

TO: Mayor Savage and Members of Halifax Regional Council

SUBMITTED BY: Original Signed by 
Jacques Dubé, Chief Administrative Officer

DATE: May 1, 2019

SUBJECT: Long Term Aquatic Strategy

ORIGIN

- February 7, 2017 Regional Council Meeting Motion:
Moved by Councillor Mason, seconded by Deputy Mayor Craig that Halifax Regional Council:
1. Approve the use of the *Community Facility Master Plan 2* (CFMP2) as a framework for municipal decision-making regarding recreation facilities and;
2. Approve the categorization of the CFMP2 recommendations outlined in Attachment 1 of the staff report dated January 6, 2017, and direct staff to incorporate the recommendations in future annual Business Plans for Council's consideration. **MOTION PUT AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**
- March 21, 2017 Regional Council Meeting Motion:
Moved by Councillor Mancini, seconded by Councillor Cleary that Halifax Regional Council request a staff report to look at the possibility of building a 50-meter pool in HRM. Staff should consult with community stakeholders including Swim Nova Scotia (SNS) in preparing the report to benefit by technical information, including options and other considerations to inform recommendations for the construction of a 50-metre pool. Options should include looking at building a pool within an existing HRM facility or a stand-alone facility. **AMENDED MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

Halifax Regional Municipality Charter

7A The purposes of the Municipality are to

...
(b) provide services, facilities and other things that, in the opinion of the Council, are necessary or desirable for all or part of the Municipality; ...

79A(1) Subject to subsections (2) to (4) the Municipality may only spend money for municipal purposes if
(a) the expenditure is included in the Municipality's operating budget or capital budget or is otherwise authorized by the Municipality; ...

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Halifax Regional Council:

1. Approve the *Long-Term Aquatic Strategy* (Attachments A and B) as the strategic direction for municipal aquatic facility planning; and
2. Direct staff to incorporate subsequent implementation plans into future annual Business Plans for Council's consideration.

BACKGROUND

The 2016 *Community Facilities Master Plan 2* (CFMP2), approved by Regional Council, is a framework for community facility planning. The CFMP2 provides an overview of the aquatic service and recommends the development of a comprehensive long-term aquatic strategy. The CFMP2 noted that there is sufficient capacity in the current aquatic inventory to generally meet usage requirements, but found that some facilities are near the end of their expected lifecycles. The CFMP2 found some users may not get favoured pool times in preferred locations, some facilities are not fully accessible, and policies should be reviewed to ensure barriers to participation are reduced.

In 2016/17, there were several temporary aquatic facility closures which placed additional pressures on the delivery system and heightened the need for the development of an Aquatic Strategy. They included, a five-month closure of Dalhousie University's 50-metre competition pool due to maintenance issues, a three-month closure of the Sackville Sports Stadium due to a roof fire, and a year and a half closure of the Zatzman Sportsplex for a revitalization project. During the Dalhousie facility closure in March 2017, Regional Council directed staff to study the possibility of building a 50-meter pool which has been incorporated into the overall review of aquatics.

Whereas past aquatic studies only addressed specific aquatic facilities, the *Long-Term Aquatic Strategy* (the "Strategy") is a comprehensive examination of the full range of aquatic facility types. The purpose of the Strategy will be to inform decisions and provide guidance to HRM and the general public and specialized groups, including competitive aquatic sport clubs for the next 15 years. Its scope includes municipal indoor and outdoor pools, training and competition aquatic sport facilities, municipally-supervised beaches and splash pads.

DISCUSSION

Approach

The development of the Strategy models a similar approach previously undertaken for the completed *Long-Term Arena Strategy* (2012). The Strategy is guided by the Parks & Recreation Vision and guiding principles. It was also informed through community and stakeholder engagement and evidence-based analysis.

Community and Stakeholder Engagement

As part of the overall analysis, a key component of the Strategy's approach has been community and stakeholder engagement. This included an Aquatic Stakeholder Working Group to provide guidance and advice throughout the process. The Working Group consisted of representatives from Sport Nova Scotia, Swim Nova Scotia, Diving Nova Scotia, Synchro Nova Scotia, Water Polo Nova Scotia, Lifesaving Society, Canoe/Kayak Nova Scotia, Dalhousie University, Parks and Recreation Aquatic Services and the Province of Nova Scotia's Department of Communities, Culture and Heritage. The Working Group did not review the final version of the Strategy but provided input throughout its development.

Additional broader community engagement included a two-month online public survey that was widely promoted. Outreach engagement was also comprised of focus groups and workshops with persons with disabilities, newcomers, marginalized youth, and aquatic facility managers. This outreach, in conjunction with the public survey and stakeholder engagement, helped to inform the key findings and recommended actions contained within this Strategy.

Key Findings

The Strategy's Key Findings, Section 4, are derived from the analysis and community engagement findings and include the following:

- Public feedback confirmed strong overall interest in aquatics across a wide range of ages and areas of the municipality.
- Engagement findings indicated that the top reasons participants use aquatic facilities are for 'exercise and being active' and 'recreation and fun'. 'Lowering fees' and 'upgrading and enhancing facilities' were identified as two factors that could encourage more aquatic participation. The main barrier to participation expressed was 'not having enough aquatic facilities nearby'.
- Most recreational aquatic participation is for open swims, learn to swim programs, aquatic fitness programs and visiting supervised beaches.
- Overall aquatic demand is strong, but utilization is impacted by some aging facilities which do not fully meet program requirements and lack the accessible and multifunctional features required for broader participation.
- The two oldest recreational aquatic facilities are Needham Centre Pool and the Halifax Common Outdoor Pool. These facilities do not fully meet current program requirements and have the lowest recreational participation, but are located within areas of anticipated future residential growth, the Regional Centre.
- The municipality is mostly reliant on beaches for its provision of outdoor aquatics, while also having a small number of outdoor pools and splash pads, leading to potential gaps in the outdoor aquatic inventory. Further, there is a growing trend of beach closures due to water quality issues in some locations, which is negatively impacting participation.
- The municipality is host to the only 50-metre pools in the province. Both Centennial Pool and Dalplex are aging and do not meet the requirements for hosting national level competitive swimming events. Further, the community is reliant on Dalplex to host most local and regional competitive swimming events which poses a risk in the event of an unexpected closure.
- In addition to the Regional Centre, Bedford West is anticipated to continue to experience significant growth over the next 15 years and its impact on surrounding areas could lead to a gap in the indoor recreational facility inventory.
- There is a lack of consistency across municipally-owned aquatic facilities with regards to program/user fees and there is no system wide framework related to allocations and scheduling.

Aquatic Strategy and Strategic Actions

From the Key Findings, a complete list of strategic actions outlining where the municipality may place an emphasis in the provision of aquatics is presented in Section 5 of the Strategy. A few highlighted examples of these actions include:

- Recapitalize the Halifax Common outdoor aquatic facility as identified through the forthcoming *Halifax Common Master Plan*.
- Replace the Needham Recreation Centre and explore design options for an updated recreational aquatic facility that complements existing facilities and meets community recreational needs.
- Establish a regional distribution of splash pads to meet municipal-wide and district needs as outlined in the Long-Term Aquatic Strategy.
- Maintain the municipal beach program, continue water quality monitoring, and seek solutions to improve water quality.
- Monitor population growth trends throughout the municipality, assess emerging service gaps in and surrounding Bedford West and, if warranted, identify available lands for a potential future facility or explore expansion opportunities with existing facilities.
- Initiate the development of a business case that includes an evaluation of partnership opportunities, approaches, design, funding, cost-benefit, risk, economic impact, and locational siting options for the replacement of Centennial Pool with an updated regional training and competition hosting aquatic facility.
- Recognize the aquatic mandate when seeking guidance on the provision of aquatics and when developing strategies to remove barriers that facilitate lifelong participation.
- Adopt the Aquatic Access Plan (Appendix C of the Strategy) which provides a framework and allocation guidelines for municipal aquatic facilities.

The Strategic Actions outline priority directions to guide current and future project work. No new additional staff, specific to the actions, are anticipated at this time. However, actions may lead to strategic investments phased over multiple years or new programs that will require further approval from Regional Council. Most actions will be led through the Parks and Recreation Business Unit. Budget implications resulting from the Strategy will need to be considered through future business planning cycles. These include:

- Retaining older facilities which do not meet user requirements and are nearing the end of their lifecycles, resulting in continued capital investments as required through regular lifecycle planning.
- The Halifax Common Outdoor Pool is at the end of its lifecycle and its recommended recapitalization, which is forthcoming through the *Halifax Common Master Plan*, will need to be considered in an upcoming budget and business planning cycles.
- The preliminary funding for the replacement of Needham Centre is currently identified in the 10-year capital budget which should include a recreational aquatic facility within its design.
- Assessments for net additional splash pads are recommended to be undertaken. New splash pads may need to be considered in future budget and business planning cycles. Existing projects which have been identified, such as the replacement of the Beechville Lakeside Timberlea Recreation Centre, provide potential synergies and collocating opportunities.
- The funding of a business case study for the replacement of Centennial Pool.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no immediate financial implications associated with this report. However, there are financial

implications that will need to be considered for future budget and business planning cycles and which will be the subject of future reports. This may result in a re-prioritization of future capital projects.

RISK CONSIDERATION

The following risks have been identified through the aquatic strategy in this report:

- There are some risks to retaining older assets in terms of operational efficiencies, meeting community needs, low utilization, and future recapitalization costs. The Halifax Common Aquatic area is at the end of its lifespan and its short-term viability may be questionable. A closure of this facility would negatively impact service delivery. The recommendation to recapitalize and replace this facility would mitigate this risk, as would future capital funding to maintain other existing facilities.
- There are risks to the municipality's reliance on the supervised beach inventory for outdoor aquatics considering trending beach closures in some locations. The recommendations to seek water quality solutions and diversify the outdoor aquatic provision through additional net new splash pads mitigates this risk.
- There is some risk associated with a reliance on Dalplex, which operates outside of municipal control, in the event of unexpected facility closures as it relates to hosting swimming competitions. This risk is mitigated by the recommendation to initiate the development of a business case for the potential replacement of Centennial Pool, including the feasibility of a single rationalized but expanded regional facility.
- There are some risks associated with population growth trends and their impact on emerging gaps to service delivery. The recommendation to monitor, conduct further assessments, and to begin planning for anticipated impacts of residential growth mitigates this risk.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The community engagement process for the development of the *Long-Term Aquatic Strategy* involved consultation through a Stakeholder Working Group made up of aquatic representatives; focus groups with new Canadians, marginalized youth, and persons with disabilities; feedback from aquatic facility managers; and, a broad based two-month online public survey.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no immediate environmental implications associated with this report. The Strategy notes:

- Warming trends may continue to impact water quality, resulting in beach closures and impacting service delivery. Recommendations aim to address this through the pending outcomes of the *Pollution Control Study* as well as diversifying outdoor aquatic facilities.
- There are potential impacts on water resources and operational feasibility when considering public aquatic facilities outside of the Urban (Water) Service Area. The Strategy does not recommend net additional aquatic facilities outside of the water service area

ALTERNATIVES

1. Regional Council may choose to direct staff to consider alternatives to the directions in the *Long-Term Aquatic Strategy*. This may involve additional assessments, revisions to the Strategy and a

new staff report to Regional Council.

2. Regional Council may choose to not approve the *Long-Term Aquatic Strategy*. This is not recommended due to the identified need for an aquatic strategy to guide future planning and provision of aquatic services to meet community needs.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A: Long-Term Aquatic Strategy

Attachment B: Long-Term Aquatic Strategy Appendices

A copy of this report can be obtained online at halifax.ca or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 902.490.4210.

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HALIFAX

LONG-TERM AQUATIC STRATEGY

May 2019

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Attachment B

Appendix A - Facility Rules and Guidelines of Swimming Canada
Appendix B - Evaluation Criteria - Splash Pads & Supervised Beaches
Appendix C - Aquatic Access Plan
Appendix D - Building Condition Assessments

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Executive Summary

Background

Halifax Parks and Recreation aims to improve quality of life through lifelong participation in healthy active lifestyles. Having access to a broad range of recreational opportunities helps citizens achieve those active lifestyles, and attracts visitors and new residents to the municipality.

The development of a *Long-Term Aquatic Strategy* was identified in the 2016 *Community Facilities Master Plan 2* (CFMP2) and subsequently approved by Regional Council in the Parks and Recreation 2017/18 - 2018/19 multi-year business plan. In addition, Regional Council's March 21, 2017 meeting motion initiated the direction to investigate the feasibility of a 50-metre competition pool, which is also incorporated into the Strategy's development.

This Strategy's purpose is to provide a broad-based overview of the entire aquatic service delivery system, identify gaps, opportunities and priorities within the system, and provide strategic approaches and actions which can be used to guide aquatic facility planning over a 15-year timeframe. The scope of the *Long-Term Aquatic Strategy* includes a full range of aquatic facilities including indoor and outdoor pools, training and competition aquatic facilities, splash pads and supervised beaches.

The municipality is growing; which emphasizes the need to plan for changing demographics, aging facilities and emerging trends, to ensure opportunities for public aquatic access are available. The Key Findings and Strategic Actions are derived from analysis and community and stakeholder engagement findings, along with guidance from an aquatic Stakeholder Working Group.

Strategic Goal

To facilitate lifelong participation for everyone to enable healthy and active lifestyles through a full range of aquatic facilities.



Key Findings

- 1 Public feedback confirmed strong overall interest in aquatics across a wide range of ages and areas of the municipality.
- 2 Engagement findings indicated that the top reasons why participants use aquatic facilities are for 'exercise and being active' and 'recreation and fun'. 'Lowering fees' and 'upgrading and enhancing facilities' were identified as the two key factors that would encourage more aquatic participation. The main barrier to participation expressed was 'not having enough aquatic facilities nearby'.
- 3 Most recreational aquatic participation is for open swims, learn to swim programs, aquatic fitness programs and visiting supervised beaches.
- 4 Overall aquatic demand is strong but utilization is impacted by some aging facilities which do not fully meet program requirements and lack the accessible and multifunctional features required for broader participation.
- 5 The two oldest recreational aquatic facilities are Needham Centre Pool and the Halifax Common Outdoor Pool. These facilities do not fully meet current program requirements, have the lowest recreational participation, and are located within populated areas of anticipated future residential growth, the Regional Centre.
- 6 The municipality is mostly reliant on beaches for its provision of outdoor aquatics, while having a small number of outdoor pools and splash pads, leading to potential gaps in the outdoor aquatic inventory. Further, there is a growing trend of beach closures due to water quality issues in some locations, which is negatively impacting participation.
- 7 The municipality is host to the only 50-metre pools in the province. Both Centennial Pool and Dalplex are aging and do not meet the requirements for hosting national level competitive swimming events. Further, the community is reliant on Dalplex to host most local and regional swim competitions which poses a risk in the event of an unexpected closure.
- 8 In addition to the Regional Centre, Bedford West is anticipated to continue to experience significant growth over the next 15 years and its impact on surrounding areas could lead to a gap in the indoor recreational facility inventory.
- 9 There is a lack of consistency across municipally-owned aquatic facilities with regard to program/user fees and there is no system-wide framework related to allocations and scheduling.

Strategic Actions

Seventeen Strategic Actions address the Key Findings and provide priority direction for current and future project work related to:

- » Aquatic Mandate
- » Indoor Recreational Pools
- » Regional Training and Competition Aquatic Facilities
- » Outdoor Recreational Pools
- » Splash Pads
- » Supervised Beaches

The actions relate to one or more of the following directions: guidance, assessment, recapitalization, replacement, monitor, and additional net new.

I Introduction



1.1 Background

The 2016 *Community Facilities Master Plan 2* (CFMP2), approved by Regional Council, is a framework for community facility planning. The CFMP2 provides an overview of the aquatic service and recommended the development of a comprehensive long-term aquatic strategy.

The CFMP2 noted that there is sufficient capacity in the current aquatic inventory to generally meet usage requirements, but found that some facilities are near the end of their expected lifecycle. The CFMP2 also found that some users may not get preferred pool times in preferred locations, that some facilities are not fully accessible, and that policies should be reviewed to ensure that barriers to participation are reduced.

In 2016/17 there were several temporary aquatic facility closures which placed additional pressures on the delivery system and heightened the need for the development of an aquatic strategy. They included a five-month closure of Dalhousie University's 50-metre competition pool due to maintenance issues, a three-month closure of the Sackville Sports Stadium due to a roof fire, and a year and a half closure of the Zatzman Sportsplex (formerly the Dartmouth Sportsplex) for a revitalization project. During the Dalhousie facility closure in March 2017, Regional Council directed staff to study the possibility of building a 50-meter pool.

Whereas past aquatic studies only addressed specific aquatic facilities, the *Long-Term Aquatic Strategy* is a comprehensive examination of the full range of aquatic facility types from splash pads to training and competition facilities.

Background Aquatic Studies

Two past aquatic studies have been considered in the development of this Strategy and their summary findings are highlighted in Section 3.2:

- » *2007 The Mainland Common 50 Metre Pool Study* – This study was commissioned to assess the need for an additional 50-metre competition pool in the Halifax Region.
- » *2014 Eastern Region Aquatic Analysis* – This study provided an aquatic needs assessment for the Eastern Region of the municipality initiated by an impending closure of the Nova Scotia Community College Akerley Campus Aquatic Facility, which was operated by the YMCA.

1.2 Project Purpose & Scope

The purpose of the *Long-Term Aquatic Strategy* is to recommend directions for the provision of aquatic facilities and how they may be accessed by the general public and specialized groups, including competitive aquatic sport clubs, over the next 15 years. Its scope includes municipal indoor and outdoor pools, training and competition aquatic sport facilities, municipally-supervised beaches, and splash pads. The Strategy also considers non-municipal facilities, such as the Dalplex and the Waegwoltic Club. Not included within the scope of this Strategy are:

- » Detailed needs assessment for aquatic programming
- » Hotel pools and private backyard pools
- » Paddling clubs
- » A detailed business case analysis
- » A detailed site suitability analysis
- » A detailed fee review (this is included in a separate forthcoming *Fee Review Study*)



1.3 Approach

The development of the *Long-Term Aquatic Strategy* models a similar approach previously undertaken for the completed *Long-Term Arena Strategy* (2012). The *Aquatic Strategy* is guided by the Parks & Recreation Vision and guiding principles. It was also informed through community and stakeholder engagement and evidence-based analysis.

Community and Stakeholder Engagement

As part of the overall analysis, a key component of the Strategy's approach has been community and stakeholder engagement. This included an Aquatic Stakeholder Working Group to provide guidance and advice throughout the process. The Working Group consisted of representatives from Sport Nova Scotia, Swim Nova Scotia, Diving Nova Scotia, Synchro Nova Scotia, Water Polo Nova Scotia, Lifesaving Society, Canoe/Kayak Nova Scotia, Dalhousie University, Parks and Recreation Aquatic Services and the Province of Nova Scotia's Department of Communities, Culture and Heritage. The Working Group did not review this final document but provided input throughout its development.

Additional broader community engagement included a two-month online public survey that was widely promoted. Outreach engagement was also comprised of focus groups and workshops with persons with disabilities, newcomers, and marginalized youth. A workshop and individual

meetings were conducted with Multi-District (MDF) Facility managers. This community and stakeholder engagement helped to inform the recommended actions contained within this Strategy.

Parks and Recreation Vision

The following Parks and Recreation Vision Statement was used for guidance in the development of the Strategy: *We work together to create a Halifax where everyone has access to meaningful recreation experiences that enable healthy lifestyles, vibrant communities and the sustainability of our natural and built environments. We make a difference.*

Guiding Principles for the Strategy Development

The Guiding Principles for the development of the Strategy are:

- » Evidence-based analysis
- » Lifelong participation in active healthy lifestyles
- » Safety in and around the water
- » Access and inclusion
- » Informed partnerships
- » Collaborative municipal-wide service delivery
- » Service excellence
- » Financial responsibility
- » Environmental impact
- » Reflective of community interest and needs

Municipal Aquatic Mandate

The municipality does not currently have a formalized aquatic mandate by which its facilities are guided. An overall mandate is proposed as part of this Strategy (Section 5.1). The mandate focuses on lifelong aquatic participation for everyone to enable active and healthy lifestyles while playing a secondary support role regarding high level sport development. The mandate provides strategic guidance while allowing municipal facilities the flexibility to operate within our current service delivery model which reflects diverse community interests and needs.

Components of the Analysis

Evidence-based analysis informs the Strategy's Key Findings and actions and includes the following components:

- » Demographic overview - population and residential growth
- » Current facility inventory and distribution
- » Benchmarking
- » Drive-time estimates and public transit access
- » Summary of community and public engagement findings
- » Facilities and usage

Guiding Documents - Past and Current Studies

As noted in the Background Section (1.1), past aquatic studies were considered as part of the development of this Strategy. Additionally, several reports, current studies, and guiding documents were reviewed to help inform it. These include:

- » 2012 - HRM Community Access Plan
- » 2013 - Quantifying the Costs and Benefits of Alternative Growth Scenarios, Stantec.
- » 2014 - Regional Municipal Planning Strategy
- » 2015 - Canadian Sport for Life – Long Term Athlete Development Plan (LTAD)
- » 2016 - Community Facilities Master Plan 2
- » 2016 - Halifax's Economic Growth Plan
- » 2017 - Halifax Regional Council's Priority Areas and Outcomes
- » 2018 - Halifax Regional Municipality's Diversity and Inclusion Framework
- » 2018 - The Draft Regional Centre Secondary Municipal Planning Strategy Package A
- » 2019 - Pollution Control Study
- » 2018 - Fee Structure Review (underway)



This Strategy is guided by the Parks & Recreation Vision, Guiding Principles, and was informed through community and stakeholder engagement and evidence-based analysis.



2 Background Analysis



This section provides an overview of demographic trends, benchmarking with other municipalities, and results from stakeholder and community engagement regarding aquatics. This information is subsequently used in Section 3, Facilities & Usage, which provides detailed analysis of the individual types of aquatic facilities in the municipality: indoor pools, including training and competition facilities; outdoor pools; splash pads; and, supervised beaches.

2.1 Demographic Overview & Population Growth

Demographic Information

The municipality’s population grew from 390,328 to 403,390 between 2011 and 2016*, an increase of 13,062 (Statistics Canada). The 2017 estimate is 431,701 (Statistics Canada). Representing 17% of the population, the single largest age range category is made up of 50-59-year old’s (Table 1). The combined age range categories of 0-19 years make up 21.5% of the population (Table 1). In 2016, the municipality had an overall average household income of \$87,566 annually (Statistics Canada).

Household Growth

The *Long-Term Aquatic Strategy* aims to respond to future anticipated growth in the municipality. According to the 2014 *Regional Municipal Planning Strategy*¹, 25% of new

*Population counts are lower than population estimates as some subsets are not included. For more information see [Stats Canada](#).

Age (yrs)	Mean (%)	Approx. Pop’n*
0-4	4.9	21,314
5-9	5.4	23,277
10-14	5.4	23,187
15-19	5.8	25,233
20-29	12.0	51,872
30-39	12.4	53,503
40-49	14.2	61,281
50-59	17.0	73,418
60-69	12.9	55,848
70-79	6.7	28,794
80 +	3.2	13,975

*Statistics Canada 2016, scaled using 2017 projected population of 431,701.

housing is targeted within the Regional Centre (Figure 1), 50% within the Urban Service Area (Figure 2) and 25% in rural areas. According to a study by Stantec, *Halifax Regional Municipality’s Growth Scenarios Final Report*, the municipality’s population is projected to grow to 484,154 by 2031². It should be noted that *Halifax’s Economic Growth Plan*³ is targeting higher growth than what has been projected in the Stantec report.

The *Draft Centre Plan*⁴ outlines a growth scenario to accommodate up to 40% of the municipality’s residential growth within the Regional Centre between 2016 and 2031 (Figures 1, 3). Similarly,

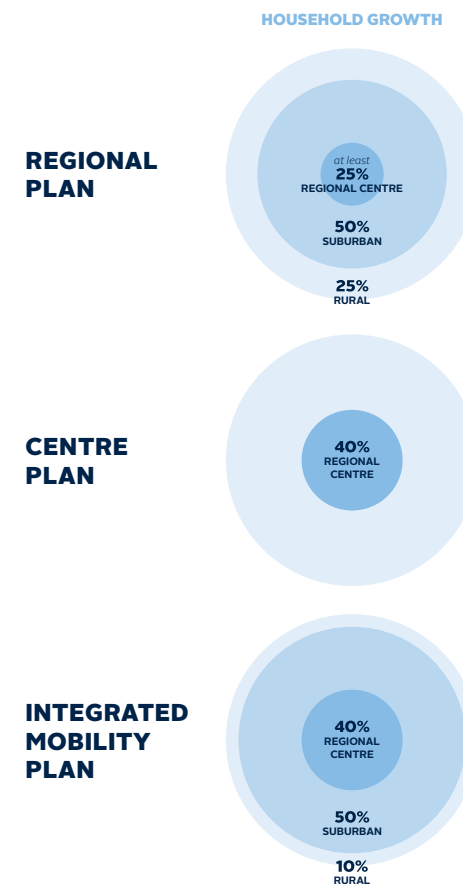


Figure I. Household growth scenarios (Integrated Mobility Plan, 2017)

¹ Halifax (2014) [Regional Municipal Planning Strategy](#)

² Stantec (2013) [Growth Scenarios Final Report](#)

³ Halifax Partnership (2016) [Halifax’s Economic Growth Plan](#)

⁴ Halifax (2018) [Draft Centre Plan](#)

the *Integrated Mobility Plan*¹ household growth scenario indicates that 40% of the anticipated household growth in the municipality will be within the Regional Centre, 50% within suburban areas (Urban Service Area) and 10% will occur within rural areas (Figure 1).

While our population is aging, there are also increases in Indigenous households, new Canadians, young families, multi-generational households, and multi-unit housing in urban areas (*Draft Centre Plan*). Along with the Regional Centre, Bedford West is a significant area of anticipated residential growth (Figure 3). Smaller, yet potentially significant, residential growth is anticipated in other areas of the municipality and should be monitored for future impacts on the aquatic inventory.

