

**PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT REPORT**

**THE FUTURE  
NEW WEST AQUATICS &  
COMMUNITY CENTRE**



**City of New Westminster  
Canada Games Pool &  
Centennial Community Centre  
Renewal Project**

June 1, 2018  
Prepared by HCMA Architecture + Design

  
NEW WESTMINSTER



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AQUATICS &  
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CENTRE**

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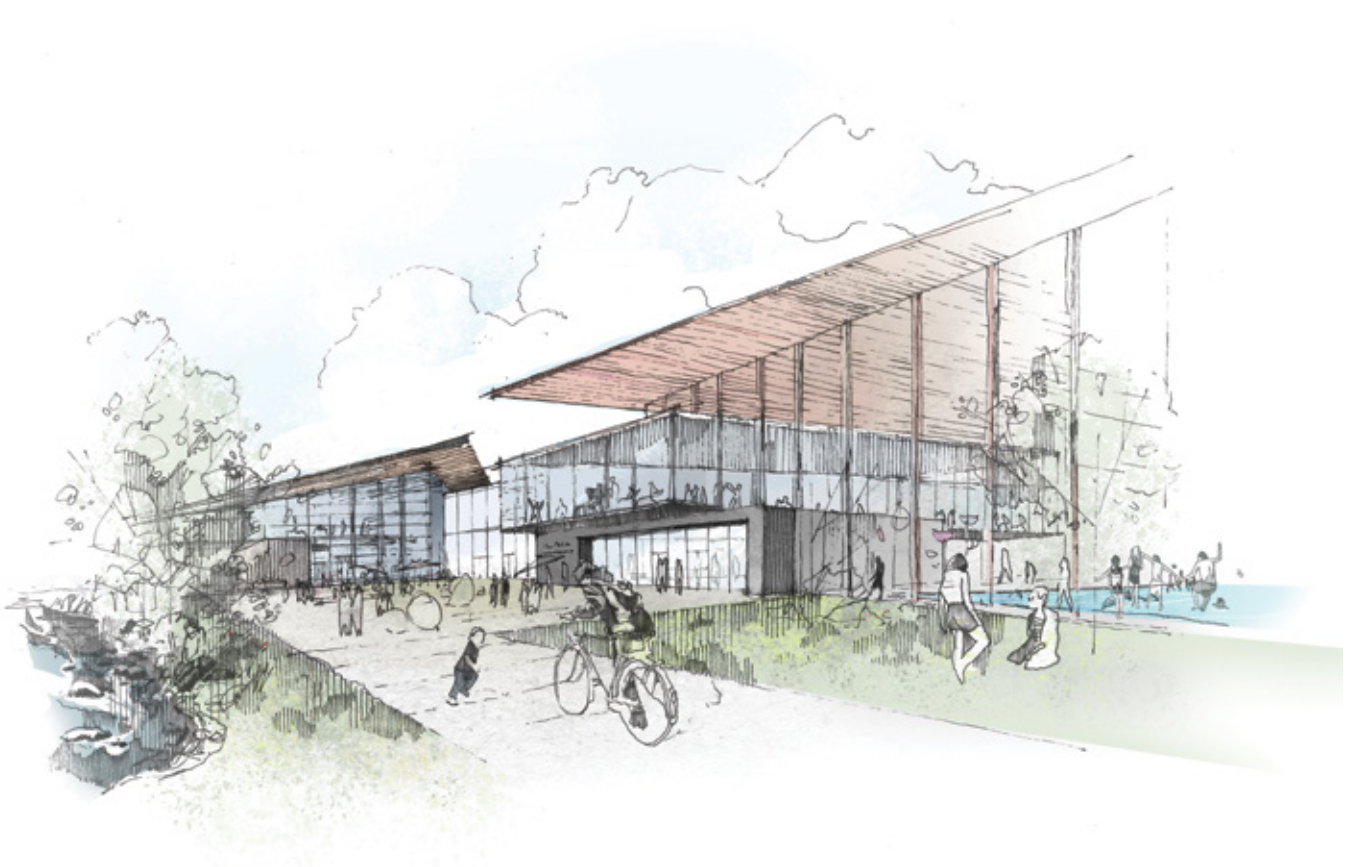
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# 1

