

## Lake Oswego Recreation Aquatic Center

### Amenity Priorities

**Introduction:** In the planning stages for an aquatic recreation center, it is not unusual to have concerns regarding the amenities that should be included in center as well as determining the appropriate size of these spaces. This is almost always driven by capital funding limits for the project. Below are listed some of the possible issues for the Lake Oswego Recreation Aquatic Center.

- What are the priorities for the project?
  - Aquatics?
  - General recreation use?
  - High operational cost recovery?
- What are the needs of the two partners in the project? The basic needs are outlined below.
  - *City* – Provide “dry side” amenities to allow for general recreation activities to be provided to the community. It has been difficult for the City to provide indoor based recreation programming over the years due to the lack of facilities that they own and can control the use. In addition, provide opportunities for community based aquatic programs and recreational swimming.
  - *School District* – Replace the existing Lake Oswego Pool and serving the needs of high school swimming and water polo teams as well as the supporting community aquatic organizations.
- The construction of a competitive pool is the top priority for the center and the size and configuration of this pool has been determined.
- The recreation/program pool options that are under 3,000 SF in water surface area are too small for the market and for the demand for this amenity.

**Possible Areas of Project Focus:** There are three possible areas of focus for the recreation aquatic center project that will have a bearing on the priorities of the spaces in the center.

#### OPTION #1, AQUATICS

- *Aquatics* – This focus is based on the premise that the primary purpose of the center is to meet the aquatic needs of the School District and the City.

Key Amenities:

- Competitive Pool – this amenity would remain as previously determined.

- Recreational/Program pool – the pool is increased to a water surface area of approximately 4,000 SF.
- Multipurpose Event Room – 1,300 SF (divisible into 2 equal spaces)

Pros:

- The center will serve a wide range of aquatic needs.
- The recreation/program pool is sized closer to the market potential.
- The “dry side” amenities could be added later as a later phase.

Cons:

- The center is solely an aquatic facility.
- The center has very poor cost recovery.
- The center does not meet the City’s indoor recreation needs and does not give recreation a permanent home.
- If the project is a one-time effort, then it will be very difficult to add additional amenities later.

**OPTION #2, RECREATION**

- *Recreation* – This option focuses on the need for the “dry side” amenities along with having the aquatic spaces.

Key Amenities:

- Competitive Pool – this amenity would remain as previously determined.
- Recreational/Program pool – the pool has the medium water surface area of approximately 3,000 SF.
- Dry side amenities include:
  - Gymnasium – 7,250 SF
  - Group Exercise Room – 1,300 SF
  - Fitness/Weight-cardio – 3,300 SF
  - Multipurpose Event Room – 1,300 SF (divisible into 2 equal spaces)
  - Multipurpose Room (2-in the old Golf Clubhouse) – Approx., 2,000 SF (divisible into two spaces)

Pros:

- Serves a broader range of recreation needs for the community.
- Brings more users to the facility.
- Has a higher level of cost recovery.
- Active and passive recreation uses are accommodated.

Cons:

- The recreation/program pool is undersized for the market.
- Moves away from the focus on aquatic needs.

### OPTION #3, COST RECOVERY

- *Cost Recovery* – The focus of this option is on having a high level of cost recovery to minimize the annual operational subsidy that is required for the facility. This requires a strong focus on the fitness amenities in the center.

#### Key Amenities:

- Competitive Pool – this amenity would remain as previously determined.
- Recreational/Program pool – the pool has the smaller water surface area of approximately 2,600 SF.
- Dry side amenities include:
  - Gymnasium – 7,250 SF
  - Group Exercise Room- larger room that is 1,800 SF.
  - Exercise Studio – a room of approximately 900 SF is added.
  - Fitness/Weight-cardio – 4,600 SF
  - Multipurpose Event Room – 1,300 SF (divisible into 2 equal spaces)
  - Multipurpose Room (2-in the old Golf Clubhouse) – this space is eliminated.

#### Pros:

- Higher focus on fitness activities.
- Highest cost recovery rate.
- Promotes health and wellness.

