

## **SUPPLEMENTAL EVALUATION & RECOMMENDATIONS**

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This report provides the following supplemental evaluation and recommendations as an opportunity for the COG to realize the mission statement declared in the Executive Summary and the original March 2002 report. As stated from the original report, *“It is the goal of the CRRA to provide high quality aquatic facilities that are affordable, accessible and offer enjoyable experiences for all residents and their visitors of the Centre Region service area. It is the also the desire of the CRRA to explore financing and funding options to make more efficient and self-supporting the operations and capital improvement programs for aquatic facilities. ...it is the expectation of the CRPR Board / CRRA to revitalize the aquatic program to best meet the changing needs of the community, meet the new requirements for accessibility, safety, code compliance and provide a greater level of customer satisfaction and community support.”*

It was the findings of the original report that the Centre Region could not, financially, sustain more than two CRRA aquatic facilities to realize the objective of being fiscally responsible in its approach to development and operations and to provide outstanding service to users of the facilities. It was further suggested that these two facilities should consist of a renovated and refurbished Park Forest Community Pool facility and a new Regional Aquatic Facility at a new, centrally located site within the Centre Region. However, options are presented here that provide the CRRA and COG with the possibility of what can be accomplished using the existing sites. A breakdown of estimates of probable cost as well as conceptual plans follows the revised recommendations for each facility.

In the process of developing this supplemental report, the consultants were asked to respond to comments and suggestions from members of the COG, CRRA & the Aquatics Task Force and incorporate these and other items into this document. Hence some of the recommendations of the initial report have been revised. The project consultants have included, where

appropriate, comments that include their professional opinions on the applicability of such revisions to achieving the stated goals of the project.

### **DEMOGRAPHICS & FACILITY SIZING**

For both facilities, the project team was asked to re-evaluate the demographic information for the Centre Region. Specifically, the team was asked to project a more conservative growth of the population for the communities and the impact this would have on the findings. The team used data developed by the Centre Regional Planning Agency in the “Centre Region Growth Forecasts 2003-2030” published in December of 2003.

According to this document, in 2000 the population of the Centre Region was 79,406. This is inclusive of an approximate enrollment of 42,000 Penn State University students. Original demographic data provided by the Centre Regional Planning Agency and the CRRA in the previous report indicated only 12,346 students of the total enrollment lived in the dorms. To be conservative for the purposes of this report, we will subtract the total enrollment from the total population to obtain a current base population of 37,406. By 2010 the population was expected to grow to 85,689 (43,000), 91,972 (46,972) by 2020, and 98,255 (52,255) by 2030 (the numbers in parenthesis being population exclusive of the University students). Taking into account the population as it exist today, the Centre Region aquatics facilities should have a capacity of between 1,100 and 1,500, conservatively. This is based upon empirical data collected by WTI of communities with similar populations and demographics and does not factor in growth over the next 20 years. The combined capacities of Park Forest and Welch are only 1,050, half of that coming from excess deck and grass lounging areas. Actual capacities are less - based upon water area and availability of restrooms as required by the State and local health departments.

What this finds is that, even by conservative standards, the existing facilities are woefully undersized for a community of the likes of the Centre Region. The facilities being renovated should be sized not only for

the current population but for the expected growth of the area over the next 15 to 20 years. By developing facilities that are not sized for the current and future population, the Centre Region runs the risk of continuing a policy of subsidizing the aquatics program as opposed to having an aquatics program that generates revenue; a main goal of this study as established in the original report. Even if conservative in our estimates, it is not foreseeable that growth would halt or decline, leading us to conclude that without increasing capacity of the existing facilities aquatics as a whole in the Centre Region will suffer.

Also, according to the document, a majority of the growth is expected in Ferguson and Patton Townships. This growth is expected to be seen in the number of housing units constructed as well as an increase in the raw population numbers. Both existing facilities are positioned, geographically, in close relationship to the area of future development. This reinforces the need to maintain and expand these facilities where they are or locate on a suitable site in close proximity to these areas of growth.

The Aquatics Task Force and HP Architects compiled a list of the available aquatic venues in the CRRA service area that allow for use by the general public on a daily or seasonal basis. There are a total of 19 pools in the region that represent several types of facilities, including hotels, country clubs and municipal community pools. Half of the facilities are hotel properties with relatively small pools that offer limited aquatic opportunities and amenities. Three of the venues are owned and operated by Penn State and are available to the general public on a fee basis. Due to university programs, scheduling opportunities for community aquatics programs are extremely limited.

