

Aquatic Center Planning

Kirkland presentation on Indoor Recreation Facilities and
formation of Metropolitan Park District

Bellevue white paper on Bellevue Aquatic Center

Kirkland City Council / Bellevue City Council
Joint Meeting
May 11, 2015

Topic: Indoor Recreation Facilities

	Kirkland	Bellevue
Planning Status:	Indoor Recreation Facility Plan completed in 2007. Study to secure replacement of Aquatic Center at Juanita High School began in 2013. Planning for future aquatic, recreation, and community (ARC) Center is ongoing.	Aquatic Center feasibility Study completed in 2009. Study to replace Bellevue's Odle pool.
Facility Type:	Multi-purpose community recreation center with 32-meter pool (option to 50-meter)	Multi use aquatic center featuring competition, water sports, recreation, adult fitness and warm water therapy. Five alternatives studied ranging from an outdoor pool to an indoor national aquatic center.
Facility Size:	87,000 – 105,000 sq. ft.	70,000 -139,500 sq. ft.
Estimated Cost:	\$48 - \$67 million	\$19 - \$114 million
Land Acquisition Included:	No	No
Siting Status:	Preference for Totem Lake Urban area. City seeking private property.	Highland Community Park or Bellevue College campus
Funding:	Considering Metropolitan Park District (see attached)	Voter initiative, cost share with school Districts, fundraising, private investment
Timing	Considering November 2015 ballot measure	No timeline established
Partners:	Desired. Outreach to potential partners. No commitments at this time.	Desired. Outreach to potential partners. No commitments at this time.

For more information:

Kirkland ARC Center: www.kirklandwa.gov – Search: ARC

Discussion Questions

1. If Kirkland voters approve a MPD in 2015 as the funding mechanism to build the proposed ARC, would Bellevue consider partnering with Kirkland on a similar timeline?
2. An MPD has authority to invest inside or outside the MPD borders (see attached). If Bellevue can partner on a similar timeline, should the concept of an expanded Metropolitan Park District encompassing both communities be further explored?
3. Are there other opportunities for Bellevue and Kirkland to cooperate or partner on meeting the health, wellness, and indoor recreation needs of their respective communities?

Metropolitan Park District

Metropolitan Parks District (MPD) (RCW 35.61), a metropolitan park district may be created for the management, control, improvement, maintenance, and acquisition of parks, parkways, boulevards, and recreational facilities. MPDs have the authority to levy up to \$0.50 per \$1,000 of assessed valuation for operations and maintenance and another \$0.25 per \$1,000 of assessed valuation for capital projects, for a total of \$0.75 per \$1,000.

The purpose of an MPD is "to manage, control, improve, maintain and acquire parks, parkways, boulevards and recreational facilities within a defined area." MPDs are also permitted access to property taxes available to Junior Taxing Districts, thus granting an MPD an increment of taxing authority that is not otherwise available to cities. In effect, an MPD provides new resources that are outside the competition with other City departments for General Fund resources.

Tacoma voters approved an MPD one month after the original law was enacted in 1907. In 2001 the State amended the legislation in order to make the creation of MPDs more accessible for all cities, counties and unincorporated areas. The new legislation made it possible for an MPD to be created within a single jurisdiction and allowed existing city councils or county commissioners to act as the governing board of the MPD. As of 2015 there are 17 metropolitan park districts in Washington. The City of Seattle is the most recent city jurisdiction to form an MPD, with Seattle voters approving the Seattle Park District in November 2014.

At the Kirkland City Council retreat in February 2015, the Council received a presentation from Foster Pepper attorney Alice Ostdiek on the mechanics and merits of a Metropolitan Park District, or MPD, as a potential funding mechanism for the ARC.

Kirkland asked Ms. Ostdiek whether a Kirkland-only MPD could invest funds outside the boundary of the MPD if a partnership opportunity with Redmond or Bellevue emerged but on different timelines than the City of Kirkland is contemplating. Ms. Ostdiek provided the following analysis: "Such an arrangement outside the boundaries would be fine (so long as the Metro Park District is not exercising eminent domain outside of its boundaries). Some specific statutory references:

