

Minutes of the regular meeting of the Cowichan Lake Recreation Commission held Thursday, July 25, 2013 in the Cowichan Lake Sports Arena Multipurpose Room, Lake Cowichan, BC.

PRESENT: Members: D. Darling; R. Forrest, (Mayor, Town of Lake Cowichan); I. Morrison (Director Area F); L. Johnson; R. Wise; J. Rowley; B. Peters.

ABSENT: P. Weaver (Director Area I); E. Fearon; R. Frost, (West Cowichan Facility Coordinator);

ALSO PRESENT: L. Blatchford, (Manager, Cowichan Lake Recreation); R. Austen (General Manager - Parks, Recreation and Culture - CVRD); J. Wakeham (Manager, Facility, Fleet and Transit Division - CVRD); R. Piechnik (Recording Secretary)

Meeting called to order at 7:03 p.m.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

It was moved and seconded:

That the agenda be approved as amended with the addition of Length Of Service Commission and Youbou Lanes under R2; NB1 Programming Question; NB2 Facilities Maintenance Question.

MOTION CARRIED

ADOPTION OF MINUTES

It was moved and seconded:

That the minutes of the Cowichan Lake Recreation Commission regular meeting of Thursday, June 27, 2013 be adopted as presented.

MOTION CARRIED

DELEGATION

None at this time.

BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

BA1: Smoking Policy Update: Chairman D. Darling and Manager, L. Blatchford will attend the Town Council meeting on Tuesday, August 6 at 6:15 to speak on the new smoking policy being implemented by the Cowichan Lake Recreation Commission.

BA2: HBCS Additional Request - Staff report

It was moved and seconded:

That the Cowichan Lake Recreation Commission adds Painting classes to the list of "free hall use" events hosted by Honeymoon Bay Community Society included in the motion made on June 27, 2013.

MOTION CARRIED

CORRESPONDENCE

None at this time.

REPORTS

R1 - West Cowichan Facility Coordinator - Verbal report presented

by J. Wakeham

- **Propane Bleacher Heaters** - Have been removed.
- **Hall heating systems project** – Government grant signage is up at all locations. Project is going well on or under budget.
- **Youbou boiler shed asbestos abatement project** – Project has been awarded and will hopefully be completed by end of August. At this time, the project looks like it could come in under budget.
- **Honeymoon Bay rainwater containment and dispersal project** – It is expected that there may be benefit from work being done in the area. The project is being coordinated by the CVRD Parks and Trails Division.

R2: Cowichan Lake Recreation Manager - Written reports:

- **Alcohol, Tobacco and Drug discipline Policy** - Staff report

It was moved and seconded:

That the Cowichan Lake Recreation Commission approves the following amendments to the Alcohol, Tobacco, and Drug discipline Policy:

Discipline Policy Steps

Step 1: First Offence:

Written warning to the user group indicating that a subsequent infraction will result in the cancellation of a booking, with the user group still responsible for that booking's rental fee.

Step 2: Second Offence:

Cancellation of a booking, with the user group still responsible for that booking's rental fee.

MOTION CARRIED

ACTION: I. Morrison has some suggestions for wordsmithing in the policy. Suggestions will be reviewed.

- **Discussion regarding August Commission meeting** – The annual summer bonspiel start date is the same date as the scheduled Commission meeting; there are no agenda items at this time. Commission direction to cancel the August meeting.
- **Poll Commission for length of service.** Staff asked Commission members how long they have been on the Commission. Information to be shared with A. Nelson at the CVRD office.
- **Youbou Lanes** - Youbou Lanes was visited by CTV News and staff was interviewed on the history, recreation and community interest

of the Youbou Bowling Alley. The interview will be aired sometime in the next week. Staff was also interviewed live by CFX on the provision of lifeguarding and the swimming program at the Arbutus Park facility.

R3: CVRD Board - Director Morrison Verbal report - report on CVRD Board corporate strategic plan; Honeymoon Bay is in Stage 2 of water restrictions; Kerry Park renovation idea is not going through to referendum at this point.

