



AQUATIC SPORT COUNCIL

Community Planning for Aquatic Sport

July 2012

Aquatic Sport Council

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SECTION ONE: AQUATIC SPORT SUPPORT ORGANIZATIONS

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Aquatic sport clubs at the local level continue to investigate ways and means of growing their sport, appealing to entry level participants, increasing swimmer's abilities and ensuring that the club can become sustainable over time. Most clubs operate through a strong and dedicated group of volunteers complemented by coaching staff, all of whom are usually stretched to maintain a solid governance structure while meeting all legislated and operational requirements. The Aquatic Sport Council (ASC) advocates for the development of sport friendly pools and builds the capacity of clubs to advocate for adequate and appropriate aquatic infrastructure at the local level. To this end the ASC offers this document "Community Planning for Aquatic Sport" which sets about to assist aquatic sport clubs in gaining an understanding as to how they can influence aquatic sport, work with other aquatic sport clubs at the community level and best administer their own club.

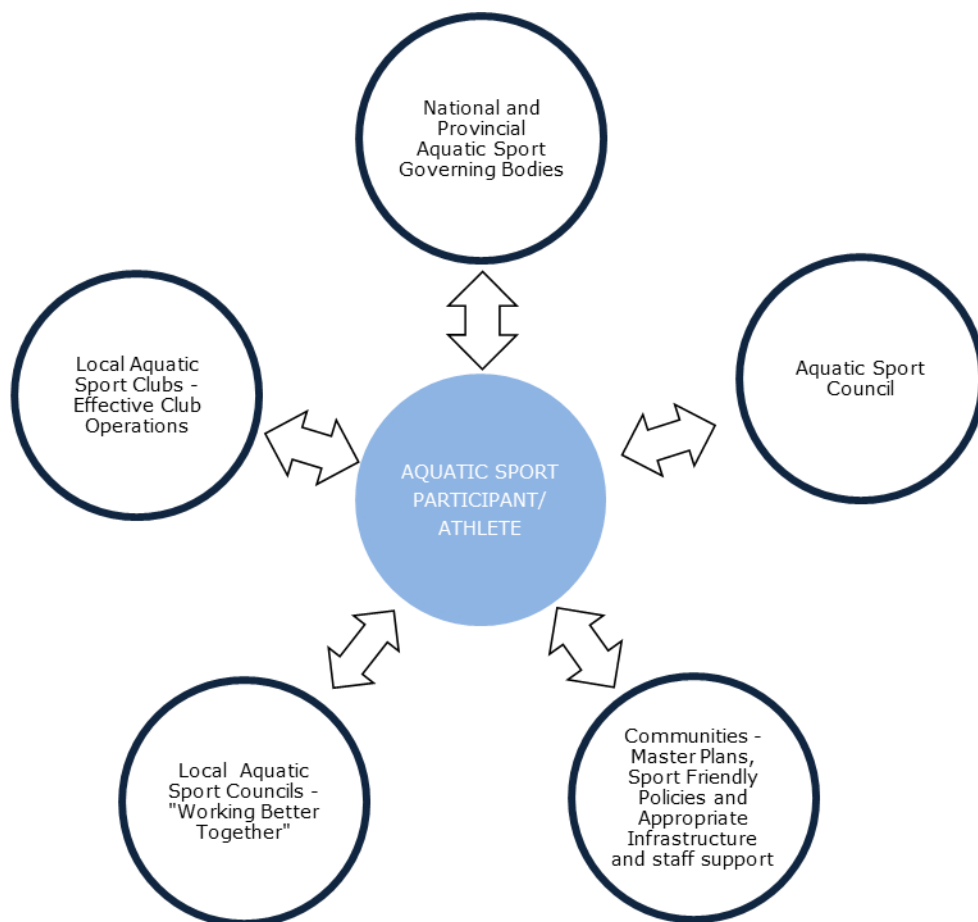
This resource document will assist aquatic sport clubs in better understanding the roles of the various agencies and how to best utilize the resources before them in meeting the club's goals.

The report is divided into four sections:

1. Introduction and the Role of the Sport Governing Bodies and the Aquatic Sport Council
2. The Role of the Municipality
3. The Aquatic Sport Club
4. The Role of Aquatic Sport as a Collective

The following diagram depicts the various agencies and organizations available to assist aquatic sports in their development, and efforts to remain vital and sustainable. This resource will describe the roles of the various organizations and articulate ways of

ensuring aquatic sport clubs can influence decision making at the local level and work together most effectively.



1.2 THE ROLE OF THE NATIONAL AND PROVINCIAL SPORT GOVERNING BODIES

The key aquatic sports represented by the Aquatic Sport Council (ASC) include diving, synchronized swimming, competitive swimming and water polo. The Community Planning for Aquatic Sport resource places focus on what can be done at the local level to develop and sustain aquatic sport, however it must be noted that the ASC works closely with organizations that serve locally, provincially and nationally to further aquatic sport.

