



Legislation Text

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City of Alexandria, Virginia

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MEMORANDUM

**DATE:** JANUARY 20, 2016

**TO:** THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

**FROM:** MARK B. JINKS, CITY MANAGER /s/

**DOCKET TITLE:**

Consideration of Receipt of the Updated Chinquapin Aquatics Center Feasibility Study and Cost Estimates.

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**ISSUE:** City Council receipt of the consultant's Updated Chinquapin Aquatics Center Feasibility Study and related cost estimates for the project options. This update discusses the final feasibility assessment for the construction of a 50 meter aquatic facility, including review of cost estimates for alternative layouts and building types.

**RECOMMENDATION:** That City Council receive the updated Chinquapin Aquatics Center Feasibility Study and related cost estimates for the project options.

**BACKGROUND:** Through the FY 2014 budget discussions, City Council approved \$500,000 in funding for a feasibility study to determine the viability of constructing a 50 meter competition pool and renovated recreation pool at the Chinquapin Park Recreation Center and Aquatics Facility. The City released a Request for Proposals (RFP) and selected the firm of Hughes Group Architects (HGA) to complete this study. HGA began the work in February 2014 and completed the first phase of the study (Tasks 1A and 1B) in January 2015.

Task 1A determined that a 50 meter pool addition is feasible based on the physical conditions/constraints and that Alexandria's market could sustain an expanded aquatics facility. Task 1B provided further assessment of the feasibility including a detailed market analysis, constructability and estimated overall cost. HGA provided the cost estimate for the new 50 meter pool and renovated recreation pool, with a caveat that they were not at the design phase yet, so the estimate is of rough magnitude. The estimated cost for the 50 meter pool expansion totaled \$30,717,619, which was significantly greater than what was estimated in Task 1A. The estimated cost for both the 50 meter pool and renovations to the existing recreation pool totaled \$41,686,909. Both Task 1A and 1B Reports can be found at:

<http://www.alexandriava.gov/recreation/info/default.aspx?id=78867>

Based on the findings from Task 1B and the subsequent cost estimates, staff requested that HGA pause their work on the feasibility study to allow for a discussion with City Council and the public regarding how and if to proceed with the project. A public meeting was held in February 2015, at which time the consultant presented their findings and answered questions from the public. Following discussions with the stakeholders, broader community, and direction from City Council through the FY 2016- FY 2025 budget process, staff directed and worked with the consultant to develop and analyze alternative options for the project to determine if the cost of the 50 meter pool expansion could be lowered to be within the available capital budget. HGA was also asked to first complete additional site studies, including geotechnical and utility work, to reduce the unknown conditions which were requiring a higher contingency cost (estimate) for the project.

**DISCUSSION:** Following completion of the geotechnical and utility studies, HGA worked closely with staff and met with the Advocates for Alexandria Aquatics (AAA) over the summer and early fall of 2015 to produce and assess alternatives that might decrease the cost for construction of a 50 meter pool. The results of the geotechnical and utility studies supported reducing the significant cost for soil related work included in the January 2015 estimates, and indicated no significant existing utility impacts were present. Based on the additional studies and recommendations from staff and AAA, HGA explored the following 50 meter pool options:

- A. One-story, conventional building (\$24.5 M);
- B. One-story, pre-engineered building (\$22.8M);
- C. One-story, translucent enclosure (\$25.4M);
- D. One-story, architectural membrane (not feasible for two-story construction) (\$22.0M);
- E. Two-story, conventional building (\$27.1M);
- F. Two-story, pre-engineered building (\$25.5M); and
- G. Two-story, translucent enclosure (\$28.3M).

All of the one-story options above show the new 50 meter pool at grade with the main/lobby level of the current recreation center, with the existing and new pools on two different levels.

The prior concepts proposed the new pool be constructed at the same grade as the existing pool. This change has resulted in considerable savings in earth work. The additional options also differ from the original concept presented in Task 1B with the reduction of connector space between the existing building and new 50 meter pool structure. This reduction eliminates new “dry” recreational space previously shown that would be available for increased programming of the entire center. For each building option, HGA researched and found no discernable impact on non-personnel related operating costs (e.g., utility costs, etc.).

Concurrent with developing the expansion options listed above, HGA provided related cost estimates for each of the options. The overall cost estimates include both soft and hard costs, as well as escalation for construction costs to be incurred in 2018. Detailed cost estimates for each option are provided in Attachment 1.

The FY 2016-FY 2025 CIP included \$22.35 million for the project in FY17 (\$4.5M) and FY18 (\$17.85M). The Advocates for Alexandria Aquatics (AAA) committed to raising \$2.5 million of the \$22.35 million. Of the options considered, the current cost estimates for Option B (one-story, pre-engineered building) and Option D (one-story, architectural membrane building) are within or close to the \$22.35 million project budget.

Staff will continue to work with the community to seek feedback on the options. At this time, staff recommends the one-story, pre-engineered building as the preferred option to move forward into the design and construction phase, if adequate funding is proposed and approved in the forthcoming FY 2017-FY 2026 Capital

Improvement Program. The funding of City and School capital projects in the forthcoming CIP will be very competitive. This recommendation is based on knowledge of each building system, the aesthetic of each system, the neighborhood context, and the potential available budget. The architectural membrane provides a 50 meter pool option that is estimated to cost slightly (\$800K) less to construct than the pre-engineered building, but offers fewer design options that can work more seamlessly with the existing building and neighborhood context.

The final portion of this assessment included a review of the project's ability to reach the established 80% cost recovery goal for operating the expanded aquatics center. A detailed pro-forma will be provided if and when a preferred option is selected and moves into design. In the meantime, the analysis concluded that with adequate programming of the two bodies of water (the existing pool and new 50 meter pool), as well as the other recreation center facilities, the 80% cost recovery goal can be met within three years of opening the new pool.

In addition to consulting with the community and project stakeholders, staff will discuss these alternatives with Council as part of the FY 2017 budget deliberations.

**FISCAL IMPACT:** The cost of the feasibility study is covered by the \$500,000 of prior year funding provided in the FY 2014 CIP. The cost of expanding the Chinquapin Aquatics Center with a 50 meter pool ranges from \$22 million to \$28.3 million. The FY 2016-FY 2025 CIP included \$22.35 million in fiscal years 2017 and 2018 for the project, \$2.5 million of which would be planned future private funding from AAA. The proposed FY 2017 - FY 2026 CIP will be proposed to City Council on February 23, with adoption planned for May 5.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

1. Chinquapin Feasibility Study 50 Meter Pool Options Cost Estimates
2. Chinquapin Feasibility Study 50 Meter Pool Options Presentation

**STAFF:**

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