

# Final Report – Memorial Pool Committee - Isaac Sports Group Executive Summary

## REVIEW OF BURBACH AQUATICS, INC. STUDY

The BAI Study accurately identified and analyzed the current condition and the renovation and code requirements needed to re-open Memorial Pool for safe use. The narrow scope of the BAI study did not include the exploration and analysis of reconfiguration, downsizing, or total new replacement of a redesigned Memorial Pool. These considerations can create more cost-effective options that better meets the current and future aquatic and community needs of La Crosse residents.

## HISTORIC REVIEW

Memorial Pool is one of hundreds of depression era PWA and WPA pools built in the country. The historic significance of Memorial Pool is largely its important social and recreational role in the City through many decades and its commitment to water safety and drowning prevention. There are no design or architectural features that are unique or of significant historic significance. Any renovation or replacement of Memorial Pool can preserve the historic importance and relevance through preservation of the bathhouse façade and use of portions of the old pool tank for historic display while maintaining the historic role as a modern pool providing great aquatic programs and serving as a central element of community life. Many of the other depression area pools in Wisconsin have been similarly renovated or replaced while preserving recognition of their history.

## PROGRAMMING and USE

The results of the Public Opinion Survey on Memorial Pool indicate strong support for some type of pool at the current Memorial Pool site. Naturally, this support is higher among residents of the Memorial Pool neighborhood, but support across all City residents is also strong. The survey shows the importance of broad based aquatic programs and amenities that provide opportunity for all ages, including lap swimming, aquatic fitness, fun, recreation, and leisure. The most important element identified was swim lessons, which further supports the initial historic goals of Memorial Pool.

The design options suggested in this report support a full range of multi-generational programming, including swim lessons, summer swim team, lap swimming, Masters swim program, lifeguard and safety training, aquatic fitness and exercise, and easy accessibility and family friendly spaces with ramps, stairs, and zero/beach entries. Deep water is also included for diving boards as well as space for recreational and play features. The downsizing of the pool allows for expanded deck space which meets the expressed needs for shade and lounge spaces to provide a total environment for a fun and safe day at the pool.

The presence of a neighborhood pool easily accessed and utilized by neighborhood residents also can play a significant role in growing City wide aquatic participation and enhance the potential for a future year round aquatic center in La Crosse. The neighborhood pools provide the opportunity for feeder programs for area teams and aquatic programs and serve as the initial exposure to water based activities for a large number of City and neighborhood youth and adults.

## RENOVATION and NEW REPLACEMENT DESIGN OPTIONS - 2 OPTIONS

### **Option #1-Renovation**

- Shorten cross portion of pool from 110' to 75' to provide 5 x 25 yard lap lanes and recreational water space that does not interfere with shallow or deep water activities
- Add ramp and stairs to shallow end of pool to enhance accessibility for the youngest and oldest users and those with special needs
- Increase deck space
- Downsize overall pool footprint by 14% from 9,900 square feet to 8,500 square feet and the volume from 339,500 gallons to 290,000
- Reduce operating and long term maintenance costs
- Enhanced participation, use, and revenue projections

- Explore Myrtha Renovation option not considered in BAI report, reducing renovation costs and eliminating need for annual and regular tank painting and resurfacing
- Reduced renovation costs compared to BAI proposal
  - Projected renovation costs in 2017: \$3,053,700, including competitive & recreational equipment
    - Can be reduced to \$2,582,000 with further downsizing and some phasing of equipment
  - BAI renovation projection for current design is \$3,924,000

### Option #2-Replacement

- New replacement pool can provide a more long term cost effective option in a further downsized pool footprint with more modern aquatic amenities and features
- Pool size estimated at 6,500 to 7,000 square feet
- Key features
  - 6 x 25 yard lap lanes
  - Deep water area with diving and other amenities
  - Zero/beach entry shallow area
  - Additional shallow-mid depth area with ramp and stairs entry
  - Expanded deck space with shade and lounge elements
- Further reduced operating costs as well as enhanced participation and revenue projections
- Project Costs
  - \$3,000,000 to \$3,500,000 pending more detailed design development in next study phase
  - BAI total new facility replacement based on current size: \$4,435,000

### Bathhouse and Mechanical Systems

- Downsizing pool can reduce code requirements for bathhouse fixtures
- Trends in locker room use suggest current bathhouse can be downsized
- Update of pool mechanical systems
  - Significant operational savings with new technology
  - Improved water quality and safety
  - Significant savings in water use
  - Creation of smaller stand alone pool mechanical building

### FINANCIAL ANALYSIS

Both Options can result in reduced annual operating costs, reduced long term maintenance costs, and increase program and participation revenue.