The national and provincial aquatic sport governing bodies exist to provide overall administrative coordination through the organization and regulation of the sport. From a provincial perspective they also provide support to the aquatic sport clubs operating at the local level. A common mandate is to provide a framework to enable athletes to participate or compete at their level of choice and ability.

Sport governing bodies may provide some or all of the following services:

- Sport technical and development opportunities
- Sport promotional opportunities to encourage more participants to become involved
- Coordination and sanctioning of competitions
- Club registration
- Athlete registration
- Coaching certification
- Officials certification
- Club development and resources

Developing clubs can receive technical advice from the governing bodies and resources to best grow and sustain club operations. All aquatic sport governing bodies offer a host of resources on their websites and staff is readily available to assist. The Aquatic Sport Council website provides links to these sites.

1.3 THE ROLE OF THE AQUATIC SPORT COUNCIL

The Aquatic Sport Council of Ontario under the auspices of the Aquatic Federation of Canada was formed in 2007 to best represent the interests of aquatic sport in Ontario. At this time, ASC has a membership comprised of representatives from diving, lifesaving sport, Parks and Recreation Ontario, competitive swimming, synchronized swimming and water polo. While there are many more recognized aquatic sport organizations, focus has been to develop facilities for these four core sports. ASC benefits from the interest and advice from practitioners, coaches, design specialists and other interested parties.

ASC's vision of *"Making Ontario a global leader in aquatic sport"* will be realized through its mission and drive.

By 2015, Ontario will be a recognized leader in aquatic sport because of the:

- Sustained collaboration among stakeholders and communities
- Creation of a compelling picture of the multiple benefits of aquatic sports
- Development and dissemination of resources, research and expertise related to aquatic facilities

And as a result:

- Communities value and support aquatic sports
- Ontarians of all ages, abilities, and aspirations participate in aquatic sports through the continuum of sport for life
- There is an optimal mix of facilities accessible for training and competition

SECTION TWO: THE ROLE OF THE MUNICIPALITY

Municipalities in Ontario recognize the value of recreation and sport within a community. It provides health and wellness to its residents and overall community pride and cohesion. The investment is well documented in that for every \$1.00 spent on the provision of active opportunities, overall healthcare costs are reduced by \$11.00. The recent inactivity and obesity health crisis has forced communities to re-evaluate their provision of active opportunities and ensure that there are no barriers to participation and that there are active opportunities for everyone. The social, psychological, spiritual, emotional and physical benefits of sport are well documented and embraced in communities.

Municipalities and other service providers such as the YMCAs and Boys and Girls Clubs continue to evaluate the most effective way to provide recreation and sport services without relying too heavily on tax based or membership funding. To this end, there are more partnership arrangements to provide services through community based non-profit organizations (such as aquatic sport clubs) and the role of the municipality is to support community organizations in providing more recreation and sport services through the utilization of public facilities. Strong relationship need to be established between aquatic sport and municipal staff in order for both parties to understand needs and work toward a compliment of sport friendly pools and policies. Communities can assist aquatic sport organizations by understanding the needs of the residents and projecting future growth and use patterns in facilities.

Swimming is one of the more popular recreational activities in Canada and the type and use of swimming pools is constantly under debate. Aquatic sports advocate for sport friendly designs while more casual users prefer free-form designs. The Aquatic



Sport Council advocates for a balance of the type of pools in a community. It can play a supportive role at the local level while proposed pools are in the feasibility study and conceptual design stages.

Municipal staff has a role in assisting clubs to build capacity, promote aquatic sport and consider aquatic sport in the “learn to swim” continuum. There is work to be done to ensure aquatic sport is a value added sport in the community and not just considered a facility rental to be accommodated within the pool schedule. There is much depth and benefit that aquatic sport can bring to a community and it is important that the parties create a better understanding of each other’s needs, more effective planning for future actions.

