

# **AQUATIC CENTER NEEDS, GOALS, AND OPPORTUNITIES**

One of the most important early tasks of any Feasibility Study is to identify the goals, objectives, and opportunities for new aquatic facilities and programs. This includes consideration of both City and Regional needs as well as the needs of user groups, schools, community organizations and health care providers. Input on needs, goals, and opportunities has come from the full range of stakeholder engagement outlined in the Methodology Section, Best in Class facilities as well as forward looking trends. The focus is first on the programming needs and opportunities, which then informs the facility needs and concepts.

## **Goals and Objectives**

The following are the aquatic facility and program needs, goals, and opportunities we heard and identified during the Study.

- Maximize the programming, access, and benefits to the community of the existing aquatic BAC/Odle, focusing on the programming best suited to the features of the BAC/Odle
  - Coordinate any re-programming or repurposing of existing facilities to better utilize the unique aspects of the existing BAC/Odle facilities while integrating updates with new facility design and programming
- Enhancing overall health and wellness levels of the community with year-round indoor amenities
- Teach all children and adults to learn to swim and be water safe
  - Making swim lessons and water safety programs available to all regardless of background, resources, and accessibility
- Provide wider range of aquatic programming and access to all members of the community regardless of age, ability, special needs, and financial resources
- Develop aquatic programs and facility capabilities not currently offered in Bellevue or even in the wider region
- Provide added pool space and time to meet unmet current and future demand for pool space and time for lap lanes, community and competitive programming, and aquatic stakeholders/user groups
  - Bellevue School District
  - Aquatic Teams and Clubs
  - Special Olympics of Washington
  - Boys and Girls Clubs of Bellevue
  - And more
- Create business and operational model that reduces the net cost of operating aquatic facilities and programs through decreasing operating costs and increasing revenue generation
- Create sustaining partnerships for programming that best serves the community's needs and broadens access to traditionally underserved or those without aquatics access
- Increase our community's water safety, access to Learn to Swim programming thereby reducing the likelihood of both youth and adult drownings in home pools, facilities, lakes and rivers.
- Develop a model for a new facility and upgrade existing facilities to reduce long term capital maintenance and replacement costs

- Develop the design and state of the art technology for the Aquatic Center to optimize energy efficiency, reduce water consumption and create, an environmentally friendly facility
- Develop aquatic facilities and programs that can drive economic impact and spending through sport tourism (competitive and training events and camps) and by attracting more users from outside the City of Bellevue
- Support regional aquatics development

### Opportunities

Following are specific programs and features that are not currently available in Bellevue or the Eastside and represent significant opportunities with a new aquatic center and meet the identified needs and objectives:

- Leisure and recreational components and features to draw families, children, and youth to the aquatic center
- 50m training facilities
- Deep water to support water polo, artistic swimming, and diving
- Event facilities to support local and regional events
- Purpose built warm-water Program Pool to better serve aquatic programming needs
- Improved locker rooms and changing room options and access to accommodate current and future needs for safety, access, inclusion, privacy, and health

### SPLASHForward Community Vision & User Personas






In addition to quantifying these goals and objectives, it also helps to put a personal human face on the programs, needs, and opportunities to truly understand the impact the Aquatic Center can have on the community and users. During the SF/ISG Feasibility Study process SPLASHForward had the opportunity to meet and engage with many of the people that will be impacted by a new Aquatic Center. SPLASHForward put together the following Vision and User Personas to help keep the wide range of users in the forefront of the Feasibility Study, specifically the design of the Program Model and the Aquatic Center Design.


### **Accessible Aquatics for All**


SPLASHForward envisions a thriving community space. An oasis for our community to belong regardless of age, ability or background with a full range of year-round recreational, fitness, leisure, health & wellness, and competitive aquatics facilities and programs.


- Accessible, safe and healing. *A place where I belong no matter my abilities or age.*
- Destination experiences where families want to be, the community finds value and is sought after year-round. *An active place to be; an oasis.*
- A place to cross paths, meet through exercise and unite among our differences. *Our diversity is one in the water.*
- Introduces all ages to water activities for a lifetime of wellness, water safety and opportunities beyond the water. *A place of local pride.*


SPLASHForward advocates for youth, families, seniors, recreational users, athletes, rehabilitation and therapy users. A comprehensive public aquatics facility should serve ALL members of our community including those who are under-served (the elderly, disabled teens, people of color and low income families without access or exposure to aquatics).