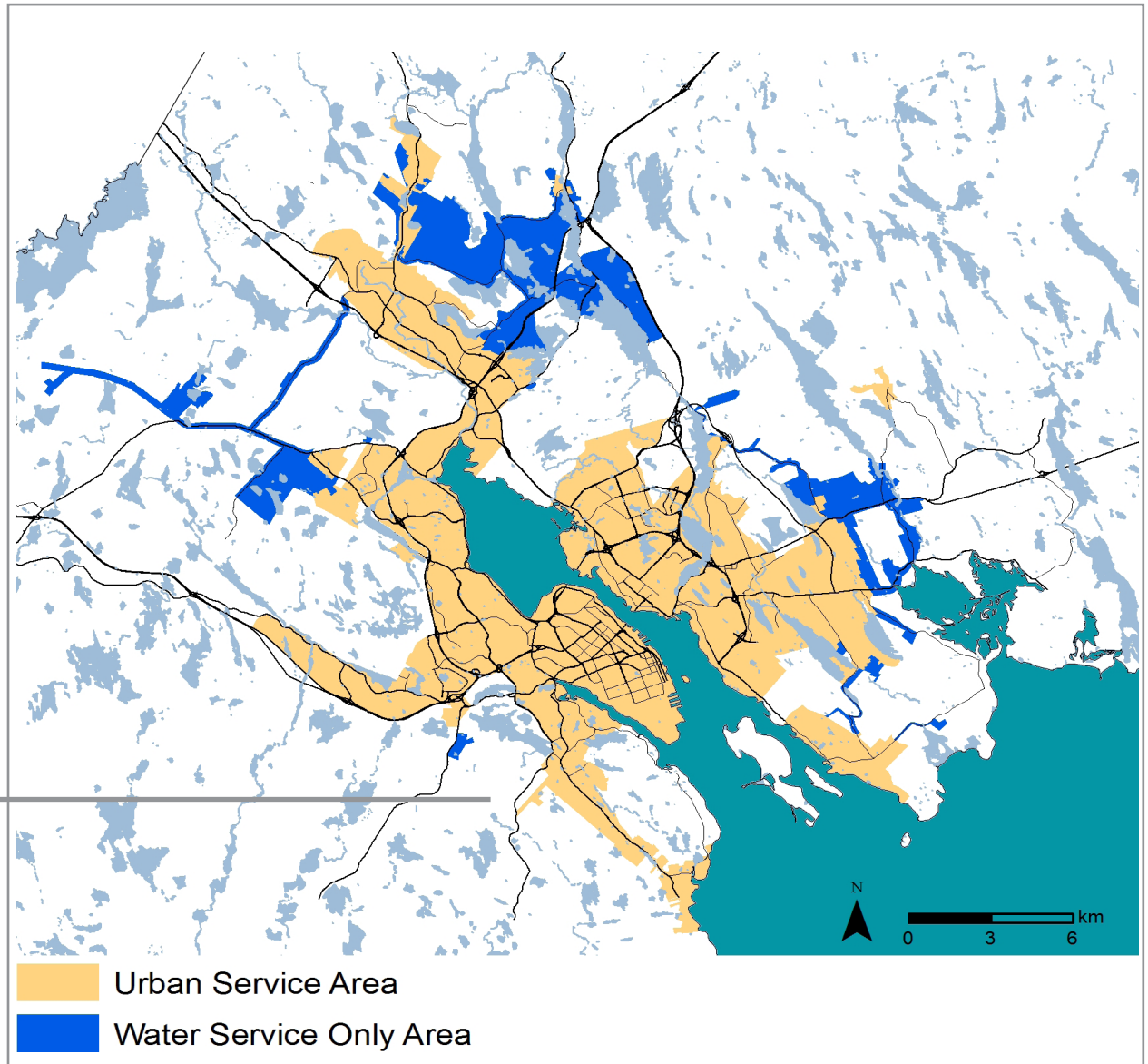
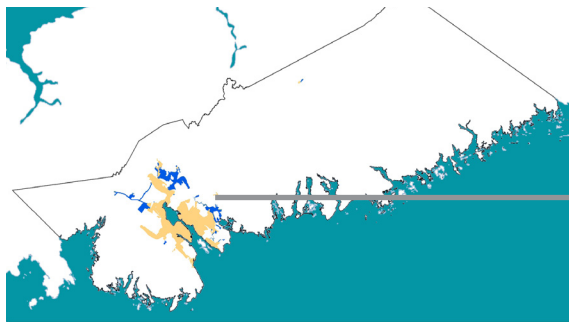


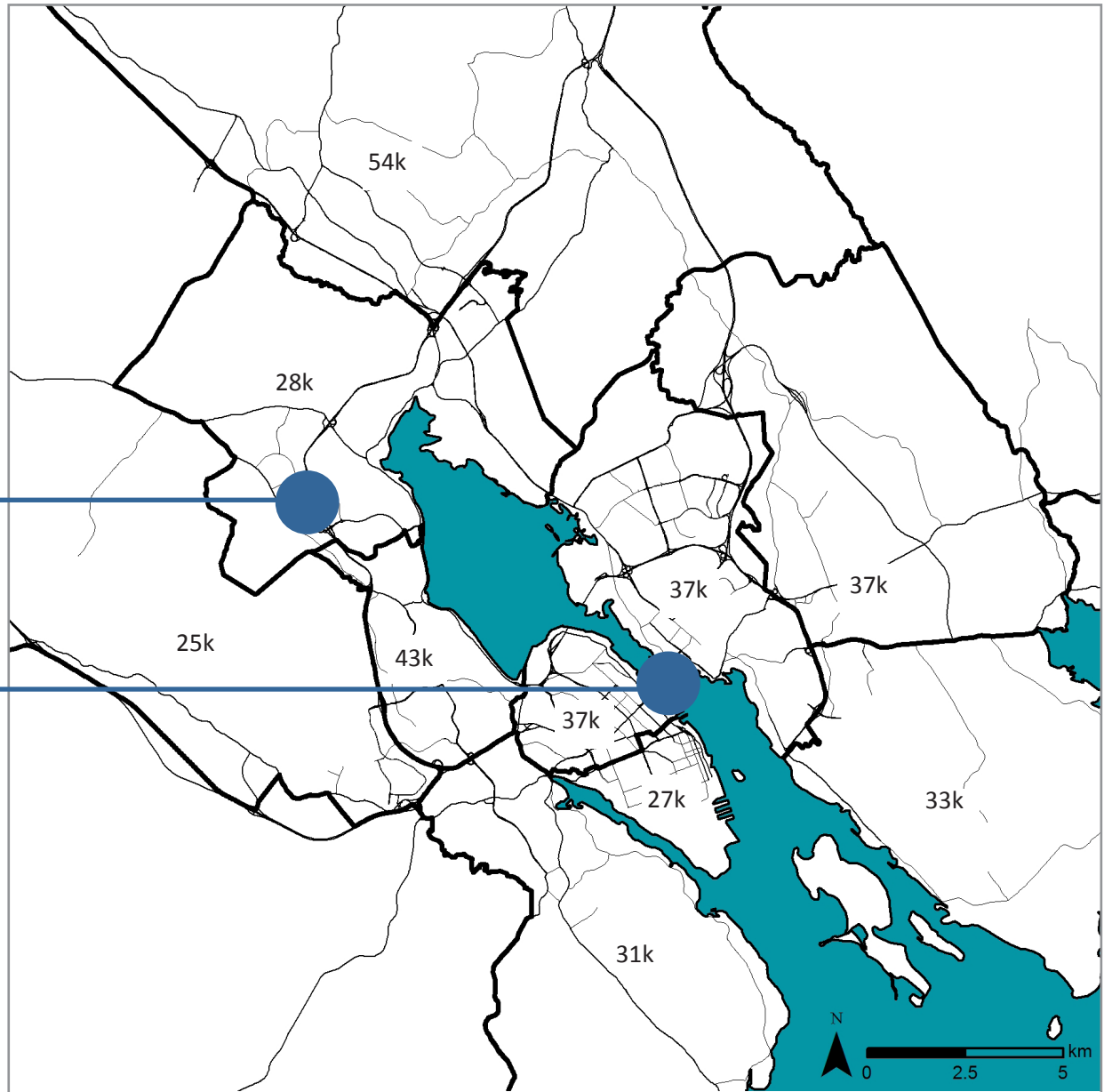
Figure 2. Urban Service Area and water-only service areas.

¹Halifax (2017) [Integrated Mobility Plan](#)

Bedford West is a Master Plan area that currently has the largest anticipated residential growth outside the Regional Centre.

The Regional Centre is anticipating 40% of the municipality's residential growth up to 2031.

Figure 3. 2016 population* in or near the Urban Service Area, aggregated by dissemination area. Major anticipated residential growth areas are highlighted.



*Population counts are lower than population estimates as some subsets are not included. For more information see [Stats Canada](#).

Summary

- » Between 2011 and 2016 the municipality's population grew by over 13, 000 people.
- » The *Draft Centre Plan* and *Integrated Mobility Plan* outline growth scenarios to accommodate 40% of household growth in the Regional Centre, 50% in suburban areas and 10% in rural areas.
- » In addition to the Regional Centre, Bedford West is an area of significant anticipated residential growth.

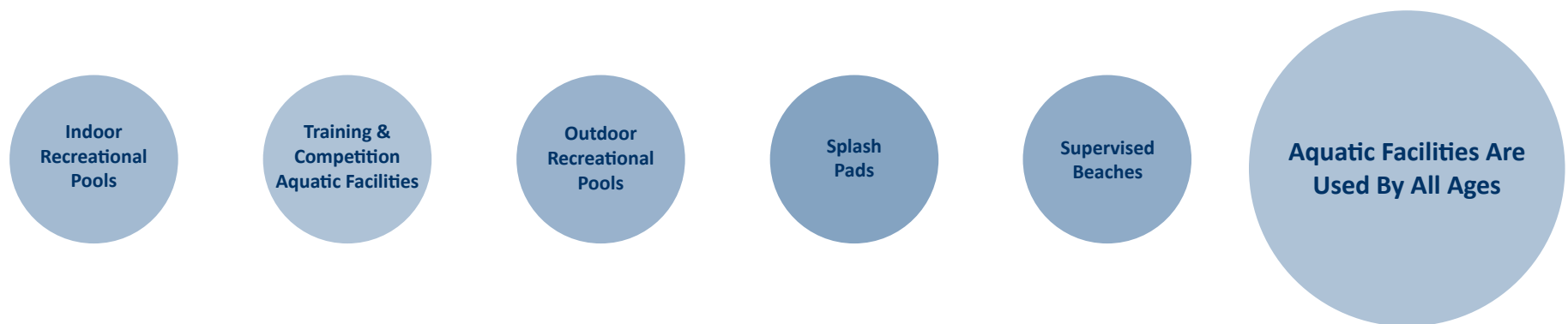
2.2 Aquatic Facility Inventory & Service Delivery Model Overview

The municipality's aquatic service delivery system is a multifaceted network that includes splash pads, supervised beaches, indoor and outdoor recreational pools, and 50-metre training and competition pools. This network of facilities can meet a variety of aquatic needs throughout the municipality. Aquatic facilities are municipal-wide assets where users may travel to various locations depending on where they live, work, or the type of program or facility features they desire.

The municipal aquatic service delivery model is a hybrid system. Municipal recreation facilities

are either owned and operated directly by the municipality or they are owned by the municipality but operated by a community board. In the latter case, the community boards act on behalf of the municipality to deliver the service, but they are responsible for their own operations including program offerings, fees charged, scheduling, operating hours, and staffing. This hybrid model can result in some inconsistencies in service delivery across all municipal facilities.

There are also non-municipal facilities that contribute to the provision of aquatics through their own respective mandates. These include the new YMCA, Department of Defence (Shearwater Pool), Dalhousie University (Dalplex), and other membership-based organizations such as the Waegwoltic Club, and the Royal Nova Scotia Yacht Squadron.



Total Inventory

There are 10 indoor pools, 6 outdoor pools, 6 splash pads, and 26 supervised beaches within the municipality (Table 2, Figure 4). Facility details related to specific pools are outlined in Section 3, Facilities & Usage.

Aquatic Facilities Overview	Total #	Ownership/Operations Breakdown
Indoor Pools	10	3 Municipally owned & operated 4 Municipally owned/board operated 3 Non-municipally owned*
Outdoor Pools	6	3 Municipally owned & operated 1 Municipally owned/board operated 2 Non-municipally owned
Splash Pads	6	6 Municipally owned
Supervised Beaches**	26	19 Municipally Supervised 6 Provincially Supervised 1 Recreation Association Supervised
*YMCA is under construction		
**Does not include beaches supervised by paddling clubs		

Water Resource Considerations

Except for one outdoor pool, all municipal pools are located within the Urban Service Area with piped municipal water services (Figure 2). Public pools require substantial amounts of potable water for their daily operation: guidelines require daily water replacement and filtration for public health reasons¹, and water is lost due to evaporation and regular pool maintenance. Water is also needed for the associated public washroom and shower facilities.

Consideration of public aquatic facilities outside the Urban Service Area where there are no piped municipal water services have additional technical, operational, and environmental

implications and risks. In such cases many factors need to be considered: hydrological assessments; provincial permitting for water withdrawal; regular monitoring and water quality testing; limitations to groundwater supply; and evaluation of impacts to adjoining/surrounding wells. Further, warming and drying climate trends observed in our region can have impacts to the water supply. Water usage for public aquatic facilities in areas with groundwater supply limitations could result in increased risks and costs associated with providing holding tanks, ongoing commercial water delivery to meet the supply needs, and additional water filtration and treatment systems to address water quality concerns.



¹Nova Scotia Operational Guidelines Aquatic Facilities

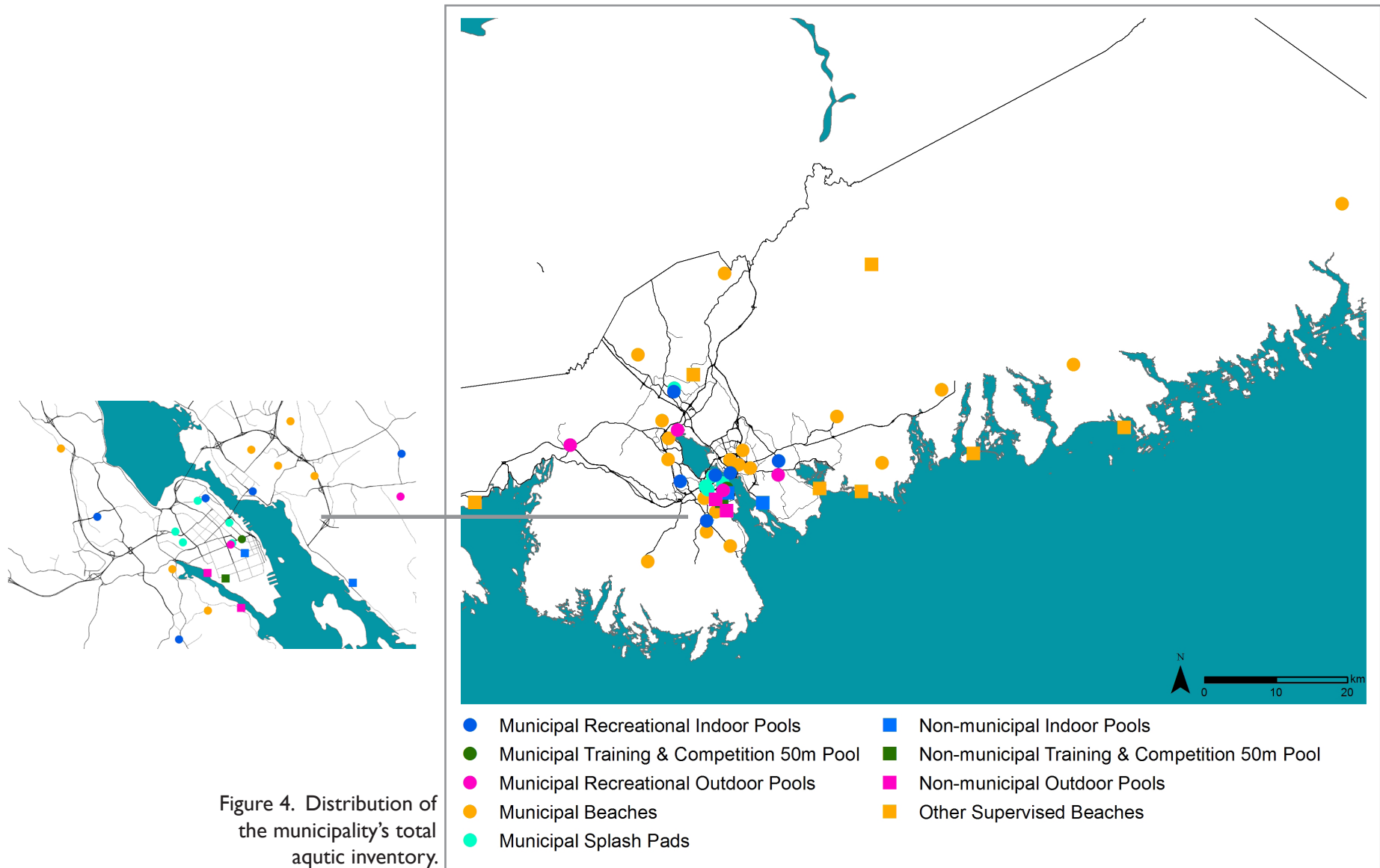


Figure 4. Distribution of the municipality's total aquatic inventory.

Drive-Time Estimates & Public Transit Access

Drive times to aquatic facilities should be considered in the context of the municipal inventory with the unique geography of urban and rural considerations. Community feedback from the aquatic survey (Section 2.3) indicated that long distances to aquatic facilities is a barrier to participation for some.

The CFMP2 noted, through public feedback, that nearly all residents would be willing to drive 15 minutes and most would be willing to drive 20 minutes to larger recreation facilities. Residents in rural communities were willing to travel longer distances. Table 3 indicates the current drive times to existing aquatic facilities (Table 2, Figure 4). Most residents are served by an aquatic

facility within a 20-minute drive time. Regarding public transit access to aquatic facilities, 77% of the aquatic assets listed in Table 2 and Figure 4, are within 400m of a transit stop. This includes all of the indoor pools and splash pads, 16 of 26 beaches and all but one of the outdoor pools.

Benchmarking - Indoor and Outdoor Pools & Splash Pads

The Municipal Benchmarking Network Canada (MBNC) is a partnership between participating Canadian municipalities who's goal it is to identify and collect consistent and comparable data on their municipal service areas.

The eleven municipalities reporting on these measures for 2017 include Calgary, Halifax, Hamilton, London, Montreal, Regina, Sudbury

(Greater), Thunder Bay, Toronto, Windsor, and Winnipeg. The applicable benchmarks include the number of indoor pool locations, outdoor pool locations, and splash pad (spray pad) locations per 100,000 population (Table 4). The measures include all facilities with “municipal influence”. The eleven municipally-owned indoor and outdoor pools (Tables 8, 12, 18) and 6 splash pads (Table 19) were included as part of the benchmarking analysis.

Of the participating municipalities, Halifax is below the average per capita benchmarks when considering municipally-owned indoor and outdoor pools, and spray pads (Table 4). However, when including the new YMCA and Dalplex pool's (non-municipal), Halifax is in line with the average per capita benchmarks for indoor facilities. The Benchmarks should be considered in context of Halifax being a municipality containing numerous natural lakes with municipally-supervised beaches and supervised coastal beaches that serve a vast geographical area. At 5,928 km² the municipality is considerably larger than the other MBNC cities (average size is 818 km²).

While benchmark comparisons are interesting, there are no nationally accepted standards for aquatics service provision. Therefore, unique community needs related to access and program requirements along with considerations of facility age, condition and functionality (which varies widely) should be at the forefront when assessing service requirements.

Table 3. Aquatic Facilities - Drive Time Estimates and Distance to Transit Stops

Drive Time (minutes)	% of Municipality's Population Served*			
	Indoor Pools	Supervised Beaches	Outdoor Pools	Splash Pads
Up to 10 min	69	71	57	50
Up to 20 min	84	92	84	79
Up to 30 min	89	97	91	87
% of Facilities Served by Public Transit				
< 400 m to nearest stop	100	61	75	100

*The percent population served are estimates based on the 2016 Census and drive times that are calculated using drive speeds associated with travelling 75% of the typically posted speed limit (50 km/h). Analysis doesn't factor in time of day, day of week, or season (i.e. traffic and road conditions). All facilities listed in Table 2 and Figure 4 are included.

Table 4. Benchmarks of Indoor and Outdoor Pools & Splash Pads

2017 Benchmarks* (11 municipalities reporting)	Median	Average	Influencing Factors	Halifax (2018)
Number of Operational Indoor Pools per 100,000 Population	1.81	2.05	-Demographics -Facilities	1.62**
Number of Operational Outdoor Pools per 100,000 Population	2.09	1.99	-Demographics -Facilities -Weather Conditions	0.93
Number of Operational Spray Pads per 100,000 Population	4.13	4.82	-Service standards established for maintained parkland -Amount of parkland/trails in municipalities -Population density	1.4
<p>*Source: Municipal Benchmarking Network Canada – 2017 data extracted on 26, November-2018 SREC232, SREC233, & PRKS270. **When including the new YMCA and Dalplex (both non-municipal facilities) Halifax’s average for indoor pool locations is 2.08 per 100,000 population which is in line with the average per capita benchmarks from other reporting municipalities.</p>				

The CFMP2 provided a benchmark range for indoor pools of 1 per 30,000 to 50,000 persons. The Halifax region currently has one municipally-owned indoor pool per 61,700 persons. When adding non-municipal facilities, there is one indoor pool per 43,200. These calculations use the 2017 estimated population of 431,701 (Statistics Canada).

Halifax Regional Municipality owns 7 indoor pools, 4 outdoor pools, 6 splash pads and supervises 19 beaches.

Summary

- » There are 10 indoor and 6 outdoor public pools in the municipality which have a mix of ownership/operating models: municipally owned and operated; municipally owned and board operated; and, non-municipally owned/operated.
- » Except for one outdoor pool, all municipal pools are located within the Urban Service Area. Public aquatic facilities use substantial amounts of potable water for their operation.
- » The municipality owns 6 splash pads and of the 26 supervised beaches; 19 are municipally supervised.
- » Most residents are served by an aquatic facility within a 20-minute drive.
- » The municipality is below the average per capita national benchmarks when considering municipally-owned spray pads and indoor and outdoor pools, however when including the new YMCA and Dalplex pool’s, Halifax is in line with the average per capita benchmarks for indoor facilities. Further, the municipality has 19 municipally-supervised beaches, an asset for which there is no benchmark.

2.3 Community Engagement Summary

Community and stakeholder engagement feedback, along with other analysis, helped inform the Key Findings and recommendations in the Strategy. A two-month online public survey was conducted. It was promoted through recreation facilities and libraries, public service announcements, media promotion, the municipal web site, area Councillors, aquatic clubs, and through regular social media Twitter and Facebook posts. In addition, targeted outreach focus groups with persons with disabilities, newcomers, and marginalized youth were hosted. A workshop with the Stakeholder Working Group along with facility managers was also held. Additionally, a 2016 general population survey for the CFMP2 found that 50% of respondents (or a household member) used an indoor pool over the past year. Comparatively, 36% used an indoor ice arena and 55% use an indoor recreation centre.

Public Survey Summary

Demographics

The online public survey had a response of just over 3,400 individuals, with the following composition:

- » 15% of the respondents were between the ages of 13 to 29 years; 56% were between the ages of 30-49 years; and 29% were between the ages of 50 to 79 years (Figure 5).

- » 30% identified as being a sports club member or had someone in their household who is a member.
- » 73% of the respondents were female and 23% male, 0.5% identified as non-binary and 3.5% chose not to respond.

- » 41% of respondents had 0 children, 21% had 1 child, 28% had 2 children, 8% had 3 children and 1.4% had 4 children.
- » Approximately 45% of the respondents were from the Regional Centre, 27% from urban areas outside the Regional Centre, and 28% were from rural areas (Figure 6).

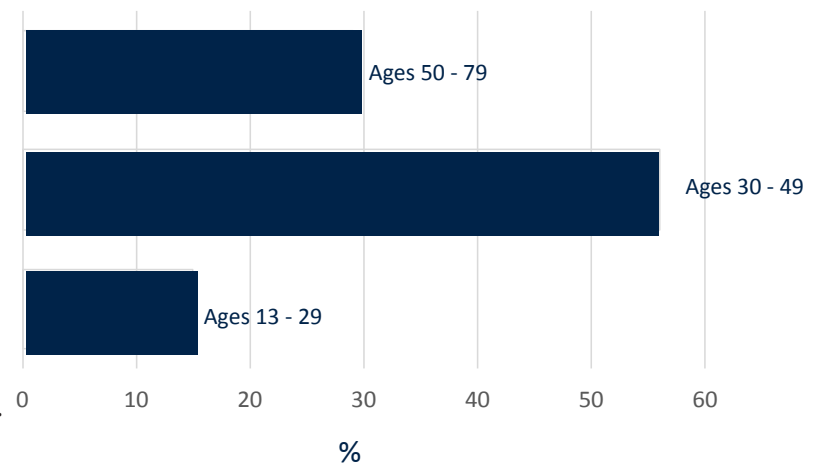


Figure 5. Age of survey respondents.

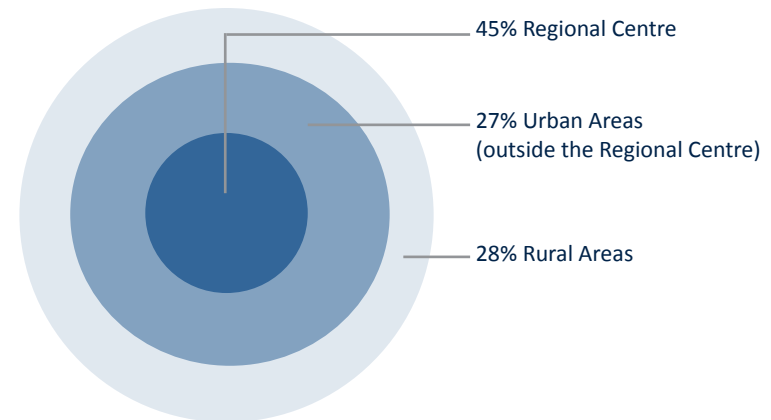


Figure 6. Where survey respondents are from.

Frequency of Use

Most respondents indicated that they use aquatic facilities (including supervised beaches) at least once a week. The frequency is higher in the summer months.

Top Reasons People Use Aquatic Facilities

Respondents listed the top reasons (in-order) as to why they use aquatic facilities:

- 1 Exercise and being active
- 2 Recreation and fun
- 3 Aquatic sports, training, and competition
- 4 Learning to swim
- 5 Meeting people/socializing
- 6 Therapy and rehabilitation

Other notable comments included cooling off in the summer, volunteering, teaching, coaching, birthday parties, and to be with family.

Reasons Why People Do Not Use Aquatic Facilities

Respondents who indicated they limit their use of aquatic facilities gave the following reasons (most common themes):

- » Proximity – I do not live close to a facility
- » Cost – The facilities are not affordable where I live
- » Hours and Scheduling –The hours and schedule do not work for my specific needs
- » Programming – The programs offered do not meet my needs
- » Facility Related Issues – Cleanliness, maintenance, beach closures, chlorine issues, and water temperatures being too cold

- » Accessibility – Beaches are not accessible to wheelchairs, indoor pools and/or changing facilities cannot accommodate those with mobility issues
- » Crowded – facilities are generally too crowded when I want to use them
- » Other – I have a pool, I use unsupervised outdoor areas, I'm not interested



‘Exercise and being active’ and ‘Recreation and fun’ are the top two reasons why survey participants use aquatic facilities.

Most Used Facility Types

Respondents listed the facilities they use always or often:

- 1 Indoor Aquatic Facilities
- 2 Supervised Beaches
- 3 Competition Aquatic facilities (50-m pool)
- 4 Outdoor Pools
- 5 Splash Pads

Most Used Locations

Respondents listed their most popular facilities (in order):

Indoor Pools

- 1 Canada Games Centre
- 2 Dartmouth Sportsplex
- 3 Centennial
- 4 Cole Harbour
- 5 Cpt. Spry
- 6 Sackville
- 7 Needham

Splash Pads

- 1 Westmount
- 2 Halifax Common
- 3 Isleville
- 4 Sackville
- 5 Westwood
- 6 George Dixon

Beaches (Top 5)

- 1 Chocolate Lake
- 2 Shubie
- 3 Kearney Lake
- 4 Birch Cove
- 5 Oakfield Beach

Outdoor Pools

- 1 Bedford
- 2 St. Margaret’s Ctr.
- 3 Cole Harbour
- 4 Halifax Common

Non-Municipal Facilities

- 1 Dalplex
- 2 Waegwoltic Club
- 3 Shearwater Pool

Non-Municipal Beaches

- 1 Lawrencetown
- 2 Rainbow Haven
- 3 Queensland
- 4 Martinique
- 5 Crystal Crescent



The Canada Games Centre Pool represents a multi-tank facility designed to meet the needs of a variety of users.

