



CITY OF PORT ALBERNI
PARKS + RECREATION DEPARTMENT

ECHO AQUATIC CENTRE FEASIBILITY STUDY

FINAL REPORT
4 NOVEMBER 2011

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Executive Summary	PAGE 3
1. INTRODUCTION	PAGE 5
2. METHODOLOGY	PAGE 6
3. DEMOGRAPHICS INFORMATION	PAGE 8
4. TRENDS IN AQUATIC FACILITY DESIGN + OPERATION	PAGE 10
5. COMPARABLE COMMUNITIES	PAGE 13
6. COMMUNITY INPUT	PAGE 18
7. PARTICIPATION STATISTICS	PAGE 22
8. REVIEW, ANALYSIS + CONCEPT DESIGN	PAGE 24
9. CAPITAL COSTS	PAGE 29
10. OPERATING COSTS	PAGE 30
11. RECOMMENDATIONS	PAGE 31
APPENDICES	PAGE 32
A. VANCOUVER ISLAND FEES + CHARGES 2011 SURVEY	
B. COMMUNITY INPUT NOTES	
C. SURVEY + QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS	
D. OPEN HOUSE PRESENTATION RESULTS	
E. MEETING NOTES	

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In the spring of 2011, the City of Port Alberni retained the services of Venture Pacific Construction Management, along with Bruce Carscadden Architect Inc. and Professional Environmental Recreation Consultants Ltd. (PERC) to prepare a Facility Feasibility Study related to the possible renovation or replacement of the Echo Aquatic Centre.

The study was completed over a six month period and involved a number of key steps including:

- Meetings with City, Regional District, Recreation Department staff, local organizations and the general public;
- A review of background information including previous studies and reports;
- A review of demographic information;
- A review of the current condition of the aquatic centre;
- Research related to trends in aquatic facility design and use;
- The development of information related to capital and operating costs and their impact on local taxpayers;
- The preparation and presentation of a draft and final report.

The consultants developed three Concept Options for presentation at the first of two public meetings.

Option One retained the existing pool and added a leisure pool with new change rooms. The leisure pool would include two swimming lanes, and would have water depth appropriate for instruction, play and rehabilitation programs. The cost for this option was estimated at \$12 million. This option would require closure of the pool for several months.

Option Two retained and renovated the existing pools and added new leisure pool components as well as fitness and multipurpose space. The leisure pool would include two swimming lanes and appropriate water depth. This option would also include an outdoor patio with a winter hot tub and spray pool. The cost of this option was estimated at \$15 million. This option would also require the pool to be closed for a period of time.

Option Three would involve the construction of a new six lane 25 meter pool with new change rooms and staff areas, and a leisure pool that would include three swimming lanes. An outdoor patio with a winter hot tub and spray pool would also be included. The existing pool area would be renovated for fitness and multipurpose space. The estimated cost was \$18 million. The existing aquatic center would be able to continue operation during the construction of the new facility with this option.

Following the first public meeting on June 27, 2011 the consultants reviewed the comments on each of the three options and developed additional options (four and five) based on additional public input.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Option Four included a new aquatic facility to the north of the existing community centre, and improvements to the existing pool for fitness and multipurpose space, and included a "Surf Rider", which simulates surfing in a confined indoor space. A leisure pool with three swimming lanes and related features would be included along with a large hot tub, steam room and sauna. This option would include new accessible change rooms for men, women and families. The cost was estimated at \$15.8 million and would not require the existing pool to be closed during construction.

Option Five included a new aquatic facility to the north and renovation to the existing aquatic centre for fitness and multipurpose space, as well as water slide. A leisure pool with three swimming lanes and related features would be included along with a large hot tub, steam room and sauna. This option would include new fully accessible change rooms for men, women and families. In Option Five, a new entrance would be developed providing enclosed lobby space with entry to the aquatic centre and the community centre. The cost of this option was estimated at \$17 million and would not require closing the existing pool during construction.

Option Six is the **Preferred Option**. This plan builds a new aquatic facility to the north, and renovates the existing natatorium for fitness and multipurpose spaces, and includes a waterslide.

The new pool would significantly enhance the services provided to the community as a whole. The leisure pool offers swimming lessons, play for all ages, rehabilitation opportunities and frees up the 25 meter pool for length swimming and advanced lessons. The separate pools allow for different water temperatures to be provided ensuring all age groups can enjoy their aquatic experience.

In terms of operating costs, a pool with the features described above generally draws more participants resulting in increased revenue opportunities. Other communities that have added leisure components to their aquatic facilities have experienced up to a 40% increase in general swim participation. On the expenditure side, a larger aquatic centre requires more staff and additional maintenance; however, facilities have found that the increase in revenues offsets the increase in expenditures.

From an attendance point of view, most renovated or replaced aquatic facilities have experienced increased participation in lessons and other programs as well as at general swimming sessions. Pool staff has found in many cases that other program areas have experienced increased participation as well.

1. INTRODUCTION

The Echo Community Centre was constructed as part of British Columbia's 1967 Centennial celebrations and consists of five separate phases of development. The Aquatic Centre was included in the original 1966 development. At the time, it was considered "cutting edge" in terms of community recreation facility design. Following the initial construction, a small fitness room, hot tub, sauna and tot's pool were installed in 1974 and family change rooms were added in 2000.

The original facility construction was well done with quality finishing and attention paid to function and durability while providing service to large numbers of patrons. The facility has been well maintained over the past 44 years and there are no pending operational issues. The tank is sound and the main seal at the base of the sidewalls has been replaced and is reviewed annually for leak points. Much of the filter room equipment has been replaced and an upgraded HVAC system was installed in 2010 to improve air quality and reduce energy consumption. Approximately one third of the original roof membrane has also been replaced.

City Council has frequently asked for an estimated cost to construct a new aquatic centre and subsequently approved funds for a pool feasibility study as part of the 2011 Financial Planning process. At this point there is no commitment for actual project funding.

The objectives of the feasibility study include:

- To gather and review information on the current operation of the existing aquatic and community centre;
- To ensure that the general public and stakeholders are given an opportunity to provide comments and suggestions regarding the development of a new or expanded aquatic centre in the community;
- To review plans prepared as a result of the study;
- To identify current design and program trends, desirable features and space requirements related to those facilities;
- To optimize the use of existing and future facility space and staff resources;
- To discuss the benefits of an upgraded aquatic facility with the community;
- To detail both construction and operating costs for the new facility;
- To consider possible phasing of the proposed development;
- To determine the financial impact of the proposed facility on local taxation;
- To prepare and present a final report with plans, costs and recommendations.

2. METHODOLOGY

The City of Port Alberni retained the services of Venture Pacific Construction Management, Bruce Carscadden Architect Inc. and Professional Environmental Recreation Consultants Ltd. (PERC) in the spring of 2011 to prepare a feasibility study to assist in determining if the existing Aquatic Centre should be renovated or replaced, and to identify the type of features the community would most prefer in a new or refurbished facility.

The following specific steps were undertaken in the completion of the report.

2.1 MEETINGS WITH THE CLIENT

At project commencement, the consultants met with the Parks and Recreation Department senior staff to review the proposed methodology and terms of reference for the project, and to confirm project deliverables. The following specific items were also discussed:

- Availability of background information and related previous reports;
- Project time line;
- Design and programming trends in aquatics;
- Capital and operating costs;
- Community input;
- Preparation and presentation of some concept options;
- Preparation and presentation of the final report.

At this time the consultants were taken on a tour of the current facilities and the overall site of the Centre

2.2 BACKGROUND MATERIALS

The consultants reviewed a number of background documents and previous planning studies including:

- 1995 Echo '67 Centre Facility Study including the 1990 Seismic Survey of City Owned Buildings (Echo Centre section and summary)
- Assorted facility plans
- School District 70 High School Site Plans (2011)
- Current Fees and Charges
- 2011 survey of Vancouver Island fees and charges
- Current facility budget and wage rates
- Current facility organization structure
- Twelve month summary of Hydro and Gas invoices
- Summary of Aquatic Centre attendance statistics

2. METHODOLOGY

2.3 PUBLIC / STAKEHOLDER INPUT

The consultants met with and collected information from the following stakeholders and public groups:

- Port Alberni Swimming Pool Committee
- Port Alberni Parks and Recreation Department staff
- City Hall and Council representatives
- Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District Representatives
- School District #70 Alberni Representatives
- Alberni-Clayoquot Continuing Care Society
- Tsunami Swim Club
- Public meetings
- Distributed and summarized public survey
- Correspondence

2.4 REVIEW AND ANALYSIS / CONCEPT DESIGN

In a collaborative approach based on the proposed program, a number of conceptual design options were developed. Input included review and analysis of the site, existing facilities and information provided through consultation with the public, existing reports, user groups and staff. The concept options and designs developed according to this collaboration were refined until a Preferred Option was settled upon. With consensus on the program, budget and design the preferred option was identified, and is presented in Chapter 8 of this report.

3. DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

The team consulted Statistics Canada to obtain information regarding the 2006 Census to develop a demographic snapshot of Port Alberni and the surrounding communities. The B.C. Regional District and Municipal Population Estimates were also consulted to provide 2010 population estimates. School District #70 provided their enrollment statistics to assist in estimating the trend in population for the next several years.