R4 - Town Of Lake Cowichan - Mayor Forrest Verbal report - There will be another Multidisciplinary Medical Meeting on Thursday, September 5 at 9am at the Senior Centre. The community is encouraged to attend; the Library is close to completion and then the Town Square will start; the roundabout project is progressing according to plan.

R. McCowan from Big Mountain Hockey School joined the meeting at 7:39pm.

It was moved and seconded:

That Rob McCowan is allowed to speak to the Commission for 10 minutes.

MOTION CARRIED (Unanimously)

NEW BUSINESS

NB1 - Big Mountain Hockey School - R. McCowan introduced himself and gave a history of the founders of the school and past hockey experience with hockey schools at the Cowichan Lake Sports Arena. He shared Big Mountain Hockey School's vision for hockey in the area.

R. McCowan left the meeting at 8:12pm.

NB2 - Programming Question - Mayor Forrest - The question was raised about swimming lessons only being offered in Youbou. Question regarding the possibility of Cowichan Lake Recreation offering a Movie In The Park night during the summer months.

ACTION: Staff will research the possibility of offering swimming lessons in other locations next year and will look into the cost of a license to show movies.

NB3 - Facility Maintenance Question - Director Morrison - A suggestion to do major cleanups in Honeymoon Bay Hall once or twice a year, go through equipment and remove unusable or outdated items.

INFORMATION

None at this time.

OLD BUSINESS

OB1 - Budget Information Session - Staff Report

Staff reviewed the Cowichan Lake Recreation operating budget 2013 with an explanation of what each line and category represents. The budget was color coded in an effort to explain the line items that the Commission can direct change or give input but cannot always control the outcome; the line items whereby staff and Commission are presented with details so the Commission cannot direct change; and the line items whereby the Commission can direct change or give input.

QUESTION PERIOD

None at this time.

**NEXT MEETING
DATE**

Thursday, Sept 26, 2013 at 7pm in the CLSA Meeting Room.

**MEETING
ADJOURNED**

It was moved and seconded:

To adjourn meeting.

MOTION CARRIED

Meeting adjourned at 9:40 pm.

Chairperson

Recording Secretary

Dated: _____



STAFF REPORT

COWICHAN LAKE RECREATION COMMISSION MEETING of September 26, 2013

DATE: July 29, 2013
FROM: Linda Blatchford, Manager, Cowichan Lake
Recreation
SUBJECT: Alcohol, Tobacco, and Drug Policy 2013

Recommendation/Action:

That the Cowichan Lake Recreation Commission approves of the revised Alcohol, Tobacco, and Drug Policy 2013.

Relation to the Corporate Strategic Plan:

Review organizational processes and streamline where appropriate, to improve efficiency and reduce costs.

Financial Impact: (Reviewed by Finance Division: _____)

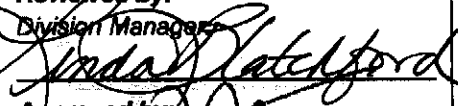
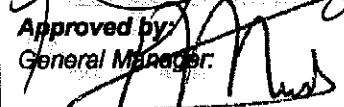
The only impact on cost will be the cost associated with purchasing new signage.

Background:

At the regular meeting of the Cowichan Lake Recreation Commission held on July 25, 2013 Commission members adopted a two-step discipline policy regarding the use of alcohol, tobacco and drugs in facilities and on land owned or managed by Cowichan Lake Recreation.

A copy of Cowichan Lake Recreation's current Alcohol, Tobacco, and Drug Policy, was provided for background information.

It was noted that due to a number of policy changes the wording in the original policy no longer applied. Commission directed staff to re-word the policy and to bring it back to an upcoming meeting for approval.

Reviewed by: Division Manager: 
Approved by: General Manager: 

COWICHAN LAKE RECREATION POLICIES & PROCEDURES

Title: Alcohol, Tobacco, & Drug Policy

Approved: September 26, 2013

Updated: September 26, 2013

Policy:

The use or consumption of Alcohol, Tobacco, or Drugs (ATD) is prohibited in all Cowichan Lake Recreation facilities and on all lands owned or managed by Cowichan Lake Recreation. Liquor can be consumed if permitted with a posted valid liquor license in accordance with the BC Liquor Control and Licensing Act.

