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Motion to approve the Design Development Documents for the Orange Memorial Park Aquatic Center (Project No. pk2310). (Philip Vitale, Deputy Director of Capital Projects)

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the City Council motion to approve the updated Design Development Documents for the Orange Memorial Park Aquatic Center Project (Project No. pk2310), authorizing staff to move forward with the Construction Document Development phase of the project.

BACKGROUND/DISCUSSION

On May 24, 2023, staff and the project team presented a design development update to City Council. The staff report and presentation included an update on design progress since last presenting to City Council at the schematic design phase in February 2023. The presentation reviewed the project scope, budget, updates on materials and finishes, entry signage options and design of the Veterans' Memorial. As had been presented at the schematic design level, the pool design included an indoor pool with 7 lanes in the 25-yard direction along with a sloped entry with fun water features, two sets of steps, ladders and a mechanical lift. Also, as presented at the schematic design level, the outdoor pool features 10 lanes with starting blocks in the 25-yard direction, 5 lanes with starting blocks in the 25-meter direction, width and depth for water polo with deck mounted goals, a set of steps, ladders and a mechanical lift.

The presentation and staff report generated a series of questions from Councilmembers. These included:

- Explore an all-deep outdoor pool.
- Explore reducing depth of the indoor pool.
- Confirm the outdoor pool size, depth and configuration can accommodate swim competitions and water polo.

Learn-to-Swim Program

Orange Pool currently sees 100,000 visitors each year. The new aquatic center is projected to receive twice as many visitors each year, with affordable and accessible learn-to-swim, fun water, lap swimming, and wellness programs.

The Orange Pool learn-to-swim program has successfully served a significant number of individuals, averaging between 2,500-3,000 participants annually. To improve and expand these services, staff have set a goal to accommodate an additional 2,000-3,000 individuals per year. This expansion will enable the City to serve the community better and meet the growing demand for swim instruction. Both the indoor and outdoor pools have been designed to accommodate this expansion, while balancing the needs of other lap, recreation, competitive, and fitness users.

To demonstrate the need for lessons, below is a summary of a typical waitlist for summer learn-to-swim lesson programs, from summer 2022.

- Infant, Toddler Preschool: 168
- Level 1, 2, and Pre-Basic Beginners (Shallow Water): 596 (1,583)
- Level 3 - 5 (Deep Water): 87 (139)
- Adult Lessons: 74
- Exercise Classes: 46

The numbers in parentheses include the number of people waitlisted for multiple classes (duplicated individuals), while the numbers not in parentheses are unduplicated registrants.

Co-Sponsored Group: South San Francisco Aquatics Club

Co-sponsorship is a status granted to non-profit organizations that are recreational in nature, bring people of like interests together, and provide opportunities for social exchange and development by the Parks and Recreation Department and Parks and Recreation Commission. Co-sponsored groups must meet certain qualifications, including serving no less than 51% South San Francisco residents, and must apply for co-sponsorship designation, which includes a review of their membership, non-profit status, finances, and program offerings. Benefits of co-sponsorship include modest staff support, inclusion of promotional materials in the Activity Guide, ability to participate in Department events, and reduced cost of facility usage as available.

The South San Francisco Aquatics Club is one of the City's co-sponsored groups and an important user group at Orange Pool. For a reduced rental fee of \$6,195 per year, the Aquatics Club uses Orange Pool Monday through Friday from 3:15 p.m. to 6:15 p.m. If assessed the typical rental fee for the existing pool if not co-sponsored, the club would be assessed at approximately \$114,000 per year in rental fees. Essentially, co-sponsorship certification allows the City to greatly subsidize non-profits providing recreation programs for the community. Teams in other cities often pay much higher dues; the Pacifica Sea Lions Aquatics Club for example, is charged more than \$4,000 per month per their July 1, 2021 agreement with the City of Pacifica for 15 hours per week of use.

Staff estimates that the club has 120-140 members, and per past discussions, are looking to expand to over 200. The proposed 10-lane outdoor pool will accommodate the growth of members and will allow the team to host competitions.