FIGURE ONE - POPULATION CHANGE (1996-2006)

AREA	2006	% CHANGE	2001
Port Alberni	17,548	-1.1 %	17,748
Beaver Creek	2,822	1.5 %	2,779
Sproat Lake	2,027	0.5 %	2,016
Cherry Creek	1,882	-0.5	1,892
Beaufort	476	-5.2 %	502
Alberni Valley	24,755	-0.7%	24,937
Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District	30,664	1.1 %	30,345
British Columbia	4,113,487	5.3 %	3,907,738

The 2006 Canada Census lists a population of 17,548 residents in the City of Port Alberni. That figure is down from the 18,468 that was reported in the 1996 Census, which was slightly lower than the 18,523 reported in the 1991 Census. Since the initial population decrease was shown in the 2001 Census, the population of Port Alberni has basically stabilized. The BC Estimates for 2010 report a slight population increase of 1.2% up to 17,752 residents.

The Alberni Valley, which is made up of the City of Port Alberni, and the Electoral Areas of Beaver Creek, Sproat Lake, Cherry Creek and Beaufort, had a total population of 24,755 as reported in the 2006 Census, which was down slightly from the 24,937 report in the 2001 Census. BC Estimates for 2010 show the unincorporated areas of the Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District up slightly by about 2% but there is no breakdown available for each Electoral Area.

It is safe to say that the population of the area served by the Port Alberni Parks and Recreation Department is stable and will be for the foreseeable future.

3. DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

FIGURE TWO - AGE DISTRIBUTION BY PERCENTAGE IN 2006 CENSUS

AREA	0-14	15-24	25-44	45-64	65+
Port Alberni	16.8	11.6	22.1	31.0	18.5
Beaver Creek	16.8	10.6	22.8	32.8	17.0
Sproat Lake	14.2	11.6	16.8	42.3	15.1
Cherry Creek	15.2	11.2	21.5	36.4	15.7
Beaufort	16.6	13.6	21.9	31.3	16.6
Alberni Valley	16.5	11.5	21.7	32.5	17.8
Alberni-Clayoquot	17.0	12.1	23.6	31.6	15.7
British Columbia	16.5	13.1	27.4	28.4	14.6

The age distribution in the Alberni Valley is relatively similar through the areas of the Valley except for Sproat Lake where the 25 to 44 age category is lower and the 45 to 64 age category is larger. The Alberni Valley age distribution is very similar to the Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District.

FIGURE THREE - SCHOOL ENROLMENT PROJECTIONS

School District # 70 Alberni provided information regarding the enrolment projections and the trend being experienced in the Alberni Valley. The 2011 / 2012 projections indicate a total of 1,385 children in kindergarten through grade five, 767 children in middle school, grades six to eight and 1,173 children in high school, grades nine to 12. The School District also indicated that their major declines have ended and it is anticipated that enrolment levels will remain similar to 2011 / 2012 for the immediate future.

4. TRENDS IN AQUATIC FACILITY DESIGN + OPERATION

An important aspect of the study was the exploration of current trends in the design, construction, and operation of aquatic facilities. These trends indicate a wide variety of features, design characteristics, and operational strategies that exist throughout the country or are being promoted as new elements to be included in swimming pools design.

The population of the community, as well as trends in pool use, the frequency of use by patrons, and the types of aquatic activities offered to the public will influence the size, make-up and configuration of a new or improved Aquatic Centre in Port Alberni. As most residents know, the existing pool is 44 years old, and a wide variety of amenities have been introduced to aquatic facilities during this period of time.

In most communities in British Columbia and in other parts of Canada, pool use is increasing, with more people making use of aquatic facilities more often for recreational swimming, swim lessons, competitive training, and in particular, for health and fitness.

At the present time, approximately 4 to 5 swims per resident can be anticipated each year. Some communities report as many as 10 swims per year on a per capita basis. This figure will vary, of course, depending on the ability of staff to offer creative and enjoyable programming opportunities, the accessibility of the facility to the greatest number of people, and the cost of using the facility.

Due to the increasing age of our population and shifts in demographics, the most successful aquatic centres include a variety of amenities that are designed to attract all ages and levels of ability, with an increasing emphasis on wellness, fitness and the therapeutic benefits of aquatic activities.

Discussions with architects, planners and aquatic managers, as well as with Parks and Recreation managers in other communities suggest the following trends:

- **LEISURE POOLS:** There is continuing interest in leisure pools with interactive play apparatuses. Lazy rivers in particular are popular among all age groups, as well as water arches, bubble pits, tots pools, and sprinklers.
- **BIG TOYS:** Water slides remain popular, and a “standing wave” machine that allows patrons to “surf” (or learn to surf) is a relatively new feature. The Standing Wave at H2O Aquatic Centre in Kelowna and has received positive reviews, and is a significant and unique draw to the facility.
- **SIX LANE LAP POOLS / LEISURE POOLS:** Almost all indoor pools in British Columbia, particularly in communities the size of Port Alberni, have a 6 lane, 25 meter pool that can be used for swim training, swimming for fitness, and lessons. The combination of lanes and leisure components is vital to the overall success of an aquatic program. In addition, one or more separate pools, typically with warmer water and play features, are also included to accommodate younger participants. A large hot tub sufficient in size to accommodate approximately 20 people is common in most recently built facilities.

4. TRENDS IN AQUATIC FACILITY DESIGN + OPERATION

- **YOUTH ATTRACTIONS:** In order to attract youth, it is suggested that a number of games and activities be incorporated into the facility such as water basketball and volleyball, screens or walls that can be used for the projection of movies and either rope swings or pulleys. Diving is also popular in many locations, and retention of the 1 and 3 meter diving boards would certainly be recommended in Port Alberni.
- **FITNESS:** One of the most popular activities, particularly for adults, is swimming for fitness or taking part in aquatic fitness programs, physiotherapy, aerobics activities, and weight training. It is important to note that a depth of approximately 4 feet or less is appropriate for water aerobics and aqua fit classes, and 5 feet or more is needed for deep water aerobics.
- **WARM WATER:** There is continued interest in a variety of pools and water temperatures within a single facility. The most popular pools will have one temperature for the main tank (the coolest water), another for the leisure pool/tots pool and another for the hot tub which is primarily used by adults and teens. This combination addresses the needs of various age and interest groups in the community.
- **ACCESSIBILITY:** There is increasing interest in accessibility for all age groups and for people with a disability. Interests include but are not limited to: well-located lockers and railings, increased and well located parking, contrasting colours to assist those with visual impairments in moving about the facility, and ease of access to the pool, either with modern lifts or zero depth entries.
- **FAMILY CHANGE ROOMS:** Dressing room design has evolved to accommodate the needs of families and elderly patrons as well as those with disabilities. The newest pools have included an increased number of private change rooms within a larger communal area that includes lockers for personal belongings. Bruce Carscadden Architect Inc has conducted considerable research into the design of these amenities across Canada and in Europe.
- **DROP IN USE:** There is continuing interest in flexible programming that allows people the opportunity to engage in lap swimming throughout a good portion of the day.
- **NATURAL LIGHT AND CONNECTIONS TO THE OUTDOORS:** There is increasing interest in ensuring that new aquatic facilities include as much natural light as possible, as well as access to an outdoor deck area. This type of feature makes the facility more attractive than the previous generation of indoor pools which tended to avoid the use of natural light. There are relatively few "outdoor opportunities" in BC at the present time; however, the consultants suggest that properly designed and located, they can be particularly popular.
- **GREEN DESIGN:** In recent years, more attention has been directed toward minimizing impacts on the environment in the design of all aquatic facilities, and where possible taking advantage of heat exchange opportunities from adjacent facilities such as arenas. This is a trend that will continue into the future.

4. TRENDS IN AQUATIC FACILITY DESIGN + OPERATION

- **CHILD MINDING SPACES:** There is steady interest in amenities that cater to young children (i.e. child minding space). This provides parents with an opportunity to participate in an activity in the pool while their children are being cared for in another part of the facility.
- **PARTNERSHIPS:** Partnerships with local organizations and businesses are increasingly important to the success of aquatic facilities. The middle of the day, in particular, is typically a quiet time. With this in mind, local schools should be encouraged to use the pool throughout the day, as well as seniors and parents with pre-school youngsters. In addition, strong relationships with business and industry will result in greater use, particularly in the area of rehabilitation. Space for physiotherapists is common in many facilities.
- **SOCIAL CENTRE:** An aquatic centre can be a gathering place for social interaction. As such, the facility should provide adequate space for spectators and those coming to the facility to wait for other family members and friends. Some type of food service – particularly concession machines – should be available. The consultants would suggest that the inclusion of food services would not necessarily be a major attraction, and would encourage further research among aquatic facilities on the Island and in other parts of the province.
- **STAFF:** Space for staff and the storage of equipment continues to be a critical concern and staff should be engaged in discussions regarding this important area. The design of aquatic facilities must address the ability of lifeguards to observe the entire facility. It is increasingly important to involve guarding staff in discussions related to facility design.
- **COMPUTER ACCESS & CONTROL:** Electronic and computerized access are being used more to control access to recreation facilities. Card access, fobs, and other devices are used to access various service levels, program areas, lockers and even food services; this trend is about cost recovery.
- **THERAPY & SPA:** Spa experiences associated with hot tubs, steam rooms, saunas, cold plunge pools and opportunities to relax and enjoy water therapy often in a soothing more intimate atmosphere are increasingly popular.
- **COMPETITIVE SWIMMING:** Interest in competitive swimming is common in most communities, and staff should work closely with community interests to ensure that appropriate time is available, at reasonable cost, to ensure that this type of activity can occur in the facility, in some cases while other activities are taking place. Most swim clubs will desire hosting a swim meet once or more each year in which competitors from other communities will also take part.

