renovation and expansion of existing facility envelope

- Estimated Cost: \$32,375,000.00
 - Maintain portion of current building envelope with new addition
 - 2 separate pool basins:
 - leisure pool with zero entry
 - competitive 25m pool with diving board

Option #4: New facility construction, 2 tanks

- Estimated Cost: \$45,843,750.00
 - Demolition of existing building and construction of new facility.
 - Sunroom remains but converted to pavilion
 - 2 separate pool basins:
 - leisure pool with zero entry
 - competitive 25m pool with diving board

All four options have increased changing room sizes with gender neutral and universal options. Amenities such as hot tub, sauna, steam room, cold plunge, and waterslide have been included in each option. Increased viewing areas with temporary seating are also included in each option.

Where facility demolition is proposed there is potential for renovating the interior of the facility to utilize the space for a different purpose. However, costs associated with renovating to repurpose the facility have not yet been determined and would require further study. Demolition costs of \$1,125,000 are included in options 2 & 4.

Operational Cost Forecasts

In addition to the capital construction costs, the City will also incur ongoing operational investment requirements associated with the annual operations of the facility. As the City operated the indoor pool in the past, some of these ongoing impacts are already accounted for in City budgets however there will be an operational cost impact of a new or renovated facility. This annual investment requirement is net of revenues generated through utilization of the facility and should also be considered +/-30% at this point in the planning process.

Summary	2023 Actual	2025 Estimate: Option #1	2025 Estimate: Option #2	2025 Estimate: Option #3	2025 Estimate: Option #4
Revenues	\$ 324,445.00	\$445,939	\$474,429	\$645,167	\$645,167
Expenses	\$ 1,243,034.00	\$1,355,106	\$1,438,997	\$1,953,440	\$2,251,301
Net operations	(\$918,588.00)	(\$909,167)	(\$964,568)	(\$1,308,273)	(\$1,606,134)
Cost recovery	26.10%	32.91%	32.97%	33.03%	28.66%
Investment ratio	73.90%	67.09%	67.03%	66.97%	71.34%
Life cycle reserve budget		\$414,488	\$505,575	\$543,900	\$770,175

It is important to note that these estimates should be considered 2025 values and have been derived from 2023 actual observed revenues and expenses at the Weyburn Leisure Centre. They assume the renovated/new indoor facility is operated in the same seasonal way as the existing facility did while in operation. Other key assumptions include:

- Inflation estimated at 4% per year between 2023-2025
- Revenues and utilization for most aspects of the operation are expected to increase, with larger increases in options three and four that have 2 tanks.
- Facility operating expenses have been extrapolated on a square foot basis with some reductions in energy consumption and maintenance due to having a modernized facility
- Life cycle budgeting (future funds for major repairs and renovations) is estimated at 2.1% of capital per year.

As can be seen, the four concepts range between increased investment requirements of \$0-\$770,000 per year and arrive at cost recovery levels between 28.7% to 33.0% compared to the 2023 observed rate of 26.1%. Facility investment rates are highest for Option #4 at 71.3% and are lowest for Option #3 and #1 at 67.0% and 67.1% respectively.

Financial Funding

- **Municipal Debt Financing**
 - The City of Weyburn would need to increase current debt limit (currently \$20,000,000).
 - City would need to apply to the Government of Saskatchewan through the Local Government Committee (LGC) to change debt limit
 - City would then request debt financing through the Municipal Financing Corporation (MFC) or other financial institutions
- **Options to pay off debt / raise project funding:**
 - Leisure Facility Levy
 - \$150-\$200/property or \$800,000 to \$1,000,000
 - Fee increase for users
 - Fundraising
 - Naming Rights (facility, program spaces)
 - Engage Philanthropic Service Consultants
- **Grants**
 - Federal-Provincial Programs**
 - Canada Community-Building Fund (CCBF): This federal program, administered by the provincial government, provides predictable, long-term funding to municipalities on a per capita basis for eligible infrastructure projects, including recreation facilities. Municipalities can pool and bank this funding for larger capital projects such as a new pool. The CCBF is currently being utilized by the City for the Infrastructure Revitalization Program
 - Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program (ICIP): This cost-shared program between the federal and provincial governments includes a Community, Culture and Recreation Infrastructure Stream. It provides funding to build or materially enhance recreational facilities. Municipalities can receive a significant portion of project costs through this program. There has been a commitment made to the federal government that the province will contribute one-third of the costs toward a municipal infrastructure programs, contingent on the federal government establishing a partnership to secure the remaining funding, which would include contributions from municipalities.
 - Green Municipal Fund (GMF): Delivered by the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM), this fund supports innovative projects that offer environmental, economic, and social benefits. While primarily focused on green initiatives, funding for feasibility studies or energy-efficient components of a new pool complex may be available through grants and loans.

Next Steps:

City Councilors have the information needed to make informed decisions about potential investment in indoor aquatics in the City. Should the decision be made to move forward with any of the four options presented, next steps would include the following:

- 1) City commitment in principle to invest in one of the options outlined (or a variant of).
- 2) Funding commitment to engage a design consultant (~10% of capital cost)
- 3) Selection of project delivery model
- 4) Conduct detailed design and achieve better capital cost assurance (depending on the project delivery model chosen)
- 5) Funding commitment to construct a renovated or new facility
- 6) Facility construction
- 7) Operational business planning and capital fundraising
- 8) Facility opening and ongoing operations

If a decision is made to move forward in the short term, the project could materialize in 24-36 months. Expected grand opening would be within 48 months of starting the process.

Recommendation:

I recommend that Council provides administration with direction on what option to proceed with.

Regards,



Richard Henning
Director of Leisure Services | City of Weyburn