

THE CITY OF CALGARY

Aquatic Strategy

July 2022



Southland Leisure Centre

Land Acknowledgement

Our Elders teach us that it is important to acknowledge the land that we gather on and the peoples who traditionally lived here. This acknowledgement gives respect for the first peoples who traditionally lived on the land on which we gather as well as to urban Indigenous Calgarians. It also pays homage to Indigenous ways of knowing.

We would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge that we are gathered on the traditional territories of the people of the Treaty 7 region in Southern Alberta. The Nations of the Treaty 7 region are: the Siksika (Seeg-see-gah), Piikani (Pee-gah-nee), and Kainai (G-ai-nah) First Nations, who, altogether, form the Siksikaitsitapi (Seeg-see-gate-see-ta-pee) (Blackfoot Confederacy). The Chiniki (Chin-ick-ee), Bearspaw, and Wesley First Nations, who, altogether form the Iethka Nakoda Wicistabi (Yith-ka Na-ko-da We-chi-staw-bee) Stoney Nakoda First Nations; and the Tsuut'ina (Soot-tenna) First Nation. The city of Calgary is also homeland to the historic Northwest Métis and to Métis Nation of Alberta, Region 3¹. We acknowledge all Indigenous urban Calgarians who have made Calgary their home.

¹ The phonetic pronunciations are as follows:
Siksika – Seeg-see-kah (emphasis on kah) (g/k almost sound the same)
Piikuni – Pee-gah-nee
Kainai – G-ai-nah (g/k almost sound the same)
Chiniki – Chin-ick-ee
Tsuut'ina – Soot-tenna

Aquatic Strategy

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Acknowledgement

The City of Calgary would like to extend our gratitude to everyone involved in the creation of this Strategy, and to all of those who will contribute to the implementation of the work contained within.

In particular, we would like to thank The City's Aquatic Partners: Calgary Outdoor Swimming Pools Association, MNP Community & Sport Centre, Trico Centre for Family Wellness, Vecova Centre for All Abilities, Vivo for Healthier Generations, Westside Recreation Centre, and YMCA Calgary; as well as the other private aquatic providers who contributed to engagement sessions and shared their experiences in the Pool Study.

Executive Summary

Aquatic facilities and services play a critical role in the quality of life of Calgarians as they provide opportunities for residents to gather, socialize, relax and participate in sport and recreation activities. The City of Calgary operates 13 indoor aquatic facilities and works with Partners¹ who operate an additional 11 facilities on City-owned land to provide quality aquatic programming and services for residents. In late 2019 The City undertook the Pool Study to assess the current state of aquatic facilities and services offered within the city and develop a strategic plan for the future of publicly supported aquatic opportunities. The Pool Study is the first collaborative planning process undertaken by The City that includes both City and Partner operated recreation facilities. The City of Calgary Aquatic Strategy is the result of the work completed by the Pool Study.

As part of the preparation of The City of Calgary Aquatic Strategy, an extensive research process was undertaken to assess the current state of the aquatic system in Calgary. To define the current state of aquatic facilities and services, a variety of data sources were leveraged, including an extensive literature and policy review, demographic analysis, discussions with City of Calgary staff and Partner staff involved in the delivery of aquatic opportunities, and the geo-spatial analysis of the current aquatics provision in Calgary. Effective planning begins by considering the complete aquatic system within the city.

While this Strategy provides direction for the 24 facilities operated by The City and Partners, there are also privately operated pools that contribute to Calgary's aquatic system, which were considered when assessing the provision of service.

The purpose of the Aquatic Strategy is to support The City of Calgary in future decision-making related to the provision of aquatic facilities and services and provide benefits to Calgarians in a sustainable and equitable manner. It has been developed based on the premise that The City of Calgary provides aquatic facilities and services so that all Calgarians:

- Have the opportunity to learn to swim
- Develop fundamental movement skills to ensure they are safe in and around water
- Benefit from lifelong participation in physical activity
- Have access to leisure opportunities

The Strategy offers 12 recommendations, which are supported by 40 implementation actions, that will ensure Calgary's aquatic facilities and services remain relevant, attractive, sustainable, and well-utilized.

¹ The City of Calgary Partners who contribute to the aquatic system include: Calgary Outdoor Swimming Pools Association, MNP Community & Sport Centre, Trico Centre for Family Wellness, Vecova Centre for All Abilities, Vivo for Healthier Generations, Westside Recreation Centre, and YMCA Calgary.



Aquatic Service Delivery Recommendations

1.

Develop and review approaches that enable greater fee equity and standardization to reduce socio-economic barriers.

2.

Expand on existing approaches that enable equitable access and reduce barriers for those who face physical, social, and cultural challenges to participation.

3.

Improve data collection procedures at all publicly funded pools.

4.

Continue to enhance relationships with Partners to support the delivery of a spectrum of aquatic opportunities for Calgarians.

5.

Continue to build on existing practices and procedures that support City staff in meeting their full potential while creating an organizational culture that promotes innovation and diversity.



Aquatic Programming Recommendations

6.

Monitor for population change, facility utilization, trends, and community needs when evaluating the provision of aquatic services.

7.

Facilitate lifelong participation in swimming for Calgarians, and provide innovative, specialized aquatic experiences and opportunities.

8.

Continue to evaluate, monitor, and implement new uses of technology to support program delivery.



Aquatic Infrastructure Recommendations

9.

Continue to invest in aquatic facilities, prioritizing user experience, accessibility, and sustainability.

10.

Provide strategic direction to inform investment in the management, operations, maintenance, and renewal of publicly funded aquatic facilities to maximize community benefits.

11.

Strategically plan for the development of new or retrofitted aquatic facilities to improve access to, and use of aquatic services to address service provision gaps.

12.

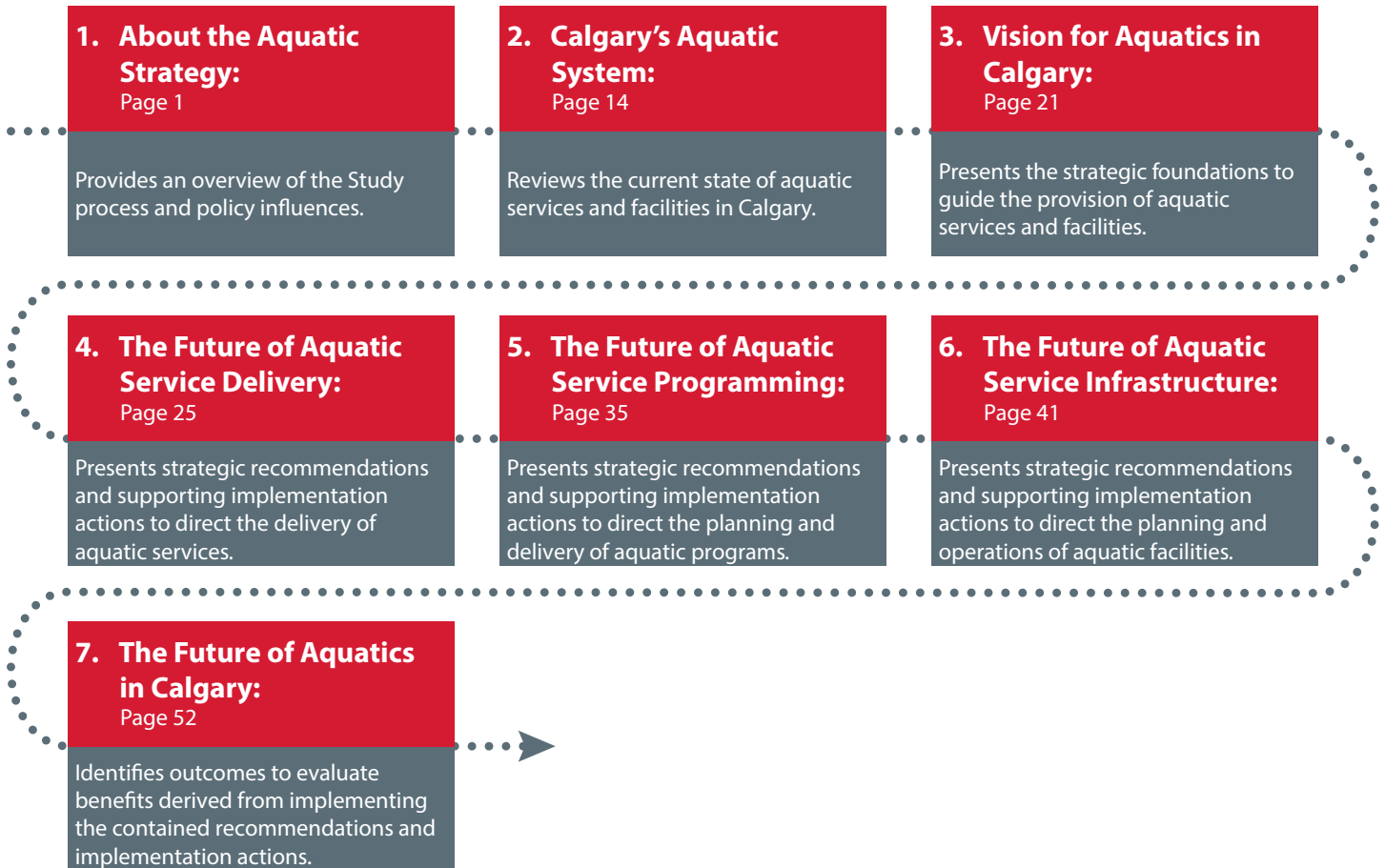
Support the provision outdoor aquatic opportunities for Calgarians.

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How to Read the Strategy Document

This Strategy seeks to provide a road map to ensuring aquatic services and facilities are relevant, attractive, sustainable, and well-utilised community recreation assets. The first sections provide an overview of the current state of aquatic services and facilities in Calgary, which offers context to the recommendations and implementation actions contained in the concluding sections.





About the Aquatic Strategy

The City of Calgary invests in the development and enhancement of aquatic recreation facilities, programs, and services so that Calgarians can be active and healthy through the lifelong participation in aquatic activities.

Public recreation opportunities contribute to achieving The City vision in which Calgary is, “A great place to make a living, a great place to make a life.” In working towards this vision, The City of Calgary¹ recognizes that quality recreation opportunities and experiences can provide the following community benefits:

- Promote both individual and community health and well-being
- Strengthen social connections
- Enhance cultural vitality
- Drive economic prosperity
- Encourage environmental responsibility

To support achieving these outcomes, The City invests in a variety of indoor and outdoor spaces, programs, and opportunities to shape the recreation system in the city. This includes both directly providing recreation experiences, as well as partnering and engaging with members of the sport and recreation sector and supporting civic and community partners, who also provide recreation facilities and experiences for Calgarians.

Calgary Recreation’s Purpose: “Making life better every day by enhancing individual, family, and community wellbeing.”¹

One of the more popular recreation experiences that The City invests in is aquatics (both indoor and outdoor). Public pools provide opportunities for residents to participate in a variety of activities and provide important community benefits. When well-planned and effectively managed, the benefits and contributions of pools include personal health and wellbeing, community vibrancy, and economic development.

To ensure the best use of resources and continued good management of municipal aquatic facilities and services, The City (with the support of consultants) has undertaken the process of studying the current aquatic system in Calgary and in the broader aquatic sector to understand trends and best practices. By evaluating the current state of aquatic facilities and services in Calgary, The City can identify opportunities for pool enhancement, contribute to continued good governance practices, and efficient facility operations.

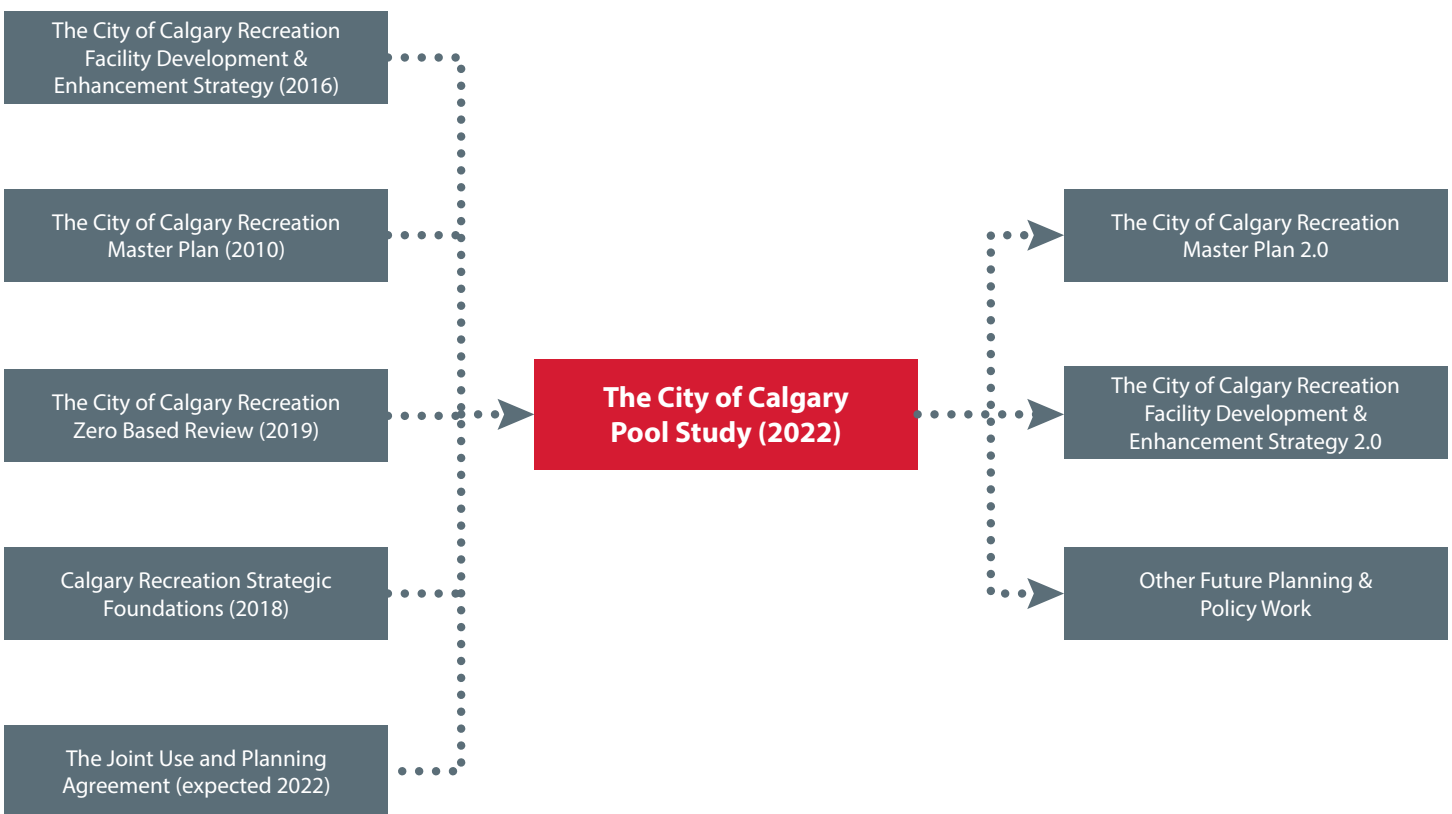
1 One City One Voice, Calgary Recreation Strategic Foundation (PFC2018-0647)

1.1 Strategy Purpose

In late 2019, The City engaged RC Strategies to conduct a Pool Study to assess the current state of aquatic facilities and services offered within the city and develop a strategic plan for the future of publicly supported aquatic opportunities. The Pool Study is the first collaborative planning process undertaken by The City that includes both City and Partner operated recreation facilities.

