

AQUATICS FEASIBILITY STUDY

CENTRE REGIONAL RECREATION AUTHORITY
(CRRA) /
CENTRE REGION PARKS & RECREATION BOARD

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THE AQUATICS TASK FORCE

MARCH 12, 2002

AQUATIC TASK FORCE ROSTER

Richard C. Marboe, Ph.D., Chair	Centre Regional Recreation Authority Chair 2002
Cindy Solic	Centre Regional Recreation Authority Vice-Chair 2002
Tom J. Griffiths, Ed.D.	Penn State University Director of Aquatics
Tim C. Pfeuffer	State College Area School District Aquatics Director
Dennis Ditmer	State College Area Family YMCA Executive Director

CONSULTANTS

Water Technology, Inc.

Beaver Dam, WI

www.watertechnologyinc.com

920-887-7375

Hoffman-Popovich Architects

Boalsburg, PA

www.hparchitects.com

814-466-7811

Chuck Neuman, President

Judith L. Leblein, CPRP, Assoc.

Alan Popovich, RA

Kelly Harris, RLA

STAFF:

Ronald J. Woodhead, CPRP	Centre Region Parks & Recreation Director
Greg L. Roth, CPRP	Centre Region Parks & Recreation Parks Supervisor
Todd A. Roth	Centre Region Parks & Recreation Aquatics Supervisor
James C. Steff	Centre Region Council of Governments Executive Director

March 2002

This report documents a yearlong effort to:

- Determine the aquatics facility attributes necessary to meet present and future Centre Region program needs,
- Assess the viability of existing and planned public and private facilities to meet those needs (in conformance with current health and safety standards) for the next twenty years, and
- Develop options for addressing any shortcomings.

In the case of an extensive modification to an existing facility or design of a new facility, the intention was to provide options more oriented toward leisure aquatics with broader appeal and a greater likelihood of financial self-sustainment.

We were fortunate to have a very experienced task force, and consultants who are world-class experts in the design of public aquatic facilities. They were able to present a critical assessment of the two pools operated by the Centre Regional Recreation Authority (CRRA) and make objective recommendations for future operation and investment. National trends in aquatic programming and facilities were blended with survey results, public hearings with local residents and pool patrons, and projected demographics to determine public bathing capacity needs that can reasonably be sustained by our community.

This task force strongly recommends that the CRRA and Centre Region Council of Governments municipalities embark on implementing the recommendations in this report within the next five years. We are literally living on borrowed time with the William L. Welch Pool as it enters the 44th season of service. Deterioration of this asset, despite cost-effective maintenance, could rapidly render it useless at any time in the future. In addition, the needs and financial viability assessments have shown that the regional bather capacity should be increased by 50% and reoriented toward leisure aquatics over the next five years.

We absolutely appreciate the high capital cost of aquatics facilities, and the significant financial pressures on a community that currently needs to replace several other 30-40 year old public facilities. While the final costs for the improvements will be specifically determined during the master planning process for each project, this report demonstrates how critical these aquatics facilities are to the Centre Region's residents.

Richard C. Marboe

Chair, Aquatics Task Force

Chair, Centre Regional Recreation Authority

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CENTRE REGION PARKS & RECREATION BOARD CENTRE REGIONAL RECREATION AUTHORITY

MARCH 12, 2002

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SECTION I: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Centre Regional Recreation Authority [CRRA] owns two outdoor community swimming pools that are operated by the Centre Region Parks & Recreation [CRPR] Board and serve the following municipalities in the Centre Region:

- College Township
- Ferguson Township
- Harris Township
- Patton Township
- Borough of State College

Halfmoon Township, although not a current funding partner of Centre Regional Recreation Authority or this study, was considered in determining the potential service areas. Therefore, the current population of the Centre Region is approximately 82,000 persons. In looking to the future, planners estimate that in the next twenty years, the Centre Region's population will grow by an additional 16,200-19,600 residents depending on the planning model used.

To address this projected growth, while dealing with two aging aquatic facilities, the CRRA commissioned this Aquatics Feasibility Study in January 2001. As a part of this process, an Aquatics Task Force of five volunteer members appointed by the CRRA was formed to select and then provide direction to the project consultants, Water Technology, Inc. [WTI] and Hoffman-Popovich Architects [HPA], and to receive community input.

The objective of this study is to review the need for and economic feasibility of improving public aquatic opportunities for Centre Region residents. The study will serve as a planning document or master plan of CRPR aquatics program as part of its 'aquatic mission' for the 21st century. Along the way, the study identified and accomplished many different objectives. These objectives (in execution order) included:





- An analysis of current and projected demand for aquatic services in the Centre Region;
- An inventory of existing facilities and programs in the Centre Region, including public and private aquatic operations;
- Evaluation of the two outdoor CRRA pools and recommendation for improvements or additions needed to the existing facilities (including preliminary capital and operational costs); and
- Exploration of options and costs for location, construction, and operations of new facilities, if warranted.

Following a consultant selection process, the CRRA officially contracted with WTI / HPA in January 2001. At the start of the study, the consultant team addressed the COG General Forum (on Feb. 26, 2001). Several meetings with members of the Aquatics Task Force, CRPR staff, and project consultants were held to become familiar with the goals of the Task Force and the Centre Region Parks and Recreation Board. These objectives have been met.

■ AQUATIC MISSION - PLANNING FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

It is the goal of the CRRA to provide high quality aquatic facilities that are affordable, accessible and offer enjoyable experiences for all residents and their visitors of the Centre Region service area.

It is the also the desire of the CRRA to explore financing and funding options to make more efficient and self-supporting the operations and capital improvement programs for aquatic facilities. In 1969 CRRA was created to provide safe and affordable aquatic facilities for residents. Through this report, it is the expectation of the CRPR Board / CRRA to determine the aquatic program to best meet the changing needs of the community, meet the new requirements for accessibility, safety, code compliance and provide a greater level of customer satisfaction and community service.



■ PROCESS

"FOCUS ON AQUATICS" HEARINGS

As a part of the Aquatics Feasibility Study, the Aquatics Task Force held two "Focus On Aquatics" hearings to listen and comprehend public comments about ways to improve public aquatics in the Centre Region. Two identical, 90 minute hearings were conducted on the following dates:

- Tuesday, May 8, 2001; 7:00-8:30 PM - College Township
- Wednesday, May 9, 2001; 10:00-11:30 AM - Ferguson Township

The minutes of these meetings are attached to this document in Appendix A: Support Documents. One of the hearings was recorded and later broadcast on the C-NET TV-cable access system. Information about this study has also been available to the general public through the Internet at the CRPR web site:

www.CentreConnect.org/crpr

SURVEYS

- In April 1997, a Parks, Recreation and Open Space Survey was conducted among 1,841 randomly selected households.
- In the summer of 2000, a Resident Aquatics Survey was conducted amongst 1,920 randomly selected households, 320 season passholder households and 44 Centre Region municipal officials with 869 survey forms being returned.

Throughout the results of both surveys conducted, there was strong evidence of an interest in improving the aquatic facilities at both Park Forest and William L.Welch Community Pools. The citizen input from both of these surveys was carefully considered as a part of this study process.

The information from a Needs and Feasibility Assessment conducted by the State College Area Family YMCA regarding the addition of an indoor aquatics facility was also weighed heavily. The nationwide experiences of both the YMCA and WTI with regard to pools with an air-supported enclosure or dome to extend the operational season indicate that they are not cost effective due to high maintenance and operational costs. Aquatic



programs offered at the State College Area High School indoor pool were also factored into the evaluation of indoor aquatic needs.

It should be noted that the participating municipalities historically provide annual contributions for public pool operations and for pool capital projects:

1. With respect to **operations**, season pass sales, pool admissions, and program fees now provide 80% of the cost of annual aquatic operations. The remaining 20% (\$65,131 in 2002) is provided by municipal contributions. This approach permits the reasonable admission fees that have been provided since the pools opened. Based on a statewide survey of municipal pool entrance fees conducted by CRPR in 2000, the Centre Region is well below the average fees charged. The two outdoor pools hosted 63,562 visits during the 2001 season.

2. Municipal contributions provide 100% of the costs for pool **capital improvement and capital repairs**. This amount has varied each year (pending required projects) from \$35,000 to \$65,000 annually over the past five years.

After a review of all the programming and demographic information (Section II), along with a study and evaluation of the existing swimming pools (Section III), the following recommendations are submitted for the consideration of the Authority / Parks and Recreation Board and the Centre Region Council of Governments.

■ RECOMMENDATIONS

Evaluation of the facilities available for year-round (indoor) leisure, instructional, and competitive aquatics programs leads the Task Force to conclude that the needs will be met adequately when the proposed State College Area Family YMCA indoor facilities become operational. The available usage times and costs may not be the most desirable for many groups, but the opportunities will be available.



After careful consideration of the demographic profile of the Centre Region and factoring in the available population within the vicinity of Centre Region, WTI recommends an outdoor base ‘bather capacity’ of 1,200 for the Centre Region Aquatic Program with the ability to obtain a total ‘bather capacity’ of 1,600 within the next 5-7 years to meet the needs of the Centre Region.

Recognizing that of the 80,000 people in the Centre Region, 36,000 are students of The Pennsylvania State University [PSU], the figure of 3% of the population net of the non-students [44,000] has been used for the purpose of establishing the recommended capacities noted. WTI feels that this is a fair representation based on other similar college communities and the available PSU aquatic facilities accessible to the student body as well as the large percentage of students that leave the area during the summer season. Based on their nation-wide experience, WTI believes that private club and hotel/motel facilities serve small clienteles and do not significantly affect the attendance or the customer population of municipal aquatics facilities.

Attendance figures from previous seasons were also considered. In 2001, including recreational, instructional and competitive (swim team) visits:

- Park Forest hosted an average of 251 visits per day
- William L. Welch Pool hosted an average of 384 visits per day.

2001 Season	Recreational Visits	Instructional Visits	Competitive (Swim Team) Visits	Total Visits
Park Forest Pool	17,641	1,816	5,700	25,157
Wm. L. Welch Pool	29,111	2,568	6,726	38,405
Total	46,752	4,384	12,426	63,562
% of Total Visits	74%	7%	19%	100%

Based on the current and projected population and available aquatic facilities of the service area of the CRRA, the Task Force, WTI and HPA have determined that the Centre Region cannot sustain more than two CRRA outdoor aquatic facilities to realize the objective of being fiscally responsible in its approach to development and operations. **As a result, the project**



team recommends that a total of two outdoor Family Aquatic Centers for the Centre Region be developed, per the following approach:

PARK FOREST COMMUNITY SWIMMING POOL

Park Forest Community Swimming Pool should be rehabilitated to meet current health and safety requirements and to increase guest satisfaction, entertainment value, and length of stay. This facility, which was built in 1970, has served as a neighborhood-based community pool that has averaged 160 recreational visitors per day over a 100-day season in the summer of 2000. In 2001, this number increased to an average of 176 visitors per day (recreational attendance only), in part due to the closing of the Science Park Recreation Association Pool.

WTI recommends that the neighborhood-based atmosphere be protected and enhanced by:

- Rehabilitation and renovation of the support buildings, the filtration systems, and site features, and
- The addition of a new zero depth children's water playground or slide complex.

Because this pool primarily serves the Park Forest area, it is not anticipated that the attendance would have any effect on attendance projections for a second location and will provide a joint use in the community. In addition, the existing support facilities are outdated and require substantial work to meet current health and safety requirements and guidelines. The amount of work will entail a complete re-build of the existing bathhouse structure (or a new structure built) to better serve the patrons and program of the facility.

It is estimated that to perform this task at Park Forest Community Pool would require the investment of approximately \$1,735,000. A complete estimate of the probable cost as well as a conceptual plan showing suggested improvements is included in the Recommendations section of this report. It must also be noted that the concept of enclosing the facility with an air-



supported structure has also been explored and is also discussed in that section.

NEW REGIONAL FAMILY AQUATIC FACILITY (OUTDOOR)

The Aquatics Task Force, WTI and HPA recommend that a new Regional Family Aquatic Facility be developed and that the 43-year old William L. Welch Community Pool be retired. Welch Pool no longer meets the aquatic needs of the Centre Region, and renovation or “rebuilding” the existing facility on the existing property is not economically or physically feasible. Site limitations include:

- Limited area available to provide the features associated with an increased bather capacity;
- Future considerations pertaining to school property development as proposed in the SCASD Master Plan;
- The SCASD plans appear to preclude a long-term lease agreement (that includes additional land) that is necessary to obtain state grants;
- Limited vehicular circulation, access and parking; and
- A storm water drainage problem onto the site.

The two existing pools and support facilities at Welch Pool have reached the end of their service life and warrant a complete replacement of mechanical systems as well as pool and building structures. To meet the financial goals of becoming operationally self-sustaining, the “bather capacity” of the new facility should be initially increased to 1,000-1,200 bathers, requiring additional space for feature amenities (particularly additional shallow water areas) that the existing site cannot provide. A Regional Family Aquatic Center would serve the residents of Centre Region, but could also attract customers from surrounding communities within 15-20 miles of the facility, and therefore increase the revenue base.

The proposed facility would include a large, zero-depth entry, multi-purpose lap and leisure pool, water slides, interactive water features, and other site



amenities such as large sunning deck and grass areas, shaded areas, concessions, and sand play and volleyball. The projected estimate of cost for the new facility is approximately \$7,049,000 (not including land acquisition cost or the cost to restore the Welch Pool site). Of course the specific costs would be determined during the master site planning process for the new facility.

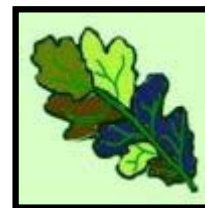
The Aquatics Task Force also recommends locating this facility in an easily accessible area that could share support facilities (parking, utilities, access roads, etc.) with other needed recreation facilities, such as regional sport fields, school district sport venues, and other community facilities.