#### Cons:

- The recreation/program pool is significantly undersized for the market.
- There is a lack of multipurpose space to support more passive and classroom-based activities. Rental opportunities are reduced significantly.
- Will require continued use of other community space for some dry side recreation programs.

**Project Recommendation:** It is the recommendation of Ballard\*King & Associates that option 2 – *Recreation* be the focus of the center for the following reasons:

- More than any other option this is about having balance in the facility with amenities that serve the aquatic, fitness, active recreation, and passive recreation needs of the community in a cost-effective manner.
- This option meets the City’s parks and recreation needs and gives them a permanent home for their operation.
- The option has a reasonable cost recovery level.
- This recognizes that this likely a one-time effort to build an aquatic recreation center and future phases will be difficult.

- That the capital funding level for this option will likely need to be increased beyond the current level.
- The recreation pool at approximately 3,000 SF is great as a program pool but still somewhat undersized for recreation swimming. This can be dealt with by running “sessions” for recreational swimming where every two hours the pool is emptied of patrons and new ones are admitted, this is a common practice in many community recreation centers.

**Other:** These are other considerations for the project.

- It is estimated that up to 90% of public recreation/aquatic center projects are constrained by capital budget limitations that result in the facility not adequately serving all of the identified recreation needs in a community.
- If overall building square footage is going to be or increased in certain areas, it is important to realize that every square foot of aquatic space is the equivalent of 2 to 3 square feet of dry space in cost.
- It is important that the center is built with functional and durable materials that will require a low level of maintenance. Cutting quality is not recommended as a way to reduce cost.
- If the capital budget limits requires that the size of the center has to be reduced, do not attempt to keep all of the spaces by reducing the size or quality of each space. It is better to reduce the number of amenities and do the ones remaining right.
- The most consistently undersized program spaces in most public recreation centers include:
  - Weight cardio space
  - Recreation pool
  - Group exercise space
- It is nearly impossible to expand the size of the recreation/program pool at a later date.
- Flexible and multi-use space is important to adapt with the changes in recreation programming needs as well as meet a large cross-section of community needs in a single space.
- Communities are often renovating their first center phase before they are adding a second phase. So, phasing a project is not always practical.

- The recreation/program pool can serve each aquatic program needs (learn to swim, aqua fitness) and recreational lap swimming while still being suitable for recreational activities. The use of inflatables in the competitive pool during certain recreational swimming times will help to alleviate some of the anticipated overcrowding in the recreation/program pool.
- Below is a table that lists the relative size of proposed spaces in the center and a designation of what is considered small, medium, and large as currently seen nationally with public recreation centers.

| <b>Amenity</b>                 | <b>Proposed</b> | <b>Small</b>   | <b>Medium</b>   | <b>Large</b>   |
|--------------------------------|-----------------|----------------|-----------------|----------------|
| Recreation Pools <sup>1</sup>  | 2,600-3,300 SF  | Under 3,000 SF | 3,000-5,000 SF  | 5,000 SF & up  |
| Weight/Cardio Sp.              | 3,200-4,000 SF  | Under 3,000 SF | 3,000-6,000 SF  | 6,000 SF & up  |
| Group Ex. Rm.                  | 1,200-1,300 SF  | 1,500 SF       | 2,000 SF        | 2,500 SF       |
| Group Ex. Studio               | N/A             | 900 SF         | 1,000 SF        | 1,200 SF       |
| Gymnasium                      | 7,250 SF        | Under 8,500 SF | 8,500-12,000 SF | 12,000 SF & up |
| Multi-Purp. Rm. <sup>2</sup>   | 2,160 SF        | Under 2,000 SF | 2,000-3,000 SF  | 3,000 SF & up  |
| Multi-Purp. Event <sup>3</sup> | 800-1,300 SF    | 800 SF         | 1,200 SF        | 1,600 SF       |

The proposed spaces in the Lake Oswego Recreation - Aquatic Center are all either small or medium sized amenities.

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<sup>1</sup> Refers to the water surface area only.

<sup>2</sup> Total space that is usually divisible to two or three smaller rooms.

<sup>3</sup> Total space that is usually divisible to two smaller rooms to serve small meetings and aquatic based parties.