2.1 THE MASTER PLANNING PROCESS

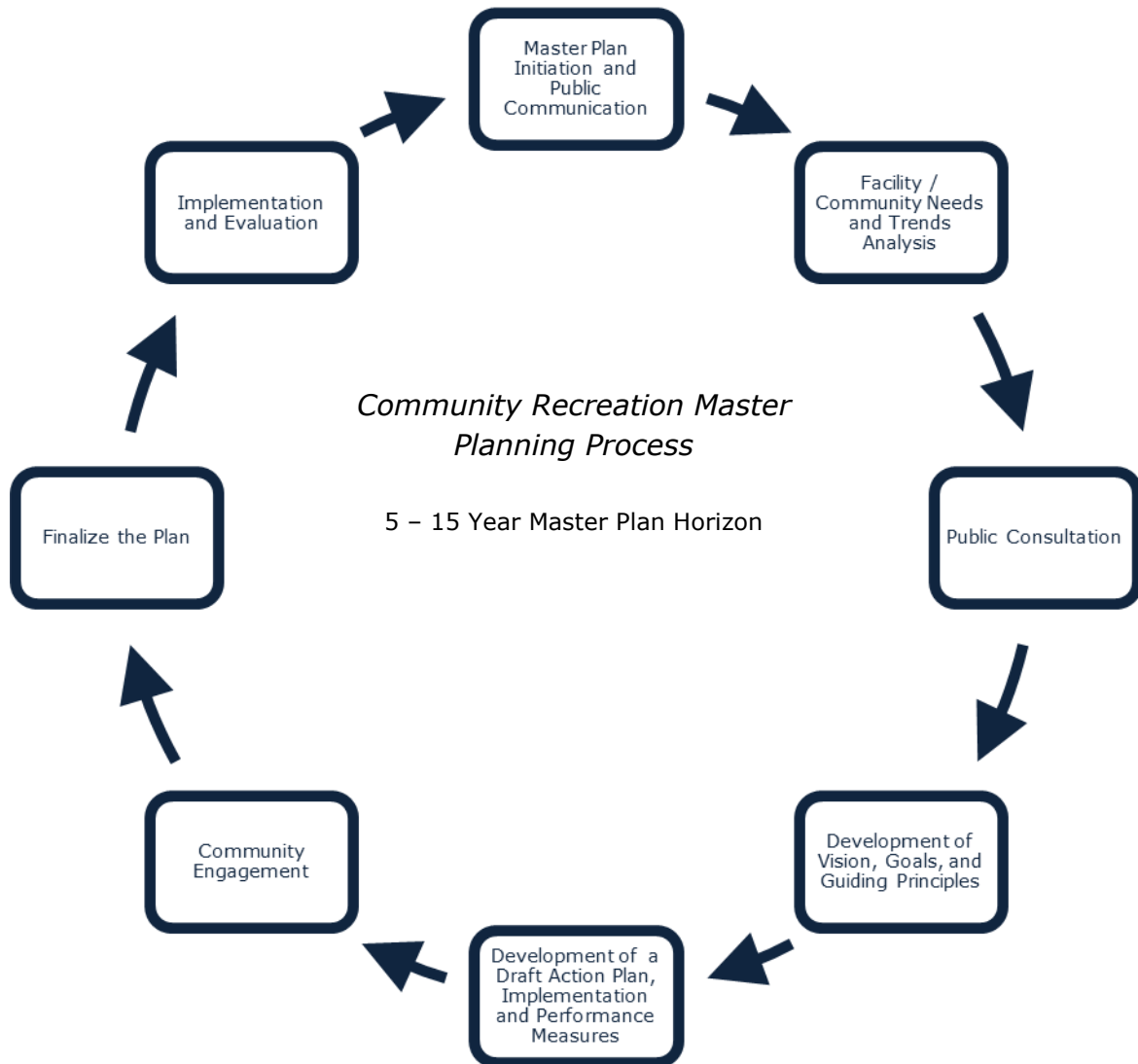
Most municipal Parks and Recreation Departments in Ontario develop Recreation Master Plans as a means of:

- Better understanding community recreation needs and changing demographics
- Keeping informed about trends, legislative compliance and impacts on service
- Understanding staff and community capacity in delivering a comprehensive but coordinated recreation delivery system
- Mapping out facility repair and replacements
- A planned approach to developing new facilities and parks

Most Recreation Master Plans address:

- Future growth in the population, demographics and socio-economic, social trends and current issues
- Diversity, inclusion and access and equity in the delivery of programs and services (gender equity, access for low income residents, cultural diversity, etc.)
- Current trends in the delivery of service (inactivity and obesity, aging populations, community engagement, strengthening neighbourhoods, etc.)
- The current state of repair of parks and facilities as well as a proposed inventory that will best serve the population in the future
- The current supply and use of all facility types (capacity and fill rates), and determining future facility needs
- Propose a set of provision standards for facilities. For example, one indoor pool for every 50,000 residents, or one ice surface for every 750 registrants
- An extensive consultation program that seeks public input into the supply and use of facilities and future needs

- A futuristic vision, mission and guiding principles and the development of goals and action plans at a high level
- An assessment of the staff and governance models to ensure that appropriate resources are in place to support master plan outcomes



2.2 THE MASTER PLAN PROCESS AND PROVIDING INPUT

The planning horizon is typically a 15 year span for facilities which is revisited every five years to ensure that the plan is still realistic and achievable. The process to develop a master plan is typically similar in nature and is usually massaged to meet the particular needs of the municipality. It is important to understand the planning process and where best to provide informed input along the continuum.