Required and Recommended Pool Sizes and Depths

USA Swimming, USA Water Polo and the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) are three of the most recognized organizations providing guidelines for swim and water polo competitions. These organizations provide guidelines for the minimum requirements along with recommendations for pool depths, lane width and water polo course design.

USA Swimming requires a 4' minimum depth at starting blocks, while California Building Code requires a 6' minimum depth, with a 6'-6" depth recommended for safety. USA Swimming allows for a 3'-6" depth for flip

turns yet recommends a 4' depth.

For water polo, the National Federation of High School Associations recommends a minimum depth of 6'-6" and requires a width between 45'-66' and a length of 25 meters or 25 yards. USA Water Polo, the national governing body for water polo in the United States, recommends that the distance between the goal lines shall not be less than 20 meters and not more than 30 meters for games played by men. The distance between the goal lines shall not be less than 20 meters and not more than 25 meters for games played by women. The width of the field of play shall not be less than 10 meters and not more than 20 meters. As such, the pool is appropriately sized for youth, high school, and adult competitive club water polo.

Outdoor Pool Depth Options

At the request of City Council, staff explored three additional options for a deeper outdoor pool.

Option 1 - Current Design

- 10 lanes with starting blocks in the 25-yard direction
- 5 lanes with starting blocks in the 25-meter direction
- Shallow end depth of 3'-6"
- Minimum deep end depth of 7'
- Entry steps/ledges

This option meets required depths for starting blocks and flip-turns in the 25-yard direction for swim competitions and meets the minimum depth, width and length for high school and collegiate water polo competitions with deck mounted goals. Additional lane lines may be run for practices in the 25-meter direction; however, additional starting blocks may not be added per code due to the depth. In this option, the pool can serve an additional 1,500-3,000 learn-to-swim participants, accommodate lap/competitive swimming, and all of the programs the indoor pool can offer.

Option 2 - 4' Deep Shallow End

- 10 lanes with starting blocks in the 25-yard direction
- 5 lanes with starting blocks in the 25-meter direction
- Shallow end depth of 4'-0"
- Minimum deep end depth of 7'
- Entry steps/ledges

This option requires the entry stair to be lengthened 5' to accommodate the deeper shallow end. With a slightly deeper shallow end, this option meets recommended depth for starting blocks and flip-turns in the 25-yard direction for swim competitions and meets the minimum depth, width and length for high school and collegiate water polo competitions with deck mounted goals. Like Option 1, additional lane lines may be run for practices in the 25-meter direction, however, additional starting blocks may not be added per code. Similar to Option 1, this option can serve an estimated 1,500-3,000 learn-to-swim participants and accommodate lap/competitive swimming. The slightly deeper shallow area increases the need for in-water elevated teaching platforms (commonly known as tot docks) for lower level learn-to-swim classes. The deeper water may only be suitable for younger children to use the pool with a parent or guardian holding onto them or being within arm's reach for assistance.

Option 3 - All Deep without Steps

- 10 lanes with starting blocks in the 25-yard direction
- 8 lanes with starting blocks in the 25-meter direction
- Minimum depth of 7'

- No entry steps/ledges

Without steps, the pool would be designated a Special Purpose Pool. California Building Code defines a Special Purpose Pool as “A pool constructed exclusively for a specific purpose, such as instruction, diving, competition, or medical treatment.” County Health may require a letter from the City stating that the pool is special purpose and is committed to only allow certain uses in the pool. In this case, the pool would only be permitted per California Building Code for lap swimming, and no other activities could be hosted here. Portable steps as the only means of access do not meet building code, nor do they reach depths of 7’. This pool option requires slightly larger filter tanks for additional water volume and would result in increased soil mitigation costs. Additional costs are estimated to be approximately \$300,000. An all-deep option eliminates the outdoor pool from being used for lower-level learn-to-swim classes. It only caters to advanced swimmers and would require a swim test for anyone appearing not skilled enough to be in deep water and anyone under the age of 18.

