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# ON DECK



CSRD Aquatic Feasibility Study  
Technical Memo #3

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## Summary

In the Fall of 2020, over 1,000 people in Golden and Electoral Area A shared their thoughts about a potential indoor aquatic centre in Golden through an interactive online survey. This input contributed to the selection of preferred options based on broad community support for the construction of a new indoor aquatic centre with a six-lane lap and leisure pool, a hot tub, steam and sauna rooms, as well as a multipurpose room. While this interactive survey was a pivotal component to determine the preferred options and feasibility of this facility, it was only one part of a much larger community engagement effort that included hosting a series of five Ideas Fairs and two additional online surveys. Every one-on-one conversation, survey comment, and sticky note over the course of the project played a role in shaping the final recommendations.

## Project Description

The Columbia Shuswap Regional District is producing a comprehensive Aquatic Centre Feasibility Study on future development of an indoor aquatic facility to service Electoral Area A and the Town of Golden. The study is being conducted by HCMA Architecture + Design (HCMA) and GDH Solutions (GDH). HCMA is an interdisciplinary design group that specialize in aquatic and recreation design. GDH Solutions is a management consulting group that specialize in recreational business plans and feasibility studies.

The following report is the third technical memo in a series of three. The findings of the feasibility study will be captured in three progress technical memos and a final report. Each of the three technical memos will focus on these areas of study:

1. A review of existing systems and benchmarking of aquatic assets from similar sized communities
2. Needs/Benefit assessment and stakeholder engagement
3. Identification and prioritization of options

## Identification and Prioritization of Options

Community building begins with understanding the values and aspirations of those it will serve. In phase one of engagement, ideas of aquatic and non-aquatic building features were explored that would best serve the community. In the second phase of engagement, the list of ideas was refined and provided to the community to solicit feedback about each feature. Aquatic features and options were identified with their associated capital, operating and renewal costs, as well as the associated tax implications. The public engagement exercise required a robust and interactive community survey tool to gauge community support for the type of aquatic tank and collection of associated features. The chosen survey software was Ethelo, an online

group decision-making platform that allows participants to evaluate options on a scale and weigh priorities and trade-offs while seeing tax calculations in real time. The project's interactive survey was open on the Ethelo platform from October 16 to November 16, 2020.

Survey participants were tasked with learning about optional features for the new facility, adding their thoughts, and indicating whether they support or oppose including each feature. As participants advanced through the survey, the Ethelo platform calculated the cost for their ideal design, which was then made visible on the Final Personal Results page. Ethelo used the results to generate a combination of aquatic features, identified to have the most community support. The results of the Ethelo survey indicate clear support for separated six lane lap and leisure aquatic tanks as well as support for additional aquatic features of a hot tub, sauna and steam rooms, and a multipurpose room.

To ensure that survey respondents were provided thorough support, an instructional video was published that walked participants through the survey explaining how each section worked. A phone number and email were also provided on all promotional materials advertising over-the-phone guidance for community members who needed additional support in completing the survey.

## Data Validation

The online engagement was conducted via an open website link, available to anyone. Ethelo has a rigorous process for ensuring the results are secure and reliable. Ethelo performs a thorough validation process in which their analytics team goes through the results to ensure there has been no system tampering. This process involves combing through entries to isolate any potential suspicious users.

This is done using participants' digital fingerprints, and cross-referencing these against answers. Ethelo does not have an exact numerical limit of entries per household, as they recognize that subdivided homes, unique cohabitation situations, workplaces and apartment complexes may have multiple interests. Instead they use IP addresses and participant input to isolate instances where an individual in the same place submitted identical or close to identical responses, numerous times. This ensures that multiple participants from the same household with similar opinions are able to contribute, while removing out submissions of individuals who may be attempting to game the system.

Ethelo removed 193 sessions from the results using this process, an average amount for an engagement of this size. As it was not conducted using random sampling and demographic profiling, the results are not intended to be representative.