AQUATIC SPORT COUNCIL – COMMUNITY PLANNING FOR AQUATIC SPORT

MASTER PLANNING PROCESS	DESCRIPTION	OPPORTUNITIES FOR INPUT
Phase One – Project Initiation		
Step 1 – Development of a Steering Committee	Often a steering committee is made up of residents with skills, competencies and community knowledge	Find out when the Master Plan will be developed. Write to the department head to request the initiation of a steering committee and offer to have an aquatic sport representative participate.
Step 2 – Development of a Communications Plan	Communications will keep residents informed of opportunities for input and the progress of the plan development	Pass along the communications to aquatic sport club members
Step 3 – Environmental Scan	Reviews other pertinent plans and their impact on the master planning process (official plan, demographics, growth, employment, income, education levels, inventories of facilities and services)	Be informed as to how community growth, changing demographics and current trends will impact aquatic sport development. Check ASC website for information
Phase Two – Needs and Trends Analysis		
Step 4 – Initial Community and Stakeholder Consultation	May entail key informant interviews, a stakeholder survey, a telephone survey of residents, a community meeting and/or focus groups	Ensure that aquatic sports receive and fill out the stakeholder survey, request a focus group meeting for aquatic sports and attend and participate at the community meeting
Step 5– Emerging Issues and Trends Assessment	A summary of emerging issues and trends derived from the consultation and summary of background documents and the environmental scan	Submit a document on the participation and trends in aquatic sport and respective facility needs
Step 6 – Vision Statement, Principles, Goals	A vision will be developed that is aligned with the priorities of the community and Council's strategic directions. Specific goals and principles will be developed to support and realize the vision over time	
Step 7 – Service Delivery Audit	An audit will be completed through focus groups and workshops with staff and volunteers that serves to assess the strengths and challenges in the delivery of programs and services as well as legislative compliance	
Step 8– Facilities Needs Assessment	An assessment of the programs and use of facilities as well as a facility condition assessment will determine future facility provision standards, and address needed facility revisions	Aquatic sport may check other pool provision standards in other like communities with respect to size and geography and provide input
Step 9– Summary Findings Report	A summary findings report will report on community input, the environmental scan, key strengths and challenges	There may be an opportunity to provide input on the key findings report

MASTER PLANNING PROCESS	DESCRIPTION	OPPORTUNITIES FOR INPUT
Phase Three – Development of Action Plans		
Step 10 – Creation and Prioritization of Actions to Support Goals	Based on the conditions within the community and the guiding principles, the actions will be prioritized over 5 years to ensure actions are sequenced and that there are meaningful results over the horizon of the plan	
Step 11 – Implementation, Monitoring Financial Implications	The plan will most likely set out an implementation strategy complete with performance measures and a requirement for annual reporting to stakeholders and Council on the plan’s progress	
Phase Four – Master Plan Report		
Step 12– Development of the Draft Master Plan Report	A draft of the key findings, vision, guiding principles, goals and recommended actions will be developed and reviewed at the steering committee level	
Step 13 – Public Review of the Draft Report	Various mechanisms will be used to ensure that all stakeholders and residents have an opportunity to review the draft master plan and provide input such as public meetings and posting the draft report on the website	Host a meeting with aquatic sport representatives to review the draft master plan and provide input as to the actions, timing, sequencing etc.
Step 14 – Finalize the Report	The report will be finalized including community and stakeholder input for final review by the steering committee	
Step 15– Presentation of the Master Plan report to Council for receipt and Approval	A final report will be presented to Council for consideration, receipt and/or approval. Many Councils receive master plans so as not to commit future councils to significant capital expenditures for facilities	Attend a Council meeting or the standing committee of Council to present the consensus of aquatic sport on the report

2.2.1 OPPORTUNITIES TO PROVIDE INPUT INTO MASTER PLANS

In summary, there are at least eight possible opportunities to provide input throughout the typical master planning process:

- Seek to understand the master planning process and opportunities to actively participate in its development
- Apply to be represented on the master plan steering committee
- Fill out the stakeholder survey as many sports do not make time to provide their input

- Provide a background paper on the growth and development of aquatic sport, future growth and the respective needs as new facilities are built or aging facilities are refreshed
- Provide documentation on pool provision standards in other like communities to ensure that the proposed provision standards in the master plan are reflective of current use patterns and will provide for community growth
- Request a copy of the key findings report to ensure that aquatic sport needs are well represented
- Attend and participate at the public meeting to review the draft master plan recommendations
- Review the draft master plan and provide requested changes and/or support for the recommended actions
- Request an opportunity to be part of any teams or committees struck to assist in the implementation of the master plan recommended actions



SECTION THREE: THE ROLE OF THE AQUATIC SPORT CLUB

Volunteers usually get involved in aquatic sport through supporting a child or youth involved in the club. Volunteers are critical to the success of aquatic sport and clubs could not exist without them. The benefit to the volunteer base centres on seeing the direct benefits of their work through club results and the gains of individual club members. Many friendships are made and many gains for aquatic sport are seen through facility access, aquatic sport friendly policies, and in some cases, gaining input into facility design. Much of what is learned by parent volunteers is through hands on experience and developmental opportunities provided by provincial aquatic sport organizations. In order to be “volunteer smart” and make the most out of volunteer and coaching time and address common concerns, the Aquatic Sport Council offers clubs some advice on:

- Developing aquatic club plans
- Pool time required for aquatic sport development
- Evaluating pool time for aquatic sport
- Maximizing pool allocation with operators
- Understanding the costing and pricing of pool time

3.1 DEVELOPING AN AQUATIC SPORT CLUB PLAN

Following the same approach year over year may bring similar results. Opportunities at annual general meetings to evaluate the work of the club exist, but most often focus is on financial standing and who will give of their time to stand for office on the board of directors. More time must be spent on creating a go-forward plan and discussing where the club wants to be in five years and what steps will get them there. A plan need not be an extensive document requiring an exhaustive planning process. The use of technology to survey members’ needs and craft a draft plan for comment can be accomplished in a relatively short timeframe. Annual reviews and setting direction for the next year can be



achieved at the annual general meeting. A template for an aquatics sports plan can be found in Appendix A of this report.

3.2 POOL TRAINING TIME REQUIRED FOR AQUATIC SPORT DEVELOPMENT

It would be most beneficial if aquatic sports could come to an agreement on the amount of pool time required per aquatic sport and per level of athlete. These standards exist for other sports and make allocation of facility time very simple and understandable. Sports such as hockey, baseball, soccer all submit a required time per level of player and these standards are built into many sport field and facility allocation policies through formulas. For example, each house league hockey player is allotted 30 minutes of practice time and one hour of game time per week. The following are draft standards for aquatic sport uses and still need to be tested and further vetted with aquatic sport clubs and coaches.

SPORT/ ATHLETE LEVEL	DIVING	COMPETITIVE SWIMMING	SYNCHRONIZED SWIMMING	WATER POLO
Introductory FUNdamentals	0.5 to 1.5 hours /week	1-3 30-60 minutes sessions/week Moving to 3-6 30 – 60 minute sessions per week	0.5 to 0.75 hours/week	3 hours /week @ 2 X 1.5 hours
Learn to Train	1-2 hour sessions @ 2 times per week	60-90 minute sessions @ 4-6 times per week	60-90 minutes sessions 2-3 times per week	7.5 hours /week @ 4-5 times per week
Train to Train	4-14 hours per week depending on age and competitive level	60-120 minute sessions @ 6-12 sessions per week	4-6 sessions per week @ 120-180 minutes	8 hours / week @ 4 X 2 hours
Train to Compete	4-14 hours per week depending on age and competitive level	90-120 minute sessions @ 8-12 sessions per week	6-8 sessions per week @ 120-240 minutes	12-14 hours / week @ 6 times per week
Train to Win	4-14 hours per week depending on age and competitive level	90-150 minute sessions @ 10-15 sessions per week	8-10 sessions per week @ 120-240 minutes	12-14 hours / week @ 6 times per week

SECTION FOUR: WORKING AS A COLLECTIVE OF AQUATIC SPORT STAKEHOLDERS AT THE COMMUNITY LEVEL

The Sport Alliance Ontario (SAO) is a provincial sport development and support organization. Their goal is to support personal and community development through sport opportunities – from the Playground to the Podium. Programs, services and resources help member organizations achieve their own objectives and realize their full potential – enabling the entire Ontario sport and recreation community to grow, prosper, succeed and celebrate (Source: SAO website). Sport Alliance Ontario has a mandate to enhance sport and sport infrastructure in Ontario through community development and capacity building initiatives along with hosting multi-sport competitions for Ontarians of all ages and abilities. One of the more promising initiatives seen in the last decade is the development of sport councils. These councils serve to represent the needs of sport in a more cohesive and planned way. These sport collectives can be formalized with boards of directors and staff, or be a connected group of sport groups who come together to respond to planning initiatives and sport related issues. Good results have come about as a result of these collectives getting together to act with one voice and maximize the use of the local sport facilities. A collective of aquatic sport representatives is being suggested for consideration at the local level in this report to best represent the interests of athletes.

The Aquatic Sport Alliance of Kitchener Waterloo was formed out of a necessity to better align and utilize limited pool space and time. The alliance includes the diving, synchronized, water polo and competitive swim clubs. The group speaks with one voice on behalf of aquatic sport and holds more weight in negotiations with the city. This is a promising practice that is proving to be well worth the efforts to better communicate and cooperate on behalf of sport development and the athletes that gain from this cooperation.

