

Table of Contents

SECTION 1: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

SECTION 2: DESIGN CONCEPT

SECTION 3: SITE PLAN FOR A NEW AQUATIC FACILITY

SECTION 4: OPINION OF PROJECT COSTS

SECTION 5: LOCATION

SECTION 6: IDENTIFICATION OF POTENTIAL USER GROUPS

SECTION 7: BENEFITS

SECTION 8: SAFETY

SECTION 9: PROGRAMMING

SECTION 10: USER FEE SUGGESTIONS

SECTION 11: OPERATING COSTS

SECTION 12: REVENUE

SECTION 13: GRANTS AND FUNDING

SECTION 14: FACILITY DEVELOPMENT TRENDS

SECTION 15: RECREATION PARTICIPATION TRENDS

SECTION 16-MANAGEMENT OPTIONS

SECTION 17: PUBLIC CONSULTATION

SECTION 18: CONCLUSION OF THE FEASIBILITY STUDY

SECTION 1: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Sou'West Recreation Complex Advisory Committee SWRCAC or committee in this report) retained AW Consulting (AWC) to assist in the preliminary development of a feasibility study for an aquatic facility that would expand and diversify aquatic recreational, instructional and community opportunities for residents of Shelburne County and various surrounding communities.

This feasibility study was initiated by SWRCAC who are advocates for a healthier community and utilization outcomes and AW Consulting has attempted to provide information that supports these efforts while also putting forward additional aquatic programming options that may be worthy of consideration and review to help sustain broad-based community programming that will help to maintain a healthy local population and fill gaps in the community in programming.

In addition this report includes information gleaned from best practices from successful aquatic facilities in rural communities in Canada, a review of other aquatic facilities in the area that may be competitors for usage, an examination of demographic and statistical information specific to Shelburne County, an analysis of probable and comparable construction costs, municipal data on recreation and information to meet the requirements of competitive swimming facilities in Nova Scotia.

This study will include

- Identification of various potential user groups
- Analysis of programming
- Preliminary estimate of capital and operating costs
- Potential funding sources
- Analysis of facilities in close geographic proximity and recreation opportunities
- Results of the public consultations and stakeholder interviews

Based upon analysis of the information presented herein, and with full recognition of various economic factors associated with the local community, SWRCAC will be able to engage in discussions with decision makers and funders in preparation for building an aquatic facility that will meet community needs.

Sou'West Recreation Complex Advisory Committee SWRCAC) retained AW Consulting to assist in the preliminary development of a feasibility study for an aquatic facility that would expand and diversify aquatic recreational, instructional and community opportunities for residents of Shelburne County and various surrounding communities to provide needed information to a variety of community constituencies, stakeholders and possible funders.

Currently there is no year-round aquatic recreation opportunity in Shelburne County. This was a concern for SWRCAC who understood the risks of water safety in a community who primarily based their livelihood and daily activities near or on the water.

There was also a concern in a community that is underrepresented by physicians and access to healthcare that the community needs to have better opportunities to live a healthier, active lifestyle.

SWRCAC hopes the increased level of recreation opportunities might help to attract and retain health care professionals and their families with the addition of recreation opportunities to the community.

SECTION 1: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Based on the planning imperatives outlined above, AWC proposes a design concept for consideration that meets the instructional, competitive, recreational, therapy/rehabilitation and preventative health wellness clinic needs outlined in this report.



SECTION 2: DESIGN CONCEPT

The importance of creating a pool to the standards of Swim Nova Scotia is to entertain the possible revenue for local businesses through competitions and sports tourism.

Swim Nova Scotia Facility Requirements (1)

Provincial Level Meets: 8 lanes 25m Pool for Short Course competitions, plus additional warm-down facilities for Championships 8 lanes 50m Pool for Long Course competitions, plus additional warm-down facilities
Usage: • Short course championships are held once per year, generally in February or March. • Long course championships are held once per year, generally early in June. • Regional short course championships are held once every two years, generally early in March • Regional long course championships are held once every two years, generally early in July.

National Level Meets: 10 lanes, 50m Pool with access to a warm down facility (minimum 6 lane 25m pool) • National championships can only currently be held short course in Halifax- we have held 2 over the last 10 years, the short course events must be run in a 50m facility. Long course must run in a 50m facility that has warm down space available. If facilities were available, we could host 1 per year.

Timing Equipment: Omega Quantum electronic timing system and 10 OMEGA touch pads.

Starting Blocks: One per lane, extras would be required. Starting wedge required.

Backstroke Ledges: One per lane, extras would be required. OBL2 Pro.

Deck Capacity: Space for approximately 500-600 swimmers, 50 coaches, and 50 officials would be required.

Spectator Capacity: Seating for approximately 800-1000.

Additional Space Available on deck for Provincial & National Level Competition: • Officials Meeting Room • Media Room • Doping Control Room • Administrative Offices • Secure Storage Space • Coaches & Officials Hospitality

Training Venues: Practice times vary depending on athlete ability, but on average 20-25 hours of training time per week can easily be utilized both short and long course. Training hours are generally: twice per day (one early morning, and one late afternoon/early evening) Monday- Friday and once early Saturday morning. Dry land space is also required (such as studios, weight rooms, field house, outdoor fields) on a daily basis.

(1)

(https://www.swimming.ca/content/uploads/2019/09/NEW-FACILITY-RULES_final_20190916.pdf, n.d.)