The purpose of the Pool Study’s Aquatic Strategy is to support The City of Calgary in future decision-making related to the provision of aquatic facilities and services in a sustainable and equitable manner to deliver community benefit to Calgarians (Please see Figure 6 for overview of community benefits). As illustrated in Figure 1, the Strategy builds on the inter-relationship of several City of Calgary policy frameworks and aligns with relevant internal documents including, but not limited to, The Municipal Development Plan, The Guide for Local Area Planning, the Joint Use and Planning Agreement with school boards, and external planning influences, such as the Framework for Recreation in Canada. The aim of the Aquatic Strategy is to provide recommendations to support and enhance the current state of aquatic services² for all Calgarians.

Figure 1 Calgary Strategic Foundations + Planning Initiatives



Partner refers to an independent organization that agrees to collaborate with The City to deliver positive Results for Calgarians. (Investing in Partnership Policy, 2017)

² Please see the Pool Study Stage 1 Report for a detailed examination of the current state of Calgary aquatics (indoor and outdoor) facilities and associated service provisions, including Partner operated facilities.

1.2 Pools in the City

The Study has examined 26 indoor pools within Calgary that are publicly funded and available to residents and visitors. During the process of the Pool Study (2019 - 2022) two of the aquatic facilities (Beltline Aquatic Centre and Eau Claire YMCA) were permanently closed due to the extensive capital investments required to maintain the facilities. Of the current 24 facilities operational in the city, 13 of these are operated by The City of Calgary, while 11 are operated by Partners. Map 1 shows the location of indoor pools with the city. The map illustrates that generally facilities are well dispersed across the city, with a greater concentration in established communities in the central and west areas of the city where there is greater population density.

Of the current 24 facilities operational in the city 13 of these are operated by The City of Calgary while 11 are operated by Partners.

Swim Visits in 2019

5.3 million

Top Activities

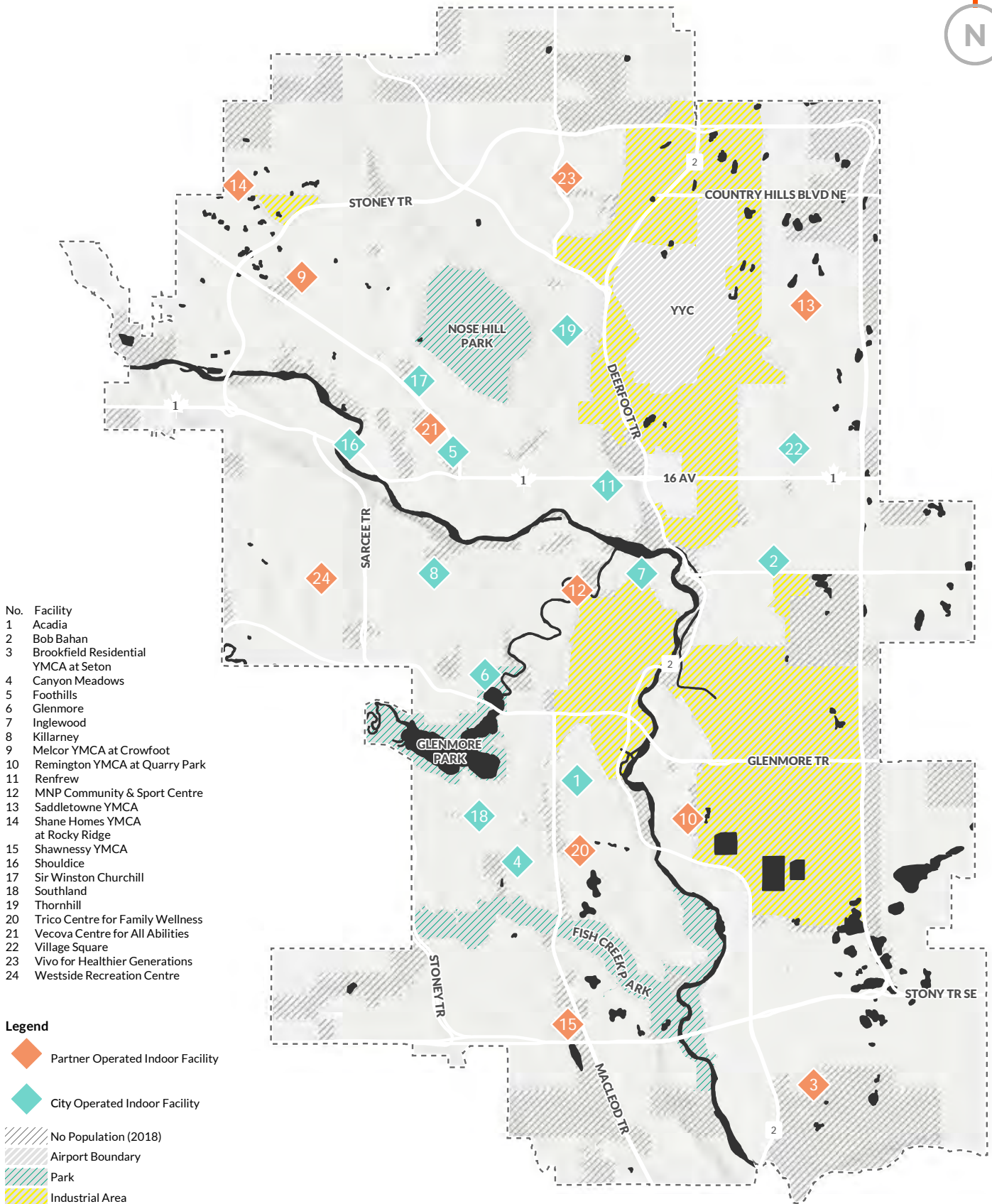
Recreation Swimming

Fitness Swimming

Skill Development

Shane Homes YMCA at Rocky Ridge

Map 1 Calgary Indoor Pools



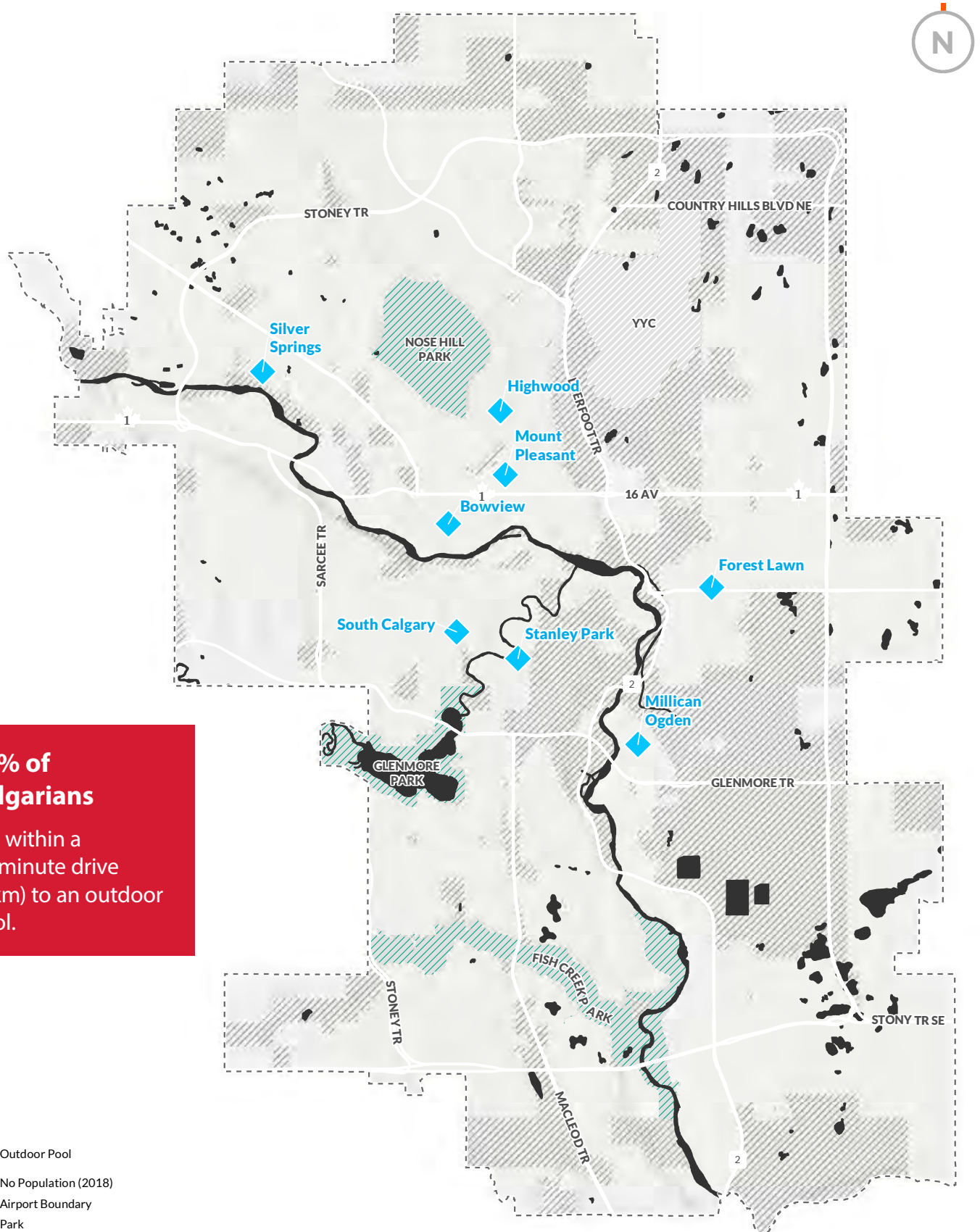
- | No. | Facility |
|-----|--------------------------------------|
| 1 | Acadia |
| 2 | Bob Bahan |
| 3 | Brookfield Residential YMCA at Seton |
| 4 | Canyon Meadows |
| 5 | Foothills |
| 6 | Glenmore |
| 7 | Inglewood |
| 8 | Killarney |
| 9 | Melcor YMCA at Crowfoot |
| 10 | Remington YMCA at Quarry Park |
| 11 | Renfrew |
| 12 | MNP Community & Sport Centre |
| 13 | Saddletowne YMCA |
| 14 | Shane Homes YMCA at Rocky Ridge |
| 15 | Shawnessy YMCA |
| 16 | Shouldice |
| 17 | Sir Winston Churchill |
| 18 | Southland |
| 19 | Thornhill |
| 20 | Trico Centre for Family Wellness |
| 21 | Vecova Centre for All Abilities |
| 22 | Village Square |
| 23 | Vivo for Healthier Generations |
| 24 | Westside Recreation Centre |

Legend

- Partner Operated Indoor Facility
- City Operated Indoor Facility
- No Population (2018)
- Airport Boundary
- Park
- Industrial Area

The Pool Study scope is focused on indoor aquatic environments within Calgary; however, during the research program the eight outdoor pools, four wading pools, and seven spray parks were identified as part of the broader aquatic system in Calgary. The map below illustrates the location of outdoor pools in Calgary, which are primarily located in central neighbourhoods to serve established communities.

Map 2 Calgary Outdoor Pools



**53% of
Calgarians**

live within a
10-minute drive
(7 km) to an outdoor
pool.