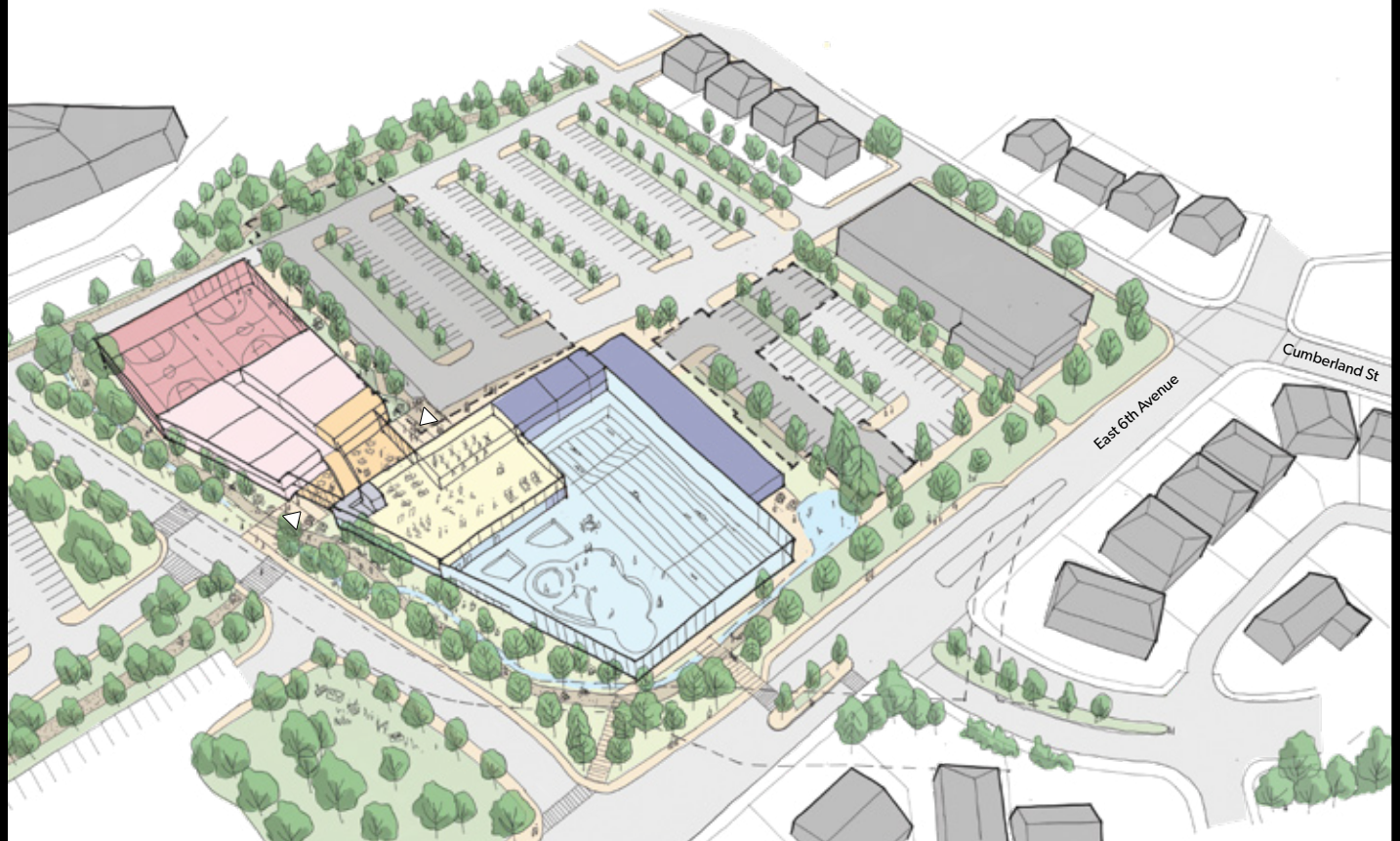
## Introduction

This report summarizes the 2018 Community and Stakeholder engagement process that was conducted by the City of New Westminster between January – April 2018 following the initial 2016 public engagement and the 2017 feasibility study for a future New Westminster aquatic and community facility. The recent engagement included a wide range of strategies for collecting community input including an online platform as well as specific stakeholder meetings and pop-up event opportunities.



**Above:**  
Conceptual artist rendering  
of future facility

# PROPOSED FACILITY CONFIGURATION

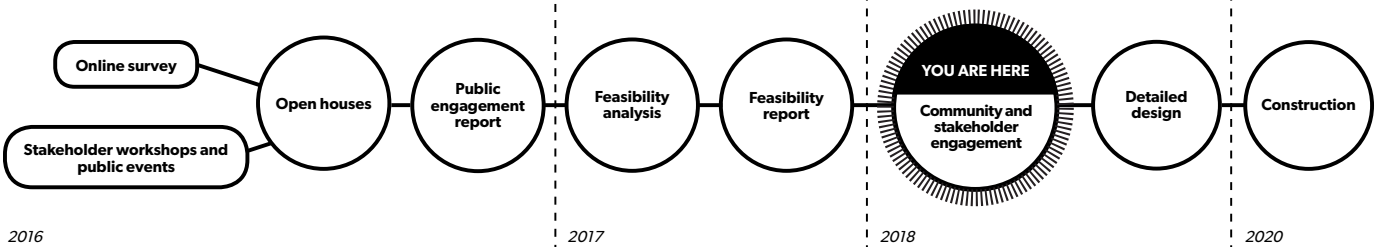


## LEGEND

- Aquatics
- Welcome Centre
- Community Centre - gymnasium
- Fitness Centre
- Community Centre - multi-purpose
- Aquatic change
- Aquatic support spaces and mechanical
- △ Entry
- - Sewer easement
- Existing buildings