Users Experiences

Respondents rated experiences in municipal aquatic facilities. Table 5 shows the percentage of respondents that indicated poor to moderate, good, or very good to excellent experiences. Also shown are the percentage of respondents who indicated that the facility type was not applicable to them.

Facility	Poor to Moderate (%)	Good (%)	Very Good to Excellent (%)	Not Applicable (%)
Indoor Pools	7	27	62	4
Outdoor Pools	6	18	29	47
Supervised Beaches	6	21	53	20
Splash Pads	4	9	25	62

Desired Features & Encouraging Participation

Respondents indicated the features they would like to see in aquatic facilities. They were also asked what would encourage more participation. The responses to both of these were similar and are summarized in Table 6.

Feature/Ideas	Themed Comments
More Facilities	More facilities across the municipality in rural areas, outside urban areas; more/improved facilities in the Regional Centre and Peninsula; pools should be in multi-use facilities; more splash pads throughout the municipality - with a particularly high response from Dartmouth
Affordability	More affordable family and senior rates, complaints about higher fees in some municipal facilities; desire for free programs; more affordable lane rental for aquatic sport teams
Facility Improvements and Features	Cleanliness, improved change facilities (including outdoor facilities); warmer water for recreational users, cooler water for competitive swimmers; shaded areas at outdoor facilities; more deck space/seating around pools; more pool space and larger facilities; more training space for aquatic sport teams; a new 50-metre competition pool to host competitions; improve accessibility; improve bus routes to service beaches and pools; improve parking at beaches and pools; improve maintenance of beaches; solutions to reduce the closures of beaches; improved amenities at beaches including food options; improve sitting areas; add café's and more recreation/fun equipment (slides, water toys) in facilities; establish saltwater and non-chlorinated pools
Programming/ Allocation	More lane swimming; more adult-only and women-only times; more family swims and swims for parents and small children; more convenient/flexible schedules; longer hours of operation, especially outdoor pools in the summer; more aquatic classes and programs to accommodate those who work full-time or shiftwork; more adult, senior and teen programming; more children's swim lessons; more user-friendly registration; enforced lane swimming rules; more aquatic events; include swim lessons in the school curriculum; have facilities open on holidays; onsite child care; improve social aspects to swimming; more inclusive
Promotions	Improve advertisement of facilities, locations and what is offered; up to date schedules that are easy to find; a way to know how busy a facility is at any given time

Lower fees and upgraded facilities were ranked as the most important factors in encouraging future participation.

Most Important Factor to Encourage More Participation

Respondents were asked to choose the single most important factor to encourage future participation. Below are the factors ranked in order:

- 1 Lower fees
- 2 Upgrade/enhance facilities
- 3 Facilities for aquatic sports & hosting
- 4 More pool time for non-programmed use (e.g. open swims)
- 5 More recreational play features (e.g. slides, climbing walls, spray features)
- 6 More programs for all ages (e.g. learn to swim, youth leadership, aquatic fitness classes)
- 7 Improved overall accessibility
- 8 Better facility maintenance
- 9 Inclusive and accessible change facilities

Barriers to Participation

Below are the (themed) comments most expressed as to what is limiting people from using aquatic facilities:

- » Proximity and not enough aquatic facilities
- » Affordability/ Consistency of Pricing/ Memberships not Being Transferable
- » Programming/Scheduling:
 - Programs fill up too fast
 - More varied programming
 - Scheduling does not work for work schedules
 - More competitive programs
 - Programs for individuals with special needs
 - More lane, open, family, and parent tot swims
 - Facilities should extend hours
 - Women only and adult only swims

- Schedules are inconsistent
- Conflict of uses of varying program needs
- » Facility Condition, Design:
 - Change Facilities – too small, more family change rooms, more universal, updated cleanliness, disrepair, change areas not being secure
 - Need for more parking
 - Issues with chlorine and cold water
 - More sun shelters at outdoor facilities
 - Facilities lack shallow entry for small children
 - Issues regarding ventilation and air quality
 - Demand for saunas and hot tubs in municipal facilities
 - Facilities being inaccessible to those with mobility issues such as gradual entry points for wheelchair users or those with mobility issues
 - Facilities should be more inclusive

Other noted issues include over crowding, lack of public transportation, better promotions, lack of rule enforcement, women feeling safe, and culturally sensitive facilities.

Level of Agreement with Future Priorities for Aquatic Facilities

Below are the rankings of the statements with which respondents most strongly agreed (multiple answers permitted):

- 1 Pools should be affordable to use - 74% agree
- 2 Pool bookings and scheduling should be fair for all users - 50% agree
- 3 Pools should be fun, active, social places for recreational use - 50% agree
- 4 The Halifax Region should be able to attract and host aquatic sport competitions - 46% agree
- 5 Pools should offer more open (unprogrammed) public swims - 36% agree
- 6 Pools should offer more aquatic fitness programs for adults and seniors - 36% agree
- 7 Pools should be therapeutic and relaxing - 32% agree
- 8 Pools should offer more aquatic sport programs - 31% agree
- 9 Pools should offer more learn to swim programs - 30.5% agree
- 10 Pools should offer more youth opportunities - 30% agree



Summary of Outreach Focus Group Sessions

Several outreach focus group sessions were conducted to receive feedback: newcomers were interviewed during a Multi-Cultural Recreation Fair; youth between 16 and 24 years old involved in an at-risk youth program; and a group of young adults who are part of a local program for persons with disabilities. Below are summaries of the comments of each session which focused on usage, what people would like to see, and barriers to participation. In addition, a workshop was conducted with the Stakeholder Working Group along with aquatic facility managers. These sessions explored priorities, partnerships and collaboration, and what facility features are required to meet a variety of needs.

Multi-Cultural Recreation Fair

Swimming is important to newcomers for health, exercise, relaxation, and meeting new people. The Canada Games Centre is a popular destination for many newcomers. Across various facilities affordability was a key issue for many newcomers, particularly with memberships and day passes. Many noted that \$3 drop in swims and women's-only swims are the main options for most to access swimming. Swimming lessons for adults, child care, and women's-only swims were highlighted as important. Accessing beaches was also cited as important, but many are too far away and not easily reached. The water temperature being too cold in facilities was often noted.

At Risk Youth

The youth respondents stated that they tended to participate in facilities when they were younger but not so much now as young adults. Accessing facilities is a challenge for many. They find facilities to be crowded and hard to go to with a group of friends. They enjoy hanging out with friends and tend to prefer local beaches. Pools should be updated and offer more of a variety of things to do, such as water volleyball, having multiple swimming areas, slides, ropes, saunas, whirlpools, spray pads, and lounging areas. Generally, they would like to see more fun things to do, which appeal to a wide range of ages. They feel that the municipality needs a larger outdoor aquatic space that is accessible for everyone.

Persons with Disabilities

Most respondents tended to use the Canada Games Centre, Captain Spry Wave pool, Chocolate Lake, and some other beaches. Participants enjoy socializing with friends and would like to see more areas that foster socialization (e.g. accessible picnic areas). Providing manual water chairs, ensuring pools have low-sloped entry, and larger more accessible change areas were all cited as important. Other feedback included:

- » Have pool features that create sensory stimulation
- » More pool time for adaptive programs such as different water sports
- » Provide a variety of fun things to do such as hot tubs, saunas, splash pads, rope swings, lazy river, and floating tubes

- » Have pools as part of multi-use facilities where you can take fitness classes
- » Have separate pool areas for small children
- » Provide pools that have more space
- » Provide warmer water temperatures
- » Reduce loud sounds (e.g. siren at the Captain Spry Wave Pool)

Youth enjoy hanging out with friends and tend to prefer local beaches. Pools should be updated to offer a greater variety of things to do.



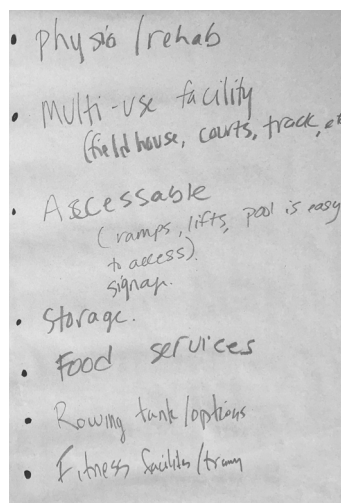
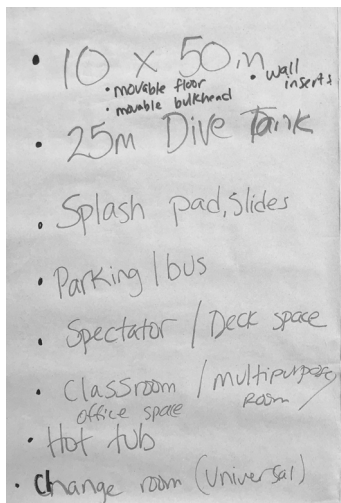
Aquatic Stakeholder Working Group and Aquatic Facility Managers

Feedback from aquatic sport organizations noted the importance of having aquatic facilities that can adequately host competitions and training, and that improved facilities enable growth of aquatic sports. They also highlighted the need for clear and consistent allocation procedures for booking pool time across facilities along with providing more affordable/consistent rental fees.

Table 7 outlines feedback from a workshop on aquatic priorities, desired partnerships/collaboration, and facility features required to meet a variety of needs. Workshop participants included representatives of aquatic sport organizations, the Lifesaving Society, the province, and aquatic facility managers.

Table 7. Aquatic Sport Representatives and Facility Managers - Feedback

Priorities	Desired Partnerships/ Collaboration	Facility Features Desired	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learn to swim Access/Equity Balance between sport & recreation Changing demographics (i.e. aging population) Policies to support priorities Infrastructure (aging facilities) Programming flexibility to meet needs Safety Respect the environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schools Marginalized groups and groups that currently do not use pools Private health care providers Private sector All levels of government Universities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10 lanes x 50-m Moveable floor Bulkhead Wall inserts 25-m dive tank Spectator viewing Deck space Physio & Rehab Classroom Office space Competitive & Community Use Rowing tank Welcoming entrance Glass Walls & Privacy Areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hot tub Universal change rooms Multi-purpose spaces Food services Storage Fitness training facilities Leisure area/ Lazy river Splash pad Slides Accessible ramps & Beach entry Food services Parking



Aquatic sport organizations noted the importance of Halifax having aquatic facilities that can adequately host competitions and training, and that improved facilities enable growth of aquatic sports.

Sample of aquatic stakeholder working group workshop feedback.

Summary

- » An online survey reached over 3,400 individuals. Public feedback confirmed strong overall interest in aquatics across a wide range of ages and areas of the municipality.
 - » An overall summary of the key engagement themes included providing more facilities/proximity; improving affordability; improving facility features and amenities; improving public program offerings and the allocation of pool time; and improving the promotion of aquatic opportunities.
 - » The top reasons why participants use aquatic facilities are for 'exercise and being active' and 'recreation and fun'.
 - » Overall, public feedback identified that lowering fees and upgrading and enhancing facilities are the two most important factors to encourage more aquatic participation.
 - » The main barrier to participation noted in the survey was not having enough aquatic facilities nearby.
 - » The most popular facilities according to the survey are: indoor pool - Canada Games Centre; outdoor pool - Bedford Pool; splash pad - Westmount; and, beach - Chocolate Lake.
 - » Public feedback expressed the importance of beaches and a desire to find solutions to beach closures along with improved transit, accessibility, parking, maintenance and overall amenities.
- » Targeted community outreach found that membership costs can be prohibitive and that more accessible change areas and features such as low-sloped entries are desired.
 - » Aquatic sport organizations expressed the importance of having facilities that can host training and competitions to grow their sports, improving allocation procedures among facilities, and having more affordable/consistent rental fees.



3 Facilities & Usage

The background of the slide is a close-up photograph of water ripples, creating a pattern of light and dark blue-green tones. The ripples are irregular and organic, filling the entire frame.

The Facilities & Usage Section provides detailed analysis of the individual types of aquatic facilities in the municipality: indoor pools, including training and competition facilities; outdoor pools; splash pads; and, supervised beaches.

3.1 Indoor Recreational Pools

This section provides an overview of indoor recreational pools including a facilities overview, facility features, usage, allocation of pool time, sample fee comparison, and a summary.



Table 8. Indoor Recreational Pools*

Indoor Pool	Year Built**	Ownership/Operations	Examples of Facility Features
Needham Recreation Centre	1972	Municipally Owned & Operated	Single tank, 5 lanes, small single pool, swing rope
Zatzman Sportsplex	1982 ***	Municipally Owned/Board Operated	Two separate tanks (8-lane 25-m pool and shallow pool), slides, swing rope, climbing walls, spray feature, hot tub, universal change areas, program rooms, pool pod, low sloped accessibility ramp
Captain William Spry Pool	1985	Municipally Owned & Operated	Single tank with separated areas (4-lane 25-m pool and large accessible beach entry area), wave features, slide, climbing wall
Sackville Sports Stadium	1989	Municipally Owned & Operated	Two separate tanks (7-lane 25-m pool and leisure pool), spray features, swing rope, diving board, entry ramp/stairs
Cole Harbour Place	1988	Municipally Owned/Board Operated	Two separate tanks (8-lane 25-m pool and small leisure pool), slide, spray spa feature, swing rope, diving board, entry stairs, hot tub
Canada Games Centre	2010	Municipally Owned/Board Operated	Two separate tanks (8-lane 25-m pool and leisure pool), moveable floor, parent and tot pool, diving boards, slides, hot tub, sauna, spray features, accessible entry
Other Indoor Pools			
CFB Shearwater	NA	Non-municipal	Single tank, 6-lane 25-m pool
John W. Lindsay YMCA	2019 ⁺	Non-municipal	Two separate tanks (25m lap pool and accessible teaching pool) moveable floor, hot tub
<p>*Centennial and Dalplex pool's are included in Training and Competition Facilities (Table 12) **Reported in the <i>Community Facilities Masterplan 2</i> (2016), and building condition assessments (Appendix D) ***Formerly the Dartmouth Sportsplex which is now newly renovated ⁺John W. Lindsay YMCA is currently under construction and is proposing an indoor pool, opening is anticipated for 2019</p>			

Facilities Overview

Indoor recreational pools (Table 8, Figure 7) generally provide for water play, open/lane swimming, learn to swim, aquatic fitness/therapy, and aquatic sports. However, each facility differs in its specific features and designs. Except for Shearwater and the YMCA, indoor recreational pools are owned by the municipality. Three out of the six pools are operated on behalf of the municipality through the community-board model.

Operating costs specific to municipal indoor aquatic facilities are difficult to determine with accuracy as they are embedded within the overall costs associated with larger multi-use centres. However, utility costs are about three times higher in a facility with a pool when compared to a similar sized facility without a pool.

Distribution

All indoor recreational pools (Figure 7) are located within the Urban Service Area (Figure 2); where 84% of residents are within a 20-minute drive time to an indoor pool (this includes all indoor pools listed in Table 2) and all pools are within 400 m of a transit stop. The CFMP2 provides a benchmark range of 30,000 to 50,000 persons for an indoor pool facility. Understanding

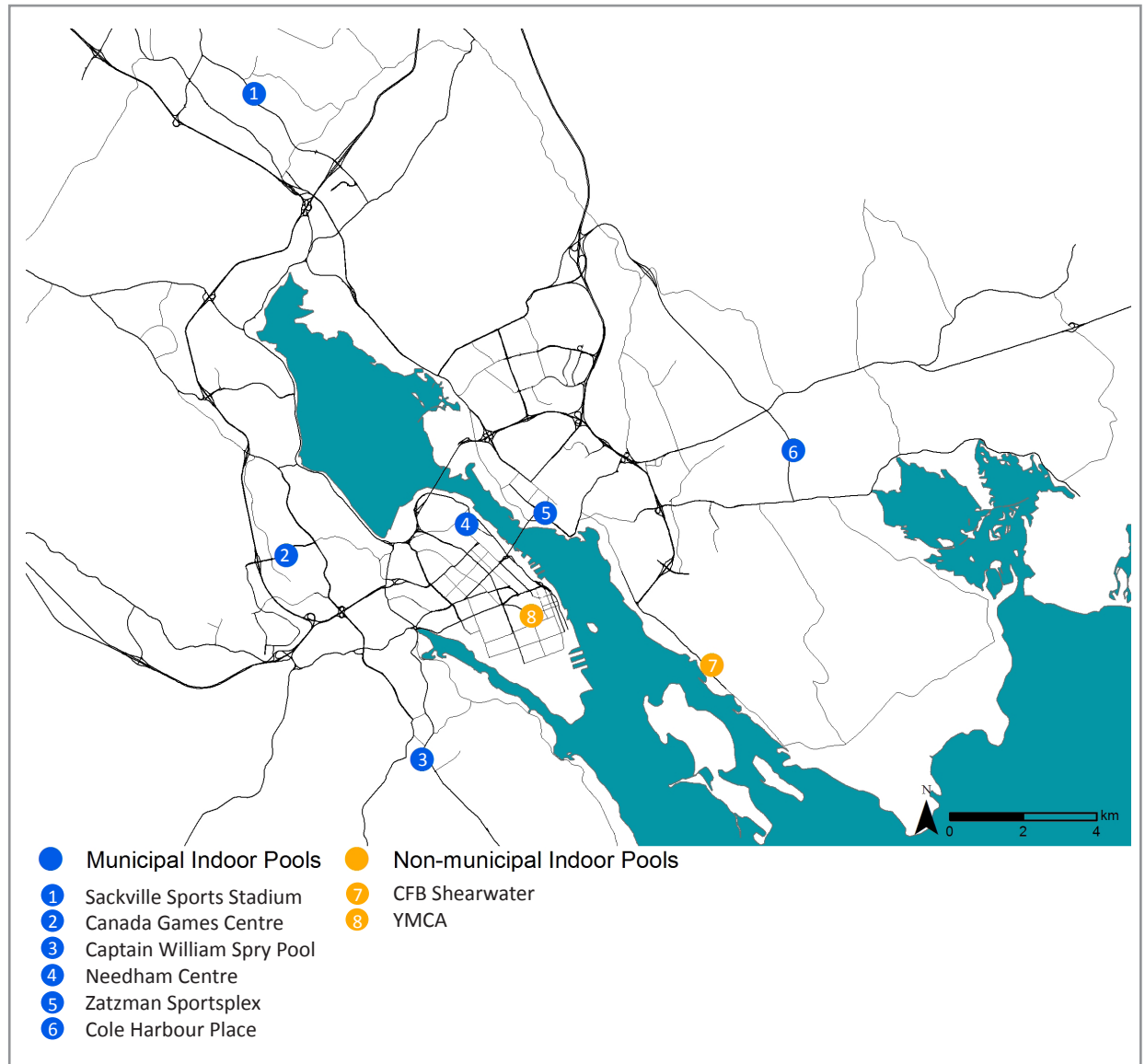


Figure 7. Distribution of indoor pools.

where significant residential growth is anticipated to occur is key when analyzing facility distribution. Figure 7 shows the current distribution of indoor recreational pools which can be compared to the population distribution in Figure 3.

Needham Centre

The Needham Centre Pool, located in the North End of Peninsular Halifax, represents the oldest recreational pool in the inventory. Its pool, compared to other indoor pools (Table 8), has the least amount of multifunctionality, accessibility, and fewest recreational features for a wide range of users. This appears to contribute to its low-recreational usage (Tables 9 and 10), and reduced operating hours, since its catchment has an adequate population base and is experiencing significant residential growth (Figure 3). Additionally, the *Draft Centre Plan*, has identified areas of the North End for future redevelopment. Note that although Centennial Pool is also located on the peninsula, its primary use is for sport club training and its design limits its broader multifunctionality.

YMCA

The Halifax YMCA Pool, located in the South End of Peninsular Halifax is expected to provide a replaced and updated recreational pool. As a replacement, it is not a net additional facility to the overall inventory. Its business plan aims to have approximately 6,000+ members within the first two years of operation, 70% of those are expected to be adults.¹ As expected, the

population in the downtown expands significantly during the weekday and the facility hopes to serve this market. The YMCA will also cater to nearby afterschool use, therapy/hospital usage, university students, seniors, and community use. The YMCA offers an assistance program to those who face financial barriers. The YMCA is planning a 6-lane 25-m pool, a separate small teaching pool, and therapy/hot tub.²

Zatzman Sportsplex

The Zatzman Sportsplex, located within the Regional Centre of Dartmouth, has been significantly revitalized to include new updated change facilities, new features such as slides, climbing walls, birthday party rooms, splash pad, hot/therapy tub and accessibility ramp. The updated facility is designed to meet a wide range of recreational needs as well as aquatic sport club usage.

Sackville Sport Stadium

The Sackville Sports Stadium, located in Lower Sackville, has two separate pool tanks and features to accommodate varied programming along with aquatic sport usage. The facility's program attracts a considerable number of learn to swim participants (Table 9).

Cole Harbour Place

Cole Harbour Place has two separate pool tanks and features to accommodate varied programming and aquatic sport usage. The facility is well used for learn to swim, aquatic fitness programs and open swims.

Canada Games Centre

The Canada Games Centre, located on the Mainland Common, is the newest municipal indoor pool facility. There is a leisure pool and a separate 8-lane 25-metre pool. The facility has many accessible and recreational features designed to attract broad usage. It is also used for aquatic sports. The facility programming attracts a significant amount of open swim participation (Tables 9 and 10). It has been expressed through the outreach engagement that the Centre is a popular location for new Canadians (Section 2.3).

Captain William Spry Centre

The Captain William Spy Centre, located in Spryfield, has two separate aquatic areas. One is a low-sloped entry shallow area and the other is a 4-lane 25-metre pool. The facility has several recreational features such as a climbing wall, waves, and slide. The facility is popular for learn to swim and aquatic fitness programs and has been reported to have a large amount of daytime usage from seniors.

CFB Shearwater

CFB Shearwater, located in Eastern Passage, is operated by the Department of National Defense. It has a single tank, 6-lane 25-m pool. The facility primarily serves military families but is open to the public who have an affiliation to a military member. The facility is used by external groups such as aquatic sport clubs.

¹ Staff Report to Audit and Finance - Funding Request YMCA of Greater Halifax/Dartmouth

² [YMCA of Greater Halifax/Dartmouth](#)

Facility Features for Indoor Recreational Pools

Indoor recreational pools which are designed for broader participation have a combination of facility features which allow for more diverse programming, multifunctionality, scheduling flexibility and accessibility. As noted above, each pool may have unique design features to meet specific community needs. The following examples of desirable features are based on trends, the CFMP2, and community engagement from this Strategy:

- » Beach entry/low sloped and or accessible ramp access
- » Moveable floor for aquatic programming
- » Multiple pool tanks (separate pool areas) to accommodate diverse programming
- » Area for lane swimming
- » Updated, accessible/universal change facilities
- » Accessibility lifts/Pool Pods
- » Recreational “fun” features such as water slides, spray zones, activity zones, diving boards, climbing walls, lazy rivers, and flow riders
- » Therapy pool/hot tub
- » A design that considers safety, security, privacy, and a welcoming atmosphere
- » Spacious pool deck
- » Areas for seating, viewing and social interaction
- » Meeting/program rooms
- » Innovative methods to reduce water consumption

Recreational Indoor Pool Usage

Operating hours vary between municipal facilities and can range from 74 to 112 hours in a typical week. Recreational participation makes up most of the usage in aquatic facilities. The key categories for recreational aquatics include learn to swim programs, aquatic fitness programs, open/public lane swims, and youth leadership programs. The following analysis provides participation numbers in these categories within municipal aquatic facilities. It should be noted that the open swim category includes programming such as lane, drop-in, parent and tot and female/male only swims.

September to June Usage

The September to June period is a high demand time for indoor pools usage. Open swims have the largest participation numbers especially within the Canada Games Centre (Table 9), this may be due to the facility having a more updated, accessible and functional pool design that allows for more open swim programming. Most learn to swim waitlisted participants are at the Sackville Sports Stadium and Captain Spry Centre which offer lower pricing (Table 11).



Summer Usage

Indoor aquatic facilities are well utilized in the summer (Table 10). Compared to program registration for September to June, summer numbers normalized to 10 months (numbers not shown) are higher for open swims, lower for learn to swim, and comparable for aquatic fitness and youth leadership. Waitlisted participants are lower in the summer compared to the rest of the year. Daytime usage generally increases due to summer camp participants.

Most recreational participation is for open swims, and learn to swim and aquatic fitness programs.

Table 9. Aquatic Recreational Usage for Indoor Pools - September to June (2016)*

Facility	Learn to Swim	Youth Leadership	Aquatic Fitness**	Open Swims***	Waitlisted [†]
Sackville Sports Stadium Pool	5183	170	6,427	19,949	936
Needham Pool	1125	33	3,954	2,067	161
Captain William Spry Pool	5119	224	14,804	28,169	629
Centennial Pool ^{**}	0	30	550	6,444	0
Cole Harbour Place	3577	168	44,744	33,748	334
Canada Games Centre	4171	345	18,794	457,422	229
Zatzman Sportsplex	3007	155	7,750	45,400	150
TOTALS	22,182	1,125	97,023	603,940	2,439

Table 10. Aquatic Usage for Indoor Pools – Summer Period (2016)*

Facility	Learn to Swim	Youth Leadership	Aquatic Fitness**	Open Swims***	Waitlisted [†]
Sackville Sports Stadium Pool	406	111	1,374	8,454	31
Needham Pool	67	0	990	1,163	0
Captain William Spry Pool	422	75	2,618	8,769	10
Centennial Pool ^{**}	0	9	315	1,488	0
Cole Harbour Place	212	8	8,160	16,700	30
Canada Games Centre	637	57	3,690	116,345	28
Zatzman Sportsplex	293	20	1,000	7,600	0
TOTALS	2,037	280	18,174	160,519	99

*2016 data was used due to the closure of the Zatzman Sportsplex in 2017.

**Aquatic fitness data varies due to some facilities counting registered program participants, whereas other facilities include classes in their membership and count participation at each individual class.

***Open swims are individual counts.

[†]Waitlisted participants are mostly related to learn to swim programs.

^{**}Primarily a training facility with some public lane swimming and aquatic fitness programs.

Allocation of Pool time

The following analysis of allocation of indoor pool time examines how time is divided between recreational public programming, aquatic sport use, and other uses (institutional, non-profit or private bookings). The analysis is based on sample weekly schedules from each municipally-owned pool, including Centennial Pool, to provide a combined overall breakdown. Allocation time does not necessarily reflect the pools' operating hours since multiple activities/user groups can occur simultaneously within some aquatic

facilities. It should be noted that there is no system-wide framework related to allocations and scheduling.

September to June Allocation of Pool Time

For municipal-owned indoor pools (Table 9), between September and June in 2016, 80% of pool time was used for recreational public programming, 19% was used for aquatic sport clubs, and 1% was used for non-sport club rentals (Figure 8). The diversity and capacity of

public programming varies significantly between facilities depending on their functionality.

Summer Allocation of Pool Time

For municipal-owned indoor pools (Table 9), in the summer of 2016, 82% of pool time was used for recreational public programming, 15% was used for aquatic sport clubs, and 3% was used for non-sport club rentals (Figure 9).

