



## **Ray Williamson Pool Renovation FAQ's**

Source: Comments and Questions raised by way of a survey between 2/28-3/20

### **1. Why are you renovating the Ray Williamson Pool?**

Built in 1970, the Ray Williamson Pool has been in continual operation for over 50 years. Beginning in 2016, several studies have investigated options for the pool's renovation or replacement. In September 2022, Stemper Architectural Collaborative was hired to do a comprehensive assessment of the existing facility. This included identifying critical projects to extend the life of the pool a minimum of 20 years.

### **2. What are the critical elements of the project?**

The renovation project's key parts are HVAC replacement, new electrical system and panels, concrete and structural repairs, seismic upgrades, re-roofing of the low-slope roof, fire sprinkler pipes recoating, replacement of the pool deck slab and its linear drains, a new pool filtration and pool chemical treatment system, repurpose of support spaces, LED lighting upgrades, tile and fixture improvements, and a new pool tank liner.

### **3. What is the urgency for this project and decision making?**

Answer: "The three C's: Closure, Code, and Cost"

The electrical and heating/cooling systems have reached the end of their lives. They pose real threats of failure and permanent pool closure.

The permits for the project, submitted in 2023, are close to issuance. A new building code went into effect in Spring 2024. If the project were delayed or resubmitted, the new code would require changes that would compromise the benefits of using the existing building. Staying in the existing building provides significant cost savings, forms the basis of the current improvement permits, and meets lease terms with the School District, the landowner.

Construction and aquatic repair costs continue to escalate. The Park District is pursuing the renovation as efficiently as possible. It is reaching beyond its capital funding and dipping into reserve funding to fix critical items in one expedient effort. The strategy includes the mobilization and management of diverse work under one general contractor per phase.

#### **4. How long will this project expand the life of the pool?**

This project will extend the life of the Ray Pool for a minimum of 20 years. The project includes various improvements with specific lifespans and various warranties. In total, this is a full rehabilitation project for the existing 50-year-old pool.

#### **5. What is the proposed timeline for the project?**

Due to site constraints and complexities within construction trades, the project must be done in two phases:

- Phase 1 is planned to begin in Summer 2024 and last through Spring 2025, with intermittent closures of the Ray Pool.
- The pool could re-open before Phase 2 commences.

Two options for Phase 2 are under consideration. Phase 2 A would rehabilitate a sixlane pool. Phase 2B would renovate and expand it to eight lanes.

- If Phase 2A is selected, work could begin in Summer 2025 and last up to 10 months.
- If Phase 2B is selected, work could begin in Summer 2025 and last up to 18 months.
- The Ray Pool will be closed during Phase 2.

#### **6. What is the scope of work for Phase 2?**

The extent of the renovation in r Phase 2 is now under discussion and design. The bond measure would allow the opportunity to go beyond rehabilitation in Phase 2 and to expand the existing pool, possibly adding two additional swim lanes and introducing a consistent pool depth to increase safety and meet user needs.

#### **7. What will be the depth of an expanded Ray Pool, per Phase 2B?**

The depth of an expanded Ray Pool is under technical review. It could go from its current variable depth to a consistent depth across the pool, per user group needs. A study in December 2023 found that the existing building and pool systems can handle an expanded pool width at a six-and-a-half-foot depth.

#### **8. How will two more lanes and an even pool depth help team sports and the community?**

Two more lanes will increase pool space and the reallocation of lap swim space between the Ray Williamson and the adjacent Don Nakata pools. This will have positive impacts for users across aquatic programming:

- Additional pool space available during peak hours.
- More space for swim lessons in the Nakata pool. It's possible we could expect 35% growth in lessons offered.
- Opportunity for daytime family swim and homeschool swim lessons.
- Increased membership capacity for the Bainbridge Island Swim Club and the Bainbridge Aquatic Masters.
- Greater accessibility for Water Exercise classes, currently almost at capacity. We could see as much as 50% growth in that area.
- Greater availability of water walking and injury treatment for community members who come to the pool for physical therapy.
- Possibility of accommodating private swim lessons.

A deeper and consistent pool depth improves safety and benefits competitive sports, especially water polo and swimming.

## **9. What is the amount of deck space with the eight-lane option?**

The eight-lane layout reduces the east and west sides of the deck, where the spectator stairs are now. It would result in the minimum code-required perimeter deck width in these areas. The preliminary layout shows a varying four – six foot deck width up to the building support beams. This width only allows for circulation, refereeing, and coaching.

The proposed expansion plan includes the conversion of existing storage rooms into deck space. The resulting deck space will be largely equivalent to the existing space and to the typical aquatic venues.

## **10. How will spectator needs be met?**

Spectator needs can be addressed through a range of options as needs present. Deck space for spectators and for team assembly would be mostly be shifted to the north deck that adjoins the Nakata Pool. It's possible to expand deck space here by reducing storage areas on the northeast and northwest corners. Portable bleachers can be placed here for spectators to circulate from the adjacent Don Nakata Pool to view desired events.