# PROJECT TIMELINE



# 2

## Engagement Objectives and Methodology

### Objectives

Following completion of the feasibility study, City of New Westminster engaged HCMA to complete an additional round of engagement to confirm and validate the results of the report. Specifically, the engagement aimed to:

- Update the community on the process and decisions made to date
- Check-in with the community about the feasibility study and recommended option
- Explore trade-offs and how the community's values will be reflected in the facility and programming
- Provide the community with information and check-in expectations about costs

### Methodology

Strategy and scope: The engagement was approached in three phases.

#### **Phase 1: Education and Awareness Campaign (January – March 2018)**

Create awareness about the outcomes of the feasibility study through the distribution of information about the project in multiple written and visual formats.

- Information brochure
- Hand-rendered sketch of the proposed facility
- Social media content
- Video
- Project microsite

#### **Phase 2: Public Engagement (February – March 2018)**

Provide multiple ways for the community to discuss and provide feedback on the outcomes of the feasibility study including online and in-person methods.

- Online survey
- Stakeholder group meetings
- Public meeting
- Pop-up engagement events

#### **Phase 3: Report to City of New Westminster Council (April – May 2018)**

Provide an easy to understand summary of activities and input received during Phases 1 and 2 and ensure the community's input is tracked and communicated back to stakeholders.

- Analyze and summarize results of survey, pop-up engagement events, and stakeholder and public meetings into presentation and report formats





# 3

## Engagement Results

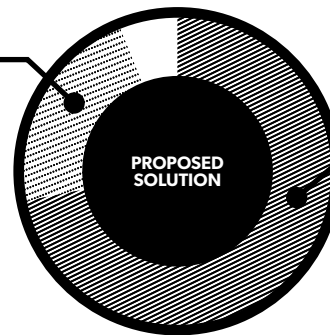
### Online Survey

A study was conducted from February to April 2018, as a freely accessible online survey as well as printed copies at numerous community and stakeholder engagement events. The survey received 968 responses.

The survey results are provided below. In summary:

**22%**

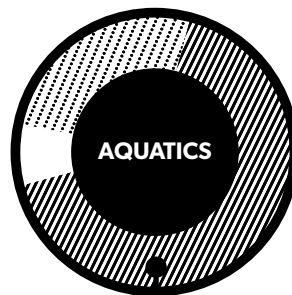
The proposed solution **does not accurately reflect the overall needs and priorities** of New Westminster



**72%**

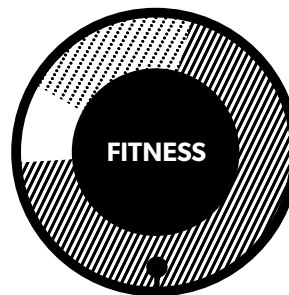
of respondents believe the proposed solution **accurately reflects the overall needs and priorities** of New Westminster

**To what extent does the proposed overall solution accurately reflect the AQUATICS, FITNESS AND COMMUNITY CENTRE needs and priorities of New Westminster?**



**67%**

of respondents believe the proposed solution accurately reflects the specific **aquatic** needs and priorities



**67%**

of respondents believe the proposed solution accurately reflects the specific **fitness** needs and priorities



**66%**

of respondents believe the proposed solution accurately reflects the specific **community centre** needs and priorities

**26%** believe it does not 

**25%** believe it does not 

**26%** believe it does not 

\*unweighted survey data

In addition to quantitative questions related to the proposed project, the survey collected data on specific characteristics of the respondents including age, gender, region within the city and ethnicity, which allowed for weighting. Collected data was weighted according to the latest Statistics Canada census information for age, gender and region in New Westminister, to ensure that the dataset was representative of the city’s entire population. The analysis of the results was conducted by Research Co., a Vancouver-based firm with over 15 years’ experience in data collection and analysis.

**To what extent does the proposed overall solution accurately reflect the needs and priorities of New Westminister?**

	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b> (Statistics Canada weighting applied)
Does accurately reflect (very accurate; somewhat accurate)	<b>72</b>	<b>77</b>
Does not accurately reflect (not accurate; not quite accurate)	<b>22</b>	<b>17</b>

**To what extent does the proposed overall solution accurately reflect the AQUATICS, FITNESS AND COMMUNITY CENTRE needs and priorities of New Westminister?**

	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b> (Statistics Canada weighting applied)
<b>AQUATICS</b>		
Does accurately reflect (very accurate; somewhat accurate)	<b>67</b>	<b>71</b>
Does not accurately reflect (not accurate; not quite accurate)	<b>26</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>FITNESS</b>		
Does accurately reflect (very accurate; somewhat accurate)	<b>67</b>	<b>70</b>
Does not accurately reflect (not accurate; not quite accurate)	<b>25</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>COMMUNITY CENTRE</b>		
Does accurately reflect (very accurate; somewhat accurate)	<b>66</b>	<b>69</b>
Does not accurately reflect (not accurate; not quite accurate)	<b>26</b>	<b>21</b>

In response to the question of whether there was anything missing, a total of 652 respondents provided a comment. The most common topics included parking, weight facilities, water slide, costs, child care/minding and diving.