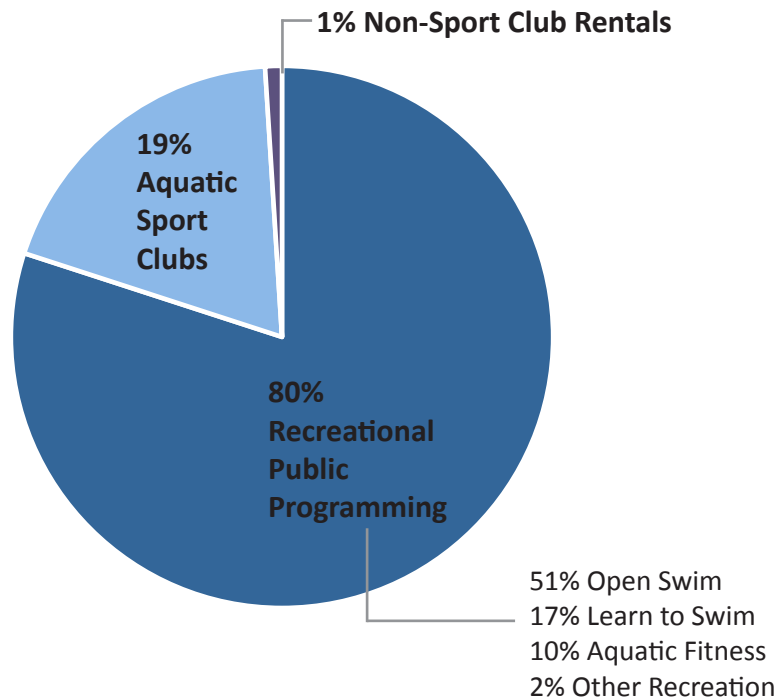


Figure 8. Indoor pool allocation for September to June 2016.

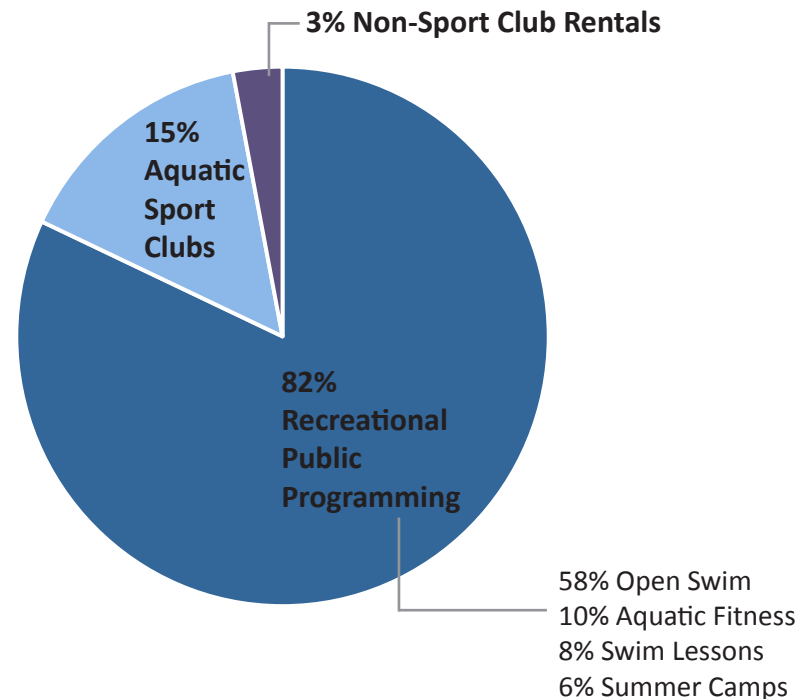


Figure 9. Indoor pool allocation for the summer of 2016.

Sample Fee Comparison

Public engagement feedback identified affordability as a key issue impacting aquatic participation. Table 11 provides a sample fee comparison within municipally-owned indoor aquatic facilities in three key aquatic categories: learn to swim programs, open swims, and family memberships.

As noted in Section 2.2 the municipal aquatic service delivery model is a hybrid system which can cause inconsistencies in service delivery. Prices vary between municipal facilities, particularly with learn to swim programs and open swims. Municipally owned and operated facilities (Needham Centre, Captain William Spry Centre, and Sackville Sports Stadium) offer lower aquatic pricing in most cases. However, pricing is impacted by the range of services included, the length of a program, and the number of participants included. Facilities may offer various discounts, program subsidies, and in some cases free programs which are not listed in Table 11. Parks and Recreation is currently undergoing a separate *Fee Structure Review* to address fee standardization and equity.

Table 11. Sample Fee Comparison 2018*

Facility	Learn to Swim (child)**	Open Swim Fee**	Family Membership/year**
Zatzman Sportsplex	\$108 non-member \$81 members 10 classes (30 min)	\$5.22/youth and senior \$8.70/adult \$13.91/family Drop in fees include access to full facility	\$850.40 (Full facility)
Canada Games Centre	\$105 non-member \$75 member 9 classes (35 min)	\$6.04/child and youth \$10.52/adult \$20.52/family Drop in fees include access to full facility Offers scheduled drop-in \$3.00 open swims	\$1,050.00 (Full facility)
Cole Harbour Place	\$98 non-member \$68 member 7 classes (45 min)	\$4.35/child \$6.09/adult \$11.30/family Just Swimming Offers scheduled drop-in \$3.00 open swims	\$797.39 (Full facility)
Sackville Sports Stadium	\$58.00 10 classes (30 min)	\$3.04/child \$5.87/adult \$11.30/family Just swimming	\$660.00 (Full facility)
Cpt. Spry Centre***	\$58 10 classes (30 min)	\$1.96/child \$3.48/adult \$7.83/family Just Swimming	\$651.30 (Includes pool and fitness centre) \$382.60 (Pool only)
Needham Centre***	\$58 10 classes (30 min)	\$1.96/child \$3.48/adult \$7.83/family Just Swimming	\$382.60 (Pool only)
Centennial Pool	N/A	\$1.74/child \$3.48/Adult \$8.70/family Just Swimming	No family membership
Non-municipal Facilities			
Dalplex	No child Learn to Swim programming offered	\$13/child \$13/adult \$20/family Drop in fees include access to full facility	\$1,101.00 (Full facility)
Shearwater	\$75 (Civilian rate) 8 classes (30min)	\$3.47/child \$3.47/adult \$8.70/family Must have military sponsor/association	\$626.96 (Full facility – must have military sponsor to join)
*Services offered, discounts, facility amenities, number of people included in family membership, and length of classes can differ amongst facilities. **Prices are pre-tax ***Needham and Captain Spry offer a transferable membership for access to each pool.			

Summary

- » 84% of residents are within a 20-minute drive to an indoor recreational pool, and all pools are within 400 m of a transit stop.
 - » The largest amount of aquatic participation within indoor recreational pools is for open swims, learn to swim programs, and aquatic fitness programs.
 - » The oldest indoor recreational aquatic facility is the Needham Centre Pool. It has the lowest recreational usage which is impacted by the facility not fully meeting program requirements.
 - » Updated indoor pools have greater multifunctionality, multiple pool tanks, and more recreational features. The new Zatzman Sportsplex has been revitalized with features to improve accessibility and functionality for broader participation.
 - » The Halifax YMCA Pool is a replaced and updated recreational pool but not a net additional facility to the overall inventory. Its business plan expects approximately 70% of its members to be adults.
 - » Aquatic sports make up about 19% of allocated time in indoor facilities from September to June and 15% in the summer.
 - » The Canada Games Centre's Pool is heavily used, especially during open swims.
 - » Captain William Spry Centre and Sackville Sports Stadium have the most learn to swim participants possibly due to lower pricing.
- » Prices vary between municipal facilities particularly in the areas of learn to swim programs and open swim fees. However, there are variations to the services included in the pricing.



3.2 Regional Training & Competition Aquatic Facilities

This section provides an overview of training and competition aquatic facilities including a facilities overview, facility features, aquatic sports clubs, allocation of pool time, and a summary.

Facilities Overview

The municipality hosts two regional training and competition aquatic facilities (50-m pools): Dalplex which is owned and operated by Dalhousie University and Centennial Pool which is owned by the municipality and operated by the Centennial Pool Association (Table 12, Figure 10).

Training and competition aquatic facilities focus on aquatic sport training and hosting competitions. The largest aquatic sports include swimming, synchro, diving, and water polo. There are specific program and facility requirements for aquatic sports which differ from typical recreation pools; such as water depth, temperature, deck space, seating, and warm up pool. The *Facility Rules and Guidelines of Swimming Canada* (Appendix A) outlines specific requirements that apply to all facility usage for swimming competition and training in Canada, all sanctioned competitions, and all affiliated Swimming Canada Clubs in their daily training environment.

Table 12. Training and Competition Facilities

Indoor Pool	Year Built*	Ownership/Operations	Facility Features
Centennial Pool (50-m)	1967	Municipally Owned/Board Operated	Single tank, 6-lane 50-m pool, moveable bulkhead, 10-m diving tower and 3-m spring board, 280 spectator seating capacity
Dalhousie University Dalplex (50-m)	1979	Non-municipal	Single tank, 8-lane 50-m pool, moveable bulk head, 898 spectator seating capacity, diving boards and tower

*Reported facility ages are from the *Community Facilities Masterplan 2* (2016), and building condition assessments (Appendix D).

Distribution

Centennial Pool and Dalplex, the only 50-metre training competition pools in the province, both reside within the Regional Centre (Figure 10).

Centennial Pool and Dalplex

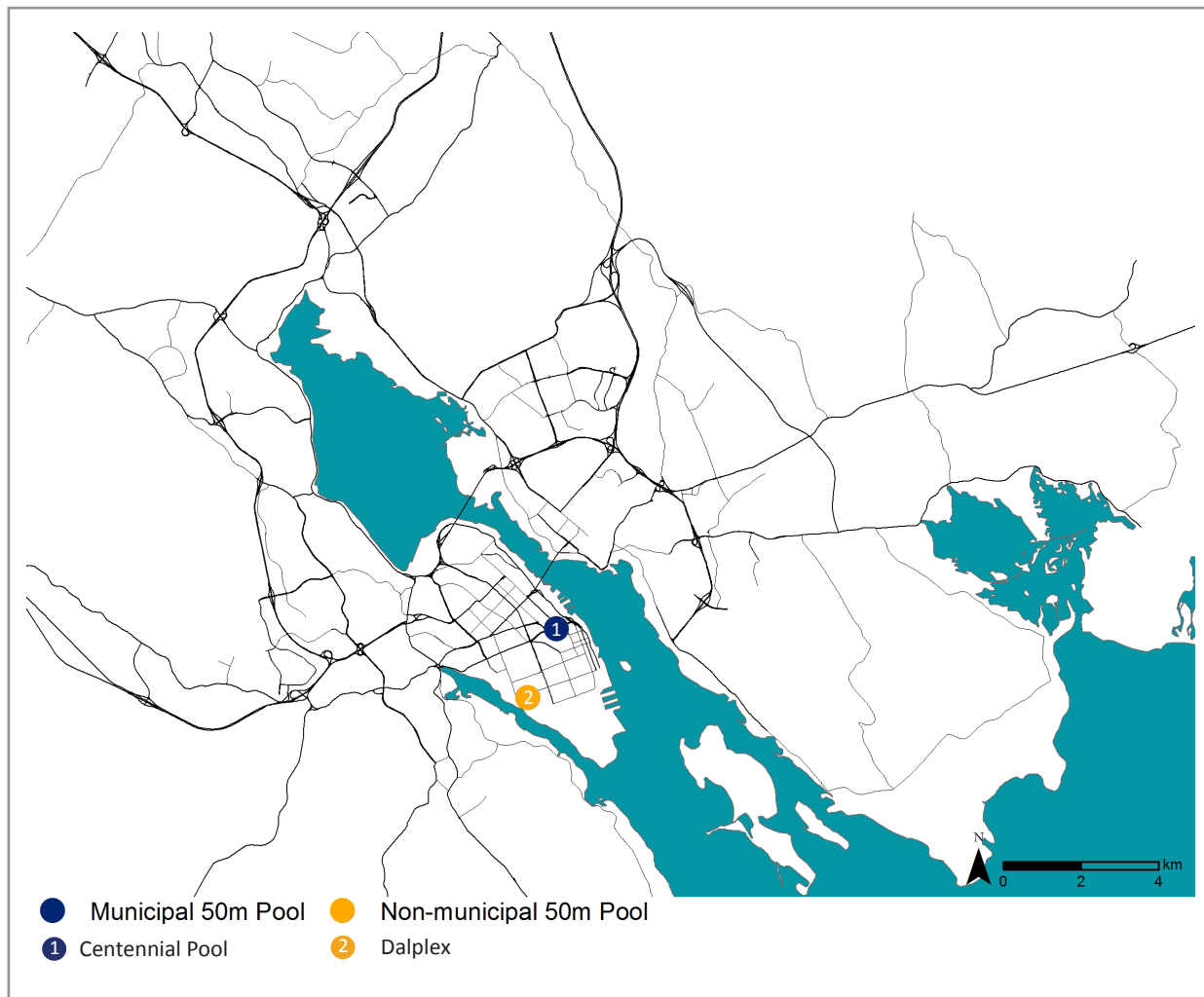
Centennial is mainly used for aquatic sport club training with a smaller amount of community programs and public lane swims. It also hosts diving competitions but the facility cannot host larger swim events due to its limited spectator seating and deck space. As a municipal facility, the Centennial Pool receives an annual operating grant and the municipality covers some maintenance and capital expenses. The pool collects revenue from a municipal parking lot as well as usage fees.

Dalplex's mandate is to serve university students, faculty, the varsity program, and its community

members. It is also used for training and accommodates most swimming competition events. In 2015, a municipal contribution of \$80,000 was made to address code requirements and to improve seating capacity.

Both Centennial and Dalplex are aging facilities and neither meet the required standards for national hosting of swimming events. Dalplex was constructed in 1979 and the Centennial Pool in 1967 for the 1969 Summer Games. The CFMP2 notes that Centennial Pool should be considered for replacement within an approximate 10-15-year lifecycle. Dalplex experienced a 5-month closure for maintenance issues in 2017. The engagement findings noted a desire for an updated aquatic training competition and hosting facility.

Figure 10. Distribution of regional training and competition pools.



Background

The 2007 *The Mainland Common 50 Metre Pool Study* examined the need for a new 50-metre pool. The findings noted:

- » That there was no defined need for an additional municipal 50-m competition pool at that time.
- » Any consideration for a new 50-m pool should only be done as a replacement of Centennial Pool so any funding subsidies can be directed to a new facility.
- » A new 50-m facility should not be constructed if it was determined that a capital investment in the Centennial Pool could extend its life an additional 20 years.
- » That a new 50-m pool was not recommended without direct financial support from the municipality or a third-party partner.

Following the 2007 Study, the municipality recapitalized the Centennial Pool in phases at a cost of approximately 4 million dollars, the work was completed in 2014.

Subsequently, the Canada Winter Games was hosted in Halifax in 2011. The Winter Games does not include competitive swimming as an event. As a result, there was no requirement or funding to provide a 50-metre competition pool in the Canada Games Centre. As part of the municipal mandate, Halifax enhanced the Canada Games Aquatic Facility and subsequently closed the nearby Northcliffe Recreation Centre. This replacement significantly increased recreational aquatic capacity and utilization due to improved functionality and accessibility of the new pool,

while also adding some competition and training elements.

In 2012 it was announced that the NSCC Akerley Campus Pool was going to close. The closure was prompted by NSCC's need of the space for educational requirements. This prompted Regional Council to request a needs assessment for the Eastern Region, the *2014 Eastern Region Aquatic Analysis*. The assessment noted, that the facility was near Cole Harbour Place and the Zatzman Sportsplex, and that recreational users could be accommodated at these locations. Although this facility was primarily a recreational pool, it was used by the Manta Ray's Swim Club which disbanded shortly after the pool closed.

As noted in the Background Section (1.1), there was additional pressure on all aquatic users in 2017, including sport clubs, due to the temporary closures of the Zatzman Sportsplex (20-month revitalization project), Dalplex (5-month closure for maintenance issues), and the Sackville Sport Stadium (roof fire). Recently, Stadplex (DND), located on Peninsular Halifax, announced its closure. This closure is not anticipated to have a significant impact on the overall delivery system as it was primarily serving military families with only a small amount of external bookings. Its operations will be shifting to the Shearwater (DND) facility.



Facility Features for Training and Competition Aquatic Facilities

Each aquatic sport has its specific requirements. The general features in a training competition aquatic facility include:

- » 8 to 10-lane 50-m pool or a 71-m pool, both with moveable bulkheads (walls)
- » A separate 8-lane warm-up pool
- » Sufficient spectator seating for hosting competition events
- » Adequate deck space for dryland training, stretching, warm ups and officiating
- » Accommodation for diving, synchro, and waterpolo
- » Adequate change facilities
- » Storage, program rooms, offices, and supporting facility amenities

An updated facility, as described above, would significantly increase capacity when compared to the current 6-lane Centennial Pool facility.

Examples of Newer Training and Competition Facilities

Windsor International Aquatic and Training Centre

[The Windsor International Aquatic and Training Centre](#) in Windsor, Ontario opened in 2014. The facility is a destination for sport tourism and local competitive training and events and includes a 71m x 25m, 10-lane pool, moveable bulk heads with a movable floor, a diving well with platform tower and springboards, spectator seating for

900 people, and meeting rooms. The project was municipally and provincially funded with most of the funding coming from the municipality at a cost of \$78 million. However, this complex also includes a separate area with a large family water park facility.

University of British Columbia Aquatic Facility

[The UBC Aquatic Centre](#) is a modern facility (shown below) constructed to expand and update its aquatic program to meet the needs as a post-secondary institution and growing residential neighborhoods in the area. The Aquatic Centre features a 10-lane 50-m FINA certified competition pool and an 8-lane 25-m pool with accessible ramp and diving boards. The facility also contains a separate leisure pool. Additional amenities include a large hot tub, a food and

beverage kiosk, meeting rooms, class rooms and viewing areas at both deck and mezzanine levels. The project cost was ~\$39 million in capital funding.

Temporary Pools

Temporary competition pools are facilities used for hosting large events for a brief period, where existing facilities cannot accommodate an event. They can be constructed within arena facilities or outdoor stadiums. In 2014, the City of Montreal built a \$2.5 million temporary pool for the FINA Masters swimming event. Costs toward temporary pools should be carefully examined so that the business case and economic spin off benefit the community.



Aquatic Sport Club Usage

Feedback from aquatic sport organizations noted the need for more consistent allocation booking procedures, greater affordability and equity in booking fees across facilities, and the need for facilities that enable the growth of aquatic sports.

Aquatic sport clubs affiliated with Provincial Sport Organizations (PSOs) are the largest users of training and competition aquatic facilities. Sport clubs also use municipal and non-municipal recreational facilities across the municipality. Affiliated sport clubs are guided by training standards that are outlined in their respective sport governing bodies through Long-Term Athlete Development Plans (LTADs).

The largest aquatic sport club categories include swimming, synchro, water polo, and diving (Tables 13 to 16). There was a total of 1,709 affiliated aquatic sport club participants in 2016 with swimming being the largest category. There are other aquatic sport organizations and programs that use lesser amounts of pool time which include some paddling clubs, Special Olympics, and underwater aquatic sports (e.g. underwater hockey). The Canada Games Centre also offers a Swim Academy program that introduces participants to a variety of aquatic sports.

Table 13. Swimming Clubs (2016)*

Club	Total Participants
Banook Lakers (Summer)	13
Bedford Beavers (Summer)	124
CGC Clippers (Summer)	74
Colby Sailfish (Summer)	60
Cole Harbour Hurricanes (Summer)	46
Dalhousie Masters	43
Dalhousie University Tigers	33
Dartmouth Crusaders	116
Dartmouth Whalers	79
Halifax CGC Clippers Masters	49
Halifax Trojans	296
Halifax Wavecutters	6
Sackville Masters	9
Sackville Waves Aquatic Team	71
Shearwater Bluefins Swim	52
St. Margaret's Bay Breakers (Summer)	52
Waeg Waves (Summer)	92
Halifax Chronos Masters	73
Total Swim Club Participants (including Masters and Varsity) = 1,288 (63% Female 37% Male)	

Table 14. Synchro Clubs (2016)*

Club	Total Participants
Atlantis	146
Halifax Aqua Nova	43
Total Synchro Participants = 189 (89% Female 11% Male)	

Table 15. Water Polo Clubs (2016)*

Club	Total Participants
CGC	22
Dalhousie	55
Halifax Wave Cutters	37
Total Water Polo Participants = 114 (32% Female 68% Male)	

Table 16. Diving Clubs (2017)*

Club	Total Participants
Cygnus Springboard and Platform Diving Club	41
Canada Games Centre Diving Club	77
Total Diving Participants = 118 (44% Female 56% Male)	

*Data provided by Provincial Sport Organizations (Tables 13-16).

Aquatic Sport Club Allocation

There is no system-wide framework for guiding allocation processes in municipal aquatic facilities. A lack of consistent process could lead to potential inequities across the system between user groups or individual sports. This is unlike ice allocation where a process has been established through the *HRM Community Access Plan*¹. Through this allocation process, annual registration data is provided to the municipality from the sport organizations and a formula based on the sports LTAD guidelines is used to determine allocations for the next season. An annual meeting is held with facility managers and allocations are assigned to the sport organizations by the municipality.

The primary facilities for aquatic sport club training and competitions are Centennial Pool and Dalplex. Where appropriate, other recreational facilities are utilized. The aquatic sport clubs make up 19% of total indoor pool time across municipal facilities during the September to June period, 15% in the summer, and 17% of the allocated time in municipal outdoor pools (July and August).^{*} Within the 19% of total indoor pool time (September to June), aquatic sport clubs use 45% of the early morning time and 24% of the evening and weekend. At Centennial Pool, which is primarily used for sport club training, aquatic sport clubs make up nearly all the early morning allocation and 63% of evening and weekend allocation.

Aquatic sport clubs are also allocated time in non-municipal facilities such as the Waegwoltic Club, Shearwater and Dalplex. At Dalplex, excluding varsity use, aquatic sport clubs make up 17% of allocated time overall. In addition, Dalplex hosts most competition swimming events. In 2017, Dalplex hosted 17 events over 35 days of which 10 days were varsity related.

The Long-Term Athlete Development Plan (LTAD)

Overall aquatic sport club participation numbers (Tables 13 to 16) are much smaller when compared to recreational aquatic participation (Tables 9, 10). However, competitive sports require more training time. Sport governing bodies recommend training standards through the LTAD for various age categories. For

Swimming Canada, the training guidelines are outlined in Figure 11.

The 2017/18 combined average training hours per week allocated to swim clubs across all aquatic facilities by LTAD Category are shown in Table 17. The allocation averages do not equate to the amount of time that each participant is training. Some categories have a higher allocation so that a variety of program times can be offered to participants while still operating within the LTAD guidelines. This allows flexibility to participants who can then pick and choose from the training times offered throughout a week.

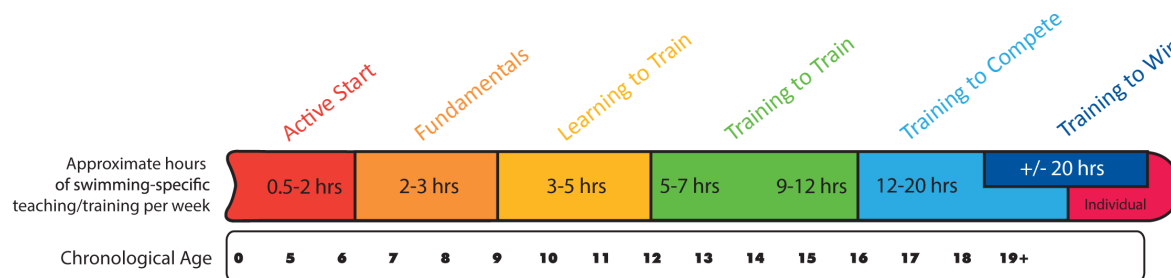


Figure 11. Swimming Canada LTAD. Source: [Swimming Canada](#)

^{*}As previously noted, allocation breakdown is based on sample weekly schedules from all municipal facilities (see Allocation of Pool Time in Sections 3.1 and 3.3).

¹Halifax (2012) [HRM Community Access Plan](#)

Table 17. The 2017/18 combined average training hours per week allocated to swim clubs by category.

LTAD Swimming Category	Average Hours per Week Allocated*
Active Start	3.9
Fundamentals	5.2
Learning to Train	8.0
Training to Train	10.8
Training to Compete	13.9
Training to Win**	12.8
Active for Life	6.4

*Averages were derived from allocation data provided by Swim Nova Scotia.
 **Except for the 'Training to Win' category, the overall combined average allocated training hours meet the LTAD guidelines for swimming.

Dalplex and Centennial are the only two 50-m competition pools in Nova Scotia.

Summary

- » Training and competition facilities have specific facility requirements which differ from general recreational pools.
- » Halifax is host to the only 50-metre pools in Nova Scotia.
- » Both Centennial and Dalplex are aging facilities. The CFMP2 notes that Centennial pool has about a 10-15-year lifecycle remaining.
- » Both Centennial and Dalplex facilities do not meet national hosting requirements for competitive swimming and Centennial has limited capacity to meet local hosting needs for larger swim competitions.
- » The community is reliant on Dalplex to host most local, regional and provincial swimming competitions; in the event of a closure hosting would be significantly impacted.
- » An updated competition pool to a national standard would significantly increase capacity compared to the existing Centennial Pool.
- » Aquatic sport club participation numbers are much smaller when compared to recreational aquatic participation, but aquatic sport club participants require more pool time for training.
- » The analysis indicates that sport clubs use 45% of early morning pool time when combined across all municipal facilities and 24% of evening and weekend time. At Centennial Pool, aquatic sport clubs make up nearly all the early morning allocation and 63% of evening and weekend allocation.

- » The engagement findings from aquatic sports noted a desire for an updated aquatic training competition and hosting facility.



3.3 Outdoor Recreational Pools

This section provides an overview of outdoor recreational pools including a facilities overview, facility features, usage, allocation of pool time, and a summary.