Policy contraventions will be subject to disciplinary and/or legal action.

Duties and Responsibilities:

- The Cowichan Lake Recreation Alcohol, Tobacco, and Drug Policy is to be included in all facility rental contracts and signed off by all user group representatives (conditions of use).
- User Group contracts will specify that groups must vacate arena dressing rooms within 45 minutes after completion of the specified time of the ice slot. For all other facility rentals, user groups must vacate the premises at the time indicated on the contract.
- Signage posted in the arena citing the following:

"The use or consumption of Alcohol, Tobacco or Drugs is prohibited in all Cowichan Lake Recreation Facilities and on all land owned or managed by Cowichan Lake Recreation. Alcohol consumption is only allowed in areas and at times indicated by a posted, valid liquor license in accordance with the BC Liquor Control and Licensing Act. Arena dressing rooms to be vacated 45 minutes after specified ice slot."

- Signage posted in all other facilities citing the following:

"The use or consumption of Alcohol, Tobacco or Drugs is prohibited in all Cowichan Lake Recreation Facilities and on all land owned or managed by Cowichan Lake Recreation. Alcohol consumption is only allowed in areas and at times indicated by a posted, valid liquor license in accordance with the BC Liquor Control and Licensing Act. Facilities are to be vacated at the time indicated on the contract."

- Continue to work with other Cowichan Valley Regional District Recreation Commissions to implement similar policies.



STAFF REPORT

COWICHAN LAKE RECREATION COMMISSION MEETING SEPTEMBER 26, 2013 MEETING

DATE: SEP 3, 2013

FROM: JOHN CUMMINGS, RECREATION PROGRAMMER

SUBJECT: Aquatics Viability Report.

An aquatics viability survey was completed August 19, 2013 by Ms. Kailey Laidlaw, current NLS Lifeguard, WSI Instructor, CVRD employee, and 3rd year university student and myself, a former lifeguard with 15 years' experience, a 4 year WSI Instructor with 2 years of direct aquatic facility supervision experience.

The goal of the survey was to identify alternate locations viable for conducting swim lessons in order to facilitate growth and to better accommodate the region served. There are 5 sites included in the survey;

- the Duck Pond,
- Saywell Park,
- Lakeview Park,
- Bear Lake Park, and
- Lily Beach.

The standards utilized as a measuring stick for Siting Requirements and Prerequisites for Infrastructure are derived from the Lifesaving Society, Waterfront Safety Standards, the CVRD's Aquatic Safety Audit Report of 2012 and 17 years' experience with aquatics.

In order to properly understand the ideal model for conducting safe and effective swim lessons, one needs to look no further than the indoor aquatic facility, this is the functioning standard upon which waterfront facilities safety standards are based. Arbutus Park stands as a fine example of a high standard for a waterfront aquatic facility.

The Siting Requirements are as follows;

- A sandy, rock free bottom with a slow grade from water entry
- A position to perform deep water entry, without reaching bottom, minimum 10 feet water depth
- A floating structure to practice beside to provide monitoring by instructor and safety, minimum length of 100 feet
- Segregation from boating traffic
- Absence of water currents
- A sheltered area away from waves and boat wake and
- Restricted K-9 access/control policies.

The Prerequisites for Infrastructure are as follows;

- Pre-existing structure to house storage of equipment, and controlled documents
- Washrooms
- A land line to activate Emergency Services
- Signage for direction and policy and
- A park maintenance plan for grounds, washrooms and garbage removal.

The table below illustrates the skill requirements for each level of the Red Cross Program Guide. These skill requirements are determining factors of facility suitability.