**Parking:** The most common idea expressed about parking was to reduce the amount of surface parking (27 respondents), with most of those who wanted to reduce surface parking suggesting underground parking instead (20 respondents). Where reasons were noted, increasing green and/or recreation space (12), maintaining the recycling depot (5) and housing (3) were the most common reasons. A fair number of respondents (15) suggested it was important to ensure the design incorporated sufficient parking. Three respondents mentioned bicycle parking.



**Weight facilities:** Of the 43 comments regarding weight training facilities, most of the respondents suggested maintaining or expanding the free weight and dead weight lifting areas, including ensuring a suitable location (e.g., ground floor), ideally separated from fitness weight users, and including sound-proofing considerations. Nine respondents indicated an interest in fitness weight machines. Other comments included temperature control in the weight area, and considerations for smaller/slighter users.



**Water slide:** There were 32 respondents that mentioned slides, with 30 of those suggesting that the design should include a water slide. The remaining two comments were neutral.



**Costs:** Of the 30 responses related to costs, 22 comments indicated concerns that the capital and/or operating costs were too high. Ten respondents who thought costs were too high suggested ways to reduce/offset costs including inclusion of residential, repairing rather than rebuilding, charging for sports field use or parking, reducing the features of the design or partnering with a commercial fitness club. Three respondents suggested that the funds could be better spent on other community priorities. Four respondents commented that recreation user fees were too high. Three comments indicated an interest in more information on costing and funding.



**Child care/minding:** Nearly all the 22 comments noted were in favour of both childcare and childminding, with a few people noting they did not use the services but were neutral about them. The need for affordable day care was the most commonly expressed sentiment.



**Diving:** Most respondents (18) that mention diving reference high diving or note specific board heights (5m, 10m, 20m). A smaller number of respondents (6) questioned whether diving boards were included in the design.

Other common topics noted included: arts spaces; café/seating/viewing area; lazy river and leisure pool; addition of housing; and, disaster preparedness.

Many responses to the open-ended questions appear exactly word for word in the results, indicating coordinated responses by one or more groups. These phrases include:

***“The present Aquatic Center proposal does not reflect the needs of the present and future users of the facility...”***  
*appeared 93 times or 14% of all verbatim responses*

***“...the Hyack Swim Club can host a swim meet while the facility can remain open to the public...”***  
*appeared 33 times or 5% of all verbatim responses*

Research Co. also reviewed an online petition (<https://www.ipetitions.com/petition/decision-2018-canada-games-pool>) circulated during May 2018, that at the time of writing included 915 signatures. The analysis indicated it is not possible to determine if signatories are residents of the City of New Westminster, or how many are affiliated to existing swim clubs.

The full analysis of the results from Research Co. is provided as an appendix on page 21.

## Stakeholder events

Between January and April, 2018 14 stakeholder events were hosted by the City of New Westminster to engage members of various community organizations and committees. Below is a summary of the events and feedback received from each group at the time of the event.

Stakeholder groups consulted during this phase were generally in support of the project and provided a wide range of feedback that represents their interests in the project. Many comments pertain to design details that would typically be resolved in the next stages of the project.

<b>1</b>	Parks and Recreation Committee	January 31, 2018
<b>2</b>	Youth Advisory Committee	February 22, 2018
<b>3</b>	Multicultural Advisory Committee	February 28, 2018
<b>4</b>	Glenbrook GSA (students and teachers)	March 6, 2018
<b>5</b>	Community and Social Issues Committee	March 6, 2018
<b>6</b>	Seniors Advisory Committee	March 8, 2018
<b>7</b>	Royal City Curling Club	March 15, 2018
<b>8</b>	Justice Institute of BC	April 6, 2018
<b>9</b>	City Staff	April 10, 2018
<b>10</b>	Hyack Swim Club	April 10, 2018
<b>11</b>	CNW Healthy Community Committee	April 20, 2018
<b>12</b>	Access Ability Advisory Committee	April 12, 2018
<b>13</b>	Fire Services	April 18, 2018
<b>14</b>	Westminster Judo Club and Judo BC	April 18, 2018

**Parks and Recreation Committee** gave the proposal a high rating for the Community and Social component as well as Fitness component and a low score for the Aquatic component. The group noted that they saw the proposed 50m pool tank as not maximizing the opportunity for competitive development which could be remedied by going to a 10-lane pool and providing adequate deck area for spectator seating. Various questions and comments related to future programming and design details should be referenced in future detailed design stages of the project.