5. COMPARABLE COMMUNITIES

The consultant team reviewed information from similar communities on Vancouver Island that have recently completed significant renovations to their aquatic facilities, including Ravensong Pool at Qualicum Beach, Panorama Recreation Centre on the Saanich Peninsula, Esquimalt Recreation Centre, and the Cowichan Aquatic Centre. This review included:

1. Operating costs for the year prior to the renovations and the year following the renovations.
2. Changes to staffing levels as a result of modifications to the facility.
3. Current fees and charges in use.
4. Participation statistics prior to and following the renovations.
5. The critical design features that made a significant difference to the facility.
6. Any other relevant information it was felt important for Port Alberni to be aware of.

A survey of Vancouver Island facility fees and charges are included for information in appendix A.

5.1 RAVENSONG AQUATIC CENTRE

The Ravensong Aquatic Centre project was undertaken to correct several deficiencies in the original building and did not increase the size of the facility. The pool was closed for approximately 26 weeks and reopened in December 2010. The work included:

- Skylight replacement;
- Building envelop remedial work;
- Interior structural steel work;
- Natatorium light fixtures replacement;
- Drain pipe work;
- Electrical / communications services repairs;
- Installation of a new water treatment system;
- Upgrade of the air handling and heat recovery systems;
- Pool tank integrity review and repair.

5. COMPARABLE COMMUNITIES

The following was noted based on discussions with Ravensong operators and the Port Alberni Pool Study Group:

1. The net operating cost from the year prior to the work compared to the budgeted figure for the year following the work indicates a 4.7% decrease. This is comparing normal annual operating revenues and expenditures and does not include capital grants or debt retirement.
2. Staffing levels for the aquatic facility were at 15 full time equivalents prior to the renovation work and remain the same following the work.
3. The Ravensong Aquatic Centre was closed for 26 weeks in 2010, reopening in December 2010. Attendance increased 21% for December 2010 over December 2009.
4. There was no critical design features involved in the project as the work was all remedial to correct deficiencies in the original facility.
5. There were no feature design changes as all of the work was to enhance the aquatic experience in the original facility.
6. The Pool Study Group indicated that Ravensong was a good example for a hot tub, tots pool, family change room, natural light, and staff control room.
7. Deck space at Ravensong was thought to be too narrow and an example of what not to do.
8. The addition of a separate leisure pool and additional dry floor space would have been preferred, but the scope and cost of remedial work needed made these additions impossible for the project.
9. Other issues noted included the need for good communications with staff, user groups and the general public, as well as realistic timelines and the need for accurate costing.

5. COMPARABLE COMMUNITIES

5.2 PANORAMA RECREATION CENTRE

The Panorama Recreation Centre Pool was closed in the fall of 2008 and reopened in the fall of 2009. The renovation project consisted of the addition of a large leisure pool with features such as a lazy river, giant slide and several spray elements. A hot tub, sauna and steam room was also included in the facility as well as a multi-purpose room that can be used for birthday parties.

The following was noted based on discussions with Panorama operators and the Port Alberni Pool Study Group:

1. The last full year of operation was 2007 prior to the renovation and the first full year of operation following the renovation was 2010. Revenue increased in 2010 over 2007 by 58% while expenditures increased by 63%; the expenditure increase was mainly due to on deck staff hours.
2. Staffing levels following the renovation have remained the same for aquatic administrative staff but has risen from 30 part time deck staff to 60 part time deck staff.
3. Annual drop-in participation has increased from 87,301 in 2007 to 123,175 or 41% in 2010; swimming lesson participation has increased by 16%.
4. The critical design features that the PRC staff felt important include:
 - Simplicity of design (design that doesn't date; design that aids in safety supervision);
 - Use of tiles instead of liners and paint;
 - Orientation of walls dividing swimming areas;
 - Direction of water flow in lazy river;
 - Lazy River with speed control for 0% to 100%;
 - Depth of water;
 - Underwater bench in leisure pool equipped with massage jets on back and calf muscles;
 - Plan in advance the purpose of various swimming areas including instruction, length swimming, rehabilitation, play etc;
 - Free form leisure pool should include length swimming lanes;
 - Independent filter and sanitation systems;
 - State of the art sound system;
 - Adequate viewing area and storage;
5. Other relevant information felt to be important was to include aquatic staff in the design stage to ensure a user friendly facility.

5. COMPARABLE COMMUNITIES

5.3 ESQUIMALT RECREATION CENTRE

The Esquimalt Recreation Centre added a leisure component to the existing six lane 25 meter pool in 2004. The leisure pool is located along side of the original pool with floor to ceiling windows looking over the department's playing fields. The leisure component includes a separate tot pool in one corner that ranges in depth for about six inches to about 10 inches. In another corner is the hot tub that is slightly elevated overlooking both pools. The main part of the leisure pool includes a lazy river, a vortex, benches along one wall and a few spray features. A waterfall feature is popular with seniors for its massage value. A one meter diving board was part of the original pool but due to current regulations it is a spring board with feet first entry only. The renovation also included the addition of a large fitness centre.

The following was noted based on discussions with Esquimalt operators and the Port Alberni Pool Study Group:

1. The Esquimalt pool was closed for about one year while the renovations were completed. Revenues increased by 365% when comparing direct revenues from the last year of the old pool operation and the first year of the pool operation; direct expenditures increased in the same comparison by 255% resulting in a significant positive net position change
2. Staffing levels where increased from approximately 15-18 staff to 35-40 deck staff for the most part
3. Annual participation figures were not available for 2003, however, the change in revenue would indicate substantial increase in participation both in public swimming and swimming lessons
4. The critical design features that the Esquimalt staff felt important include:
 - Including some swimming lanes in the leisure pool;
 - Lazy River feature is a must for the leisure pool;
 - Water fall feature is very popular with seniors ;
 - The vortex element is also very popular;
 - The latest design in pool lift equipment.

5. COMPARABLE COMMUNITIES

5.4 COWICHAN AQUATIC CENTRE

The Cowichan Aquatic Centre was built as a separate facility adjacent to the Island Savings Centre to replace the Aquannis Aquatic Centre. The original pool consisted of a six lane 25 meter pool with a sauna, hot tub and a small fitness area. The new Cowichan Aquatic Centre has an eight lane 25 meter pool with a leisure pool which includes a wave pool, lazy river and spray elements, hot tub, sauna, steam room, twin water slides and one and three meter diving boards. Also included in the facility is a 3,000 square foot fitness centre. In addition, two birthday party rooms, a child minding room, pro shop and coffee shop are located in the building.

The following was noted based on discussions with Cowichan operators and the Port Alberni Pool Study Group:

1. The Aquannis Aquatic Centre closed in July 2008 and the Cowichan Aquatic Centre opened in September 2008. Revenue attributable to the pool operation is projected to increase over the last full year of operation in the old pool by 178%; at the same time operating expenditures directly attributable to the pool are projected to increase by 43%; the increase in expenditures is mainly due to the increase in staffing hours required in the larger facility including front desk staff, maintenance staff and on deck aquatic staff
2. Staffing levels have increased in all areas from pool deck supervision to lifeguards and instructors; the old pool employed approximately 35 while the new pool employs approximately 66 staff members
3. Operators noted that the increase and diversity of space within the facility has allowed staff to program for a much larger clientele.
4. Annual participation statistics were not available however the best estimate is about a 200% increase since the opening of the new aquatic centre
5. Other relevant information felt to be important was to invest in a disabled access consultant prior to construction; staff have experienced problems with the lifts that were installed.
6. The Pool Study Group review found the Cowichan facility to be a good example for hot tub design, deck space, water slides, fitness facility space, storage space (though it could be larger), and the staff control room.

6. COMMUNITY INPUT

The consultants conducted meetings and workshops with a number of community organizations and agencies, as well as members of the Port Alberni Parks and Recreation staff and members of the general public. Please refer to Appendix B for the complete notes from all the public input opportunities.

6.1 MEETINGS WITH GROUPS AND ORGANIZATIONS

Meetings were held with specific agencies and groups, and public meetings were held for the general population. Two separate surveys were also made available at the public meetings and at other locations for people to answer and return at their leisure.

The agencies and organizations that the consultants met with or received correspondence from included:

- Port Alberni Swimming Pool Committee
- Port Alberni Parks and Recreation Department staff
- City of Port Alberni staff
- City of Port Alberni Mayor and Councilors
- Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District CAO
- Sproat Lake Regional District Director
- Alberni Valley Senior Secondary School Principal and Vice Principal
- Alberni Valley School District #70 Secretary Treasurer
- Alberni Valley Regional District Continuing Care
- First Nations representative
- Tsunami Swim Club Coaching staff
- Port Alberni Lawn Bowling Club

6. COMMUNITY INPUT

The first of the two public meetings was held on June 7, 2011 and had 50 residents attend and participate in a two hour discussion. The second public meeting was held on June 27, 2011 and was held from 3:30 pm until 8:00 pm to ensure that as many residents could attend as possible, resulting in approximately 100 people viewing the three concept options and filling out a short questionnaire.