SECTION 2: DESIGN CONCEPT

Preliminary Design

A) Basic design needs

- Eight-lane, 25-metre lap pool
- Leisure pool with ramp access
- Fully accessible hot pool/tub
- Three change rooms
- Diving board
- Reception, administration, lifeguard's area, staff and building support spaces
- Community/instructional room capable of holding up to 50 people
- Kitchenette next to community room
- Public lobby and a pool viewing area
- Pool and building mechanical rooms
- Parking

B) Multi-Purpose Facility, Including Recreational Play Amenities and Preventative Health Spaces

Modern Aquatic Centres are designed to appeal to the broadest possible community uses on a year-round basis. They can become a community hub and used for multi-purpose recreation and facilities. It is important to identify gaps in the community when creating a new facility to meet the needs of the community as a whole.

Multi-purpose aquatic facilities should include a six-lane, 25-metre pool for competitive and fitness use but it is recommended to build more than one pool allowing for different water depth and temperature, to encourage utilization for recreational, instructional, competitive and therapeutic purposes. A pool with eight lanes is ideal for swim meets but would also allow the pool to be used for multiple purposes at the same time. For example, swim lessons could occur during lane swim. Increased usage would create increased income for the pool.

Creating a suitable space for an anchor tenant such as a physiotherapy clinic would add revenue to the facility and focus on the rehabilitation using both hot and cooler pools for therapy. A suitable space for a fitness gym should also be considered that could be shared by physiotherapy patients. This could help to offset the annual operating costs of an aquatic facility. Partnership with a local hospital, health care providers or specialists or rehabilitation services can add substantially to the annual revenue of the facility and therefore should be considered.

SECTION 3: IDEAS FOR A NEW AQUATIC FACILITY

The facility should meet the requirements of Swim Nova Scotia in order to be used for provincial and national facility requirements but also to accommodate regional and provincial swim meets. Swim meets are usually multiple, day-long events and they draw a large crowd of spectators. Adequate seating for spectators is an important investment. This will also contribute heavily to the annual revenue for the facility.

Sports tourism is a revenue source for the community that should be considered in the planning of an aquatic facility that could bring revenue to the yearly operating costs of the facility but also to the surrounding communities as travelers use hotels, bed and breakfast, restaurants and shopping.

With the addition of a deck space and spectator seating, the facility could be used for the Special Olympics swim competitions. It can also be expanded for use outside of swim competitions. Locally, there is a strong cultural history of lumberjack water activities including log rolling, and tub racing. It could also be used for synchronized swimming and water polo.

It should be understood that seating capacity increases incrementally the construction cost of the facility because of the required additional square footage and required ceiling height but the addition of the spectator seating has the potential to expand the usage of the facility for increased economic development.

A safe and healthy community is the primary focus of the aquatic facility and AWC recommends that SWRCAC provide an adequate setting for teaching swimming and other aquatic activities including water safety, lifeguarding, scuba diving as well as providing an adequate space for fishers to obtain their water and boat safety requirements.

With a community concerned about the closures of the Roseway Hospital Emergency Department and a shortage of physicians, it is advised that the community focus on preventative health measures to live a healthier life. This can include fitness through aqua fit, laps, recreational swimming, gym memberships but can also include programming that focuses on issues surrounding diet, smoking cessation, drug use and diabetes etc. Programming throughout the aquatic facility should have a strong health component to encourage a healthier community. Grants for programming available provincially and federally as well as through private corporations will help to keep the aquatic facility sustainable for years with a healthier future generation to support the community.

The aquatic centre should be educationally sound with the operations of the proposed facility should prioritize the instructional needs of the community including teachings from the Department of Fisheries, Nova Scotia Community College and to serve as a desirable site for school-sponsored learn to swim programs and competitive teams.

A space dedicated to youth should be available to meet the underserved population in the community.

AWC recommends a multi-purpose design concept for consideration that would include two pools and a hot tub or warm pool.

The pools contain the following elements:

- The primary pool is 25 metres in length with six, seven-foot lanes plus a ramp for people with limited mobility access. The pool varies in depth to allow for shallow to deep water activities.
- The pool temperature should be maintained at 25-27 degrees Celsius to accommodate the ideal temperature for competitions and other activities.
- The secondary pool is a warm-up pool, aquatic therapy/rehabilitation pool with dimensions of 10 by 20 feet and a 3 to 4-foot water depth and a water temperature of 30 to 40 degrees Celsius.
- There is a meeting space to accommodate up to 50 people
- There is an exercise/weight room/rehabilitation space and shared changing/locker facilities
- There is a third kids pool of 12 feet by 20 feet between 2 feet to 2 feet six inches deep with a splash feature and gradual incline and a temperature of 30 degrees.
- There will be a diving board

SECTION 4: OPINION OF PROJECT COSTS

(2) Based on an estimate after consulting MJMA architects based on the East Hants aquatic facility and most recently built aquatic centre in the province.

Usage	Square footage	Total
Pools	4,382	@\$600/square foot
Pool Shells (82.02 ft x 42 ft 10 ft x 20 ft, 12 ft x 18 ft plus sloped entry 82 ft x 7 ft) Deck space and seating areas @2000 sq. ft.	2,000	@\$600/square foot
Sub-total	6,382	\$3,829,200
Public Spaces		
Control/cashier/administration	1,000	@\$600/square foot
Locker rooms/toilets/changing rooms	1,200	
Meeting rooms/exercise and fitness area	1,000	
Circulation and walls (20 percent)	640	
Sub-total	3,840	\$2,304,000
Building Support		
Mechanical/Filtration	400	All at \$600 per square feet
Electrical	200	
Custodial/Maintenance	400	
Sub-total	1,000	\$600,000
Total	10,927	\$6,556,200

Contingency (5%)	\$327,810
Project design costs/overhead (10%)	\$655,620
Insurance (2 %)	\$131,124
Fees/permits (4%)	\$262,248
Sub-total of overhead costs	\$1,376,802
Sub-total of construction and site costs	\$6,556,200
Grand estimated total *	\$7,933,002

*This estimate is based on the size of similar aquatic centres to fit the needs of the community and projected usage and the cost of recently quoted aquatic centres in Nova Scotia in 2019 and is an estimate or best guess only

(2) (<https://www.ncaa.org/sites/default/files/Swimming%20and%20Diving%20Pool%20Diagram.pdf>)

SECTION 5: LOCATION

An analysis of swimming pools within a one-hour drive time radius of Shelburne County indicates that there is a need for a facility oriented toward aquatic fitness and an active and healthy lifestyle including water safety with the advancement of aquatic skill and knowledge. Currently there is no year-round public aquatic facility between the areas of but not including Yarmouth and Bridgewater.

