

City of Piedmont
COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT

DATE: March 21, 2022

TO: Mayor and Council

FROM: Sara Lillevand, City Administrator

SUBJECT: Update on Piedmont Community Pool Schematic Design Process, Updated Cost Estimates and Proposed Design Modifications, and Possible Direction to Staff to Move Forward into Design Development

RECOMMENDATION

Direct staff to advance a modified schematic design for the Piedmont Community Pool project into design development.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Construction cost hyperinflation will necessitate significant modifications to the previously approved Conceptual Design for the Piedmont Community Pool building. For the reasons set forth in this report, staff along with project management and design team consultants advise the City Council review design modifications and facilitate an accelerated timeline for getting the Community Pool Project to bid.

BACKGROUND

Following passage of Measure UU in November 2020, the City focused attention on assembling an experienced team to ensure attention to every detail of the Community Pool project, from design through construction. In March 2021, the City Council established the Community Pool Advisory Committee (PAC) to offer advice and serve as a conduit for the community's voice throughout the design and construction process. In June 2021, Griffin Structures was engaged to provide the City with professional Project Management/Owner's Representative services. In October 2021, the City Council approved an agreement with ELS Architecture & Urban Design for Architecture and Engineering Services for the Community Pool Project. In selecting ELS over seven other firms who submitted proposals, it was acknowledged that the firm has a highly qualified project team, deep and relevant experience in designing successful aquatic facilities, and demonstrated a clear understanding of project opportunities and constraints, as well as an appreciation of the aspirations of the Piedmont community.

Over the ensuing months, ELS held a series of three workshops to gather community input for

refinement of the 2016 Aquatics Master Plan Conceptual Design which was approved by City Council and included a competition pool, a recreation pool and a two-story building. The building as conceived in the 2016 conceptual plan included ground level functions supporting the aquatics uses, while the second story focused on general community programming, such as multipurpose rooms and restrooms accessible to the adjacent tennis courts.

At the second workshop, held in November 2021, the community analyzed the relative benefit of three potential design schemes, each showing various options for building shape, location, and pools. The workshop culminated in the selection of a preferred scheme which entailed a two-story, L-shaped building nestled along the south edge of the Corey Reich Tennis Courts and extending in a southerly direction along Bonita Avenue to Magnolia Avenue.

During the third and final Community Workshop, held in December 2021, the ELS team, responding to community input throughout the process, presented a refinement of the Concept Design, detailing plans for the size, shape and depths of both the fun-water and competitive pools, and for the function and architecture of the Community Pool Building. The City Council approved the Conceptual Design on January 18, 2022 and directed staff to proceed to Schematic Design. The approved concept held closely to the 2016 master plan, except for the addition of a poolside multipurpose space as well as a feasibility analysis of an all-electric pool, which were not included in the 2016 master plan.

Supporting and expanding on the Community Workshops and design refinement process, the Pool Advisory Committee has held five public meetings, from October 2021 through February 2022.

COMMUNITY POOL PROJECT STATUS

ELS completed the Schematic Design (SD) for the Community Pool and submitted the SD package to the City on March 4, 2022. An important element of SD is the estimation of construction costs which were provided by construction cost consulting firm Mack5, who analyzed the design elements and developed an estimate of construction costs. Mack5 concluded that Community Pool construction costs would be in the range of \$25 million which far exceeds the City's \$19 million hard cost construction limit, exclusive of all soft costs. Soft Costs include Architecture/Engineering, Construction Management, Utilities, and Consultant Fees, among others. Thus, the City is faced with a nearly six million dollar gap to close as we move toward design development. The overall project budget as defined by the Measure UU funds, is \$24.5 million, and this \$24.5 million is broken down as follows:

Soft Cost	\$ 5,500,000
Hard Cost (Construction)	\$19,000,000
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Total Project Budget:	\$24,500,000

SCHEMATIC DESIGN CONSTRUCTION COST SUMMARY

SD Construction Cost Estimate (Hard Costs)	
Building	\$14,600,000
Swimming Pools and Pool Decks	\$6,200,000
Site Improvements	\$4,200,000
Total	\$25,000,000
Target Hard Cost Construction Budget	\$19,000,000
Gap	\$6,000,000

The primary driving force behind these exceptional costs is hyperinflation. Construction industry experts are advising that construction costs will rise at a rate in excess of 1% per month for the foreseeable future. Aquatic center projects designed by ELS and put out to bid in the last year and as recently as December 2021 have come in at or below cost estimates. Projects bid more recently are coming in substantially over budget. As a frame of reference, the ELS designed building at the Mountain View aquatic center which received bids for construction just three months ago in December 2021 came in at \$825/square foot. The cost estimate for the Piedmont Community Pool Building as conceptualized is more than \$1,200/square foot.

These volatile times and extraordinary cost estimates necessitate that the Community Pool design be modified. The ELS team, led by Clarence Mamuyac, has been working tirelessly to identify options for significant cost reductions, with the over-arching goal of maintaining the functionality of the facility for competitive water polo and swimming, as well as for aquatic recreation. The developing plan is to keep the competition pool as conceived in the ELS approved concept (27 meters x 25 yards), to modify the length of the three recreation pool lap lanes from 75 feet (25 yards) to the YMCA standard of 60 feet (20 yards), as well as to reduce the size of the zero-depth entry area. With the goal of prioritizing the aquatics needs of the community, proposed design alterations have focused on reducing the scope of the Community Pool Building.

Proposed design alterations needed to meet our project budget include:

- Elimination of the majority of the second story of the building. The restrooms oriented to the tennis courts would be retained, as well as a small storage area for mechanical equipment but the three multi-purpose rooms would be eliminated. The area paralleling the tennis court would be redesigned as a rooftop pavilion which could support outdoor programming as well as community gatherings. The roof deck paralleling Bonita Avenue would support area for mechanical storage as well as PV (solar) panels. The “Pavilion” would be accessible from Bonita Avenue and would have no internal access to the lower

level.

- With the elimination of the second story, the planned elevator and stairway would also be eliminated, thus making the lobby of the Community Pool Building significantly smaller and shortening the leg of the building paralleling Bonita Ave.
- The poolside room at deck level which could be used for birthday and school parties, classes, camps, as well as regular lifeguard and staff training would be included in the bid package as an “Additional Alternate.” This means that it would be designed and included in the bid package, but would only be constructed if the budget allows.
- Elimination of one of the two planned “Family Restroom/Changing” areas.

Potential electrification of the entire facility, which was not conceived of in the 2016 conceptual master plan, comes with an upfront additional construction cost of approximately \$600,000. Eighty percent of the project’s required energy goes to the pools (pump operations and heating). How to proceed through design development relative to heating the pools with gas or electricity will be discussed in a separate agenda item and considered by City Council with a target decision date of April 4, 2022.

The City finds itself in volatile economic times, which make design modifications an unfortunate necessity. The good news is that, even with the proposed modifications, the Piedmont Community Pool facility will serve the aquatic needs of the Piedmont community – both for recreation and for competition, while providing nearly double the pool water area of the former Piedmont Community Pool. Given extreme inflationary pressures, it will be critical to transition as efficiently as is possible to and through design development, with a goal of getting the project out to bid as early as summer 2022.

NEXT STEPS

If the Council is in agreement with the guiding principle of prioritizing the pools as conceptualized and making substantial cost reductions in the building, then staff and ELS will continue to move forward in to design development with significant modifications to the Community Pool Building as described above. Refinements to the global changes presented tonight will be vetted in public meetings by both the Pool Advisory Committee and the Planning Commission.

**Item #4 –Piedmont Community Pool Schematic Design Process Update
Correspondence Received before Monday, March 21st at 3:00 p.m.**

Hello City Staff and Council. Thank you for the material time and effort committed to date towards approving a final budget and breaking ground on our future Community Pool. The designs shared to date look absolutely fantastic, well done to you and the ELS Team. I only have one worry with the recently shared staff report, the reduction of the length of the recreation pool from 25 yards to 20 yards. I have been a lap swimmer for decades and strongly encourage the approval of a 25 yard rec pool so lap swimmers can share workout times when youth and masters teams are using the larger competitive pool.

Best,

Vince Saunders

Section of Concern:

These volatile times and extraordinary cost estimates necessitate that the Community Pool design be modified. The ELS team, led by Clarence Mamuyac, has been working tirelessly to identify options for significant cost reductions, with the over-arching goal of maintaining the functionality of the facility for competitive water polo and swimming, as well as for aquatic recreation. The developing plan is to keep the competition pool as conceived in the ELS approved concept (27 meters x 25 yards), to modify the length of the three recreation pool lap lanes from 75 feet (25 yards) to the YMCA standard of 60 feet (20 yards), as well as to reduce the size of the zero-depth entry area. With the goal of prioritizing the aquatics needs of the community, proposed design alterations have focused on reducing the scope of the Community Pool Building

Dear Piedmont City Council,

As you consider modifications to the new Piedmont Community Pool in light of escalating costs, please prioritize the pool itself over the adjacent community building. The community building could always be modified in the future, but it is exceptionally difficult to modify a pool. The intent of Measure UU was to modernize the pool, including "new facilities and restrooms." The bond was not passed with the intention of creating a multi-purpose community center; it was passed with the specific intention of improving aquatics access for the community.

Please prioritize keeping the pool as large as possible, including maintaining a 25-yard pool for recreational swimming. 20 yards may be a "YMCA standard," but 25 yards is the actual standard used for most pools. Recreational lap swimmers prefer a 25 yard pool.

Given that more than half of the project cost is for the building, the City should also consider funding the building improvements from other funding sources instead of Measure UU.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Cousins

Dear City Leaders,

I am writing to strongly encourage and voice support for maintaining the pool design as currently conceptualized.

This is a one time chance, a reduction in the size or scope would be short sighted. Let's get it done and get it right.

In terms of programming, presently and likely going into the future, the Piedmont water polo program is growing and will continue to grow for both boys and girls. Particularly as the boys program attracts fall athletes and parents looking for alternative sports options.

Last season was the first league title for the boys team and the team is heading into another season with a strong roster and high hopes. The girls continue to improve and attract participation.

Admittedly I am a parent of former players and a fan of the team. However, anyone who watched first hand how this dedicated group of students and coaches literally trained on the softball field while trying to get pool time--anywhere--would conclude Piedmont water polo is a model program and deserves a home pool to continue its championship pedigree.

Respectfully submitted,
Jonathan Davis

Item #4 –Piedmont Community Pool Schematic Design Process Update
Correspondence Received before Monday, March 21st at 3:00 p.m.

I strongly support the staff and ELS prioritization of the pools (especially the “competition” pool) over the building. That is the only way to have a facility that meets the aquatics needs of the community and there is no point in building a facility that doesn’t meet those needs. That said, the originally approved design was such a great potential community asset that I hate to give it up without a fight. I suggest that the first floor of the building be designed so that a second floor can be added, either in the initial construction or later. (Connecting the two floors internally was never a necessary feature, so elimination of the elevator and internal stairway shouldn’t pose a problem. If there is ramp access to the second floor from Bonita and an external stairway to that level from the pool deck level at the west end of the building, that should be both ADA compliant and sufficient.) PRFO has offered to fundraise in connection with UU and the new aquatics center. Let’s put them and the Piedmont Boosters to work and see how much we can raise over the next year or so to fill the budget gap.

Jon Sakol

Dear Council Members,

As you know it is rare for me to weigh in on items before you for consideration. As a former Mayor I have always preferred to simply support your great work with my thanks and appreciation - I had my 8 years. So I will start here with my thanks and appreciation to you all!

I do have some strong views on the pool project, however, that I would like to share. As some of you may recall, as Mayor I championed an effort to explore renewing our center of town and in particular building new pools. It has taken over a decade but this council has been able to move that ball forward substantially and I congratulate you for that! I think the plan that has been developed is an exciting and good one for Piedmont.

I understand some cost issues have arisen. And now the council is considering some changes to address that. I hope that you will choose to lead with a vision for what’s possible and ask the community to step up so we don’t have to compromise the basics of an exceptional facility. We can make this happen in Piedmont.

Whatever you decide I particularly hope that you won’t compromise the size of the pool such that it will not be able to be used well by our families and kids. We need the full 25 yards to provide for our kids. I know there is enough will in this town to make that happen and I personally will be glad to help support whatever effort is needed to make it so.

If folks want other features like electric power, etc they should step up to help make that happen too. But let’s not compromise having a facility that is really exceptional over money. We can do this!

Thank you for considering my views and for your exceptional service to our community!

Abe Friedman