Several e-mails and letters were received from interested people expressing their views on the possible renovation or replacement of Aquatic Centre. The most frequently mentioned features of a new or renovated facility included:

- A 25 meter – 6 lane main pool;
- A large leisure pool with warmer water to accommodate swimming lessons, play and rehabilitation features and two or three lanes with chest deep water for those who prefer to swim and exercise in warmer water;
- Larger family change room facilities;
- Larger fitness room for weight training with separate access from the pool;
- A fitness room with appropriate floor for aerobics, yoga etc.;
- More natural light into the pool area;
- Improved viewing area for public to view general swimming sessions and lessons;
- All pools to have good access for those with disabilities;
- Larger mechanical room;
- Improved water disinfection system;
- Consideration of parking for the whole site;
- Loading dock and storage for maintenance items in appropriate locations;
- Larger staff room facilities with separate change areas for male and female;
- Common reception area for the whole of Echo Centre;
- Features to attract youth / teen demographic;
- Outdoor leisure space;
- Inclusion of some type of concession service;
- Consider expanded use by the High School in its new location;
- Steam room and sauna;
- Extend hours of operation to include all year access;

6. COMMUNITY INPUT

6.2 PUBLIC MEETING #1

On June 7, 2011, the District hosted the first of two Public Meetings with the assistance of Venture Pacific Construction Management, Bruce Carscadden Architect Inc. and Professional Environmental Recreation Consultants Ltd.

The meeting attracted approximately 50 local residents who were provided information regarding popular trends in aquatic facilities and advised that the current study would address the current condition of the existing pool, the preparation of several concept options, and provide estimates of capital and operating costs. Attendees were encouraged to ask questions of the consultants and staff, and to respond to a survey regarding the existing pool, as well as preferences in terms of future amenities.

The following information provides a brief summary of the survey results of the meeting. Please refer to Appendix F for additional details regarding the completed surveys.

Existing Pool

- Top five features most liked regarding the existing pool - family change rooms; whirlpool; main pool; fitness room; viewing area (It should be noted that "staff" were perceived to be very professional)
- Top five most needed improvements - Water treatment; additional amenities, including a leisure pool, a larger pool, and a larger fitness area; additional private change areas; warmer water; additional public sessions
- Top five least appealing features - not enough lanes (over-crowding); too many children; water quality; need for different temperatures; size of pool - too small
- Travel to other pools - A good number of respondents indicated that they travel to other communities (particularly the Nanaimo Aquatic Centre) because of the family-oriented features

Existing Programs

- Top five current programs - water aerobics; everyone welcome swims, lane swimming, swimming lessons, fitness training

New Facility

- Top ten suggested features when a new pool is built, or renovations to the existing pool is undertaken: waterslides; brighter / natural lighting; fitness room and equipment; tots play area; lazy river; improved water treatment; leisure features; pool length and width; steam room and whirlpool; family change rooms; zero depth entry

Interest in Outdoor Pool Amenities

- 35 of the respondents indicated that they would like outdoor leisure features, and 33 of the respondents expressed an interest in a summer patio / picnic area. An outdoor pool was suggested by 31 of the respondents; 17 respondents suggested that outdoor water activity would increase their use of the facility

6. COMMUNITY INPUT

New Programs

- There were very few responses to this question, which resulted in three suggestions – water based fitness programs, rehabilitation programs and, generally, programs for everyone

Other Comments

- There were two key comments: (1) the pool should not be shut down during the construction process, and (2) financing improvements could be a concern

6.3 PUBLIC MEETING #2

On June 27, 2011, the District hosted a second Public Meeting with the assistance of Venture Pacific Construction Management, Bruce Carscadden Architect Inc. and Professional Environmental Recreation Consultants Ltd.

The meeting attracted approximately 100 local residents who completed 73 questionnaires. Staff members were also able to provide comments and suggestions, and spoke to a number of the attendees about the concept options. Three concept options were presented by the consultants and residents were able to view the poster boards and discuss each option with the consultants and Port Alberni staff members. Option Three was favoured by almost all of the respondents.

Summary

- The preferred leisure features:
 - Water slide (46)
 - Lazy river (44)
 - Tots play area (40)
 - Wave pool (25)
 - Standing waves/wave rider (22)
- The preferred general features (top five):
 - Fitness room (52)
 - Room for exercise classes (46)
 - Sauna (45)
 - Whirl pool (42)
 - Leisure pool (41)
 - Six lane pool (41) - very few respondents suggested a larger pool
- Notable suggestions/questions:
 - How will pool construction be financed?
 - Ensure features for everyone
 - Include a climbing wall – a feature in several pools in BC
 - Ensure access to pool during construction
 - Features and programs for youth
 - Three different water temperatures
 - Fitness facility and programs are very important to all ages
 - Ensure appropriate water treatment

7. PARTICIPATION STATISTICS

The consultants analyzed the participation statistics for past few years at the Echo Aquatic Centre, and developed estimates for participation in the proposed new facility and current and future uses relative to the facility capacity.

7.1 CURRENT AQUATIC CENTRE USE

The consultants have analyzed use statistics back to 2006 and based on those figures have calculated the number of swims per year in three categories including:

- Public swimming sessions which include general swims, length swimming sessions, water exercise sessions and any other non instructional activity;
- Skill development sessions which include swimming lessons, lifeguarding courses, swimming instructor courses and similar activities based on 10 sessions per lesson set;
- Swim club sessions which were calculated based on the current number of swimmers and the number of swim sessions held each week; this number is static across the years presented but is as close as we can estimate with the information available.

FIGURE FOUR - CURRENT ECHO AQUATIC CENTRE PARTICIPATION

CATEGORY	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Public Swims	120,599	124,042	130,558	123,217	124,164
Skill Development	57,130	57,360	53,340	62,620	57,990
Swim Club	5,760	5,760	5,760	5,760	5,760
Annual Total	188,489	187,162	189,658	191,597	187,914

To determine how these usage numbers relate to the swimming pools capacity to accommodate swims the consultants use a typical approach to determining capacity for mixed uses of an indoor public pool which is based on water surface area. By mixed use the consultants mean all types of pool use that would be included in each of the categories in FIGURE FOUR above. For all water surface less than 5 feet deep, physical capacity for use is deemed to be 60 swims per year. For all water greater than 5 feet deep, physical capacity is deemed to be 25 swims per year. A swim is assumed to be each time a person enters the pool to swim.

The Echo Aquatic Centre currently has a capacity for 234,600 swims per year. Using the average annual total swims of 190,964 the swimming pool is using 81.4 percent of capacity. The consultants experience also indicates that the average number of swims per capita that a community can expect is about five. The highest the consultants have experienced is 10 swims per capita. Port Alberni's swimming pool is currently experiencing about seven swims per capita per year. It should also be noted that there are times during each day that are not conducive to programming and therefore reaching 100% capacity is not to be expected.

7. PARTICIPATION STATISTICS

7.2 FUTURE PROJECTED AQUATIC CENTRE USAGE

The favoured option for a new aquatic centre in Port Alberni would provide capacity for 352,210 swims annually or a 50 percent increase in capacity. The major change in the new facility compared to the old one is the addition of a leisure pool which provides a significant increase in water surface area under five feet deep. The consultants estimate that about 65 percent of those participating in aquatic activity do so in water less than five feet deep. This additional water surface area will likely be where the greatest increase in participation will take place. With this additional shallow water available for instruction, water exercise, rehabilitation and therapy the main 25 meter tank will be more available for other aquatic activity.

The preferred option also allows for the old pool to be converted into a significantly larger weight training area as well as the inclusion of a good sized exercise room for aerobics, yoga and similar types of activity. A large portion of the anticipated increase in use will be the users of these enlarged and improved spaces. The combination of the weight training, exercise room and the swimming pool is ideal for rehabilitation and therapy for those recovering from injuries and those with disabilities.

Based on similar facility upgrades or replacements in other communities the expected increase in participation can be significant - in some cases well over 100%. These communities have also experienced an increase in participation in other program areas due to new people becoming aware of the total program offering that is available as a result of their visit to the new pool.

FIGURE FIVE below shows the experience of other community aquatic facilities that have completed renovations or added new facilities, comparing the new facility public swimming results to the old facility results.

FIGURE FIVE - CHANGES IN PUBLIC SWIMMING PARTICIPATION

FACILITY	OLD FACILITY	NEW FACILITY	CHANGE
Ravensong Aquatic Centre	N/A	N/A	21%*
Panorama Recreation Centre	87,301	123,175	41%
Esquimalt Recreation Centre	15,054	116,893	776%**
Cowichan Aquatic Centre	100,000	300,000	200%**

* Ravensong Aquatic Centre was closed for 23 weeks in 2010. It re-opened in December 2010 and the increase shown in **FIGURE FIVE** is December 2010 over December 2009.

**Esquimalt and Cowichan had no statistics for the old facilities available; as a result, the numbers available are best estimates.

8. REVIEW, ANALYSIS & CONCEPT DESIGN

REVIEW

In addition to meetings and site reviews, the following important documents were made available for review from the City of Port Alberni

- 1995 Echo Centre Study, Larry MacFarland Architects Ltd
- 1966 POOL BLDG, CJP Architects
- 1967 Community Centre,
- 1970 Kitchen, CJP Architects
- 1974 Sauna & Cedar West, CJP Architects
- 1981 Museum Additions, CJP Architects
- 1999 Family Change rooms, Ellins Architect Inc
- Stanley Report for the Stan Halcro Arena (23 July 1999)

A Project Initiation Meeting was held where the consulting project team and key stakeholders including the Recreation Director, councillors, and representatives from the staff met to review, identify and prioritize the key issues that affect the project, operations and functions and a “program” or “wish list” for the project.