- RCW 35.61.130(2) references the power to "regulate, manage and control the parks...[etc.]...under its control...." (i.e., no reference to being located within its boundaries).
- RCW 35.61.130(3) specifically grants "...the power to improve, acquire, extend and maintain, open and lay out, parks, parkways, boulevards, avenues, aviation landings and playgrounds, within or without the park district...and may pay out moneys for the maintenance and improvement of any such parks, parkways, boulevards, avenues, aviation landings and playgrounds as now exist, or may hereafter be acquired, within or without the limits of said city and for the purchase of lands within or without the limits of said city, whenever it deems the purchase to be for the benefit of the public and for the interest of the park district, and for the maintenance and improvement thereof and for all expenses incidental to its duties..."
- RCW 67.20.010 provides that: "Any...separately organized park district acting through its board of park commissioners or other governing officers...shall have power, acting independently or in conjunction with the United States, the state of Washington, any county, city, park district, school district or town or any number of such public organizations to acquire any land within this state for park, playground, gymnasiums, swimming pools, field houses and other recreational facilities, bathing beach or public camp purposes and roads leading from said parks, playgrounds, gymnasiums, swimming pools, field houses and other recreational facilities, bathing beaches, or public camps to nearby highways by donation, purchase or condemnation, and to build, construct, care for, control, supervise, improve, operate and maintain parks, playgrounds, gymnasiums, swimming pools, field houses and other recreational facilities, bathing beaches, roads and public camps upon any such land, including the power to enact and enforce such police regulations not inconsistent with the constitution and laws of the state of Washington, as are deemed necessary for the government and control of the same. The power of eminent domain herein granted shall not extend to any land outside the territorial limits of the governmental unit or units exercising said power."



Date: May 11, 2015

To: Mayor Balducci and City Councilmembers

From: Patrick Foran, Director

Discussion: Aquatic Center Partnership

BELLEVUE AQUATIC CENTER

The City of Bellevue owns the Odle Pool, a Forward Thrust pool opened in 1971 and transferred to the City and expanded in 1997. It contains a conventional 6-lane pool, has a diving L attached, as well as a separate therapy pool. The 6-lane pool no longer meets basic standards for swim meets, but is utilized by a variety of high school and age group swim teams for practice. The therapy pool is a great amenity, and supports a number of therapy users and other functions. However, this is the only public pool in Bellevue, and it has to support a significant number of aquatic needs for a population of 130,000. It is also significant that there are no pools in any of Bellevue's four high schools. As a result, all high school swim meets are held outside the city limits.

BELLEVUE AQUATIC CENTER FEASIBILITY STUDY

In 2008, Council commissioned an Aquatic Center feasibility study. Completed in September 2009, the study was intended to assist the City to determine if, and to what extent, it supports the development of an aquatic center. A public outreach effort included stakeholder meetings, focus groups, and a public interest survey. The study included an evaluation of the current market conditions, preliminary facility and site analysis, and financing options. Capital and operating costs were analyzed for five facility models, ranging from a \$19 million outdoor leisure pool with an estimated annual operating surplus of \$130,000 to a \$114 million indoor national aquatic center requiring an estimated \$1.9 million annual operating subsidy. Each facility emphasizes different market segments, ranging from recreation to competition, serving multiple watersports, and contained capacity for additional program components, such as warm water therapy and adult fitness, and instruction.

Council expressed general support for a major aquatic facility at a March 2009 study session, though concerned about the building and operating costs, and asked staff to explore partnerships with other communities and the private sector. Staff has explored interest of nearby communities including Kirkland, Redmond, Issaquah, Mercer Island, and Sammamish for a partnership, including the formation of a Metropolitan Park District to fund the development and operation of multiple new aquatic centers to replace the old Forward Thrust pools (former King County facilities). Staff have also discussed partnership interest with the Bellevue School District, YMCA and Bellevue College. After the initial round of discussions with nearby communities, there was a general consensus that there was sufficient demand in each city to support a pool but everyone was in a different place on timing and community priority, and that it was best for each community to move at its own pace.

Since that time, Sammamish has proceeded on its own to develop a pool/recreation center in partnership with the YMCA. Redmond has done community outreach work for a pool/recreation center and its Council is now considering potential sites and the timing horizon is still several years out. Kirkland has explored the formation of a Metropolitan Park District to fund a pool/recreation center and have set a goal to be on the November 2015 ballot.

PARTNERSHIP WITH KIRKLAND

A partnership with Kirkland seems unlikely at this time as they are much further ahead and are targeting a November ballot measure to establish a Metropolitan Park District to fund the pool/recreation center and possibly other park needs. Bellevue is also contemplating a ballot measure for the future, but the content and timing is not known. Kirkland's facility model is also different than the Bellevue alternatives that were studied. Kirkland's incorporates a full-service community center with gymnasiums, classrooms, and meeting space along with a pool. Bellevue's focus is on a full range of aquatic activities; competition, recreation, watersports, and warm water therapy. Kirkland's preferred location in the Totem Lake Urban Area is not convenient for many of Bellevue's residents.

COUNCIL PRIORITY

Although Council has supported exploring the feasibility of a new Bellevue Aquatic Center in the past, it is not currently on the list of Council priorities.