The advantages of this approach include:

- Working together with other aquatic sports clubs to better quantify the community interest in aquatic sports, to identify and address common strengths and issues.
- Creating efficiencies in utilizing pool allocations more effectively and therefore reducing costs for pool rentals to the clubs

- Creating a well rounded team of persons with needed skills, common interest and objectives
- Adding all aquatic sport athletes together will have greater influence than each sport working individually and at cross purposes - Numbers speak volumes!
- Creating broader consultation – gathering input from members, volunteers and stakeholders to better inform the needs within the clubs and be representative of aquatic sport
- Creating better opportunities to work together to define future needs

4.1 DEVELOPING AN AQUATIC SPORT PLAN

Sport clubs at the local level continue to investigate ways and means of growing the activity, appealing to entry level participants, increasing participant's abilities and ensuring that the club is sustainable over time. Most clubs operate through a strong and dedicated group of volunteers possibly complemented by coaching staff, all of whom are usually stretched to maintain a solid governance structure while meeting all legislated and operational requirements. It is tactical for clubs to take the time to develop a multi-year plan in order to complete an analysis of its strengths and challenges, and think and act more strategically about priorities. The process does not have to be arduous and the results need not be captured in a lengthy report. The main directions of the plan can be well articulated in summary form in a couple of pages. Plans allow clubs to embrace a philosophy of continuous evaluation and improvement. Grants are typically available to non-profit groups to assist in developing plans through the Trillium Foundation and the provincial government. Typically, solid and forward thinking plans attract resources. A template for an aquatics sports plan can be found in Appendix A.

4.2 UNDERSTANDING THE ALLOCATION OF POOL TIME

It is important to have dialogue with pool owners/operators to gain an understanding as to how pool time is allocated, and especially the time for aquatic sport training. The role of an aquatics coordinator in developing a pool schedule is to maximize the use of the pool during both prime and non-prime hours. One performance indicator is the percentage of time that the pool is in use as compared to the available hours. One indicator of a well programmed pool is 85 per cent of scheduled usable hours. Staff must also balance the need for a wide variety of aquatic program choices to meet public demands which includes lesson provision, public and lane swims, aquatic sport training and community rentals. The budget is also a major consideration in protecting time for various pool activities. Lessons bring in the greatest amount of revenue as compared to

public swim, sport training and rentals and therefore the vast majority of pool time is dedicated to the provision of learn to swim opportunities.

4.3 POOL ALLOCATION POLICIES

Many pool operators – especially municipal pool operators – have facility/pool allocation policies in place that speak to how time will be divided amongst users and listing priorities for allocation - often cited as given to children and youth first. Considerations for gender equity are also seen in many revised and current policies due to the challenges the municipalities have faced around inequitable and historical distribution of time. Aquatic sport clubs should understand the allocation policies and try to provide input as these policies are reviewed and revised.

These critical questions should be addressed in the review of pool allocation policies and practices:

- Is there a policy that sets limits or targets for aquatic sport programming or rental times?
- Is there a policy/practice that guides the introduction of new aquatic sports and the sharing of pool time?
- Is there an annual forum where users can learn and share information about each other's needs?
- Are more pools really the answer or is there an opportunity to increase access through facility programming, shared use or a change in policy/practice?

4.4 KEEP RECORDS - COMPARISON OF POOL TIME AND OTHER DATA YEAR OVER YEAR

Aquatic sports have been at a disadvantage when it comes time to discussing how much pool time is required per level of swimmer. Hopefully articulating a common standard will enable municipalities to allocate time more equitably. It is suggested that aquatic sport clubs keep records of their participants, annual growth patterns and pool allocation per week per swimmer. These comparisons year-over-year will allow aquatic coordinators to see trends in pool allocation for aquatic sport. If aquatic sport registrations are growing, but pool time remains stagnant, aquatic sport can demonstrate additional need and inadequate pool allocations. Collecting this data and comparing it year to year can provide the required information to enable pool providers to see demonstrated sport growth and additional pool allocation needs.

4.5 MAXIMIZING POOL ALLOCATION WITH OPERATORS

Traditionally, pool operators have permitted pools for one aquatic pool use per hour. Aquatic sport clubs are now sharing pool times since the movement to become more efficient in allocating pool time and to reduce costs has come into play. Aquatic sport clubs need to consider what other uses could be compatible during their swim times that could serve to reduce their costs while not interrupting effective and safe use of the pool space.

Clubs can work with aquatic coordinators to better understand the impact of different lane configurations on programming revenue and capacity to provide examples of shared use. Aquatic coordinators could gain an understanding as to how more lanes will provide greater primetime opportunities therefore better budget numbers. This approach also frees up more community time so that the public can gain access to the pool when they want it, and therefore, more space for pool sharing both in shoulder hours and in primetime.

The following budget table reflects the level of programming and respective revenue that can be achieved as a result of using pool time efficiently. The table compares expenditures and revenues for both a six and eight lane 25 metre pool. Skilled aquatic programmers have worked collectively to develop a program that maximizes pool space and promotes joint programming of aquatic sport training and other activities.

It should be noted that pool costs will vary and this is only a guide; older facilities will have greater costs for pool maintenance and repairs and replacements for example.

