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ON DECK



CSRD Aquatic Feasibility Study
Technical Memo #1

GDH Solutions

HCMA

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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 first technical memo in a series of 3. The ongoing findings of the feasibility study will be captured in 3 progress technical memos and a final report. Each of the 3 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

Project Start Up - Impact Workshop

For a feasibility study to be reflective of the current needs and aspirations of its community, it is important to establish key performance indicators and build a common vision for the project. An Impact Workshop was held on November 7, 2019 with the advisory committee which provided an opportunity for the members of the committee to reflect and comment about what a future facility could mean for the local community and the region. The goal of the workshop was to create a unifying vision for a future aquatic centre as well as the key principles that support the vision.

The workshop included facilitated collaborative activities based on thematic elements where the hopes and fears of the project were documented. Activities such as forecasting future media headlines of how the aquatic facility would be received, how the facility would be defined, and what makes this area unique helped to form a proposed vision and key principles of the project. Some of the questions the advisory committee answered which are shown below.

Question - What would the headline in the local newspaper read on opening day of the aquatic facility?

1. On schedule – on budget
2. Golden and area comes together to build innovative community hub
3. Golden and Area A come together to improve community Health + Wellness
4. Community's vision of regional aquatic centre comes to life
5. Center for everyone
6. Breaking news – new pool overflows with community attendance and diversity
7. We did it! Excitement!
8. We've finally done it!
9. Under budget and above the bar
10. New Aquatic centre making a big splash!
11. Public embraces new facility

Question - What would the headline in the local newspaper read on the anniversary (5 – 10 years) of the opening day of the aquatic facility?

1. So many innovative activities in one place
2. Golden recognized as one of the gems of the Kootenays
3. Social and health benefits felt by all... Aquatic Center a big win
4. Gold aquatic centre hub for Olympic trials!
5. 10 yrs and going strong. Community Hub created a space that locals and tourists love
6. Highest used facility in Golden year round
7. Aquatic centre stands test of time.
8. Aquatic Centre expands to reuse mount 7 rec plex
9. 100 yr old woman celebrates b-day. Nods to Pool life longevity
10. 10 yrs later the aquatic centre continues to be a hub in the community
11. Attendance at all time high – looking to expand.

Question - What makes Golden and Electoral Area A unique?

1. People – Sense of community
2. Lets get it done attitude – Roll-up sleeves
3. The people / place / lifestyle
4. Small town outdoor living
5. Work/life balance
6. Opportunities for children to grow into awesome humans
7. Outdoor lifestyle / sporting
8. Business opportunity
9. Community spirit
10. Authentic mountain town without the pretentious nature of some others.
11. People like you
12. Little on the edge

Place Deck Cards Activity

The advisory committee was separated into three groups for this exercise and were issued deck cards that contained various phrases. The groups organized and ranked the phrases on the cards that best described what the new facility should or should not be.

Group 1 Place Deck Cards

Theme: This Place Is...	Theme: This Place Is Not...
1. Proud / Welcoming	1. Effortless
2. Active	2. Subtle
3. Realistic	3. Exclusive
4. Efficient	4. Sophisticated
5. Enduring	5. Improvisational
	6. Experimental

Group 2 Place Deck Cards

Theme: This Place Is...	Theme: This Place Is Not...
1. Casual	1. Defined
2. Welcoming	2. Dim
3. Inspirational	3. Small
4. Consistent	4. Segmented
5. Realistic	5. Elegant
6. Proud	6. Exclusive

Group 3 Place Deck Cards

Theme: This Place Is...	Theme: This Place Is Not...
1. Welcoming	1. Dim
2. Relatable	2. Exclusive
3. Transformative	3. Luxurious
4. Iconic	4. Elegant
5. Proud	5. Experimental
6. Realistic	6. Detached

Impact Workshop Results

The outcomes of each exercise in the workshop produced valuable information that assisted in developing a proposed vision and guiding principles.

VISION

The Golden Aquatic Centre will be home grown. It will proudly reflect the unique character of its place and bring all regional residents together through inclusive recreational activities. It will be a year-round, vibrant, community hub that provides health and wellness opportunities for all.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The Golden Aquatic Centre will be...

- 1. Community Focused**
 - a. A social hub of activity beyond aquatic use bringing local and regional residents together as one community.
- 2. Inclusive**
 - a. Accessible and welcoming to all.
- 3. Realistic**
 - a. Rooted in grounded aspirations that achieve the best possible outcome.
- 4. A Unique Landmark**
 - a. Born out of community input and passion representing the special character of its people and place.
- 5. A Place of Wellness**
 - a. Supportive of the individual and the community health and wellness needs.
- 6. Versatile**
 - a. Adaptable in the way that it meets the needs of residents both now and in the future.