**The Youth Advisory Committee** provided positive feedback and specific suggestions including a recommendation that the pool include a water slide and taller diving board/tower as well as multiple hot tubs which can be dedicated to adult or family users during peak times. The committee provided feedback on accessibility of the Fitness area and proposed additional space be dedicated to ping pong and also highlighted healthy food options and car share parking provisions as important items. The committee felt that a wellness centre including massage therapy, physiotherapy and counseling was missing from the proposed program and that a large community kitchen would be well used in the future facility.

**The Multicultural Advisory Committee** requested that a strategy for women's only swimming be developed in the new facility. The project was seen as an opportunity to be a hub for multiculturalism that provides safety for seniors and children alike.

**The Glenbrook GSA** provided positive recommendations on the universal and LGBTQ safe strategies and programming that should be considered for the design of the facility. Outdoor space, "Everybody" swims and a brighter day lit facility were also highlighted by the group as important elements to the new facility.

**The Community and Social Issues Committee** supported the project and made several recommendations of how cultural sensitivities could be accommodated within the new facility including women's only swims, language sensitivity, and pool accessibility. The group also highlighted an accessible community kitchen and an interest in ensuring the future café/cafeteria be operated by the City.

**The Seniors Advisory Committee** provided comments on accessing the pool with dignity and warmer water temperatures as well as potential programming and dedicated seniors' swim times. The group questioned the emphasis on a 50m competitive pool and noted that ideally one pool could accommodate everybody. The group was receptive to the idea of a moveable floor and were interested in flexible and adaptable outdoors space to accommodate programming like pickleball. Interest in women's only swim and an active community living space (lobby) was expressed.

**The Royal City Curling Club** expressed that their only concern with the project is how it may affect the cement floor of the club which is of significant value. An engineering study would need to be conducted prior to construction to ensure that the club is protected.

**The Justice Institute of BC** Director of Facilities, VP and Manager of Facilities were supportive of the overall basic design and interested in discussing potential use of the facility further. The group was interested in looking at parking options

and participating in the transportation study that would be conducted in the next stage of the project.

**City Staff** had many questions about the project and provided a wide range of comments on future details of the building including future programming, program areas, bodies of water, acoustic conditions, and operating temperatures. The notes taken on each topic as well as future meetings with City Staff should be conducted when the project moves into detailed design.

**The Hyack Swim Club** agreed that the proposed Community Centre component meets the needs of the community but felt the Aquatic Centre component would not meet future needs given anticipated population growth. The Hyack Swim Club provided a summary report of its recommendations for the facility to ensure it can continue to host provincial and national swimming events. These recommendations include: 10-lane 50m tank, 25m warm down/up tank, training room, officials' meeting room, bleachers for athletes, parents/public, electronic score board, and data cabling and power infrastructure.

**The CNW Healthy Community Committee's** comments included reducing number of parking stalls in favour of car share programs, seeking a local social enterprise to run facility food/café service rather than a corporate group, development of the proposal's connectivity to surrounding neighbourhoods, accessibility and pool operating temperature, and the replacement of Arenex programming within the new facility.

**The Access Ability Advisory Committee** provided feedback on the proposal with regard to practicality of universal design standards and noted that alternate methods of moving between different levels of the facility could be explored as an equalizing strategy. The group noted emergency exit areas and dedicated indoor/outdoor waiting areas should be integrated to help prioritize those with mobility problems. It was discussed to look to best practices in accessibility rather than code requirements.

**Fire Services** noted their current concerns being space for storage, space to host their annual charitable events, and loss of parking.

**Westminster Judo and Judo BC** noted that they are actively seeking a permanent training centre with a goal to grow from 30-50 to 150-300 members. The group provided a range of criteria for a space that would suit their needs, which should be referenced in the future if this program is to be included.

## Public meeting and pop-up engagement events

The City of New Westminster hosted a series of pop-up engagement events to invite feedback from a wide range of community members. These events included information boards where City staff answer questions and encourage visitors to complete a survey. Pop-Up events were held at “Easter in the Park” at Queens Park, Centennial Community Centre, Canada Games Pool and Queensborough Community Centre. Anecdotal feedback from these sessions generally supported the results of the survey, with many residents expressing enthusiasm and excitement for the project to move ahead.