Based on this program and with a steering committee meeting and design workshops, three concept options were developed, that explored a range of costs, features, ideas and configurations. These were presented to the public in an open house format. Following is a summary of these Concept Options. The detailed presentation panels for these options – including architectural cost estimates for each – can be found the appendices to this report.

ANALYSIS

Bruce Carscadden Architect conducted an in-depth review of related aquatic precedents including typical programs and sizes and spatial relationships. A review of precedents included a number of recent BC aquatic facilities, graphically represented on panels and also presented in a power point presentation along with a number of international references.

A technical site analysis included explorations of sitting options, sun exposure and parking constraints and was also illustrated graphically on a panel with the existing building plans.

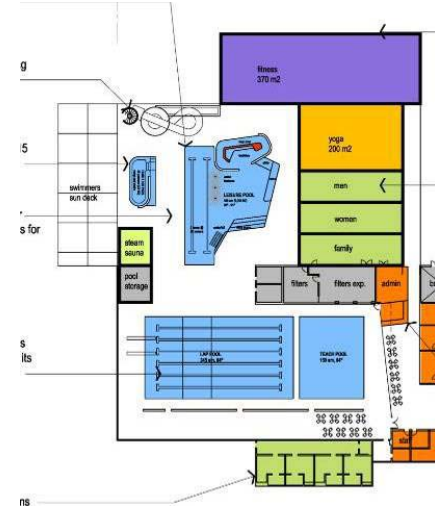
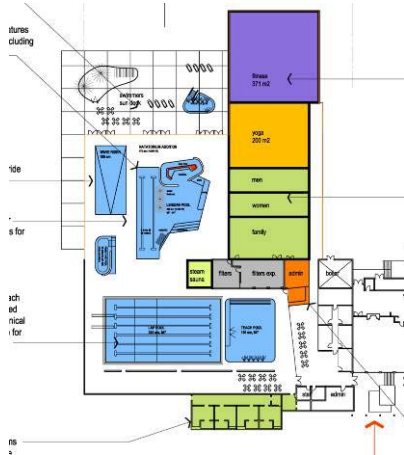
8. REVIEW, ANALYSIS + CONCEPT DESIGN

CONCEPT OPTIONS

This overview information was presented along with three concepts options at an open house on the 27th. Following is a summary of each of the Concept Options. The open house presentation panels can be found the appendices to this report:

OPTION ONE

Option One retained the existing pools and added a leisure pool with new change rooms. The leisure pool would include two 20 metre swimming lanes in water one metre in depth. The rest of the leisure pool would have water depth ranging from zero to one metre for instruction, play and rehabilitation programs. The cost for this option was estimated at \$12 million. This option would require closure of the pool for several months.



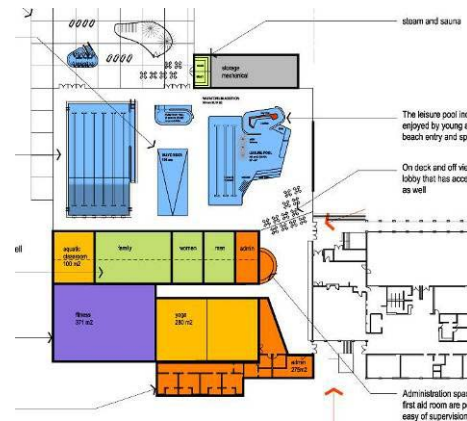
OPTION TWO

Option Two retained and renovated the existing pools and added new leisure pool components as well as fitness and multipurpose space. The leisure pool would include two 20 metre swimming lanes in water one metre in depth. The rest of the leisure pool would have water depth ranging from zero to one metre for instruction, play and rehabilitation programs. This option would include an outdoor patio with a winter hot tub and spray pool. The cost of this option was estimated at \$15 million. This option would also require the pool to be closed for a period of time.

OPTION THREE

Option Three constructs a new six lane 25 metre pool with new change rooms and staff areas with a leisure pool that would include three 20 metre swimming lanes.

An outdoor patio with winter hot tub and spray pool would also be included. The existing pool area would be renovated for fitness and multipurpose space. The estimated cost for this option was \$18 million. The existing aquatic center would be able to continue operation during the construction of the new facility.



8. REVIEW, ANALYSIS + CONCEPT DESIGN

OPTION SIX – THE PREFERRED OPTION

After further review of Option Four and Five with the Port Alberni Pool Swimming Pool Committee it was agreed that Option Six was the preferred option. This plan builds a new aquatic facility to the north, and renovates the existing natatorium for fitness and multipurpose spaces, and includes a waterslide.



8. REVIEW, ANALYSIS + CONCEPT DESIGN

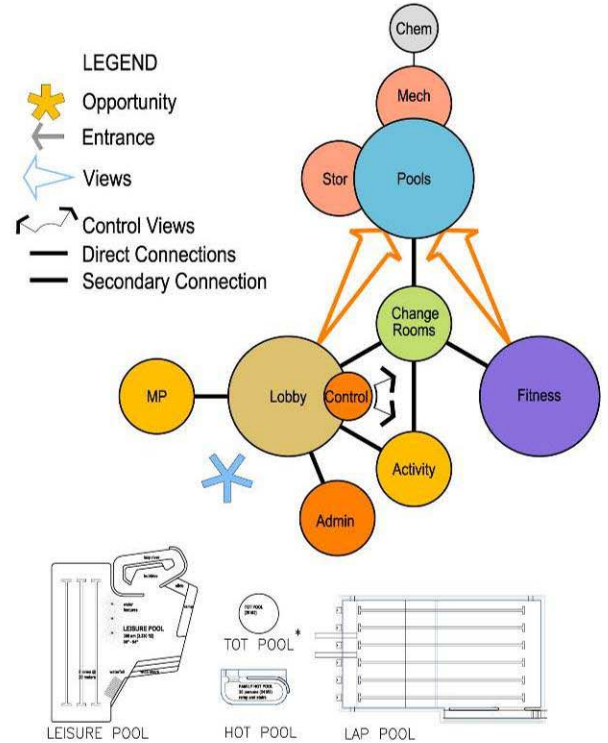
proposed program

This panel provides an overview of the features, functions, and technical requirements of an aquatic centre. This program has been tailored to suit the community based on input from the first open house.

TYPICAL AQUATIC PROGRAM - 30,000 ft²



- Public Spaces 1,250 ft²**
 1. Lobby and Entry
 2. Public Washrooms
 3. Fitness Space
 4. Viewing
- Activity Spaces 8,500 ft²**
 1. Fitness Space (4,000 ft²)
 2. Yoga / Multipurpose Studio (3,000 ft²)
 3. Aquatic Classroom (400 ft²)
- Aquatic Spaces 17,000 ft²**
 1. 6 Lane Lap Pool
 2. Leisure Pool (250 m²)
 3. Hot Pool (20 persons)
 4. Sun deck, on deck viewing
 6. Sauna and Steam
 7. Water slide
 8. Tot Pool (20 m²) *
- Change Rooms 3,300 ft²**
 1. Women
 2. Men
 3. Family
- Administration Space 1,000 ft²**
 1. Reception & control
 2. Office One: Manager/Aquatic Leader
 3. General Offices
- Service / Support Spaces 1,500 ft²**
 1. Janitorial Office/Closets
 2. Pool Storage
 3. Pool Mechanical, ozone room
 4. Chemical Storage
 5. Electrical Room
- Circulation and Walls 20%**



BATHER LOAD CALCULATIONS

	<2' DEEP	S=2'-5' DEEP	D=5'+ DEEP
LAP POOL	90 SF	2,000 SF	1,700 SF
LEISURE POOL	600 SF	2,700 SF	0 SF
HOT POOL	80 SF	300 SF	0 SF
TOT POOL *	240 SF	0 SF	0 SF
TOTAL	770 SF	5,000 SF	1,700 SF

BATHING LOAD = $S/10 + D/27 = 5,000/10 + 1,700/27 = 563$ BATHERS
 MEN/WOMEN = 282 BATHERS PER GENDER

NEW CHANGE ROOM AREA CALCULATIONS

# OF FIXTURES REQUIRED FOR 563 BATHERS IS	36 FIXTURES
AREA REQUIRED PER FIXTURE (2.5M ² PER FIXTURE)	90 M ²
AREA REQUIRED PER BATHER (0.32 M ² PER BATHER)	180 M ²
TOTAL NET REQUIRED CHANGE AREA	270 M ²
GROSS-UP (CORRIDORS AND WALLS ADD 15%)	40 M ²
TOTAL REQUIRED CHANGE AREA	(3,337 ft ²) 310 M ²



city of port alberni
 parks and recreation department

www.carscadden.ca

9. CAPITAL COSTS

Estimated capital costs of the preferred option for a new aquatic facility were developed based on the Preferred Option. With the assistance of the City of Port Alberni Director of Finance the tax implication on the municipal portion of a Port Alberni home is also provided.