Geography, Facilities, Demographics and Statistics

The Town of Golden, incorporated in 1957 continues to provide and expand a range of essential and expected services to its residents and the neighbouring communities. These services are in addition to the many services provided by the Columbia Shuswap Regional District.

Area A is a large geographic area – 1,735 km², whereas Golden is 11.41 k²

According to the 2016 Statistics Canada Census Profile, Electoral Area A has a population of 3,148 and Golden has a population of 3,708 for a total population of 6,856.

Golden is part of the provincial Resort Municipality Initiative (RMI). Since 2007 the RMI has helped fund, upgrade and invest in Golden's community tourism infrastructure. The program is intended to assist small, tourism-based municipalities to support and increase visitation.

Golden is also home to some major employers. Louisiana Pacific which makes Engineered Wood Products at their Golden plant provides full time employment for many, as well as jobs for students over the summer. CP Rail provides jobs at their operation in Golden and the Northern Silica Corp. which operates the mine just outside town, is a large industrial employer.

Recreation Facilities

The Town of Golden (Town) has the only public aquatic facility within the study area.

The Golden Municipal Swimming Pool opened in the summer of 1978. It is a twenty-five metre (25m) six lane heated outdoor swimming pool, with depth ranging from 1.2m at the shallow end to 3.4m at the deep end. There is a wide set of stairs with hand rails at each corner of the pool to allow for easy access in and out of the water. The pool has a one-metre diving board and an adjacent wading pool which is 6 metres by 2 metres and .7 metres deep. It is open daily from the May long weekend until late August.

The town also has an indoor ice Arena (owned by the CSRD), a Curling Rink (owned by the CSRD), and the Mount 7 Sports Plex, which includes a large open space accommodating a wide range of gymnasium, fitness and community gathering uses. In addition, Golden has a Seniors Centre, and the Civic Centre which includes a large hall that hosts many cultural events and community meetings.

Pool Operations

The level of tax support for the Town of Golden Pool has varied between 77% and 83% for the past 5 years (2015 to 2019), or a "Recovery" of between **23% and 17%**.

If Current Replacement Amortization is considered, the recovery % is between 13% and 18% over the past five years.

The attendance and the corresponding revenue are greatly affected by staff availability, as well as the weather, and in particular smoke from wildfires. Pool revenue increased steadily from 2016 to 2018,

then dropped in 2019. This drop in revenue was due in large part to the difficulties in attracting enough aquatics staff, necessitating a delayed start to the season. In addition, the final revenue numbers for 2019 have not been confirmed.

User fees (2019)

Golden Swimming Pool Rates

	Drop-In	Punch Pass (10 visits)	Seasonal Universal Membership
Adult 19-59	\$5.00	\$45.00	\$132.00
Youth/Student (13-18)	\$4.00	\$35.00	\$99.00
Child (5-12)	\$3.00	\$25.00	\$80.00
Senior (60+)	\$4.00	\$35.00	\$99.00
Family	\$15.00	\$115.00	\$330.00
Tots (4 & under)	Free		

Residential Breakdown for Pool users

Demographic Information was tracked at the front desk of the pool, as a question asked of the patrons after they pay for a pool visit. There are challenges with this system as many residents are unclear on the location of the municipal boundaries.

For the entire season, May 19 - Sept 2, 2018 the residential breakdown was as follows:

- 60% of pool users were from Golden,
- 19% from Area A,
- 20% from "other"

Other Swimming Opportunities for Locals

There are eight hotels that have indoor pools in Golden, however many have corporate policies that do not permit public use. Hotel pools do not have lifeguards and are not required to maintain the same standards as municipal pools.

The Town currently operates an Aquafit program at the Ramada Hotel and has offered programs in the past at the Travelodge. The Town pays a set hourly rate to the hotel for program use of \$40 per hour. These two pools are open to the public for a five dollar (5\$) drop-in fee.

The Travelodge hotel pool is about 20ft by 30ft, with a waterslide and a hot tub. The Ramada swimming pool is about 15ft by 30 ft with a separate small hot tub.

The Prestige Inn has a small pool and hot tub, with requirements that anyone under the age of 16 be accompanied by an adult. The Holiday Inn has a corporate policy which prevents the general public from using their indoor pool or whirlpool.

