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# CITY OF KELOWNA

## MEMORANDUM

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**Date:** December 17, 2003  
**File No.:** 6240-20  
**To:** City Manager  
**From:** Manager of Recreation Services  
**Subject:** Future Aquatic Facility – Survey Results

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### **RECOMMENDATION:**

THAT the City of Kelowna continue with the Future Aquatic Facility project for Mission Recreation Park with the target completion date in 2007;

AND THAT Council direct staff to develop a new conceptual design for the facility to include a 50 metre main pool and a significant leisure waterpark area, based on prototype 4 as described in the Future Aquatic Facility Preliminary Investigation Report presented to Council on June 10, 2003;

AND THAT staff report to Council in the winter of 2004 on the most effective approach to the development process, which will include the full design and construction of this project;

AND THAT the Council direct staff to investigate strategies to reduce the capital cost and net operating cost so that the tax impact is not greater than 4%;

AND THAT staff establish an input process to include periodic presentations, open house sessions and workshops for stakeholders and the public;

AND THAT Council consider \$400,000 from general taxation or the Major Facilities Reserve for the costs associated with the preparation of the new conceptual design in the 2004 budget;

AND THAT staff report to Council in the fall of 2004 with a recommended approach to the required borrowing and the public approval process, once the conceptual design, capital cost, operating cost and tax impact are finally determined;

AND FURTHER THAT staff report progress on the conceptual design and input process to the Parks and Facilities Committee on a regular basis.

### **Background:**

In June 2003, City Council approved "in principle" a major leisure aquatic facility to be constructed at the Mission Recreation Park site with a target completion date in 2007.

Council also directed staff to conduct a public consultation and input process to include a statistically valid survey, as well as a series of presentations at a shopping mall and public facilities, utilizing the *Future Aquatic Facility Preliminary Investigation Report*, which described 4 design prototypes, including many standard features and options.

Staff are pleased to report that the survey, mall display and public open house sessions are now concluded. All results have been analyzed and a statistical report is now completed.

### **Discussion:**

A computer disc survey was distributed randomly to 2,500 Kelowna residents. A total of 633 responses were returned, generating a response rate of 26%. The City can have confidence in this survey, as the results are valid within (+) or (-) 3.12%, and have a reliability of producing the same results 19 times out of 20.

Some key results of the formal survey are:

1. Need for a new Aquatic Facility - There is a strong need for a new aquatic facility with a combined 85% of respondents indicating either a moderate (40%) or high need (45%) for a new aquatic centre.
2. Most preferred prototype - Prototype 4 received the highest percentage of respondents, where 38% clearly preferred the facility with the larger leisure area and the larger 50 metre main pool.
3. Most preferred design options – when asked the preferred option for the leisure area, 65% of respondents favored the larger leisure area, and when asked the preferred option for the main pool, 65% favored the 50 metre main pool, both of which are in prototype 4.
4. Prototype with the most attraction - More respondents indicated they and their visitors would prefer to use prototype 4 if this facility were available today.
5. Second most preferred prototype - The choice for the second most suitable prototype is more ambiguous;
  - a. From the question on the *second* most suitable prototype, more people or 34%, indicated prototype 3,
  - b. 45% of respondents preferred the larger 50 metre main pool, whereas 38% of respondents preferred the larger leisure area,  
By comparison;
  - c. 65% prefer the larger leisure area, which is both in prototype 4 and 2, and
  - d. More people indicated that they would use prototype 4 and prototype 2, each of which has the larger leisure area.

Note: The conclusion of staff is that more people will use the new facility if it has the larger leisure area, but people also recognize that this is the best opportunity for Kelowna to acquire the 50 metre pool.

6. Willingness to pay higher admission fees - 49% of respondents indicated a willingness to pay higher admission fees for a facility with the larger design options. The responses progressively increased for higher fees related to the larger prototypes. Prototype 4 received the largest support for willingness to pay high admission fees.
7. Potential tourism impact - More than 50% of respondents believe that tourists would attend a new aquatic facility at least occasionally, indicating there would be a positive impact on recreation tourism.

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8. Willingness to support a tax increase - There is a willingness to support significant tax increases in order to acquire a major aquatic facility as evidenced by 64% of respondents supporting at least a 4% tax increase.
  9. Preferred public process - A referendum method for the public approval process was preferred by 53% of respondents, 19% preferred a counter petition process, and 28% were either uncertain, or did not support any financial borrowing for this project.

Twenty cross-tabulations were generated to check for accuracy and determine any unique results. Throughout all the cross-tabulations, there was no significant bias detected. Some of the keys cross-tabulation examples are:

10. Own or Rent your home - There was roughly equal agreement on the 'moderate to high' need for a new aquatic facility from both home owners and home renters.
11. Time as a Kelowna Resident – over 82% of respondents agreed on the 'moderate to high' need for a new aquatic facility, whether they lived in Kelowna for 1 or more than 20 years.
12. City Area lived in – the combined 'moderate to high' support for a new aquatic facility from all sectors of Kelowna is;

Mission and SE Kelowna areas	95%
Central Kelowna	85%
Dilworth/Glenmore/Clifton/McKinley Areas	85%
Rutland/Black Mtn./Ellison	74%
Average	85%

13. Age of respondents – the combined moderate to high support for a new aquatic facility was very consistent from all 7 age groups, with a range from 81% to 89%.
14. Willingness to pay higher fees for the larger design options – Of those who indicated they would be willing to pay higher fees for the larger design options, 95% also indicated there is a moderate to high need for a new aquatic centre. Of those who indicated they are not willing to pay higher admission fees, 75% indicated there is still a moderate to high need for a new aquatic centre.

In addition, citizens attending any presentation or an open house were also invited to complete the survey. There were 191 informal surveys submitted and the results are substantially the same as the results from the formal CD survey. There was very strong support for the larger design options, willingness to pay higher fees, and willingness to pay a greater tax increase in order to achieve a new aquatic centre.

**Summary:**

As the City moves forward to finalize one conceptual design, staff is now able to focus on a number of strategies and explore opportunities to reduce both the capital and operating costs including;

- Energy conservation through new technology,
- Federal and/or provincial grants,
- Partnerships,
- Different terms for borrowing,
- Community bonds,
- Modify some design features such as the outdoor waterpark component, and
- Reallocation of 'pay-as-you-go' capital program funding in annual budget and 10 year capital plan.

Once the budget for 2004 is approved, staff will report back to Council early in 2004, on the best development process for this project.

Also, once the conceptual design, capital cost, net operating cost and tax impact are finally determined, staff will report back to Council in the fall of 2004, with a recommended approach to the required borrowing and the public approval process.

The Parks and Facilities Committee and the Mission Recreation Park Development Committee have reviewed this report, and a resolution in support of these recommendations has been approved by the Parks and Facilities Committee.

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JWR Oddleifson  
Manager of Recreation Services

P/c     Director of Parks and Leisure Services  
           Director of Financial Services

Attachment