Table 18. Outdoor Recreational Pools

Outdoor Pools	Year Built*	Ownership/Operations	Facility Features
Halifax Common	1960's	Municipally Owned & Operated	Single tank, small pool with no lanes
Cole Harbour	1981	Municipally Owned & Operated	Single tank, 5-lane pool (almost 25 m in length), separate wading pool, slide
St. Margaret's Centre	1988	Municipally Owned/Board Operated	Single tank, 4-lane 25-m pool
Bedford	Pre 1980	Municipally Owned & Operated	Single tank, 6-lane 25-m pool, small tot pool, spray feature, recreational features
Other Outdoor Pools			
Waegwoltic Club	NA	Non-Municipal	Four separate outdoor pools within the club
Royal NS Yacht Squadron	NA	Non-Municipal	Small outdoor pool and wading pool
*Reported in the <i>Community Facilities Masterplan 2</i> (2016), and building condition assessments (Appendix D)			

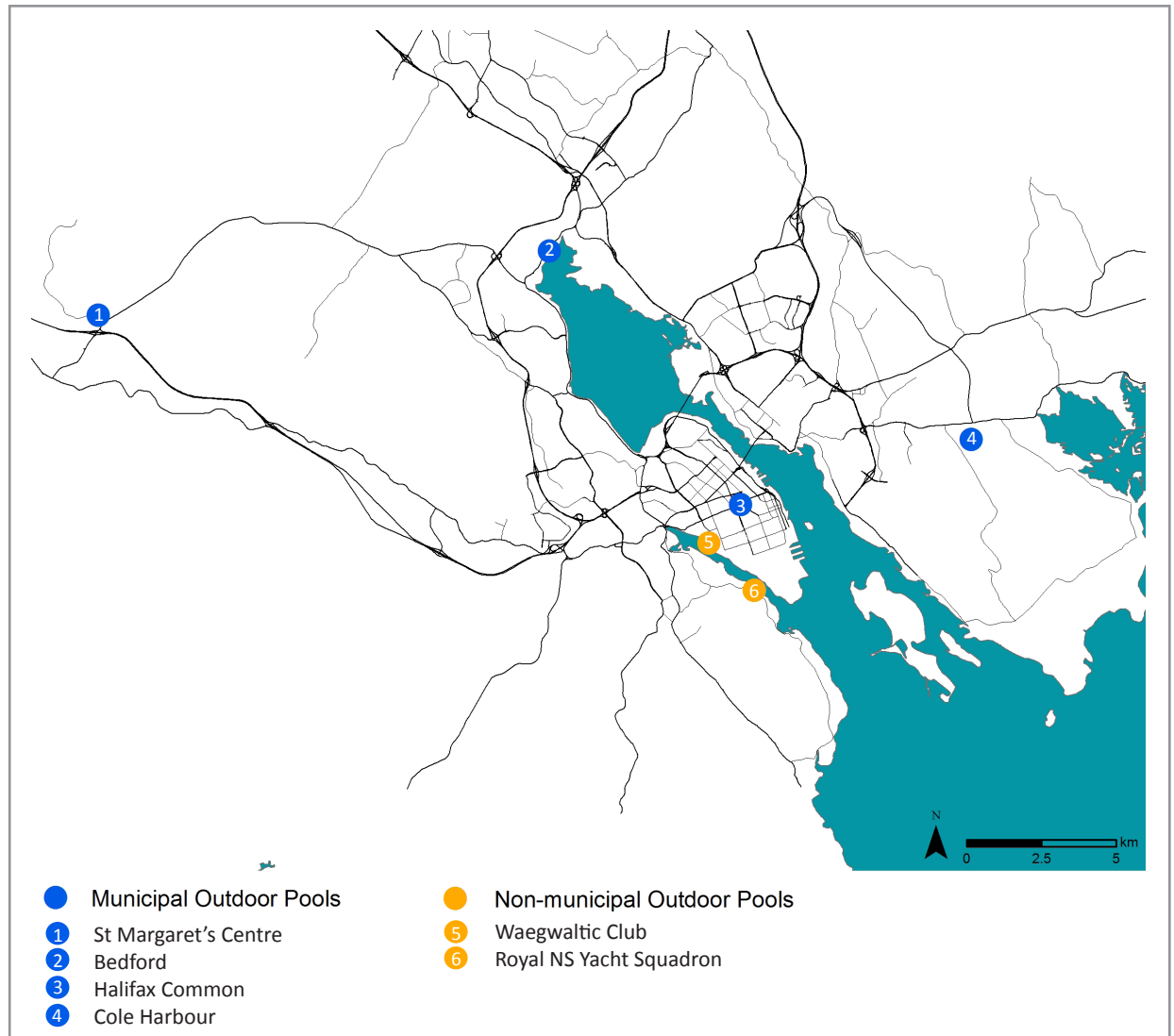
Facility Overview

There are six outdoor pool facilities in the municipality (Table 18, Figure 12). With the exception of the Waegwoltic and Royal Yacht Squadron Pools, all pools are owned by the municipality. Bedford, Cole Harbor, and Halifax Common Pools are operated directly by the municipality, and the St. Margaret's Centre Outdoor Pool is operated by a community board. Each outdoor pool has different facility features, but are generally used for open swims, learn to swim, and aquatic sports. As expected, the frequency of use in outdoor facilities increases during the warmer summer months. Outdoor pools together with other outdoor facilities such as supervised beaches and splash pads provide a network of outdoor aquatic opportunities.

Distribution

The four municipally-owned outdoor pools are located in Peninsular Halifax, Cole Harbour, Bedford, and Tantallon (Figure 12). The small number of outdoor pools is primarily due to the municipality's use of many supervised beaches (Figure 15 in Section 3.5). Eighty-four percent of residents are within a 20-minute drive time to an outdoor pool, and 75% of outdoor pools are within 400 m of a transit stop. (Table 3).

Figure 12. Distribution of outdoor pools.



Halifax Common Outdoor Pool

The Halifax Common Outdoor Pool is the oldest outdoor facility in the inventory and is at the end of its lifecycle. The facility is the only municipal outdoor pool on the peninsula, where there are no supervised beach locations. Although the Halifax Common is a regional destination, visiting summer day-camps cannot use the facility because it is undersized and not accessible. The facility offers no-cost learn to swim programs. The pool has the lowest amount of recreational usage (Table 19) but this is believed to be due to the facility being undersized and in poor condition with reduced operating hours (as compared to other facilities). For example, on hot days the pool cannot accommodate the demand, and residents are lined up to gain access. The pool is located adjacent to a wading pool/spray feature which is also at the end of its lifecycle. Some facility users expressed that the Halifax Common was ideal as a regional destination because of its central location and proximity to other facilities, where families can “make a day of it”. However, it was also noted that the facility is unsightly, not up to standard, and not functional as a recreational pool.

Bedford Outdoor Pool

The Bedford Outdoor Pool has two separate pool areas allowing for more utilization of varying ages and has evening hours of operation until dusk. Spray features for younger children are an integrated component. The facility is well used for open swims, learn to swim and aquatic sport usage. The pool has the most learn to

swim participation when compared to the other outdoor pools (Table 19).

Cole Harbour Outdoor Pool

Like the Bedford pool, the Cole Harbour Outdoor Pool has two separate pool areas and early evening hours of operation. There is a spray feature incorporated into the facility. It is well used for open swims, learn to swim and aquatic sport usage and has the most open swim participation (Table 19).

St. Margaret’s Centre Outdoor Pool

The St. Margaret’s Centre Outdoor Pool is the only municipal pool outside the Urban Service Area (Figure 2) and therefore operates from an onsite well water system. The facility requires provincial permitting and has water withdrawal restrictions. The facility requires ongoing water monitoring and testing. The outdoor pool was originally constructed as a water reservoir to supply the facility’s fire sprinkler system and this is still its primary purpose. Because of its dual function, in case of a fire, there are special evacuation and safety protocols in place for swimmers when the pool is in operation. Continued capital investment related to water management will be required due to the hydrogeological conditions at this location. Recent upgrades to the water filtration and treatment systems were required to address radon in the groundwater and to bring the facility back into compliance with provincial environmental regulations.

Currently there are no municipally-supervised beaches close by, therefore, this outdoor pool provides an important service for surrounding communities. The pool is well used during a three-month summer period for recreational programs, open swims and sport club training. The pools liner has recently been replaced which is anticipated to extend its lifecycle to 20 years.

Waegwoltic Club

The Waegwoltic Club is a non-municipal, membership-based outdoor recreation facility located in the South End of Peninsula Halifax. The facility contains four separate outdoor pool facilities and offers a variety of aquatic programs. In 2018, the club had over 2,000 members.

The Royal Nova Scotia Yacht Squadron

The Royal Nova Scotia Yacht Squadron is a non-municipal, membership based sailing club located on Purcell’s Cove road. The club has two small outdoor recreational pools available during the summer season for its approximately 900 members.

Facility Features for Outdoor Recreational Pools

Like indoor recreational pools, outdoor facilities which are designed for broader participation have a combination of facility features that allow for more diverse programming, multifunctionality, scheduling flexibility and accessibility. Different pools may have unique features to meet specific community needs. Examples of general features are based on trends, the CFMP2, and community engagement from this Strategy, and include the following:

- » Beach entry/low sloped and or accessible ramp access
- » Multiple pool tanks or separate pool areas to accommodate diverse program requirements
- » Updated, accessible/universal change facilities
- » Accessibility lifts
- » Recreational “fun” features such as spray zones
- » A design that considers safety, security, privacy, and a welcoming atmosphere
- » Spacious pool deck
- » Areas for seating, viewing, social interaction, and lounging
- » Storage, equipment loan
- » Lifeguarding huts/offices
- » Areas for shade
- » Outdoor showers
- » Warmer water temperatures for extended use
- » Attractive fencing and a secure site
- » Drinking fountains/water bottle filling station

Updated facility features provide accessibility, multifunctionality, and improve user experience, contributing to broader utilization.



Outdoor Recreational Pool Usage

Outdoor pools provide learn to swim, open swims, sport club bookings and other aquatic programs for a wide variety of ages. Open swims are the largest category of participation in outdoor pools (Table 19).

Allocation of Pool Time

For municipally-owned outdoor pools (Table 18), in the summer of 2016, 80% of pool time was used for recreational public programming, 17%* was used for aquatic sport clubs, and 3% was used for non-sport club rentals (Figure 13). This analysis is based on sample weekly schedules from each municipally-owned pool.

The municipality has a small number of outdoor pools providing open swims to over 20,000 participants and learn to swim programming to over 1600.

*For the Cole Harbour Pool, hours for sport club rentals are based on the 2018 schedule.

Facility	Learn to Swim	Youth Leadership	Open Swims	Waitlisted
Halifax Commons Pool	103	4	1,892	7
Bedford Outdoor Pool	732	73	5,960	39
St. Margaret's Centre	470	12	4,256	0
Cole Harbour Outdoor Pool*	373	23	9,875	6
Total	1678	112	20,091	52

*Data for 2018

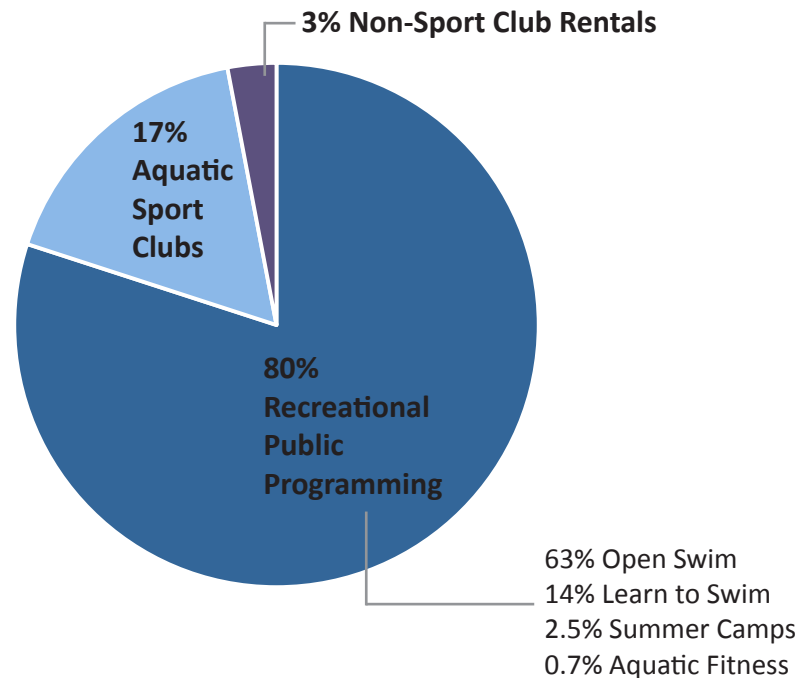


Figure 13. Outdoor pool allocation for the summer of 2016.*

Summary

- » 84% of residents are within a 20-minute drive time to an outdoor pool, and 75% of outdoor pools are within 400 m of a transit stop.
- » Outdoor pools are part of an integrated network of outdoor aquatic facilities that includes supervised beaches and splash pads.
- » Outdoor pools are used for open swims, learn to swim program, and aquatic sports, with the largest amount of allocation for open swims (over 20,000 participants).
- » The demand for outdoor pools is high particularly with our trend of warmer summers.
- » Three of the four municipal outdoor pools have an integrated or nearby spray feature.
- » The St. Margaret's and Halifax Common pools are the smallest facilities with the fewest recreational features.
- » The St. Margaret's pool is the only aquatic facility outside of the Urban Service Area (Figure 2).
- » The Halifax Common, the oldest least functional and accessible outdoor facility, has the lowest recreational usage even though it is located within a regional destination for residents and visitors.



3.4 Splash Pads

This section provides an overview of splash pads, including trends, distribution, features, gaps, operating systems, and a summary.



Table 20. Splash Pads

Indoor Pool	Ownership/Operations	Facility Features
Halifax Common	Municipally Owned & Operated	Two ground spray holes located within the original wading pool - flow through system Close to washrooms and change areas – but not accessible
Westmount	Municipally Owned & Operated	Several spray features with flow through system No washrooms
Isleville	Municipally Owned & Operated	Several spray features with flow through system Close to portable washroom
Bayer’s Westwood	Municipally Owned & Operated	Two spray features with flow through system Within walking distance to a recreation centre
George Dixon	Municipally Owned & Operated	Several spray features with flow through system Near a recreation centre
Sackville Kinsmen	Municipally Owned & Operated	Several different spray features with recirculating system Close to portable washrooms

Facility Overview

The municipality currently has six municipal splash pads (Table 20), not including Bishops Landing on the Halifax Waterfront, which has a ground spray feature that is a non-municipal asset.

Splash pads are outdoor, free-play water facilities that range in size and features, are often co-located with other recreation amenities, and cater to preschoolers to teens depending on the features. New facilities can be designed for intergenerational participation. Splash pads are part of a network of outdoor aquatic facilities, which includes outdoor pools and supervised beaches. They provide accessible, safe, free (no cost) water-play activity which is especially important in areas where barriers exist to participation in aquatic programming.

Distribution

Splash pads are primarily concentrated on the Halifax Peninsula (Figure 14). The newest and largest splash pad facility is in Lower Sackville. These facility locations are in areas which lack supervised beaches within densely populated areas (Figure 3). The municipality is mostly reliant on its supervised beaches for outdoor

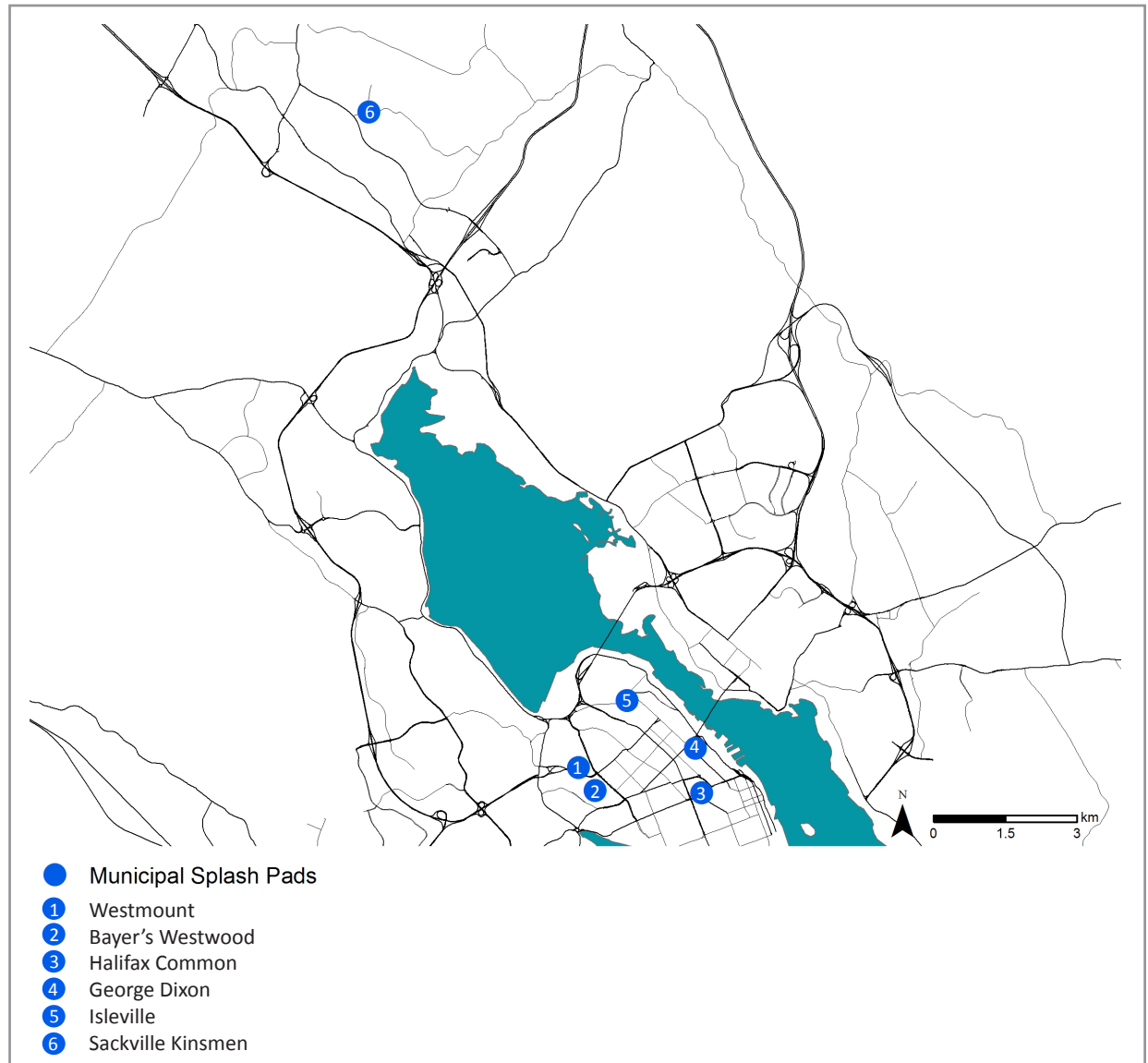


Figure 14. Distribution of splash pads.

aquatics (see Figure 15 in Section 3.5). Seventy-nine percent of the municipality's residents are within a 20-minute drive time to a splash pad , and 100% of the splash pads are within 400 m of a transit stop (Table 3).

Trends

Due to splash pads providing greater accessibility with generally lower capital and operating costs, there is a growing trend of municipalities, especially in urban/suburban areas, to providing these facilities as an alternative to outdoor pools.¹ However, splash pad facilities do not offer the wider range of program opportunities that outdoor pools provide, such as learn to swim programs. When newer outdoor pools are constructed, they often include splash pad features within its design to allow for broader participation.

The growing trend of splash pads is also fueled by warmer, longer seasons, which is increasing demand for outdoor aquatics in the summer. However, splash pads are costlier, both in operational and capital costs, than playgrounds with capital costs can range between \$300,000 to \$600,000 (in current dollars) for a mid-sized facility. Therefore, the provision of new splash pads should be done strategically to maximize utilization and cost effectiveness.

Features

Splash pads are scalable in size and can offer a variety of designs and features including ground sprays, interactive play, overhead sprays, themed

or sculptural elements, different zones, and spray pressures for different ages.

Gaps

An initial assessment was conducted to identify priority gaps in the overall outdoor aquatic inventory. This assessment considered access to municipally supervised beaches and outdoor pools, locations of trending beach closures, demographics, and the condition of an existing splash pad facility.

Based on these findings, primary gap areas include Beechville-Lakeside-Timberlea, Dartmouth, and Eastern Passage. This assessment requires further analysis using the proposed evaluation criteria (Appendix B) for specific siting. As outlined in the Outdoor Recreational Pool Section (3.3), the Halifax Common Splash Pad is at the end of its lifecycle, is in poor condition, and not accessible. The replacement of this facility is being examined through the forthcoming *Halifax Common Master Plan* and its replacement could be considered as part of an integrated design within the overall outdoor aquatic area for this site.

With the current small number of splash pads, there is a gap in providing a regional distribution for these facilities. Therefore, a secondary focus should be placed on improving the regional distribution to meet district and municipal-wide needs. These locations should align within recreation hubs or parks with supporting

amenities that can serve a larger population catchment.

Finally, because splash provide no cost aquatic access, smaller scale neighbourhood splash pads should be provided in lower socio-economic areas to address any existing barriers to participation at aquatic facilities.

Operating Systems

There are two main types of operating systems for splash pads: recirculating and flow through. Flow through systems use potable water from the municipal water system which drains back into the wastewater system. These systems are less complicated but may use more water, although holding tanks can be considered for capturing grey water which can potentially be re-purposed for other uses. Flow through systems are generally used with smaller splash pads. Recirculating systems also requires a potable water supply but operate more like a pool with pumps and chemicals and are typically used for larger facilities. Recirculating systems tend to use less water but require more mechanical infrastructure and servicing. Further evaluation is needed regarding the types of operating systems and their operational impacts.

¹Steinbach. P. August 2014. [Key Considerations When Building a Splash Pad](#), In *Athletic Business*

Summary

- » Splash pads provide safe, free (no cost) water-play activity and have lower operational and capital costs when compared to outdoor pools, but they cannot offer the same range of aquatic program opportunities.
- » Seventy-nine percent of the municipality's residents are within a 20-minute drive time to a splash pad, and 100% of the splash pads are within 400 m of a transit stop.
- » Splash pads are part of a network of outdoor aquatic facilities, which includes outdoor pools and supervised beaches.
- » Splash pad facilities are currently located in areas which lack supervised beaches within densely populated areas.
- » Splash pads can range in size and features.
- » Operating systems should be evaluated for their operational costs and water consumption.
- » Preliminary analysis indicates gaps in the outdoor aquatic inventory in Beechville-Lakeside-Timberlea, Dartmouth, and Eastern Passage.
- » The Halifax Common Aquatic Area is at the end of its lifecycle.

Splash pads are an important part of the aquatic delivery system as they provide safe, free (no cost) water-play activity.



3.5 Supervised Beaches

This section provides an overview of supervised beaches including a facilities overview, usage, beach closure trends, monitoring water quality and a summary.

Facility Overview

The municipality has many natural assets within both urban and rural communities which are used for outdoor aquatics. In 2017, 19 municipally-supervised beaches throughout the municipality (Table 21, Figure 15) provided learn to swim programs at no cost along with supervised public access from July through August. Supervised beaches are important



Table 21. Supervised Beaches

Municipal Supervised Beaches	
Albro Lake Beach*	Long Pond Beach
Birch Cove Beach*	Malay Falls
Campbell Point Beach	Oakfield Beach
Chocolate Lake Beach*	Penhorn Beach*
Cunard Beach	Pleasant Drive Beach
Kearney Lake Beach	Sandy Lake
Kidston Lake Beach	Saunders Beach
Kinap Beach	Springfield Lake
Shubie Park Beach*	Webbers Beach
Lake Echo Beach	
Other Supervised Beaches - NS Lifeguard Service	
Clam Harbour	Queensland
Dollar Lake	Rainbow Haven
Martinique	Lawrencetown
Other Supervised Beaches - Associations	
Third Lake - Windsor Junction Community Centre	
*Municipal beaches that have permanent change/washroom facilities Note that beaches at paddling clubs are not included in this study.	

in rural areas where drive times are typically longer to other aquatic facilities. Public feedback expressed the importance of beaches along with a desire to find solutions to closures related to poor water quality, and the need for improved transit to locations, accessibility, parking, better maintenance and more amenities.

Distribution

The municipality utilizes and primarily relies on beaches for providing outdoor aquatics. The distribution indicates a high concentration of supervised beaches within the Regional Centre of Dartmouth, a more even distribution in eastern parts of the municipality, with fewer distributed in the west (Figure 15). However, this distribution should be viewed in the context of the overall outdoor aquatic inventory (ie. together with outdoor pools and splash pads, Figures 12 and 14). Ninety-two percent of the municipality’s residents are within a 20-minute drive time to a supervised beach, and 61% of supervised beaches are within 400 m of a transit stop (Table 3).

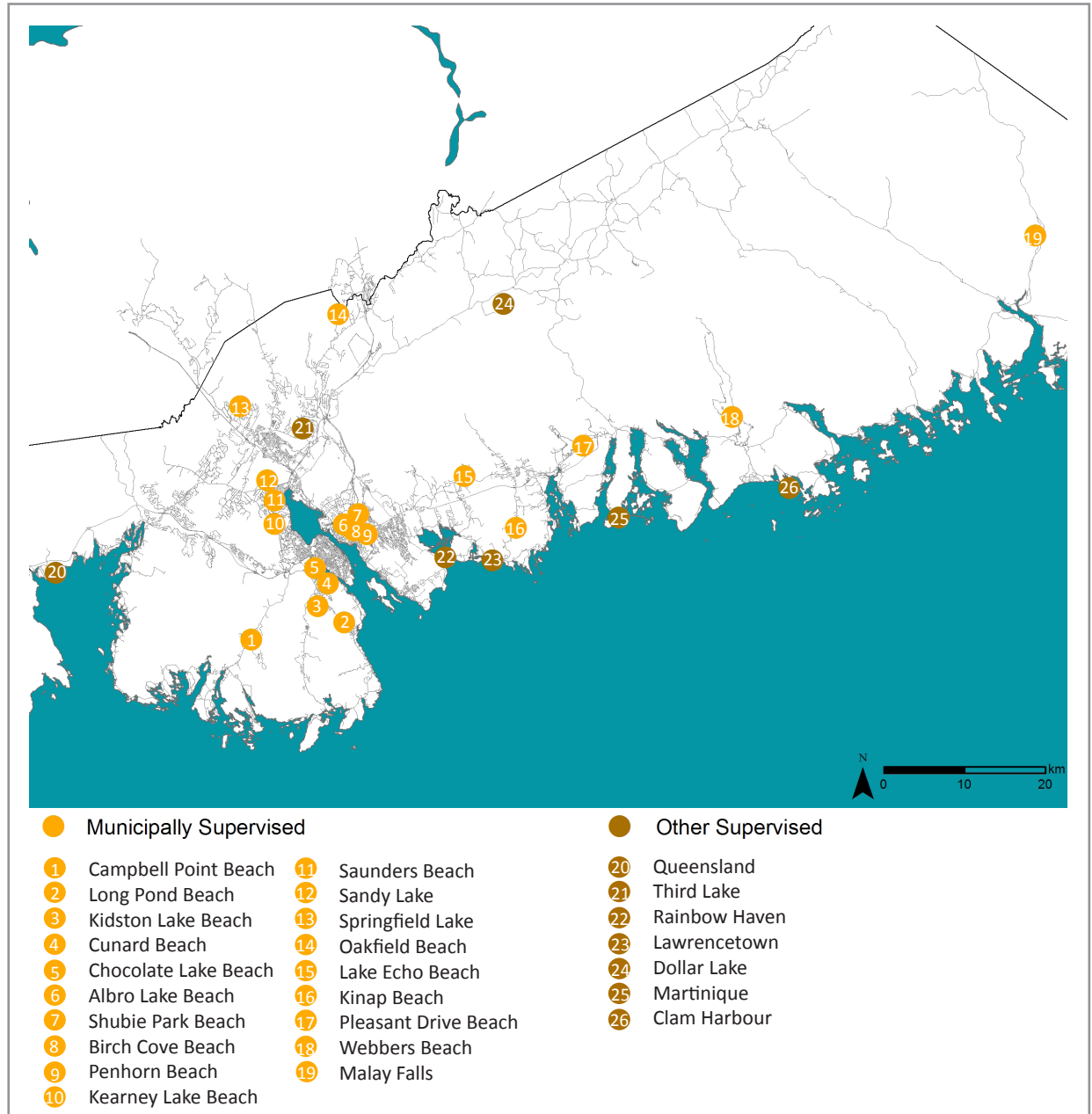


Figure 15. Distribution of supervised beaches.

Supervised Beach Usage

Learn to Swim

Municipal supervised beaches provide no-cost learn to swim programs (Table 22). There were 2,106 learn to swim participants at supervised beaches in 2018. Chocolate Lake, Shubie, and Oakfield are the most well-used beaches for swim lessons.

Total Beach Population

The total beach population counts include the total number of visits in the water, on the beach, and those outside the supervised area. The total count in 2018 was 96,969 (Table 22). It is believed that lengthy beach closures at some locations are impacting utilization counts (see Beach Closures – 2010 to 2018 below). The 2018 population count is up from 2017, which saw approximately 91,000 participants, but down from 2016, which had approximately 115,000 participants. The three most populated beaches in 2018 were at Chocolate, Kearney, and Penhorn Lakes.