- There are no indoor pools in Shelburne County.
- The three indoor pools most used by residents of Shelburne County are White Point Beach Resort, a private facility with no swimming instruction for the community, the LCLC in Bridgewater and the Yarmouth YMCA. There is also an outdoor seasonal Municipal pool in Barrington that is open three months of the year; June, July and August.
- To access either Bridgewater or Yarmouth pools there is approximately a 45-minute to hour and a half drive each way.
- Outdoor aquatic programs are run in the summer at Welkum Park, the Barrington pool and at some private pools in Shelburne County.
- Families with children and seniors are the primary group of people that will drive the distance to use Yarmouth and Barrington facilities for recreational swims, therapy or swimming lessons.

Through public consultation there were several locations brought forward for consideration. If the aquatic facility were to be built adjacent to the Sherose Island Arena there could be some benefits including sharing staff and parking as well as accessing facilities already there. There is also the benefit of using the discarded ice cooling energy by storing thermal energy in the ground to heat the swimming pool water. There are some concerns about the accessibility of the location to those without transportation.

Another location considered was a location in Clyde River if there was donated land available so that travel would be equally distributed for most residents in Shelburne County. This would put a facility in the centre of Shelburne County and would be an ideal location for hosting swim competitions on the provincial level.

The Municipality of Shelburne is currently in the planning stages of building a new municipal facility and it would make sense to include an aquatic facility in the new build location across from the Shelburne High School. This would be an accessible location for many youth in the community who have access to the department of education school busses.

SECTION 6: IDENTIFICATION OF POTENTIAL USER GROUPS

(3)

Demographics

Demographic information is based on Census Canada Data collected from Shelburne County in 2016. (3)

Population

Shelburne County recorded a population of 13,966 living in 6,378 of its 7,765 total private dwellings, a change of -3.7% from its 2011 population of 14,496.

Median Age

The median age for Shelburne County for 2016 was 50.4%

With a breakdown of ages:

0 to 14- 13%

15 to 64-63.1%

65 and over-23.9%

85 and over-3%

Workforce Participation

The Unemployment Rate in Shelburne County is 14.8%. This accounts for non-institutional persons 15 years or older who are seeking employment. The Participation rate in Shelburne County is 53.7%. The participation rate is a measure of the active portion of an economy's labor force. The participation rate refers to the number of people who are either employed or are actively looking for work. The number of people who are no longer actively searching for work would not be included in the participation rate. During an economic recession, many workers often get discouraged and stop looking for employment, as a result, the participation rate decreases. The Employment rate in Shelburne County is 63.3%. The employment rate represents the number of employed persons expressed as a percentage of the population aged 15 years and over. The workforce participation rate for the Province was 55.2 % and the unemployment rate was 10 %.

Catchment Area

Catchment area where the majority of visits to an Aquatic facility would be the majority of Shelburne County. Currently those who would use an aquatic facility in Shelburne County would need to travel to either Bridgewater or Yarmouth.

The population of Shelburne County in 2016 was 14,496.

Additional regular users would come from Pubnico and could be extended to Queen's County.

(3)

(<https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/dp-pd/prof/details/page.cfm?Lang=E&Geo1=POPC&Code1=0754&Geo2=CD&Code2=1201&Data=Count&SearchText=Shelburne&SearchType=Begins&SearchPR=01&B1=All&TABID=1>)

SECTION 7: BENEFITS

The Province of Nova Scotia issued Operational Guidelines for Aquatic Facilities in 2013 outlining the health benefits of aquatic facilities. (4)

“Benefits of Aquatic Facilities indicates that the benefits of accessible aquatic programs that target all age groups, socioeconomic populations, and at-risk populations including those with a chronic illness will and can be a major tool for a healthy community. Swimming pools, spas, and therapeutic pools contribute greatly to the physical, mental, social, and rehabilitation wellbeing of the individual and therefore the community. Pools, pool features, and water parks also offer employment opportunities across a variety of age groups for both the local and tourism industry. Providing professional, safe, and positive aquatic experiences for our visitors is a key component of a robust tourism industry. As Canada’s Ocean Playground, our province is rich in accessible water in the form of the ocean, lakes, streams, and rivers. We spend much professional and leisure time enjoying these bodies of water. Many Nova Scotians are also keenly aware of the dangers water may present and the need for accessible learn-to-swim programs that are often delivered in our community pools.

Community Benefits and Hazards of Aquatic Facilities (5)

European Conference on Evidence-Based Aquatic Therapy-Bringing Research to Practice Ben Waller, MSc, University presentation at the 2013 World Aquatic Health Conference 10 Aquatic facilities can also offer a variety of other features and programs to individuals of all ages. Additional programming includes competitive swim and diving opportunities, fitness classes including maternity aqua classes, rehabilitation classes for sport and other injuries, and classes specifically geared for the very young, seniors, and those that suffer from chronic illness. These programs contribute to the physical and emotional well-being of the community by decreasing depression and anxiety, improving overall mood, as well as encouraging family and social connections. Doctors Nova Scotia has stressed the role physical activity plays in healthy development, increased bone density, and chronic disease prevention including cancer, type 2 diabetes mellitus, and heart disease. Physical activity provides an increase in energy and leads to a more productive life. It decreases stress, promotes social interaction, and extends independence with advancing age.