<p><b>Benji the Youth Swimmer</b></p> 	<p><i>Every week my dad brings me to the pool for swim lessons and to play in the Splash area. I have made many new friends and so has my dad! I am ready to safely play in any pool, water feature or lakeside park.</i></p> <p><b>Activities:</b> Learn to Swim, Leisure Pool, Splashball, Birthday Parties</p>
<p><b>The Park Family</b></p> 	<p><i>My family loves to go to our pool. I spend all of my time playing in the fun pool with my friends while my Dad plays with my younger brother in the Splash area. My mom loves it because she can go to her yoga class and join us afterwards for a snack at the cafe before we all head home.</i></p> <p><b>Activities:</b> Leisure Pool, Water Babies, Birthday Parties, Lap Swim, Adult Fitness Classes, Open Gym, Health &amp; Wellness Events, café</p>
<p><b>Paul the Adult Learn to Swim Student</b></p> 	<p><i>I never properly learned how to swim growing up and I have always feared the water. When I was in my 20's, I had a bad experience swimming in the ocean. Living here in Bellevue, surrounded by lakes and now with grandchildren who are learning to swim, I want to learn how to be water safe so I can enjoy swimming with them. I have signed up for adult learn to swim classes at the aquatic center. It will mean a lot to me to be able to swim and tell my grandkids that their grandpa can swim with them this summer.</i></p> <p><b>Activities:</b> Learn to Swim, Adult Fitness / Cardio, Health &amp; Wellness Events, Cafe</p>
<p><b>Jazlyn the Competitive Youth Swimmer</b></p> 	<p><i>I have been swimming since I was three years old and I absolutely love being on a team. The aquatic center is my second home and my team is my swim family. Now that I am in middle school, balancing my time between my sport and homework is important. The aquatic center makes this easier with awesome cubicle and workspaces where I and my swim team friends do our homework either before or after practice depending on my parent's schedules. I also can easily get a snack or a meal in the café which have the best smoothies!</i></p> <p><b>Activities:</b> Swim Team Practice, Events, Open Study Spaces, Cafe</p>
<p><b>Olivia the Special Olympics Swimmer</b></p> 	<p><i>I learned to swim at the Bellevue Aquatic Center and I always love going to the pool. I love the way I feel in the water and the friends I meet. My swim instructor encouraged me to try swim team and I absolutely loved it. I think everyone should learn how to swim and join me on my Special Olympics Team.</i></p> <p><b>Activities:</b> Special Needs Learn to Swim, Special Olympics Swim Team, HS Swim Team, Events, Social Spaces, Cafe</p>

<p><b>Sally the Masters Swimmer</b></p> 	<p><i>Three times a week, I join my fellow Masters swimmers for a coached workout. I love the people and many are my good friends. Working out with others motivates me and it's a highlight of my day. Some of us compete, but most of us are here because we want to stay in shape and exercise with others. See you on Wednesday?</i></p> <p><b>Activities:</b> Masters Practice, Lap Swimming, Events, Social Spaces, Cafe</p>
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<p><b>Jason the Water Polo Player</b></p> 	<p><i>I love playing water polo and being a part of my high school team. I have made lifelong friends and developed a great sense of team. Our team has spent years practicing outdoors in pools that are not deep enough for our proper training. The aquatic center is our dream facility and we are proud to call it our home facility.</i></p> <p><b>Activities:</b> Water Polo Team Practice (Wet &amp; Dryland), Events, Study Spaces, Cafe</p>
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<p><b>Matthew the Special Needs Swimmer</b></p> 	<p><i>My son has muscular dystrophy. His water time is the best part of his world and he looks forward to it every week. He comes alive. Through adaptive swim lessons at the aquatic center, he has gone from learning how to be water safe to being on the local Special Olympics team that trains together on Saturdays. Water gives him confidence and freedom to be who he is. This is priceless.</i></p> <p><b>Activities:</b> Adaptive Swim Lessons, Special Olympics Team, Events, Social Spaces, Cafe</p>
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<p><b>Ed the Veteran</b></p> 	<p><i>Water has given me a place to feel whole again. After losing my lower leg, my world changed faster than I was ready for. I was hesitant to try the Adaptive Swimming classes at the aquatics center, but when I learned there were other amputees, I gave it a try. I'm hooked and have found others who deal with similar issues as me. Water really does have healing powers.</i></p> <p><b>Activities:</b> Adaptive Swim Classes, Open Swim</p>
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<p><b>Candace the Senior Swimmer</b></p> 	<p><i>I am 71 years old and at my daughter's suggestion decided to try an H2O Water Aerobics class. I now have new friends, look forward to seeing them at class and socialize with them afterwards. I feel young again!</i></p> <p><b>Activities:</b> Aqua Arthritis, H2O Water Aerobics, Pickle Ball, Health &amp; Wellness Talks, Cafe</p>
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**Meyrav the HS Lifeguard & Swim Instructor**



*I grew up swimming in Israel before I moved to Bellevue with my family. I have always loved the water and working with kids. I jumped at the chance to become a certified lifeguard and swim instructor through my HS Junior Lifeguard program at the aquatic center. Working with the kids I teach is the best part of my busy day.*

**Activities:** Lifeguard & Swim Instructor Training Program, Lap Swimming, Study Spaces, Cafe