Bleachers can also be placed outdoors on existing concrete pads, under a roof overhang, extended canopy, or within heated tents. The new east-side doors and windows would be selected to minimize spectator obstructions. Garage, accordion and sliding options are under design considerations for this purpose. Accommodations learned during COVID safety practices may be implemented, such as creative space management and live-streaming in climate-controlled meeting rooms offered onsite.

Competitive events require additional consideration. [Here's a conceptual meet layout.](#)

**11. What are the impacts to ongoing programs and to the Don Nakata Pool during this project?**

The Park District will work to accommodate all ongoing established programs, working with user groups. We will optimize the mix of creative and expanded scheduling of our available pool spaces (Ray, Nakata, and the Bainbridge Island Recreation Center (BIRC)). We will also coordinate use of offsite locations. During the Ray's closure, we will fit many participants into the Nakata and BIRC spaces while being respectful of current uses.

**12. What are the potential funding sources that the Park District envisions to cover the cost?**

The Park District is addressing the costs of the project now. A funding discussion is ongoing at the regular business meetings of the Park Board meetings. The Board has asked staff to look at options that go beyond existing capital funds, expecting combination proposals. Staff is looking into a combination of capital and reserve funds, grants, loans, private fundraising, and public bond funds.

**13. Will this project increase maintenance costs?**

This project addresses all critical capital needs for the Ray Pool as identified in the comprehensive conditions assessment. We anticipate little to no increase in maintenance costs.

**14. Will this project result in increased operational costs and user fees?**

While staff expense will increase due to increased bather load in the expanded space, revenues generated by new programming are anticipated to be greater than that expense. User fees are assessed and changed yearly based on comprehensive studies of surrounding sites and cost of living increases. There is no plan to work outside of that normal procedure.

**15. How much money is needed?**

The project costs depend on the evolving design status and input from industries and contractor bids. This is especially true due to the required public construction bidding process. The cost estimates must also account for risk, contingency, and inflation.

The cost estimate for Phase 1 is most specific at \$3.5 million. Phase 2 work faces a rough order of magnitude estimate of \$2-7 million, dependent on the scope of the work, now under discussion. Total costs then are currently estimated between \$5.5 million and \$10.5 million.

Pursuing the base project, the Park District has committed \$5.5 million. This allows the project to move forward with Phase 2A as well as the opportunity for the community to consider and fundraise for Phase 2B.

The Phase 2B option would likely double the total cost to approximately \$11 million. Therefore, the gap in funding to expand the Ray is a minimum of \$5.5 million.

#### **16. What happens if the bond fails?**

If the bond fails, the District plans to renovate the Ray in the existing configuration utilizing existing District funds. The Park Board has already approved the original six lane renovation. It committed 2.5 million dollars of reserves and would pursue other funding through fundraising, grants, and loans to cover the estimated \$5.5 million project, as approved by motion at the March 7, 2024 board meeting.

#### **17. What did the Park Board decide at the March 7, 2024 meeting?**

At the March 7th Board Meeting, the Park Board committed the funding for the base rehabilitation project (six-lane renovation) while remaining open to community fundraising for pool expansion (eight-lane renovation.) Specifically, the Board authorized the use of \$2.5 million from Park District reserve funds for the Ray Pool project. The remainder of the project would be funded by a loan to the Park District, reduced by grants or other fundraising.

#### **18. What happened at the March 24, 2024 Board meeting?**

Recognizing the current opportunity, the Park Board initiated a public bond process that would, if passed by voters, fund pool expansion, through Phase 2B. The Board authorized a bond amount to range between 8 and 10million dollars, acknowledging its use towards the funding gap for Phase 2B as well as the loan amounts required for the Park District to advance the base project.

#### **19. What happened at the April 4, 2024 Board Meeting?**

There was evidence that the public campaign group had been formed and presented itself. The staff reported progress on identifying members of the for and against committee required. The aquatic community in the room showed great enthusiasm for the bond.

#### **20. What happened at the April 18, 2024 Board Meeting?**

At the April 18 board meeting the board reviewed the initial draft of a resolution for a Ray renovation bond measure and provided feedback for a final draft.

## **21. What happened at the May 2, 2024 Board Meeting?**

The board unanimously passed a resolution that authorizes a bond measure to go before voters. The bond is anticipated to be on the August Primary Ballot.

The board appointed members of the for or against committee.

The proposed resolution was discussed, and it was identified that it allowed for flexibility for the evolution of the best renovation design. The decision was made to allow the Bainbridge Island community to vote on the bond to allow the expansion the renovation project.

## **22. What are the next steps?**

There is opportunity to gather the community for further evaluation and public education process. There will be public information regarding expansion of the project and final design considerations.