Although these facilities, including backyard pools, do entertain residents of the area, they do not directly affect the outdoor aquatic needs of the Centre Region or the immediate physical needs of the Park Forest and William L. Welch Community Swimming Pools. In addition, the facilities on this list do not reflect the trends and concepts discussed earlier in the original report, as most of these facilities are traditional in nature and offer

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little in aquatic entertainment, variety of activities or programming. With the exception of the other community-based pools and those owned by PSU, the remaining facilities have limited space for expansion and can only accommodate a limited amount of guests. Statistically, hotel pools rarely affect attendance at publicly owned and operated Family Aquatic Centers throughout the country.

<b>Centre Region Pools</b>			
<b>Facility Name</b>	<b>Fees / Pass Type</b>	<b>Pool Type</b>	<b>Hours</b>
<b>Park Forest / Welch Pools</b> Centre Region Parks & Rec 2643 Gateway Drive #1 231-3071	\$48 Age 11-64 \$33 Age 2-10 / 65 + \$18 5 <sup>th</sup> Family member + \$3.00 Daily Admission 10 & u \$3.50 Daily Admission 11 +	Outdoor, Heated	Mon-Sun 12-8 PM
<b>Ramada Inn</b> 1450 S. Atherton St. 238-3001	\$200 Single \$250 Couple \$300 Family \$3.50 Daily Admission	Outdoor, Heated  Indoor	Mon-Sun 8 AM-8 PM Mon-Sun 9 AM-10 PM
<b>Science Park Rec. Assn.</b> Science Park Road 238-4862	\$1350 One-Time Bond \$370 Annual Family Dues \$3.00 Guest Daily Admission	Outdoor, Heated	Mon-Sat 12-8 PM Sun 12-9 PM
<b>Autoport Motel</b> 1405 S. Atherton St. 237-7666	\$300 Family \$200 Single \$5.00 Daily Admission	Outdoor, Heated	Mon-Fri 10 AM-8 PM Sat-Sun 9 AM-8 PM
<b>Toftrees Resort</b> 1 Country Club Lane 234-8000	\$1,000 Annual Dues, Plus \$75 Single \$150 Family	Outdoor, Heated	Mon-Sun 11 AM-8 PM
<b>Elks Country Club</b> Route 322 466-7231	\$90 Annual Elks Dues, Plus \$90 Age 13 + \$65 Age 4-12 \$150 Family (Couple + \$55 each add. Person)	Outdoor, Heated	Mon-Sun 12-8 PM
<b>Centre Hills Country Club</b> Branch Road 238-0111	\$7,500 Initiation Fee \$2,398.50 Annual Dues \$3.00 Guest Daily Admission \$15.00 Guest Week Admission	Outdoor, Heated	Mon-Sun 11 AM-8 PM
<b>McCoy Outdoor Pool</b> Penn State University 865-1432	\$3.00 Daily Admission \$30.00 15-swim pass	Outdoor, Heated	Mon-Sun 10:30 AM-9 PM
<b>McCoy Natatorium</b> Penn State University 865-1432	\$30 Student \$50 Non-Student \$100 Family \$3.00 Daily Admission	Indoor (3 pools)	Mon-Fri 6:30-9 AM 11 AM-1 PM 5:30-6:30 PM
<b>White Building Pool</b> Penn State University 865-1432	\$32 Student \$50 Non-Student \$100 Family \$3.00 Daily Admission	Indoor	Mon-Sun 6:30 AM-10 PM
<b>Days Inn</b> 240 S. Pugh Street 238-8454	Guests Only	Indoor	
<b>Courtyard By Marriott</b> 1730 University Drive 238-1881	\$44 / month Single \$64 / month Family	Indoor	Mon-Sun 6 AM-11 PM
<b>Comfort Suites</b> 235-1900	Guests Only	Indoor	
<b>Penn Stater Hotel</b> PSU Research Park 865-5000	\$30 / month Single	Indoor	Mon-Sun 6 AM-11 PM
<b>Athletic Club</b> 1445 W. College Avenue 237-5108	\$55 / month Single \$65 / month Couple \$75 / month Family (4)	Indoor	Mon-Thur 6 AM-9:30 PM Fri 6 AM-7:30 PM Sat 8:30 AM-1 PM Sun 1-6 PM
<b>Hampton Inn</b> 101 E. College Avenue 231-1590	Guests Only	Outdoor, Heated	
<b>State College YMCA</b> 677 W. Whitehall Road 237-7717	\$50 Joining Fee \$45 / Month Family \$35 / Month Single Par. Family \$29 / Month Age 18-61 \$23 / Month Age 62 +	Indoor (2 pools)	5:30 AM-10 PM