Option 4 - All Deep with Steps

- 10 lanes with starting blocks in the 25-yard direction
- 8 lanes with starting blocks in the 25-meter direction
- Minimum depth of 7’
- Entry steps/ledges

This option requires expansion of the pool size by approximately 320 to 570 square-feet to accommodate steps and required area to slope down to the 7’ depth. A larger filtration system and additional soil mitigation would increase the project cost approximately \$500,000. Additionally, this configuration would significantly reduce the pool deck area, impact circulation around the pool and between the natatorium and outdoor pool deck.

Option 4 would allow for some lower-level learn-to-swim classes. However, it would only accommodate 300 to 400 lower level participants annually. Similar to Option 3, this pool mostly caters to advanced swimmers.

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends either Option 1 or Option 2 for the outdoor pool as these designs provide a shallow area no deeper than 4’. This depth allows the pool to be programmed for learn-to-swim and recreation swim while meeting the requirements for swim competition in the 25-yard direction and up to five lanes with starting blocks for training in the 25-meter direction and maintaining the required depth and area for water polo at the high school, club and collegiate level.

Indoor Pool Depth Options

The current design of the indoor pool has roughly half of the lap lane portion of the pool at 3’-6” depth with the remaining lap lane area sloping down to a deeper end of 7’ depth. This provides for a generous length of steps/ledges, which in addition provide access for users, are utilized for learn-to-swim programs. This configuration allows for a deep end that can accommodate starting blocks, offer deep water programs such as water aerobics, aqua zumba and water treading, which was highly desired by individuals seeking therapeutic opportunities, particularly senior users.

At the request of City Council, staff explored options for reducing the indoor pool depth. An option explored allowed for 3’-6” shallow areas at both ends of the lap lane portion of the pool then sloping down to a deeper 7’ depth in the middle. This results in a deep area reduction from 1,825 sf to 875 square-feet, which eliminates the opportunity for starting blocks and limits the range of fun-water features that could be incorporated into this portion of the pool. Additionally, this shrinks the overall deep area considerably, where it could not serve the large group of aqua aerobic users who desire a deeper warm water pool. Annually, the current pool serves 350-400 aquatic exercise participants. Aquatic Design Group expressed safety concerns with this configuration stating “*shallow water on both ends and deep in the middle often requires more lifeguard saves at a pool. It is*

difficult for patrons to understand the depth of water they are getting into when they may think they are going from shallow end to a shallow end. For this reason, we do not recommend it."

Staff Recommendation

It is the recommendation of staff that the indoor pool depth remain as presented in the design development package with a single 3'-6" shallow end and a 7' depth deep end to allow for a wide range of programs, opportunities for starting blocks and safety.

Two entry signage options were presented at the May 24 City Council Meeting. Based on councilmember comments, the project will move forward with the Orange Memorial Park Aquatic Center lettering along the face of the building over the main entry, rather than lettering wrapping the corner of the building, facing Tennis Drive.

Summary

If the approach and amenities presented in this report receive City Council approval, the design team will move into the Construction Document Development phase. Cost estimates will be refined, and the team will endeavor to maximize pool features wherever possible. Staff will keep City Council apprised as design refinements are made.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no current fiscal impact, unless options 3 or 4 are considered, in which case the project cost would increase approximately \$300,000 to \$500,000. The budget of \$49 million for this project is included in the City of South San Francisco's Fiscal Year 2022-23 Capital Improvement Program from bond sales (fund 524).

RELATIONSHIP TO STRATEGIC PLAN

Approval of this plan will contribute to the City's Strategic Plan. It aligns with Priority #2, which is focused on enhancing quality of life by building and maintaining a sustainable city, and making the city a great place to live, learn and play.

CONCLUSION

Staff recommends that the City Council review the Updated Design Documents for the Orange Memorial Park Aquatic Center Project (Project No. pk2310) and authorize staff to move forward with the Construction Document Development phase of the project.