To remain viable and meet the projected population growth of the region, WTI recommends that the facility be sized to accommodate a future addition of a Lazy River, large deck areas for seating and ‘grassy knolls’ for seating and sun bathing. This would allow for an additional 400-guest capacity as the community continues to grow and the facility becomes more financially self-supporting.

After a new facility is constructed at another location, a renovation of the Welch Pool site into a water playground (or spray-ground) was considered but does not appear to be economically feasible.

PROJECT COST (EXPENSES & REVENUE)

Water Technology, Inc., and Hoffman-Popovich Architects, with the assistance of the CRRA, developed preliminary and conceptual figures of projected expenses and revenue for the recommendations presented. It is very important to note that projected expenses and revenue are subjective and will vary dependent on operational policies and other factors such as weather, attendance, and alternative programs or facilities. These numbers are only to be used as a reference point. **The master site planning process,**



not a part of this study, will determine the actual costs and projected revenue as specific features are identified for the facilities.

As the report discusses in further detail, it is projected that preliminary annual revenue projections for a new Regional Family Aquatic Facility (1,200 bather capacity) will total \$331,432 and projected operating expenditures of \$303,640. This would provide the CRRA a net (recreational) income of \$27,792 that could be applied to capital costs, or to possible operational budget shortfalls at the Park Forest facility. Not included in the net income figure is the substantial revenue that can be generated from instructional and competitive programs, concessions, sponsorships, rentals or other miscellaneous items. It is estimated that the Park Forest Community Pool will show little change in terms of operating expenditures and revenue.

■ PHASING OF THE PROJECTS

It is recommended that the following schedule be considered:

Year 1 – Based upon information in this report, develop a Master Site Plan for the new Regional Family Aquatic Center and for the renovation of Park Forest Community Pool. This process would include finalizing a location with the recommended features and the associated costs / revenue. State funding assistance may be available for this process.

Year 2-3 - Determine funding strategy, available grants, and proceed with construction of the Regional Family Aquatic Center.

Year 4 - Open the new facility; retire Welch Pool (and proceed with site restoration).

Year 5 - Proceed with the renovation of Park Forest Community Pool.

Year 6 - Reopen the renovated Park Forest Community Pool.



Year 8 - Add the recommended additional features to the new facility to increase capacity by 400 (to 1,600 bathers).

SUMMARY

This study has confirmed that the Centre Region has grown (and will continue to grow) to the point where additional aquatics facilities are warranted. In our opinion, it is not economically feasible to:

- Build and operate a third outdoor, regional pool; or to,
- Expand the Welch Pool site to accommodate an increased bather capacity; or to,
- Add an air-supported structure over Park Forest Community Pool; or to,
- Invest additional capital resources in an aquatic facility that is 43 years old.

However, it is critically important to incorporate modern aquatic features that will attract customers to the new / renovated facilities.

Further along in the report, greater time and attention is given to the process involved in producing the recommendations. Evaluation of the existing facilities, review and explanation of current trends and concepts in the aquatic industry as well as a complete breakdown of the concepts presented and alternative considerations is included.

It is the goal of CRRA to meet the aquatic needs of the community now and in the future while being fiscally responsible with respect to development and operations. Obviously, further consideration is required by CRRA and municipal officials regarding the financial impact of the steps recommended in relation to other Centre Region projects and the needs of the community. The project team believes that this report accomplished the mission set for it and that achieving the goals of COG and CRRA is possible.

SECTION II: NEEDS ASSESSMENT & CURRENT TRENDS

Needs Assessment

The basis for this entire study is the information acquired by prior surveys, interviews with groups, public hearings, demographic projections, customer input, and local and national experience in facility operations.

Much of the specific information is contained in Appendix A. This includes:

- 1997 Centre Region Parks, Recreation & Open Space Survey
- 2000 CRPR Resident Aquatics Survey
- 2000 Customer (Season Pass-holder Households) Survey
- 2000 Municipal Pool Fee Survey (state-wide)
- Centre Regional Planning Agency Demographic Projections
- 1998 State College Area Family YMCA Demographic Profile
- 2001 State College Area Family YMCA Needs & Feasibility Study
- 2001 Inventory of Penn State & local private aquatic facilities.

The Aquatics Task Force and the consultants used this information to determine needs for year-round vs. summer-only aquatics, leisure, instructional, and competitive programs, and for providing opportunities to all age groups. Some key factors are regional demographic projections by age group, geographic distribution of that population, and a desire for regional accessibility to the pool sites.

Current Trends

An important element of the consultant's contribution to this study has been their experience with public aquatics on a nationwide basis. How have other communities responded to the changes in aquatic trends? The challenge is to tailor those experiences to provide community aquatic facilities to the Centre Region for the next thirty years, and are attractive enough to be economically viable.



Americans love to swim and the communities of the Centre Region are no exception. A variety of surveys and studies conducted throughout the nation by reputable analysts provide us with conclusive evidence of the importance of swimming as a leisure activity. Swimming is now only second to walking as the most popular exercise in the United States, with more than 368 million annual visits to swimming pools. In response, the aquatic recreation community has changed dramatically. Our society has become much more sophisticated in its recreational activities and expectations. The way an aquatic facility is developed has changed in response. Herein are but a few examples of the concepts and trends in the aquatic industry that must be considered as the CRRA looks to revitalize their own aquatics program.

■ CENTRALIZATION OF FACILITIES

There has been a trend across the nation in recent years by which local government agencies are being held to a greater level of accountability when it comes to spending taxpayer's money yet are also asked to provide a greater quantity and quality of services to the public. This has developed into a 'catch 22' situation for many park and recreation agencies who are finding fewer and fewer resources from which they can operate a successful recreation system.

By this action, many of the park and recreation agencies are being directed to reduce, in some cases completely eliminate, subsidies for operational cost of aquatic facilities that historically tend to be large sources of financial drain on operating budgets. In some rare cases, departments are required to cover 100% of capital cost for new development. This has led many departments to consolidate resources into larger, all-inclusive aquatic facilities that provide greater services for less operating cost. This centralization of facilities has rendered itself into the concept of the Regional Family Aquatic Center.

■ FAMILY AQUATIC CENTERS / REGIONAL AQUATIC FACILITIES

The Family Aquatic Center can trace its origins back to the early 1980's. Communities at this time began rethinking how and where they provided aquatic recreation services. Gone was the traditional definition of a



rectangular body of water, possibly with a diving well, bordered by a thin ribbon of concrete and encircled by a tall chain-link fence. The new facility responded to a need for increased programming, decreased density and accessibility. Features such as zero-depth (beach) entries, water slides, leisure and activity areas, and interactive water features are commonplace in the new concepts.

Today, the increasing aquatic recreational needs and interests of the American public are pushing these concepts further. We are seeing in public facilities such elements that were only seen in commercial waterparks just a decade ago. Elements such as continuous rivers, themed activity structures, wave pools, Spraygrounds, and family raft rides are commonplace in regional family aquatic centers.

■ SPRAYGROUNDS / WATER PLAYGROUNDS

One of the latest developments in providing aquatic recreation to the public has been the explosive growth of Spraygrounds. These features are utilized both as independent entities within an aquatic system and as part of regional aquatic facility. Purely comprised of interactive water elements on a level, inviting surface, Spraygrounds embody the current approach towards accessibility, safety, innovation and affordability.

The Sprayground or water playground provides a form of aquatic recreation that is cool and entertaining to the community while also providing reduced operational cost. These features are neighborhood playgrounds that incorporate various types of water elements. Elements that are comprised of a relatively flat surface covered with colorful resilient surfacing and water sprays emanating from the ground as well as vertical activities. All of the sprays are interactive to varying degrees. The treated water drains off the deck and is re-circulated through a filtration system rather than allowing the water to run to 'storm' as was the practice at traditional neighborhood wading pools.



■ **SITE AMENITIES**

These facilities also included site enhancements that increased the entertainment value of the stay. Sand, consistently associated with aquatic recreations, has been a natural addition to the Regional Family Aquatic Center. Features such as sand volleyball and sand play have become staples in most aquatic facilities.

Another important concept has been the incorporation of a lot of shade to the aquatic facility. The increase in concern regarding the detrimental health effects of too much sun exposure is evident. Large shade umbrellas and other types of shade elements pepper the typical aquatic facility. Important too is the need for space. Guest satisfaction is critical in retaining a profitable facility. By increasing the space in which the guest can stretch out and relax, today's facilities notice greater lengths of stay and increased attendance. Grassy knolls for sunning and deck lounge areas are essential. Other site features such as full-service concessions areas and paperback exchange area are also essential. All in all, greater attention to the site has become a factor in the development of a regional aquatic facility.



■ **CORPORATE SPONSORSHIPS / PARTNERSHIPS**

Marketing and promotions need not have a "Madison Avenue" budget to be successful. All it takes is the right marketing tools in department's 'Tool Kit' and the interest and energy of the staff. One way to get the most of the advertising dollar is to form alliances and relationships with companies who have the advertising budgets most cities could never entertain. Forming alliances with businesses and corporations can be hugely successful in obtaining funding for operations, programs and special events. The stronger the marketing tool kit for aquatics, the stronger the response from the media and corporations. Communities throughout the country have been successful in establishing Corporate Sponsorship Campaigns that have resulted in sponsorships and advertising that fund capital improvements, scholarship campaigns, building maintenance, plantings, training and equipment at all levels. From television and radio commercials to billboards, rate cards and



brochures, the possibilities for free or reduced advertising through corporate partners are available.

A renewed sense of community education, such as Back Yard Pool Safety, Infant and Child CPR taught at Community Pools, fitness and activity lessons, can be accomplished within the business community through hospitals, medical groups, clubs and organizations and specialty shops such as kayaking, scuba, swim shops, etc. This type of community programming can also mean increased positive exposure in the media. This increased positive media exposure will result in increased attendance and revenues at the gate and through corporate relationships.

The concept of Corporate Sponsorship for large recreation events is not a new concept for some park and recreation agencies, but the concept of corporate sponsorships of aquatic facilities and its programs has not been explored in most and is a great resource yet untapped. It is noted that CRPR has been very successful in establishing important partnerships for many of their operations (Gifts-For-Parks, Remembrance Trees, Park Partners, Program Partners, Millbrook Marsh Nature Center, etc.).

Corporate Sponsorships for aquatics need not stop at programs and events. Many of the customer service and guest satisfaction issues that have come up during this study can be addressed by corporate involvement. Shade, seating, landscaping, food concessions, lockers and buildings all can be improved with the help of corporate donations and sponsorship.

■ LOCAL TRENDS

■ Leisure Programs

Survey data has indicated that there is strong customer demand for additional “shallow water” areas (zero-depth entry to 4’ deep). At Welch Pool, the current layout causes the slide-entry safety zone to consume much of this popular-depth area. Observation at the pool also shows that many times the shallow areas are packed shoulder-to-shoulder, while the 5’-deep areas are sparsely populated. Utilization of the tot pools at Welch and Park Forest has decreased significantly in favor of interaction with parents & other swimmers



at the pools edge. Modern zero-depth entry designs were created to address this trend.

In addition, there are many requests for additional shaded areas at Welch Pool, especially for young children. The requests include shade for both pool deck areas and lawn areas.

The use of the community swimming pools on weekday afternoons by organized day-care and summer day-camp providers (both public and private) has increased dramatically over the past five years. Due to complaints of overcrowding by patrons, the CRRA implemented in 1997 measures to regulate pool availability, coupled with a reduced entrance fee, for these groups. During 2001, 10% of all recreational visitors at Welch Pool entered via the group admission rate; for Park Forest Pool the figure is 14%. Many groups purchase season passes for their members, so their numbers are not identifiable. However, demand for recreational pool time continues to grow. A surprising number of potential family customers have noted that they do not attend the pools due to the overcrowding in the shallower areas.

Local hotel/motel swimming pools seem to accommodate their guest demands, but may not provide the level of supervision expected at a public pool. It has also been shown by other communities that hotel/motel pools rarely impact attendance at publicly owned family aquatic centers. The same can be said for backyard pools.

Recreational use of the High School Natatorium during the school year is also noteworthy. CRPR rents the use of the indoor pool on Friday nights from 7:30-9:00pm for a general swim period. Admission is \$3.00 per person. During 2001, 26 Friday Night Swims were held with 1,572 participants. The average attendance was 60 swimmers per night. Recent attendance figures show that the indoor pool routinely approaches its capacity of 100 swimmers. (CRPR also rents the High School pool to offer year-round aquatic instructional programs.)

■ Instructional Programs

Several organizations provide aquatic instructional programs in the Centre Region, including CRPR, YMCA, Penn State University, The Athletic Club,



and Days Inn Penn State, among others. CRPR offers a full range of American Red Cross instructional programs on a year-round basis. The High School Natatorium is rented from State College Area School District for those programs. Private facilities have also been rented, when available, to host CRPR aquatic programs. During the summer, extensive programs are offered by CRPR at the two outdoor pools, in addition to renting the High School Natatorium. During 2001, 170 instructional programs were operated by CRPR at the High School Natatorium (over the 4 seasons); each program met an average of 7 evenings. Those programs involved 1,572 registrants. Demand regularly exceeds the capacities of the programs, so waitlists are a common occurrence for school-year CRPR swim lessons. However, it is expected that the proposed YMCA indoor facility will provide additional opportunities for instructional programs in the region.

■ Competitive Programs

The demand for competitive swim programs remains strong, and is limited only by pool space. During the summer, the two CRPR swim teams serve 350 swimmers; private swim teams serve 400 swimmers, with some individual overlap. The Welch Swim Team and Park Forest Swim Team have been very popular with both swimmers and their parents for many years. Demand during the school year consists of about 350 swimmers in the Centre Region. It appears that there is an unmet demand for additional competitive (intramural level) swimming opportunities during the school year, which should hopefully be met by the addition of the proposed YMCA indoor pool facilities.