LEVEL	AGE	SKILL REQUIREMENT
Pre-School Starfish	4-6 months	Move forward (assisted) Move backward (assisted) Arm movement (assisted)
Duck	18 months	Move forward (assisted) Move backward (assisted) Floats: Front float and recovery (assisted) Back float and recovery
Sea Turtle	30 months	Kick on front using buoyant aid, 2 m (assisted)
Salamander	3-5 years	Kick on front using buoyant aid, 2 m Distance swim: 2 m
Sunfish	3-5 years	Kicking drills: kick with buoyant aid, 5 m Distance swim: 5 m
Crocodile	3-5 years	Kicking drills: kick with buoyant aid, 10 m Strokes: Dolphin Kick (assisted) Distance swim: 10 m Jump into deep water, surface support 5 sec
Whale	3-5 years	Kicking drill: 2x10 m Whale Kick (Dolphin Kick harder) Distance swim: 2X 10 m Jump into deep water, surface support, 20 sec.
Swim Kids Level 1,2	6 +, previous level	Kicking drills: flutter kick, 15 m (assisted) Distance swim: 10 m
3,4	6 +, previous level	Kicking Drills: Flutter kick drill on back 3 X 15m Distance swim: 25 m
5,6	6 +, previous level	Kicking Drills: 3 X 25 m Distance swim 75 m
7,8	6 +, previous level	Egg beater/tread water: 3 min Kicking Drill: Dolphin kick drills 3 X 10 m Distance swim: 300 m
9,10	6 +, previous level	Dolphin kick 3 X 10 sec Strokes: Butterfly drill 3 X 10 m Distance swim: 500 m

The following table illustrates suitability of evaluated sites as they currently exist.

Location	Duck Pond	Saywell Park	Lakeview Park	Bear Lake Park	Lily Beach	Arbutus Park
Site Parameters Sandy Bottom						•
Gentle Grade	•			•	•	•
Sheltered from boat wakes			•	•		•
Segregation of Water Depths at Drop-Off						•
Absence of Water Currents		•	•	•	•	•
K-9 Restrictions			•			•
Infrastructure Permanent Structure	•		•			•
Dock for Deep Water Entry/ Stroke Correction				•		•
Washroom Facility	•		•			•
Segregation from Boating Traffic			•	•	•	•
Existing Land Line						•
Park Maintenance Plan	•					•
Signage						•

Date: September 3, 2013


Conclusions;

- of the 5 locations surveyed, none are currently suitable for conducting swim lessons
- the most suitable location geographically is Lakeview Park
- the most suitable aquatic environment is Bear Lake Park due its 100 ft plus floating dock and gentle underwater grade
- of the 5 locations surveyed, the Duck Pond is the least suitable aquatic environment due to is shallow water, rocky bottom, insufficient size dock, river current, unregulated boating and K-9 access
- conducting swim lessons in a less than optimal environment will create safety, liability and litigation issues
- conducting swim lessons at a secondary site represents a significant investment to compete against an already existing infrastructure and program.

Recommendations;

- at this time, there is insufficient infrastructure in place to conduct swim lessons at a secondary location.

Reviewed by:
Recreation Programmer:



Recommended by:
Cowichan Lake Recreation Manager:



Approved by:
General Manager, Parks, Recreation & Culture Department:





CVRD

Going Green

Summer 2013

Cowichan: On the Road to Fuel Security *by Laura Nessman*

Vancouver Island's first and only biodiesel blending station, located at the CVRD's Bings Creek Recycling Drop-off Depot, is now officially open! Cowichan's Biodiesel Blending Station is the result of a unique partnership between the CVRD, Cowichan Energy Alternatives, and the Cowichan Bio-Diesel Cooperative. The opening of this station completes Phase I of a sustainable fuel loop where recycled fryer oil is processed into biodiesel and used to fuel diesel vehicles, all at the same location.

Phase II will add a point of sale system that will allow the station to be accessed by Co-op and BC Biofuel Network members. Select CVRD diesel vehicles are now using this fuel source, moving us one step closer to energy and fuel security.