The Best Western has a small indoor pool, and Mary's Hotel has small indoor and outdoor pools . The Day's Inn on the outskirts of town has a small L-shaped pool with a waterslide. None of these hotels permit persons who are not guests to use their pools.

With the exception of the Ramada and Travelodge pools, the other hotel pools are either not available or not appropriate for general public use.

Residents travel to both Radium Hot Springs and Revelstoke for their aquatic facilities. They offer different experiences, as Radium hot springs is an outdoor facility, with both a hot pool and a "cool" pool, open year round. The City of Revelstoke has a 25 metre 6 lane indoor pool, along with a leisure pool and lazy river along with a waterslide and climbing wall.

Radium Hot Springs is about a one-hour drive, while Revelstoke is about 90 minutes. Radium Hot Springs is usually easier to reach than Revelstoke in the winter due to snow and road conditions heading west.

Revelstoke does not have very many pool users from Golden, although they do not specifically track that information. School groups visit the pool in Revelstoke on an occasional basis.

Demographics

Census Profile 2016 for Golden - Source Statistics Canada

The population of Golden decreased from 3,262 in 2011 to 3,708 in 2016, then increased to 3,934 by 2018 (BC Stats 2018 Sub-Provincial Population Estimates). The numbers of male vs female are almost equal.

The following table shows the age distribution (by percentage) in broad age groups. The median age of Golden residents is almost 3 years younger than that of BC.

Total - Distribution (%) of the population by broad age groups - 100% data	Golden	BC
0 to 14 years	15.4	14.9
15 to 64 years	69.0	66.9
65 years and over	15.7	18.3
85 years and over	2.5	2.3
Average age of the population	41.1	42.3
Median age of the population	40.3	43.0

Census Profile, 2016 Census, for Columbia Shuswap -Area A

The population for Area A increased from 3,065 in 2011 to 3,148 in 2016. (a 2.7 % increase)

Total - Distribution (%) of the population by broad age groups - 100% data	100.0	100.0
	Area A CSRD	BC
0 to 14 years	14.4	14.9
15 to 64 years	69.5	66.9
65 years and over	15.9	18.3
85 years and over	0.6	2.3
Average age of the population	43.2	42.3
Median age of the population	46.0	43.0

As compared to the population of Golden, Area A has an older population, by 6 years, and 3 years older than the average for all of BC.

Income Statistics

The median total income aged 15 years and over in Golden, in 2015 was \$37,056, as compared to the Province of BC at \$33,012. The median after tax incomes were \$33,184 in Golden and \$29,783 in BC.

The median total income aged 15 years and over in Area A in 2015 was \$34,544, as compared to the Province of BC at \$33,012. The median after tax incomes were \$31,024 in Area A, and \$29,783 in BC.

Population Health

The Interior Health “Local Health Area Profile for Golden and Electoral Area A indicates a population of 6,850 as of 2018.

The average life expectancy in this area is 82, versus the provincial average of 83. However, the “median age at death” is shown as 86 for the Golden Health Area (GHA).

The median age in the GHA is 43 as compared to 46 in Cranbrook and 55 in Creston.

In the area of Chronic Disease, the GHA has a lower percentage in all categories than is found in the rest of the Interior Health region and in British Columbia as a whole. These chronic diseases include: Mood & Anxiety disorders, Depression, Asthma, Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease, Diabetes, Heart Failure and Alzheimer's/Dementia.

Benchmarking

A number of similar communities with indoor pools were selected as “benchmarks” for planning purposes.

All of the selected communities had a local population of 3,500 or greater, and served the surrounding, more rural, communities bringing their service population into the 10,000 range.

Another criterion in the benchmarking exercise was the lack of another indoor pool within reasonable driving distance (at least one hour).

Each of the communities was contacted for information relating to their aquatic facility – size, pool features, demographic served, capital and operating costs, subsidy levels, whether a referendum was held, programming and user fees. In many cases it was not possible to obtain costs and revenues for just the aquatic facility as many were part of a larger recreation facility and did not separate out their operating costs or revenues. Most were able to provide their approximate “level of subsidy”.

High level observations across the eight communities show a number of similarities. Most notably the cost recovery rate in the 20-30% range and common facility size and aquatic offerings. Most facilities provide a 25m lap pool, leisure pool, lazy river and hot tub.

Benchmark Communities

1. Creston – Regional District of Central Kootenay. Creston & District Community Complex

Contact: Randy Fediuk, *Manager of Recreation, Creston and District Community Complex, Regional District of Central Kootenay*

Population of Service Area:

Creston: 5,660; RDCK, Area C, parts of Areas A & B for a total population served of about 10,000.