A 2003 aquatic study (6) compared water exercise with other forms of exercise and found swimmers had lower mortality rates than those who were sedentary, walkers, or runners. It also noted that swimming, water jogging, and aqua aerobics are lifetime physical activities that provide many health benefits comparable to those of walking and running. A recent report for Recreation Nova Scotia and Sport Nova Scotia entitled The Cost of Inactivity in Nova Scotia, chronicled the cost of physical inactivity including medical intervention and premature death. (7) Inactivity costs the Nova Scotia health system an estimated \$107 million in direct health care expenditures and costs the Nova Scotia economy an additional \$247 million each year in indirect productivity losses due to premature death and disability. The report provides support

that living a physically fit life extends the lifespan and allows for a healthier and fuller life. As summarized in the report, “regular physical activity also protects against obesity and assists weight control; fosters development of healthy muscles, bones, and joints; increases strength and endurance; improves behavioral development in children and adolescents, and helps maintain function and preserve independence in older adults.” Understanding the benefits of physical activity and the costs of physical inactivity, the Government of Nova Scotia has committed to healthy public policy through a variety of healthy living initiatives including those dedicated to developing a childhood obesity prevention strategy that focuses on healthy eating and physical activity for our youth, with the goal of a healthier and happier population, leading to a reduction in chronic illness.

Included in this program is the encouragement of youth access to a variety of physical activities and facilities including those associated with aquatics. Pool owners, operators, and recreational facility program developers should be supported and encouraged to promote the health benefits of aquatic activity. Equally important, swimming and other water activities are fun. Linking fun with long-term health benefits can only be a win.

(4)

(<https://novascotia.ca/dhw/environmental/documents/aquatic-guidelines/Nova-Scotia-Operational-Aquatic-Guidelines.pdf>)

(5)

(<http://www.doctorsns.com/en/home/issuesadvocacy/healthpromotion/physicalactivity.aspx> 5 PHAC))

(6)

(<http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/hp-ps/hl-mvs/pa-ap/02paap-eng.php> 6 Chase, Nancy L; Sui, Xuemei; Blair, Steven, Swimming and All-Cause Mortality Risk Compared with Running, Walking and Sedentary Habits’)

(7)

(<http://www.gpiatlantic.org/pdf/health/inactivity.pdf>)

The high cost of health care

As the report states inactivity costs the Nova Scotia health system an estimated \$107 million in direct health care expenditures and costs the Nova Scotia economy an additional \$247 million each year in indirect productivity losses due to premature death and disability.

An indoor pool would help the health outcomes of so many people in our community. This is Candi's story:

On November 7, 2014 I slipped in the mud while getting groceries out of my car. At the same time my right knee hyperextended resulting in 2 completely severed ligaments, 2 torn ligaments and a dislocated patella which stretched my peroneal nerve. When the patella was put back in place it trapped that stretched nerve causing a condition called Foot Drop which is essentially the inability to lift your foot in a normal manner while walking. I had surgery in June 2016 called a Tendon Transfer to give me a new way of lifting my foot and in June of 2019 I had knee surgery in which I had my ACL and PCL replaced with cadaver ligaments and a complete PLC (outside of knee) reconstruction.

In general, walking is the biggest difficulty I have. I will never walk correctly and pain free again. But if I had the ability to strengthen the muscles in that leg year-round it would make it easier. I try to exercise but I can't walk on uneven ground and I can't kneel or get down on the floor because I will not be able to get up again. My injuries have left me with numbness from knee to ankle and neuropathic pain with severe hypersensitivity so bad that it hurts to even wear a sock. I can't even drive myself to any medical appointments past Bridgewater because my leg cannot handle it. My husband has to miss work anytime either myself or my children have appointments in Halifax.

I will sadly have these issues for the rest of my life. At every specialist appointment I hear the same thing "Swim!" Swimming is the best exercise for someone like me whose joints in the injured leg can not withstand impact exercises or exercises that put strain on the joint which is still extremely unstable.

Having access to a year-round facility in which to swim would be immeasurably beneficial to my recovery! I am only 47 years old and I have a young child. I have missed out on so many things and she has missed being able to participate because Mommy can't do it. To hear your child cry saying she "misses old Mommy" is something I would not wish on anyone. Had I had access to a pool for physiotherapy over the last 4.5 years my recovery would be reaching its end instead of me still being in the middle of it due to not being able to do the one thing that is the best.



SECTION 8: FACILITY/COMMUNITY MEMBERS

Responsible supervisor

The Responsible Supervisor is an individual responsible for water treatment operations when the Qualified Operator is not on-site at the aquatic facility. This person shall

- have the authority to act in an emergency
- have the authority to close the venue when required
- be capable of testing the water quality levels as required and know how to make adjustments as needed to maintain water quality levels
- be knowledgeable regarding aquatic venue operation
- know how and when to contact the qualified operator

Contracted off-site qualified person

The Contracted off-site qualified person may replace an on-site qualified person for less complex pools, but a Responsible Supervisor shall be always available when the pool is operating.

An aquatic facility may have a contracted off-site qualified person instead of, or as well as, an on- site qualified person. The off-site individual shall meet the same criteria as the on-

site person. They would be expected to make routine visits, as outlined in the Aquatic Safety Plan, to the facility, be available for consultation, and provide a written report that would be available and retained on-site and provide supervision/technical direction and advice to the on-site Responsible Supervisor.