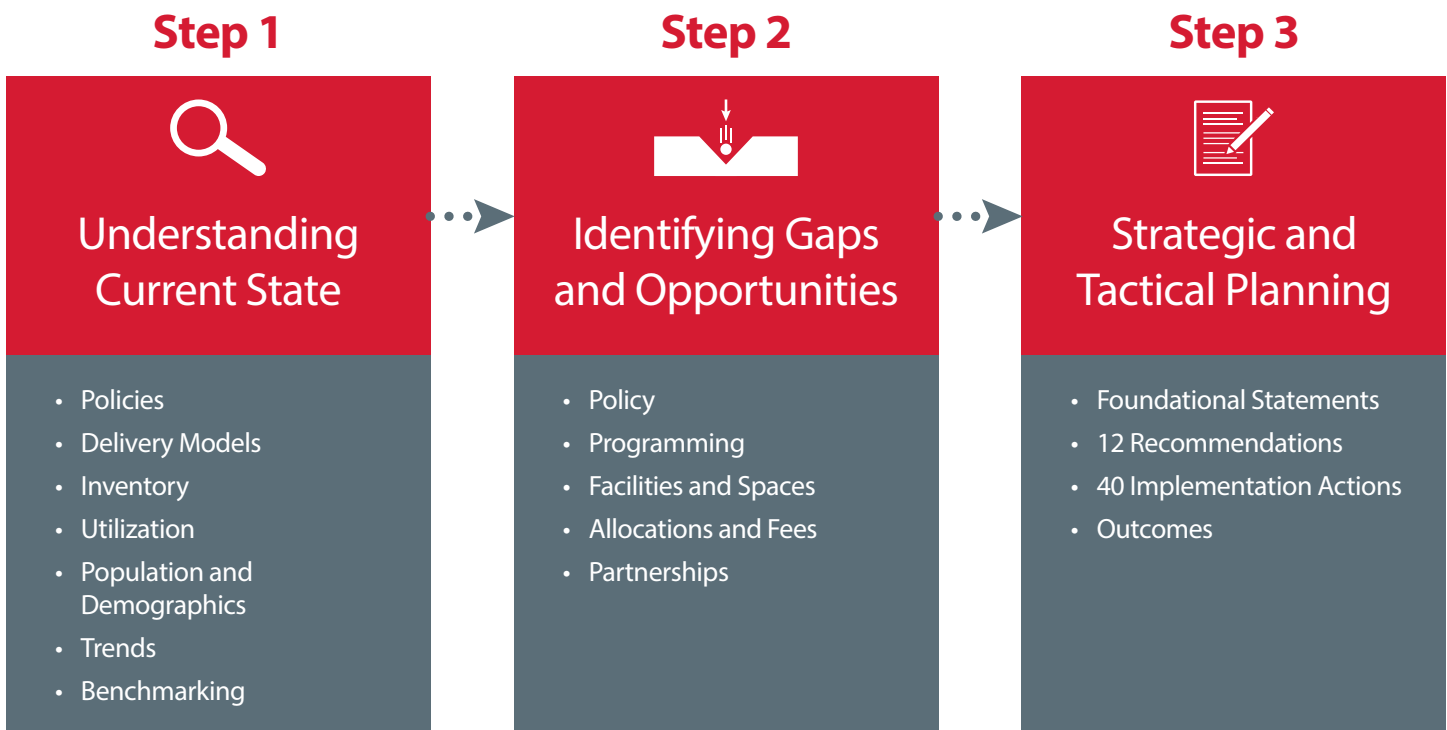
1.3 Strategy Process & Guiding Documents

The Study process, which is illustrated in Figure 2 below, began with assessing the current state of the aquatic system in Calgary. To define the current state of aquatic facilities and services, a variety of data sources were leveraged, including an extensive literature and policy review, demographic analysis, engagement of City and Partner staff involved in the delivery of aquatics opportunities, and the geo-spatial analysis of the current indoor and outdoor aquatics provision in Calgary.

It should be noted that the Pool Study took place during the COVID-19 pandemic, which caused disruption to municipal operations, service delivery, and facility usage. As a result, the Pool Study faced several unanticipated delays and changes to the established workplan. For example, with facilities closed for much of 2020, utilization data was unable to be collected. Therefore, the data presented within the Study is based on 2019 swim visits. While the ongoing pandemic has created great uncertainty as to the future demand for recreation services, this Study assesses the influence of COVID on participation trends and will speak to potential opportunities in support of the safe return to recreation in the recommendations contained within the Pool Strategy.

Additionally, as this was the first collective planning exercise that analyzed both City and Partner operated facilities, there were challenges collecting utilization data in a consistent manner. For example, some multi-purpose facilities provided total visitor counts based on entry scans without filtering out non-pool user visits in the reported pool utilization. The collected data has been incorporated into the Strategy's recommendations, but it should be noted that some discrepancies may still exist.

Figure 2 Overview of Study Process



1.3.1 Methodology

In order to fully analyze the current state of aquatic facilities and services in Calgary and to contemplate future provision and enhancement, a multi-faceted methodological approach was taken to account for various sources of data and the multi-dimensional nature of the aquatic system in Calgary. The Study analysis began by categorizing the use of pools into seven different activity types, each type having a unique set of attributes and infrastructure requirements, and each contributing to the overall justification for investment in public pools. Building on activity categories, targeted market catchment areas were outlined for each activity type based on known usage data at existing pools and other relevant research.

Aquatic Activity Type Classification

For planning purposes, it is useful to divide the entire realm of available aquatic services into categories based on what motivates or “drives” the use of publicly available pools. By understanding more completely what motivates the use (e.g. fitness, recreation, personal development) the types and amounts of aquatic facilities and services can be more finely honed and enhanced. In other words, the water temperature, depth, and configuration of each tank can be more precisely designed or operated to each category of use and specialty amenities; as well, the overall mix of amenities and programs can be balanced across all facilities and operators (City and Partner).

Seven activity types, which are defined in Figure 3, were established to guide the analysis. Some of the activity types, such as recreational and leisure swimming, are further categorized as “fundamental” or “specialized” depending on the level of service a given facility can accommodate. Any pool within the current system can accommodate a fundamental recreational and leisure swimming experience; however, only facilities with dedicated leisure or training amenities such as water slides and wave pools can be characterized as specialized.

Fundamental Facility

Flatwater facility with limited to no leisure amenities. Suitable for lane fitness swimming, swim lessons and water orientation.

Specialized Facility

Aquatic facility with enhanced amenities to provide unique experiences and/or high performance training opportunities.



Context for the Catchment Area Distances

Five km, eight km, and 38 km catchment distances were identified using existing data from customers' willingness to travel for various aquatic activities as well as actual attendance patterns. Using customers' home locations, their reason for visiting a facility, and the destination facility's address, travel distances for fundamental and specialized swimming were determined as five km and eight km respectively.

Eighty percent (80%) of customers travel an average of five km to pools with fundamental-level features and 80% travel an average of eight km to swim at pools with specialized features. These distances were represented primarily through pass scans of individual and family memberships.

For more highly specialized activities that should be provided at a city-wide service level a catchment distance of 38 km has been applied. These catchment distances represent the typical distance or catchment area an indoor pool provides service for, and does not necessarily equal the number of facilities that should be provided. For example, a city-wide level catchment distance of 38 km does not mean that only one facility will meet City wide demand, but rather that the facility can expect to serve people from across the city. The catchment areas for indoor aquatic facilities in Calgary, along with the number of visits each facility received in 2019 are illustrated in Figure 4.



Shouldice Aquatic Centre

Figure 3 Aquatic Activity Type Categories






















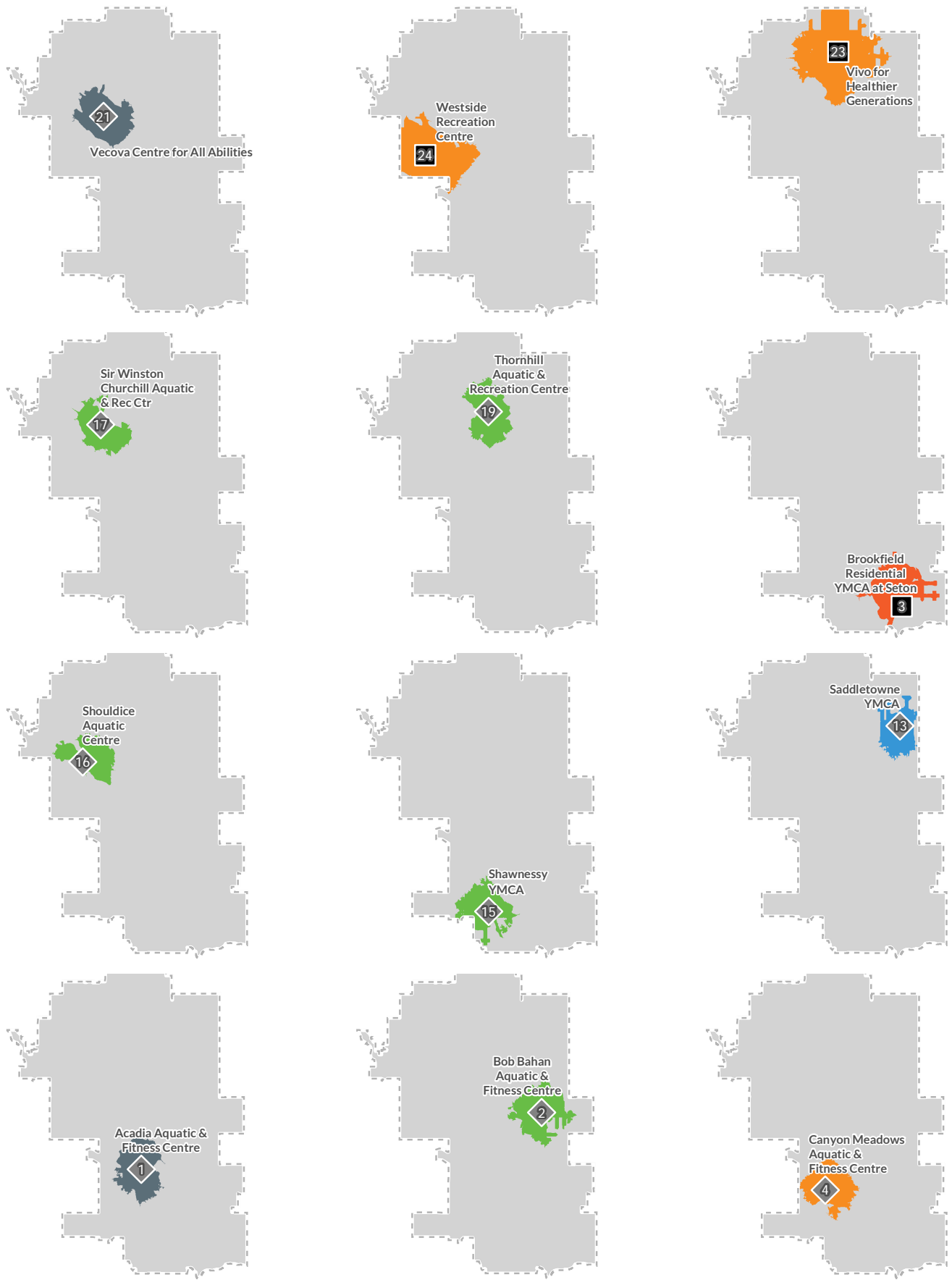
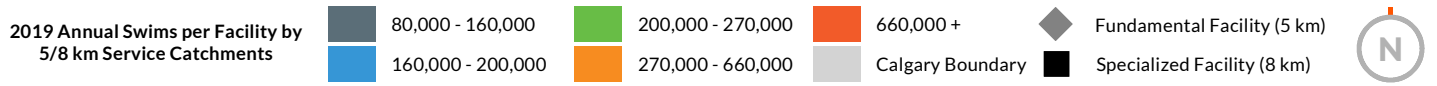
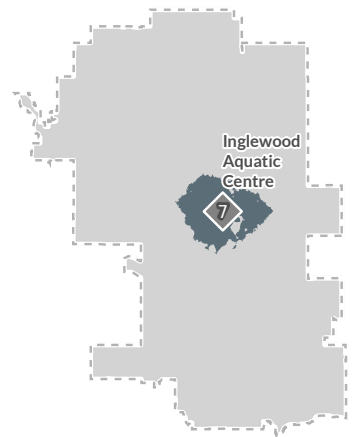
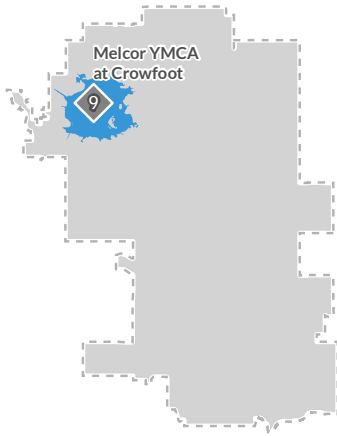
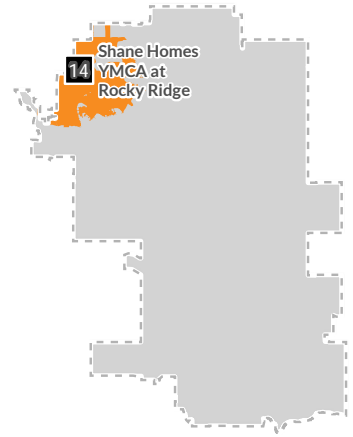
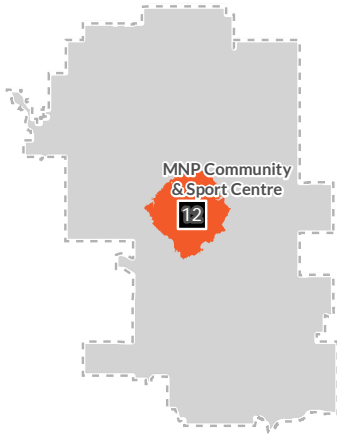
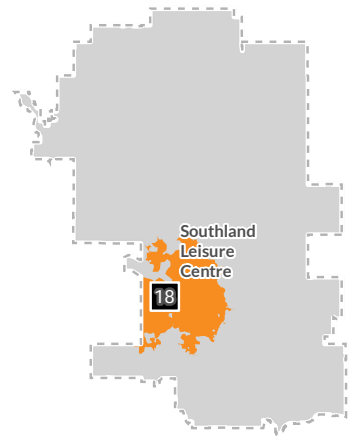
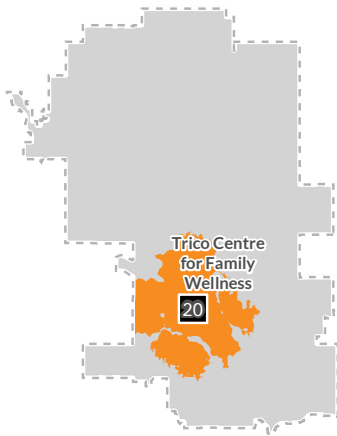
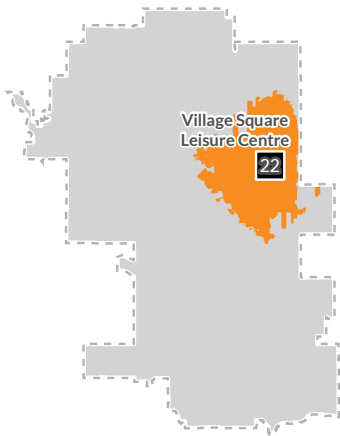
 <p>Recreational and Leisure Swimming</p>	<p>Description Fundamental - Water activity for leisure in a flat water facility Specialized - Water activity for fun with specialized amenities like waterslides, wave pools, lazy rivers, play equipment, etc.</p>	<p>Level of Service</p>	<p>Fundamental </p>	<p>Specialized </p>
 <p>Skill Development</p>	<p>Description Primarily Swim lessons but can also include other skills taught in a lesson format</p>	<p>Level of Service</p>	<p>Fundamental </p>	<p>Specialized </p>
 <p>Fitness Swimming</p>	<p>Description Both lane swimming and structured aquacize / fitness classes</p>	<p>Level of Service</p>	<p>Fundamental </p>	<p>Specialized </p>
 <p>Sport Training</p>	<p>Description Fundamental - Aquatic sport club training programs Specialized - Training requiring specialized amenities such as diving tanks, underwater sound systems, timing systems etc.</p>	<p>Level of Service</p>	<p>Fundamental </p>	<p>Specialized </p>
 <p>Special Events</p>	<p>Description Fundamental - Swim meets, water sport league play Specialized - Higher level sport competitions</p>	<p>Level of Service</p>	<p>Fundamental </p>	<p>Specialized </p>
 <p>Therapy and Rehabilitation</p>	<p>Description Activity and exercise by people with varying ability and functional limitations and those recovering from injury or surgery, either in a program or individually</p>	<p>Level of Service</p>	<p>Fundamental </p>	<p>Specialized </p>
 <p>Leadership Training</p>	<p>Description Lifeguard, aquatic instructor training, leadership, and development programs</p>	<p>Level of Service</p>	<p>Fundamental </p>	<p>Specialized </p>