SECTION III: LOCAL AQUATIC FACILITY INVENTORY & ANALYSIS

WTI was commissioned, along with HPA, in January of 2001, by the Centre Regional Recreation Authority to conduct an Aquatics Feasibility Study for the region. Together with the members of the Aquatics Task Force, a plan for the future of the aquatics program would be formulated and presented to the public in a series of public meetings. The first step in the process of completing this task was to perform an inventory and analysis of the existing aquatic facilities in the Centre Region.

■ EXISTING AQUATIC FACILITY INVENTORY

The Aquatics Task Force and HPA compiled a list of the available aquatic venues in the CRRA service area that allow for use by the general public on a daily or seasonal basis. There are a total of 19 pools in the region that represent several types of facilities, including hotels, country clubs and municipal community pools. Half of the facilities are hotel properties with relatively small pools that offer limited aquatic opportunities and amenities. Three of the venues are owned and operated by Penn State and are available to the general public on a fee basis. Due to university programs, scheduling opportunities for community aquatics programs are extremely limited.

Although these facilities do entertain residents of the area, they do not directly affect the outdoor aquatic needs of the Centre Region or the immediate physical needs of the Park Forest and William L. Welch Community Swimming Pools. In addition, the facilities on this list do not reflect the trends and concepts discussed earlier in this report, as most of these facilities are traditional in nature and offer little in aquatic entertainment, variety of activities or programming. With the exception of the other community-based pools and those owned by PSU, the remaining facilities have limited space for expansion and can only accommodate a



limited amount of guests. Statistically, hotel pools rarely affect attendance at publicly owned and operated Family Aquatic Centers throughout the country.

STATE COLLEGE AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT NATATORIUM

In the mid-90's, the school district constructed an indoor pool as part of an addition to the High School North Building. The facility accommodates their scholastic swimming and diving programs, as well as (district-wide) physical education needs for students. It is also available for rent to CRPR and the YMCA for community aquatic programs as time is available. It is the policy of the district to provide all their facilities to CRPR as the priority partner. As noted earlier, during 2001 a total of 170 instructional programs were operated by CRPR at the High School Natatorium (over the 4 seasons); each program met an average of 7 evenings and involved a total of 1,572 registrants.

STATE COLLEGE AREA FAMILY YMCA

In July 2001, the State College Area Family YMCA released a report entitled, "A Promise to Our Community." This report clearly explains the YMCA's plans for a fundraising program (currently underway) to raise \$2 million in philanthropic funds to build a \$2.9 million, indoor YMCA Aquatics Center for children, youth, adults and seniors, as well as a teen center. YMCA membership has tripled since the completion of the most recent phase of the YMCA building in January 1999. The State College Area Family YMCA now serves 4,000 members and almost 10,000 people annually. It is identified that membership could grow to 6,500 members in the near future.

Based upon that report, the YMCA has launched the fund-raising campaign for the expansion of their facility at Whitehall Road and Waupelani Drive. This new facility will be comprised of a new therapeutic pool (1,200 sq. ft.) and an 8-lane, lap/fitness pool (4,500 sq. ft.), new locker room facilities and a teen center. The 18,000 square foot facility is scheduled to start construction as funds permit.





The YMCA of the USA East-Field Office, to test if there was sufficient local program need, community support, and financial resources for such an expansion, conducted a Community Needs Assessment. Some 90% of those interviewed felt that the YMCA needed to expand its facilities with an indoor fitness and family pool center, as well as an expanded teen center. A second study, conducted by a private firm, validated the original assessment and specifically confirmed the value of the YMCA Aquatics Center.

With the YMCA's plans for a new indoor aquatics center, there is no need for the CRRA to pursue the concept of an indoor pool (or an air-support structure for Park Forest Pool) at this time. This announcement, however, does not in any way diminish the recommendations of this study or the outdoor aquatic needs of the residents of the Centre Region. In fact, it further demonstrates that the existing pools in the community have not yet met the aquatic needs of the residents. Outdoor swimming and the social and physical opportunities that it presents are different than those addressed in a year-round facility, such as the YMCA plans to build. A copy of the YMCA report is attached to this document in Appendix A.

PENN STATE UNIVERSITY

Although indoor pools are available at PSU and many people in the community use these facilities, the opportunity for use by the general public has diminished over the years, as University programs grow to meet student and athletic program needs. Limited time is available for the public at PSU indoor pools. The indoor pool at the White Building was recently renovated. Although there have been planning discussions regarding construction of another indoor pool on campus as part of McCoy Natatorium, no timetable has been established for that development.

SCIENCE PARK RECREATION ASSOCIATION

The Science Park Recreation Association experienced a sinkhole problem and was closed for the 2001 season. The facility served approximately 300



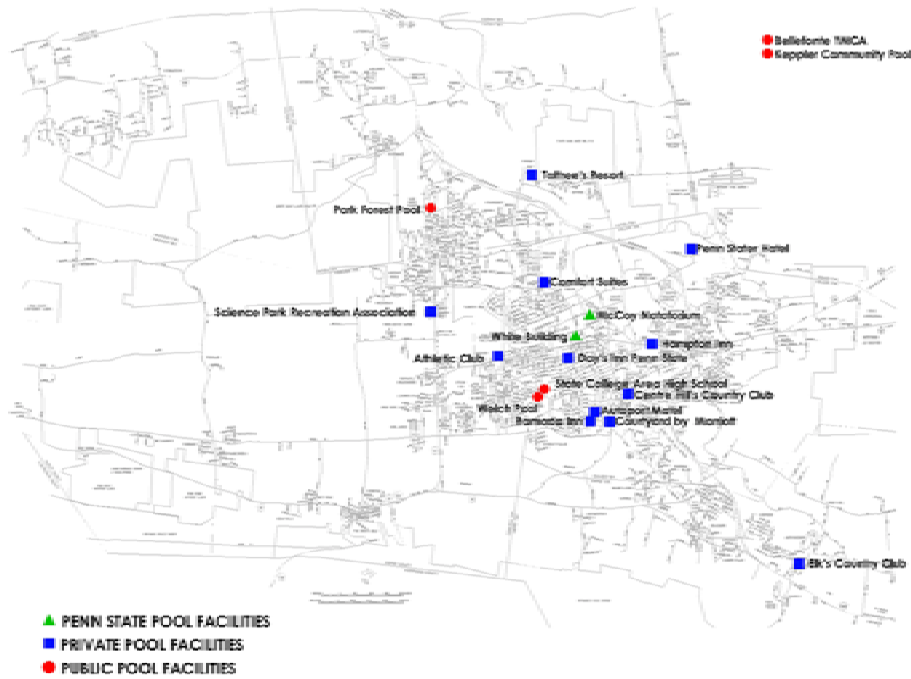
families. Costs to rehabilitate the facility have proven quite sizeable, and repair work did not occur in time for the 2001 season. The closing of the Science Park Recreation Association Pool may be one of the causes for the increase in 2001 attendance at Park Forest and Welch Pools. The association currently plans to perform the repair work at the facility in time for the 2002 summer swim season.

OTHER PRIVATE FACILITIES

There are a number of other privately operated aquatic facilities in the Centre Region. Examples are apartment complexes, fitness clubs, and hotel / motel pools. These pools tend to be small in size with a limited client base. Judging from the number of apartment-residents that visit the two public pools, the outdoor pools at apartment complexes do not fully meet the needs of their residents. The fitness club pools tend to be oriented toward instructional or fitness program. These pools (and their fees for public use) are included on the following map and table.

LOCAL AQUATIC FACILITY INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS

Centre Region Council of Governments /
Centre Regional Recreation Authority
AQUATICS FEASIBILITY STUDY - 2001



Facility Location Map

**Hoffman &
Popovich
Architects, LLC**

110 West Main Street
Boalsburg, PA 16827-0125
814-466-7811
fax 814-466-6340
hpaarchitects.com



100 Park Avenue
Beaver Dam, WI 53916
920.867.7375
fax 920.867.7999

LOCAL AQUATIC FACILITY INVENTORY AND ANAYSIS

Centre Region Parks & Recreation - Feb. 2001

Facility Name	2001 Fees	Pass Type	Desc.	Hours
Welch & Park Forest Pools	\$40.00	Single	Heated, Outdoor	M-Sun 12:00-7:30 pm
Centre Region Parks & Rec.	\$20.00	Senior (65+) / Toddler		
131 S. Fraser St., #3	\$160.00	Family (4+)		
814.234.3071	\$15.00	5th family members +		
	\$3.00	Daily admission		
Ramada Inn	\$170.00	Single	Heated, Outdoor	M-Sun 8:00 am-8:00 pm
1450 S. Atherton St.	\$200.00	Couple	Use of the Indoor Pool is not permitted	
238-3001, ext 2102	\$250.00	Family		
	\$3.00	Daily admission		
Science Park Rec. Assn.	\$600-\$800	Bond	Heated, Outdoor	
Science Park Road	\$200.00	Single		
238-4862	\$2.50	Daily Admission for Guest		
	\$3.00	Night Swims (Invite by members)		
Autoport Motel	\$195.00	Single	Heated, Outdoor	M-Fri 10:00 am - 8 pm
1405 S. Atherton St.	\$295.00	Family (2-4 members)		Sat & Sun 9:00 am - 8:00 pm
237-7666	\$30.00	5th family members +		2001 rates not yet established
Toftrees Resort	\$1,000.00	Annual	Heated, Outdoor	M - Sun 11:00 am - 8:00 pm
1 Country Club Lane	\$75.00	Single Pool Membership	Annual Fee includes 5 days of golfing per week	
234-8000	\$150.00	Family (2 +) Pool Membership	Single Pool Membership, Memorial Day - Labor Day	
Kepler Comm. Pool	\$60.00	Single	Heated, Outdoor	M-Sun 12:00 pm - 8:00 pm
Bellefonte Borough	\$80.00	Family		
355-5551	\$3.00	Daily admission - Adult		2001 fees n/a
	\$2.00	Daily admission - Children		
Elks Country Club	\$70.00-\$80.00	Single + dues	Heated, Outdoor	M-Sun 12:00 pm - 8:00 pm
Route 322	\$140.00	Couple + dues		
466-7231	\$50.00-\$60.00	per additional person		
	\$72.00	Dues		
Millheim Borough	\$50.00	Youth / Adult / Senior	Heated, Outdoor	
Penns Valley Pool	\$90.00	Family		
349-5905	\$3.00	Daily admission - Adults / Seniors		
	\$3.50	Daily admission - Children		
Centre Hills C. Club	\$5,000.00	Initiation Fee	Heated, Outdoor	M-Sun 11:00 am - 8:00 pm
Branch Road	\$1,560.00	Annual Dues		
238-0111	\$400.00	Single Pool Membership		
	\$555.00	Family Pool Membership		
	\$3.00	Daily admission for guests		
PSU Outdoor Pool	\$30.00	15 Visits	Heated, Outdoor	M-Sun 10:30 am - 9:00 pm
Penn State University	\$2.50	Daily Admission	Will Open 5/1 - 9/30 Dependent on Weather	
865-1432				
PSU McCoy Natatorium	\$40.00	Semester Pass, Single	Heated, Indoor	M-Fri 7:30 am - 9:00 pm
Penn State University	\$80.00	Semester Pass, Family (2+)		11:00 am - 1:20 pm
865-1432	\$2.00	Daily Admission		5:30 pm - 6:30 pm
PSU White Building	\$40.00	Semester Pass, Single	Heated, Indoor	M-Th 6:30 am - 11:00 pm
Penn State University	\$80.00	Semester Pass, Family (2+)		Fri 6:30 am - 10:00 pm
865-1432	\$2.00	Daily Admission		Sat & Sun 10:00 am - 10:00 pm
Penn Stater Hotel	\$20.00	Single, per month	Heated, Indoor	Sun 9:00 am - 9:00 pm
Penn State Research Park				M- Sat 11:00 am - 11:00 pm
863-5000				
Days Inn Penn State	\$20.00	Single, per month	Heated, Indoor	M-Th 6:30am-11pm
240 S. Pugh St.	\$35.00	Initiation Fee		Fri. 6:30am-10pm
238-8454	\$15.00	Couple, per month + initiation fee		Sat 9:00 am - 10:00 pm
Courtyard by Marriot	\$30.00	Single + Initiation Fee	Heated, Indoor	M-Sun 6:00 am - 11:00 pm
1730 University Dr.	\$50.00	Family (2+)		
238-1881	\$40.00	Initiation Fee		
Comfort Suites	Guest Only		Heated, Indoor	M-Sun 8:00 am - 10:00 pm
235-1900				
Athletic Club	\$40.00	Single, per month	Heated, Indoor	M-Thu 6:00 am - 10:00 pm
1445 W. College Ave	\$50.00	Family, per month (2+)		Fri 6:00 am - 8:00 pm
237-5108	\$45.00	10 visit pass		Sat & Sun 8:30 am - 7:00 pm



EXISTING POOL FACILITY EVALUATION REPORTS

Staff members conducted a tour of the CRRA aquatic facilities on February 26, 2001. The tour included two pool sites: Park Forest Community Swimming Pool and the William L. Welch Community Swimming Pool. Staff opened up all the facilities and answered questions relating to the history, maintenance and operations. Chuck Neuman and Judith Leblein of WTI reviewed the pools and associated equipment, Alan Popovich and Kelly Harris of HPA reviewed the buildings and site.

■ PARK FOREST COMMUNITY SWIMMING POOL

The original pool was opened in 1970 and renovated in 1991. Those renovations included the addition of a wading pool and a new marcite plaster finish. In 1999, new blacktop was placed in the shared (with SCASD) parking and a picnic pavilion was added to the facility. During the 2001 Season, Park Forest Pool hosted 17,641 recreational visits during the 100-day season. The “*pool user load*” at Park Forest Pool is 235 people in the water at one time, as defined by the PA. Public Bathing Place Manual. The following swimmer numbers are defined by the state bathing code for each area of Park Forest Pool:

- Wading Pool: 47
- Main Pool, Shallow Area: 140
- Main Pool, Deeper Area: 42
- Diving Well: 6

Total Park Forest Pool User Load = 235

When the lounging areas are included from the state formulas, the total facility capacity has been calculated to be 423.