Staff training

Depending on the size, design, features, and intent of the aquatic facility, there may be one or many part-time and full-time staff members that play very specific and sometimes general roles in the functioning of the facility. Developing job descriptions for all staff that clearly outline expected duties and the required training and on-going training required to enable the staff member to perform his/her duties safely and effectively is an essential part of pool operation and shall be recorded in the Aquatic Safety Plan.

Training shall include, but not be limited to training in water safety, emergency procedures, first aid and CPR for appropriate pool-related staff.

- Not all staff working in a pool environment will necessarily be proficient swimmers.

Lifeguards, if available, will not always be available. Staff including maintenance and cleaning personnel may be at risk of water-related injuries. Formal training, practical simulations, and regular in-servicing on the Aquatic Safety Plan and how to respond to a drowning person in a safe manner, without endangering their own life or the lives of others, is recommended.

- Orientation of all new staff shall include Aquatic Safety Plan training, orientation to the facility, and, when appropriate:
 - facility communication plan
 - facility fire safety plan
 - facility occupational and safety plan and procedures
 - cleaning and disinfection of surfaces procedures
 - injury prevention program
 - violence in the workplace
 - other facility-specific requirements
- Appropriate certification and training may also include pool operator training
- Lifeguard/lifesaving
- Swimming and other class instruction
- Proper use of personal protective equipment
- Training in specialized first aid equipment use
- WHMIS
- Maintenance and electrical training
- Any other identified certification and training

Aquatic Safety Plan Development (8)

Rationale:

The intended purpose of an Aquatic Safety Plan is to protect the health of patrons and staff, and ensure the longevity of pool equipment. The goal is to develop pool-specific risk reduction/ prevention policies and procedures, and describe actions to protect the health and safety of patrons and workers. Clear written operational procedures including preventative equipment/facility maintenance and cleaning, and procedures required to ensure consistent, efficient, and effective response to emergency situations that may occur are essential in the Aquatic Safety Plan. All staff shall receive continual training in the Aquatic Safety Plan.

Aquatic Safety Plan

A designated team shall develop a comprehensive Aquatic Safety Plan document that is customized to the facility. Appendix 1 provides an example Table of Contents for an Aquatic Safety Plan and a Nova Scotia Aquatic Safety Plan template will be available. The designated team should include persons with aquatic venue risk assessment expertise, an experienced qualified pool operator, maintenance technicians, person(s)/organizations with lifeguard risk assessment expertise and any other essential pool staff.

Note: Investing in the development of a quality Aquatic Safety Plan is worthwhile and wise. Seeking the expertise of lifeguard facility planning and aquatic risk assessment specialists is recommended when developing or updating pool-specific policies and procedures.

(8)

(<https://novascotia.ca/dhw/environmental/documents/aquatic-guidelines/Nova-Scotia-Operational-Aquatic-Guidelines.pdf>)

SECTION 9: PROGRAMMING

A preventative health care approach

It is the recommendation of AWC that the aquatic facility meeting spaces focus somewhat on the whole health of the community with a focus on health issues within the community including diabetes workshops, smoking cessation, drug addiction and other health information sessions that can be created on a rotating guest speaker basis to focus on community needs. This could be offered on a weekly basis in the community room for free for participants and could be fully funded by grants.

Leisure swimming and swimming lessons

Leisure swimming and swimming lessons were identified as the top three aquatic priorities in the public engagement consultation. Providing a leisure pool will be needed. These types of facilities typically contain warmer bodies of water that better accommodate leisure swim, early years lessons, fitness and rehabilitation programs. Part of the leisure pool can also be designed to allow for separate programming e.g. lane swimming, lessons or aqua aerobics. It could also be designed to accommodate competitive swimmers for the need to warm up in competition.

The importance of learning to swim is important for any child or adult but it is highlighted in a province surrounded by water and whose residents primarily make their living on or near the water.

In addition to young children swimming lessons there should also be water safety courses for fishers in the community as well as the required courses needed to maintain their licenses.

Possible scenarios in instructional lessons can include but is not limited to swimming lessons, Red Cross lifesaving and lifeguarding classes, Coast Guard safety boating classes, kayaking lessons, fishing safety classes and water aerobics.

Competitive swimming

Sports tourism should be a large component of a new aquatic centre with partnerships with local schools and expectation of local and provincial swim competitions.

It is expected that if there were a suitable aquatic facility in the community the high schools throughout the county would develop competitive sports swim teams.

Swim Nova Scotia is always looking for places in the province to hold events for competitive swimming.

Athletes in other sports are now using swimming as an ideal form of cross training including traditional lap swimming and water exercises.

Local traditional water sports

There was a strong interest in holding log rolling competitions year-round if there was an aquatic facility in the community. A lumberjack festival with water competition features would be sure to draw sports tourism spectators and participants.

Dry fitness programming

There should be a fitness gym or physiotherapy gym at the aquatic centre. It would be ideal to secure a physiotherapy or Cross-fit like tenant that could help to cover the operating costs of the facility.

Water therapy

Swimming pools have become centers for physical and occupational therapy of various types to relieve discomfort or injury or disability. Aquatic therapy involves rehabilitation activities, usually performed in warm water and involving physical activity that includes exercise across a range of motion.

Participation in an aquatic therapy program offers some or all of the following:

- Overall health and fitness
- Range of motion
- Stretching and movement capabilities
- Muscular coordination
- Physical endurance

Aquatic therapy has been shown to be an effective way of producing revenue for aquatic facilities through partnerships with hospitals or physio or occupational therapists.

The space should be created for many community uses and could include a community space for non-swimmers including family members or spectators. This could include a space with an outdoors feel complete with market umbrellas, tables and a coffee bar.