AQUATIC SPORT COUNCIL – COMMUNITY PLANNING FOR AQUATIC SPORT

REVENUES	6 LANE	8 LANE
Recreational Swim		
Swim Lesson Revenue	285,163	384,037
Aquatic Sport Training /Rentals	65,376	90,345
Other revenue	40,000	40,000
Sponsorship / Naming		
Total Gross Revenue	390,539	514,382
EXPENDITURES		
Full Time Staff	184,722	184,722
Swim lessons	156,055	190,453
Recreational/ Lane Swim	153,522	153,522
Lifeguards for Competition Rentals	35,680	49,628
Staff Training	9,973	9,973
Part Time Staff	539,952	588,298
Mileage	400	400
Conferences	1200	1200
Training	1000	1000
Program Supplies	2000	2000
Pool Equipment/ Repair	1500	1500
Pool Maintenance Supplies	4000	5000
Pool Utilities (hydro, gas, water) 4.50 per Sq Ft.	177188	196246
Total Hard Costs	187288	207346
Total Gross Expenditures	727,240	795,644
NET DEFICIT	-336,701	-281,262

Programmers and aquatic sport clubs can develop their own pool programming options by using the tool found on the Aquatic Sport Council website. Using this tool, you have an opportunity to describe the program, enter the average costs that you would have for flexible and non-flexible operation costs, including staffing. The idea is that users can try programming a six lane or eight lane pool to see how they compare. This can be of assistance when comparing programming options and maximizing pool time through shared use of pool space.

This budget information also provides the aquatic sport club with the knowledge that pools tend to run at a deficit and further that pool rental revenues generated from aquatic sport clubs generate 8-10% of the total revenues in a pool.

4.6 UNDERSTANDING COSTING AND PRICING OF POOL TIME

Municipal aquatic divisions are continually required to reduce expenditures through streamlined processes and efficient operations. They are also required to increase revenues through maximizing pool use and resultant revenues. It is therefore inherent on the aquatics staff to determine the aquatic priorities and a pricing structure that can maximize pool use and revenues.

4.6.1 COSTING

The cost of an hour of pool time is usually arrived at by dividing the rentable/usable hours of pool time into the gross operating costs of the pool facility. Therefore, if a pool's gross operating costs (costs before revenues are deducted to get a net operating cost) of a six lane pool equals \$ 838,300 per year, and the pool is open for operations 5,047 hours per year, the formula would be \$838,300 divided by 5,047 hours of operation which would equal an hourly operating cost of \$166.00. In this calculation all direct and indirect operating costs are included. Some municipalities include only the direct operating costs (staff, fringe benefits and any program related costs and not utilities or maintenance costs). Capital or reserve funding costs are not included in the gross operating costs.

4.6.2 PRICING

Municipal pools exist to contribute to the public and individual good. Community good can be defined as activities that attract a mix of residents and build community pride and cohesion. Individual good is defined as those activities and services that further one's physical, emotional, spiritual, social, mental and creative development. Activities in which benefits accrue to the public good (public swimming, public skating, trail use, pathways, playgrounds, etc.) are usually priced lower than opportunities accruing to the individual good supporting a user pay philosophy. Further, there is often a guiding principle that indicates that those least able to pay and that garner greater benefits (community good), pay a lower price. Therefore, lower prices are usually seen for children, youth and seniors, and a full price levied to adults and adult groups. There are some municipalities that are raising costs to the senior adult phased in over time to recognize that the current generation reaching retirement are better prepared and able to pay for services.

Not all municipalities have costing/pricing policies and they simply charge a fee based on historic fees and consider what the market will bear. Prices are sometimes raised based on inflation and ability to pay. Aquatic sport clubs should understand the costing/pricing philosophy and policies within their jurisdiction and share the pool time with other users to maximize pool space and reduce the inherent costs to the club.

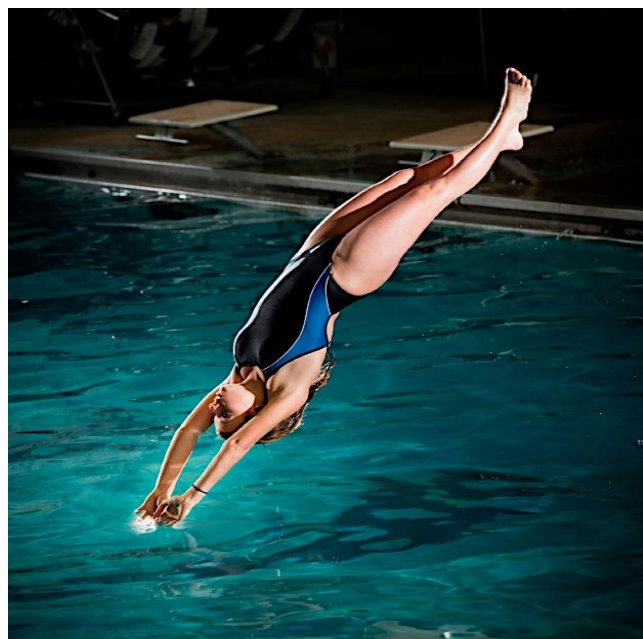
In a survey conducted in 2011, for the purposes of informing the legacy plan for the Pam Am Facility in Toronto, the following summary describes the variables involved in understanding and evaluating pool rental prices:

- Prices need to be reduced to a unit of space: \$100 for an eight lane, 50 metre pool versus \$38 for the area required for diving
- Are lifeguards included in the pool hourly cost? Some municipalities allow clubs to provide lifeguards (through certifying their coaches), and others provide lifeguards and include this in the hourly cost
- Some facilities subsidize residents, members and/or students. One needs to consider that these stakeholders will pay for that discount in other ways – through taxes, membership fees or tuition. Others may promote use by certain populations, such as under 18 years of age
- What market conditions are driving prices? In Toronto, the effort to make best use of Toronto District School Board pools resulted in a price-drop for 25 metre pools to \$50 (without lifeguards) per hour. This change was implemented in order to reduce the losses, and does not represent the actual cost of operating the pools.

Understanding the pool pricing variables will assist the aquatic sport club in understanding the pricing philosophy of the pool owner and look for ways and means of reducing the costs to the aquatic sport clubs.

The best way to understand pricing is to learn about the policies and challenges of the facility operator – do they have sources of subsidization? How competitive is the demand for pool space? Is it possible to share the cost with another party, by sharing the pool space?

In summary, full 25 metre pool rentals range from \$50 to \$100 an hour (2012) plus the cost of lifeguards with a factor of subsidization. The 50 metre pool rates start at \$100 and range as high as \$300 (commercial rate) an hour. In all cases there are reduced rates for the use of just a portion of the pool, while sharing it with other users.



CONCLUSION

Aquatic sport clubs are finding it increasingly difficult to operate in a time where pool provider's capital and operating budgets are stretched, and it is not easy to justify added expenditures to support aquatic sport. By better understanding the planning, allocation and pricing policies and practises, clubs can become more proactive and timely in providing input and implementing strategies to best serve sport development and the general public. It is in finding common ground with decision makers, other aquatic sport clubs and operational staff that true collaboration can occur. Influencing plans at a macro or municipal wide level and having a go forward plan at the club level are both winning strategies in creating strong clubs with promising futures.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A – STRATEGIC PLAN TEMPLATE

The following table captures the main components of a plan, a description of each component and any background materials that will be helpful in the pre-planning stages.

STRATEGIC PLAN COMPONENT	DESCRIPTION
Vision Statement	A vision statement describes how the club would like to be viewed within the next 5 years.
Mission Statement	A mission statement describes what the club does, for whom and how it goes about its undertaking.
Guiding Principles	Guiding principles are developed to give direction to the club as it goes about its work. Guiding principles may centre around: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Providing a continuum of swimming development- Embracing the concept of sport for life- Strengthening families and community through swimming- Ensuring adequate facilities and facility time at an affordable price
Analysis of Strengths, Challenges and Opportunities (internal & external to the swim club)	A planning team or an open session with interested club members would serve to capture member's thoughts on the strengths and challenges that the club is facing. Potential challenges might centre on sustainability, club membership, marketing and promotion, sport development etc.

STRATEGIC PLAN COMPONENT	DESCRIPTION
<p>Development of Key Result Areas & Goals</p>	<p>Key result areas capture the major themes and operational elements of the club. Key result areas might centre around:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Governance and Volunteers - Fiscal Sustainability - Program and Athlete Development - Communications <p>A goal statement should be developed to support each key result area indicating what needs to be achieved over time.</p>
<p>Developing and Prioritizing Actions</p>	<p>Actions would be developed that would ensure that each goal can be met. Actions should be simply stated, realistic, measurable, and timely and work toward achieving the vision over time.</p>
<p>Mapping Actions and Needed Resources Over 5 Years</p>	<p>Actions should be prioritized and mapped out over the course of 3-5 years. Any resources needed (human, fiscal and physical) should be identified at this point. Implementation of the plan would involve assigning the actions to various positions within the club or to willing and competent volunteers.</p>
<p>Plan Evaluation, Review and Performance Measures</p>	<p>The executive and membership should take time to review the effectiveness of the plan on an annual basis and report out the status of the plan to the full membership and stakeholders. Performance measures will demonstrate and quantify the effectiveness of the club’s operations and demonstrate to external funders the successes that have been achieved. Six simple performance measures can be used to determine the effectiveness of the club’s operations:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Growth of membership year over year as well as pent up demand 2. Retention of members year over year 3. Pool time required as per pool time provided 4. Volunteer hours year over year 5. Satisfaction of the athletes and membership 6. Performance at competitions