Capital Funding Sources

A referendum was held to debenture \$18.25 million (the cost of the project) in 2006. About \$2 million was received through a Federal Grant. The \$18.25 M was invested for two years prior to the start of construction, with the interest revenue going back into the project.

Facility Description

Their new Aquatics Facility opened in 2010. The new pool was added to an existing arena and curling rink, which were both renovated. The old (1967) outdoor pool was demolished and the area was used for parking.

The features of the facility are:

- Five lane 25 M lap pool, with diving boards
- Multi-use leisure pool with lazy river and spray features (tea cup)
- Lazy river has different speeds, good for therapy
- 25-person hot tub
- Three separate pool tanks
- On-deck viewing area
- Pool storage
- Changerooms – men, women, universal, family (with provision for disabilities)

Operations

Facility Ownership/operations – Pool is owned and operated by the Regional District. Taxpayers in the four areas – Creston, Areas A, B, C pay into this service through taxation.

User fees contribute to the cost at a rate of about **35% cost recovery, or 65% subsidy**. This is the amount on the whole facility – which includes the arena and the curling rink. The facility also includes a fitness centre, meeting/program rooms, food service, physio office.

User fees are in the chart below. There is one fee to access the whole facility. Complete complex user pass system.

ADMISSION RATES - CRESTON

	FAMILY*	ADULT	STUDENT	CHILD	SENIOR	GOLDEN(80)+
Daily	\$15-40	\$6.47	\$4.91	\$3.33	\$4.91	Free
10 X Admission	\$123.80	\$57.80	\$45.00	\$29.71	\$45.00	Free
1 Month Pass	39.05	\$64.76	\$46.90	\$34.29	\$46.90	Free
3 Month Pass	\$3 52.38	\$157.14	\$114.29	\$82.29	\$14.29	Free
6 Month Pass	\$603.81	\$271-43	\$197.14	\$142.22	\$97.14	Free
1 Year Pass		\$437.14	\$340.00	\$224.52	\$340.00	Free

2. City of Fernie – Regional District of East Kootenay

Contact: Marta Proctor, Director of Community Service, City of Fernie

Population of Service Area

Fernie: 5,384, plus the rural area of RDEK 1,200. In addition, there are many part-time residents with second homes – doubles the number of users.

The demographics are slightly younger than the BC average. It is a very active community.

Capital Funding Sources

A referendum was held (early 1990's) prior to building the Fernie Aquatic Centre.

Fernie is currently looking at upgrading their other recreational facilities. The pool is their newest facility.

They are reviewing options to build a multi-purpose community centre integrated into their existing pool. The concept design looks at replacing the existing arena, curling rink and community hall/gym. The new facility concept proposed a new arena, curling club, gymnasium, modular multi-purpose space that can accommodate up to 400 people and common space.

Council has formally directed staff that should they be successful with their grant submission, a referendum would be needed to approve their portion of the contribution.

They have initiated discussions with the RDEK on a service agreement for the proposed new facility. The RDEK has confirmed that they would hold a referendum on this agreement, likely before Fernie's referendum.

If Fernie is not successful with their current grant submission, they will revisit the plans for replacing the aging recreation facilities and will likely continue discussion with the RDEK on associated service agreement options.

Facility Description

The Fernie Aquatic Centre is 24 years old (built in 1995).

The features of the Aquatic Centre are:

- a six-lane 25 metre competitive pool with zero entry depth
- a 15 metre leisure pool
- a 25-person hot tub
- Separate tanks
- 15 person steam room
- A 150 foot waterslide

Limitations of the pool are:

- No universal changerooms
- No access to main pool for wheelchair access

- Limited spectator viewing

The pool is used by many young families with babies (warm leisure pool). The swim club is also very popular, as is lane swimming and public swim.

Operations

Annual Participant numbers: 41,782 plus swim club use (5 days per week) and pool rentals. (2018)

Revenue is in the \$250,000 to \$300,000. Expenses are in the \$800,000 to 1.1 M.

Level of subsidy is in the 70% range, so **a recovery of about 30%.**

The City of Fernie covers all the expenses. They are currently in discussion with the RDEK regarding a service agreement.