## **INDIVIDUAL FACILITY EVALUATIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **PARK FOREST COMMUNITY SWIMMING POOL**

The most frequent criticism of the recommendations for the Park Forest facility focused on the estimated capital cost required to make the improvements suggested. For this supplemental study, a total capital investment of \$750,000, including soft cost and project contingencies, was provided for initial improvements. To accomplish this, the project team reviewed the original recommendations and established a priority of improvements. Higher priority was given to infrastructure-related issues that are required to keep the facility operating to health and safety standards and for improvement to the guest experience and user satisfaction. Priority features identified by the Aquatics Task Force included:

- Replace bathhouse/staff/control building
- Replace the existing wading pool (with a water play feature or spray ground) & related filtration system.
- Improve the area within the fence to maximize guest use opportunities
- Re-design the parking & drop off area to increase parking opportunities and improve guest circulation
- Better utilize existing site topography
- Provide in the estimate a sidewalk along School Drive.

Other features that were rated high on the priority list included the addition of a concessions stand/area, large water playground, and a drop slide for the existing pool.

Of primary concern for the renovation of the facility is the need to update the change facilities and parking at the site. The site does provide opportunities for increasing “in-fence” capacity by taking advantage of

topography for waterslides and creating areas for lounging and a splash playground. The bathhouse facilities, as documented in the original report, are “deficient with respect to the current regulatory requirements for ADA accessibility and plumbing fixture counts...based upon projected use.” It is noted that the “physical structure is displaying signs of deterioration at the roof.” and “at the ground level at the masonry wall bases and slab on grade junction, sealants have failed or are non-existent and are allowing for increasing water infiltration.” Repair of these and other issues on the existing building would require dismantling the structure down to the exterior walls and the cost to renovate would be as great as it would to construct a new structure that is properly designed for the intended use.

The capacity of the current facility based upon water area is 235 patrons. With excess lounging areas, the capacity potential increases to 423 patrons. Currently, the capacity of the facility is limited to the quantity of fixtures in the change facilities. The initial report found that if the facility was to increase capacity past the 235, additional fixtures would be required. As part of the recommendations to improve/upgrade the existing change facilities, it is suggested that the number of fixtures be increased so that a total capacity of 560 patrons for the facility is provided including family change and accessible areas. This would allow for improvements to be added to the facility over a period of time without creating an issue of continually renovating the change facilities every time an attraction or feature is added.

The parking on the site (the site is owned by the CRRA) is currently used by the staff and parents of students for the Park Forest Middle School during the school year. The parking, as it currently stands at 57 spaces, is short of the required spaces as noted by the Patton Township. The proposed plan allows for increasing the parking to 92 spaces and provides a side walk along the street for improved access to the school. This would maximize the parking at the existing site without taking more property for development of parking.

The revised estimate provided identifies those features to be included in the initial capital improvement program and elements that can be added during future improvements over a period of time. It is recommended that these future phases be planned for so that they can be implemented within the next 5 to 7 years. It is also recommended that before each improvement is to be undertaken that the CRRA review the aquatics industry to identify any changes in program or feature trends so as to keep in line with guest expectations and demands.

Though the modifications to the design does achieve the goal of providing the CRRA with a program for meeting the prescribed budget by identifying initial improvements from future or alternate additions, it is felt that the improvements included are mostly infrastructure related (extremely important) and does little more than clean up the facility so as to keep it operating. This will, most likely, have a negative impact over attendance in the long term unless the additional improvements and renovations are made in a timely fashion.