Biodiesel is an important renewable energy solution that can be used with existing diesel engine technology to immediately begin to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and other harmful pollutants. It is clean burning, biodegradable, and non-toxic. Biofuel also has mechanical and operational benefits, including increased lubricity, decreased noise, and cleaner fuel systems

and combustion chambers. Furthermore, by using biodiesel we are preventing waste oils from being poured down municipal drains where they clog waste-water infrastructure, or being sent for landfill disposal in southern Washington State.

The Cowichan Biofuel Facility is a homegrown biodiesel processing and distribution centre. It recycles locally collected commercial and residential waste cooking oils into environmentally-friendly biofuel for local users. Waste cooking oil (vegetable oils only) can be dropped off by residents at CVRD Recycling Drop-Off Depots and at sponsored waste oil collection bins around town such as the one at Ingram Street and Canada Avenue in Duncan.

The CVRD provided \$50,000 of UBCM Community Works funding to help build the station on a portion of Bings Creek land, which the facility leases from the CVRD. By taking a waste product and refining it into a value-added commodity, we are closing the loop on local sustainable energy solutions. This partnership has moved the CVRD yet another step closer to achieving its goal of zero waste.

West Cowichan Community Halls Heating Upgrades *by Kuan Foo*

The CVRD is in the process of upgrading the heating systems at Youbou Community Hall, Honeymoon Bay Community Hall, Mesachie Lake Community Hall, and Lake Cowichan Centennial Hall. The project to upgrade to high efficiency air source heat-pumps offers an opportunity to reduce annual operating costs by an estimated \$34,078 (77%) each year, reducing costs from \$44,296 to \$10,218.

Newsletter of the Cowichan Valley Regional District Green Team
gogreen@cvrd.bc.ca | Staffnet under Tools & Resources | 250-746-2520

How is this possible? There are two problems with the old system. First, the current oil-fired furnaces operate with efficiencies of only 45 to 65 percent. The second problem is control. The users of these halls set the thermostat to their desired temperature when necessary. However, more often than not, people forget to turn the thermostat down when they leave. Because staff are not on site daily, the furnace could run for days to maintain a high temperature in a space that is unoccupied.

We needed a solution that could solve both those problems. As no natural gas is available in the area, we looked to modern air source heat pumps as replacements. These new units are extremely efficient with the ability to modulate heating output from 10 to 100 percent of their slated capacity. This feature, coupled with heat pump technology, allows these units to take 1 unit of electricity and output 2.5 units of heat by leveraging low temperature heat in the outside air year round. These units can also operate down to -20°C without any backup heat, perfect for our west coast climate.

To address the second problem, all new units are being installed with web-enabled controls so CVRD staff can monitor, control, and program the heat pumps from their offices or from their smart phones. Users will still have some control in the space, but temperatures will return to baseline values after a set amount of time.

From an environmental perspective, eliminating the oil furnaces reduces any leak and contamination risks, and reduces air pollution and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. GHG emission reductions from this project are approximately 88 tonnes each year. Over the 20 year life of this project, the emissions reductions will be 1760 tonnes of greenhouse gases, the equivalent of taking 370 cars off the road permanently.

Budgeting on Less Paper

by Andrea Kross & Tammy Knowles

Finance staff have reduced their paper use for printing budgets by 72% over last year. The final adopted version of the CVRD's 2013 budget was distributed to CVRD directors and staff via a link to the CVRD's website, which they were able to access on their new ipads.

Budget books are produced twice a year. First is the draft budget, which is produced in February. After weeks of debate, the final budget is adopted by the CVRD Board before the March 31 deadline. A final version of the budget is produced in April. This year, the budget was released in two separate sections: the General Budget and the Water and Sewer Budget.

In 2012, paper copies of the 887 page budget were made for 30 people: 15 for the CVRD's directors, 5 for Finance staff, 8 for members of the Corporate Leadership Team, and 2 for the public. In addition, 10 partial budget books in draft and final versions were printed for Division Managers, containing only the functions applicable to their division. These partial budgets ranged in length from 10 to 100 pages. That's 53,220 pages printed for the full budget book, plus about 1100 pages for the partial budget books. In 2012, approximately 54,320 double-sided pages, 54 reams of paper, or 5½ boxes of paper were used for budget books alone.