Figure 4 Aquatic Facility Catchment Areas in Calgary





1.3.2 Policy and Planning Review

Currently there are a number of documents, plans, and policies that are used to guide the planning and operations of aquatic services within the city. The City of Calgary has adopted extensive planning and strategic guidance related to recreation and pools in order to guide decision making and subsequent actions. Similarly, the Government of Alberta, the Government of Canada, and recreation and swimming governing bodies have policies and strategic plans to guide and influence the provision of sport and recreation in Calgary. A high level overview of relevant policies and planning documents that influenced the Pool Study is presented in Figure 5.

Upon the completed review of municipal, provincial, national, and industry policy and planning documents and regulations, the following seven key policy related themes were identified as relevant to the Study and have influenced the Study's analysis of publicly supported pools in the city.

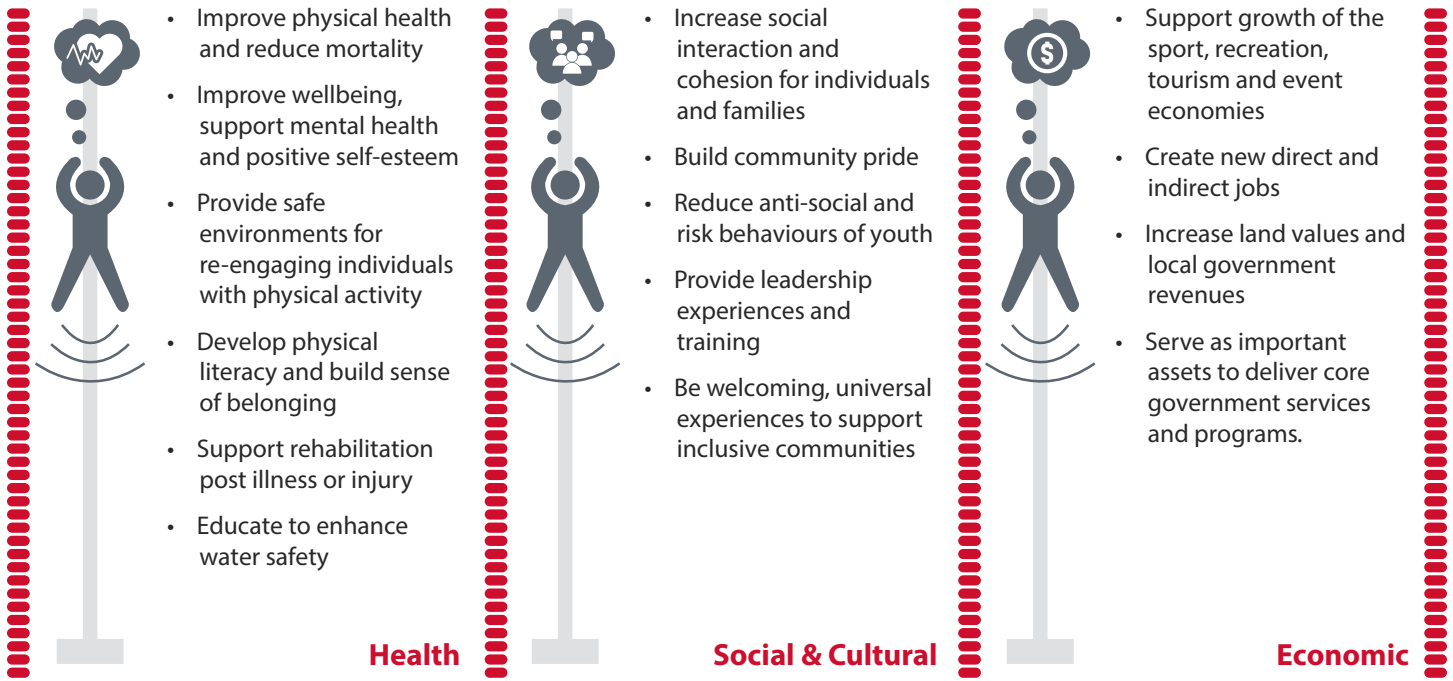
- **Equitable access** to sport and recreation facilities and programming should be a priority regardless of a person's ability, race, gender, sexual orientation, age, cultural, or socio-economic background.
- Public provision of facilities and services fosters vital **lifelong sport and physical activity participation**.
- Outcome based and **evidence driven decision making** should focus on fostering healthy, active communities and supporting the wellbeing of citizens.
- **Environmentally sustainable** building practices and facility management protocols need to be prioritized.
- **Multi-sector partnerships** to deliver sport and recreation services and programming to individuals and communities are vital.
- A **value-based approach to partnership** management will ensure intended outcomes are met.
- **Safe operation** of facilities aligned with provincial and national legislation, as well as public health standards and protocols is integral from a user and facility operator perspective.

Figure 5 Documents Influencing the Provision of Aquatic Services in Calgary



Figure 6 Benefits of Aquatic Facilities and Services

If well designed, purposefully planned, and managed aquatic facilities and services can...



Calgary's Aquatic System

The City of Calgary operates 13 indoor aquatic facilities and works with Partners who operate an additional 11 facilities on City-owned land to provide quality aquatic programming and services for residents. There are various factors that are influencing and challenging how The City of Calgary provides aquatic facilities and services for residents, including aging municipal aquatic infrastructure, a growing population, funding considerations, and changes to regulatory requirements. However, these factors also serve as the catalyst for examination and planning for the future of The City's aquatic facilities and services, and relationships with Partner operators.

Effective planning begins by considering the big picture looking at the whole of the aquatic system within the city. While this Study examines the 24 facilities operated by The City and Partners, there are also privately operated pools that contribute to Calgary's aquatics system, such as University of Calgary, Calgary Winter Club, Glencoe Club, and Paperny Family JCC. These facilities were included in engagement efforts to understand how each facility contributes to the larger aquatic system.

The existing network of aquatic facilities in Calgary has the ability to meet a variety of aquatic needs from basic water skills and swim lessons to specialized therapy experiences and sport development skills. However, the Pool Study analysis identified gaps and challenges within the system and influences from broader trends in the aquatic sector that combine to present opportunities for future enhancement. These opportunities will be explored and expanded upon within the Recommendations presented in Chapter 4. This section presents the current state of aquatics in Calgary organized into three areas: service delivery, programming, and infrastructure.

2.1 Aquatic Service Delivery Trends

Calgarians have access to a variety of aquatics opportunities, however, the aquatic industry has experienced many changes in recent years. As user expectations of indoor aquatic facilities have evolved over time and broader societal shifts are influencing aquatic services and facility operations, some trends have emerged specific to aquatics service delivery that have been considered in the creation of this Aquatic Strategy, including:

- Pools are more commonly thought of as social gathering spaces as well as recreation facilities. Frequently, pools function as more than just a place to swim, they are a destination; a place to gather and to socialize in a community.
- Accessibility means looking at a facility holistically from the moment a potential user considers going to a facility to their experience arriving at and entering the facility, to how change rooms are configured, and finally, getting into the pool itself. The City of Calgary currently has Access Design Standards which provides guidelines to remove barriers that might prevent residents and visitors from fully participating in City programs and services.
- Inclusion and accessibility are priorities for The City of Calgary, as reflected in the policies and plans that acknowledge the importance and support the delivery of providing programs, spaces, and opportunities that are accessible for everyone. Current strategies for reducing barriers to participating in aquatic programs include allowing caregivers or support workers free access to facilities and providing training to staff on how to assist swimmers with special needs. Other strategies may include 'quiet' times in the pool schedule to accommodate for those with sensory sensitivities.
- The experience of the COVID pandemic event has identified the need for greater alignment between the sport and recreation sector and public health. Recreation facility operators are currently challenged with destigmatizing public spaces and encouraging facility users to return to facilities.
- More extreme weather events means that people will seek out climate-controlled environments more often. Pools can provide not only a respite from summer heat, but also provide reprieve from frigid winter temperatures. Incorporating social gathering spaces that can be accessed without paying for admission can provide safe, comfortable environments for all.
- Many municipalities are engaging in multi-sector partnerships to leverage experience and expertise to delivery aquatic services in an efficient and effective manner.

Current Opportunities for Enhancement to Aquatic Service Delivery in Calgary

- The existing Calgary Recreation aquatic allocation process favours historical utilization patterns, resulting in certain groups or swimmers having less opportunities to access pools, particularly during prime hours. There is an opportunity to develop a new allocations framework that supports equitable access to pool time for different users and different water sports.
- Currently the benefits of aquatic services to Calgarians are not being effectively measured or communicated to the public. There is an opportunity to create evaluation parameters to assess service provision levels.
- Inconsistencies in swim use data collected between City and Partner facilities, has created challenges in analyzing the aquatic system as a whole. There is an opportunity to collect additional utilization data to strengthen future analysis and assessment of the aquatic sector in Calgary. Enhanced data collection related to activity use in pools would also support future program evaluation and program planning.
- Inconsistencies in operations (e.g., allocations, fees) across the aquatic system (e.g., City compared to Partner operated facilities) results in inconsistent services levels. There is an opportunity to explore the approach to Partner agreements and review the roles of various service providers in the Calgary aquatic system.
- Shifting demographics and socio-cultural factors, such as an aging population and increased immigration, are creating new demands and planning considerations for facility operators. While a thorough understanding of barriers to participations and gaps in services offered is needed, there is an opportunity to serve new users and enhance the experience of existing users. Strategies to address changing market needs may include incorporating multiple languages into facility signage and written materials, providing culturally sensitive programming such as women only times for women practicing Islam or LGBTQ+ dedicated swim times, and even designing admission counters to be offset from main entries to create a more open and inviting first impression.

2.2 Aquatic Programming Trends

The City of Calgary offers a variety of swim programming at its facilities, including learn to swim for children, swim skill development for youth, fitness classes and leadership programming. These programs are generally well attended and provide quality recreation opportunities for Calgarians. However, as we continue to adapt due to COVID-19, the activity preferences of many have shifted and safety remains a key consideration. Research into aquatic programming highlighted the following trends that have been considered in the creation of this Aquatic Strategy, including:

- Swimming and all water-based activities are regaining popularity as people are looking for more spontaneous physical activities. This is also resulting in greater demand for lessons for those of all ages, particularly as such lessons are viewed as integral to physical literacy, skill development, and preventing injury/drowning.
- Aquatic exercise, including swimming, water-based resistance training, or water aerobics, are increasingly popular activities among those looking for a low impact workout in a fun environment. However, accessible community pools and therapeutic tanks are necessary amenities to support these types of activities.
- There is a growing popularity in offering co-participation and multigenerational programming. Providing opportunities for all family members to take part in different activities simultaneously at the same location can increase participation levels, as well as a sense of convenience and satisfaction for residents. For example, while children participate in swim lessons, guardians may wish to swim laps, relax in a hot tub or to grab a coffee and visit in social areas in sight of pool tanks.
- The COVID-19 pandemic has limited the ability of many to participate in aquatic programming. To support the development of water safety skills and build knowledge, many providers, including Calgary swim clubs and private facility operators, have enhanced their use of technology to support virtual delivery of water education and swimmer training activities.

Current Opportunities for Enhancement to Aquatic Programming in Calgary

- Current Calgary Recreation co-participation parent/guardian and child programs are generally targeted at younger children and focus on skill development of the child, not the parent/guardian along with the child. There is an opportunity to offer new programming focused on skill development and participation for both a child and a guardian.
- The COVID-19 pandemic has led to more people spending more time outside and engaging in new activities. Outdoor water sports, such as stand-up paddle boarding and kayaking, skyrocketed in popularity. Now that indoor pools have reopened, there is an opportunity to offer new programming, such as stand-up paddle boarding classes, to provide year-round opportunities to participate in water activities.
- Shifts in the labour market and the growth of the gig economy, or temporary work, presents an opportunity to support residents who cannot be accommodated by traditional prime time programming schedules. There are opportunities to offer programming during non-prime time's such as: adult swim skill development programs; aquatic fitness classes; wellness and post-rehabilitation therapy programs and opportunities for socialization.
- Currently there has been limited use of complimentary technology to support water education and skill development by Calgary Recreation. There is an opportunity to offer complimentary water safety education modules online. These modules could be targeted to a variety of potential users such as children and newcomers.