Facility Admittance and Pass Information

	Single entry	1 month pass	3 month pass
Infant	No Charge		
Pre-Schooler	\$3.00	\$33.00	\$84.00
Child	\$4.00	\$44.00	\$112.00
Youth	\$5.00	\$55.00	\$140.00
Adult	\$6.00	\$66.00	\$168.00
Senior	\$5.00	\$55.00	\$140.00
Family	\$15.00	\$165.00	\$420.00

3. Northern Rockies Regional Municipality - Fort Nelson

Contact: Harvey Woodland, Director of Recreation, Northern Rockies Regional Municipality

Population of Service Area

The population is about 5,000. There is a good cross section of all ages, lots of young families as well as seniors.

They recently completed a brand new recreation centre. Construction started in 2010, and the last phase was completed in 2015. It consists of an aquatic facility, community hall, two arenas, a fitness centre, a three story “play space”, an indoor climbing wall, and a walking track. Their old pool was decommissioned.

The cost of construction for the entire facility was \$90 to \$95 million. The old aquatics building was decommissioned - just sitting there for now. It may be developed as something else someday.

Capital Funding Sources

The funding sources for the whole project were \$5 million from the Federal Government, \$5 million from the Province and taxation. Only fifteen (\$15) million went to long term debenture. The rest was paid off through taxes – they have a tremendous business tax base, primarily the oil and gas industry.

They received some support from the local Rotary, who paid for the “Play Space” in the amount of \$130,000.

Facility Description

The Aquatics Facility includes a 25 M, six lane pool, a leisure pool with three lanes plus a lazy river, a three-storey waterslide and a twenty-five person hot tub. The cost of the Aquatics facility portion was \$25 million.

Operations

Facility is used by all age groups- no one predominant demographic. Population has declined, and is now under 4,000, but use is increasing. Last year 220,000 participants used the whole facility. Pool users only was 2000 in October, versus 1400 last year. Year to date is 18,000 pool users.

Their Council has made a conscious decision to support recreation – that space is the heart of the community. They have an operating budget of \$ 5.5 M. Revenue is \$750,000 which is about a **15% cost** recovery rate. . Events are all free and local companies support local events. Use of the walking track is free. The facility is open all year. Council brings a preliminary operating budget to the community each year.

On a \$160,000 house, only \$9 out of every \$100 went towards rec centre. (Vs \$90 for internet). Tax revenue - 83% comes from large companies (oil and gas) 10 % from other businesses; and only 3 or 4 % from residential.

The “recovery” for the Aquatic Facility was about **13% in 2018**, down from 15% in 2017 and 19 % in 2016.

The budget:

Year	2016	2017	2018
Revenue	177,056	140,736	119,018
Expenses	737,918	814,484	804,534
Revenue as % of expenses	19.35%	14.73%	12.89%

Pool Fee Schedule

	Single Use	1 month	3 months	6 months	1 year
Child (0-6)	Free				
Youth (7-12)	\$3.50	\$37.50	\$97.25	\$165.50	\$275.78
Teen (13-17)	\$4.00	\$42.75	\$110.75	\$188.25	\$314.50
Adult (18-59)	\$5.75	\$61.50	\$165.50	\$281.50	\$470.00
Senior (60+)	\$4.25	\$49.95	\$120.00	\$204.00	\$360.00
Couple (2 adults)		\$109.50	\$295.00	\$501.50	\$885.00
Family	\$12.75	\$136.25	\$387.75	\$659.25	\$1101.25

4. District of Port Hardy

Contact: Allison McCarrick, CAO

Population of Service Area

3,643 2016; 4,393 in 2018

They serve a population of 11,000, the North Island community + 3 first nations (about 1,500 population).

New Facility Development

They are developing a new facility - the Port Hardy Multiplex. They started the process in 2015. Construction budget is \$12 million. The tenders came in way over budget (see information under Capital Funding)

It will include a 25 M 3 lane pool; zero entry into a play area – lazy river, kids’ area. It is all one tank, with a separate hot tub.

They are adding some rooms, and may have an exercise room as well, plus meeting space etc.

The new pool design is more efficient, more environmentally friendly and more accessible. The footprint is not any larger than old pool area.

Have not as yet looked at any changes to potentially reduce the price. They will determine next steps early in 2020.. They may consider design build.

They have applied for Investment Canada funding, could do more of their own borrowing, and have other funds. They are waiting for decision from Government on their funding application. Stacking rules for grants come into play. Strategic Priorities (Federal), Canada Infrastructure (Shared fund).

They held a referendum which had a great response rate, with 77% in favour. The referendum was just Port Hardy, not the surrounding area (Regional District). They provided information comparing the cost to repair the old pool versus building a new one.