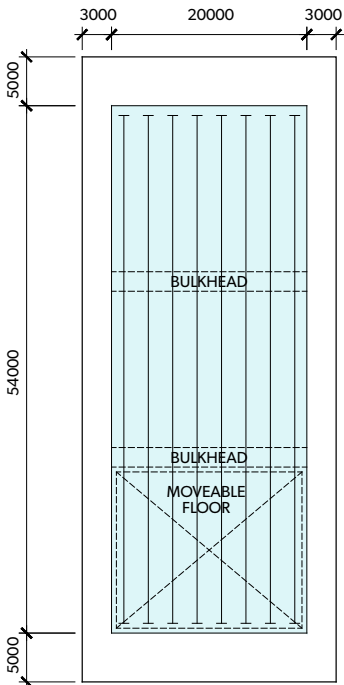
**Right:**  
Easter in the park

## Correspondence

In addition to the 968 survey responses, CNW received 28 emails from residents and users of the current facilities. Almost all (24 of 28) correspondents identified themselves as members of the Hyack Swim Club, outlining their interest in the facility remaining suitable for competitive swimming. Their comments primarily centered around maintaining the sporting legacy and their support of local businesses because of frequent attendance at the current facility. Other emails, while indicating general support for the proposed design, noted a desire to retain the current recycling depot, the inclusion of a café, and a suggestion that the parking in the current proposal takes up too much of the site.

## BASE CONDITION

54m x 8 Lane Pool with community focused deck space



### PROS

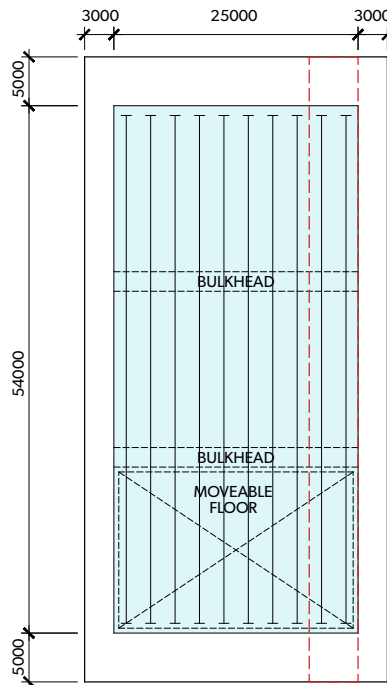
- Represents status quo for swim competition and training use
- Represents change to current private club utilization
- Provides 50m with least operating costs

### CONS

- Requires change in Hyack usage
- No improvement to current limitations to host competitions

## OPTION 1

54m x 10 Lane Pool



### PROS

- Provides more versatility for use of 50m tank during day to day use
- Increases programming capacity

### CONS

- Increased capital and operating costs
- Increased energy consumption and GHG's
- Some current competition limitations still exist

### CAPITAL COST

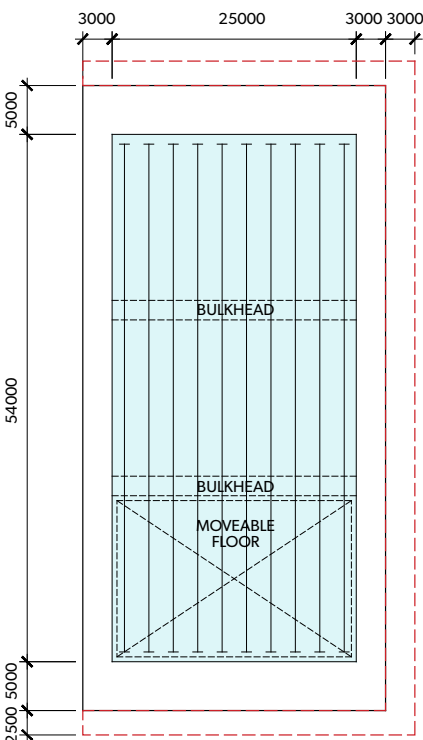
+\$4.0M - 5.8M

### OPERATING COST

+\$200,000 annually

## OPTION 2

54m x 10 Lane Pool \*Extra deck  
Additional deck space



### PROS

- Increased deck space better facilitates local and regional competitions

### CONS

- Increased operational and capital costs
- Increased energy consumption and GHG's
- Limited uses for additional deck space for non-competitive uses
- Little benefit to facility business case

### CAPITAL COST

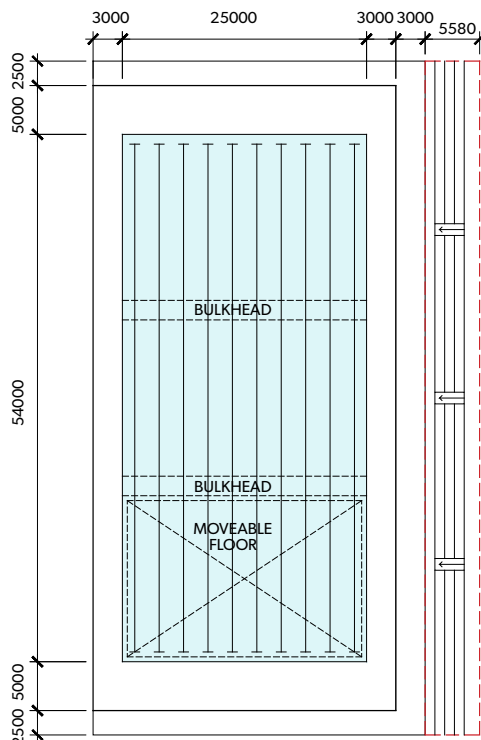
+\$3.0M - 4.8M

### OPERATING COST

+\$50,000 annually

## OPTION 3

54M x 10 Lane Pool  
Extra deck + Spectator seating (1100 seats)