9.1 CAPITAL COSTS FOR THE PREFERRED OPTION

BUDGET		Quantity	Unit	Rate
\$	7,650,000	Aquatic / "Wet" Space / Addition	17,000	ft ² 450
\$	5,300,000	Multipurpose / "Dry" Space / Reno	26,500	ft ² 200
\$	200,000	Exterior Features Allowance	1	Isum
\$	200,000	Site Development Allowance	1	Isum
\$	13,350,000	Sub Total		
\$	2,937,000	Design & CM Fees / Soft Costs	22%	
\$	16,287,000	Sub Total		
\$	814,350	Contingencies & Escalation (2012)	5%	
\$	17,101,350	TOTAL PROJECT BUDGET		

9.2 POSSIBLE FUNDING SOURCES

The consultants are aware of community fund raising efforts in several communities that have been implemented to generate support for a community aquatic facility. Any funds that can be raised will obviously lessen the tax impact for residents of the Alberni Valley.

Funding opportunities include:

- Federal and provincial grant opportunities
- Corporate donations
- Community forest timber sales
- Parks and Recreation Department capital reserves
- Gas tax funding
- Grants and donations from local residents, businesses and service clubs
- Sale of facility naming rights
- Sale of naming rights for specific rooms or areas within the Aquatic Centre
- Partnership possibilities with First Nations within the Alberni Valley

Regardless of the type of contribution, it is critical that donors be recognized. This can take many forms, but most important, must include a charitable receipt and recognition in the local press as well as in the facility itself. In addition, a celebration should be scheduled at the time the referendum is approved and / or when the facility is completed and open to the public.

10. OPERATING COSTS

The consultants reviewed operating budgets from several Vancouver Island facilities that had undergone major renovations to add a leisure component. Based on this, estimate operating costs were developed and reviewed relative to the current Port Alberni facility, and considering changes in operating expenses and revenues.

Different communities use different formats for reporting their aquatic centre operations, which makes direct comparisons difficult. The consultants have singled out direct revenues and expenditures for each facility, excluding such items as debt retirement and other general expenses related to the overall department. In some cases, the aquatic centre is part of a complex including arenas, indoor racquet facilities, fitness facilities and/or multipurpose spaces. The information provided here is intended to give a general idea of what these other facilities have experienced as a result of their improvements, renovations or added facility features.

Ravensong Aquatic Centre made several improvements to their facility consisting of operational modifications but did not add any additional features. Since the pool was closed for 26 weeks in 2010, we reviewed their 2009 financial results and their 2011 budget. Their expectation for 2011 is slightly less revenue and somewhat higher expenditures resulting in their net subsidy being about 21% higher. It is worth noting that the first year of budgeting for a new or renovated facility is often difficult and can result in very conservative figures.

Panorama Recreation Centre expanded their original pool building adding a large leisure pool, slide and more deck space around the main pool. They were closed from early fall 2008 and reopened in early fall 2009. The consultants have used 2007 financial results and 2010 financial results. They experienced a significant increase in general swimming as well as an increase in programs resulting in higher revenues but also experienced increased expenses due in large part to increased staff requirements. Their net position in 2010 showed a 34% improvement over 2007.

Cowichan Aquatic Centre opened in the fall of 2010 to replace the Aquannis Aquatic Centre in the Cowichan Community Centre. Aquannis was operated by the Cowichan Valley Regional District while the new Cowichan Aquatic Centre is operated by the District of North Cowichan. The consultants compared the 2006 financial results from Aquannis, the last full year of operation, with the new Cowichan Aquatic Centre budget for 2011. Although a detailed comparison is difficult with actual results and budget figures the revenues are expected to be much greater while the expenditures are expected to be higher but less significantly. The overall result is an expected improvement in their net position of over 100%.

The Esquimalt Recreation Centre did a similar major renovation to that done by Panorama. They were also closed for approximately one year and therefore the consultants have used their last complete year of operation in the old pool (2003) with the first full year of operation in their new facility (2005). The Esquimalt Recreation Centre new aquatic facility had an increase in operating revenue of 365% over the old operation in its first year in 2005. The revenue increased another 32% from 2005 to 2010. On the expenditure side an increase of 255% was experienced while the net position on direct aquatic operations improved by 2,307%.

The facilities that have added additional amenities, particularly leisure pools, have seen their revenues increase to a greater extent than their expenditures, resulting in an improved net position. As well, a larger number of residents are taking advantage of the services offered. In the case of Panorama, they have also experienced increased participation in other program areas of the recreation complex. Port Alberni can expect to see growth in the fitness area with the expanded facilities that will be available with the new aquatic centre.

11. RECOMMENDATIONS

The City of Port Alberni ECHO AQUATIC CENTRE FEASIBILITY STUDY represents the significant effort of the City of Port Alberni, the Port Alberni Parks and Recreation Department, and the community to improving aquatic and recreation opportunities in the area. Through meetings with City and Regional District officials, Parks and Recreation Department staff, as well as interviews with stakeholders and public meetings, and the review of demographic information, recreation trends information and a number of related documents, Venture Pacific Construction Management, Bruce Carscadden Architect, and Professional Environmental Recreation Consultants aimed to develop a comprehensive understanding of the needs and desires of the community. Based on the outcomes of the study, the consultants can make the following recommendations:

1. That the City of Port Alberni develops a financial plan to proceed with the preferred option presented in this report.
2. The City of Port Alberni, in cooperation with the Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District, prepares strategies for a referendum to include the City of Port Alberni and the Electoral Areas of Beaver Creek, Cherry Creek, Sproat Lake and Beaufort.
3. That the original Echo Aquatic Centre be converted into a fitness centre and multipurpose space as a part of the project.
4. That adequate parking and traffic flow is provided for the new facility as well as the other recreation facilities in the Echo Centre area.
5. That the Port Alberni Parks and Recreation Department review their partnerships with the Alberni District Secondary School, Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District, Continuing Care, First Nations, and other appropriate organizations to encourage expanded use of the new aquatic centre

APPENDIX A

VANCOUVER ISLAND SWIMMING POOL ADMISSIONS FEES FOR 2011 SURVEY

The table below provides an overview of the admission fees for several aquatic facilities on Vancouver Island. Where a two price system exists the resident price is shown including HST.

Community	Child	Teen	Senior	Adult	Family
Campbell River	2.75	3.75	4.00	5.50	11.00
Comox Valley	2.85	3.40	4.50	5.40	11.50
Cowichan	2.50	4.00	4.00	5.00	12.00
Esquimalt	3.00	3.25	4.50	6.00	12.25
Gold River	3.25	3.50	3.50	4.50	10.00
Juan de Fuca	3.20	4.45	4.45	6.10	12.20
Nanaimo	3.25	4.50	4.50	6.25	12.50
Oak Bay	3.50	5.40	5.40	7.00	14.50
Parksville/Qualicum	2.97	3.84	4.29	5.49	10.44
Port Alberni	3.00	3.75	3.75	5.25	12.00
Powell River	3.10	4.25	4.80	5.70	11.40
Saanich Peninsula	3.00	4.50	4.75	6.25	12.00
Sooke	2.25	4.10	4.10	5.50	11.00
Saanich	3.25	5.50	5.50	6.50	13.00
Victoria	2.75	3.75	4.25	5.50	11.00
AVERAGE	2.97	4.13	4.42	5.73	11.79

APPENDIX B

COMMUNITY INPUT NOTES

Stakeholder Meeting Notes

(orange check marks denote that this suggestion is included in the Preferred Option plan)

Port Alberni Council, Regional District and School Officials

- Opportunities offered at Ravensong Aquatic Centre and the Nanaimo Aquatic Facilities need to be provided in Port Alberni
- ✓ • Consider the use of wood in the construction of new facilities
- Concern expressed about ongoing operating costs
- ✓ • Include features unique to Port Alberni
- ✓ • First Nations are very supportive of an expanded aquatic facility and will be big part of the process
- Opportunities must be investigated for partnerships to help with operating costs
- ✓ • Maximize natural light in the facility
- Surf Rider feature should be seriously considered
- ✓ • Echo Centre is an emergency centre for the City and Region and construction must keep this in mind
- High School is interested in increased involvement with the aquatic facility as they move into the new high school across the park from the Echo Centre
- High School would likely reestablish a swim team and specialty courses such as scuba diving
- With the close proximity to the pool students with disabilities would be able to increase their participation in physical activity on a more regular basis

APPENDIX B

COMMUNITY INPUT NOTES

Port Alberni staff and Aquatic Committee members

- ✓ • Six lane 25 meter pool
- ✓ • Good size leisure pool with features including a lazy river
- ✓ • Larger mechanical room to accommodate more modern equipment
- ✓ • Accessibility for people with disabilities including automatic doors, a system to call for help and other emerging issues
- ✓ • Consider demographics for the long range needs of the community
- ✓ • Separate leisure pool tank with warmer water, zero to 1.5 meter depth for lessons, therapy and kids fun play
- ✓ • Parking and patron circulation must be addressed with additional facilities
- ✓ • Weight room and fitness space larger, not accessed across pool deck, consider a private operator, expand rehabilitation programs
- ✓ • Properly located loading dock for maintenance supplies close to storage and where the supplies are going to be used
- ✓ • Aerobics space similar in size to weight room also to be used for Pilates, dance, Tai Chi, yoga etc.
- ✓ • Common reception area for pool and community centre
- ✓ • Separate larger staff rooms for female and male employees
- ✓ • Larger family change room with private change rooms within the larger family change room for people with disabilities
- ✓ • Separate viewing area with better spectator control for wet and dry traffic
- ✓ • Some element included that will attract teen/youth demographic
- Outdoor leisure space such as sun deck and/or water feature
- ✓ • Maximize natural light
- Consider a "Surf Rider" as a unique component to the Port Alberni Aquatic Facility
- Status of the current pool is questionable with several issues
- Thirty seven meter pool with bulkhead provides extra versatility for programming
- ✓ • Consider scooter parking conveniently located
- Maintain tot pool as well as the main tank and leisure pool for quieter enjoyment for young children
- ✓ • Provide basic concession service
- Possibility of expanded program opportunity with new high school next door
- ✓ • Hot tub in open space around pool area