The CAO stated that the communication piece is critical – need to explain the process to seniors re funding. Taxation is along the whole useful life – the current residents are not paying for the whole thing now.

Capital Funding Sources

Construction budget is \$12 million. In October 2016 held a referendum, which got 77% approval to borrow up to \$6 M for the project. In 2018 got \$6 M for Federal Gas Tax fund. They received \$250,000 from Marine Harvest Canada (local business).

Update Feb 2019: Tendered project (budget was \$12,680,000) Tenders \$18,260,000. Have now applied for more funding through the 2019 Infrastructure Program.

Facility Description

Aquatic Centre – They currently have a 25 M pool with a small slide (old facility 40 years).

The old pool – cost to do upgrades so high, that it made sense to build new (for 12 M). Now that price is 18 M – not so sure – but may have also been higher than thought for repairs and it only buys 15-20 years max.

Arena is attached to old pool and will also be part of new facility.

Will demolish old building (aquatic centre) – make into skate park.

Operations

Their current pool has at least a 75% to 80% subsidy, or a **25% to 20% recovery**.

Port Hardy taxpayers will pay for the new pool facility. They've been taxing for last few years every year – put this money into a reserve fund. Will need to calculate new construction cost. They have a "tax rate stability fund" which they will use as a supplement; \$250K in it now.

Regional District does not support the facility through taxation but have a Grant in Aid program for debt up to \$6 mil, so Port Hardy asked the RD if they could pay back 1M of PH debt. Agreed to that.

RD funds ski area and golf course.

It will be an extra \$250,000 operating dollars per year to support new pool.

There is an outdoor pool in Port McNeil, a half hour drive to the south.

5. District of Sparwood – Regional District of East Kootenay

Contact: Duane Lawrence, Director of Community and Facility Services, District of Sparwood

Population of Service Area

Sparwood had a population of 3,490 (2016 Census) and 4,013 (2018 BC Stats). In addition, they have 2,000 to 3,000 temporary mine workers, whose permanent homes are generally elsewhere.

Capital Funding Sources

The pool was built 33 years ago supported by some grants, but primarily by corporations (the mines) and by taxes.

Facility Description

The Aquatic Facility was built in 1986. It is a leisure pool, with 3 lanes, that are 20 metres long. This was a conscious decision at the time to discourage competitive swim meets. The pool is salt water. There is a sauna and a hot tub, mens, women's and family change rooms. The complex also includes two fitness centres, one of which is leased to a private operator. There are squash and racquetball courts.

An arena and curling rink are also part of the complex.

Operations

The facility is owned and operated by the District of Sparwood. The RDEK contributes a small amount.

The pool is well used by all age groups.

The recreation facility is subsidized by the District in the amount of 85%, a **15 % cost recovery**. This is possible to the high amount of industry tax support (mining).

Sparwood is currently developing a Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

User Fees

Drop In Rates

Infant (2 & under):	FREE
Preschool (3-5 yrs):	\$2.75
Child (6-12 yrs):	\$3.75
Student (13-25 yrs*):	\$4.75
Adult:	\$6.05
Senior:	\$4.75
Family:	\$12.85
Hot Tub Special/Shower:	\$2.75

One Month Pool & Gym Pass

Infant (2 & under):	FREE
Preschool (3-5 yrs):	\$23.37
Child (6-12 yrs):	\$33.20
Student (13-25 yrs*):	\$41.46
Adult:	\$54.19
Senior:	\$41.46
Family:	\$114.74

6. District of Vanderhoof – Regional District of Bulkley Valley

Contact: Lori Egli, CAO District of Vanderhoof

Population of Service Area

4,636 (2016 census); 4,644 (2018) Serve a total population of about 8,000

Capital Funding Sources

The pool project received funding support from all levels of government as well as a wide number of community organizations and corporate sponsors.

The construction budget was \$12 million, and came in on budget.

The Government of Canada contributed \$7.4 million through the federal Gas Tax fund.

The Regional District of Bulkley Valley, Areas D and F provided capital funding in the amount of \$700,000., and the District of Vanderhoof contributed \$700,00 from their gas tax fund.

The Northern Development fund contributed \$250,000 and one million dollars came from the Vanderhoof Community Forest, and the Nak'azdli Whut'en contributed \$50,000.

A Pool Society was formed for the purpose of fundraising. Through various methods including jars in store for donations and a mass mailing to sell \$5 memberships, the Society raised \$600,000.