Beach Closures - 2010 to 2018

Between 2010 and 2018, most supervised beaches did not experience significant closures (Table 23). However, in recent years there has been an increasing closure trend in some locations. Several beaches have closed within the Urban Service Area (Figure 2). Birch Cove, Kinap and Albro beaches are the locations with the highest number of closure days for operational beaches. Since 2013 Birch Cove has been a

certified a Blue Flag beach, which requires higher standards for quality, safety, environmental education, and environmental management. The Blue Flag designation was removed this past season due to the high number of closures.

Table 22. 2018 Municipal Supervised Beaches - Learn to Swim Participants and Total Beach Population

Beach Name	Learn to Swim Participants	Total Beach Population
Albro	81	4,890
Birch Cove	133	4,962
Campbell Point	99	4,296
Chocolate Lake	194	12,941
Cunard	74	6,019
Kearney	153	10,836
Kidston	94	4,492
Kinap	121	1,171
Lake Echo	89	3,415
Long Pond	107	2,695
Malay	22	403
Oakfield	163	7,621
Penhorn	131	9,407
Pleasant	107	3,191
Sandy	85	2,114
Saunders	108	4,783
Shubie	165	6,998
Springfield	111	4,332
Webber	69	2,403
Total	2,106	96,969

Table 23. Number of Beach Closure Days in the Halifax Regional Municipality from 2010 to 2018*

Beach Name	2010**	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	TOTAL
Kinsmen***	13	45	26	38	0	39	20	62	27	270
Dingle***	27	11	11	14	6	35	22	10	7	143
Black Rock***	24	11	10	18	0	23	24	16	15	141
Government Wharf***	0	7	0	2	5	32	15	32	35	128
Birch Cove	0	6	5	0	6	17	7	33	28	102
Kinap	0	3	0	8	0	5	4	44	31	95
Albro	7	0	0	2	0	0	0	6	25	40
Shubie	0	11	0	7	2	2	0	0	6	28
Springfield	0	0	0	0	10	0	2	6	6	24
Oakfield	7	0	0	5	3	0	0	6	3	24
Long Pond	0	5	0	7	0	2	0	0	5	19
Lake Echo	0	0	3	0	0	0	2	10	0	15
Kearney	0	0	0	7	0	5	2	0	0	14
Penhorn	0	0	0	0	4	0	2	0	0	6
Malay Falls	0	0	0	0	4	0	0	0	0	4
Chocolate	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	3
Sandy	0	0	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	3
Campbell	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	2
Saunders	0	2	n/a	n/a	n/a	0	0	0	0	2
Kidston	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Cunard	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Pleasant	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Webbers	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	78	101	57	112	40	160	103	225	188	1,064

*The standard beach season is 62 days long

**Uncertain data

***No longer supervised but still monitored for water quality

Beach Monitoring

Supervised beaches are subject to additional influences beyond those of pools in enclosed facilities. To manage the additional risks, municipal staff conduct weekly water quality monitoring. Water quality has been adequate to excellent for most beaches but closures have been an ongoing issue in some locations (Table 23). It should be noted that the municipality does not have jurisdiction over lakes as Nova Scotia Environment is the regulatory body. However, it's important the municipality and the province work together toward optimal watershed management.

Water quality is affected by many factors. For example, storm water runoff from impervious surfaces such as high local road density, bacteria, and other pathogens from canine and avian fecal matter. Further, higher than average summer temperatures and longer periods of warm weather increase rates of bacterial growth (the leading cause of beach closures) and the occurrence of harmful algal blooms. These factors can degrade water quality over time and reduce the reliability of beach facilities.

Pollution Control Study

A *Pollution Control Study* has been conducted to address concerns about the water quality issues related to E. Coli bacteria and toxic cyanobacteria (blue-green algae blooms) experienced at Birch Cove Beach in 2017. The beach was closed for 33 days out of 62 because of these water

quality issues (30 days from E. Coli and 3 days from cyanobacteria). The number of closures documented in 2017 mark the highest number recorded for that beach to date, and is part of a trend towards more closure days over the last several years (Table 23). The Study is also investigating phosphorus in the lake, which is thought to be a factor in the recent emergence of nuisance plants that are being managed through an active harvesting project set to conclude in 2018. The Study will recommend options toward the long-term reliability of the lake for paddling events and swimming.

Summary

- » The municipality uses and mostly relies on its natural assets in providing outdoor aquatics.
- » 92% of the municipality's residents are within a 20-minute drive time to a municipal supervised beach, and 61% of beaches are within 400 m of a transit stop.
- » Access to natural water assets for public recreation is especially important in rural areas where there are longer drive time to other facilities.
- » Municipal supervised beaches provide no-cost learn to swim programs for 2,106 participants in 2018.
- » There were 96,969 visitors to municipal beaches in 2018.

- » There has been an increasing beach closure trend in some locations in recent years. Birch Cove, Kinap and Albro beaches have had the highest number of closure days for operational beaches. Several beaches have already closed.
- » Water quality at beaches may be affected by factors such as storm water runoff, bacteria, and longer periods of warm weather causing increased rates of bacterial growth.
- » Public feedback expressed the importance of

The Halifax Regional Municipality is reliant on its beach provision for outdoor aquatics, serving almost 97, 000 users.



HALIFAX

4 Key Findings



The Key Findings are derived from analysis, community and stakeholder engagement findings, along with guidance from an aquatic Stakeholder Working Group.

- 1 Public feedback confirmed strong overall interest in aquatics across a wide range of ages and areas of the municipality.
- 2 Engagement findings indicated that the top reasons why participants use aquatic facilities are for 'exercise and being active' and 'recreation and fun'. 'Lowering fees' and 'upgrading and enhancing facilities' were identified as the two key factors that would encourage more aquatic participation. The main barrier to participation expressed was 'not having enough aquatic facilities nearby'.
- 3 Most recreational aquatic participation is for open swims, learn to swim programs, aquatic fitness programs and visiting supervised beaches.
- 4 Overall aquatic demand is strong but utilization is impacted by some aging facilities which do not fully meet program requirements and lack the accessible and multifunctional features required for broader participation.
- 5 The two oldest recreational aquatic facilities are Needham Centre Pool and the Halifax Common Outdoor Pool. These facilities do not fully meet current program requirements, have the lowest recreational participation, and are located within populated areas of anticipated future residential growth, the Regional Centre.
- 6 The municipality is mostly reliant on beaches for its provision of outdoor aquatics, while having a small number of outdoor pools and splash pads, leading to potential gaps in the outdoor aquatic inventory. Further, there is a growing trend of beach closures due to water quality issues in some locations, which is negatively impacting participation.
- 7 The municipality is host to the only 50-metre pools in the province. Both Centennial Pool and Dalplex are aging and do not meet the requirements for hosting national level competitive swimming events. Further, the community is reliant on Dalplex to host most local and regional swim competitions which poses a risk in the event of an unexpected closure.
- 8 In addition to the Regional Centre, Bedford West is anticipated to continue to experience significant growth over the next 15 years and its impact on surrounding areas could lead to a gap in the indoor recreational facility inventory.
- 9 There is a lack of consistency across municipally-owned aquatic facilities with regards to program/user fees and there is no system wide framework related to allocations and scheduling.



5 Aquatic Strategy

The background of the slide is a close-up, top-down view of water ripples. The ripples are light blue and white, creating a complex, organic pattern of concentric and overlapping circles and lines. The overall color palette is a range of light blues, from pale cyan to a slightly darker, muted blue.

This section is the Aquatic Strategy. It addresses the Key Findings noted in Section 4 and provides Strategic Actions.

5.1 Aquatic Mandate

The way in which municipalities provide aquatic facilities and services varies. Some municipalities may have a combination of direct provider, partnership models, or third-party operators to ensure that their core services are provided. There are also examples where non-municipal organizations and facilities, such as a YMCA, may provide similar services to a municipality. As noted in Section 2.2, most aquatic facilities are owned by the municipality but delivered through a hybrid system of facilities that are either directly owned and operated by the municipality or directly owned by the municipality but operated by a community board.

This Strategy sets out that the municipality has a primary mandate of ensuring that the public has aquatic access, to be safe in and around the water, to learn to swim, and to benefit from lifelong participation in healthy active lifestyles (Figure 16). To this degree, the municipality needs to ensure that these opportunities exist in its full range of facilities. The Provincial government has an established mandate regarding higher level sport development and sport hosting through its support of provincial sport organizations and partnerships with Sport Canada. As stated above, the

municipality's primary focus is on a wide range of recreational level opportunities, however, it does have a secondary mandate to support

sport development. Therefore, when considering specialized sports that may require competition training and hosting facilities, such as a 50-metre

Water Safety

Facilitating safety in and around the water includes learn to swim programs, water safety skills, and providing lifeguard leadership training and supervision in aquatic facilities.

Active Living

Facilitating participation in healthy active lifestyles includes facilities and programs for all ages and abilities, such as open swims, aquatic fitness programs, and water play. In addition, the municipality contributes to the Canadian Sport for Life - Long Term Athlete Development Framework.

Aquatic Access

Facilitating suitable access to a full range of aquatic facilities and programs. The *Aquatic Access Plan* (see Appendix C) provides a framework to guide access and inclusion policies, practices, programs, and allocation guidelines to facilitate full participation in aquatic opportunities.

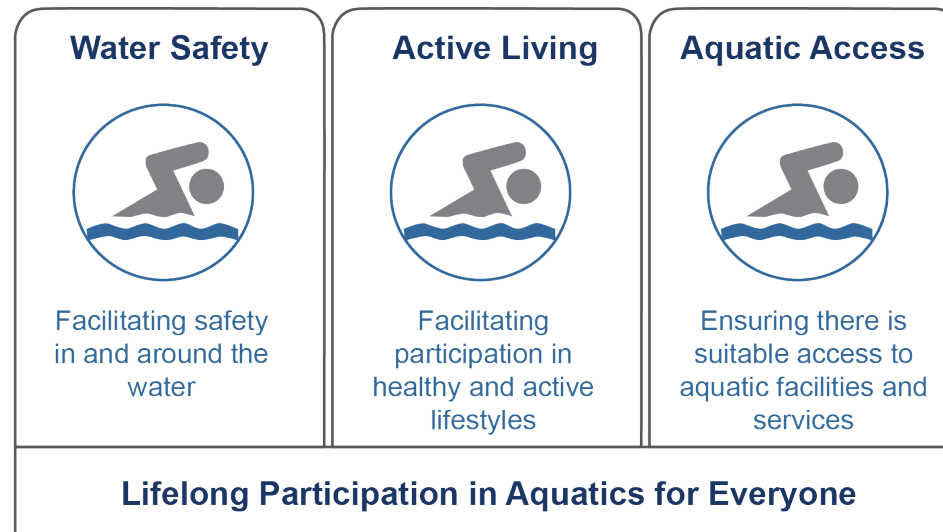


Figure 16. Lifelong participation in aquatics for everyone.

pool, the municipality contributes through partnerships that consider alternative ownership, management and funding models.

As identified in the analysis, there is no system-wide framework for allocation and scheduling guidelines across municipal aquatic facilities. The lack of such a framework could result in inequities amongst various user groups. This is unlike the *HRM Community Access Plan*¹ which provides a consistent allocation process for ice arenas. A similar guiding framework based on the municipal mandate and community need should be adopted to provide allocation priorities and a consistent allocation process for aquatic sport groups. Such a framework is proposed in the *Aquatic Access Plan*, Appendix C.

Finally, there are inconsistencies regarding program/user fees across municipal aquatic facilities. The municipality should continue to work toward approaches that enable greater fee equity and standardization while also reducing barriers for those who face financial challenges to participation.

Strategic Action

- » Recognize the aquatic mandate when seeking guidance on the provision of aquatics and when developing strategies to remove barriers that facilitate full lifelong participation.
- » Adopt the *Aquatic Access Plan* (Appendix C) which provides a framework and allocation guidelines for municipal aquatic facilities.
- » Continue to place an emphasis upon municipal ownership of facilities to secure the provision of recreational aquatics and only seek alternative partnership models where the municipality's interests are secured.
- » For specialized facilities, such as training and competition pools, consider partnerships and alternative models with organizations and institutions.
- » Develop approaches that enable greater fee equity and standardization while also reducing barriers for those who face financial challenges to participation.

5.2 Indoor Recreational Pools

Indoor recreational aquatic facilities should reflect the recreational requirements of the communities they serve, including aquatic sport usage where appropriate. Recreational pools may differ in the specific types of features and designs offered, based on understanding community needs and how they can complement other existing facilities. Overall, indoor recreational pools should focus on multifunctionality, accessibility for all ages and abilities, and user experiences which will encourage broad-based participation. Older single tank pools pose challenges with meeting multiple needs and requirements.

Based on the municipality's current population, anticipated growth, and benchmarking, a reduction in the current indoor recreational pool inventory is not recommended. The population of the North/West end of Peninsular Halifax is approximately 37,000 and is anticipating future residential growth (Figure 3). The replaced YMCA in the south end of Halifax will be an updated facility with a recreational pool but it is not a net additional facility. Therefore, it is expected that there is a need to replace the aging Needham Recreation Centre's Pool with an updated recreational pool as part of a new recreation centre. The current facility has a small single tank which lacks multifunctionality and is not fully accessible. Regional Council has already directed

¹Halifax (2012) [HRM Community Access Plan](#)

staff to retain the former adjacent Devonshire land for the future replacement of the Needham Centre. The site can accommodate an expanded recreation centre. However, a 50-metre competition pool to a hosting standard would be constrained within the property (e.g. site access, egress, property line set backs, parking), and this is without consideration of the multifunctional community space required for a recreation centre.

The municipality should carefully monitor residential and population growth trends over the 15-year time frame of this Strategy and conduct an additional assessment to evaluate the growth impacts in Bedford West. Although Bedford West is an emerging gap in indoor recreational aquatics, providing an additional net facility is not expected to be required within the Strategy's time frame. However, it is recommended that planning for a net new facility or examining the potential for future expansion of nearby existing facilities be initiated within the time frame. This could involve identifying available lands within the noted catchment area (Bedford West/Bedford South/Bedford).

The public engagement findings (Section 2.3) note a desire for aquatic facilities outside the Urban Service (Water) Area (Figure 2). However, building a net new aquatic facility outside the service area is not recommended due to challenges related to the management of water resources required for public pools.

The municipality has not needed to add a net new indoor pool to the inventory for the past 30+ years but rather has focused on recapitalizing (including replacing) existing facilities. This approach helps meet current needs and broadens utilization without adding to the inventory. This Strategy recommends continuing recapitalization of all other existing indoor pools facilities to upgrade major building components and facility features when needed (refer to Appendix D - Building Condition Assessments). It is anticipated that the newly revitalized Zatzman Sportsplex will improve accessibility and functionality as a regional facility.

Strategic Action

- » Replace the Needham Recreation Centre and explore design options for an updated recreational aquatic facility that complements existing facilities and meets community recreational needs.
- » Continue to recapitalize all other indoor aquatic facilities with a focus on user experience, accessibility and necessary upgrades as required.
- » Monitor population growth trends throughout the municipality, assess emerging service gaps in and surrounding Bedford West and, if warranted, identify available lands for a potential future facility or explore expansion opportunities with existing facilities.



5.3 Regional Training & Competition Aquatic Facilities

Based on the age, lifecycle, and program requirements, the municipality should begin planning for the replacement of Centennial Pool with an updated training and competition hosting aquatic facility. Both training and competition facilities are aging. The CFMP2 notes that Centennial Pool has about 10-15 years before replacement should be considered. The facility does not currently meet the full requirements for hosting swim competitions. There is a risk to the municipality's ability to host swimming competitions if the Dalhousie aquatic facility were to unexpectedly close.

Because of the need to replace Needham Centre as a recreational pool, the focus of the competition facility should be primarily on the regional training and competition hosting requirements for aquatic sports. There are a few examples of new training and competition facilities in Canada that have multiple tanks hosted within a mega complex designed to accommodate both specialized sport and training requirements as well as broader recreational needs. However, if recreational needs can be met through other facilities or are needed in other locations (such as the new YMCA and Needham Centre) then the pool design could focus on the specialized aquatic sport needs, training and regional hosting requirements.

Historically, the municipality has not developed this type of specialized facility without partnerships, shared funding or without a major hosting event such as the Canada Summer Games. Halifax is not currently listed on the hosting cycle for the Canada Summer Games, up to 2033. Where elite-level sport development is not the primary mandate of the municipality, partnerships with other levels of government or other organizations should be sought when considering this type of facility.

The municipality should initiate the development of a business case that explores the potential partnership opportunities for the replacement of Centennial Pool with a new updated regional training and competition facility. In addition to other levels of government and organizations, a potential partnership with Dalhousie University should be considered and investigated since a synergy currently exists between the University and the municipality for training and hosting needs. This investigation should explore the feasibility of a rationalized single but expanded regional facility and confirm that such a facility can meet sport club needs and requirements. As a comparative example of this type of partnership approach, the City of Toronto and University of Toronto jointly operate the new Pan Am Aquatic Facility through a third-party operator.

Dalhousie's current position regarding the future of its facility states the following:

"Dalhousie University's long-term strategy with respect to their aquatic facility is yet to be determined. We recognize the importance of our pool to our students, varsity programming and community members which include competitive swim clubs. While aquatics is part of our long-term athletic facility renewal plan discussions, exploring partnership models would be critical to any major investment in the next 5-10 years."

Along with exploring this and other partnership options, the business case should also include design considerations, cost-benefit analysis, risk assessment, economic impact, and locational siting options.

Strategic Action

- » Initiate the development of a business case that includes an evaluation of partnership opportunities, approaches, design, funding, cost-benefit, risk, economic impact, and locational siting options for the replacement of Centennial Pool with an updated regional training and competition hosting aquatic facility.

5.4 Outdoor Recreational Pools

As the municipality falls below the benchmark analysis for outdoor pools, the current inventory should be retained and recapitalized to improve functionality, user experience, and accessibility. Outdoor pools are part of a network of outdoor facilities which include splash pads and beaches.

Additional net new outdoor pools are not likely required within this planning horizon if the municipality's beach inventory is stable and the distribution of splash pads improves (refer to Section 3.4 Splash Pads). However, if supervised beaches continue to close, the municipality may have to invest more heavily in outdoor aquatic infrastructure in the future.

A recapitalization priority should be placed on the replacement of the Halifax Common Outdoor Aquatic Area as identified through the forthcoming *Halifax Common Master Plan*. Despite being within a municipal recreation destination, this facility is at the end of its lifecycle and in poor overall condition. Replacing this outdoor pool with a regional splash-pad-only facility would likely be a less costly alternative but would eliminate the only municipal outdoor public pool on the peninsula, reduce the municipal inventory, and decrease the associated public service provision for learn to swim and open swim programs. This reduction would be within the context of anticipated residential growth and trending beach closures.

The municipality should continue to recapitalize the other outdoor pool locations, St. Margaret's Centre, Cole Harbour, and Bedford, with necessary upgrades as required. Site planning exercises should be undertaken at these locations to better understand what small-scale improvements could be made to the outdoor aquatic areas to improve user experience.

Significantly expanding the St. Margaret's Centre outdoor pool or turning it into an indoor year-round operation would impact water consumption for the Centre with unknown risks. Because the pool serves as a reservoir for the fire sprinkler system, requires provincial water withdrawal permitting, and additional water filtration and treatment systems for water quality, significant expansion is not recommended while the facility operates using on-site well water.

Strategic Action

- » Continue to recapitalize outdoor aquatic facilities (Bedford, Cole Harbour, St Margaret's Centre) with a focus on user experience, accessibility and necessary upgrades as required and conduct site planning exercises to identify small-scale improvements that can be undertaken.
- » Recapitalize the Halifax Common Outdoor Aquatic Area as identified through the forthcoming *Halifax Common Master Plan*.



5.5 Splash Pads

With an abundance of natural assets across the region, there has been a reliance on supervised beaches to provide outdoor aquatic opportunities. However, given the increase in seasonal beach closures in certain locations, a limited number of outdoor pools, and gaps in the outdoor aquatic inventory, the municipality should gradually diversify aquatic offerings through additional net new splash pads. This should be done through a strategic approach that improves overall aquatic access while being fiscally responsible.

The approach for new splash pads should first focus on addressing immediate gaps in the current outdoor aquatic inventory (i.e. areas lacking access to outdoor pools and supervised beaches and where facilities are in need of replacement). Efforts should then be directed toward improving the regional distribution in areas that can serve municipal wide and district needs. Over the longer term, smaller-scale neighbourhood facilities should place a priority on lower socio-economic areas to address barriers to participation. In all cases, new splash pads should be located in recreation hubs or parks with supporting amenities, and should be evaluated based on the criteria outlined in Appendix B.

Prioritized approach for new splash pads:

1. Address Immediate Gaps in Outdoor Aquatic Inventory (Short Term)

The following areas have been highlighted through preliminary assessment that has considered access to municipally-supervised beaches and outdoor pools, areas of trending beach closures, population, and the age and condition of an existing facility.

- » Beechville-Lakeside-Timberlea - Consideration of a future recreation centre in the Beechville-Lakeside-Timberlea area may provide co-locating opportunities.
- » Dartmouth - The Dartmouth area is experiencing trending beach closures and Regional Council has already directed staff to explore the Dartmouth Common as a potential future site.
- » Eastern Passage – the Eastern Passage Common is undergoing a site planning exercise which provides an opportunity to consider a splash pad facility.
- » Halifax Common Splash Pad (replacement) - The Halifax Common Facility is already being considered through the *Halifax Common Master Plan* as the facility is at the end of its lifecycle.

2. Address a Regional Distribution (Medium Term)

Over the medium term, the following areas can be considered to establish a regional distribution of splash pads. A regional distribution will diversify the outdoor aquatic inventory and improve municipal wide aquatic access. The following locations fall within the Urban Service

Area (Figure 2) and have district or regional facilities within them, serving a wider population catchment:

- » Cole Harbour
- » Bedford
- » Halifax Mainland
- » Spryfield

Fall River at the Gordon R. Snow Community Centre is another potential candidate site which has municipal adjacent water service, but currently doesn't have piped wastewater infrastructure. Therefore a technical feasibility study would be required to confirm splash pad suitability.

3. Address Access in Marginalized Communities (Longer Term)

To address barriers in lower socio-economic areas, consideration for smaller-scale neighbourhood facilities would help to improve access to free aquatic play opportunities. Further demographic analysis should be undertaken to appropriately identify these areas.

Strategic Action

- » Address the immediate gaps in the outdoor aquatic inventory as outlined in the *Long-Term Aquatic Strategy*.
- » Establish a regional distribution of splash pads to meet municipal-wide and district needs as outlined in the *Long-Term Aquatic Strategy*.
- » Implement small-scale neighbourhood splash pads in lower socio-economic and marginalized communities which have not already been served through establishment of the regional distribution.

5.6 Supervised Beaches

The municipality is fortunate to have many natural assets that can be used for outdoor aquatic recreation. Municipalities without access to natural assets have invested more in outdoor aquatic infrastructure. The Halifax Regional Municipality should work to maintain its beach program through continued water quality monitoring and solutions to improve water quality through the findings of the *Pollution Control Study*. However, if current closure trends continue, the diversification of other outdoor aquatic infrastructure becomes increasingly important.

Site planning exercises should occur over time at existing beach locations to improve the safe, accessible, and sustainable use of the sites and to ensure that appropriate amenities are provided. Such a site planning exercise is currently underway in Lake Echo.

Recognizing that public access to natural water bodies is a critical part of the provision of aquatics in rural areas (areas beyond the Urban Service Area), the municipality should ensure access to beaches and other natural water areas are provided and improved for recreational opportunities. Evaluation criteria of new beach locations have been developed as part of this Strategy (Appendix B).

Strategic Action

- » Maintain the municipal beach program, continue water quality monitoring, and seek solutions to improve water quality.
- » Undertake site planning exercises at existing beach locations to improve the safe, accessible, and sustainable use of the sites and ensure that appropriate amenities are provided.
- » Evaluate new locations that provide public access to natural water bodies which are suitable for recreational opportunities using the developed criteria in Appendix B.



5.7 Current & Future Project Work

The Strategic Actions outlined herein provide priority direction to guide current and future project work (Table 24). No new additional staff, specific to the actions, are anticipated at this time. However, actions may lead to strategic investments phased over multiple years or new programs that will require further approval from Regional Council. Most actions will be lead through the Parks and Recreation Business Unit. Budget implications resulting from the Strategy need to be considered through future business planning cycles.

Table 24. Current and Future Project Work Themes and Time Frames

Direction	Action	Time Frame
Guidance	Aquatic Mandate - Recognize the aquatic mandate when seeking guidance on the provision of aquatics and when developing strategies to remove barriers that facilitate full lifelong participation.	Ongoing 1-15 years
Guidance	Aquatic Mandate - Adopt the <i>Aquatic Access Plan</i> (Appendix C) which provides a framework for allocation/scheduling guidelines for municipal aquatic facilities.	Ongoing 1-15 years
Guidance	Aquatic Mandate - Continue to place an emphasis upon municipal ownership of facilities to secure the provision of recreational aquatics and only seek alternative partnerships models where municipality's interests are secured.	Ongoing 1-15 years
Guidance	Aquatic Mandate - For specialized facilities, such as training and competition pools, consider partnerships and alternative models with organizations and institutions.	Ongoing 1-15 years
Guidance	Aquatic Mandate - Develop approaches that enable greater fee equity and standardization while also reducing barriers for those who face financial challenges to participation.	Short Term 1-3 years
Replacement	Indoor Recreational Aquatic Facilities - Replace the Needham Recreation Centre and explore design options for an updated recreational aquatic facility that complements existing facilities and meets community recreational needs.	Short Term 1-3 years
Recapitalize	Indoor Recreational Aquatic Facilities - Continue to recapitalize all other indoor aquatic facilities with a focus on user experience, accessibility and necessary upgrades as required.	Ongoing 1-15 years
Monitor/ Assessment	Indoor Recreational Aquatic Facilities - Monitor population growth trends throughout the municipality, assess emerging service gaps in and surrounding Bedford West and, if warranted, identify available lands for a potential future facility or explore expansion opportunities with existing facilities.	Medium Term 3-10 years
Assessment/ Replacement	Regional Training and Competition Aquatic Facilities - Initiate the development of a business case that includes an evaluation of partnership opportunities, approaches, design, funding, cost-benefit, risk, economic impact, and locational siting options for the replacement of Centennial Pool with an updated regional training and competition hosting aquatic facility.	Medium Term 3-10 years
Assessment/ Recapitalize	Outdoor Recreational Pools - Continue to recapitalize outdoor aquatic facilities (Bedford, Cole Harbour, St Margaret's Centre) with a focus on user experience, accessibility and necessary upgrades as required and conduct site planning exercises to identify small-scale improvements that can be undertaken.	Ongoing 1-15 years
Assessment/ Recapitalize	Outdoor Recreational Pools - Recapitalize the Halifax Common Outdoor Aquatic Area as identified through the forthcoming <i>Halifax Common Master Plan</i> .	*
Assessment/ Net New	Splash Pads - Address the immediate gaps in outdoor aquatic inventory as outlined in the <i>Long-Term Aquatic Strategy</i> .	Short Term 1-3 years
Assessment/ Net New	Splash Pads - Establish a regional distribution of splash pads to meet municipal-wide and district needs as outlined in the <i>Long-Term Aquatic Strategy</i> .	Medium Term 3-10 years
Assessment/ Net New	Splash Pads - Implement small-scale neighbourhood splash pads in lower socio-economic and marginalized communities which have not already been served through establishment of the regional distribution.	Longer Term 10-15 years
Monitor	Supervised Beaches - Maintain the municipal beach program, continue water quality monitoring, and seek solutions to improve water quality.	Ongoing 1-15 years
Assessment	Supervised Beaches - Undertake site planning exercise at existing beach locations to improve the safe, accessible, and sustainable use of the sites and ensure that appropriate amenities are provided.	Ongoing 1-15 years
Assessment	Supervised Beaches - Evaluate new locations that provide public access to natural water bodies which are suitable for recreational opportunities using the developed criteria in Appendix B.	Ongoing 1-15 years

* As identified through the forthcoming *Halifax Common Master Plan*.