■ Main Pool Structure – Park Forest

The Main Pool is a 25 yd, six-lane pool with a separate diving well. The structure is reinforced concrete with a relatively recent plaster finish that appears to be in good condition. The pool holds 220,000 gallons with a



surface area of 4,480 square feet (3,150 ft.² lane pool section; 1,330 ft.² diving well section).

The structure appears to be quite serviceable with minimal maintenance. The estimated life of this important component is at least 15 years. The marcite plaster life is usually something a little more difficult to predict due to outside influences including maintenance procedures. However, continued care, the life could certainly be another 15+ years. At this time the surface is painted at the beginning of each season.

■ Main Pool Filtration and Circulation – Park Forest

The original circulation system was modified in 1990. Some piping along with new Mermaid® fiberglass high-rate sand filters were added and should provide a long service life. A Pool-Link® chemical control system was installed in 2001 and should provide good service with normal maintenance. There are some areas that will require service in the near future: there appears to be a leak in the backwash-waste holding system and has been repaired, though the tank is severely rusted and needs to be replaced. This can be replaced with a large plastic holding tank for under \$4,000.

The pool pumps, hair and lint strainers, and piping (PVC and some steel) are the old variety and need to be scheduled for replacement. Re-piping will clean up the mechanical room and make it more efficient to operate. The new hair and lint strainers will require less attention because they are constructed of non-ferrous material. A budget estimate for the above work would be in the \$20,000 range, including all related electrical expenses.

The pool heater is a 1994 model AP1010 Teledyne Laars® natural gas heater. The condition of the heater is consistent with equipment of this age. The average life of direct-fired pool heaters is 8-12 years, depending on the chemical content of the water, proper venting and the mechanical room condition. Heater replacement is estimated at \$10,000.



■ Wading Pool – Park Forest

The Wading Pool was constructed in 1990 and opened in 1991. The concrete shell appears to be in good condition. Shallow vessels tend to have a shorter longevity than deeper vessels, due to the fact that cold weather and frost tend to act more aggressively on them. In this case, the surface finish (marcite plaster with chlorinated rubber paint) is repaired as necessary and repainted each spring. This should continue to be handled as an annual operating expense by CRRA.

Wading Pool Filtration & Circulation – Park Forest

The circulation system is in need of new plumbing and equipment. The current equipment is housed below deck, which is most harmful to the life of the equipment. Our recommendation is to replace the existing equipment and, if possible, reinstall it at deck level. This would be easily accomplished, since the pool is a skimmer pool and can use a self-priming pump. Estimated cost \$15,000-\$18,000, including electrical work.

■ Other Pool Related Issues – Park Forest

The pool deck is a critical part of any pool facility. It provides access to activities along with lounging and sunbathing opportunities. The condition of the deck is critical to bather comfort and safety. There appeared to be a few locations where the deck is disjointed and could be a tripping hazard. Staff should inspect the deck surface to determine if any areas require patching or replacement. This type of repair is most commonly handled as an annual maintenance item as opposed to a capital improvement, unless the deck deterioration is widespread.

In general, this facility has been well maintained and has operable life available. There are equipment life issues that were covered in this overview that should be addressed. As a note, the overall Master Plan includes recommendations that require modifications to this facility.



■ **Site Related Issues – Park Forest**

Size/Ownership – Park Forest pool occupies approximately 1.5 acres of land owned by the CRRA with a total area, including parking, of 3 acres.

Parking - A 57-car parking lot adjacent to the pool is available for use by pool patrons, however it does not meet current the number of parking spaces currently required by Patton Township. The Authority permits the school district to utilize, without charge, the pool parking area for Park Forest Middle School staff, visitors, and bus parking. Three HC parking spaces and a loading/unloading area are designated. The parking area was repaved and lined in 1999.

Accessibility – The pool, bathhouse and concession facilities generally meet the requirements of the ADA, except for the absence of accessible toilet and shower facilities and some requirements for access to the pool.

Landscaping – Because of the wooded nature of the pools setting, there have been few landscape improvements made aside from traditional foundation plantings at the bathhouse. Our recommendation for landscape improvements is limited to minimal aesthetic additions to enliven the space.

Security – A chain link perimeter fence separates the operational area of the pool complex from the outside. Flood type security lighting has been provided to illuminate the existing pool deck.

Site Furnishings – A roofed pavilion structure with picnic tables provides a suitable shaded area for congregating. Sunbathers utilize the lawn.

Topography – It's significant to note that a surface drainage swale crosses the site through the existing lawn area on the east side of the pool. Any improvements in this area must deal with this issue. A steeply sloped and



wooded bank characterizes the west side of the pool; the vertical grade change could be incorporated in the development of a water slide.

Aesthetic Impression – This facility imparts a friendly neighborhood feel, due in part to the wooded nature of the site and its relative seclusion from major pedestrian and vehicular routes.

■ Building Issues – Park Forest

The Park Forest Bath House was constructed in 1970 along with the community swimming pool. The structure is single story, of approximately 3,000 square feet, of non-combustible masonry bearing construction with a combustible wood roof structure of a combined flat and wood shake mansard design. The design provides for a bilaterally symmetrical plan to accommodate men and women’s changing and shower areas characterized by an open-court (unroofed) configuration. With the exception of minor interior space and accessibility adaptations, the structure appears to be of near original design providing a facility program representative of early 1970 accommodations and requirements. The facility has been generally well maintained and is fully utilized for current programmatic activities and functions.

Although continuing to serve the needs of the adjacent community, the facility is deficient with respect to current regulatory requirements for ADA accessibility and plumbing fixture counts for both men and women’s services based upon projected use. Furthermore, contemporary programs for facilities of this type identify the need to provide for individual family changing areas complete with independent toilet and shower facilities that are not easily accommodated within the current layout. An inventory of fixture requirements based upon a proposed bathing capacity of 560 patrons is as follows:



Park Forest Swimming Pool	Men's		Women's	
	Existing	Required	Existing	Required
Showers	4	5	4	7
Water Closets	4	5	4	10
Urinals	3	5	--	--
Lavatories	2	5	2	5
Drinking Fountain	1	1	1	1
Service Sink	0	1	0	1

A minimum of one ADA compliant fixture of each type indicated above is required.

The physical structure is displaying signs of deterioration at the roof. Evidence of water infiltration due to flashing failures along masonry piers that define portions of the mansard configuration have contributed to deterioration of the structural wood trusses and (presumably) portions of the roof deck. In addition, increased parapet deterioration is observed as a result of water infiltration and freeze thaw cycling due to the inherent design that did not provide for adequate sealing of the masonry parapet. At the ground level at the masonry wall bases and slab on grade junction, sealants have failed or are non-existent and are allowing for increasing water infiltration.

The 300 square foot pump house is located across from the bathhouse, at the opposite end of the main pool and diving well. Constructed of a similar masonry bearing construction but limited to a flat roof configuration, the structure is experiencing similar problems as identified with the bathhouse with respect to roof and parapet deterioration. A long unit masonry wall extends from the pump house to screen exterior pump and filter equipment and to provide a backdrop to the diving well area. Similar water-deterioration of this wall is evident due to inadequate sealing, flashing and capping.





The following deficiencies or remedial treatment should be addressed in order to provide for future utilization of the facility:

BATHHOUSE – PARK FOREST

- Remove existing roof coverings to include mansard wood shakes and flat portions; replace with new standing seam metal and EPDM roofing at the mansards and flat portions respectively; provide appropriate remediation of deteriorated fascia and soffit as required.
- Repair structural deterioration of roof trusses.
- Reconstruct existing masonry parapet walls providing for adequate watertight caps and flashing.
- Upgrade existing shower and toilet areas to meet contemporary standards with respect to fixture count and ADA accessibility.
- Provide new sealant at the junction of all masonry wall bases and slabs on grade.
- Provide for new painting at the interior and exterior.

In addition, due to the need to accommodate additional programmatic requirements with respect to number of fixtures and potential family changing areas, a significant reconfiguration of the interior layout will be necessary.

Consideration to provide for enclosing of the open courts will require further study to assess the structural requirements necessary to accomplish this task, and will most likely require redesign and replacement of a majority of the existing roof structure.

PUMP HOUSE – PARK FOREST

- Remove existing roof coverings; replace with new EPDM roofing; provide appropriate remediation of deteriorated fascia and soffit as required.
- Repair structural deterioration of roof structure as required.
- Reconstruct existing masonry parapet walls providing for adequate watertight caps and flashing.
- Provide new sealant at the junction of all masonry wall bases and slabs on grade.
- Provide for new painting at the exterior.

WILLIAM L. WELCH COMMUNITY SWIMMING POOL

The original pool was constructed in 1958 and opened in 1959 by a non-profit, community association, “The State College Recreation Assn.” In 1960, the bathhouses were reconfigured so that the pool entry would be at the rear of facility, as it is today. In 1969 the Centre Regional Recreation Authority was formed when the pool was transferred to municipal operation. In the early 1970’s a perimeter floor inlet system was installed to improve circulation and is still operating today. In 1983-84 the site of the original wading pool was abandoned, and the current wading pool constructed. At that time a new gutter system was installed on the main pool, concrete decks were replaced, and a Mermaid® vacuum diatomaceous earth filter was installed (which remains in service today). In 1987, the water slide was added to the facility. The water slide remains very popular, but is showing signs of age. In 1999, both pool shells were sandblasted, coated with Thoroseal®, and repainted with chlorinated rubber paint.

During the 2001 season, Welch Pool hosted 29,111 recreational visits during the 100-day season. The “*pool user load*” at Welch Pool is 315 people in the water at one time, as defined by the PA. Public Bathing Place Manual. Since crowding is an issue at this site, the following swimmer numbers are defined by the state bathing code for each area of Welch:

- Wading Pool: 43
- Main Pool, Slide Exit area: 3
- Main Pool, Shallow Area: 186
- Main Pool, Deeper Area: 77
- Diving Area: 6

Total Welch Pool User Load = 315

When the lounging areas are included from the state formulas, the total facility capacity has been calculated to be 627.



The main pool contains 330,000 gallons with a water surface area of 7,225 square feet. In general, the facility has served the community very well, but after 43 years of service, it has surpassed its service life and requires retirement. The Aquatics Task Force is concerned about the high likelihood of a catastrophic failure that will render the facility unusable. The at-risk areas are discussed below.

■ **Main Pool Structure – Welch Pool**

The pool is a six-lane, "L" shaped vessel, typical of those built in the late 1950's and early 1960's. The pool construction is reinforced concrete with a slab construction for the floor. This type of construction is high maintenance due to the number of floor joints that require attention and have the propensity to leak. Even after a through inspection and repairs each spring, the pool continues to loose water each day due to joint leakage.

There are numerous cracks in the walls and floor consistent with a pool of this type and age. The interior finish of the pool is a cement based "Thoroseal®" product, which requires frequent re-coatings and is currently repainted annually with chlorinated rubber paint. What will eventually occur is a condition where the base concrete surface will not support a coating. When the coating comes off, it takes concrete with it, resulting in exposed aggregate and extremely rough (and porous) surfaces.

■ **Main Pool Filtration and Circulation – Welch Pool**

The pool is operating essentially with the original systems that came with the pool. There may have been some replacements, modifications and maintenance, however it is operating to 40-year-old standards. The vacuum diatomaceous earth filter is also beyond its useful life and is undersized by current standards. This can be confirmed by the observation of clouded water on busy days. The configuration of the filter and the mechanical space itself is very labor intensive. Due to the age of the pool, it would be a poor investment to replace the filter system. Per today's standards, the pool turnover rates would require larger piping because of higher flow rates. This is the trap that agencies fall into by replacing portions of equipment on aging



facilities. Determining where maintenance should stop and at what price is often a difficult local decision.

The gutter return system is comprised of a number of plastic drains around the perimeter, which by current standards do not meet the skimming needs of the pool surface, where 90% of the contaminants are located. The pool loses up to two inches of water per day, which is believed to be because of possible leaks in the structure and piping. A leak detection firm was contracted by the CRRRA this past fall. Five leaks were detected in the pool shell and have been repaired so as to prevent the formation of a sinkhole under the structure.

■ Wading Pool – Welch Pool

The Wading Pool dates from 1984 and also has inadequate filtration and circulation to meet any of today's standards. The condition of this pool is such that it is difficult to determine just where to begin to make repairs. Beyond the physical problems of the structure and the systems, there are operational and programmatic issues that raise the question of total value. We also recommend that this vessel be replaced along with the Main Pool system. If possible, the filter should be located at deck level, as recommended for the Park Forest wading pool.

■ Other Pool Related Issues – Welch Pool

There are other issues, such as the pool decks that need repair and replacement. The pool deck area is limited, as is the parking and facility access. These issues are discussed below.

■ Site Related Issues – Welch Pool

Size/Ownership - Welch Pool also occupies approximately 3 acres of land “leased” to the CRRRA by the SCASD on a year-to-year basis. The Authority or the school district have not located documents related to that lease from the 1950’s to the State College Recreation Association. Based on the comments from prior Directors, it is suspected that the arrangement was only verbal in nature, and included only the fenced pool property, not the parking area. Combining the lease status with current Master Plan discussions by the



school district (that no land is available for expansion), directly affects issues such as expanding the pool features, bather capacity, parking and accessibility. Note that a lease with a minimum 25-year term is required in order to obtain state funding assistance for improvements, and such grant assistance has not been used at Welch Pool to date.

