



## Memorandum

Date: 1/12/2024

To: BIMPRD Board of Commissioners

From: Dan Hamlin, Park Services Director  
Bainbridge Island Metropolitan Park & Recreation District

Subject: Ray Pool Renovation Update

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### **Background:**

The following outline is meant to capture the timeline and topics of conversation the District has had in assessing the best solution for the Ray Pool replacement or renovation due to its age. The discussion has taken several turns due to the findings throughout the years.

1. In 2016 discussions began about a potential new pool to replace the Ray Williamson Pool for a number of reasons, including:
  - a. Aging infrastructure
  - b. Code and safety concerns
  - c. Desire for more, and better, pool space
2. During the initial Sakai planning process, also launched in 2016, a new 50 meter pool was identified by the community as one of several options for development of the Sakai Park property.
3. The Board of Commissioners later in Sept 2017 determined the Sakai site not to be suitable for a new pool due to the available space and cost of operation. Reasons included:
  - a. A new pool would utilize the entire buildable footprint
  - b. A new pool would require double the staffing and costs for operation due to the Nakata being left in place.
4. A study conducted by Aquatic Design Group and presented to the Board in August 2017 revealed a couple of options:
  - a. Renovate the Ray
  - b. Build a new pool (with 3 options)
  - c. This study was conducted with extensive community input, and concluded the

renovation of the Ray would not best serve the community, cost at least 1.4 million, and would likely produce nothing more than a “band aid” fix for the Ray. So, the Board, with the assumption that a new pool could cost as little as \$11 million launched a second study of what it would take to construct a new pool.

- d. This decision was based on the information known to the District at that time.
5. In 2018 Coates Design Architects conducted an extensive community input process on three new pool concepts, including a 25x25, 33x25, and a 50x25 pool options. This study concluded in fall of 2019. Costs were excessively higher than previously thought. The least costly option, 25x25, was estimated to cost approximately \$30 million. Also, at this time, KPFD was considering funding of a 50 meter pool only. That funding was ultimately denied after extensive District effort to apply for the grant that was available, leaving the full fund raising effort to the District and community. KPFD had no interest in the smaller two pools at all so the potential funding was not available for either of those two options. Much work was needed to negotiate a new pool footprint with BISD as well. The potential cost and realization that a bond would need to be passed caused the District to pause the planning until further information could be gathered.
6. This crossroads left the District with no immediate path forward for a new pool. Efforts then turned to ensuring the Ray didn't have an imminent failure requiring shut down. At this point the Covid 19 pandemic shut down discussions and investigations for an extended period of time.
  - a. During Covid many safety and code issues were resolved within the District's Capital budget in effort to avoid having to close the Ray Pool.
    - i. Decking
    - ii. Electrical and other system improvements
7. In late 2021, once Covid was beginning to have less of an impact on operations, staff suggested conducting yet another study on how to rehabilitate the Ray to determine up to date cost and feasibility of that project. It was also discovered through this process that this repair would provide a stable pool for at least a couple decades, however additional pool space and depth improvements were not being considered at that time.

**Current status:**

8. In December of 2021 the District contracted with Stemper Architecture Collaborative to perform a comprehensive assessment of the Ray complete with critical condition items to reassess the cost and determine if the Ray could be renovated within the District funding ability.
9. That effort has provided us with the 15 critical condition items and Stemper AC has been working on costs and permitting for completing that work which will be reviewed and updated at the Jan 18<sup>th</sup> Board meeting.
10. It's important to note that during this entire discussion dating back to 2016 there have been consistent priorities throughout the process:
  - a. Safety issues must be addressed as they are identified

- b. Keep the Ray operational
- c. Assess all options thoroughly
- d. Make the best decisions for the entire Island, weighing the cost vs benefit of all options carefully.

**Additional Information:**

11. It was suggested in December 2023 that additional lanes could be added to this project in order to increase pool space. The District directed Stemper to conduct a feasibility study and provide cost estimates on what that additional work would look like and what the additional costs would be. Being considered at this time is:
  - a. Adding two lanes consistent with existing lane width.
  - b. Creating an even depth of the pool across the entire area of up to 6.5 feet.
  - c. Spectator solutions if pool is widened reducing deck space
12. Important to note that this addition would create a new project and require much more robust permitting to occur.
13. It is also important to note that a decision regarding final design will need to be made soon to ensure our suggested timing of Phase 1 of the project can be met. Phase 1 will be presented at the Board meeting and includes the most critical items to avoid a shutdown due to failure of critical components such as the HVAC system.

**Next Steps:**

14. Stemper AC will attend the Jan 18, 2024 Board meeting to present an update on the project and information on potential costs, timing, and phasing of the project.