SECTION 10: USER FEE SUGGESTIONS

User Definitions

User	Definition
Adult	Individual ages 19-59
Youth/Senior/Student	Ages 3 -18, 60 and over, or anyone who holds valid student ID when processing transaction (Children under the age of 3 are free with guardian admission)
Household	A household pass includes two (2) adults and all children 18 years of age and younger in one household

Fees (pre-tax)

Pass Type	Annual – 12 Month Paid in Full	Annual – Monthly Payment	3 Month	1 Month
Adult	\$559.13	\$53.60	\$206.96	\$75.65
Youth/Senior/Student	\$391.30	\$37.50	\$145.22	\$53.04
Household	\$850.43	\$81.50	\$335.65	\$120.00

Fees (pre-tax)

Day Pass	Per Visit	10-Punch Pass
Adult	\$7.83	\$70.43

Day Pass	Per Visit	10-Punch Pass
Youth/Senior/Student	\$5.22	\$49.57
Household	\$15.65	\$140.87

Aquatic Program Fees (pre-tax)

Course	Per Program
Parent Tot – Preschool 5	\$85.00
Swimmer 1 – 3	\$85.00
Swimmer 4 – 9	\$91.50
Adult Swim Lesson	\$95.00
Private	\$190.00
Semi-private (price per user)	\$137.50
Junior Lifeguard Club	\$58.50
Bronze Star	\$85.50
Bronze Medallion	\$140.00
Bronze Cross	\$125.00
National Lifeguard	\$270.25

Course	Per Program
Swim Instructor/or Lifesaving Instructor	\$200.00
Swim Fit	\$135.00
	(9)

*Suggested fees based on similar aquatic centre fees in Nova Scotia

(9)

(<https://www.easthants.ca/residents/aquatics/membership-rates-east-hants-aquatic-centre/>)

SECTION 11: OPERATING COSTS

Operating Costs

Comparing the operating costs of several indoor recreation facilities of similar size, the projected annual operating cost would be \$300,000 per year.

It is the recommendation of AWC that all five municipal units in Shelburne County would share the cost based on a per capita rate. An example of a shared municipal ownership of an indoor swimming recreation complex is the Pictou Wellness Centre. While the group had a difficult time staying within their operating budget for the first few years, they have now maintained a balanced budget after tweaking the usage of the centre. They found that lowering the total events at the centre brought down the annual operating costs.

SECTION 12: REVENUE

Revenue

According to Swim Nova Scotia, if the facility were to meet the standards for competition have a projected revenue of \$55,000 to \$60,000 per year in rental fees for competitions hosted by Swim Nova Scotia. In addition to this revenue there would be upwards of \$100,000 per year in rental fees for training and competitions hosted by a local swim team. If there was a suitable facility in the community it would be a natural fit for all local high and elementary schools to form swim teams and compete at a local and provincial level.

The Nova Scotia Community College teaches several boating and water safety courses. It would be a good partnership to hold some of these courses at the complex.

In a small community with limited resources it would be advised to form the aquatic facility to include spaces that will fill a need in programming for the community. For example, a drop-in centre for at risk or vulnerable youth could be included in one of the rooms where youth would have a safe space to meet with peers and be active. Funding for programming may be accessed by the Province, "A Place to Belong" grant, an annual funding support of \$20,000.

Operating costs could also be offset by leasing out a portion of the dry space for a physiotherapy or gym. It would be ideal to maintain a healthy community focus for the facility.

The meeting rooms could also be used to host other community programming with a focus on health and wellness, including addiction and mental health support groups.

There have been aquatic centres in the past utilizing this process including the Strathcona Gardens Recreation Centre. The project was funded through the federal government's gas tax innovation grant and municipal support and cost \$300,000 to install. The energy recovery loop channels waste energy from the ice rink's compressor room to heating the centre's pool.

The energy saved by this project was 11,000 to 13,000 gigajoules energy per year amounting to 561,000 and 663,000 kg of CO₂ reductions per year with a savings of \$50,000 to \$60,000 in heating costs per year.

SECTION 13: GRANTS AND FUNDING

FUNDING FROM OTHER LEVELS OF GOVERNMENT

There are two major forms of grants or other-government-level funding that can be used to fund municipal projects, including the aquatic facility. The first is an ongoing, more secure funding known generically as the “Gas Tax”. The Canadian Federal Government Gas Tax Program is designed to provide stable and predictable funding to build and revitalize municipal infrastructure. The second funding sources from other levels of government are more project-based or time sensitive.

GAS TAX PROGRAM

The following text is from the Infrastructure Canada website: “Funding is provided up front, twice-a-year, to provinces and territories, which in turn flow this funding to their municipalities to support local infrastructure priorities. Municipalities can pool, bank and borrow against this funding, providing significant financial flexibility. Initially the categories for which the gas tax could be used included public transit, wastewater infrastructure, drinking water, solid waste management, community energy systems, local roads and bridges and capacity building. As of April 1, 2014, communities are also able to use the renewed GTF towards highways, local and regional airports, short-line rail, short-sea shipping, disaster mitigation, broadband and connectivity, brownfield redevelopment, culture, tourism, sport and recreation.”

The Pictou Wellness Centre successfully used the gas tax to build their aquatic facility with the partnership of connecting municipalities.

GREEN MUNICIPAL FUND

The Federation of Canadian Municipalities manages the Green Municipal Fund designed to “...offer below-market loans, usually in combination with grants, to implement capital projects. Funding is provided for up to 80% of eligible project costs. The loan maximum is \$10 million, and the grant amount is set at up to 20% of the loan to a maximum of \$1 million.” With the incorporation of a thermal energy, solar and other green initiatives may help to obtain funding.

