

10.1.4 Recreation and Aquatic Facility (RAF) Feasibility Project

Location:	All
Ward:	Not Applicable
Applicant:	City of South Perth
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Strategic Direction:	Community: A diverse, connected, safe and engaged community
Council Strategy:	1.2 Community Infrastructure

Summary

This report updates Council on planning for the development of a potential regional multi-use recreation and aquatic facility within the City to service the community's future leisure and health needs, following the initiation of the Recreation and Aquatic Facility Feasibility Project and recent preliminary assessments reviewing possible sites and partnership opportunities.

Officer Recommendation AND COUNCIL DECISION

Moved: Councillor Travis Burrows
Seconded: Councillor Tracie McDougall

That Council:

1. Reaffirm its commitment for the planning and promotion of the development of recreation and aquatic facilities to service community needs in accordance with Strategic Outcome 1.2(C) of the City of South Perth Strategic Community Plan 2017-2027;
2. Commence formal engagement with Federal and State Governments, adjoining local authorities, tertiary institutions, peak sporting bodies and commercial operators to gauge their interest, support and involvement in a regional scale multi-use leisure and aquatic facility to be located within the City;
3. Advance work on the design concepts and preferred sites to enable preparation of a detailed Business Plan to be submitted to Council by July 2019;
4. Commit to consultation with stakeholder groups and the public on the refinement of the concepts and preferred sites; and
5. Form a Project Reference Group reporting through to the Property Committee to oversee the development of the project.

CARRIED BY EXCEPTION RESOLUTION (7/0)

Background

The City's Strategic Community Plan 2017-2027 is a long term, overarching strategy and planning document that outlines the community's aspirations and priorities for the future, and sets out the key strategies required to achieve these.

A key strategy within the Community Strategic Direction is to deliver community infrastructure to create a diverse, connected, safe and engaged community and to "plan for and promote the development of recreation and aquatic facilities to service community needs".

In planning for the development of a recreation and aquatic facility, and appreciating the timing of upcoming elections and associated possible funding opportunities, the City has initiated a Recreation and Aquatic Facility (RAF) Feasibility Project. This report provides an overview of the progress to date of this project.

Comment

The prospect of an aquatic facility within the City of South Perth has been under consideration for some years, with a number of studies, reports and submissions prepared and received. In planning for and promoting the development of such a facility to service community needs the City has revisited this work. In undertaking a strategic review of these proposals, adoption of a citywide approach to the wider provision of community facilities and services throughout the City was considered.

As part of longer term financial planning by the City, provision for improvements to key facilities had been made to support strategic community facilities, namely the George Burnett Leisure Centre (GBLC) and Collier Park Golf Course (CPGC). To inform these improvements, preparation of masterplans for each site were programmed, prioritising George Burnett Recreational Precinct within the program of works. Previous planning for the GBLC had planned to cater for a limited scale expanded indoor facility, and also explored opportunities for an aquatic facility on the site. A 2015 assessment had indicated that a conventional swimming pool, while publicly supported, would likely require ongoing subsidy to meet operational costs.

A strategic review of this assessment was undertaken earlier this year in the context of the need to re-assess the future of the GBLC, and the short to medium term requirement for a masterplan for Collier Park Golf Course. With these considerations in mind, the necessity to explore how a recreation and aquatic facility could be made more viable as a functioning centre was articulated through the initiation of a Recreation and Aquatic Facility (RAF) Feasibility Project.

To assist this analysis, the approach adopted and experience gained from the most recent integrated recreation and aquatic facility in Perth, the City of Cockburn's Aquatic and Recreation Centre (ARC) was examined. This award winning centre is exceeding expectations in meeting community needs, operating as a highly successful viable mix of sporting and leisure services.

Site visits to the Cockburn ARC were arranged for both Councillors and nominated staff, with the tours highlighting different delivery methods, scale of operations and partnership approaches to the provision of aquatic facilities. Of notable success to the delivery of the ARC was the co-location of mutually complementary

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multi-use facility components and the partnering approach with key stakeholders, as opposed to traditional 'single-use' service delivery models previously proposed within the City.

An exploration of potential partnering opportunities was therefore undertaken, using principles similar to that at the ARC. The review highlighted the potential opportunity to locate a RAF in close proximity to Curtin University (including an option within Collier Park Golf Course) to take advantage of the long term growth of area from the development in time of the Bentley-Curtin Specialised Activity Centre and more specifically the Greater Curtin Master Plan. This siting sought to leverage an existing and rapidly growing student, staff and academic demand, and avail of potential partnering opportunities with the University to deliver Greater Curtin objectives. In addition, the review articulated greater catchment opportunities (and related financial returns) related to larger-scale/regional-level facilities, and reinforced a revised approach to delivery options and commercial partnerships.

Since that review, further work commenced has included a desktop review of current market offerings to further inform what core elements could be incorporated into a RAF. Gaps in the market were identified within the more regional catchment (with an appreciation of the City's demographic trends), and baseline footprints incorporating these elements were conceptually represented with accompanying areas to assist initial quantity surveying costings.