APPENDIX B

COMMUNITY INPUT NOTES

- ✓ • Improve acoustics
- ✓ • More and larger program storage space
- ✓ • Current pool must stay open during construction
- ✓ • Include sauna and steam room
- ✓ • Consider all possible energy conservation options
- ✓ • Provide various types of access to the pools including ramps, stairs and walls
- ✓ • Include some type of pro shop to supply basic aquatic supplies
- ✓ • Leisure pool needs adult chest deep water

Port Alberni Swim Club coaches

- The swim club currently has about 40 swimmers ages between 5 and 17
- They have 3 sessions a week for 1 hour and 45 minutes each session
- They would like a 50 meter pool with variable depth floor and bulkheads to allow for 25 meters as well
- They liked the Comox 25 meter pool with a wave pool
- The current pool has good deck space and bleachers for swim meets and they would like that amenity retained
- ✓ • Larger deck space around the entire pool is needed
- They currently host 1 Island swim meet each year
- They envision a High School swim team being started as there is a teacher with aquatic background and interest on staff
- ✓ • Would like a swim club office off the pool deck with a window overlooking the pool
- Would like a swim club dedicated storage room that could be used as an officials room during meets
- Underwater speakers would be nice
- A removable mirror 15 meters long on the bottom of 1 lane
- ✓ • Lane rope wells in the deck would assist with putting in and taking out lane lines
- Would like 8 lanes with either a 50 meter or 25 meter pool
- ✓ • Dry land area for warm up and stretching
- ✓ • Higher ceiling over windows
- Electronic score board needs updating along with timing system including starting block timing

Top three wishes:

- ✓ 1. Deck level gutter system
2. 8 lanes
3. Variable depth pool floor

APPENDIX B

COMMUNITY INPUT NOTES

June 7, 2011 Public Meeting

The following comments came from a public meeting attending by approximately 50 Port Alberni residents. Four topics were presented and the group provided feedback on each with the comments being summarized below. Those who were unable to attend the public meeting had to option of sending their responses to the consultants. Their responses have been included in the summary below as well.

A. EXISTING POOL

1. What features do you like about the existing Aquatic Centre?

- Family changes are big, roomy, private and accessible
- Sauna
- Water quality is excellent
- Bulkhead is great for separating shallow water for different concurrent activities
- Parking is free and access is great
- New ultra violet filters are great
- Hot tub
- Fitness room

2. What improvements would encourage you to use the facility more often?

- ✓ • Warmer water for different groups including rehabilitation, older swimmers and toddlers
- ✓ • Include diving boards
- Admission in line with Nanaimo
- ✓ • More family changing area
- More public drop in swim sessions
- More opportunities for gentle Aqua-Fit with trained instructors
- Much larger weight room
- A fitness room as large as the weight room for aerobics, yoga, Pilates etc.

3. What do you not like about existing Aquatic Centre?

- Always have to wait for a family change room
- More regular daily cleaning of change rooms and washrooms
- Lack of visibility between hot tub, tot pool and main pool

4. Do you travel to other communities to use their pool and if so why and what features are the attraction? (eg. Combine with shopping or other business, value for money, etc.)

- Nanaimo pool offers better value for money, more attractive scheduling and facility options
- Do not close existing pool while new facility is being constructed

APPENDIX B

COMMUNITY INPUT NOTES

B. EXISTING PROGRAMS

1. What current programs do you value most?

- Staff are excellent
- Swimming lessons
- Gentle aqua-fit
- Water aerobics
- Lane swimming
- Special needs sessions
- Everyone welcome swims

2. What additional programs or changes would you like to see?

- More adult swim lessons in warmer water
- Separate room for birthday parties
- Design facility to separate different activities that can happen concurrently. This could be by age, activity or ability
- More everyone welcome swims with more flexible times
- Masters swim club
- Shut down during Christmas instead of summer

C. NEW FACILITY

1. What feature would you improve in a new or expanded facility?

- Create more inviting facility
- More drinking fountains
- More facility features suitable for seniors
- Warmer water
- Better access to a new facility meaning more hours of availability
- More swimming lessons including weekends
- Wider lanes of more lanes for length swimming
- Fitness facility with windows, more natural light
- Indoor running track
- Skylights in change rooms
- More colour
- Live plants, palm trees

APPENDIX B

COMMUNITY INPUT NOTES

- Standing wave facility, surf rider
 - More facilities that are attractive to families
 - Coffee shop
 - Good sound system with appropriate acoustical treatment
 - Windows, natural light
 - Better access to pools- ramps, stairs, lifts etc.
 - Pro shop for goggles, swim suits, bathing caps etc.
 - Better first aid area
 - Improved first aid equipment
 - Better spectator viewing area
 - Water slide
 - Lazy river
 - Zero pool depth entry
 - Salt water
 - Large gym with windows and air conditioning
 - All purpose room adjacent to coffee shop
 - Better staff room
 - Climbing wall
 - Total Regional District participation in project
 - Consider demographics now and future in designing facility
 - Create "WOW" factor in design
 - Dedicated washrooms in the fitness area
 - Murals
- 2. Would you use outdoor pool amenities?**
- Outdoor activity pool
 - Outdoor water park/play area
 - Outdoor playground area
 - Outdoor pool access via garage door
- 3. Is Echo Centre the preferred location for a new facility?**
- Virtually all agreed that the Echo Centre location was the preferred site for a new Aquatic Centre.

APPENDIX B

COMMUNITY INPUT NOTES

D. NEW PROGRAMS

1. What new programs would you like to add?

- Kayaking
- Steam room
- Deep water programs
- Volleyball
- Water polo
- Safety training-canoe tipping, specialty training
- Gymnasium dry floor programs
- Rehabilitation programs
- Snorkeling
- Scuba diving
- Climbing wall
- Diving
- Family oriented lessons in water safety and canoeing etc.
- Pool to remain open on statutory holidays
- Facility big enough to attract swim meets
- No 50 meter pool needed
- Shut down time line?-why summer? Is there a better way to deal with shutdown? Can you shut down one pool while other is worked on and switch?
- Keep our residents in town. It is cheaper in Nanaimo and Qualicum than in Port Alberni.
- A new facility will keep people in town and spend their money in town instead of in other communities.

2. Would increased outdoor water activity increase your use of the pool during the summer?

There were comments in support of outdoor pool opportunities but no way of judging how much use that would generate.

APPENDIX B

COMMUNITY INPUT NOTES

Written Submission by members of the public and organizations that could not make either Public Meeting

From a School District office staff member;

- Teachers take their students to Nanaimo on field trips for the wave pool experience
- Would like to see that money spent in Port Alberni

From a user with disability issues;

- A heated therapy pool for those with inflammatory diseases such as Rheumatoid Arthritis, Osteoarthritis, Lupus and Parkinson's Disease
- This feature is also beneficial for overweight people or those recovering from joint problems
- The lazy river concept or "Endless Pool" is a beneficial feature for people with physical challenges

From Port Alberni winter club swimmer and regular lap swimmer;

- More flexible times for length swimming
- A new pool should be at the current Echo location
- Echo pool cannot be closed during and construction
- Outdoor features would be nice but not required
- A 50 meter 8 lane pool with a movable bulkhead would be fantastic to allow 2 - 25 meter pools, one for lap swimming and the other for lessons etc.
- Echo pool is no worse now than when it first opened
- Change rooms need to be bigger
- Leisure pool features to attract young children must be included and the pool must be available in the summer for the youth as Sproat Lake is a long and unsafe bike ride.

APPENDIX B

COMMUNITY INPUT NOTES

From the Alberni-Clayquot Continuing Care Society;

- As a parent I support for design planning to provide children and youth aquatic opportunities that currently don't exist in Port Alberni and negate the need to travel to Nanaimo with family and school for that opportunity
- As a Health Care professional I would advocate for some kind of therapy pool
- This would benefit the elderly and those recovering from injuries, surgeries and general ailments
- Has experienced the benefits that patients have derived from therapy pools including physical health, independence, increased feeling of self-worth and a greater sense of belonging.
- Many seniors currently travel to Ravensong pool for the features they offer
- Therapy pool must provide the following features
 - Higher water temperature (90-93 C)
 - Chest deep water
 - Set of parallel bars and rail at side of pool
 - Water bench
 - Wheelchair ramp with room to maneuver the wheelchair
 - Lift that can manage the increased weights we are now seeing with people (140+ KG)

From the Port Alberni Lawn Bowling Club;

- The club includes 65 members between the ages of 7 and 85
- Support the idea of replacing the Echo pool

Major concern is their parking being reduced because of the new school being construction close by as well as the Frisbee golf course construction.