THE INNOVATIVE COMMUNITIES FUND (ICF)

The ICF is delivered through ACOA and designed to benefit the economic development of a community in a manner that is consistent with the challenges and objectives of that community. Projects must be sustainable, of a fixed duration and must demonstrate adequate managerial, financial and technical capability to conduct the proposed activity. Funded projects invest in initiatives that enhance a community's capacity to address economic challenges and build on local strengths and assets. Eligible recipients include non-commercial / not-for-profit organizations such as local development associations, municipalities and their agencies, business or technology institutes, industry/sector associations, economic development associations, local co-operatives, universities and educational institutions.

FUNDRAISING OPPORTUNITIES

Most if not all recreation infrastructure projects receive some benefit from community fundraising.

SECTION 14: FACILITY DEVELOPMENT TRENDS

FACILITY DEVELOPMENT TRENDS

Facilities as Community Hubs – Recreation facilities are community social and gathering spaces, often incorporating many non-recreation services including health services, libraries, cultural spaces, physiotherapy and gym or workout spaces. Contemporary facilities incorporate a variety of components to support a wide range of interests and age groups. It would be a valuable asset to incorporate programming to meet the needs of the community that are not met.

Sustainable Building Practices – when building new it is important to consider a green approach. There is a heightened awareness in everything “green” with significant implications for all aspects of service delivery including maintenance, programming, facility development and design. Community engagement in green projects and other environmental activities is becoming more common. Schoolyard plantings, parks clean-up days, and community gardening projects are examples of activities in support of this trend. Green development is also demonstrated in heat exchange technology in arenas and aquatic facilities as outlined briefly in this report.

Opportunities for use is expanded when users of recreation, library and cultural space, drop-in, and health and wellness activities are combined. Benefits include a potential for capital cost sharing and operating efficiencies, space sharing and cross- programming opportunities, and the increased convenience for users.

SECTION 15: RECREATION PARTICIPATION TRENDS

RECREATION PARTICIPATION TRENDS

Macro Trends for Recreation and Culture – A trend document prepared for the 2011 National Recreation Summit (10) noted the following macro trends:

1-Time available for leisure has not changed since the '80s when it was anticipated that Canadian Society would have more leisure time.

2- Expenditure on recreation and culture has increased.

3- Economic barriers to recreation and culture have increased.

4- Leisure behaviour is shifting to more informal, individual, self-directed activities.

5- Digital experiences and opportunities are having a significant impact on active leisure participation.

(10)

(http://www.community.gov.yk.ca/pdf/Framework_For_Recreation_In_Canada_EN.pdf)

Initiatives designed to increase healthy activity – These include provincial, national and local activity plans, active transportation plans, policies to increase healthy food and snack consumption, and the development of targets for health and wellness. This movement has led to significantly greater attention to the development of trails and walking infrastructure including indoor walking infrastructure and a general focus on overall wellness.

- General physical activities – The 2010 Canadian Community Health Survey (11) found that walking, jogging, gardening and yard work, home exercises, swimming, bicycling, and weight training were among the ten most popular physical activities for Canadian adults. Nearly 70% of surveyed Canadians reported walking during their leisure time.

- The trend towards increasing personal “wellness” has spurred growing participation in programs supporting holistic health such as yoga, Cross-fit, Pilates, and other mind/body centred activities. While private facilities have capitalized on this trend in the past, it is increasingly common for public recreation centres to offer these activities in facilities once used primarily for dance, aerobics, and general fitness.

- Aquatic Sports and Activities – typically appeal to a wide range of ages and ability levels. Recreational swimming continues to be one of the most popular leisure activities for all ages. As the population ages and older adults remain active well into their 80s and beyond, opportunities to participation in this mildly aerobic low impact activity will increase in demand. Instructional swimming programs continue to experience strong participation among children and competitive swimming has the opportunity to be strong.

(11)

(<https://gsg.uottawa.ca/data/open/rod/CCHS-82M0013-E-2010-AnnualComponent.pdf>)

Therapeutic swimming programs have also experienced growth as they continue to be recommended as a form of therapy for older adults and rehabilitation patients. Aquatic therapies often serve as a stepping-stone for patients to move onto land-based rehabilitation therapies.

Competitive diving and synchronized swimming have both been relatively stable over the past few years. Participation in these programs is limited by the availability of facilities and trained coaches, and typically enjoys success as a result of Canadian athletes in international competition.

- Sport Tourism – Facilities and services that support local recreational interests as well as sport tourism are increasingly popular. These initiatives raise a number of important considerations, including: the substantial investment, the actual benefits and the merits of sport tourism relative to other economic development strategies; scheduling priorities when community use competes with tournaments serving non-residents, the contribution of what are generally specialized facilities serving higher caliber athletes to physical activity and health objectives; and the relative priority of these facilities in municipal recreation systems where resources are typically in short supply.

SECTION 16-MANAGEMENT OPTIONS:

MANAGEMENT OPTIONS

There are three basic management models that communities adopt to operate multipurpose facilities including:

- 1) Direct operation by municipality
- 2) Operation by a non-profit incorporated group specific to the facility
- 3) Operation by a third party such as a YMCA
- 4) Operation by a for-profit business or organization.

Operation by a Non-Profit Specific to the Facility is used when two or more separate municipalities share equally in the development of a facility. This is the model currently used for the multipurpose facilities jointly owned by the Town of Truro and the Municipality of Colchester, and the Town of Bridgewater and Municipality of the District of Lunenburg, in Nova Scotia. The partner municipalities jointly own the asset and contribute to capital and operating costs including sharing the annual operating deficit, on a per capita basis.

Operation by a Third Party Such as YMCA - This model has been chosen by small municipalities without large operating recreation departments. The Wellness Centre in Pictou County, Nova Scotia is an example of operation of such a facility by the YMCA. There are numerous examples of YMCAs operating multipurpose recreation facilities on behalf of municipal units throughout Canada. In some cases, these facilities are typical YMCAs and in other cases they are public centres for which the YMCA is the operator and the municipalities the official owner.