#### Operating Costs:

- Areas of potential savings include: Electricity demand, water and sewer, chemicals, annual and long term maintenance
- Areas of increased costs include: Natural gas for addition of pool heater, increased staffing costs based on significantly increased usage and programming
- Annual operating cost savings projections over historic Memorial Pool expenses:
  - Option #1-Renovation           \$32,000/year
  - Option #2-Replacement       \$30,000/year

#### Revenue Projections:

- Revenue increases driven by increase in daily admissions and learn to swim as well as new programs including summer swim team, masters swim program, aquatic fitness, and special events
- Annual revenue increase projections over historic Memorial Pool revenue:
  - Option #1-Renovation           \$24,690/year
  - Option #2-Replacement       \$38,190/year

## Net Annual Financial Impact

- The net annual operating deficit for Memorial Pool is reduced by the following amounts annually
  - Option #1-Renovation \$56,690/year
  - Option #2-Replacement \$68,690/year

## Long Term Financial Impact

- The long term maintenance savings over twenty-five years for each option is as follows
  - Option #1-Renovation \$400,000/year
  - Option #2-Replacement \$450,000/year
- Combined with annual operating deficit savings, the twenty-five year projection of overall annual and long term savings are as follows:
  - Option #1-Renovation \$1,817,250 over 25 years
  - Option #2-Replacement \$2,167,250 over 25 years

## NEXT STEPS

Next steps in the ISG scope of services includes development of more specific design and amenity detail for both options with increased costing and operating. GENA will be closely involved with the deliberations of the Mayor's Pool Committee. It will be important in this next phase to begin to coordinate all of the stakeholders and input and incorporate these into a project timeline supported by the City budget commitments and increasing involvement of potential project partners and private support for the project.

## PROJECT TIMELINE

The project timeline is dependent on the phased funding. Best-case scenario project timeline can look like this:

**\*\*\*Funding requirement: 2017 budget funds for design development as well as initial demolition/site prep\*\*\***

November-December, 2016

- 2017 budget funding for design development, bid, and initial demolition and site prep
- Mayor's Pool Committee deliberation and recommendations for Memorial

January-Mid March, 2017

- Mayor's Pool Committee develops Request for Proposals (RFP) for Architect & Aquatic Engineering Services (A & E)
- Request for A & E Proposals issued (6 weeks)

April-July, 2017

- A & E bid awarded (~\$250k)
- Design and Development – committee & public feedback on designs
- Updated cost projections – final design, engineering & construction
- Permitting

August-September, 2017

- Pool & bathhouse construction bid process and selection of contractor(s) (~\$2-2.6million)
- Site demolition and prep RFP developed

October-November, 2017

- Site demolition and prep bid awarded & started when weather allows (~\$500k)

Late Winter-early Spring, 2018

- Pool construction when weather allows

Summer 2018

- Licensing with County & State
- Targeted opening of the pool

**If approved funding is limited to design and development in the 2017 City budget, then demolition and site prep will not be able to be begun in fall of 2017. Moving demolition and site prep to 2018 (late winter/early spring) would likely not result in the pool being ready to open in the summer of 2018.**

## Citywide Memorial Pool Survey Key Items

- Support for a Replacement Pool of some type
  - Overall respondents:
    - 71.4% favor some version of a pool to replace Memorial Pool
    - 51.2% favor a restoration or replacement pool at the current location
    - 72% of the respondents favoring some type favor the current location
  - Memorial Pool area respondents:
    - 65.7% very or somewhat concerned about closing
    - 20.8% not concerned
  
- Support for Allocating Funds to Reopen Memorial Pool
  - Overall respondents:
    - 55.5% strongly or somewhat strongly agree with allocating funds
    - 30.3% somewhat or strongly disagree
    - 14.1% express no opinion
  - Memorial Pool area respondents:
    - Express increasing support of allocating funds
    - Median strength of agreement score increases by over 10%
  
- Concern about Memorial Pool Closing
  - All respondents:
    - 49.2% very or somewhat concerned about closing
    - 23.1% not concerned
  - Memorial Pool area respondents:
    - 65.7% very or somewhat concerned about closing
    - 20.8% not concerned
  - Respondents outside the Memorial Pool area
    - 48.4% very or somewhat concerned about closing
  