This year, 11 copies of the 730 page draft General Budget and 13 copies of the 200 page draft Water and Sewer Budget were printed (5 for Finance staff and the rest for directors). Only 5 copies of the final budgets were printed, all for Finance staff who access the books daily. The 2013 total is just 15,280 double-sided pages, 15 reams of paper, or 1½ boxes of paper. And it's a whopping 72% reduction in paper use over last year. Congratulations, Finance Division!!

- [Attend ABC & Expo](#)
- [AB Newswire](#)
- [Advertise with AB](#)



Premium Partners:



ARTICLES

CONTENT LIBRARY

BUYERS GUIDE

ARCHITECTURAL GALLERIES

FORUM

MAGAZINE

Advertisement

[Home](#) / [In the News](#)

Rec Centers Strive to Keep Up with Demand for Fitness

Like Tweet

Comments (0)

AthleticBusiness.com has partnered with LexisNexis to bring you this content



Copyright 2013 Star Tribune
All Rights Reserved

Star Tribune (Minneapolis, MN)

August 30, 2013 Friday
METRO EDITION

NEWS; Pg. 1B

REC CENTERS GET WORKOUT

KELLY SMITH; MARY JANE SMETANKA; STAFF WRITERS, STAR TRIBUNE (Mpls.-St. Paul)

Thanks to changing demographics, city-run fitness centers are drawing more people. Some even rival private gyms.

From weightlifting to Zumba, more Minnetonka residents are taking their workouts to one central place: the city's fitness center.

Attendance at the city-owned Williston Fitness Center has skyrocketed since it underwent a \$4.5 million renovation in 2010. This year, membership is expected to peak at 8,400; users will top 300,000. For the first time, the city has closed nonresident memberships.

"It's tough to keep up with demand," Minnetonka Recreation Director Dave Johnson said. "It's something our community really needs."

More metro suburbs are getting into the fitness fad, rivaling private health clubs in amenities with everything from rock climbing to water parks. Eden Prairie and Shoreview are both considering multimillion-dollar additions to their heavily used centers. And St. Louis Park is weighing building a new community center.

"It used to be, you only had aerobics," said Bill Beckner, a senior researcher with the National Recreation and Park Association. "Now you have to be a full-service entity in order to bring in enough revenue to make it worthwhile."

However, not all cities can afford such high-end facilities or get taxpayers to foot the bill. And most cities that do so barely break even, because they charge lower fees than many private health clubs and still have free public areas.

But, Beckner said, increased fitness offerings are something residents expect from cities, and they can help make a city more attractive.

"They build them, and people come," he said.

Benefit vs. cost

That's exactly why cities like Shoreview have ramped up their community centers to have more of a fitness focus.

Its community center opened more than 20 years ago to attract young families and create a town

center hosting events like a farmers market. But since then, it has undergone renovations and expansions to include a water park, a full-service fitness center and an indoor playground. As a result, the number of memberships has tripled.

"We're comparable to a high-end fitness center," said Shoreview Community Center General Manager Michelle Majkozak. "We really have evolved ... every year we try to add something new."

As the center nears capacity with 6,500 memberships, the city is planning a \$1.1 million expansion in 2015.

September 2013 Issue

[Language Key to Enforcing Waivers at Health Clubs](#) - John T. Wolohan

Readers of this column already know that most waivers — if written correctly — will be upheld by the courts as long as they don't violate public policy.

[Maintaining High-Wear Areas on Natural Grass Fields](#) - Paul Steinbach

As the academic year kicks off this month, a nationwide stampede of student-athletes will put natural grass game fields to their first real tests — ideally — in months.

[Read More...](#)

AB Newswire

[Football Players Rewarded for Doing the Right Thing](#) Amid never-ending news of scandals, rules violations, thieves and angry parents, sometimes we need to hear some good news. So ...

[Why Tennis and Running Are Growing in Popularity](#) I love it when sports show growth. Any sport, any level, for any age, for any gender. It's just good, ...

