





Office of the City Manager

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ACTION CALENDAR

July 13, 2010

To:  Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council  
From:  Philip Kamlarz, City Manager  
Submitted by: William Rogers, Director, Parks Recreation and Waterfront  
Subject: Willard Pool Status

CURRENT SITUATION AND ITS EFFECTS

The June 8, 2010 ballot included a bond measure to improve the City's pools. Unfortunately that measure did not pass. Consequently, there are insufficient funds to improve Willard Pool in order to extend its useful life

Additionally, as a result of the City's \$16 million deficit for FY 2011, the City Manager directed all departments to identify cost reductions of 5% within their General Fund operating budgets. The Recreation Division submitted General Fund reductions in the amount of \$464,590 which included the closure of Willard Pool, as had been anticipated if the bond measure did not pass.

On June 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2010, the City budget was adopted by Council. At this meeting, Council requested information about possible options to keep Willard open for July and August 2010. Staff informed Council of the costs associated with reopening the pool for 2 months and informed Council of some of the logistics required to re-open Willard Pool. At its June 29<sup>th</sup> meeting, Council requested a status report on the Willard Pool which is provided below.

Decision to Close Willard Pool

As a result of a 2 year Pools Master Plan process that included an assessment in 2008 of King, Willard and West swim centers by Arch Pak, an independent engineering consultant, the City learned that Willard Pool was at the end of its useful life. Subsequent assessments of the City's aquatics facilities confirmed this fact. The decision to close Willard pool was based on the need to reduce the General Fund operational costs of pools, coupled with the fact that the Willard Pool has reached the end of its physical life and is in the poorest physical condition of all three City pools. The closure of Willard was vetted through the City's formal public budget process and was also a driving force behind Measure C (the Berkeley pools bond measure of June 8, 2010) that was intended to raise funds to renovate all public pools in Berkeley.

**Condition of Willard Pool**

Assessments of the City's pools have demonstrated that Willard is at the end of its useful life. Recent cost estimates by professional estimators have determined a cost of \$2.5 million to bring Willard up to code and \$4.7 million to completely renovate the pool.

Examples of Willard's poor condition include the following:

- Concrete Deck: The entire deck needs to be replaced. It currently has jagged edges, missing pieces of concrete, significant rust, and tripping hazards.
- Drainage System: The scum gutter drainage system needs to be replaced as it does not meet current code and results in the build up of excess bacteria.
- Pool Shell: The existing shell of the pool is missing plaster which creates jagged edges and has resulted in injuries to children.
- Piping System: The existing piping system is rotted and needs replacement. The pipes have significant leaks which result in substantial water waste.
- Pool Heating System: The heating system needs replacement. The current system is antiquated, highly inefficient and is toward the end of its useful life.

**Re-opening Willard for August 2010. Drop in Swim Only**

It is not logistically feasible to offer swimming lessons at Willard during the month of August. It would be difficult to recruit, hire, fingerprint and train swim instructors with the proper certifications in time to provide August swim lessons. Additionally, in preparation for the City's Summer Recreational Schedule, no swim lessons were planned nor advertised in the Summer Brochure for Willard after July 1st in anticipation of Willard closing. Rather, all swim lessons were planned for King and West. As a result, many families throughout Berkeley have already registered at King and West Campus and there is remaining capacity for additional registration.

For Drop-in Swim, staff estimates that it will take approximately three weeks to re-open Willard pool. Below are the cost and logistical considerations.

**A. Cost**

The cost of operating Willard Pool during the month of August for drop-in swimming only would be \$44,000. Re-opening the pool would be contingent upon obtaining staff that are available to work during the hours of operation.

**B. Logistics**

In order to re-open Willard Pool for drop-in swim, several steps would need to be completed, including the following:

- 1) Turn on the pool heater to heat the pool (takes approximately 1 week for the pool to reach acceptable temperatures)

- 2) Identify and train a supervisor
- 3) Hire several Red Cross certified lifeguards who are available to work during the hours of operation
- 4) Fingerprint and Train staff; and
- 5) Advertise

**Current Swimming Capacity in Berkeley**

There are a total of 14 pools in Berkeley. Of those, there a total of eight (8) pools in the City (excluding Willard) that allow the public to use the facility for a fee, including King and West Campus.

This summer, King and West Campus pools are fully operational and offer swim lessons and Drop-in swim programs to Berkeley residents (e.g., recreational swim and lap swim). In terms of availability of Swim Lessons, currently there are some openings at the King Pool and many openings at the West Campus pool. Lessons are offered at King all day and are offered at West in the mornings.

**POSSIBLE FUTURE ACTION**

None.

**FISCAL IMPACTS OF POSSIBLE FUTURE ACTION**

In order to fund the operation of Willard Pool for the month of August, approximately \$44,000 in funding would need to be reallocated from existing City programs.

**CONTACT PERSON**

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