6 Glossary



Additional Net New Facilities - Assessing for additional net new facilities refers to understanding when additional facilities beyond the existing inventory may be required to meet current and future needs and demands. Some of the key considerations when assessing the need for additional net new facilities include:

- » There is a notable change in demographics, residential or population growth.
- » The existing distribution of facilities does not meet current needs or demands.
- » There have been facility closures or an undersupply impacting service requirements.
- » There has been a notable change in trends impacting the facility.
- » Expanding existing facilities is not feasible or adequate to meet the current or future needs and demands.

Public Pool - For the purposes of this Strategy, a public pool refers to a municipally owned or municipally “influenced” (i.e. partnership, funding) aquatic facility which has a mandate to provide access for broad community use.

Recapitalization - recapitalization in the municipal recreation facility context refers to a continuum ranging from replacing existing facility components when required, to renovating or revitalizing existing facilities, to completely replacing facilities to better meet the needs of the community. Recapitalization can expand an existing facility’s capacity and functionality without having to add to the existing inventory. In some cases, replacing facilities may lead to a rationalization of more than one older facilities which can provide efficiencies while still meeting service requirements. Some of the key considerations when assessing need for recapitalization include:

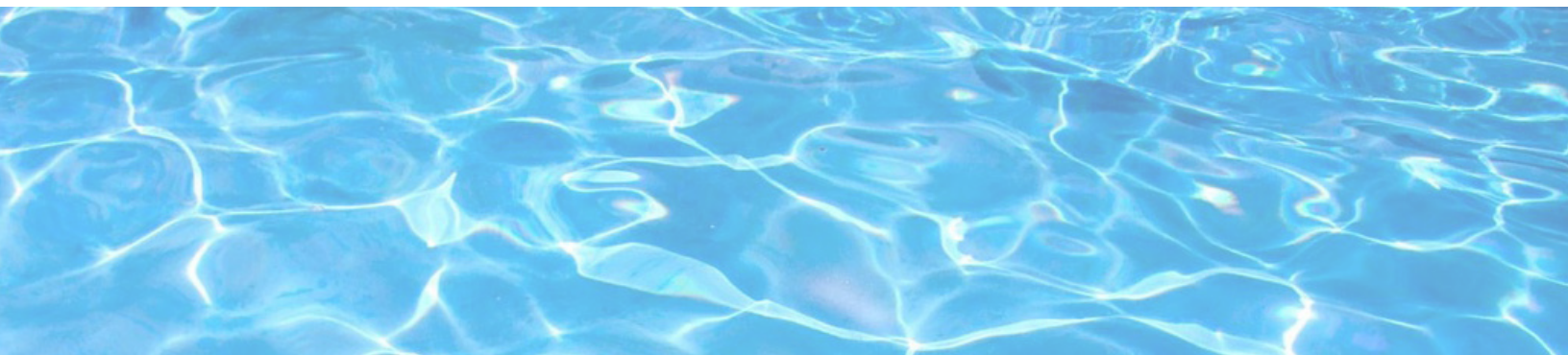
- » Facilities may not be meeting current program requirements (needs and demands) which is impacting usage and operational sustainability.
- » The facility’s major building components may be nearing the end of their expected lifecycle, therefore requiring significant investment.
- » Facilities may not meet current safety, code or accessibility requirements.
- » There is a significant change in demographics, residential or population growth.





Long-Term Aquatic Strategy Appendices A B C & D

MAY 2019



FACILITY RULES & GUIDELINES OF SWIMMING CANADA



The Facility Rules & Guidelines were prepared by Swimming Canada in partnership with the Provincial Sections, the Canadian Swimming Coaches and Teachers Association and Officials Competition and Rules Committee. They have been prepared in both English and French. Where there is a discrepancy between the two versions, the English version shall be applied. The Facility Rules & Guidelines shall be in force and shall influence all decisions surrounding facility usage for competition and training in Canada until such time as revisions are approved and published. The Facility Rules & Guidelines are to be used in conjunction with the Swimming Canada Rules for ALL sanctioned competitions in Canada. The Facility Rules & Guidelines (Section 3), are also to be used for all affiliated Swimming Canada clubs in their daily training environment.

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Introduction

Purpose:

The Facility Rules & Guidelines of Swimming Canada provide a single source of facility information regarding all facility rules and guidelines required for sanctioned competitions and training use for affiliated clubs. The Facility Rules & Guidelines will be a living document that will be updated as required. The Facility Rules & Guidelines of Swimming Canada supplement the current Swimming Canada Rules, (<https://www.swimming.ca/en/swimmingcanadarules/>) that are specific to the swimming rules for ALL sanctioned competitions held in Canada.

Overview:

Section 1: FINA Facility Rules – primarily used for FINA Competitions including World Championships and Olympic Games

Section 2: Canadian Facility Rules & Guidelines for Sanctioned Competitions in Canada

Section 3: Canadian Facility Rules for Training in Canada

Appendix A and B, provide standards for existing pools when considering international, national and provincial facility requirements. Appendix C will provide minimum standards required when considering a new pool construction project and is currently under development.

Appendix A: Facility Standard Comparison for Sanctioned Competitions

Appendix B: Swimming Canada Request for Bids (2017 – 2020)

Appendix C: New Pool Construction Guidelines (To be completed)

Interpretation:

“Affiliation” means fully registered;

“Backstroke Turn Indicator” means flagged ropes suspended across the pool from fixed standards placed 5.0 metres from each end wall;

“CFR or Canadian Facility Rule” means a Canadian specific facility rule related to either competition or training;

“Competition” or “Meet” or “Time Trial” or “Event” means a sanctioned swimming competition;

“CSCTA” means the Canadian Swimming Coaches and Teachers Association;

“FINA” means the “Fédération Internationale de Natation”;

“OCRC” means the Officials Competition and Rules Committee of Swimming Canada;

“Provincial Championship Competition” means competitions which are designed and run in accordance with the meet format determined from time to time by the Provincial Section (PS);

“Provincial Section (PS)” means that geographically defined provincial or territorial swimming organization, which is a Member of Swimming Canada;

“Reasonable Variance” is to be determined having regard to the health and safety of all users, including but not limited to the age and ability of the swimmer(s), the type of training and/or competitions to take place at the venue, and respecting all rules, policies, standards, or legislation applicable to the facility;

“Rule” means a set standard which must be met;

“Sanctioned Competition” means a swimming competition approved under the authority of Swimming Canada in a facility having the minimum standards determined by Swimming Canada with the expectation of qualified officials who conduct the competition under the published rules; and where the results of the competition are entered in the Swimming Canada results database. Swimming Canada designates the authority of sanctioning competitive events to Provincial Sections for events taking place in their respective Provinces (Link: [Swimming Canada Event Sanctioning Policy](#));

“Starting Platform” is also known as a starting block and is used when diving during sanctioned competitions or during training. The height of the platform above the water surface shall be measured from the level of the water surface to the top (front) of the starting platform;

“Swimming Canada National Competition” means competitions which are designed and run in accordance with the meet format determined from time to time by Swimming Canada; these events include, but may not be limited to:

- Olympic, World, Commonwealth, Pan Pacific, Pan American TRIALS;
- Paralympic, Para Pan Pacific, Para Pan American TRIALS;
- Canadian Swimming Championships;
- Speedo Eastern Championships and Speedo Western Championships;
- Canadian Junior Swimming Championships;
- Can Am Para-swimming Championships;

“Water Depth” means the water depth as measured from the bottom of pool to the water level at the end wall or any given point in the course of the pool per the rules defined.

Section 1: FINA Facility Rules

FINA FACILITIES RULES

Preamble:

The Facilities Rules are intended to provide the best possible environment for competitive use and training. These Rules are not intended to govern issues related to the general public. It is the responsibility of the owner or controller of a facility to provide supervision for activities undertaken by the general public.

- FR 1.1 **FINA Olympic Standard Pools.** All World Championships (except the Masters World Championships) and Olympic Games must be held in a pool which complies with Rules FR 3, FR 6, FR 8, and FR 11.
- FR 1.2 **FINA General Standard Pools.** Other FINA events should be held in FINA Olympic Standard Pools, but the Bureau may waive certain standards for existing pools if they do not materially interfere with the competitions.
- FR 1.3 **FINA Minimum Standard Pools.** All other events held under FINA rules should be conducted in pools that comply with all of the minimum standards contained within these Facilities Rules.
- FR 1.4 In order to protect the health and safety of persons using swimming facilities for the purposes of recreation, training and competition, owners of public pools or pools restricted only to training and competition must comply with the requirements established by law and the health authorities in the country where the pool is situated.
- FR 1.5 New competition equipment (e.g. starting blocks, lane-ropes, etc.) must be available by 1st January in the year of the Olympic Games and FINA World Championships.

FR 2 SWIMMING POOLS

FR 2.1 Length

FR 2.1.1 **50.000 metres.** When touch panels of Automatic Officiating Equipment are used on the starting end, or additionally on the turning end, the pool must be of such length that ensures the required distance of 50.000 metres between the two panels.

FR 2.1.2 **25.000 metres.** When touch panels of Automatic Officiating Equipment are used on the starting end, or additionally on the turning end, the pool must be of such length that ensures the required distance of 25.000 metres between the two panels.

FR 2.2 Dimensional Tolerances

FR 2.2.1 The admissible tolerance in 50.00m swimming pools will be +0.010. -0.000. Tolerances will be measured as follows:

Wall to Wall: Minimum 50.020/Maximum 50.030. Tolerances have to be consistent 0.300 mm above to 0.800 metre below the water surface.

These measurements should be certified by a surveyor or other qualified official, appointed or approved by the Member in the country in which the pool is situated. (see Swimming Diagram 1.50m Fig 1 in FINA Handbook)

FR 2.2.2 The admissible tolerance in 25.00m swimming pools will be +0.010, -0.000. Tolerances will be measured as follows:

Wall to Wall: Minimum 25.020/Maximum 25.030. Tolerances have to be consistent 0.300 mm

above to 0.800 metre below the water surface.

These measurements should be certified by a surveyor or other qualified official, appointed or approved by the Member in the country in which the pool is situated.

FR 2.3 Depth - A minimum depth of 1.35 metres, extending from 1.0 metre to at least 6.0 metres from the end wall, is required for pools with starting blocks. A minimum depth of 1.0 metre is required elsewhere.

FR 2.4 Walls

FR 2.4.1 End walls shall be vertical, parallel and form 90 degree right angles to the swimming course and to the surface of the water. They shall be constructed of solid material, with a non-slip surface extending 0.8 metre below the water surface, so as to enable the competitor to touch and push off in turning without hazard.

FR 2.4.2 Rest ledges along the pool walls are permitted; they must be not less than 1.2 metres below the water surface, and may be 0.1 metre to 0.15 metre wide. Both internal and external ledges are acceptable, however internal ledges are preferred.

FR 2.4.3 Gutters may be placed on all four walls of the pool. If end wall gutters are installed, they must allow for attachment of touch panels to the required 0.3 metre above the water surface. They must be covered with a suitable grill or screen.

FR 2.5 Lanes shall be at least 2.5 metres wide, with two spaces of at least 0.2 metre outside of the first and last lanes.

FR 2.6 Lane Ropes

FR 2.6.1 In an 8-lane pool, lane ropes shall extend the full length of the course, secured at each end wall to anchor brackets recessed into the end walls. The anchor shall be positioned so that the floats at each end wall of the pool shall be on the surface of the water. Each lane rope will consist of floats placed end-to-end having a minimum diameter of 0.10 metre to a maximum of 0.15 metre.

In a swimming pool the colour of the lane ropes should be as follows:

- Two (2) GREEN ropes for lanes 1 and 8
- Four (4) BLUE ropes for lanes 2, 3, 6, and 7
- Three (3) YELLOW ropes for lanes 4 and 5

The floats extending for a distance of 5.0 metres from each end of the pool shall be of RED colour. There shall not be more than one lane rope between each lane. The lane ropes shall be firmly stretched.

	GREEN
1	
	BLUE
2	
	BLUE
3	
	YELLOW
4	
	YELLOW
5	
	YELLOW
6	
	BLUE
7	
	BLUE
8	
	GREEN

- FR 2.6.2 At the 15-metre mark from each end wall of the pool the floats shall be distinct in colour from the surrounding floats.
- FR 2.6.3 In 50 metre pools the floats shall be distinct to mark 25 metres.
- FR 2.6.4 Lane numbers of soft material may be placed on the lane ropes at the start and turning end of the pool.
- FR 2.6.5 Lane marking measurements – see FINA Handbook.
- FR 2.7 **Starting Platforms** shall be firm and give no springing effect. The height of the platform above the water surface shall be from 0.5 metre to 0.75 metre. The surface area shall be at least 0.5 metre x 0.5 metre and covered with non slip material. Maximum slope shall not be more than 10 degrees. The starting platform may have an adjustable setting back plate. An adjustable back stroke starting platform may also be used. The platform shall be constructed so as to permit the gripping of the platform by the swimmer in the forward start at the front and the sides; it is recommended that, if the thickness of the starting platform exceeds 0.04 metre, grips of at least 0.1 metre width on each side and 0.4 metre width in the front be cut out to 0.03 metre from the surface of the platform. Handgrips for the forward start may be installed on the sides of the starting platforms. Handgrips for backstroke starts shall be placed within 0.3 metre to 0.6 metre above the water surface both horizontally and vertically. They shall be parallel to the surface of the end wall, and must not protrude beyond the end wall. The water depth from a distance of 1.0 metre to 6.0 metres from the end wall must be at least 1.35 metres where starting platforms are installed. Electronic read-out boards may be installed under the blocks. Flashing is not allowed. Figures must not move during a Backstroke start.
- FR 2.8 **Numbering** - Each starting block must be distinctly numbered on all four sides, clearly visible. It is recommended that lane number 0 shall be on the right-hand side when facing the course from the starting end with exception of 50m events, which may start from the opposite end. Touch panels may be numbered on the top part.
- FR 2.9 **Backstroke Turn Indicators** - Flagged ropes shall be suspended across the pool, 1.8 metres above the water surface, from fixed standards placed 5.0 metres from each end wall. Distinctive marks must be placed on both sides of the pool, and where possible on each lane rope, 15.0 metres from each end wall.
- FR 2.10 **Backstroke Ledge** – A backstroke ledge may be used:
- The ledge may be adjustable to 4 cm above or 4 cm below the water level.
 - The ledge is a minimum of 65 cm in length.
 - The ledge must be 8 cm in height, 2 cm at the width with 10 degrees of slope.
- FR 2.11 **False Start Rope** may be suspended across the pool not less than 1.2 metres above the water level from fixed standards placed 15.0 metres in front of the starting end. It shall be attached to the standards by a quick release mechanism. The rope must effectively cover all lanes when activated.
- FR 2.12 **Water Temperature and movement.** Water temperature shall be 25° to 28°. During competition the water in the pool must be at a constant level, with no appreciable movement. In order to keep the water level, preserve the transparency of water and take into consideration the health regulations in force in most countries, inflow and outflow has to be regulated as follows:
- 220 to 250 m³/h for 50.00 m pools

- 150 to 180 m³/h for 33.33 m pools
- 120 to 150 m³/h for 25.00 m pools

At these turnover rates, the water distribution has to be such that no appreciable current or turbulence is created. "Appreciable current" is defined as water movement that can move a floating basketball (filled with 6 liters of water to obtain the right buoyancy) in one direction for more than 1,25m in 60 seconds. The practical way to test this is to install two floating lines crosswise in a swim lane (to obtain a square with 2,5m size, ref. Image 1) and then to leave the basketball in the central point of the square. If the ball does not touch any of the four lane ropes within 60 seconds, the turbulence test is successful. Test should be repeated in lanes 1,3,6,8 on two sides, at 5m from each headwall.

FR 2.13 Lighting - Light intensity over starting platforms and turning ends shall not be less than 600 lux.

FR 2.14 Lane Markings - shall be of a dark contrasting colour, placed on the floor of the pool in the center of each lane.

Width: minimum 0.2 metre, maximum 0.3 metre.

Length: 46.0 metres for 50-metre-long pools;
21.0 metres for 25-metre-long pools.

Each lane line shall end 2.0 metres from the end wall of the pool with a distinctive cross line 1.0-metre-long and of the same width as the lane line. Target lines shall be placed on the end walls or on the touch panels, in the centre of each lane, of the same width as the lane lines.

They shall extend without interruption from the deck edge (curb), to the floor of the pool to a maximum of 3 metres. A cross line 0.5-metre-long shall be placed 0.3 metre below the water surface, measured to the center point of the cross line. For 50m pools constructed after 1 January 2006, cross lines 0.5-metre-long shall be placed at the 15 metre mark from each end of the pool. After October 2013 this shall be measured from the end wall to the centre point of the cross line.

FR 2.15 Bulkheads - when a bulkhead serves as an end wall, it must extend the full width of the course and present a solid smooth, non-slippery stable vertical surface on which touch pads may be mounted extending not less than 0.8m below and 0.3m above the surface of the water, and must be free of hazardous openings above or below the waterline which may be penetrated by a swimmer's hands, feet, toes or fingers. A bulkhead must be of a design that provides for the free movement of officials along its length without such movement creating any appreciable current or water turbulence.

FR 3 SWIMMING POOLS FOR OLYMPIC GAMES AND WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS (refer to FINA Handbook)

FR 4 AUTOMATIC OFFICIATING EQUIPMENT

FR 4.1 Automatic and Semi-Automatic Officiating Equipment records the elapsed time of each swimmer and determines the relative place in a race. Judging and timing shall be to 2 decimal places (1/100 of a second). Equipment that is installed shall not interfere with the swimmers' starts, turns, or the function of the overflow system.

FR 4.2 The Equipment must:

FR 4.2.1 Be activated by the Starter.

FR 4.2.2 Have no exposed wires on the pool deck, if possible.

FR 4.2.3 Be able to display all recorded information for each lane by place and by lane.

FR 4.2.4 Provide easy digital reading of a swimmer's time.

FR 4.3 Starting devices

FR 4.3.1 The Starter shall have a microphone for oral commands.

FR 4.3.2 If a pistol is used, it shall be used with a transducer.

FR 4.3.3 Both the microphone and the transducer shall be connected to loudspeakers at each starting block where both the Starter's commands and the starting signal can be heard equally and simultaneously by each swimmer.

FR 4.4 Touch panels for Automatic Equipment

FR 4.4.1 The minimum measurement of the touch panels shall be 2.4 metres wide and 0.9-metre-high, and the thickness shall be 0.01m when the contact is closed (and the time is stopped). They shall extend 0.3 metre above and 0.6 metre below the surface of the water. The equipment in each lane shall be connected independently, so it may be controlled individually. The surface of the panels shall be of a bright colour and shall bear the line markings approved for the end walls.

FR 4.4.2 Installation - The touch panels shall be installed in a fixed position in the centre of the lanes. The panels may be portable, allowing the pool operator to remove them when there are no competitors.

FR 4.4.3 Sensitivity - The sensitivity of the panels shall be such that they cannot be activated by water turbulence, but will be activated by a light hand touch. The panels shall be sensitive on the top edge.

FR 4.4.4 Markings - The markings on the panels shall conform with and superimpose on the existing markings of the pool. The perimeter and edges of the panels shall be defined by a 0.025 metre black border.

FR 4.4.5 Safety - The panels shall be safe from the possibility of electrical shock and shall not have sharp edges.

FR 4.5 With Semi-Automatic Equipment, the finish shall be recorded by buttons pushed by Timekeepers at the finish touch of the swimmer.

FR 4.6 The following accessories are essential for a minimum installation of Automatic Equipment:

FR 4.6.1 Printout of all information, which can be regenerated during a succeeding race.

FR 4.6.2 Spectator readout board.

FR 4.6.3 Relay take-off judging to 1/100 of a second. Where overhead video cameras are installed they may be reviewed as a supplement to the automatic system's judgement of relay take-off. For the differential in the relays take-off the manufacturer of the device shall be consulted.

FR 4.6.4 Automatic lap counter.

FR 4.6.5 Readout of splits.

FR 4.6.6 Computer summaries.

FR 4.6.7 Correction of erroneous touch.

FR 4.6.8 Automatic rechargeable battery operation possibility.

FR 4.7 Accessories for Olympic Games and World Championships: (refer to FINA Handbook)

FR 4.8 Semi-Automatic Equipment may be used as a backup to the Automatic Officiating Equipment at FINA or other major events if there are three buttons per lane, each operated by a separate official (in which case other Finish Judges shall not be required). An Inspector of Turns may operate one of the buttons.

FR 5 through FR 12 (Diving, Water Polo, and Artistic Swimming Rules)

FR 13 SOUND EQUIPMENT AND PRESENTATION STANDARDS

(Refer to FINA Handbook for specifications)

The sound equipment should include, at minimum:

FR 13.1 Amplifier-mixer system.

FR 13.2 A sound reproduction system.

FR 13.3 PA (Public Address) System (Sound reproducing system for spectators)

FR 13.4 Sound volume (decibel) meter for monitoring music sound levels both above and under water.

FR 13.5 Patch cords for interconnecting equipment properly, speaker extension lines adequate for placing speakers for optimal sound distribution.

FR 13.6 Fusing systems as needed to protect speakers and other equipment.

FR 13.7 Grounding lines to ensure safe grounding of all equipment.

FR 13.8 Safety materials to minimize potential of injury to person or equipment from stepping on or tripping over electrical or speaker lines.

FR 13.9 A stopwatch.

FR 13.10 Tools and meters as needed for initial special hookups and emergency repairs.

FR 13.11 Systems for communication between officials and sound desk.

FR 13.12 A system for monitoring and recording underwater sound continuously.

Section 2: Canadian Facility Rules & Guidelines - Competition

Rules

Preamble:

The Canadian Facilities Rules & Guidelines – Competition are intended to provide the best possible environment for sanctioned competitions in Canada. Swimming Canada designates the authority of sanctioning competitive events to Provincial Sections for events taking place in their respective Provinces.

The FINA Facility Rules (FR) are those rules found in Section 1; the Canadian Facility Rules (CFR) are Canadian specific facility rules relative to the corresponding FINA FR.

FR 2.1 Length

FR 2.1.1 **50.000 metres.** When touch panels of Automatic Officiating Equipment are used on the starting end, or additionally on the turning end, the pool must be of such length that ensures the required distance of 50.000 metres between the two panels.

FR 2.1.2 **25.000 metres.** When touch panels of Automatic Officiating Equipment are used on the starting end, or additionally on the turning end, the pool must be of such length that ensures the required distance of 25.000 metres between the two panels.

CFR 2.1.1 25.000 yards. When a 25.000 yard pool is used for competitions in Canada, the times shall not be approved or used for ranking or qualifying purposes. Swimming Canada does not recognize 25.000 yard pools for record purposes.

FR 2.2 Dimensional Tolerances

FR 2.2.1 The admissible tolerance in 50.00m swimming pools will be +0.010, -0.000. Tolerances will be measured as follows:

Wall to Wall: Minimum 50.020/Maximum 50.030. Tolerances have to be consistent 0.300 mm above to 0.800 metre below the water surface.

These measurements should be certified by a surveyor or other qualified official, appointed or approved by the Member in the country in which the pool is situated. (see Swimming Diagram 1.50m Fig 1 in FINA Handbook)

FR 2.2.2 The admissible tolerance in 25.00m swimming pools will be +0.010, -0.000. Tolerances will be measured as follows:

Wall to Wall: Minimum 25.020/Maximum 25.030. Tolerances have to be consistent 0.300 mm above to 0.800 metre below the water surface.

These measurements should be certified by a surveyor or other qualified official, appointed or approved by the Member in the country in which the pool is situated.

FR 2.3 **Depth** - A minimum depth of 1.35 metres, extending from 1.0 metre to at least 6.0 metres from the end wall, is required for pools with starting blocks. A minimum depth of 1.0 metre is required elsewhere.

CFR 2.3.1 A minimum water depth of 1.20 metres, extending from 1.0 metre to at least 5.0 metres from the end wall is required for pools where diving takes place from the permanent deck or bulkhead, where the height is not more than 0.35 metres from the water surface.

Water Depth	
Less than 1.2m	No Diving; in water starts only
1.2m – 1.35m	Diving from the permanent deck or bulkhead where height is not more than 0.35m from water surface is permitted.
1.35m (equal to or greater than)	Diving from Starting Platform (max 0.75m from water surface as per FR 2.7)

CFR 2.3.2 The water depth at the turn end for a sanctioned competition should comply with a minimum standard depth of 1.0 metre or a reasonable variance that would meet the approved rules, policies and standard of safety of the pool facility.

FR 2.5 **Lanes** shall be at least 2.5 metres wide, with two spaces of at least 0.2 metre outside of the first and last lanes.

CFR 2.5.1 Lanes should be at least 1.8 metres wide or a reasonable variance that would meet the approved rules, policies and standard of safety of the pool facility.

CFR 2.5.2 Lanes should be at least 2.0 metres wide, or a reasonable variance that would meet the approved rules, policies and standard of safety of the pool facility, when swimming 2 swimmers per lane during distance freestyle events, 800 & 1500 metre free, as noted in CSW 3.4.2

FR 2.7 **Starting Platforms** shall be firm and give no springing effect. The height of the platform above the water surface shall be from 0.5 metre to 0.75 metre. The surface area shall be at least 0.5 metre x 0.5 metre and covered with non slip material.

Maximum slope shall not be more than 10 degrees. The starting platform may have an adjustable setting back plate. An adjustable back stroke starting platform may also be used. The platform shall be constructed so as to permit the gripping of the platform by the swimmer in the forward start at the front and the sides; it is recommended that, if the thickness of the starting platform exceeds 0.04 metre, grips of at least 0.1 metre width on each side and 0.4 metre width in the front be cut out to 0.03 metre from the surface of the platform. Handgrips for the forward start may be installed on the sides of the starting platforms. Handgrips for backstroke starts shall be placed within 0.3 metre to 0.6 metre above the water surface both horizontally and vertically. They shall be parallel to the surface of the end wall, and must not protrude beyond the end wall.

The water depth from a distance of 1.0 metre to 6.0 metres from the end wall must be at least 1.35 metres where starting platforms are installed. Electronic read-out boards may be installed under the blocks. Flashing is not allowed. Figures must not move during a Backstroke start.

Section 2: Canadian Facility Rules & Guidelines - Competition

Guidelines:

Preamble:

The following Facility Guidelines for sanctioned competitions reference the corresponding FINA Facility Rule (FR) and provide the minimum expectations for use in Canadian sanctioned competitions. Some competitions at the provincial and national level may have facility requirements above the minimums stated below, as outlined in Appendix A.

Walls – FINA FR 2.4 details the highest possible standard for pools for competition. Other variations are possible in Canadian facilities. FINA FR Standards for dimensional tolerance and length of pool are the minimum standard required.