Parking - A 37-car parking lot adjacent to the pool is available for use by pool patrons when school is not in session. Two handicapped parking spaces are designated. Parking permits are issued by the school district; school students, school staff, and school visitors regularly fill this lot when school is in session. The pool lot is not directly lighted for evening school or pool uses. Pool patrons routinely use the adjoining school lots since only 37 spaces are available near Welch Pool.

Accessibility – The pool and bathhouse facility meet the requirements of the ADA. The turf area and concession used by sunbathers are separated from the concrete pool deck by stairs, except for a circuitous route to accommodate handicapped guests.

Landscaping – Landscape plantings currently consist of view obscuring hedge materials and a few recently planted deciduous trees in the lawn area.

Security – A chain link perimeter fence separates the operational area of the pool complex from the outside. Flood type security lighting has been provided by CRRA to illuminate the existing pool deck (but not the parking area).

Site Furnishings – Several seat-height retaining walls provide seating for users. One bleacher unit exists for use by bathers and spectators during competition events. Except for several trees and a canopy erected near the wading pool, no meaningful accommodation for shade exists at this site.



Aesthetic Impression – The facility is characteristic of the era in which it was constructed. Limited landscaping and the chain link barrier fence impart an institutional feeling. There is little screening between the parking area and bather areas. The pool complex lacks a definitive entry identity.

■ **Building Issues – Welch Pool**

The William L. Welch Bath House and Entry Pavilion were originally constructed adjacent to Westerly Parkway 1958 in combination with the community swimming pool. In the early 1960's the current Bath House and Entry Pavilions were added to the rear of the complex. The original Bath House and Entry Pavilions have since been utilized for remote storage, pump and filter equipment, and a concession area (vending machines).

The current utility structures are all single story, of approximately 552 and 640 square feet respectively, of non-combustible masonry bearing construction with a combustible flat wood roof structure. The Entry Pavilion is 160 square feet and is also single story, non-combustible masonry bearing construction with a flat EDPM roof. The main Bath House is approximately 34 x 92 feet (approximately 3,125 square feet) and is characterized by its sitting opposite the Entry Pavilion at the shallow end of the main pool "L".

The main Bath House design provides for a bilaterally symmetrical plan to accommodate men and women's changing and shower areas. The roof structure is composed of engineered beams supporting a flat EDPM and ballasted roof system. The main Bath House structure, with the exception of minor interior space and accessibility adaptations, appears to be of near original design providing a facility program representative of late 1950/early 1960 accommodations and requirements. Generally, the facility has been well maintained and is fully utilized for current programmatic activities and functions.

Although continuing to serve the needs of the adjacent community, the facility is deficient with respect to current regulatory requirements for ADA accessibility and plumbing fixture counts for both men and women's services based upon projected use. No accommodations for individual family changing areas are provided.



An inventory of fixture requirements based upon a proposed bathing capacity of 825 patrons is as follows:

Wm. L. Welch Swimming Pool	Men's		Women's	
	Existing	Required	Existing	Required
Showers	5	7	5	11
Water Closets	5	7	5	14
Urinals	5	7	--	--
Lavatories	2	7	2	7
Drinking Fountain	1	1	1	1
Service Sink	0	1	0	1

A minimum of one ADA compliant fixture of each type indicated above is required. ADA accessibility is provided into the facility, the main Bath House (men's and women's sides) and into the pool itself (by a ramp). A remote and winding accessible route connects the main deck area to the grass lawn on the south side of the pool. The same route accesses the former Entry Pavilion, although access to the vending area is impeded by a 7" entry step.

The physical structures are all showing signs of deterioration at the roof. The EDPM and ballast roofing is past the expected life of the material and will require replacement, and the flat wood roof structure is deteriorating due to age and water damage. The masonry walls appear to be in good condition, although some deterioration at the wall base and slab on grade junction was observed where sealants have failed. In addition, domestic water piping is near the end of its useful life; methods to provide for adequate mixing of hot and cold water supplies is non-existent and requires complete retrofit or replacement.

The following deficiencies should be addressed in order to provide for future utilization of the building:

- ENTRY PAVILION – WELCH POOL**
- Replace existing EDPM roof and ballast.



-Provide new sealant at the junction of all masonry wall bases and slabs on grade.

-Provide for new painting at the interior and the exterior.

UTILITY PAVILIONS – WELCH POOL

-Replace existing EDPM roof and ballast.

-Provide new sealant at the junction of all masonry wall base and slab on grade.

-Provide for new painting at the interior and the exterior including sand blasting, priming and repainting of structural steel at the pump house.

-Identify a new location for concessions (vending machines) that are visible and provides for full ADA accessibility.

MAIN BATH HOUSE – WELCH POOL

-Remove existing roof coverings and replace with a new, ballasted EPDM roofing system.

-Repair structural deterioration of main roof beams.

-Upgrade existing shower and toilet areas to meet contemporary standards with respect to fixture count and ADA accessibility.

-Remove and replace existing plumbing system.

-Provide new sealant at the junction of all masonry wall bases and slabs on grade.

-Provide for new painting at the interior and exterior.

-Provide doors and hardware to secure storage rooms.

In addition, due to the need to accommodate additional programmatic requirements with respect to number of fixtures and potential family changing areas, a significant reconfiguration of the interior layout of the main Bath House will be necessary.

SUMMARY OF EVALUATIONS

In the evaluation of both Park Forest Community Pool and William L. Welch Community Pool, one can see that there is a difference between the two facilities.



Park Forest Community Pool has a useful life with the possibility of adding features and more entertainment and recreational value to the facility.

Wm. L. Welch Community Pool, on the other hand, has reached the end of its service life; and we cannot recommend adding additional capital to the facility (other than minor maintenance) to keep it running for the short term.

■ AQUATIC FACILITY "SERVICE GAP" ANALYSIS

This purpose of this report is to define and address responsible ways to fill the "service gap" that has developed between the **demand** for aquatic services and the **supply** of public aquatic opportunities in terms of both facilities and programs. Exactly what is missing in our community with respect to aquatics? While the indoor aquatic service gap should be closed with the construction of the proposed YMCA indoor pool complex, the following factors indicate that a notable service gap exists for summer (outdoor) aquatics:

- A summer bather-capacity of 1,200 has been recommended by the consultants for the Centre Region aquatics program. Further, it is recommended that the capacity increase to 1,600 within 5-7 years.
- The complaints of crowding at Welch Pool have caused potential patrons to refrain from attending, which widens the service gap.
- The well-known waitlists for summer instruction classes indicate a need to address the service gap. Since the most popular youth swim instruction involves water depths of less than 4', the physical layout (depths) of Welch Pool limits the number of instructional programs that can be offered to patrons. The popularity of the newer zero-depth entry designs permit instructional flexibility and increased recreational value for patrons.
- Expansion at the Welch Pool site is not a viable measure to fill the service gap, especially in view of the age of the facility and site constraints.
- Building and operating a third outdoor, regional pool to fill the service gap would not be economically feasible.





SECTION IV: RECOMMENDATIONS

This report makes the following recommendations as an opportunity for the CRRA to realize the mission statement declared at the beginning of the report. The Centre Region cannot sustain more than two CRRA aquatic facilities to realize the objective of being fiscally responsible in its approach to development and operations and to provide outstanding service to users of the facilities. These two facilities should consist of:

- **A renovated and refurbished Park Forest Community Pool facility and,**
- **A new Regional Family Aquatic Center at a new site within the Centre Region.**

A breakdown of estimates of probable cost as well as conceptual plans follows each site review.

■ PARK FOREST COMMUNITY SWIMMING POOL

This pool has served the community well and is recommended for rehabilitation to meet new standards for sanitation and the Americans with Disabilities Act, as well as for renovation and enhancement of features and elements within the facility to provided for an increased entertainment value and guest satisfaction. These renovations will also allow for greater interaction of families, improve accessibility for guest of all abilities and become more family and ‘non-swimmer’ friendly.

Recommendations for the Park Forest Community Pool include the addition of a fully accessible water playground complete with interactive elements, shade and deck areas, or the addition of a multi-level slide complex with splash pools and run-outs. Either option is possible, but it is suggested that only one option be integrated into the rehabilitation of the facility, so as to not over-extend the capital cost in relation to the operating and maintenance aspect of the facility or the return on investment. For the purposes of the report and for the estimates of probable cost included in the appendix, a water playground has been shown. In either case, it is recommended that the existing wading pool be removed due to the quantity and cost of the work required to improve the pool.



Mechanical improvements will bring the pools into compliance with current health and safety requirements, along with addressing efficiency and cost of operations. Improvements to the existing pool will include the possible addition of water features such as a drop slide and the addition of a pool lift (a piece of equipment located on the deck used to provide access into the water for those not capable of using other methods) and other elements geared for accessibility.

Improvements to the support buildings will include aesthetic as well as functional improvements to improve guest satisfaction and meet all new codes and standards. The findings of this report recommend that the bathhouse be replaced. For the required improvements to be done correctly would entail the dismantling of the existing structure down to the exterior walls. The cost to renovate the structure is as great as it would be to construct a new structure that is better designed and located to service the facility. The new facility would be orientated to provide for better circulation through and operations of the facility.

Site recommendations for the facility include the addition of a concessions area with seating and shade opportunities, increased deck areas around the existing pool and proposed pools, addition of large shade elements and minimal aesthetic landscape improvements. It is also recommended that the existing parking area be re-designed and re-striped so as to maximize the parking opportunities of the existing site..

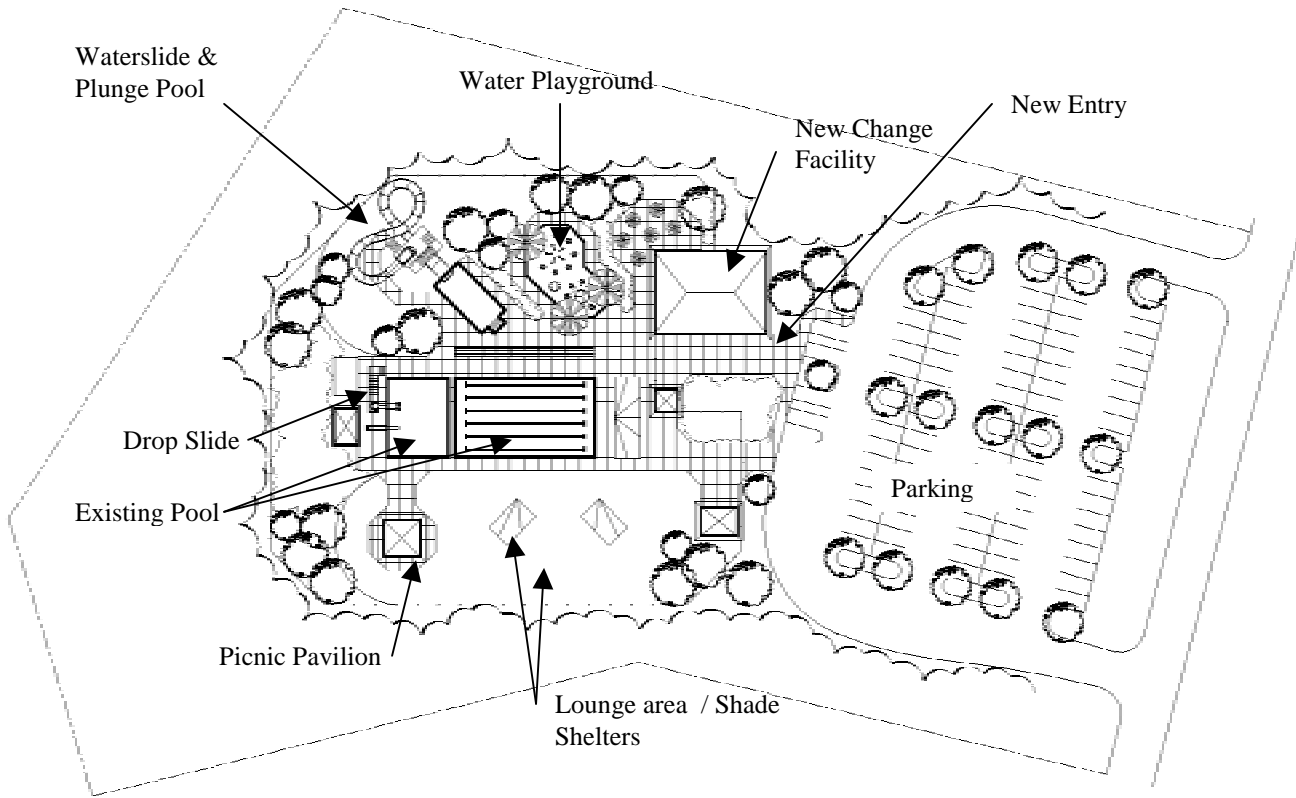
ALTERNATIVE CONCEPTS & IDEAS FOR PARK FOREST POOL

The idea of enclosing the Park Forest Pool facility with an inflatable vinyl dome has been proposed to lengthen the swimming season to year-round or to lengthen the current season. While on its face this suggestion has merit, there are issues that limit its feasibility in this case. Most notable is the fact that the existing infrastructure (utility systems and mechanical systems) was designed for temperate use only. They must be drained during winter months to prevent damage from freezing. The existing bathhouse is not insulated for



winter use. Therefore, it would require significant building and systems upgrades to permit the year-round use of the pool.

It is also significant to note that the warranty on these products is very



PARK FOREST POOL RENOVATION CONCEPTUAL PLAN

**Hoffman &
Popovich
Architects, LLC**

110 West Main Street
Boalsburg, PA 16827-0125
814.466.7811
fax 814.466.6340 hparchitects.com



100 Park Avenue
Beaver Dam, WI 53916
920.887.7375
fax 920.887.7999
www.watertechnologyinc.com

limited – usually in the 3-year range. We must also consider issues pertaining to snow load and maintenance, nor is the type of feature considered ‘user compatible’. The development of a new indoor YMCA facility also reduces the need for this option. In short, the dome idea would require a significant capital expenditure that would, in effect, triple the operating expense of the facility. Historically, the attendance of such a facility does not increase to the level of supporting its cost.