# Survey Results

## Engagement by the Numbers

### Participation

- Number of visitors: 1,463
- Number Respondents: 1,118
- Page views: 20,420
- Average time on platform: 7.5 minutes

### Who we heard from:

- Based on the survey demographics, 39% of the people we reached were between the ages of 35-48 years old, 25% were ages 49-64, 21% were ages 20-34, and the remaining 15% were over 65 or younger than 19 years old.
- Roughly two thirds of survey respondents were from Golden
- Business owners made up 30% of participants, with the remaining 70% being non business owners

## The Pool

- Six Lane Lap and Leisure | 81% support, 14% oppose  
Breakdown:
  - 67% totally support
  - 14% slightly support
  - 5% neutral
  - 4% slightly oppose
  - 10% totally oppose
- Leisure | 34% support, 53% oppose  
Breakdown:
  - 20% totally support
  - 14% slightly support
  - 3% neutral
  - 17% slightly oppose
  - 36% totally oppose

- Lap | 55% support, 28% oppose

Breakdown:

- 31% totally support
- 24% slightly support
- 17% neutral
- 11% slightly oppose
- 17% totally oppose

## **Gymnasium**

We asked:

Do you support the addition of a new gym into this project now, later, or never? (estimated cost 6.7 million)

Now – 41%

Later – 35%

Never – 4%

I don't know – 11%

## **Additional Features**

- Hot Tub | 70% support, 19% oppose

Breakdown:

- 50% totally support
- 20% slightly support
- 12% neutral
- 5% slightly oppose
- 14% totally oppose

- Aquatic Climbing Wall | 42% support, 34% oppose

Breakdown:

- 24% totally support
- 18% slightly support
- 24% neutral
- 13% slightly oppose
- 21% totally oppose

- Steam/Sauna Room | 56% support, 27% oppose

Breakdown:

- 36% totally support
- 20% slightly support
- 18% neutral
- 8% slightly oppose
- 19% totally oppose

- Multipurpose Room | 59% support, 23% oppose

Breakdown:

- 34% totally support
- 25% slightly support
- 19% neutral
- 7% slightly oppose
- 16% totally oppose

- Fitness Space | 57% support, 34% oppose

Breakdown:

- 32% totally support
- 17% slightly support
- 18% neutral
- 11% slightly support
- 23% totally oppose

## Grants

We asked:

If this project receives partial grant funding, and your chosen pool type and additional features come at a lower cost, what range of annual taxes would you support paying?

\$0-\$100	23%
\$100-\$200	19%
\$200-\$300	26%
\$300-\$400	16%
\$400-\$500	17%
\$500-\$600	8%

## **Project Support**

We asked:

How do you feel about the design of your aquatic centre?

- 56% totally support
- 24% moderately support
- 7% neutral
- 2% moderately oppose
- 8% totally oppose

We asked:

How do you feel about the associated tax that you would be paying?

- 41% totally support
- 26% moderately support
- 11% neutral
- 9% moderately oppose
- 13% totally oppose

## **Anything Else You'd Like to Tell Us?**

To analyze the results of the final open-ended question, thematic input from the survey was coded by hand and categorized as support, opposition, or 'comment, suggestion, question'. Recurring themes and patterns were identified and used for consideration to determine the final recommendations. Quotes from this section to illustrate support and opposition, as well as the nuance in between, are listed below:

- "Let us invest in something that would be a cornerstone for this amazing mountain town. Let's do this Golden!"
- "I think it would be such a benefit for the town, but I worry about how expensive it is and how a small town can handle paying for this and for the upkeep - especially during a pandemic."
- "If the tax burden is not shared between Area A and residences of Golden there should be different rates. Those that choose to live outside of town should not benefit from the taxes those of in town pay."
- "Golden really needs a pool, would rather something simple than have to wait years and years."

## Conclusion

The results above indicate high support (over 50 percent), and low levels of opposition, for the following features:

Pool:

- Six lane lap and leisure pool

Additional features:

- Hot tub
- Steam and sauna rooms
- Multipurpose room

This data aligns with the values of family-friendliness, sustainability, accessibility, affordability, balance of leisure and fitness, and efficiency that were established by the advisory committee and the community at the onset of the project. Support for the inclusion of a gymnasium was split between options for "now" and "later".

Based on this data, and looking at the year-long engagement process as a whole, this feasibility study concludes with the recommended preferred option of an indoor aquatic centre with a six lane lap and leisure pool, a hot tub, steam and sauna rooms, and a multipurpose room, designed for the possible addition of a gymnasium at a future phase.

## Next Steps

This report completes the 3<sup>rd</sup> technical memo focusing on the identification and prioritization of options. With the results of the public survey and a preferred scheme established, the project team will continue to develop a high-level concept design and final report. This work will take place in early 2021 and will include:

- Site Analysis
- Conceptual floorplan, massing and engineering analysis
- Refined project cost estimate
- Identification of possible sponsorship and grants
- Informational brochure