2.3 Aquatic Infrastructure Trends

The Calgary aquatic system is a comprehensive network of indoor recreational pools, training and competition pools, therapy and rehabilitation pools, outdoor pools, and spray parks. The range of aquatic facilities throughout Calgary offer a variety of experiences and opportunities. Although public pools are among the most expensive facilities that a community can provide, almost all communities invest heavily in them because of the tremendous direct and indirect benefits that accrue from pools. Research into aquatic infrastructure highlighted the following trends that have been considered in the creation of this Aquatic Strategy, including:

- Recreational swimmers are increasingly looking for exciting aquatic experiences such as aquatic playgrounds for those of all ages and abilities, lazy rivers, wave pools, surf machines, waterslides, etc.
- Wellness and therapy pool users are one of the fastest growing segment of aquatic users, particularly in communities with aging populations. These users tend to require warmer water (e.g. 32 degrees Celsius), but can also benefit from access to cold water plunge tanks as well.
- Competitive swimmers have high expectations for facility design and governing bodies, too, have certain standards for tank configurations, spectator seating areas, timing systems, and so forth. Modern training facilities should include amenities such as dive tanks, warm up pools, starting blocks, advanced timing systems, and scoreboards.
- Pools are being designed to have multiple tanks and 'zones', such as areas for rehabilitation and therapy, areas for users with sensitivities to sound and/or light, training areas with one or more 50 m tanks, separate 25 m warm up tanks, 25 m leisure and recreation pools, hot tubs, and saunas. Increasingly, users expect multiuse spaces as the norm and service providers need to quickly adapt to meet community needs.
- Many aquatic facilities in Canadian municipalities are nearing end-of-life and significant reinvestment is required to meet changing user expectations and provide quality environments for aquatic activities, preferring to go to newer or more feature-equipped facilities. Municipalities must also compete with the private sector in the form of hotels or resorts that may have newer or more attractive amenities.
- Climate change has and will continue to impact the provision of recreation services in Canada, with increased energy and material costs forcing many municipalities to reconsider building design and operations to minimize environmental impacts and increase resiliency to disruption.
- Pools are unique given the high levels of energy and water needed to operate in northern climates such as Calgary's. Utilizing green building design standards (e.g. LEED) and incorporating leading edge technologies to reduce energy consumption, prevent heat loss, and lower water consumption can help to offset a pool's overall environmental impact. Renewable energy generation technologies can also be incorporated to generate electricity and to warm water.
- A growing trend in recreation infrastructure planning is to ensure that there is a seamless interface between indoor and outdoor environments. Integrating indoor and outdoor environments can be as simple as ensuring that interior spaces have good opportunities to view the outdoors. Common outdoor amenities provided at indoor aquatic facilities include spray pads, playground features, and winter play activity spaces to expand the overall range and seasonality of recreational opportunities typically available within indoor facilities.



Brookfield Residential YMCA at Seton

Current Opportunities for Enhancement to Aquatic Infrastructure in Calgary

- Established communities in west central Calgary are generally well served by aquatic facilities, however most of these facilities only provide fundamental amenities and lack modern enhanced leisure amenities. The City will need to support the provision of facilities in established areas with the demands of growing communities. There is an opportunity to consider investing in a facility to provide enhanced leisure aquatic opportunities to these communities.
- The City has not established a dedicated funding source to replace aging city infrastructure. There is an opportunity for Calgary Recreation to advocate for the creation of a dedicated funding source for the development, retrofit, and operations of aquatic facilities to ensure the equitable distribution of amenities throughout Calgary.
- Given the age of the aquatic infrastructure in Calgary, many existing facilities have high rates of water and energy consumption. There is an opportunity to balance the environmental footprint of these facilities to implement new technologies to reduce energy consumption, prevent heat loss, and lower water consumption such as the use of pool covers and the use of natural water filtration.
- Of the 24 City and Partner operated aquatic facilities, 56 per cent don't have accessible tanks and there are no adult change tables in any City operated facilities. There is an opportunity to enhance accessibility of facilities and pool access through advocating for accessibility audits of Partner operated facilities and prioritizing accessibility related retrofits in facilities, such as universal change rooms and pool lifts for independent access to tanks.



Swimming is a foundation sport for all people for healthily living, and recreation, sport and competition. It's an activity families often enjoy together, and many memories that last a lifetime include swimming as a major part.

(Swimming Canada, 2021)

Vision for Aquatics in Calgary

This Strategy has been developed based on the premise that access to indoor pools and aquatic services and programs should be improved and enhanced so that Calgarians can:

- Develop fundamental skills to ensure safety in and around the water
- Have the opportunity to learn to swim
- Benefit from lifelong participation in sport and physical activity and leading healthy active lifestyles

As well, Calgarians should have reasonable access to outdoor water amenities.

Based on these intentions, the Aquatic Strategy is built upon five pillars. These five pillars are intended to be aspirational and future-oriented, representing the impact that the implementation of this Aquatic Strategy will seek to have on Calgary's aquatic system. The pillars are also foundational to a shared purpose for The City and Partners to work collaboratively in achieving the Strategy's recommendations. The guiding direction set by the pillars and shared purpose will be supported by Strategy objectives, which indicate how the shared purpose will be accomplished. These components of the strategic foundations will underpin the Strategy's recommendations and direction.



Saddletowne YMCA and Genesis Centre



Pillar 1:
Water Safety



Pillar 2:
Equitable
Access



Pillar 3:
Community



Pillar 4:
Sustainability



Pillar 5:
Partnerships

Pillar 1: Water Safety

Being safe in and around water is important and necessary life skill for all Calgarians. This Strategy will address the importance of learn to swim programs, water safety and providing leadership training and supervision in aquatic facilities.

Pillar 2: Equitable Access

The City of Calgary serves and supports a diverse community with a diverse set of needs. The City provides inclusive programs and services to support a diverse population. This Strategy will support and build on this commitment to remove barriers to access and inclusion to a range of aquatic facilities, programs and services and advance the process of Reconciliation.

Pillar 3: Community

Calgary is a vibrant city that has thrived experiencing sustained growth over the last few decades and will continue to welcome new Calgarians to the city. This Strategy takes into consideration the projected community growth, along with the shifting and evolving demographic changes. This will ensure The City is well positioned to respond to changing community demands and needs for aquatic facilities and services.

Pillar 4: Sustainability

Calgary must balance the demand and need for new aquatic infrastructure with the management and operations of existing infrastructure. This strategy will take into consideration the sustainability of aquatic facilities through intentional investments in the use of new technologies, climate change adaptations, and managing aging infrastructure in a sustainable manner.

Pillar 5: Partnerships

Partners provide valuable contributions to the aquatic system and are vital to meeting the aquatic needs of Calgarians. This Strategy will address the importance of management strategies to enhance operations and coordination between The City and Partners, focusing on implementing consistent data collection, and coordinated advocacy and planning.

Shared Purpose


The shared purpose represents the strategic direction of The City of Calgary in working with Partners to achieve desired outcomes in the aquatic sector.


Sustainable provision of aquatic facilities and services that deliver community benefit through facilitating lifelong, healthy and active living.





Objectives


The objectives represent how the shared goal and aspirational direction of the pillars will be accomplished over the planning process.


 **Healthy** – aquatic facilities and services offer opportunities for physical activity and social interaction leading to healthier and more connected individuals and communities.


 **Safe** – aquatic facilities and services are safe and meet regulatory requirements and guidelines.


 **Inclusive** – aquatic facilities and services are financially, culturally, physically, and socially accessible and are inclusive where all feel welcome, respected, and valued.

 **Green** – aquatic facilities and services are planned, designed, constructed, operated, and maintained being mindful of their environmental impact.

 **Effective** – aquatic facilities and services planning and operations considers both social and financial return.

 **Relevant** – aquatic facilities and services are multi-purpose, adaptable and respond to community need and user expectation.

 **Evidence Based** – aquatic facilities and services decisions are made using accurate and complete data and information about usage and operations.


 **Collective** – aquatic facilities and services leverage partner knowledge and experience to support meeting the Calgary Recreation mandate.

How to Read the Strategy Recommendations.

Recommendations Overarching action that will provide strategic guidance to the future provision of aquatic services and facilities in Calgary.

Implementation Actions

Suggested tactics that when implemented will support building towards achieving a stated Recommendation.

Action	 Timeline	 Opportunity Addressed	 Resources/Considerations
Tactic to be implemented by City Staff	Ongoing Short (0 – 2 years) Medium (3 – 5 years) Long (6 – 10 years)	Identifies the current opportunities and challenges within the system that the implementation action is addressing.	Information to support why this recommendation is included; as well as research to consider when implementing action.

This Strategy seeks to provide a road map to ensuring services and facilities are relevant, attractive, sustainable, and well-utilized community recreation destinations.



Westside Recreation Centre

The Future of Aquatic Service Delivery

Municipalities take various approaches to how they provide aquatic facilities and services – many, like The City of Calgary, take a hybrid approach with a combination of direct provision, partnerships, and third-party operators to ensure services are provided. This Strategy sets out the aim for The City to ensure residents have access to a variety of aquatic opportunities, are safe in and around water, and benefit from lifelong participation in aquatic activity. The Strategy also recognizes that Partners are a vital component to delivering aquatic services that are relevant and accessible for Calgarians. Planning decision making should be evidence driven and outcome based with a focus on fostering healthy, active communities and supporting the wellbeing of citizens.

The following section outlines the recommendations to guide the future of aquatic service delivery within Calgary.



Recommendation 1

Develop and review approaches that enable greater fee equity and standardization to reduce socio-economic barriers.

Supports



Pillar 1:
Water Safety



Pillar 2:
Equitable
Access



Pillar 3:
Community



Pillar 4:
Sustainability



Pillar 5:
Partnerships

Implementation Action 1.1: Review and evaluate fee and charges policies, and update as needed to reflect current operating and sector standards.

Timeline: Short

Opportunity Addressed: Policy development; economic sustainability; sector standards.

Considerations: When implementing this action broader City policy on user fees should be reviewed and considered (e.g., User Fees and Subsidies Policy; Public Use Policy); along with existing programs such as Fair Entry Program (City of Calgary Program) and Fee Assistance Program (specific to Recreation) and Partner fee structures and agreements. Research into modern practices has highlighted that equitable and fair access is a key concern for Canadian municipalities. Operating and service demand implications from the COVID pandemic should also be taken into consideration.

Implementation Action 1.2: Work with School Boards to facilitate swim opportunities for children and youth.

Timeline: Short


Opportunity Addressed: Community partners; economic sustainability.


Considerations: This action builds on the Sport for Life Policy, which outlines that The City will facilitate connections between sport and education to deliver quality experiences for youth. Additionally, existing community partnerships that deliver and support child/youth swim programming should be researched and considered if expanding partnerships with Calgary School Boards is pursued. These potential partnerships may also be a consideration in future planning to co-locate aquatic facilities near school facilities. The research data reviewed showed young swimmers to be more socially connected and engaged in their community. They are also more satisfied with their friendships, spend more time with their families and volunteer more.



Implementation Action 1.3: Continue to pursue opportunities with community organizations (e.g. health care providers, Community Associations, post-secondary institutions) to offer reduced fee access to facilities and programs.


 **Timeline:** Ongoing


 **Opportunity Addressed:** Community partners; economic sustainability, equity; community benefit.

 **Considerations:** Community organizations are useful partners to help identify and best serve equity deserving Calgarians as they have existing relationships required for effective engagement and communication of available resources. Municipal comparison research conducted as part of the Pool Study found examples of community organization partnerships being leveraged by other Canadian cities to deliver accessible aquatic services; as well as collaborative action on research/health initiatives that could be delivered at facilities, contribute to staff/City knowledge base.

Implementation Action 1.4: Continue to build on existing fee subsidy programs, considering targeted promotion and program evaluation to determine any unintentional barriers that may exist.

 **Timeline:** Ongoing

 **Opportunity Addressed:** Community partners; economic sustainability; shifting demographics.

 **Considerations:** Financial barriers are one of the key reasons why individuals do not participate in recreation activities. Part of ensuring accessibility to opportunities is monitoring and gathering community input. Conducting an evaluation, including stakeholder engagement, of existing fee subsidy programs would help to ensure financial accessibility of aquatic services and facilities. This process should consider demographics shifts and community population trends.



Recommendation 2

Expand on existing approaches that enable equitable access and reduce barriers for those who face physical, social, and cultural challenges to participation.

Supports



Pillar 1:
Water Safety



Pillar 2:
Equitable
Access



Pillar 3:
Community



Pillar 4:
Sustainability



Pillar 5:
Partnerships

Implementation Action 2.1: Regularly conduct engagement with Partners and organizations to better understand and address barriers to participation experienced by underrepresented groups.

Timeline: Ongoing

Opportunity Addressed: Community partners; shifting demographics.

Considerations: Some Calgarians experience barriers to participating in aquatic services and programming. Understanding the types of unique programming desired and specific supports required will be key to engaging those who face physical, health, social, and cultural barriers to swimming. Research has found that barriers to recreation are typically related to awareness, accessibility, personal factors, cost, time constraints, and facility design. However, people experience barriers differently, with age and income being the two socio-economic variables that regularly account for differences in the perception of barriers.

Implementation Action 2.2: Explore opportunities to offer free learn to swim/swim to survive programs for all children in Calgary and targeted adult populations.

Timeline: Short


Opportunity Addressed: Water safety; adult programming; equitable access.


Considerations: Research conducted by the Lifesaving Society and published in the Canadian Drowning Prevention Plan (2021) has found that high risk age groups and marginalized populations are disproportionately affected by drowning. These groups include children 1 to 4 years old, young adult males, Indigenous peoples, and new Canadians. The Plan (2021) presents a framework to address unintentional drownings, which includes a call to action for governments to fund survival swimming skills for those most at risk. The City should consider increasing access to free programming, including offering barrier free first involvement to swim survival and active start fundamentals programs and initiatives.