AQUATIC FEASIBILITY STUDY**RECOMMENDATION FOR THE PARK FOREST COMMUNITY POOL****ESTIMATES OF PROBABLE PROJECT COST**

ELEMENT	QUANTITY		ESTIMATED COST
<u>Site Elements</u>			
Demolition/Earthwork	Allowance	\$33,600.00	\$33,600
Site Utilities Upgrade	Allowance	\$11,200.00	\$11,200
Shade Structures	8 EA	x \$3,360.00	\$26,880
Decks/ Deck Drainage (Interior)	30,000 SF	x \$5.60	\$168,000
Sod	3,000 SF	x \$1.68	\$5,040
Landscape	3,000 SF	x \$5.60	\$16,800
<u>Architecture Elements</u>			
Renovate Change Facility/Admin. Building & Concessions	Allowance	\$218,400.00	\$218,400
Renovate Pool Mechanical Room	LS	x \$28,000.00	\$28,000
<u>Aquatic Elements</u>			
Renovate Existing Pool Mechanical	LS	x \$56,000.00	\$56,000
Drop-Slide & Tower	1 LS	\$39,200.00	\$39,200
Splash Playground	5,000	\$128.80	\$644,000
Interactive Water Elements	Allowance	\$95,200.00	\$95,200
Subtotal - Estimated Construction Cost			\$1,342,320
Contingency on Estimated Construction Cost	15%		\$201,348
TOTAL ESTIMATED CONSTRUCTION COST			\$1,543,668
<u>Owner Expenses & Project Fees</u>			
Project Fees (A & E)	9%	x 1,543,668	\$138,930
Testing, Permits, Surveys & Soils Report	Allowance	x 12,500	\$12,500
Owner's F.F. & E. (Furniture, Fixtures & Equipment)	Allowance	x 40,000	\$40,000
Subtotal Estimated Owner Expenses & Project Fees			\$191,430
TOTAL ESTIMATED PROJECT COST (2001 Dollars)			\$1,735,098

Alternate / Optional Elements

Waterslide & Tower Complex(Three-Four Body Flumes)	1 LS	\$475,000.00	\$475,000
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Notes:

1. Estimated project cost represent completion of elements as a total project. Elements can be phased. Estimated construction cost includes contractor mark-up and prevailing wage rates.
2. Estimate includes pool excavation and structure, pool gutter, pool finishes, deck equipment, safety ropes, pool mechanical systems, body flume waterslide (installed) & concrete tower and stair with a 1 slide capacity, waterslide mechanical system and piping and water activities with mechanical systems and piping.
3. Estimate does not include additional contingencies for unusual soil conditions or unknown development risk items not identified in the soils report.



NEW REGIONAL FAMILY AQUATIC FACILITY / WILLIAM L. WELCH COMMUNITY SWIMMING POOL

To best meet the aquatic needs of the Centre Region, this report recommends that a new Regional Family Aquatic Facility be developed at a new location to be determined by the COG and CRRA. The project team generated alternative options for the renovation of William L. Welch Community Pool, but none were found to provide for the objectives and requirements outlined in this report for the successful development of the CRRA aquatics program. These alternative options are presented following the description of the recommendation for a new facility.

The new Regional Family Aquatic Facility would be comprised of a 17,500 square foot leisure pool with zero depth (beach-type) entry, 6-lane competitive pool and water slide complex with landing area. (Welch Pool currently provides 7,225 sq. ft. of water surface in the main pool). Children's interactive water play equipment would be found in the shallow water. Possible features are quite diverse and quantities and options are great. Such features include bubbling geysers, pipe falls, arching jets, water curtains, and dumping pelicans. Other site features would include a children's sand playground, food concession, sand volleyball court, shade, site furnishings and other amenities. A support facility that would include both typical and family change areas as well as a concessions area, lifeguard and first-aid rooms and storage spaces will be developed. These types of elements are critical for the operational and financial success of the facility as noted in the chapter regarding Needs Assessment and Current Trends.

This facility would accommodate a base level of 1,200 bathers. As a part of the long range plan for the facility, a 600 ft. long Lazy River would be planned for an expansion at a later date, as the population grows and financing allows. This will provide for the capacity of the facility to grow to an estimated 1,600 bathers. The estimate of probable construction costs for these improvements (without any land acquisition costs or Welch pool site



restoration) would be \$6,206,563, with an additional projected expense for the expansion at \$1,300,000.

SITE RECOMMENDATIONS

At the time of the writing of this report, a number of sites have been identified as potential locations for the development of the proposed facility. Each site was evaluated based upon criteria for a new facility established by the project team.

The criteria for selection of the site included:

- Proximity of the new site to the existing Welch Pool site (preferably south of the existing site) so as to provide adequate service area coverage in response to current and future demographic trends and not to create an overlap of service areas in regards to Park Forest site or the Science Park Recreation Association Pool.
- Size of the area for the facility needs to be a minimum of 6-7 acres with a preferred 9-10 acres for proper integration of design elements and for potential growth of the facility (plus parking area requirements).
- The site should be situated within or in close proximity to the established Growth Boundary so as to be close to available utilities and respond to established policies towards development in the Centre Region.
- **The site should be of suitable size so as to integrate the aquatic facility within a community park site or develop in conjunction with other regional recreational opportunities.** This will assist in consolidating CRRA resources and providing guests with ideal access to a variety of facilities while reducing transportation issues. Benefits include shared parking, utilities, and structures.
- The site should have immediate access to sewer, water and electric in order to be cost effective.
- The site should be suitable to meet the future growth goals of the COG and Centre Region

Of the possible sites initially reviewed, two respond to a majority of the criteria established. The two sites, owned by PSU, are the Mellon/Spicer



area at Oak Hall and the Mellon Property at Whitehall Road. Both sites provide the opportunity for developing a Regional Aquatic Facility within the layout of a large regional recreational complex and are located and sized per the criteria requirements. PSU has indicated interest in initiating discussion regarding the availability of these parcels. Neither site is located within the Regional Growth Boundary but is in close proximity. The site at Whitehall road abuts existing public sewer and water utilities and has an available area of 75 acres of the total 565 acres. The Mellon/Spicer area is comprised of 75 acres, has no public utilities present and is currently leased on a year-to-year basis for agricultural purposes.

Included here is a complete list of the areas initially reviewed with some of the opportunities and constraints for each site listed. This list is in order of recommended priorities.

■ **Penn State Lands at Whitehall Road (Ferguson Township)**

75+ acres

Opportunities:

Close to existing Welch Facility (Ideal Service Area)

Easily accessible from Whitehall Road and future Inner Loop

Advantageous land acquisition potential through Penn State

Site property advantageous for integration with other regional recreational development

Constraints:

Immediately outside the Regional Growth Boundary along Whitehall Road

Infrastructure costs

■ **Penn State Lands at Oak Hall (College and Harris Townships)**

75 acres

Opportunities:

Advantageous land acquisition potential through Penn State

Easily accessible from Mt. Nittany Expressway

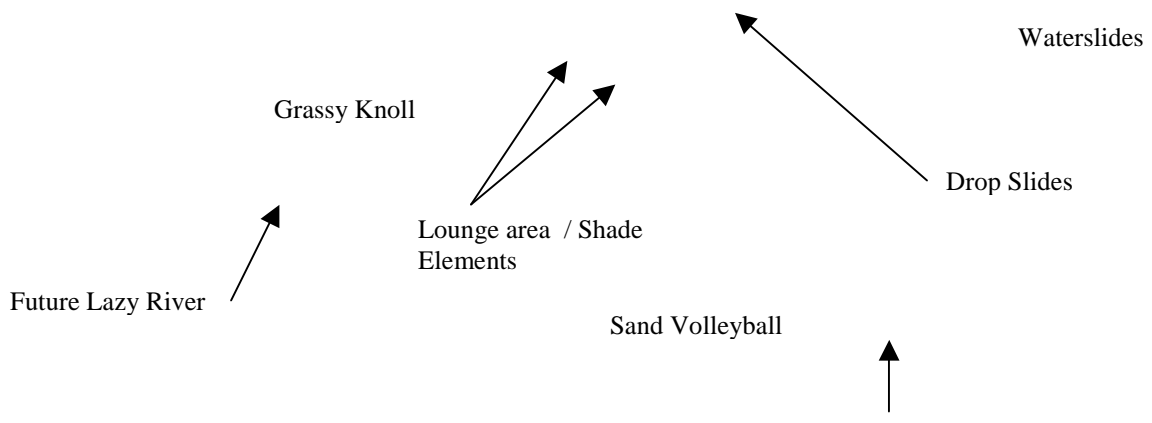
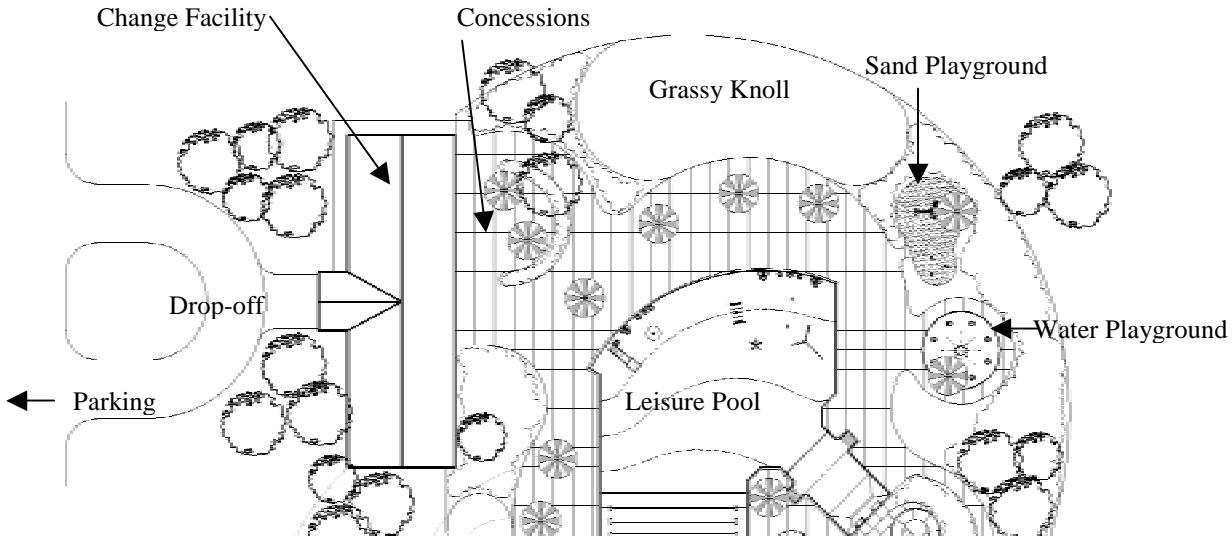
Site property advantageous for integration with other regional recreational development

Constraints:



- Remote from population center
- Exposed site
- No public sewer or water available on site
- Outside of the Regional Growth Boundary
- **Mt. Nittany Middle School (adjacent lands)**
 - Opportunities:**
 - Shared parking
 - Within Regional Growth Boundary
 - Easily accessible from Mt. Nittany Expressway
 - Constraints:**
 - Land cost and availability
 - Not proximate to population center
- **Waupelani Drive (behind Westerly Parkway Shopping Center)**
 - Opportunities:**
 - Close to existing Welch Facility
 - Within Regional Growth Boundary
 - Infrastructure availability
 - Constraints:**
 - Land cost and availability
- **Toftrees Area (Patton Township)**
 - Opportunities:**
 - Easily accessible from Mt. Nittany Expressway
 - Within Regional Growth Boundary
 - Infrastructure availability
 - Constraints:**
 - Land cost and availability
 - Close to Park Forest Pool facility

Current & accurate cost associated with acquisition of the land identified was not available. Regardless of the site selected, acquisition cost must be considered within the overall cost of development of the new facility.