Operation by a For-Profit Operator may be difficult to find the right operator who is willing to operate at a deficit or break-even financially.

Partnerships

It is essential that the benefits of collaborations be pursued widely, not just among current or potential partners, but also within the community. It is important for the prospective facility to have the support by all municipal units in Shelburne County as well as a strong community support.

Partnerships can accomplish tasks with limited resources, respond to urgent issues, encourage cooperative action and conflict resolution, and serve as an education and outreach tool:

- Sharing risk with an established governmental entity like the Municipality of Shelburne and the Municipality of Barrington which has operational standards and procedures in place and may be able to provide some human resources.
- Participating in a larger network of support and management that can enhance organizational capabilities.
- Enabling availability of staff facilitation for planning and operational efforts.
- Merging of resources to create a higher level of service, event production, and facility availability.
- Identifying alternative funding sources that can be available to improve utilization of facility amenities.
 - Delivering services efficiently through utilization of collaborative business solutions.

SECTION 17: PUBLIC CONSULTATION

We consulted the public through several methods over a four-month period in order to gain input from both the public and probable stakeholders for the potential of building an aquatic facility in Shelburne County.

Public Consultation

We held three public consultations throughout Shelburne County including one in Barrington, Shelburne and Lockport. The community was engaged at each of the sessions with around 50 attendees in total in addition to the committee members.

We discussed the role of the Sou'West Recreation Complex Advisory Committee and it's hopes to have an aquatic recreation facility in Shelburne County.

We also discussed with the attendees several features and programming ideas for a recreation facility including:

Physical Features

Pool, hot tub, walking track, meeting rooms, changing rooms, coffee or tuck shop, recreational basketball, multi-purpose with a stage and sound system, splash pad, accessible for all levels of ability, heated pools, slide, diving board, Olympic sized, swim lanes, skatepark, weight gym, washroom and shower facilities for pool but also for community access when wells run dry, energy cost saving designs

Location

Three potential locations were identified including Sherose Island next the arena in Barrington, Clyde River along the highway, in Shelburne either near the high school or the arena, or close proximity to the Barrington High School. It was discussed that gifted land would be a strong consideration in the location.

Needs of the Community

Services need to accommodate for the fishing industry including next generation of fishers and the courses needed to succeed including swimming lessons, water safety courses, small craft, first aid, lifeguard training, logrolling, aerobics, water aerobics, programming for seniors, rehabilitation programming, summer day camps for youth, addiction services, occupational, physio and recreation therapy, programming to support mental health, programming for at-risk youth, year-round access.

Resources

The community was engaged in all three communities to participate in fundraising toward an aquatic centre

Survey Results and Data- Attached is the results of an online survey that was conducted in Shelburne County beginning October 2019

SECTION 18: Conclusion of the feasibility study

While it can be a struggle to maintain a facility of this caliber for a small rural community the benefits can outweigh the risks with careful planning and a strong collaboration of the five municipal units, community, grants and partners.

In the past several years the county has faced a difficulty in attracting and retaining physicians to the area. While ultimately it is important to have physicians for all residents it is equally important to focus on preventative health approaches to stay a healthier community for longer.

Providing more services to the community may help to retain more families and professionals in the community which in turn would help develop the local economic development in the area.

The facility would need to be supported by each of the municipal units on a per capita basis as well as partnerships with businesses, community and annual operating grants.

In order to access these grants, it is suggested that the aquatic facility run at a capacity of more than a traditional pool and more so as a community hub or catch all of services needed in the community.

For example, there are few non-secular services for at-risk youth in the Barrington area, if a safe space with accessible programming were to be created at the aquatic facility an annual grant could be accessed.

It is also of our opinion that the space be built with future expansion opportunities of both indoor spaces as well as outdoor spaces as revenue is balanced or increased.

It is of our opinion that an aquatic facility should be built with the communities needs in mind.

REFERENCES

(1)

(https://www.swimming.ca/content/uploads/2019/09/NEW-FACILITY-RULES_final_20190916.pdf, n.d.)

(2)

(<https://www.ncaa.org/sites/default/files/Swimming%20and%20Diving%20Pool%20Diagram.pdf>)

(3)

(<https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/dp-pd/prof/details/page.cfm?Lang=E&Geo1=POPC&Code1=0754&Geo2=CD&Code2=1201&Data=Count&SearchText=Shelburne&SearchType=Begins&SearchPR=01&B1=All&TABID=1>)

(4)

(<https://novascotia.ca/dhw/environmental/documents/aquatic-guidelines/Nova-Scotia-Operational-Aquatic-Guidelines.pdf>)

(5)

((<http://www.doctorsns.com/en/home/issuesadvocacy/healthpromotion/physicalactivity.aspx> 5 PHAC))

(6)

(<http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/hp-ps/hl-mvs/pa-ap/02paap-eng.php> 6 Chase, Nancy L; Sui, Xuemei; Blair, Steven, Swimming and All-Cause Mortality Risk Compared with Running, Walking and Sedentary Habits")

(7)

(<http://www.gpiatlantic.org/pdf/health/inactivity.pdf>)

(8)

(<https://novascotia.ca/dhw/environmental/documents/aquatic-guidelines/Nova-Scotia-Operational-Aquatic-Guidelines.pdf>)

(9)

(<https://www.easthants.ca/residents/aquatics/membership-rates-east-hants-aquatic-centre/>)

(10)

(http://www.community.gov.yk.ca/pdf/Framework_For_Recreation_In_Canada_EN.pdf)

(11)

(<https://gsg.uottawa.ca/data/open/rod/CCHS-82M0013-E-2010-AnnualComponent.pdf>)