Simultaneously, a preliminary review of other possible sites was undertaken. To assist this exploration, criteria were developed for comparative assessment, and enable a shortlisting of sites. This analysis enabled extension of catchment opportunities to incorporate Greater Curtin proposals and neighbouring districts to be critiqued against existing strategic directions and aspirations of the City, with notional footprints applied to preferred sites for context appreciation.

This work has suggested that a state-of-the-art regional sport, recreation and aquatic facility that serves the communities of the City of South Perth (and Curtin University, extending to areas within the Town of Victoria Park and the City of Canning), warrants further investigation. Proposed attributes of the facility may nominally include the following core functions (and related components):

Aquatic Centre
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 8 lane 25m indoor pool• Leisure and fun pool• Learn to Swim (LTS) pool• Warm water program pool• Spa and sauna• Change rooms• Staff and life guards• Stores• Café (wet side)• Pool plant

Stadium
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6 court indoor hall (able to accommodate basketball/netball/badminton/volleyball/futsal) • Change rooms • Stores
Health Club
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gymnasium • Large group fitness room • Medium group fitness room • Spin and RPM cycle room • Wellness/yoga room • 3 x assessment rooms • Personal trainer room • Administration and reception • Change rooms
Outdoor 50m Pool
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8 lane 52m outdoor pool • School group change rooms • External stores • Club room / marshalling area • Partially shaded tiered grass embankment

In addition to these four functions of the build base, ancillary requirements have allowed for inclusion of reception and administration areas, crèche, meeting rooms, sports housing and related commercial floor-space. The priority of these functions and components would need to be reviewed based on community need and commercial viability, and may require a staged delivery approach if deemed feasible. Preliminary concept designs have however included all elements at this stage so as to ensure flexibility of sites and determine costings to assist feasibility of a possible facility.

It is recognised that to more rigorously examine the feasibility of such a facility, a business plan needs to be presented to Council to review a number of options (including site selection) based on these preliminary studies.

Additionally, the current political timing necessitates formal approaches to key stakeholders in the interim to quantify what funding opportunities may be available to the project. To assist this process, concept drawings will be required to be worked up to facilitate discussions with key stakeholders to ascertain scale and location of a RAF. Resultant partnerships would further inform the business plan and substantiate (or otherwise) the feasibility of a RAF.

Consultation

At this stage, the City has only undertaken preliminary engagement with key stakeholders at a conceptual level. The degree of the engagement has varied with liaison ranging from informal meetings to formal presentations to workshopping material.

Preliminary engagement has been undertaken with a number of parties including:

- Local State and Federal Government MPs;
- Local Government Authorities (namely Town of Victoria Park and City of Cockburn);
- State Government Departments;
- Curtin University;
- State Sporting Associations; and
- Commercial Operators (local and interstate).

In addition, the City undertook a community survey earlier in the year to assess a range of community programs, services and initiative. This survey included a question on a proposed recreation and aquatic facility. The majority of the community survey respondents provided positive feedback about a potential recreation and aquatic facility. Over 70% of local residents surveyed said they would use such a facility, and 85% indicated that they would use it at least monthly. Further engagement is necessary to further verify this feedback, acknowledging the risk of raising community expectation prior to conclusion of feasibility options analysis or funding commitments.

The project is now at a point where meaningful engagement could occur to assess community demand; potential project involvement and funding contribution/partnering arrangements. To assist this process, and drawing on the experience of the City of Cockburn, it is suggested that a Project Reference Group be established, inclusive of Councillors, reporting through to the Property Committee. A Terms of Reference shall be prepared to articulate roles and membership of this Group to assist governance of the RAF Feasibility Project.

Policy and Legislative Implications

The following legislation and Council Policies may be relevant to this project as it evolves:

- Local Government Act 1995 – Section 3.18 of the Act prescribes that a local government may provide services and facilities; and in doing so should satisfy itself that they are integrated and coordinated with services and facilities provided by the Commonwealth, the State and other entities;
- Local Government Act 1995 – Section 3.59 of the Act prescribes the requirements for preparation of a business plan detailing what this may include;
- Policy 106 ‘Use of City Reserves and Facilities’; and
- Policy 609 ‘Management of City Property’.

In looking at the feasibility of a Recreation and Aquatic Facility, land tenure will also need to be considered during the site investigation process and planning stages. Liaison with the WAPC and appropriate approval processes will be required, acknowledging vesting and management orders that may exist.

Financial Implications

These will be articulated within the Business Plan, which may necessitate the need for this document to be confidential owing to the commercial nature of the material (if being supplied commercial in confidence).

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Strategic Implications

This matter relates to the following Strategic Direction identified within Council's [Strategic Community Plan 2017-2027](#):

Strategic Direction:	Community
Aspiration:	A diverse, connected, safe and engaged community
Outcome:	Community Infrastructure
Strategy:	Plan for and promote the development of recreation and aquatic facilities to service community needs

Attachments

Nil