Implementation Action 2.3: Create or expand a role within The City to develop and facilitate inclusive programming and procedures for City facilities.


 **Timeline:** Medium


 **Opportunity Addressed:** Equitable access; shifting demographics; community benefit.

 **Considerations:** This role will be central to ensuring a holistic and equitable approach to creating welcoming and accessible environments and experiences in The City's aquatic and recreation facilities. The aim of this position will be to contribute to creating meaningful opportunities for all Calgarians by providing leadership to pool staff and collaborating on the planning and delivery on instructional and social activities that increase inclusive opportunities.

Implementation Action 2.4: Develop an aquatics allocation policy to support a balanced provision of aquatic opportunities in City facilities.

 **Timeline:** Short

 **Opportunity Addressed:** Equitable access; shifting demographics; community benefit.

 **Considerations:** The optimal balance between sport groups, swim lessons learn to swim programs, and drop-in programming can be difficult to achieve and maintain. Ensuring that the right groups and programs are aligned with the right spaces will help The City effectively plan and make optimal use of available aquatic resources. As The City continues to grow there will also be shifts in how residents engage in recreation, leisure, and culture pursuits. As such, the allocation of aquatic space will need to occur in a manner that maximizes the benefits of aquatic facilities for Calgarians and considers the needs of both structured and spontaneous users.



Recommendation 3

Improve data collection procedures at all publicly funded pools.

Supports



Pillar 1:
Water Safety



Pillar 2:
Equitable
Access



Pillar 3:
Community




Pillar 4:
Sustainability




Pillar 5:
Partnerships

Implementation Action 3.1: Enhance data collection through developing and implementing a comprehensive data strategy to collect more detailed utilization data, including establishing reporting parameters and timeframes.


 **Timeline:** Long


 **Opportunity Addressed:** Data management; partner management.

 **Considerations:** The Pool Study has introduced a new methodology to The City to monitor and measure how aquatic facilities are used based on what motivates or “drives” the use of publicly available pools. The ‘Activity Type Categories’ identifies seven categories of use. Understanding the use of a facility will support future planning and investment decision making to ensure the broadest community benefit is achieved.

Implementation Action 3.2: Identify and report on metrics to measure and evaluate the social, environmental, and economic benefits of aquatic services.

 **Timeline:** Long

 **Opportunity Addressed:** Data management; community benefit.

 **Considerations:** There are various methods to measure and evaluate the performance of aquatic services. While traditional approaches to measuring success have focused on financial performance and registration and utilization data, these measurements do not capture the full value of aquatic services. Aquatic services play a significant role in contributing to the quality of life of the communities in which they are located and serve. To fully measure the benefits conferred from aquatic services the focus needs to shift from outputs (such as revenue or registration numbers) to broader outcomes such as healthy residents, connected communities and sustainable environments. Review and adapt reporting procedures to align with Calgary Recreation’s Triple Bottom Line Framework/Tool.

Recommendation 4

Continue to enhance relationships with Partners to support the delivery of a spectrum of aquatic opportunities for Calgarians.

Supports



Pillar 1:
Water Safety



Pillar 2:
Equitable
Access



Pillar 3:
Community



Pillar 4:
Sustainability



Pillar 5:
Partnerships

Implementation Action 4.1: Engage Partners in future strategic planning processes to capitalize on synergies and create alignment.

Timeline: Ongoing

Opportunity Addressed: Partner relationship management; policy development.

Considerations: Engagement with City staff and Partner facility administrators conducted as part of the Pool Study found that there is a desire for more coordination and collaboration between The City and Partners in strategic planning initiatives. This planning exercise, the first which examined both City and Partner facilities, offers an opportunity to reset existing processes and enhance future information sharing and planning collaboration between City and Partner aquatic facility operators.

Implementation Action 4.2: Work with Partners to facilitate ongoing sharing of resources, information, and advocacy initiatives to enhance aquatic opportunities and experiences.

Timeline: Medium

Opportunity Addressed: Partner relationship management; communications.


Considerations: During COVID various working groups were formed across the recreation sector to share information, discuss advocacy opportunities, and leverage resources. It was reported in the engagement conducted as part of the Pool Study that both City staff and Partner operators found great value in these exercises (including existing networks such the Recreation Leadership Network) and expressed a desire to participate in a working group of Calgary aquatic providers to share information and coordinator resources. The City should be the facilitator of said group.




Killarney Aquatic & Recreation Centre

Implementation Action 4.3: Work with Partners to establish standardized, comprehensive, and practical utilization and operations records and reporting procedures at all publicly funded pools that are reviewed annually.


 **Timeline:** Medium


 **Opportunity Addressed:** Partner relationship management; data management.

 **Considerations:** The utilization and capacity analysis conducted for the Pool Study identified variations in the data collection methods used by City and Partner facilities. These differences in approaches hinder the ability to analyze the aquatic system in Calgary, and therefore impacts the ability to adequately plan for the future. The City should work collaboratively with Partner operators to establish reporting procedures that are agreeable to all.

Implementation Action 4.4: Work with Partners to evaluate current allocation practices to ensure equitable access to all facilities. Include updated allocations guidelines into all new and renewed Partnership Agreements.

 **Timeline:** Medium

 **Opportunity Addressed:** Equitable access; policy development; partner relationship management.


 **Considerations:** It is important to define the process for allocating, distributing, and managing pool resources in a transparent manner for all facilities. There should be consistency across Partner operated facilities, and allocation frameworks should complement the access and services provided in City operated facilities.




Shane Homes YMCA at Rocky Ridge

Implementation Action 4.5: Work with Partners to evaluate current fee strategies to improve equitable access, and consider updated fee guidelines for new and renewed Partnership Agreements.


 **Timeline:** Medium


 **Opportunity Addressed:** Equitable access; policy development; partner management.

 **Considerations:** To ensure that all Calgarians can receive benefits from aquatic facilities and services, it is important that rates and fees are set in a transparent manner for all facilities. There should be consistency across Partner operated facilities, and the rates and fees should complement the access and services provided in City operated facilities.

Implementation Action 4.6: Conduct a review of the existing aquatic facilities partnership model to determine how best to provide high quality aquatic services for Calgarians while clarifying the roles of Partner and City operated facilities.

 **Timeline:** Medium

 **Opportunity Addressed:** Partner relationship management; policy development.

 **Considerations:** There are several policies and planning directives that guide the development of aquatic facilities and support the decision making process to determine which operating model will be implemented at a facility. All recently developed aquatic facilities by The City are operated by Partners. It is important to review the decision making process and outcomes behind adopting a partnership model to ensure a continued positive impact to Calgarians and a social and economic return on investment for The City.



Recommendation 5

Continue to build on existing practices and procedures that support City staff in meeting their full potential while creating an organizational culture that promotes innovation and diversity.

Supports



Pillar 1:
Water Safety



Pillar 2:
Equitable
Access



Pillar 3:
Community



Pillar 4:
Sustainability



Pillar 5:
Partnerships

Implementation Action 5.1: Evaluate leadership development opportunities and career pathways for aquatic staff to improve career development and retention of staff.

Timeline: Medium

Opportunity Addressed: Lifeguard development; facility operations.

Considerations: Working in an aquatic environment requires a higher level of responsibility than many other jobs in the recreation sector as it involves being responsible for the safety and lives of participants. Working as a lifeguard or slide monitor, staff develop various transferable skills such as communication, problem solving, and teamwork skills. These are skills that would assist a staff member to transition to a leadership role in an aquatic or recreation environment. The engagement conducted with Partner operators and City staff identified the need to create career development pathways for aquatics staff to support the attraction and retention of staff as a priority. In order to sustain the operation and management of these pools, The City needs to ensure the availability of leadership training and should continue to monitor that an appropriate level of leadership training is offered at City-operated facilities.

Implementation Action 5.2: Continue to support accessibility and inclusion training for all City aquatics staff.

Timeline: Ongoing

Opportunity Addressed: Shifting demographics, equity; community benefit.

Considerations: Ensuring that recreation opportunities are inclusive to all can seem daunting, especially to staff and team members who have not received training. The municipal comparison research conducted as part of the Pool Study found examples of municipalities hosting training sessions for pool staff and lifeguards on how to best serve the LGBTQ2+ community, for example, which provided staff with tools and knowledge to best serve members of this community and promote welcoming and inclusive experiences for all. It is important that training on accessibility and inclusion continues as our understanding and the needs of Calgarians evolve.



Canyon Meadows Aquatic & Fitness Centre

The Future of Aquatic Programming

Municipalities play a key role in delivering aquatic programming for residents. All current and future residents should have equitable access to learn to swim/water safety programming, along with physical literacy and leadership development opportunities. Fitness swimming programming contributes greatly to the health and wellbeing of residents and should be easily accessible to as many residents of Calgary as possible. While the primary focus should be on engaging recreational and leisure opportunities, there is a mandate (found within the Sport for Life Policy) to contribute to athlete development through the provision of sport training and competitive experiences and opportunities for Calgarians. Additionally, leadership training is important to ensure that qualified lifeguards are in abundance to sustain operational requirements.

The Pool Study has found that the demand for swimming lessons and aquatic fitness classes at some facilities exceeds current supply. In addition, the Study has found that the demand for therapy and rehabilitation-based programming is increasing across the city and surrounding region. The following section sets out the Recommendation to guide the future of aquatic programming within Calgary.



Recommendation 6

Monitor for population change, facility utilization, trends, and community needs when evaluating the provision of aquatic services.

Supports



Pillar 1:
Water Safety



Pillar 2:
Equitable
Access



Pillar 3:
Community



Pillar 4:
Sustainability



Pillar 5:
Partnerships

Implementation Action 6.1: Continue to conduct annual evaluations of facility utilization and user satisfaction.

Timeline: Short

Opportunity Addressed: Swim for life skill; scheduling; equitable access; data collection.

Considerations: Conducting evaluations of facility utilization and user satisfaction of facilities will ensure The City is able to make evidence-based decisions related to the provision of facilities and services that meet the evolving needs of the community. Municipal comparison research identified various methods municipalities are routinely using to gather feedback from users in ongoing manners, these included on-line comment cards, conducting polls of social media, and using facility ambassadors to speak to users.

Implementation Action 6.2: Conduct targeted community engagement to capture barriers for facility non-users and identify shifts in programming and services demand.

Timeline: Medium


Opportunity Addressed: Community engagement; program development; data collection.


Considerations: Information about non-users is extremely valuable to recreation providers to identify who is not participating and the barriers they may face. To attract people to facilities and programs, it is important to know why people are not using these services at present. Through the gathering of community information, recreation providers may be able to modify their programs and information distribution to reduce the effects of barriers and ensure that recreation opportunities are available for all segments of the community.



Implementation Action 6.3: Adjust facility programming where required to address the specific needs and local preferences of communities in the facilities catchment areas.

 **Timeline:** Long

 **Opportunity Addressed:** Equitable access; program development; data collection.

 **Considerations:** Effective program planning requires matching services with service needs. Program efficiency is enhanced when resources are targeted to or focused on program priorities, including areas of greatest need, underserved locations, or vulnerable populations. The analysis of current aquatic opportunities in Calgary conducted as part of the Pool Study found that for the nine of the 11 activity categories, over 99% of residents live within the recommended distance to their nearest indoor pool. However, supply should continue to be monitored to be responsive to shifting demographics, increasing population, and changes to activity preferences.



Recommendation 7

Facilitate lifelong participation in swimming for Calgarians, and provide innovative, specialized aquatic experiences and opportunities.

Supports



Pillar 1:
Water Safety



Pillar 2:
Equitable
Access



Pillar 3:
Community



Pillar 4:
Sustainability



Pillar 5:
Partnerships

Implementation Action 7.1: Evaluate and build upon existing social programming in community facilities.

Timeline: Ongoing

Opportunity Addressed: Program development; event hosting.

Considerations: There is greater competition than ever in the recreation sector. Increasingly users no longer look to recreation facilities as places solely for physical activity, they consider recreation facilities as community facilities where social gatherings occur. Research conducted as part of the Pool Study found an increase in innovative social community programming offered; this programming is viewed by operators as a unique way to attract new users to facilities. Programming innovations found include movie nights, beach parties, water games, paddle board yoga, and scuba diving. The City could explore partnerships with community groups (e.g., Community Associations) to determine specific demands and strategies to promote activities.

Implementation Action 7.2: Create co-participation programming for parents/guardians and children/youth, including skill development and learn to swim programs.

Timeline: Short


Opportunity Addressed: Program development; equity; water safety.


Considerations: Traditionally parents and guardians are frequently left to watch their children participate in sport. By prioritizing their child's involvement, adults often don't participate in sport and physical activity themselves, this often most disadvantages women. Recreation providers are challenged to think differently about services and programs that are offered to address barriers experienced by families and caregivers of children and youth.



Implementation Action 7.3: Assess the need for additional aquatic therapy and post rehabilitation programs, and determine which new or existing facilities should provide these services.

 **Timeline:** Medium

 **Opportunity Addressed:** Program development; healthy aging, equity.

 **Considerations:** There is a growing awareness of the importance of physical activity in reducing the burden of chronic diseases such as obesity, diabetes, coronary heart disease and some cancers. Aquatic facilities play an important role in that context, especially as our population continues to age. Aquatic therapy and exercise – including swimming, water-based therapy, and water aerobics – is increasingly popular among people who want a low impact workout or post-rehabilitation activity and has led to this being the fastest-growing segment of aquatic users. The positive effect of aquatic exercise on quality of life and physical functioning is generally acknowledged and accepted, particularly for older adults (Calgary's fastest growing age demographic).



Recommendation 8

Continue to evaluate, monitor, and implement new uses of technology to support program delivery.

Supports



Pillar 1:
Water Safety



Pillar 2:
Equitable
Access



Pillar 3:
Community



Pillar 4:
Sustainability



Pillar 5:
Partnerships

Implementation Action 8.1: Support in-water activity with out of water virtual programs, such as water safety courses for children and families.