- Program and Feature Preferences and Priorities
  - Swimming lessons is identified as the top priority-65.4%
    - This finding strongly supports the need for a heated pool
  - Outdoor pool is preferred by 62.7% of respondents
  - Diving Boards preferred by 54.3%
  - Other key features include the following:
    - Lap swim lanes
    - Shade structures
    - Lounge chairs
    - Play features such as slides
    - Zero or beach entry area

# GENA Memorial Pool Events Timeline

(>17 public meetings/presentations attended by community/GENA committee “•”):

- ✓ August 17 – Parks Dept “tipping point” decision to close the pool (S.Carlyon said 5/12@ Common Council)
- ✓ September – Carrico Aquatics report: \$932k to repair pool & ~\$650k upgrade bathhouse (\$1.582mil total)
- September 15<sup>th</sup> – **GENA Meeting with Parks Director & Park Board President** – assured neighbors that Memorial Pool was planned & budgeted for in 2016
- November 17<sup>th</sup> – **City Council meeting** approving operating in 2016 (\$8,000) & no planned capital improvements for Memorial Pool for 2016-2020
- February 25<sup>th</sup> - **Park Board meeting** voting to close Memorial Pool – residents spoke in support of Memorial Pool as a: Veteran’s Memorial; State & locally significant historic pool; City-wide asset; Neighborhood gathering place; Depended on by 10 businesses who serve swimmers, draw customers & revitalize the neighborhood; City pool most specifically designed for older population & learning to swim
- ✓ March 15<sup>th</sup> - GENA Memorial Pool Committee Formed
- ✓ March 16<sup>th</sup> - Save Memorial Pool Facebook page (today over 534 likes) began
- March 17<sup>th</sup> – **Park Board Meeting** - Committee & residents presented support & short term repairs
- March 24<sup>th</sup> – **Heritage Preservation Commission** – Memorial Pool nomination accepted
- ✓ April 11<sup>th</sup> - Memorial Pool Letter of Support – over 1,000 residents signed to Save Memorial Pool
- ✓ April 18<sup>th</sup> – Asbestos, Lead & Hazmat Pre-demolition Inspection at Memorial Pool
- April 21<sup>st</sup> – **Park Board Meeting** - Burbach hired for Step 1 (\$4,950) – GENA Committee presentation
- April 21<sup>st</sup> – **Heritage Preservation Commission** – Memorial Pool adopted as Historic Landmark embodying distinguishing architectural characteristics, associated with significant contributions to heritage and exemplifying broad social & cultural history for the City of La Crosse
- ✓ May 4<sup>th</sup> - 10 Neighboring businesses letter of support for Memorial Pool presented
- May 5<sup>th</sup> – **City Council Finance & Personnel Meeting** – 6-2 Vote to close - Pool committee & many residents in attendance & spoke in support of Memorial Pool
- ✓ May 12<sup>th</sup> – La Crosse County Pool Inspector “walk-through”
- May 14<sup>th</sup> - **Common Council meeting closing Memorial** – 15-1 to close & fund Step 2 (+\$7,000 more) stated to study limiting to the Memorial site (saving \$8k of operating expenses in 2016) – 30+ residents attended
- June 16<sup>th</sup> - **Park Board meeting** review Technical Assessment, appoint City Pool Committee & city-wide pool survey (referred for 90 days) – Committee & residents in attendance
- June 30<sup>th</sup> – **Special meeting by Park Board** reconsidering request by Mayor for pool survey (approved \$20,000) & mailed late July. GENA committee & residents in attendance
- ✓ August 4<sup>th</sup> - Isaac Sports Group (ISG) hired by GENA Committee & inspection of Memorial Pool conducted
- August 23<sup>rd</sup> – **City Planning Commission Hearing** – Committee presentation & residents in attendance
- September 7<sup>th</sup> – **Save Memorial Pool Committee Press Conference**
- ✓ September 9<sup>th</sup> – Save Memorial Pool Fundraiser - \$6000 raised for Memorial Pool Study by community
- September 13<sup>th</sup> - **Committee presentation to City & public** at City Hall (2 City Council & 1 Staff attended)
- ✓ September 21<sup>st</sup> - City-wide UWL pool survey (\$20k) reported (distributed prior to July 29<sup>th</sup>)
- September 22<sup>nd</sup> – **Park Board Meeting** on city-wide pool survey results – 7 out of 10 support Memorial Pool
- October 13<sup>th</sup> – **Mayor’s Pool Committee members approved** at City Council meeting
- ✓ October 27<sup>th</sup> - Mayor’s Pool Committee meeting – cancelled & rescheduled for 11/22/16
- November 3 – **Finance & Personnel meeting** – 2017 Budget, Pool survey & GENA Committee ISG Report