This society was a key to getting a large portion of the community involved in supporting the pool project.

There were a number of corporate sponsors including Rio Tinto, Blue Valley Trucking, and Coastal Gas Link (which contributed \$50,000),.

Referendum

The project won 77 per cent support when a referendum was held in February 2013. It sought approval for a loan of up to \$4 million. An earlier referendum had failed.

The District of Vanderhoof set up a Community Design Committee that was instrumental in developing support for the project. The pool was widely promoted as benefitting all ages

Facility Description

The Aquatic Centre opened in early 2019. It includes:

- as 25 M, 6 lane pool
- leisure pool with a lazy river or a “therapy current”; depth of pool is 3’6”
- 25 person hot tub.

These are separated into three tanks, all of which have ramp access

Operations

The pool is operated by the YMCA. The Y was already contracted to operate the Vanderhoof community centre

The Y receives \$47,000 as a management fee, plus there is a cost sharing agreement (between the Y and Vanderhoof) if the revenue is greater than projected.

The District of Vanderhoof is very satisfied with the Y's management.

The recruitment of lifeguards is the biggest ongoing challenge.

As this is their first year, the level of subsidy has not yet been determined.

Pool Fees

The Vanderhoof pool has a different fee structure than most municipalities, due to the management by the YMCA. Although they have drop-in fees, they mainly rely on membership passes.

See the chart below for rates.

2019 Vanderhoof Aquatic Centre Rates

Drop-In Rates

Infant/Toddler (0-2 years)	Child (3-12 years)	Youth (13-18 years)	Adult (19-64 years)	Senior (65+ years)	Family
FREE	\$3.70	\$5.00	\$6.50	\$5.00	\$3.00 First user pays regular rate, additional users pay family rate.

Passes

Pass Category	Biweekly Fees		Annual Fees	
	Individual Rate	Additional Family Member Rate	Individual Rate	Additional Family Member Rate
Adult (19-64 years)	\$19.38	\$9.46	\$504.00	\$246.00
Senior (65+ years)	\$14.54	\$7.15	\$378.00	\$186.00
Youth (13-18 years)	\$14.54	\$3.00	\$378.00	\$78.00
Child (3-12 years)	\$6.69	\$3.00	\$174.00	\$78.00
Infant/Toddler (0-2 years)	FREE		FREE	

Benefits of Pass Holders:

- Unlimited access to the Vanderhoof Aquatic Centre
- Unlimited access to drop-in aqua fitness classes
- Unlimited access to Sauna

7. District of Houston – Regional District of Bulkley Valley

Contact: Tasha Kelly – Director of Leisure Services, District of Houston

Population of Service Area

3,130 (2016 census) 3136 (2018 BC Stats). Including the surrounding areas, they serve about 4,000.

Capital Funding Sources

They had two referendums. The first one covered Houston plus the rural areas, and it failed (rural area voted it down). The second referendum was split into two – Houston and Rural. It passed in Houston and they were able to get a by-law passed to get a loan. Non-residents had to pay a higher admission fee. This higher fee was abolished in September 2019. Although the senior citizens were most opposed to the pool, they are now the largest user group.

Facility Description

The pool was built in 2006. It includes the following elements:

- Leisure pool lazy river, zero depth deep 1.3 metre
- The leisure pool is split into 3 areas – deeper area, tot area and the lazy river
- Tea cup – Gigantic structure, giant mushroom, water pouring out
- Spray arch, Geyser, tot area
- Swirlpool, hot tub , steam room
- 4 lane main pool, with a climbing wall and a Tarzan rope.
- Family and men & women’s changerooms

They are very satisfied with their facility.

Operations

The aquatic facility is fully funded by the District of Houston. They are working on obtaining some funding support from the Bulkley Valley Regional District. The pool operations are subsidized by 70%, so a **30% cost recovery**.

An electronic system tracks attendance, over 35,000 admissions to date in 2019.

Pool Fees

ADMISSION RATES	SINGLE ADMISSION	10 VISIT PASS	25 VISIT PASS	WEEKLY MEMBERSHIP	1 MONTH MEMBERSHIP	3 MONTH MEMBERSHIP	ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP
Infant (0-2yrs)	Free						
Tot (3-5yrs)	\$1.10	\$9.90	\$22.00	\$5.50	\$11.00	\$24.75	\$99.00
Child (6-12yrs)	\$3.30	\$29.70	\$66.00	\$16.50	\$33.00	\$74.25	\$297.00
Youth(13-18yrs)	\$4.40	\$39.60	\$88.00	\$22.00	\$44.00	\$99.00	\$396.00
Adult(19-59yrs)	\$5.50	\$52.50	\$110.00	\$27.50	\$57.75	\$156.75	\$519.75
Senior(60+yrs)	\$4.40	\$39.60	\$88.00	\$22.00	\$44.00	\$118.80	\$396.00
Family	\$12.10	\$108.90	\$242.00	\$60.50	\$121.00	\$326.70	\$1089.00

The biggest issue in pool operations is attracting and retaining lifeguards/instructors. Training costs are very high. Municipalities need a lifeguard development program and subsidy of training costs.