Timeline: Ongoing

Opportunity Addressed: Technology use; program development.

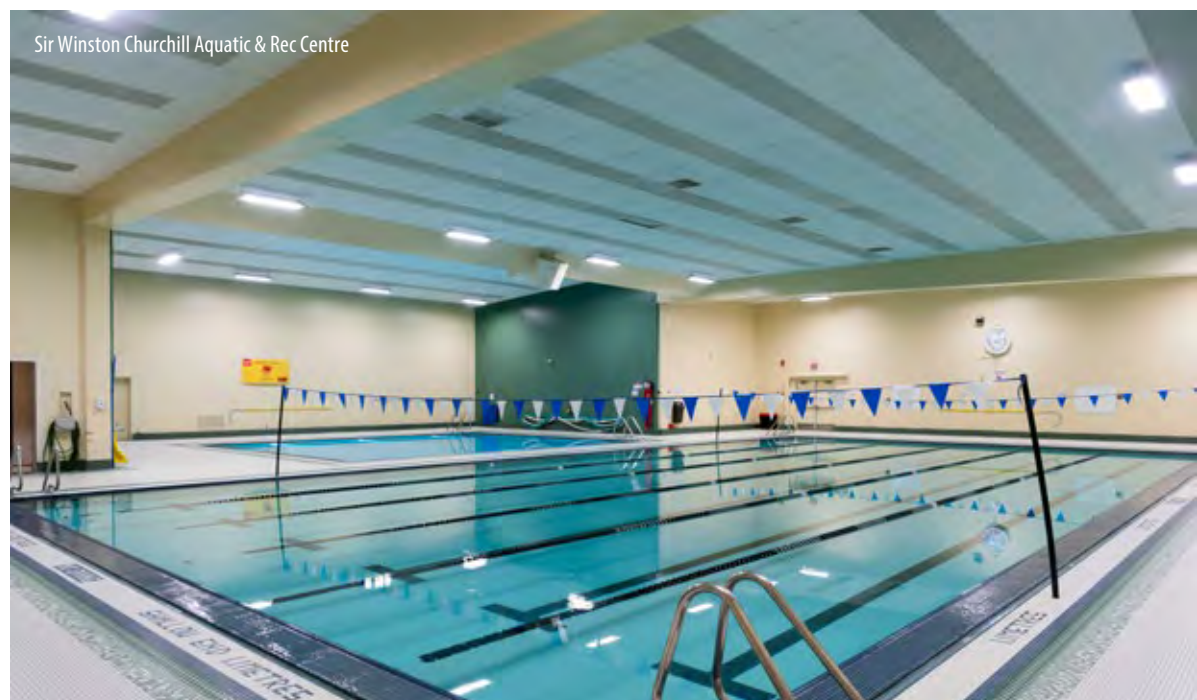
Considerations: In response to the operational disruptions caused by the COVID pandemic, program providers and facility operators (public and private) are supplementing in-water activity with online programming to enhance water safety education for families and non-swimmers. For example, the Lifesaving Society has created various resources available online to teach water safety to children.

Implementation Action 8.2: Adopt virtual programming and online safety policies to guide actions of staff and program delivery.

Timeline: Short

Opportunity Addressed: Technology use; policy development

Considerations: The pandemic has accelerated the use of online technology and virtual training in sport and recreation, including in aquatics. Online forums, information sharing, and virtual training offer recreation providers an opportunity to connect with participants outside of regular programming, traditional locations, and fill programming gaps during times of isolation. However, there are inherent risks with online gatherings and virtual programming; recreation providers must create policies to provide protocols and best practices to ensure safety and security of online users.



The Future of Aquatic Infrastructure

Through strategic investments in aquatic facilities, 90 per cent of Calgarians currently live within the recommended distance (five km) to an indoor fundamental recreation and leisure swimming opportunity while 80 per cent live within the recommended distance (eight km) to a facility suitable to deliver a specialized recreation and leisure level of service. The aim of this Strategy is to support the continued supply of relevant and purposeful aquatic facilities and experiences to Calgarians. The relevance of an aquatic facility is based on the ability for a pool to accommodate as many types of activities as possible - to provide leisure experiences; to provide fitness activity to meet specific user group requirements for event hosting and training; and to provide therapeutic and rehabilitation opportunities.

The Strategy recognizes that the planning, design, construction, operations, and maintenance of aquatic facilities are markedly different than when many of the original City facilities were first built. In 2022, the average age of the 13 City-operated indoor pools is 52 years. The newest City-operated pool is 38 years old and the oldest is 67. It should be noted that The City continues to invest in new aquatic infrastructure and facilities, and works with Partners to operate these facilities.

Aquatics facilities are one of many infrastructure and service priorities for The City; therefore, having a relevant and actionable Strategy in place for aquatic facilities is critical so that resources are directed in a manner that brings benefits to residents and results in a quality aquatic system. The following section sets out the recommendations to guide the future of aquatic infrastructure within Calgary.



Inglewood Aquatic Centre

Recommendation 9

Continue to invest in aquatic facilities, prioritizing user experience, accessibility, and sustainability.

Supports



Pillar 1:
Water Safety



Pillar 2:
Equitable
Access



Pillar 3:
Community




Pillar 4:
Sustainability




Pillar 5:
Partnerships

Implementation Action 9.1: Continue to integrate new and innovative technologies into all new and retrofitted facilities to improve building sustainability, including reducing water and energy consumption.

 **Timeline:** Ongoing

 **Opportunity Addressed:** Sustainable operations; green design.


 **Considerations:** Ensure environmentally sustainable design practices and principles are integrated into the future upgrades or retrofits of Calgary aquatic facilities. This could include but is not limited to:

- » Environmental and water sensitive urban design features
- » Use local and recycled material where practicable
- » Provide renewable energy consuming equipment, including solar, natural ventilation and temperature control, natural lighting
- » Provide safe and workable access around plant room, concourse, and roof areas for maintenance practices.
- » Provide sufficient roof capacity for solar panels
- » Source renewable energy
- » Make use of solar orientation, natural lighting, and natural ventilation
- » Incorporate energy and water efficient design, including LED technology, building management systems, wastewater recovery and heat recovery systems

Implementation Action 9.2: Continue to integrate inclusive and accessible design practices and principles into all new and retrofitted facilities.

 **Timeline:** Ongoing

 **Opportunity Addressed:** Equitable access; community benefit.


 **Considerations:** Ensure inclusive and accessible design practices and principles are integrated into the future upgrades or retrofits of Calgary aquatic facilities. Facilities hosting therapy and rehabilitation programming should be prioritized for facility upgrades to ensure they are barrier free. Elements to consider in creating a barrier free environment could include:

- » Providing gender neutral washrooms and changerooms
- » Inclusion of adult change tables
- » Facility layout and design considerations to enable specific programming (e.g., privacy screens on windows during women only programming)
- » Inclusion of PoolPod or other lift devices to allow independent entry and exit from tanks
- » Use of wayfinding and signage that do not rely on language to communicate important messages
- » Use of colour and design elements to create welcoming and friendly spaces
- » Locating information and payment stations to the side of entry areas
- » Ability to change water temperature to serve those with sensory disorders

Implementation Action 9.3: Work with Partners to conduct accessibility audits of facilities.


 **Timeline:** Medium


 **Opportunity Addressed:** Equitable access; community benefit.

 **Considerations:** To compliment the accessibility audits conducted of City operated aquatic and fitness facilities, The City should work with Partners to conduct accessibility audits at Partner operated facilities to ensure equitable access throughout Calgary's aquatic system and allow for long-term capital planning to address facility deficits.

Implementation Action 9.4: Design new and retrofitted facilities to reflect their community context and urban form with active street frontages and on-site pedestrian routes, as appropriate.


 **Timeline:** Medium


 **Opportunity Addressed:** Community development; placemaking.

 **Considerations:** Aquatic facilities should be community facilities whose design and layout are reflective and considerate of the population that the facility serves. This will support creating welcoming spaces and can contribute to establishing and/or supporting community identity. Facility design should consider the inclusion of public art to support placemaking initiatives and more broadly reconciliation calls to action outlined in the White Goose Flying Report (2016).

Implementation Action 9.5: Design new and retrofitted facilities with multiuse spaces and features that could support a variety of experiences for users, and include community gathering and social areas with consideration of servicing requirements to activate the spaces.


 **Timeline:** Ongoing


 **Opportunity Addressed:** Activity accommodation; community benefit; facility program design.

 **Considerations:** A key trend in the recreation sector has been the development of multiuse spaces. Recreation facilities are being designed to accommodate multiple activities and to encompass a variety of different components. Aquatic facilities are no exception, addressing the challenges that older single tank pools pose with meeting multiple needs and requirements. The benefits of designing multi-use spaces include the opportunity to create operational efficiencies, attract various users and procure multiple sources of revenue generation. Providing the opportunity for all family members or friends to take part in different opportunities simultaneously at the same location increases participation levels, convenience, and satisfaction for residents. Overall, indoor recreational pools should focus on multifunctionality, accessibility for all ages and abilities, and user experiences which will encourage a wide spectrum of participation activity.

Implementation Action 9.6: Support the development and enhancement of sport and event infrastructure for all stages of athlete development.

 **Timeline:** Ongoing

 **Opportunity Addressed:** Activity accommodation; athlete development; event hosting; economic impact.

 **Considerations:** Hosting sport and recreation aquatic events and competitions is a significant segment in the tourism industry; as such it has become a highly competitive between cities seeking to host national and international events. Swim Alberta has been designated by Swimming Canada as the provincial swimming

organization in Alberta and is given the authority to sanction competition events and other activities. The City should monitor infrastructure requirements set by Swimming Canada and FINA to ensure that facilities can accommodate sanctioned events and competitions. Any investment in renovating appropriate facilities or building a new facility should be initiated with the development of a business case that includes an evaluation of partnership opportunities, approaches, design, funding, cost-benefit, risk, and economic impact.



Recommendation 10

Provide strategic direction to inform investment in the management, operations, maintenance, and renewal of publicly funded aquatic facilities to maximize community benefits.

Supports



Pillar 1:
Water Safety



Pillar 2:
Equitable
Access



Pillar 3:
Community



Pillar 4:
Sustainability



Pillar 5:
Partnerships

Implementation Action 10.1: Continue to update capital development plans to guide investment in aquatic facilities.

Timeline: Ongoing

Opportunity Addressed: Facility provision; policy direction; capital planning; sustainability.

Considerations: To support the provision and operations of efficient and community relevant facilities, The City should continue to update capital development plans which would include both capital improvements (e.g., service cycle upgrades, larger scale renovations), and capital development (e.g., facility replacement, new development). Capital development plans should align with key strategic documents (e.g. Municipal Development Plan, Recreation Master Plan), and the findings of the Pool Study and recommendations contained within the Strategy.

Implementation Action 10.2: Conduct plans and needs assessments to guide the development of new and retrofitted facilities that incorporates community need, programming considerations, service area catchments, and facility design/siting.


Timeline: Ongoing


Opportunity Addressed: Facility provision; policy direction; capital planning; sustainability.

Considerations: Planning exercises can assist in the identification of amenity needs within a facility; funding and revenue generation; and recommendations to maintain and even extend facility lifecycles to maximize the community benefit and municipal investment. While long term facility planning is a useful and beneficial exercise it should be noted that community circumstance can change quickly (i.e., COVID, urgency of climate response) and therefore plans should have enough flexibility built in to ensure the recommendations and implementation tools are able to be adapted.

Implementation Action 10.3: Review planning processes and update as required to guide investment and programming of aquatic facilities.


 **Timeline:** Ongoing


 **Opportunity Addressed:** Facility provision; policy direction; capital planning; sustainability.

 **Considerations:** User expectations of modern aquatic facilities are constantly evolving. Most facilities are now designed to be multiuse to accommodate various activities, while being situated in a community to capitalize on nearby amenities and activity centres. To ensure aquatic facilities are relevant and well-utilized by the communities they serve, planning parameters should be periodically reviewed and updated to be reflective of social, economic and environmental realities.

Implementation Action 10.4: Advocate for the establishment of a dedicated funding source for the development, retrofit, and operations of aquatic facilities in established communities to ensure the equitable distribution of in-demand amenities throughout Calgary with a commensurate level of service.

 **Timeline:** Long

 **Opportunity Addressed:** Facility provision; policy direction; capital planning; community benefit.

 **Considerations:** Currently there is no dedicated funding source in Calgary allocated to the provision of recreation facilities in established communities. There is a need to advocate for reliable funding in established areas to address the needs of their communities, and support the equitable distribution of facilities and level of service for all Calgarians.

Recommendation 11

Strategically plan for the development of new or retrofitted aquatic facilities to improve access to, and use of aquatic services to address service provision gaps.

Supports



Pillar 1:
Water Safety



Pillar 2:
Equitable
Access



Pillar 3:
Community




Pillar 4:
Sustainability




Pillar 5:
Partnerships

Implementation Action 11.1: Assess the capacity and demand for aquatic facilities to inform capital planning, facility operations, and programming.


 **Timeline:** Ongoing


 **Opportunity Addressed:** Policy direction; planning; operations; data management.

 **Considerations:** There are many ways to assess a pool's capacity. The proposed Facility Capacity and Utilization Framework (see Appendix C) assesses the approximate number of swims an aquatic facility can practically accommodate. This is not a legal or absolute maximum capacity, but rather is a capacity analysis that considers the number of users that can be accommodated based on a facility's design, amenities, and programs being offered. This method is based on several assumptions, including the number of swims an aquatic facility can accommodate depends on the amount of water surface area and water depth. The framework should be considered when assessing supply and demand, along with other factors, including actual reported swims, primary activities accommodated, facility condition, and the availability of other facilities in the catchment service area. See Appendix D for maps illustrating existing facility catchments.

Implementation Action 11.2: Prioritize the development of new or redeveloped indoor aquatic facilities in strategic locations of the city where their facility catchments would address areas of little or no service coverage.