### PROS

- Spectator seating better supports local and regional competitions

### CONS

- Increased operational and capital costs
- Increased energy consumption and GHG's
- Limited uses for additional deck space for non-competitive uses
- Little benefit to facility business case

### CAPITAL COST

+\$3.0M - 4.4M

### OPERATING COST

+\$50,000 annually

**TOTAL CAPITAL COST (OPTIONS 1-3): \$10-15M**

**TOTAL ANNUAL OPERATING COST (OPTIONS 1-3): \$300,000**



# 4

## Additional Considerations

### Aquatic Focus Considerations

One of the key considerations for new multi-use aquatic centre facilities is their aquatic focus, which determines what programming opportunities the facility will support. The feasibility study, based on results from the 2016 engagement and survey, proposed a community focused aquatic centre that also supported the competitive legacy of the Canada Games Pool by providing an 8 lane 50m tank.

This arrangement would allow the city to expand programming such as swim lessons, leisure uses and aquasize, while maintaining some opportunity for length swimming, competitive training and small scale competition. This community aquatic focus was considered by council and staff as one possible option for the new facility, along with other variations that included a more regional, competitive option. The feasibility study concluded that the community focus was most aligned with the needs expressed by residents in the 2016 survey, and was supported by council and staff.

One of the goals of the current engagement process was to confirm with residents whether they supported the community focus. The results of the 2018 survey indicate community support (refer to survey results) for both the overall facility program and the aquatic components. The exception to this is the feedback received from members of the Hyack Swim Club, who have through both this engagement process and other independent channels voiced their concern with this proposed program and focus. Members of the Hyack Swim Club were formally consulted during the 2016 engagement, the feasibility study, and the 2018 engagement process.

As outlined on page 14, during these meetings the Club expressed the desire for a number of changes to the program including:

- Addition of 2 lanes to the 50m tank
- Spectator Seating
- Additional pool deck space
- Warm up and warm down tank

The following diagrams (left) outline the financial, operational and programming impact of these options. The warm up and warm down tank was not given further consideration as this would require an entirely separate tank to be built and this function can be supported to some degree by the design of the leisure pool. It should be noted that while the provision of these features would better support local, regional and provincial level swim competition, they do not guarantee higher level competition such as western or national level. These higher-level competitions typically seek out facilities that have a full, separate warm up/warm down tank, additional support spaces and the community services (hospitality etc.) that are required to bring large numbers of people to the facility.

To date, the feedback received from residents, city staff and elected officials supports the community focused aquatic approach when considered within the current financial parameters of the project. Should additional funding become available, the CNW may be able to provide some of these additional components without reducing the scope of community programming. Should the CNW decide to pursue the addition of these optional elements, further study should be undertaken to better understand the financial, operational and design implications.

# 5

## Recommendations

### Recommendations

Based on the feedback received during the course of this engagement, and in accordance with the engagement objectives, the project recommendations:

1. That the City of New Westminster proceed with the community focused programming as represented in the feasibility study, knowing that it has majority support from the residents of New Westminster.
2. That the City of New Westminster undertake a more detailed transportation study to determine more precisely the parking needs for the project in an effort to understand whether concerns expressed by citizens over the balance of parking to green space can be reasonably addressed.
3. That this report, once received by council, be made available to the public and next steps in the project be identified along with a timeline.



**Right:**  
Public engagement



# 6

## Appendix





May 16, 2018 | Prepared for: HCMA

**Factum:**

City of New Westminister Study

**Research:**

Based on an online study conducted from February to April, among 968 respondents in the City of New Westminister.

**Methodology:**

The data has been statistically weighted according to Canadian census figures for age, gender and region in the City of New Westminister. The margin of error—which measures sample variability—is +/- 3.2 percentage points, nineteen times out of twenty.

**SURVEY ANALYSIS**

Research Co. was contracted by HCMA to conduct a detailed analysis of a survey of New Westminister residents. The survey was freely accessible online to any person through a shareable “open link”—as well as printed copies at events—and received responses from mid-February to the end of April.

Aside from quantitative questions related to the proposed project, the survey collected data on specific characteristics of the 968 respondents (including age, gender, region within the city and ethnicity), thereby facilitating a process of weighting.

Weighting is a common practice in public opinion and market research, and is a process designed to reduce sampling error by ensuring that all groups in a particular country, province or city are properly represented in a dataset.