8. City of Revelstoke – Columbia Shuswap Regional District

Contact: Laurie Donato, Director of Parks, Recreation and Culture, City of Revelstoke

Population of Service Area

Population in 2018 (BC Stats) 8,129. Plus, the surrounding rural area, about 700 (Area B). In addition, there are a large number of seasonal residents – a study with Telus tracked persons staying 45+ days, for a total of 14,000 population.

They also get participants from Golden, Nakusp, Sicamous, Malaqua and Salmon Arm. School groups come to the pool as “outings”.

Capital Funding Sources

The Aquatic Facility opened in 2006. There was a referendum around 2002.

Facility Description

The Aquatic Facility includes:

- 25 Metre pool (lanes- 6)
- Separate tanks
- Leisure pool with lazy river
- Waterslide
- Rock wall
- Hot Tub
- In 2013 converted from salt system to chlorine plus built a chemical storage room.
Accessible from outdoors only

The larger facility includes 2 meeting rooms, 3 multi-purpose rooms, a seniors' centre and the Library.

Operations

They track participant numbers. In 2018 there were 92,000 pool users, up from 70,000 in 2015.

The ski population supports the pool in the winter months. Revelstoke has a hotel/motel program that promotes pool use.

The City of Revelstoke pays the majority of costs, although they have a cost sharing agreement with the CSRD, which pays a "low" percentage of costs.

The budget includes the Aquatic centre as well as the Community centre , which contains 3 multi-purpose rooms plus 2 ancillary meeting rooms. The budget for 2017 was:

Expenses: \$1,117,453

Revenue \$ 485,803

Net \$ 631,650

The cost recovery for the aquatic facility portion is **about 30%**.

The pool is very busy – there are wait lists for lessons and people have to wait to get into rec swim.

Recruiting and training enough lifeguard staff is very challenging.

Pool Fees

Pool or Fitness	Fees -Single use	One Month Pass	3 month pass	6 month pass
Child 2 & Under	No charge	No charge	No Charge	No charge
Child 3-12	\$3.50	\$34.25	\$80.50	\$134.00
Teen 13-18	\$4.25	\$43.00	\$100.25	\$199.50
Adult 19-64	\$6.00	\$60.50	\$145.00	\$263.00
Senior 65-79	\$4.25	\$43.00	\$100.25	\$199.50
Senior 80+ years	No Charge	N/C	N/C	N/C
Family (2 adults plus children under 18)	\$14.00	\$136.50	\$346.50	\$457.75

Conclusion

The eight (8) communities which have been used in this report as “benchmarks” are all similar to Golden in that they are small, remote communities that are not within reasonable driving distance from indoor aquatic facilities. Communities throughout BC with similar populations with surrounding rural, sparsely populated areas, were chosen as comparators.

These comparator communities all have significant indoor aquatic facilities – some with two separate pools, waterslides, spray features, climbing walls (in the pools) and so on. The age range of the pools in these communities range from 40+ years to one opening in 2019 and another in the referendum process (both replacing old pools).

All of the benchmark communities provided significant “subsidies” to the pool operations, as it is not possible to recover the full costs of operation through user fees.

Golden is unique in that the only aquatic facilities are the municipal outdoor pool and two hotel pools(indoor) that offered limited access for public use. Both hotel pools are small and not to the standards of a typical municipal pool (safety, size, amenities, water temperature, programs).

The closest indoor municipal aquatic facility is in Revelstoke a 90 minute to 2 hour drive, depending on road conditions. In addition, road closures in the winter months are fairly frequent.

The research indicates that there are almost no communities in BC, similar in size to Golden that do not have reasonable access to an indoor aquatic facility. One exception is Osoyoos, which is a 45 to 55 minute drive to the pool in Penticton. The other exceptions are remote, ferry access communities such as Gibsons.

In conclusion , the residents of Golden and Area A are not receiving the same level of service as other similar communities across BC.