 **Timeline:** Ongoing

 **Opportunity Addressed:** Policy direction; planning; operations.

 **Considerations:** The City must strategically consider future investment in aquatic facilities in order to meet the current and future needs of Calgarians while balancing operations and budget constraints. The location of new aquatic facilities and the closure/repurposing of others are important decisions that should consider both the needs of developing and established communities. The Site Selection Framework (see Appendix B) is a tool to help assess potential sites for investment in aquatic facilities. For example, it can be used to compare and assess different sites that are being considered for a specific project. The framework is designed to allow for decision making to be adaptable and responsive to changes in community trends, demographic shifts, and to the strategic goals of The City. The criteria within the framework should be reviewed and adapted as needed.

Implementation Action 11.3: Incorporate the location of existing and planned aquatic facilities in the Calgary Metropolitan Region into capital planning processes.

🕒 **Timeline:** Ongoing

🔑 **Opportunity Addressed:** Policy direction; planning; operations.

💡 **Considerations:** It is important to take into consideration regional aquatic facilities, both existing and planned, into The City's capital planning processes. Facilities located in municipalities surrounding Calgary may provide access to aquatic opportunities for Calgarians. Research conducted as part of the Pool Study found a high willingness by some to travel longer distances to access specialized aquatic facilities.



Highwood Outdoor Pool

Recommendation 12

Support the provision outdoor aquatic opportunities for Calgarians.

Supports



Pillar 1:
Water Safety



Pillar 2:
Equitable
Access



Pillar 3:
Community




Pillar 4:
Sustainability




Pillar 5:
Partnerships

Implementation Action 12.1: Continue to invest in the maintenance, operation, and improvement of existing outdoor pools; and support the planning and development of publicly funded spray parks.

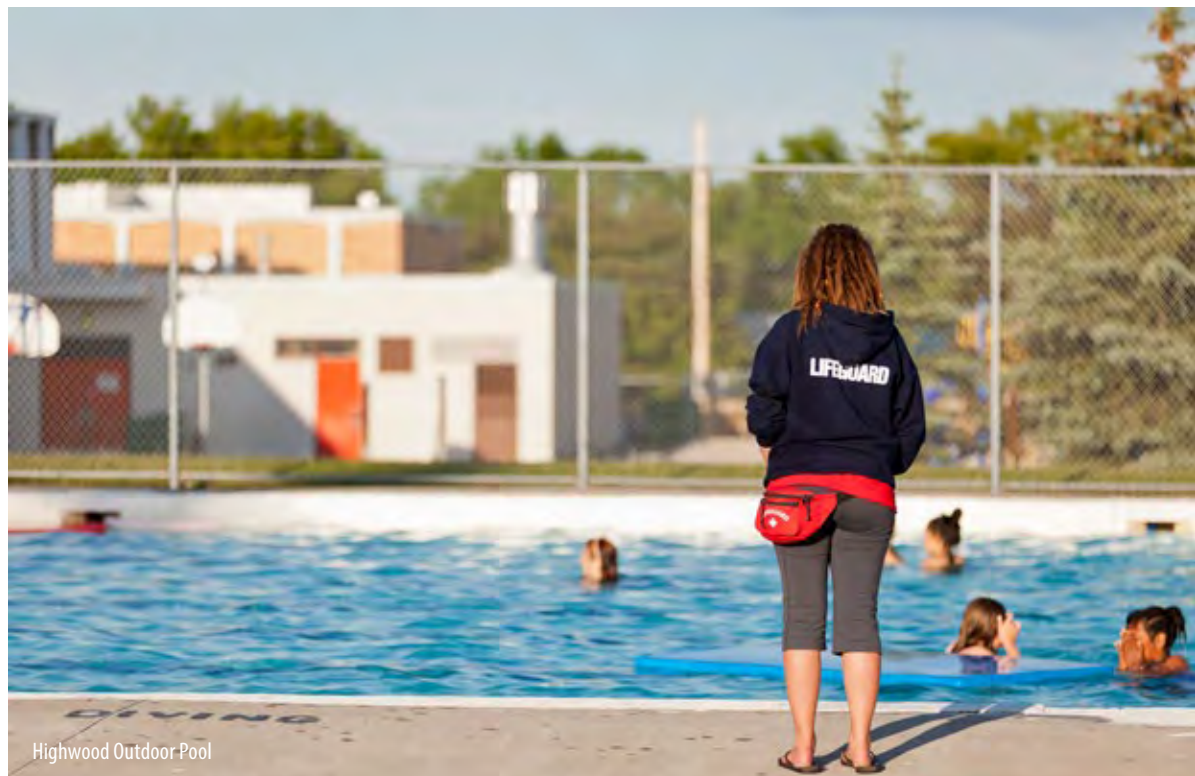
 **Timeline:** Medium

 **Opportunity Addressed:** Outdoor aquatics; policy direction.

 **Considerations:** Outdoor water opportunities, including outdoor pools and spray parks, provide unique benefits to Calgarians, such as respite from summer heatwaves and leisure swim opportunities in park settings. Spray parks with warm, shallow water and accessible features also enable water play and orientation for new or less experienced swimmers such as young children. Spray parks also generally

appeal to a greater range of users than traditional pools as they are typically more physically inclusive and can act as community gathering spaces. Access to outdoor water opportunities in Calgary is important, as Calgarians have few public beaches to choose from within a reasonable travel distance.

Future enhancement or development of these amenities should consider: minimizing impacts on the environment; the equitable distribution of aquatic opportunities across the city; co-location with other recreation and support amenities; and access to cycling and public transportation routes. All future investment and development of outdoor aquatic opportunities should also be driven by Community Associations, Developers, or other community organizations.



Highwood Outdoor Pool

Evaluating Strategy Outcomes

In today's economic climate municipal governments are often tasked with delivering more services with less resources. In recreation services, this has been further exacerbated by the COVID pandemic and disruptions to revenue generating services. As such, determining the value and performance of assets and services is often critical as it can be tied to funding and budgetary considerations. Furthermore, it is increasingly important that governments are accountable to taxpayers, as well as higher levels of government, to show progression to stated strategic goals and priorities.

There are various methods to measure the performance and benefits accrued from aquatic facilities and services. While traditional approaches to measuring success have focused on financial performance and registration and utilization data, these measurements do not capture the full value of aquatic facilities and services to Calgarians. As discussed throughout the Strategy and more broadly throughout the Pool Study, aquatic facilities and services play a significant role in the quality of life of the communities in which they are located and serve. To fully capture the benefits and value of aquatic facilities and services the focus needs to shift from outputs, such as revenue or registration numbers, to broader outcomes such as healthy residents, connected communities and sustainable environments.

Implementing the Strategy

The Strategy is intended to provide an investment and decision-making road map for developing and sustaining relevant, attractive, and well-utilised publicly funded aquatic facilities and services. It is anticipated that the recommendations and implementation actions contained within the Strategy will be implemented in phases based on the identified needs of the community, Council priorities, City and Partner operations, and available funding.

Further work is required on the implementation actions to better understand any capital and operating cost impacts to the City and Partners. All recommendations and implementation actions are subject to relevant City Policies. Where recommendations and implementations actions specifically mention Partners, they should be co-implemented with The City and Partners. If Partners aren't explicitly stated in a recommendation or implementation action the focus is on City operated facilities, however the actions can also be extended to Partners if appropriate.

The aim of the Strategy is to guide the provision of services and facilities to meet the needs of communities as resources allow and does not necessarily commit The City to implementation actions within the recommended timeline. The Strategy is intended as a living document and should be amended periodically as more information becomes available or City guiding documents are updated.

Measuring Outcomes

Tracking and measuring Strategy outcomes will capture the benefits of publicly funded aquatic facilities and services within Calgary. Measuring outcomes can be challenging though, as the units of measurement are often subjective in nature or data and information is not readily available. To overcome this, measurements should focus on a small number of key metrics and focus on change within the community over time. This activity can be supported by the Recreation Triple Bottom Line Framework.

The following outcomes provide a starting point to evaluate the possible benefits derived from the implementation of actions contained within this Strategy.

Strategy Outcomes

- Every Calgarian has the motivation, confidence, physical competence, knowledge and understanding to value and responsibly participate in swimming.
- Calgary can host international and national competitive aquatic events that generate economic value and contribute to a culture of a swimming City.
- Free public swim opportunities are available, so that all Calgarians can afford to swim and develop water safety skills.
- Environmental impacts from the operations of aquatic facilities are minimized.
- All aquatic facilities and services are accessible and barrier free.
- Every Calgarian has access to an indoor pool with relevant programming within eight km of their home.
- Aquatic facilities contribute to meeting community needs.
- An appropriate supply of lifeguards is sustained.



Glossary

The definitions contained within this section are based on provincial legislation, industry standards and practices, and City of Calgary policies and operations.

Term	Definition
Access	Services align with the ability for individuals to participate. This often is achieved through the removal of barriers impeding access, which may include: social, financial, language, cultural, geographic and physical barriers. The result is everyone is given the opportunity to participate in all aspects of society. (The Social Wellbeing Policy, CP2019-01)
Accessibility	Removing barriers to access specifically for people with disabilities (which may include but is not exclusive to physical, sensory and cognitive disabilities) to participate in City Services. (The Social Wellbeing Policy, CP2019-01)
Aquatics	An adjective for spaces and activities relating to indoor and outdoor pools.
Bather	Refers to a patron who enters or uses a pool, particularly used when discussing health standards (e.g., bather load) and caregiver to participant ratios.
Practical Capacity	The approximate number of swims an aquatic facility can practically accommodate. This is not a legal or absolute maximum capacity as it considers an appropriate programming mix for a variety of activities that should occur at a public aquatic facility.
Catchment Distance	A distance stemming outward from an aquatic facility to guide service provision. A single facility can have multiple catchment distances as these distances are associated with infrastructure features that afford certain activity types. Distances are applied using road and pathway networks rather than straight lines.
Catchment Area	The area that results around an aquatic facility when a catchment distance is applied.
Demand	Demand is the number of desired swims over a specified timeframe in a given geographic area. This can refer to all types of swims as well as swims for specific activity types. Demand is difficult to accurately measure as it includes current participation, frustrated demand (e.g., waitlists, capacity constraints), and latent demand (where, if a facility is modernized, participation may increase even if capacity remains constant).
Equity	Equity or equitable means conditions are adjusted to meet people's diverse needs, strengths, and social realities. It requires recognition that different barriers (often systemic) exist for diverse individuals or groups. The result of Equity is all people have the opportunity to benefit equally from City Services. (The Social Wellbeing Policy, CP2019-01)
Facility Service Area	The geographic area a facility is intended to serve, and is typically determine by the distance to the facility or population ratios (e.g. one facility for every 50,000 people)
Fitness	An aquatic activity type that refers to lane swimming or water-based aerobics.

Term	Definition
Inclusion	The practice of ensuring that all people can access, enjoy, and feel welcome at a facility. It relates to creating environments in which any individual or group is respected and valued. The result of social inclusion is that people feel they belong and can fully participate in society.
Leadership Training	An aquatic activity type where participants are trained to be volunteers or employees in aquatic services, providing leadership development opportunities for youth as well as enhancing employment prospects.
Level of Provision	Specifically, this refers to the number of residents per aquatic facility in a defined geographic area (e.g., 52,771 residents per indoor aquatic facility in Calgary). Broadly, this refers to a generalized quantity of facilities recommended within the city (e.g. pools that provide skill development opportunities should be provided at a community level of provision while specialized sport training opportunities should be provided at a City-wide level of provision).
Level of Service	Refers to the quality of an aquatic facility, specifically its features that deem suitability for providing fundamental or specialized activity types (e.g. a pool with a single 25-metre tank provides a fundamental level of service for recreation swimming while a pool with waves or permanent waterslides provides a specialized level of service for recreation).
Operating Cost	Expenses associated with operating the facility, such the minimum required number of staff (e.g. customer service, management, lifeguards, instructors, maintenance), insurance, utilities, and water systems.
Pool	Refers to a public swimming pool and the public swimming pool's premises as defined by the Alberta Pool Standards (2014).
Recreation	The City of Calgary defines "recreation" as including sport, arts and culture, physical and leisure activities. (Recreation Master Plan, 2010)
Gap	Refers to a shortfall regarding level of provision (quantity of facilities), level of service (suitability of facilities), or a geographic area not covered by a catchment area.
Service Delivery	A broad term referring to the elements necessary to provide recreation activity opportunities. Elements can include infrastructure development, capital reinvestment, maintenance, facility operations, financial support, and programming.
Swimming Pool	Means a structure that contains water that is deeper than 60 centimetres at its deepest point as defined by the Alberta Pool Standards (2014).
Underrepresented Groups	Refers to groups of Calgarians that do not Participate in Sport at the same rate as Calgarians as a whole. These groups commonly include some women and girls; socio-economically disadvantaged Calgarians; Indigenous peoples; persons with a disability; newcomers who include recent immigrants; refugees and new Canadians; older adults; and members of the LGBTQ community
Universal	Used in the context of facility access, often referring to change rooms and washrooms. The Canadian Human Rights Act and Criminal Code clarify the right of all people to use a washroom or change room that corresponds to their gender identity and support discussions around accessibility and how spaces can be made more inclusive. The provision of universal washrooms and change rooms in public spaces is one way to embrace inclusivity and accessibility for all. Contemporary and public expectations and legislated requirements around accessibility, change rooms, washrooms, pools and supporting program spaces require a larger footprint than conventional design.
Utilization Percentage	The actual number of swims expressed as a percentage of practical capacity.
Utilization Characteristic	When the utilization percentage is generalized into a level of use (e.g., underused, moderately used, well used, very well used).
Wading Pool	Refers to a structure containing water the depth of which is 60 centimetres or less throughout the structure as defined by the Alberta Pool Standards (2014).
Water Spray Park	Refers to a structure on which water is sprayed or released but does not accumulate as defined by the Alberta Pool Standards (2014).