Research Co. weighted the data provided by HCMA according to the latest census information for age, gender and region in New Westminister, to ensure that the dataset was representative of the city’s entire population.

**QUANTITATIVE**

The weighted data set shows the following results:

- 77% of respondents believe the proposed solution accurately reflects the overall needs and priorities of New Westminister (47% “very accurately” and 30% “somewhat accurately”).
- 71% of respondents believe the proposed overall solution accurately reflects the specific aquatic needs and priorities of New Westminister (48%



“very accurately” and 23% “somewhat accurately”).

- 70% of respondents believe the proposed overall solution accurately reflects the specific fitness needs and priorities of New Westminster (41% “very accurately” and 29% “somewhat accurately”).
- 69% of respondents believe the proposed overall solution accurately reflects the specific community needs and priorities of New Westminster (41% “very accurately” and 28% “somewhat accurately”).

The level of animosity towards the proposed solution is decidedly lower:

- 17% of respondents believe the proposed solution does not accurately reflect the overall needs and priorities of New Westminster (6% “not quite accurate” and 11% “not accurate”), with 6% being “not sure”.
- 21% of respondents believe the proposed overall solution does not accurately reflect the specific aquatic needs and priorities of New Westminster (7% “not quite accurate” and 14% “not accurate”), with 8% being “not sure”.
- 21% of respondents believe the proposed overall solution accurately does not accurately reflect the specific fitness needs and priorities of New Westminster (9% “not quite accurate” and 12% “not accurate”), with 9% being “not sure”.
- 22% of respondents believe the proposed overall solution does not accurately reflect the specific community needs and priorities of New



Westminster (10% “not quite accurate” and 12% “not accurate”), with 8% being “not sure”.

The group that appears to express more doubts about the project is residents aged 35-to-54. However, this amounts to a small minority (ranging from 23% to 29% saying the proposed solution does not accurately reflect needs and priorities).

There is no widespread opposition to the project's needs and priorities, both overall and specific.

### QUALITATIVE

A total of 652 respondents provided a comment when asked if there was anything missing or if improvements could be made to the proposed solution.

A sizeable proportion of the comments was related to issues that respondents perceived as not being a part of the original proposal, such as:

- 52 different responses related to parking.
- 22 different responses related to child care and child minding services.
- 16 different responses related to arts spaces.
- 16 different responses related to a café/seating/viewing area.
- 15 different responses related to the possible addition of housing.
- 5 different responses related to disaster preparedness.





There are concerns outlined by current users of the facility, which are mostly about their expectations, such as:

- 43 different responses related to weights.
- 32 different responses related to the water slide.
- 31 different responses related to diving.
- 30 different responses related to costs.
- 22 different responses related to the "lazy river".
- 12 different responses related to a leisure pool.

It is patently clear that some comments were posted by an organized group, or organized groups:

- A comment that stated: *"The present Aquatic Center proposal does not reflect the needs of the present and future users of the facility..."* was included 93 times by different survey-takers, amounting to 14% of all registered verbatim responses.
- A comment that stated: *"...the Hyack swim club can host a swim meet while the facility can remain open to the public..."* was included 33 times by different survey-takers, amounting to 5% of all registered verbatim responses.

## SECONDARY SOURCES

An online petition

(<https://www.ipetitions.com/petition/decision-2018-canada-games-pool>)

that is not part of the City of New Westminster's formal engagement process was circulated in the month of



May and gathered (at the time of this report's preparation) 915 signatures.

At this point, there is no way to know how many of these signatories are residents of the City of New Westminster, or how many are directly affiliated to existing swim clubs. In addition, petitions of this nature do not allow for a counterpoint (as signatories simply agree with the contents and sign).

## **CONCLUSIONS**

- 1) More than three-in-four respondents agree with the proposed solution accurately reflecting the overall needs and priorities of New Westminster.
- 2) Around seven-in-ten agree with the proposed solution accurately reflecting three specific needs and priorities: aquatic, fitness and community.
- 3) Respondents are more likely to say that the proposed solution accurately reflects the overall needs and priorities of New Westminster by a 4.5-to-1 margin.
- 4) Respondents are more likely to say that the proposed solution accurately reflects the specific aquatic needs and priorities of New Westminster by a 3.3-to-1 margin.
- 5) Respondents are more likely to say that the proposed solution accurately reflects the specific fitness needs and priorities of New Westminster by a 3.3-to-1 margin.



- 6) Respondents are more likely to say that the proposed solution accurately reflects the specific community needs and priorities of New Westminster by a 3.1-to-1 margin.
- 7) The concerns outlined by users of the facility are mostly about meeting everyone's expectations in a satisfactory manner, and not directly related to perceived problems with the project itself.
- 8) The presence of comments posted by an organized group (or organized groups) did not have an impact on the weighted data.

# HCMA

## HCMA ARCHITECTURE + DESIGN

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