APPENDIX C

SURVEY AND QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS

PORT ALBERNI PARKS AND RECREATION ECHO AQUATIC CENTRE – FEASIBILITY STUDY QUESTIONNAIRE

RESULTS OF PUBLIC MEETING DISCUSSION – JUNE 7, 2011

EXISTING POOL

What features do you like about the existing Aquatic Centre? (PLEASE CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY)

1. Existing Change Rooms		17
2. Family Change Rooms		35
3. Washrooms		19
4. Lockers		16
5. Tot's pool	20	
6. Sauna		22
7. Whirlpool	35	
8. Main pool	34	
9. Fitness room		24
10. Play amenities – rope swing etc		16
11. Parents viewing area		24
12. Water quality		21
13. Accessibility		20
14. Parking	22	
15. Other		21

- Staff (12)
- Big lockers (2)
- "Medium" pool is needed for walking and exercises
- Improved heating system – change rooms are not freezing anymore
- Clean
- Everything is functional but could use improvement

APPENDIX C

SURVEY AND QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS

What improvements would encourage you to use the facility more often?

- Already use it daily
- Better scheduling
- Improved heat / ventilation
- Cleaner pool
- Better lockers, washrooms in hot tub area and gym area
- Steam room, outdoor pool, wave pool, lazy river
- More water fitness programs and areas for children
- Better lockers
- More lane swim times late in the evening (i.e. 9-10)
- Reliable sound system; wireless microphone for workout instructors
- Wave pool, more family change rooms, more toys, colour, slides, kids activities
- More equipment in fitness room; private, adult hot tub
- Better maintenance in change area (doors, locks, hooks, lockers; warmer water, larger exercise room
- Play amenities should be more available – decrease line-ups
- Heat / ventilation
- More public sessions (everyone welcome), deep water aqua-fit, water walking,
- Bigger pool (wider and longer); also, the water could be a little warmer
- Slides, waves
- Wider, longer lanes
- Warm leisure pool – not a tots pool
- Improved, larger fitness area; more leisure features
- Walking ring around pool
- Warmer water; more showers
- Kids area – bigger, shallower areas
- More kids activities and features
- 50m pool with a movable bulkhead that allows lane swimming the whole day; water slides and waves, as in Nanaimo
- More private change rooms
- More available lane times during the day
- More lanes, wider lanes

APPENDIX C

SURVEY AND QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS

What do you not like about the existing Aquatic Centre facility?

- The sound and music system
- Lockers – not enough private change areas
- Not enough lanes (5)
- Not enough room in the morning
- Too many “small ones”
- Slides at pool
- Sauna
- Not enough family change rooms; more features would be fun
- Closes too early on week nights; summer shutdown
- Dark, small, poor water quality (chlorine), closed all the time
- Water temperature is sometimes too cool
- Chlorinated water
- Better than nothing – it is a basic pool – more things for kids would be better – this is a seniors facility
- Limited number of large sized lockers; small size of fitness room
- Lockers, not enough private change areas
- Closed on stat holidays, closed early in the evening, too small
- Small; not enough swimming activities
- No huge tube slides and waves
- It is boring
- Would like a longer time in the summer during the morning lane swim
- The pool temperature for recreation swimming is too cold; Not a lot to do in terms of leisure features; limited accessibility
- It is stark and boring; lacks colour and decorations
- Cooler water; boom box for water aerobics
- Pool is often cold
- Lockers and improved lighting in women’s change rooms
- Have arthritis – pool is too cold; family change rooms need to be updated

APPENDIX C

SURVEY AND QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS

Do you travel to other communities to use their pool and if so why and what features are the attraction?

(e.g. combine with shopping or other business, value for money, etc)

- Yes - Family celebrations
- Yes - Wave pool and slides
- Features for kids (3)
- More, different stuff and cheaper for families
- Nanaimo wave pool (14)
- No (8)
- Our family has been in recreation centres in Chilliwack and Powell River – good features
- I go to the wave pool because it's cool
- Yes – combine shopping with trip to pool in Nanaimo, more fun, better hours, stay as long as you want
- Nanaimo, Qualicum Beach
- Yes – when grandchildren visit – the water sides are river offer more excitement
- Private shower stalls, wave pool
- Nanaimo wave pool, larger pools, more pools, water slide, etc. Came from Mainland, so I'm more used to larger aquatic centres
- Yes – wave pool, river, slides, waves
- Yes – pool temperature in Nanaimo makes it enjoyable to stay for an extended period of time; I like the “open schedule” – my family can drop in when it's convenient; trip combines with shopping
- Travel to wave pool to enjoy water slides, waves, etc.
- Larger, warmer, cheaper entry fee
- Yes – kids activities
- Yes – play / wave pool; additional amenities

EXISTING PROGRAMS

What current programs do you value most? (PLEASE CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY)

1. Swimming lessons	15
2. Gentle aqua-fit	12
3. Water aerobics	30
4. Fitness training instruction	12
5. Lane swimming	21
6. Special needs	8
7. Tsunami Swim Club	10
8. Everyone welcome swims	27

APPENDIX C

SURVEY AND QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS

NEW FACILITY

What features would you improve in a new or expanded facility? (PLEASE CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY)

1. Additional indoor lanes	25
2. Pool length (25 metre vs. 50 metre)	29
3. Outdoor lanes	20
4. Fitness room - weights & machines	35
5. Fitness area - open area for yoga, aerobics etc	35
6. Sauna	15
7. Steam room	29
8. Whirlpool	29
9. Concession and pro shop services	24
10. Natural lighting and/or improved interior lighting	37
11. Outdoor playground and waiting area	16
12. Improved accessibility features	9
13. Equipment storage	12
14. Water treatment	30
15. Adjustable floor level	12
16. Public viewing area	13
17. Leisure features	30
i. Waterslides	37
ii. Wave pool	21
iii. Tots play area(in and out of water)	35
iv. Climbing walls	15
v. Waterfalls	24
vi. Lazy rivers	34
vii. Standing waves	18
viii. Zero depth entry	28
ix. Family change rooms	29

Would you use outdoor pool amenities?

1. Leisure features – lazy rivers, wading pool, spray park	35
2. Outdoor pool	31
3. Summer patio and picnic area	33

Echo Centre is the preferred location for a new aquatic facility. (PLEASE CIRCLE ONE RESPONSE)

AGREE	52
DISAGREE	1
OTHER	4

- At the very least, in the same area
- If it could be kept the same as now, if not please don't shut it down for new building
- Build new facility at old High School property
- Close to new school, athletic centre, college, hockey rinks – makes sense

APPENDIX C

SURVEY AND QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS

NEW PROGRAMS

1. What new programs would you like to add?
 - Outdoor pool is very important
 - Use existing space better
 - Masters swim program
 - More water fitness programs
 - Slush deck for easier client removal when necessary
 - Rehabilitation
 - The pool's existing programs are fine as they are
 - Deep water running, like aerobics, but done on a noodle, without touching ground
 - Water polo may attract teens
 - Expanded fitness programs and facilities – indoor running track
 - Outdoor pool very important
 - Fitness programs – in and out of water (in water is more intense than aqua fit)
 - Masters swim program
 - More water fitness programs
 - Existing programs are fine as they are
 - I like the pool as is, as long as it stays open more of the time
 - Synchronized swimming
 - Water polo / underwater hockey
 - Fitness / workout space
 - Programs for adults and kids
 - Water slides, more play areas for kids
 - More programs for rehab population
2. Would increased outdoor water activity increase your use of the pool during the summer?
 - There are children and teens who don't have access to any swim areas – these activities are important for them
 - Yes (17) - currently have an outdoor pool at home
 - No, but if an outdoor pool was to be in the plans, adult only sessions would be a must as in indoor pool
 - Thanks for asking. We really need a new pool and better water quality. Many people do not use the pool due to skin conditions from the excessive chlorine
 - Would be good for families
 - Maybe – if there were programs or games for kids and family swims
 - No, but it would for children
 - Not for my personal use
 - No – but if an outdoor pool was to be part of the plan adult only sessions would be a must
 - Don't know – I'm used to the current pool
 - Definitely
 - No – I would not pay to use facility when I could go to the river or lake
 - Prefer the lake

APPENDIX C

SURVEY AND QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS

OTHER COMMENTS / QUESTIONS

If you have other comments or questions, please use the space below.

- How could we go from “pool closure” to a new facility? Wasn't the closure all about money?
- I don't want to pay more taxes, but believe if you are going to do something, do it right. Also, hopefully, these improvements will allow for more use by others than only seniors
- Shorten the process for building and consultation, etc. – 10 years is far too long. New pool, rather than refurbish
- I know of a lot of people who go to Nanaimo to use their facility with two families; it would be nice to keep them local
- Affordable solution is necessary
- It would be wise to visit and survey other communities with new and improved facilities to see what their costs are and what are most valuable additions – don't turn any of the green space into parking lots
- I like what they did in West Vancouver; a shoulder deep warmer water pool for seniors and special needs clients is necessary; easy entrance for wheelchair clients; more family change rooms
- A new pool is a pipe dream. With a shrinking school population and young work force, the idea of a new pool expense added to the sinking tax budget, the public will object
- Better access to the fitness room
- I appreciate the central location and proximity to museum and library; people in my age group (60+) would enjoy a coffee shop for relaxation and conversation after exercising
- Private shower stalls for all people
- Some seniors are very intolerant of children – more pool area so kids don't have to be around those negative people would be nice
- These improvements will allow for more use by others than only seniors
- Shorten the process for building consultation
- Per capita, the user fees are high; many who attend are on fixed incomes or disability pensions
- A new pool is a pipe dream
- New pool should at least in the same area
- Need a new pool and better water quality
- Don't close the existing pool while a new one is under construction
- Better access to the fitness room
- Add more décor, interest to the aesthetics of the pool
- More windows
- Lane swimming at any time