Lane Ropes – FINA FR 2.6. For Canadian competitions, a sufficient number of competition lane ropes, one for each lane are required, the colour of the lane ropes is of no consequence. Gutter lane ropes should be used when possible.

Numbering – FINA FR 2.8. Each starting block should be distinctly numbered for Canadian competitions. It is recommended that lane number 0 or 1, should be on the right hand side when facing the course from the starting end.

Backstroke Turn Indicators – FINA FR 2.9. Flagged ropes shall be suspended across the pool above the water surface, from fixed standards placed 5.0 metres from each end wall. When possible the ropes should be suspended 1.8m above the water surface.

Backstroke Ledges – will be used as per FINA FR 2.10 when available.

False Start Rope – FINA FR 2.11. May be suspended across the pool not less than 1.2 metres, where possible, above the water level from fixed standards placed 15.0 metres in front of the starting end. It should be attached to the standard by a quick release mechanism. The rope must effectively cover all lanes when activated.

Water Temperature and movement – as per FINA FR 2.12 or a reasonable variance that would meet the approved rules, policies and standard of safety of the pool facility. For competitions purposes, maintaining the pool temperatures as per FINA FR 2.12 is recommended.

Lane Markings – FINA FR 2.14. Lane Markings shall be of a dark contrasting colour, placed on the floor of the pool in the center of each lane. Lane Markings should also be placed on the end wall in the centre of each lane or on the touchpad.

Bulkheads – FINA FR 2.15. Should be in place as per FINA 2.15.

Section 3: Canadian Facility Rules – Training

Preamble:

The following rule is in place for all training activities taking place by affiliated Swimming Canada clubs in Canada. Training activities are defined as any club training session, in-house unsanctioned competition, or any other non-sanctioned event where diving takes place. The purpose of the CFR – Dive Entries is to inform swimming clubs, swimming facilities owners/operators and swimming coaches of Swimming Canada’s position in relation to dive entry for swimming training.

Dive Entries

CFR –TR01 – Dive Entries

Diving – A minimum water depth of 1.35 metres, extending from 1.0 metre to at least 6.0 metres from the end wall is required for pools with starting platforms.

A minimum water depth of 1.20 metres, extending from 1.0 metre to at least 5.0 metres from the end wall is required for pools where diving takes place from the permanent deck or bulkhead, where the height is not more than 0.35 metres from the water surface.

When the water depth is less than 1.20 metres, no diving is permitted.

Water Depth	
Less than 1.2m	No Diving, in water starts only
1.2m – 1.35m	Diving from the permanent deck or bulkhead where the height is not more than 0.35m from water surface is permitted.
1.35m (equal to or greater than)	Diving from starting platform (max 0.75m from water surface as per FR 2.7)

Appendix A: Facility Standard Comparison for Sanctioned Competitions

Preamble

The following table represents minimum facility standards for the hosting of international, national, provincial and club invitational/developmental level competitions in existing facilities across Canada. Some competitions and hosting agreements may require a higher standard than those outlined below in order to provide the best competitive environment.

	International	National	Provincial	Club Invitational Development
Water Depth for start (diving) from starting platform (max height 0.75m from water surface)	1.35m (extending from 1.0 metre to at least 6.0 metres from the end wall)	1.35m (extending from 1.0 metre to at least 6.0 metres from the end wall)	1.35m (extending from 1.0 metre to at least 6.0 metres from the end wall)	1.35m (extending from 1.0 metre to at least 6.0 metres from the end wall)
Water Depth for start (diving) from permanent deck or bulkhead (height not more than 0.35m from water surface)	Will not be used for international competition	Will not be used for national competition	Will not be used for provincial championship competitions	1.2-1.35m (extending from 1.0 metre to at least 5.0 metres from the end wall)
Water Depth elsewhere	1.0m	1.0m or reasonable variance	1.0m or reasonable variance	1.0m or reasonable variance
Starting Platforms	Per FINA FR 2.7	Per FINA FR 2.7	Starting platforms available	Starting platforms or end wall starts
Backstroke Ledges	Per FINA FR 2.10	Per FINA FR 2.10	When available	When available
Length of Course	Per FINA FR 2.1	Per FINA FR 2.1	Per FINA FR 2.1	Per FINA FR 2.1 or CFR 2.1.1
Warm-up/Warm down pool available	Additional 50m pool required	Additional 25m or 50m pool required	Per provincial requirements	As required
Lane Width	2.5m	1.8 m or a reasonable variance	1.8m or a reasonable variance	1.8m or a reasonable variance
Lane Width 2 per lane (distance events)	n/a	Minimum 2.0m or a reasonable variance	Minimum 2.0m or a reasonable variance	Minimum 2.0m or a reasonable variance
Lane Rope Colours	Per FINA FR 2.6	Colour of lane ropes is of no consequence	Colour of lane ropes is of no consequence	Colour of lane ropes is of no consequence
Pool Temperature	25-28C	25-28C	25-28C or a reasonable variance	25-28C or a reasonable variance

Appendix B: Swimming Canada Request for Bids (2017 – 2020)

Preamble

The following section includes a section of the existing Swimming Canada Request for Bids (subject to change 2017 – 2020) document used in the bidding process and RFP for all National events over the current quadrennial. Included below is the section relative to the facility requirements, for reference purposes only.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION

Swimming Canada prepares a bidding process and RFP for all National events for a quadrennial. The following information was included in the Swimming Canada Request for Bids for the 2017-2020 timeframe and is specific to the facility requirements for hosting.

2.5 Swimming Canada detailed event table 2017-2020

Notes when reviewing the detailed event table (Appendix C):

- 2.5.1 Participation and visitor numbers are estimates only based upon historical data. Swimming Canada makes no guarantees to the host City regarding the number of participants. Numbers may be slightly higher or lower than estimates.
- 2.5.2 The numbers of nights are estimated based upon the typical number of participants per room and the typical number of days a team would arrive early or stay after an event.
- 2.5.3 Facility level required is as follows:
 - a. **2 x 50m pools +** : The facility has two 50 metre pools (8 lane minimum) available for competition, plus additional warm-up lanes available.
 - b. **2 x 50m pools:** The facility has two 50 metre pools (8 lane minimum) available for competition.
 - c. **1 x 50m Pool +** : The facility has a 50 metre pool (8 lane minimum) available for competition, plus a minimum of 6 additional 25 metre warm-up lanes available.

Event	Minimum Facility Level Required
Canadian Swimming Trials	A, B or C
Canadian Swimming Championships	A, B or C
Eastern/Western Swimming Championships	A, B or C
Canadian Junior Championships	A or B
CanAms	A, B or C

- 2.5.4 Swimming Canada tries hard to thoroughly plan its schedule well in advance to avoid date changes or conflicts. We do however reserve the right to change the date or format of any competition. Typically, any changes in date would be made at least 12 months out. Only in extreme cases would date changes occur within 12 months of the scheduled date.
- 2.5.5 The 2020 Olympic Trials are shown on the detailed event table, however that event bid will be awarded through a separate RFP.

Appendix C: New Pool Construction Guidelines

Preamble:

This section will provide guidelines for those clubs, communities and outside partners who are undertaking new pool construction. These standards are over and above the standards set out in Appendix A, B and C in an effort to ensure new pool construction facilities meet and exceed the fast paced changes occurring in the sport.

The work to build the guidelines around new pool construction is currently in progress and will be updated when completed.

Splash Pad Evaluation Tool

The purpose of the evaluation tool is to guide decision making as it relates to the potential siting of splash pad facilities. Further technical site evaluation will be required beyond siting potential before confirming final locations.

Criteria	Description
Service Gap	Proximity to low cost outdoor aquatic opportunities including beaches, other splash pads, and outdoor pools.
Site Suitability	A review of site opportunities and constraints such as land ownership, available open space, riparian or property line setbacks, slopes, water courses, path circulation, operational servicing, wildlife habitat, trees, drainage, existing site infrastructure, and site geology.
Infrastructure	The location of water and waste water infrastructure. All infrastructure locations to be reviewed by Halifax Water.
Compatibility with Park Uses	Identification of other uses within the site and impacts the facility may have. This includes a review of existing park plans or policies to determine if the use is permitted.
Supporting Amenities	Review of nearby amenities that support or complement the facility.
Access to Public and Active Transportation	Proximity to transit and active transportation routes.
Parking	Availability of bicycle parking on-site and vehicular parking, on or off-site.
Potential Users	The number of children ages 0-10 within a 2km catchment of the site within the Regional Centre and 5km catchment outside the Regional Centre.
Socio Economics	Median household income within catchment expected to be served.
Community Engagement	Description of the community engagement undertaken.
Financial Implications	Estimation of project cost and identification of other sources of funding (e.g. grants, donations, HRM capital budget).
Suitability of Other Sites	Identification of other sites evaluated.

Municipal Beach Evaluation Tool

The purpose of the evaluation tool is to guide decision making as it relates to the potential siting of new supervised beaches.

Criteria	Description
Service Gap	Proximity to low-cost outdoor aquatic opportunities including other beaches, splash pads, and outdoor pools.
Site Suitability	A review of site opportunities and constraints such as slopes, access, operational and emergency servicing access, vegetation and wildlife habitat, shade, drainage, adjacent uses, water quality results, hazards and obstructions, shoreline condition, cell phone service, visibility for supervision, and evaluation of site safety.
Infrastructure, Equipment, and Supporting Amenities	A review of the site to determine if it can support the infrastructure and amenities required for a supervised beach, for example, washroom facility, garbage/recycling bins, equipment storage, and lifeguarding chairs.
Compatibility	Identification of other uses within the site and potential conflicts.
Land Ownership and Zoning	Description of site ownership or access potential. A review of planning policy to determine if the usage is permitted.
Access to Public and Active Transportation	Proximity to transit and active transportation routes.
Parking	Availability of bicycle parking on-site and vehicular parking, on or off-site.
Potential Users	A demographic breakdown of the population catchment expected to be served.
Socio Economics	Median household income of the population catchment expected to be served.
Community Engagement	Description of the community engagement undertaken.
Financial Implications	Estimation of project cost and identification of other sources of funding (e.g. grants, donations, HRM capital budget).
Suitability of Other Sites	Identification of other sites evaluated.
Environmental Implications¹	Identification of potential sources of contamination or other hazards (e.g. fecal, chemical, cyanobacteria blooms, large numbers of aquatic plants). Examples may include stormwater drains, adjacent septic systems, dog parks (off leash or otherwise), areas receiving sewage sludge, inflow from streams, common waterfowl (bird) gathering areas, water circulation in proposed swimming area, commercial or industrial discharges and motorized watercraft.

¹ [Refer to Guidelines for Canadian Recreational Water Quality: Third Edition](#)

Aquatic Access Plan



Introduction

The *Aquatic Access Plan* is a framework for aquatic access and inclusion policies, strategies and processes. The framework applies to the full range of municipally-owned aquatic facilities and provides flexibility within our current service delivery model to meet diverse community needs. This framework originates from direction provided in the *Community Facilities Master Plan 2* and is informed by community and stakeholder engagement. Components of the framework include: Parks and Recreation Vision, the Aquatic Mandate, an Aquatic Access and Inclusion Model and Aquatic Allocation Guidelines. Aquatic fees are not included as they are part of a separate fee review.

Range of Aquatic Facilities

The *Aquatic Access Plan* applies to the full range of municipal aquatic facility categories.



Parks and Recreation Vision

“We work together to create a Halifax where everyone has access to meaningful recreation experiences that enable healthy lifestyles, vibrant communities and the sustainability of our natural and built environments. We make a difference”.



Image credit - Paul Joseph

Aquatic Mandate - Lifelong Participation

The municipality has a primary mandate of ensuring that the public has aquatic access, to be safe in and around the water, and to benefit from lifelong participation in healthy active lifestyles (see Section 5.1 of the *Long-Term Aquatic Strategy* for the full mandate).

Water Safety

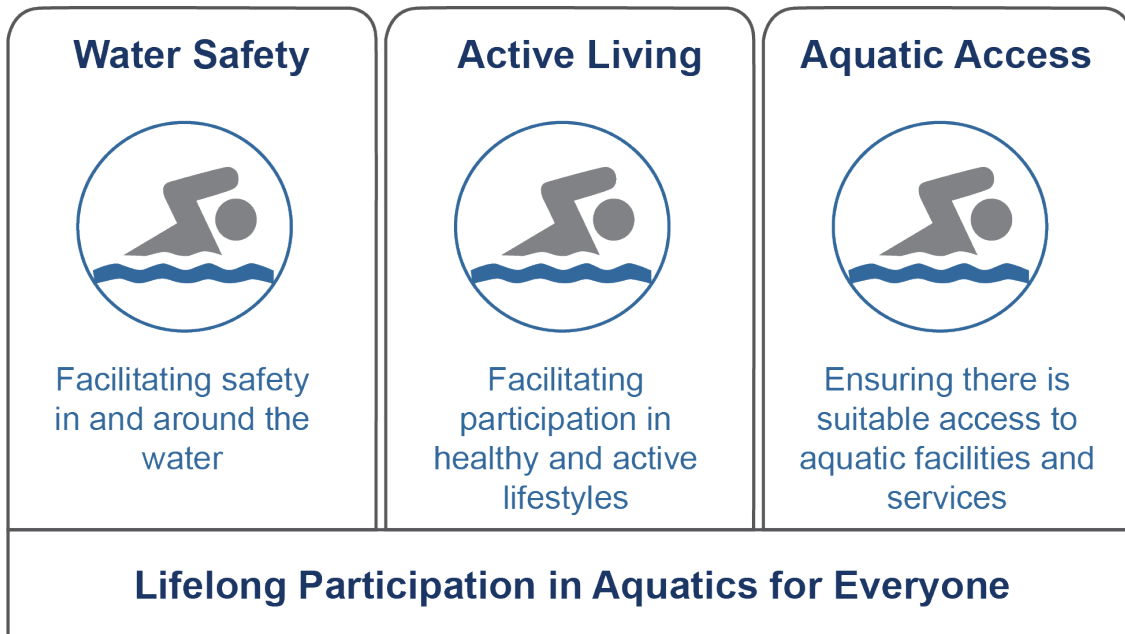
Facilitating safety in and around the water includes learn to swim programs, water safety skills, and providing lifeguard leadership training and supervision in aquatic facilities.

Active Living

Facilitating participation in healthy active lifestyles includes facilities and programs for all ages and abilities, such as open swims, aquatic fitness programs, and water play. In addition, the municipality contributes to the Canadian Sport for Life - Long Term Athlete Development Framework.

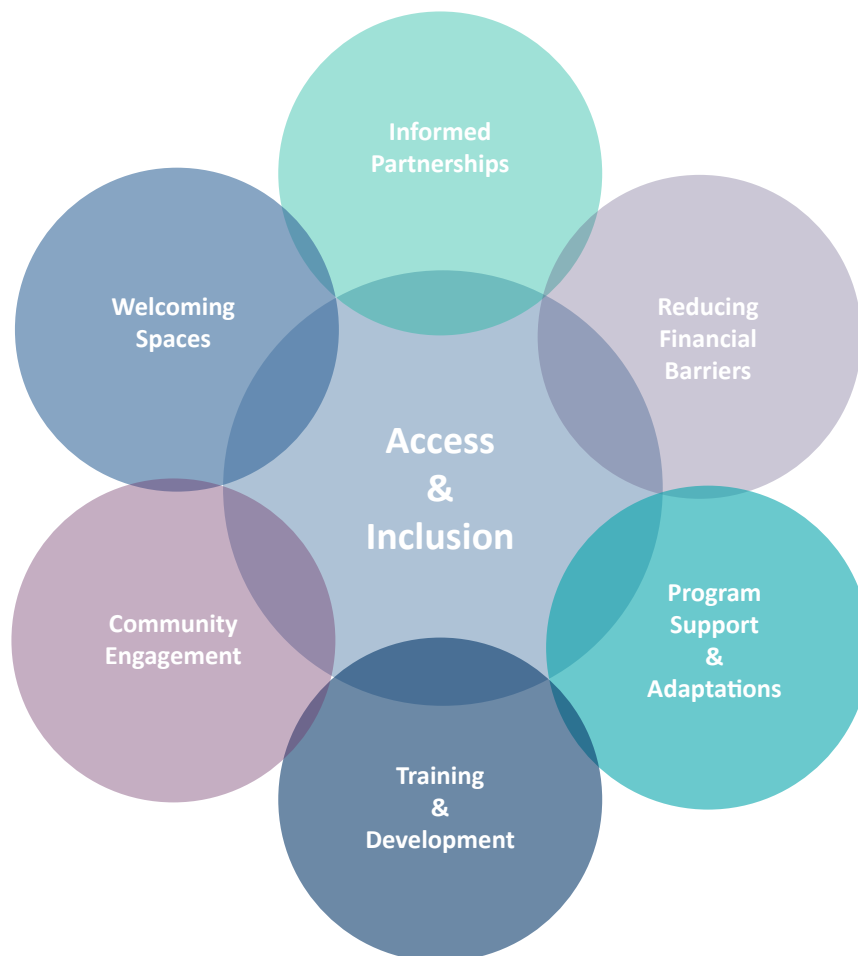
Aquatic Access

Facilitating suitable access to a full range of aquatic facilities and programs. The *Aquatic Access Plan* provides a framework to guide access and inclusion policies, practices, programs, and allocation guidelines to facilitate full participation in aquatic opportunities.



Aquatic Access and Inclusion Model

Access and inclusion strategies and policies reduce barriers to participation in healthy, active lifestyles. The Parks and Recreation Aquatic Access and Inclusion Model provides a framework to guide and inform access and inclusion decision making and support related aquatic policy, planning and service delivery toward lifelong participation for everyone. The Model's components include: Informed Partnerships, Reducing Financial Barriers, Welcoming Spaces, Program Support and Adaptations, Community Engagement, and Training and Development.



Informed Partnerships

Informed partnerships generate innovative ideas, lead to the sharing of resources, and increase collaboration. Potential partnership sectors may include educational institutions, libraries, not for profit, community groups, sport organizations, other levels of government and the private sector. Such formalized partnerships should align with our aquatic mandate to ensure that municipal interests are secured.

Reducing Financial Barriers

One of the many functions of Parks and Recreation is to provide recreation services at an affordable price for all participants, as well as ensure that opportunities exist for those who face additional financial barriers. Examples can include general universal approaches which are open to everyone such as no-cost learn to swim programs offered through local beaches, low or no-cost open swims or access to free water play opportunities at splash pads. More targeted strategies may include various subsidy programs for those who face increased financial challenges.

Program Support and Adaptations

Program supports and adaptations assist individuals who may face physical, sensory, cognitive or language barriers, or other challenges impeding full participation. Examples include assisting with communication, personal care, safety, mobility, modifications to recreation programs, and devices to enable participation.

Training and Development

Ongoing training and development, such as staff in-services, workshops, and training programs ensure that staff and volunteers have the knowledge and skill necessary to create welcoming environments and support diversity, access and inclusion.

Community Engagement

Community engagement helps to inform decisions, improve services, and understand and reduce barriers to participation. This involves processes that provide a range of opportunities for broad public feedback as well as developing effective strategies to engage marginalized and underrepresented populations, aquatic participants, and other stakeholders. It also includes information sharing through effective communication and promotion strategies.

Welcoming Spaces

Welcoming community spaces foster a sense of belonging. They are facilitated through, for example, accessible facility design, inclusive change facilities, maintenance and care, staff training, customer service, community relationship building, and policies that enable diverse and inclusive spaces.

Example - Access to Water Safety Opportunities

Swim to Survive Program

The Swim to Survive Program is offered through the non-profit Lifesaving Society which receives funding through the Province of Nova Scotia and is allocated pool time in a variety of aquatic facilities. The program is a public education initiative targeted at grade three students in the public-school system to reduce drownings.

In 2017/18, 80% of grade 3 students participated in the program (2,988 participants total). The Life Saving Society estimates half of Canadian children never take traditional swimming lessons and research shows that most drownings occur close to safety. The program teaches the basic skills needed to survive an unexpected fall into deep water, including: ROLL into deep water, TREAD water for one minute, and SWIM 50 metres.

The Swim to Survive program is an example of an externally led initiative that aligns with the municipal aquatic mandate by providing access to water safety opportunities for children throughout the municipality.

Aquatic Allocation Guidelines

As identified in the *Long-Term Aquatic Strategy* there is no system wide framework for allocations and scheduling across municipal aquatic facilities. Added to this is the expressed need and demand from multiple users to access aquatic facilities during busy times. To address this, the following Aquatic Allocation Guidelines define prime and non-prime time, allocation priorities, and guidelines for allocation processes.

Time Type (Prime & Non-Prime)

Indoor Recreational Pools and Aquatic Competition & Training Facilities

Prime Time September to June (in-season period):

- » Weekday early morning - open to 8am*
- » Weekday early evening - 4pm to 8pm
- » Weekend - open to 8pm

*Weekday early mornings are primarily busy for aquatic sport club training and early morning public lane swims in many facilities.

Non-Prime Time September to June (in-season period):

- » Weekday - 8am to 4pm
- » Weekday - 8pm to close

July to August:

There is no defined prime or non-prime time for indoor aquatic facilities in the summer. Demands for indoor pools change during this period with fewer learn to swim programs and less aquatic sport usage, but are busy with daytime summer camp use.

Outdoor Recreational Pools

Prime Time July to August (in-season period):

There is high demand for outdoor pool facilities for open swims and sport club use. Prime time is the full operational hours of the facilities' during the summer period.

Guidelines for Aquatic Allocation Priorities – Recreational Pools

The following allocation priorities are guided by the aquatic mandate and reflect community need based on the analysis in the *Long-Term Aquatic Strategy*. The following allocation priorities are outlined by program and user categories and apply to the prime time period within municipal recreational pools. Target allocation guidelines for the total prime time hours within the in-season period for each priority area are provided.

Priority 1 - Core Recreational Public Programming

Core Recreational Public Programming aligns with the municipal mandate and makes up most of the public participation and usage. It includes the following program areas which may be offered through a direct provision of service or formalized partnerships.

- » Water safety programs (i.e. learn to swim programs, lifeguard training, Swim to Survive)
- » Open and public lane swims
- » Aquatic fitness/active living programs
- » Parent and tot programs
- » Youth leadership programs
- » Specialized outreach or inclusion programs
- » Recreational aquatic sport programs

Target allocation guideline is 70%.

Priority 2 - Aquatic Sports

The Aquatic Sport category includes non-profit groups affiliated with National and Provincial Sport organizations, new and emerging sports, and any potentially under-served sports. Exceptions include recreational aquatic facilities that are not able to accommodate specific sport program requirements due to the facilities' design (e.g. shallow leisure pool).

- » Swim Clubs
- » Diving Clubs
- » Synchro Clubs
- » Water Polo Clubs
- » Canoe/ Kayak Clubs
- » Special Olympics
- » Underwater Sports
- » New, and Emerging Aquatic Sports (e.g. lifesaving sport)
- » Any Potentially Underserved Aquatic Sports

Target allocation guideline is 25%.

Priority 3 - Community

The Community category includes other non-profit organizations and public institutions such as hospitals and schools. This does not include formal partnerships to provide municipal mandate services. These types of formal partnerships would fall under Priority 1.

Target allocation guideline is 3%.

Priority 4 - Corporate or Private Bookings

Priority 4 includes commercial group or private individual bookings (e.g. birthday party rentals for exclusive pool use).

Target allocation guideline is 2%.

Allocation Priorities – Aquatic Training and Competition Facility

A municipal 50-metre regional aquatic training and competition facility which is designed for specialized aquatic sport requirements has different priorities than recreational pools. Target allocation guidelines for the total prime time hours within the in-season period for each priority area are provided.*

Priority 1 - Aquatic Sports

The target allocation guideline is 70%.

Priority 2 - Core Recreational Public Programming

The target allocation guideline is 25%.

Priority 3 - Community (non-profit organizations and public institutions)

The target allocation is 3%.

Priority 4 - Corporate or Private Bookings

The target allocation is 2%.

* Target allocation guidelines will be re-evaluated for any potential new regional aquatic training and competition facility.

Guidelines for Allocation Processes

- 1 The allocation of pool time is to be guided by the allocation priorities outlined in the *Aquatic Access Plan*.
- 2 Allocations for sport user groups are coordinated through the municipality and are based on registration numbers from the previous season and should at least meet the minimum standards of the sports Long Term Athlete Development Plans (LTAD). Any new, emerging, or potentially underserved sports are also assessed.
- 3 An annual meeting, coordinated by the Halifax Regional Municipality, with municipal aquatic facility managers is to be held to review utilization and allocations for the upcoming season. Facility managers will provide sport user groups with season schedules based on the approved allocations.
- 4 Municipal facilities should establish and educate users on lane sharing etiquette¹ including circle swimming for more effective lane utilization.
- 5 Municipal aquatic facilities should work toward having consistent data collection to better understand utilization. Implementation of the new Legend recreation software will assist with more consistent data collection to better inform decision making. It will also provide better functionality, where users can search for pool time availability.

¹Dalhousie University, N.D. [Sample Lane Sharing Etiquette Document](#)

Appendix D – Building Condition Assessment Summary Report

Introduction

Building Condition Assessments (BCAs)* were completed on the aquatic facilities listed within this report between 2014 and 2018. The BCAs consists of a visual review of the types and conditions of the building systems and elements. Based on this review, a *Facility Condition Index* (FCI), which measures the ratio between the current and deferred maintenance, and the replacement value (based on the current facility) is determined. A higher FCI number indicates buildings that require more repairs. The BCA is used to create an anticipated 25-year recapitalization schedule and is based on industry standards for expected useful life of building components. The BCA report does not reflect a facilities' ability to meet program requirements or code compliance.

FCI of under 5

Facilities with an FCI of under 5 are in good to very good condition, with the expectation that the 25-year recapitalization plan is being followed. The following facilities fall within this category, the date of construction is in parenthesis:

- Albro Lake Beach Washroom Building (2014)
- Bedford Lions Club Outdoor Pool (Pre1980)
- Birch Cove Beach Washroom Building (2005)
- Canada Games Centre (2010)
- Captain William Spry Community Centre (1985)
- Centennial Pool (1967)
- Chocolate Lake Beach Washroom Building (2014)
- Cole Harbour Outdoor Pool (1981)
- Sackville Sports Stadium (1989)
- Shubie Park Beach (2008)
- St Margaret's Centre Outdoor Pool (1988)
- Zatzman Sportsplex (1982), renovated in 2019

FCI between 5 and 10

Aquatic buildings with an FCI between 5 and 10 are in fair to good condition, deferred maintenance is high; however, the 5-year Capital Budget plan will address the gap. The following facilities fall within this category:

- Cole Harbour Place (1988)
Cole Harbour Place has been a focus of capital work over the past several years and the work planned for fiscal year 2019 will result in this location having an FCI of under 5. The rating for this building reflects the whole building and is not focused on any one area such as the pool.
- Needham Community Centre (1972)
The Needham Community Centre is recommended for replacement starting in 2022, the current location is being maintained to ensure the building remains safe and operational until the new facility is completed.

Appendix D – Building Condition Assessment Summary Report

FCI over 10

Facilities with an FCI over 10 are in fair to poor condition, deferred maintenance work is high; however, the 3-year Capital Budget plan will address the gap. The following aquatic buildings fall within this category:

- Commons Pavilion & Pool (1960's)
- Penhorn Lake Beach Washroom Building (1990)

The Commons Pavilion & Pool are currently under review as part of the *Halifax Commons Masterplan* which is due back to Regional Council later this year. The Penhorn Lake Beach washroom building has been included in the 2019/20 Capital Budget for replacement.

* The BCA Summary Report is provided through HRM's Corporate Facility Design & Construction