NEW REGIONAL AQUATIC CENTER CONCEPTUAL PLAN

**Hoffman &
Popovich
Architects, LLC**

110 West Main Street
Boalsburg, PA 16827-0125
814.466.7811
fax 814.466.6340
hparchitects.com



100 Park Avenue
Beaver Dam, WI 53916
920.887.7375
fax 920.887.7999
www.watertechnologyinc.com

AQUATIC FEASIBILITY STUDY
NEW REGIONAL AQUATIC CENTER
ESTIMATES OF PROBABLE PROJECT COST

ELEMENT	QUANTITY		ESTIMATED COST
<u>Site Elements</u>			
Demolition/Earthwork	Allowance	\$140,000.00	\$140,000
Site Utilities (Excavation & Backfill)	Allowance	\$89,600.00	\$89,600
Site Parking	Allowance	\$980,000.00	\$980,000
Shade Structures	13 EA x	\$3,360.00	\$43,680
Decks/ Deck Drainage (Interior)	22,000 SF x	\$5.60	\$123,200
Sod	12,000 SF x	\$1.68	\$20,160
Irrigation	Allowance	\$20,160.00	\$20,160
Landscape	15,000 SF x	\$5.60	\$84,000
Site Lighting (Aquatic Night Use)	Allowance	\$50,400.00	\$50,400
Sound System	Allowance	\$33,600.00	\$33,600
Fence- Perimeter	1,200 LF x	\$24.64	\$29,568
Fence- Barrier	575 LF x	\$35.84	\$20,608
Sand Play	1,500 SF x	\$28.00	\$42,000
Sand Volleyball	2,100 SF x	\$16.80	\$35,280
Site Signage	Allowance	\$30,800.00	\$30,800
<u>Architecture Elements</u>			
Change Facility/Admin. Building & Concessions	7,000 LS x	\$145.60	\$1,019,200
Pool Mechanical Room	1,500 LS x	\$100.80	\$151,200
Surge Tank	LS	\$56,000.00	\$56,000
<u>Aquatic Elements</u>			
Outdoor Leisure Pool	17,500 SF x	\$100.80	\$1,764,000
Waterslide & Tower (Two Inner-tube Flumes)	1 LS	\$364,000.00	\$364,000
Drop Slide & Tower	1 LS x	\$67,200.00	\$67,200
Splash Playground	1,500 SF x	\$123.20	\$184,800
Interactive Water Elements	Allowance	\$106,400.00	\$106,400
Subtotal - Estimated Construction Cost			\$5,455,856
Contingency on Total Estimated Construction Cost	15%		\$818,378
TOTAL ESTIMATED CONSTRUCTION COST			\$6,274,234
<u>Owner Expenses & Project Fees</u>			
Project Fees (A & E)	9%	x 6,274,234	\$564,681
Testing, Permits, Surveys & Soils Report	Allowance	x 30,000	\$30,000
Owner's F.F. & E. (Furniture, Fixtures & Equipment)	Allowance	x 180,000	\$180,000
Subtotal Estimated Owner Expenses & Project Fees			\$774,681
TOTAL ESTIMATED PROJECT COST (2001 Dollars)			\$7,048,915
Future 600 foot long Lazy River (inclusive of site elements & mechanical support elements, contractor mark-up, contingency and project fees	Allowance	\$1,300,000.00	\$1,300,000

Notes:

1. Estimate includes pool excavation and structure, pool gutter, pool finishes, deck equipment, safety ropes, pool mechanical systems, body flume waterslide (installed) & concrete tower and stair with a 1 slide capacity, waterslide mechanical system and piping, and water activities with mechanical systems and piping.
2. Estimate does not include additional contingencies for unusual soil conditions or unknown development risk items not identified in the soils report nor cost for land acquisition.
3. Estimated construction cost includes contractor mark-up and prevailing wage rates.



ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS REVIEWED FOR THE EXISTING WILLIAM L. WELCH COMMUNITY POOL SITE

The project team reviewed the options below and the findings are presented here to give explanation as to why these options are not feasible.

- **Replacement Of The Existing Facility As It Currently Exists**

The existing site is limited in size. A simple replacement of the existing facility with a new facility in the same configuration and systems would not provide adequate space for parking or support services required. In addition, there will not be a gain in entertainment value (necessary for increasing interest, attendance, and revenue) or level of service, nor will there be an increase in the capacity of the facility from its current levels, both of which are objectives of the report that need to be met by the facility. Finally, a 25-year agreement with the School District is required by the state before state funding assistance can be approved for such capital expenditures. This is not currently an option in any of the plans listed.

- **Replacement Of The Existing Facility With A Smaller Pool Facility That Fits Within The Existing Site Limits**

As noted above, a 25-year agreement is required. Whereas this will generate demand and increase the entertainment value of the facility, capacity will actually be decreased. In order to be able to generate the revenue that is needed to meet the objectives outlined, the capacity of the facility needs to be a minimum of 1,200 bathers. A facility as described in this scheme would not be close in meeting this minimum.

- **Replace The Existing Facility On The Existing Welch Site With A New Facility That Meets The Requirements Of The Centre Region For An Aquatic Facility**

Physical limitations of the site do not provide for this option. Additional land should be acquired or a shared-use policy should be implemented with the School District for additional space. As the SCASD Citizen Advisory Committee for Facilities is currently evaluating the future needs and requirements for growth of the school, a proposal to expand the Welch pool area out to the Parkway, utilize the school parking for facility



parking and construct a bathhouse/restroom to also service adjacent SCASD field activities was declined by that committee.

■ FINANCES/OPERATIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

Throughout the country, innovative methods of funding, financing, corporate sponsorship opportunities and a new entrepreneurial spirit have been proven to make these types of facilities self-supporting, depending on local recreation missions and philosophy. Existing funding and operational considerations, as well as alternatives for future considerations, are discussed in this section.

The current annual season's days of operation is 100. An industry standard of 10% is considered for rainouts or partial attendance days for the calculations presented here. In the 2001 season, there were a total of 45,640 recreational visits to both existing facilities. This does not include any visits for instructional or competitive visits. On the average, a season pass was used at the Park Forest Community Pool 10.7 days during 2001. At William L. Welch Community Pool, the average season pass was used 10.9 times in 2001. It was estimated that in 2001, average revenue of \$2.88 was generated per capita for both facilities. It should be noted that this does not include revenue from instructional or competitive programs. Instructional visits generated \$4.99 (PF) and \$5.06 (WP) per visit, and swim team visits generated \$1.06 (PR) \$1.02 (WP) per visit.

PROJECTED ATTENDANCE / REVENUE

Using data obtained from other communities nationwide that are similar in size and facilities, WTI has provided a reference for projected attendance and revenue for the CRRA aquatics program. The information provided is to be used as guidelines and not as specifics to be used by CRRA.

Attendance and revenue is a reflection of several factors: weather, marketing, pricing, programs, operations, cleanliness, concessions, accessibility and competitive alternatives. Competitive alternatives are not necessarily just pools. Some communities also compete with tourist attractions, sports and



shopping. Some communities have exceeded these figures by utilizing aggressive marketing campaigns, value pricing and efficient operations.

By comparing facilities of similar size and character at both the high and low end of 'bather capacities', it is shown that a penetration rate range of 1.79 and 2.56 and a 'per cap' of \$3.36 and \$4.89 can be obtained.

"Per cap" is the amount spent per person at a facility per each visit.

This includes admission and any concessions sales or other fees. The results are dependent on having quality food and beverage concessions, sundries and other fees such as instructional, competitive or special events as well as the fees charged for admission.

Average projected revenues for the facilities evaluated ranged from a low of \$249,167 to a high of \$518,623. Recognizing that the COG and CRRA have been offering quality aquatic experiences for the Centre Region at a very affordable rate with the intention to continue this practice, WTI has enlisted a conservative approach to generating the estimated projections for the CRRA aquatics. This translates into the use of a penetration rate of just 2 and an estimated 'per cap' of \$4.00. Factored into this number is the assumption of a \$4.00-\$5.00 daily admission rate and a seasonal pass charge of \$45.00 per person. (2002 fee rates for the existing pools are \$2.50-\$3.50 for daily admission and \$25-\$45 for individual season passes.) It is assumed that nonresidents will be charged more per CRRA policies.

For the purpose of determining projected attendance and revenue, the recommended capacity of 1,200 for the New Regional Aquatic Center is used. For comparison, the current capacity at the two existing pools, based upon current health and safety criteria, is 423 and 627 respectively. The current population of 41,429 (net of university population) has been used. At a penetration rate of 2, it is estimated that the projected attendance is 82,858 per annum. At a 'per cap' of \$4.00, it is projected that the estimated revenue at the New Regional Aquatic Center could be \$331,432. This would result in a positive balance of \$27,792 without concessions, rentals and miscellaneous



income. This positive balance could then be applied to cover any budget shortfalls at Park Forest. The numbers provided here are for general reference and to initiate discussion as to the final position of the CRRA when it comes to establishing admission and other fees and pricing for the facilities.

Again, for the purpose of determining projected attendance and revenue, the recommended capacity of 1,600 for the new expanded Regional Aquatic Center is used. Since this expanded Family Aquatic Center will offer a Lazy River and a greater entertainment value, a daily rate fee can be set (higher than in the last scenario) at \$5.00. This would still be a reasonable and competitive daily fee. An anticipated annual attendance of 82,858 guests at a conservative daily rate of \$5.00 will be used. It would result in an annual income of \$410,000, without concessions, rentals and miscellaneous revenues. This would result in a positive balance of \$45,000 (plus the net revenue from lessons, rentals, swim team programs, etc.).

Should the CRRA / COG develop a new regional aquatic facility, WTI will assist the development of an operational budget for the facility dependent on the final design and program.

OPERATIONAL BUDGETS

WTI has provided an estimated operational budget based upon the concepts recommended in this report. These numbers are subjective and dependent on the actions taken by the CRRA and how the facilities are operated. These numbers are not to be taken as an exact representation of operating cost for the facilities and should not be used to generate operation budgets.

PARK FOREST COMMUNITY SWIMMING POOL

The Park Forest Community Pool will show minimal though no substantial change in operations or salary and wages as a direct result of the recommendations presented in this study. The renovations proposed will make Park Forest a more attractive and accessible facility but will not change the staffing or operational considerations. Most changes will be based upon the utility and chemical cost associated with the addition of the elements



proposed in this study. A minimal increase in lifeguards or attendants may be required dependent upon how the CRRA incorporates these recommendations. The current operating budget for the Park Forest Community Pool is:

Operations	\$78,277
Administrative Expenses	<u>\$23,900</u>
Total Operational Cost	\$102,177

Since Park Forest is a neighborhood-driven facility, WTI believes that it will continue to have similar attendance & revenue as it currently has. The impact of a new Regional Aquatic Facility on the attendance at Park Forest Pool is difficult to project at this time.

NEW REGIONAL AQUATIC FACILITY

This budget is supplied as a guideline for a new regional Family Aquatic Center that would be comprised of a 17,500 square foot leisure pool with zero depth (beach) entry, 6-lane competitive pool and water slide complex with landing area. Children's interactive water play equipment would be found in the shallow water and other features would include a children's sand playground, food concession, sand volleyball court, shade, site furnishings and other amenities. A support facility that would include both typical and family changing areas as well as a concessions area, lifeguard and first-aid room and storage spaces. This facility would accommodate 1,200 bathers. It is purely a guideline and would have to be fine-tuned to meet the actual final design and approval of operating hours, salaries, benefits and safety review for lifeguard placement. Once a funding philosophy has been adopted, COG can determine the actual daily guest and season pass costs based on these guidelines.

Regional Family Aquatic Center

Projected Budget

Personnel Expenses

Personnel	Positions	Range/Hours	Expenses
Pool Manager	1	\$5,000-8,500 \$14 x 600 hrs.	\$8,400
Asst. Manager	2	\$2,500-4,000 \$11 x 1000 hrs.	\$11,000
Lifeguard Capt.	2	\$600-1,200 \$9 x 2000	\$18,000



Swim Team Coach	1	\$1,000-2,500		\$2,000
Asst. Coach	1	\$750-2,000		\$1,500
Learn to Swim Coordinator and Lifeguards	1	\$400-600	\$6 x 600 hrs.	\$500
Lifeguards	5	\$6.00-6.50		\$3,600
Lifeguards	10	\$5.35-6.60	\$6.00 x 10,000hrs.	\$60,000
Guest Relations Manager	1	\$7.00-10.00	\$8 x 1000	\$8,000
Cashiers	2	\$5.35-6.60	\$6 x 2000	\$12,000
Gate Attendants	2	\$5.35-6.69	\$6 x 2000	\$12,000
Maintenance Supervisor	1	\$7.00-10.00	\$8 x 1080	\$8,640
Maintenance	2	\$5.35-6.60	\$6 x 2000 hrs.	\$12,000
Benefits				\$12,000
TOTAL				\$169,640

Notes

- These personnel costs are calculated on a season of 100 days @ an average of 10 hours per day. Of a 100-day season, it is reasonable to assume that there will be full day closings or early closings during bad weather that would reduce the schedule to 95 days on average. For purposes of this planning exercise, we will use 1,000 operating hours. This will allow for fluctuation in actual salaries calculated on years of service and other incentives. It also allows for very hot days, when you may want to increase your personnel coverage.
- The Maintenance Supervisor Position requires some pre- and post-season work. Two, forty-hour weeks are being added into this calculation in addition to the 1,000 operating hours.
- The Pool Manager Position is calculated on 11 weeks at 45 hours per week, leaving 105 hours for pre- and post-season work. The Assistant Manager Positions are calculated at 11 weeks at 45 hours per week.
- Lifeguards are needed to teach swim lessons prior to operating hours. Five guards teaching a total of 120 hours equals a total of 600 swim instruction hours
- The column featuring the number of positions are the actual numbers. In order to cover all shifts and allow for any vacation and sick time coverage, more positions may be necessary. It could realistically take up to 25 full and part time lifeguard positions to provide full coverage. The hours are real figures.



Operating Expenses

Materials and Supplies

Office Materials and Supplies	\$500
Uniforms and Clothing	\$3,000
Fuel	\$800
Equipment, Parts and Service	\$600
Building Materials and Supplies	\$3,000
Landscape Materials and Supplies	\$800
Hardware and Tools	\$800
Emergency and Safety Materials	\$1,700
Electrical Supplies/Communications	\$200
Air Conditioning/Plumbing Supplies	\$500
Janitorial Supplies	\$2,000
Food/Drugs and First Aid Supplies	\$1,000
Photographic Materials	\$1,000
Chemicals and Gases	\$12,500
Recreation Supplies	\$2,000
Merchandise/Other Expenses	\$4,000
Sub Total	(\$34,400)

Utilities and Supplies

Telephone	\$1,000
Gas and Electric	\$22,500
Postage	\$1,000
Rental/Training Facility	\$2,000
Maintenance Supplies	\$2,100
Printing and Binding	\$2,000
Advertising and Promotions	\$2,000
Specialized Services	\$2,000
Travel and Training	\$3,000
Dues and Registration	\$2,500
Training Aids and Materials	\$2,000
Sub Total	(\$42,100)

Contractual Services

Start Up/Winterizing	\$12,500
Landscape Services	\$7,000
ARC or Ellis & Associates Safety Audits	\$2,300
Sewerage Fees	\$500
Water Testing	\$1,000
Electrical Services	\$2,200
Plumbing Services	\$2,000
Sub Total	(\$27,500)

Capital Improvements/Purchases

Equipment Replacement	\$15,000
Annual Improvement Projects	\$15,000
Sub Total	(\$30,000)



SUMMARY / RE-CAP	
Materials and Supplies	\$34,400
Utilities and Specialized Services	\$42,100
Contractual Services	\$27,500
Capital Improvements/Purchases	\$30,000
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TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES	\$134,000
TOTAL PERSONNEL EXPENSES	\$169,640
 TOTAL OPERATING BUDGET	 \$303,640

**REVENUE VS. EXPENDITURES
(REGIONAL AQUATIC FACILITY – 1,200 CAPACITY)**

In the effort to take a conservative approach to revenues, a Penetration Rate of 1.79-2.56 and a Per Cap of \$3.36-\$4.89 was utilized. An anticipated annual attendance of 82,858 guests at a conservative daily rate of \$4.00-\$5.00 will be used. It would result in an annual income of \$331,432. This would result in a positive balance of \$27,792 without concessions, rentals and miscellaneous income for a 1,200 capacity facility. This positive balance could then be applied to cover any budget shortfalls at Park Forest

As a part of the long-range plan for the facility, a 600 ft. long lazy river would be planned for an expansion at a later date, as the population grows and financing allows. This will provide for the capacity of the facility to grow to an estimated 1,600 bathers. This is prepared only as a guideline and would have to be fine-tuned to meet the actual final design and approval of operating hours, salaries, benefits and safety review for lifeguard placement.