[Sacramento Kings Award AECOM Bid to Design New Arena](#) A rendering of the new Sacramento arena from AECOM. "Long Live the Sacramento Kings," says the banner on the team's official ...

[Read More...](#)

Featured Vendor

Chaska was an area pioneer in full-service community centers, building its center for about \$9 million in 1980. It includes swimming pools, ice rinks, a track, gyms, a day care, a senior center, an art gallery and a 250-seat theater.

Chaska City Manager Matt Podhradsky considers his city's center a primary marketing tool. About 25 percent of members are nonresidents, and use is increasing at a steady 3 percent a year.

"It creates a place where people can gather and call home," Podhradsky said. "Nothing stands out more to me than a community center as a special place to draw people."

Running the center will cost the city about \$3.3 million this year. Unlike most city-owned centers, the Chaska center is self-supporting. Debt service on improvements is funded through transfers from the city's municipal electric utility.

Podhradsky said the center has room to expand, but the emphasis now is on preserving what it has. "When we built it, from Chaska's perspective, it went back to being the best small town in Minnesota," he said. "We didn't want to be a bedroom community; we wanted to live and work here and have this be a place where we could gather together."

St. Louis Park also likes the idea of a central gathering spot and is investigating the possibility of a new community center. Surveys show 70 percent of residents are interested in features like a pool, gym, track and fitness studios that would be part of a center.

But cost estimates make city officials cautious.

"The question is, is it really worth it, to spend \$40 or \$50 million?" said St. Louis Park Mayor Jeff Jacobs. "It would be a great amenity, but ... it's a question of benefit vs. cost."

Unfair competition?

For cities, the added amenities aren't big moneymakers.

In Eagan, for instance, the community center is celebrating its 10th year this month but is still halfway through payments on its center. In Minnetonka, 90 percent of the \$2.3 million in annual operating costs for the Williston Fitness Center is covered by the center's revenue. The city also has used center revenue and a community investment fund to fund renovations and to buy the fitness facility from a private health club in 1995 for \$800,000, a fraction of the \$1.6 million selling cost.

But in Shakopee, it hasn't been that simple.

Despite rival Chaska's large center, Shakopee residents have rejected four consecutive referendums to expand and renovate their 18-year-old community center, which City Administrator Mark McNeill said is "pretty basic" and has an overcrowded fitness center.

Other cities save money by partnering with private companies. Maple Grove connects its community center to Life Time Fitness so residents can work out there and then use the community center's pool or children's play area.

Life Time Fitness has 24 clubs in the metro area, but it welcomes the city-run fitness facilities.

"There always seems to be a niche to be filled," spokeswoman Natalie Bushaw said, adding that Life Time has more premium amenities such as spas and cafes. "There's a demographic Life Time hits. For people looking for an alternative, I think a community center is a good thing."

That wasn't the case in Arizona, where a private gym complained to a local conservative think tank about a city's recreation center unfairly competing with them. The think tank threatened to sue but dropped it earlier this year.

Growing demand

The demand for city fitness facilities is only likely to grow.

In Eden Prairie, young families and the growing number of seniors who want to stay active are packing the community center's 30-year-old lap pool, creating a backlog of swimming requests. As a result, this fall the city will release designs for a \$16.5 million project that would expand the fitness center and replace the lap pool with two new pools.

"Our senior population at the community center has exploded," Eden Prairie Parks and Recreation Director Jay Lothammer said. "And that's where the demographics in Minnesota are headed."

The center doubled in size after voters approved a \$13 million referendum in 2005. Now, it has a weight room, fitness center with 150 classes a week and three sheets of ice. Memberships, in turn, have jumped nearly five times since 2007.

"It's packed," Lothammer said of waiting lines for Pilates and yoga classes. "It's really become a gathering place for the entire community."

kelly.smith@startribune.com 612-673-4141 smetan@startribune.com · 612-673-7380

8,400

membership expected at Williston

Fitness Center in Minnetonka

6,500

membership capacity at Shoreview Community Center

August 30, 2013

Facility of the Week



Belton Outdoor Water Park

[See project slideshow](#)

Post a comment

Name: