

**To the Mayor and Members of the City Council****April 5, 2022**

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**SUBJECT: AQUATIC MASTER PLAN UPDATE**

The purpose of this Informal Report is to provide background on the Citywide Aquatic Master Plan (CAMP) and the Park & Recreation Department's (PARD) plan for conducting an update/refresh of the 2012 CAMP. In addition, this report identifies potential funding for the refresh and outlines major areas of the CAMP scheduled to be updated in FY2023.

**Background**

The PARD currently operates three aquatic facilities: the Forest Park Pool, Marine Park Pool and the Sycamore sprayground. The City also partnered with the YMCA of Metropolitan Fort Worth on a recreational aquatic facility at the McDonald YMCA.

In 2007, due to increased maintenance costs, infrastructure failures and functional obsolescence, an audit of all existing aquatic facilities was performed. This led to the development of the City's first Aquatic Master Plan. At the time, the City was operating pools at Forest Park (1922), Marine Park (1926), Sylvania Park (1936), Sycamore Park (1926), Lake Como Park (1957), Kellis Park (1960) and Hillside Park (1960). The audit determined that all of the pools had exceeded their useful life and would not be economical to repair.

On January 15, 2008, (M&C G-16003) the City Council adopted the Citywide Aquatic Master Plan. The full cost of the CAMP equated to \$66.3 million to be implemented between 2008-2022. The Plan included the construction of nine Medium Family Aquatic Centers, six spraygrounds, and demolition costs for the existing outdated pools. The Plan also considered indoor facilities through partnerships. During FY2009, operating funds for six of the seven existing swimming pools were eliminated from the General Fund budget and all pools were closed except Forest Park. In July 2010, Forest Park Pool was forced to close due to a failing liner, and no pools were operated during FY2011 season (Sycamore spray-ground remained open).

In FY2011, the City Manager appointed a Citizens Review Committee (CRC) tasked to review the programs and operations of the Library and Parks & Community Services (PACS) Departments to identify potential service efficiencies, program collaboration and alternative management structures. As part of the CRC's recommendations, PACS (now PARD) was to re-evaluate the 2008 CAMP and look at measures to make the plan more feasible for aquatics to be re-introduced to the City in a shorter period of time. The resulting scaled-down facility model was the Enhanced Neighborhood Family Aquatic Center (ENFAC), and included a four (4) lane - 25 yd. lap pool, a large 'teen' slide, and zero beach entry leisure pool with interactive play unit.

On March 20, 2012 (M&C G-17554) the City Council adopted the updated Citywide Aquatic Master Plan (2012 CAMP), and adopted the updated plan as an amendment to the Park, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan and the City of Fort Worth Comprehensive Plan. In FY2012 Park Capital Improvement funds and Community Development Block Grant funds were appropriated to construct an ENFAC in Marine Park for \$3.85 million. In addition, a public-private partnership was formed with The Radler Foundation to fund necessary repairs to Forest Park Pool so it could open for the 2013 season.

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In FY2014 general operating funds were identified for the removal of the six remaining City pools, which were subsequently demolished and the sites returned to functional park open space.

In accordance with the 2012 CAMP, during the formulation of the 2014 and 2018 bond programs the PARD included in its initial listing of bond program project recommendations for funding two (2) ENFACs. Ultimately these projects were not included in the bond referendums.

Facility Scope and Master Plan Updates

PARD recommended two pools in the 2022 Bond Program, one for replacement of the Forest Park Pool and a new aquatic facility in Stop Six. Both recommendations were for an ENFAC facility, per 2012 CAMP; Forest Park at a cost of \$7.5 million (\$500k for demolition of existing facility) and \$7 million for Stop Six. Due to the age and uncertainty of operational reliability, tax notes (\$900,000) were authorized in April 2021 (M&C 21-0265) to begin the design and engineering for the Forest Park Pool replacement.

In July 2021 the Forest Park Pool Replacement project was initiated. During the process, neighborhood and special interest groups expressed concern for the reduced size and design. In response to the public input, the PARD pursued costing options for an enlarged aquatic facility at Forest Park. As a result of the public interest, the replacement budget for Forest Park Pool was increased to \$11 million in order to replace the existing 50-meter lap pool with a similar sized lap pool and, to address equity, the Stop Six Pool was upgraded to expand the 25-yard lap pool from 4 lanes to 8 lanes at a cost of \$8.2 million. As a result of the changes to the two proposed facilities, the PARD concluded that a ten (10) year mid-term update or "refresh" of the twenty (20) year 2012 CAMP should occur in order to incorporate the revision of the base model pool, update the regional market inventory, and reflect current partnerships i.e. McDonald YMCA.

The PARD will identify funding for FY2023 in the PARD 5-yr Capital Improvement Plan in order to secure professional services for updating/refreshing the 2012 CAMP by the fourth quarter of FY2023. The refresh process will include engaging with stakeholders, citizens, interest groups, service providers and institutions to ensure we understand the voice of the customer as work is completed to review the plan. Once the process is completed, the updated plan will be presented to the Park & Recreation Advisory Board and the City Council for review, additional public comment and adoption. All future aquatic project funding requests will be based on the updated and adopted 2023 CAMP.

Should you have any questions regarding this Informal Report please contact Park & Recreation Department Director Richard Zavala.

**David Cooke**  
**City Manager**