Expansion of Regional Family Aquatic Center

Projected Budget

Personnel Expenses

Personnel	Positions	Range/Hours		Expense
Pool Manager	1	\$5,000-8500	\$14 x 600 hrs.	\$8,400
Asst. Manager	2	\$2,500-4000	\$11 x 1000 hrs.	\$11,000
Lifeguard Capt.	2	\$600-1200	\$9 x 2000 hrs.	\$18,000
Swim Team Coach	1	\$1,000-2500		\$2,000
Asst. Coach	1	\$750-2000		\$1,500
Learn to Swim coordinator and Lifeguards	1	\$400-600		\$ 500
	5	\$6.00-6.50	\$6 x 600 hrs.	\$3,600



Lifeguards	15	\$5.35-6.60	\$6 x 15,000 hrs.	\$90,000
Guest Relations Manager	1	\$7.00-10.00	\$8 x 1000 hrs.	\$8,000
Cashiers	2	\$5.35-6.60	\$6 x 2000 hrs.	\$12,000
Gate Attendants	2	\$5.35-6.60	\$6 x 2000 hrs.	\$12,000
Maintenance Supervisor	1	\$7.00-10.00	\$8 x 1080 hrs.	\$6,600
Maintenance Personnel	2	\$5.35-6.60	\$6 x 2000 hrs.	\$12,000
Benefits				\$15,000
TOTAL				\$200,600

Operating Expenses

Materials and Supplies

Office Materials and Supplies	\$700
Uniforms and Clothing	\$3,500
Fuel	\$800
Equipment, Parts and Service	\$800
Building Materials and Supplies	\$4,000
Landscape Materials and Supplies	\$1,000
Hardware and Tools	\$800
Emergency and Safety Materials	\$2,000
Electrical Supplies/Communications	\$200
Air Conditioning/Plumbing Supplies	\$500
Janitorial Supplies	\$2,500
Food/Drugs and First Aid Supplies	\$1,000
Photographic Materials	\$2,000
Chemicals and Gases	\$15,000
Recreation Supplies	\$2,500
Merchandise/Other	\$4,500
Sub Total	(\$41,800)

Utilities and Specialized Services

Telephone	\$1,000
Gas and Electric	\$35,000
Postage	\$1,000
Rents/Training Facility	\$1,500
Maintenance Supplies	\$2,800
Printing and Binding	\$2,000
Advertising and Promotion	\$2,000
Specialized Services	\$2,500
Travel and Training	\$3,000
Dues and Registrations	\$2,500
Training Aids and Programs	\$2,000
Sub Total	(\$55,300)

Contractual Services

Start Up/Winterizing	\$18,000
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Landscape Services	\$10,000
Ellis & Associates Audits	\$2,300
Sewerage Fees	\$650
Water Testing	\$1,100
Electrical Services	\$2,500
Plumbing Services	\$2,500
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Sub Total	(\$37,050)

Capital Improvements/Purchases	
Equipment Replacement	\$15,000
Annual Improvement Projects	\$15,000
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Sub Total	(\$30,000)

SUMMARY / RE-CAP	
Office Materials and Supplies	\$41,800
Utilities and Specialized Services	\$55,300
Contractual Services	\$37,050
Capital Improvements/Purchases	\$30,000
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES	\$164,150
TOTAL PERSONNEL EXPENSES	\$200,600
TOTAL OPERATING BUDGET	\$364,750

REVENUES VS. EXPENDITURES
(EXPANDED REGIONAL AQUATIC FACILITY – 1,600 CAPACITY)
 In an effort to take a conservative approach to revenues, a Penetration Rate of 1.79-2.56 and a Per Cap of \$3.36-\$4.89 was utilized. An anticipated annual attendance of 82,858 guests at a conservative daily rate of \$4.00 will be used. This would result in an annual income of \$331,432. This would result in an operating stipend of \$33,318. Since this expanded Family Aquatic Center offers a Lazy River and a greater entertainment value, a daily rate fee can be set higher than in the last scenario at \$5.00. This would still be a reasonable and competitive daily fee. An anticipated annual attendance of 82,858 guests at a conservative daily rate of \$5.00 will be used. It would result in an annual income of \$410,000, without concessions, rentals and miscellaneous revenues. This would result in a positive balance of \$45,000 for a 1,600 capacity facility.



WILLIAM L. WELCH COMMUNITY SWIMMING POOL

If the existing pool is to remain, unchanged or improved from its current status, the operating budget will not change. The 2002 operating budget for the William L. Welch Community Pool is:

Operations	\$102,091
Administrative Expenses	<u>\$31,800</u>
Total Operational Cost	\$133,891

SEASON PASSES AND POLICY

It is suggested that a community wide, season pass be continued after the recommendations presented in this report are implemented. This would allow for visits between the two facilities and allow for a variety of options by the community. It is important to be careful not to isolate residents from either facility. As proposed in this report, the facilities will incorporate different programs and options such as lap and fitness, competitive and instructional. Visitors will select a facility based upon amenities, convenience and atmosphere. It is strongly believed that Park Forest will remain a neighborhood-supported pool with a particular attraction to families with young children.

The cost of a season pass in the future should be based upon the 10.9 average visit per summer as is being currently experienced and should be priced accordingly, based upon the daily rate as established by the CRRA. It is recommended that season passes should be sold as a convenience and be on sale for a limited time. **Season pass sales should conclude by July 4th** in order to generate demand and interest without negatively affecting the revenues generated for daily admission. This provides for a reasonable cost to be assigned to the passes while still providing for a positive revenue base. Season passes are designed to make the facilities affordable to the general population and to create revenue early in the season. Season passes are not moneymakers by design. Further consideration is required by the CRRA regarding policies on season passes.



■ 2002 FUNDING FOR CRPR AQUATICS

OPERATIONS:

For 2002, the aquatic operations for CRPR will total \$320,572. Of this amount, 80% of the revenue to support those expenses comes from aquatics fees and charges (including programs), and 20% (\$65,131) is provided from COG-formula contributions from the five participating municipalities. **The 20% rate of public subsidy for municipal pool operations and year-round aquatic programs is one of the lowest in the state. This fact is especially noteworthy when coupled with the fee survey data that indicates that the admission & season pass fees is below average compared to other public pools in the state.**

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS:

100% of the capital improvements for Welch and Park Forest Pools are provided from COG-formula contributions from the five participation municipalities. For 2002, the municipalities will contribute \$65,000 for capital improvements & capital repairs at the two pools. Since capital expenditures will only be made for necessary emergency repairs (pending action on the recommendations of this study), it is expected that there will be a fund balance of \$88,496 at the end of 2002.

If the Authority proceeds with pool renovations and construction, they would be eligible for state grant assistance, which would offset, to some extent, the local costs for the projects. The extent of that assistance would not be known until the designs are finalized and grant applications submitted.

■ CONCLUSION

It is the ultimate goal of the COG and CRRA to provide for the aquatic needs of the community now and in the future, while at the same time being fiscally responsible with respect to development and operations. The recommendations offered here are those that meet the goal of the COG and CRRA. It is now the task of the COG and CRRA to reflect on the information provided and to provide direction and support for the future of aquatics in the Centre Region.

APPENDIX A: SUPPORT DOCUMENTS

This appendix includes the following information in support of the main document:

- “Focus On Aquatics” Public Hearings: Notice, Agenda, Summary;
- 1997 Centre Region Parks, Recreation & Open Space Survey Results;
- 2000 CRPR Aquatics Survey (open form) & Survey Results;
- 2002 “Aquatic Services” (from the 2002 Fee Policy),
with aquatic fee history & the 2002 pool schedule;
- Centre Region Population Data & Economic Data;
- “A Promise to Our Community” - State College Area Family YMCA Report;
- YMCA Radius Demographics Data.



APPENDIX B: CONSULTANT INFORMATION

■ WATER TECHNOLOGY, INC.

Water Technology, Inc. is an aquatic planning, design and engineering firm comprised of a well-rounded, experienced group of professionals and is headquartered in Beaver Dam, Wisconsin. Founded in 1983, we have grown from just two associates, to our current staff of 33 that includes the industry's best architects, engineers, landscape architects, designers and planners.

The firm's staff, led by principals, Charles M. Neuman, Richard C. Scott and Kenneth C. Ward, draws upon more than 72 years of combined experience in the planning, design and construction of our clients' aquatic facilities. Our design portfolio includes Commercial Waterparks, Municipal Indoor & Outdoor Pools, Family Aquatic Centers, Competitive Venues, YMCA/YWCA Pools, Resort & Hotel Pools, Health Care & Therapy Pools, Community Developments and Specialized Aquatic Features and Elements.

WTI involvement in these projects has ranged from feasibility studies, master planning, conceptual planning, consensus building, and architectural detail through mechanical design, construction administration, commissioning, and marketing and operations services.

WTI brings leading edge technology in planning, facility design, filtration, chemical treatment, ozonation, gutter profiles and other integral pool components to each project we undertake. Into each project budget we factor not only the cost of construction, but also the 'cost of ownership' as it relates to long-term facility use.

Leisure Concepts & Design, our wholly owned, Illinois-based team of aquatic and parks and recreation planners and designers is an integral portion of our overall design group. Leisure Concepts & Design and Water





Technology, Inc. have long partnered to assist communities in the planning, design and engineering of aquatic facilities, having completed some 150 such projects together. Independently, Leisure Concepts & Design has served the park and recreation field since 1977, specializing in feasibility studies, master planning and design of leisure facilities. To date, Leisure Concepts & Design has served more than 300 park and recreation agencies in the preparation of feasibility studies, park site plans, aquatic facility plans and construction documents. They are one of the few design firms in the nation that is currently involved with aquatic research and have applied this research to city and countywide master planning.

In 1996, Leisure Concepts & Design was acquired by Water Technology, Inc. and now functions as a Water Technology, Inc. company.

EXPERIENCE

Aquatic Master Plans have either been prepared or are in progress with park and recreation agencies in Milwaukee, Wisconsin; Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; Portland, Oregon; Indianapolis, Indiana; Omaha, Nebraska; and Rochester, New York. Major issues including antiquated pools, changing programs, poor attendance and low revenues were identified. In each community, corrective measures and a bold new concept of aquatic programs and facilities were recommended.

Aquatic facility planning has taken on a new perspective. Exciting aquatic conceptual solutions provide clients with a realistic direction in design and project development.

Water Technology, Inc.'s aquatic planning and design expertise is unique in the swimming pool industry. Conceptual design, site planning and feasibility studies are prepared as a prerequisite to the decision to proceed with a project's implementation. Answers to critical questions and discussions are offered that are explainable and understandable, while community



participation and support becomes an integral part of the preliminary planning process.

PROJECT APPROACH

A realistic and accomplishable Swimming Pool Master Plan is the goal of the planning process. Water Technology, Inc./Leisure Concepts & Design, based upon its previous aquatic planning experiences, suggests this goal can be met. The intent of the Master Plan is to examine all COG aquatic facilities and plan for the reorganization of the aquatic resources into a new and dynamic aquatic system that will effectively serve children, youth, adults, and families aquatic needs and be more self-supporting.

■ **HOFFMAN POPOVICH ARCHITECTS, LLC**

Hoffman Popovich Architects, LLC practices architecture, landscape architecture, planning and interior design. Located in Boalsburg, Pennsylvania, Mr. Hoffman and Mr. Popovich share a consistent design philosophy that is the basis of the firm's process.

Hoffman Popovich Architects, LLC is dedicated to excellence in design: to develop innovative yet functional buildings and sites that are positive to the aesthetic and practical needs of the client, the user, and the environment in which each facility is located. As a commitment to the design philosophy, emphasis is placed upon providing a well-structured, team-oriented approach to design that recognizes the value of client input, specific user needs, and a step-by-step process to obtain consensus in decision-making. As an extension of the commitment to excellence, great care is provided during construction to assure that the project is accurately constructed, assisting both the client and contractor through the construction and the post construction phases.

EXPERIENCE

Robert Hoffman, Alan Popovich and Kelly Harris have been practicing architecture and landscape architecture collectively in the Centre Region for

over 65 years. The firm has been involved with many recreationally oriented projects, including renovation to the McCoy Natatorium, Sarni Varsity Tennis Center and Multi-Sport Facility, all at Penn States' University Park campus.

PROJECT APPROACH

The role of Hoffman Popovich Architects, LLC in the COG Aquatics Study is to provide local professional support with respect to architecture, landscape architecture, and code/zoning issues. The firm has significant knowledge of and experience with the local municipal agencies that govern development. Hoffman Popovich Architects, LLC will provide technical and aesthetic support with respect to architectural and site design issues.