**AQUATIC FEASIBILITY STUDY**

**Park Forest Community Pool**

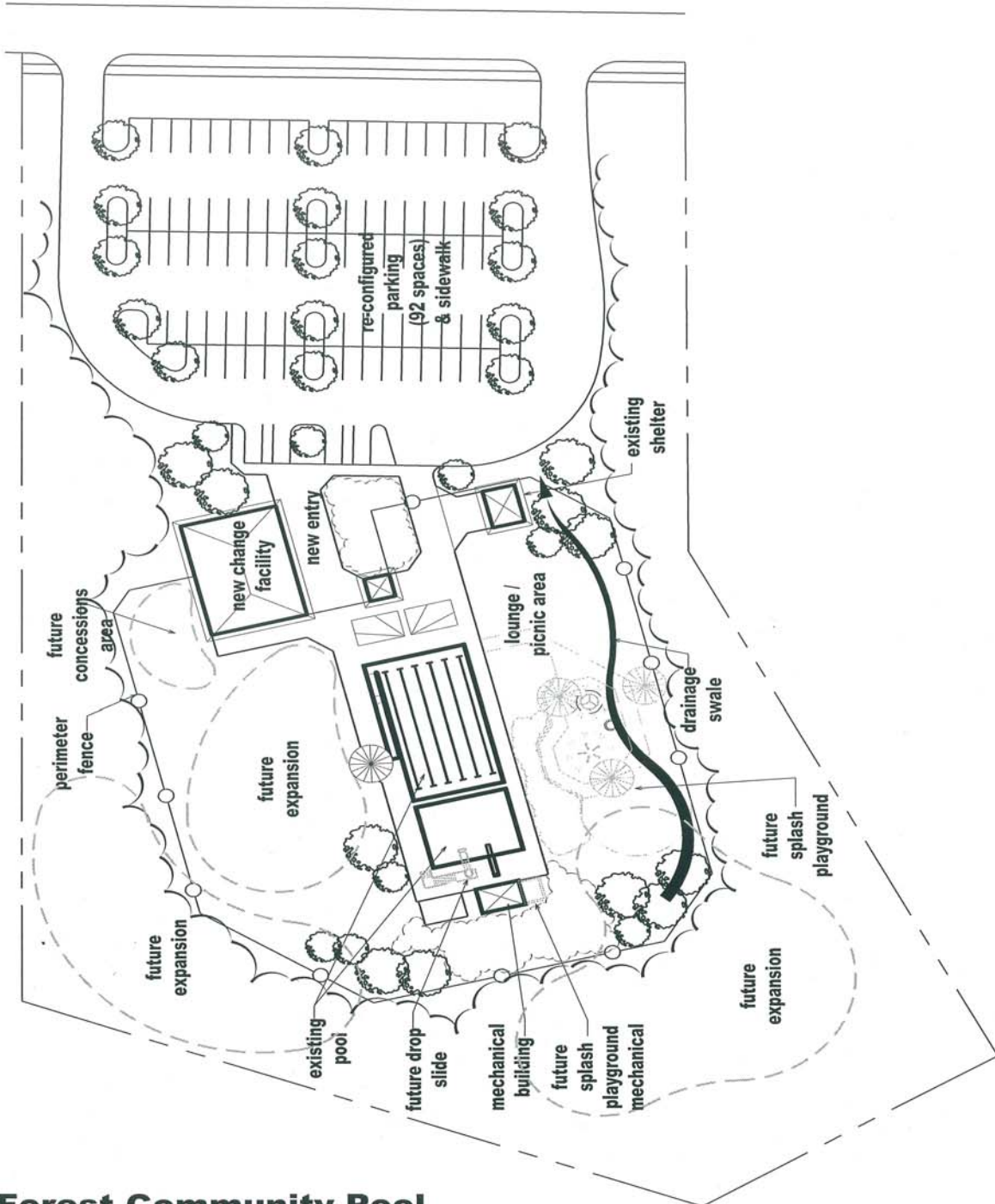
**ESTIMATES OF PROBABLE PROJECT COST**

<b>ELEMENT</b>	<b>QUANTITY</b>	<b>ESTIMATED COST</b>
<b><u>Site Elements</u></b>		
Demolition/Earthwork	Allowance	\$35,000.00
Site Utilities Upgrade	Allowance	\$15,000.00
Parking & Sidewalk	Allowance	\$28,200.00
Shade Structures	3 EA x	\$3,360.00
Decks/ Deck Drainage (Interior)	7,000 SF x	\$5.60
Sod	1,500 SF x	\$1.70
Landscape	3,000 SF x	\$5.50
<b><u>Architecture Elements</u></b>		
Renovate Change Facility/Admin. Building & Concessions	3,000 SF x	\$95.00
Renovate Pool Mechanical Room	LS x	\$25,000.00
<b><u>Aquatic Elements</u></b>		
Renovate Existing Pool Mechanical	LS x	\$25,000.00
Accessible Ramp Addition into Pool	Allowance	\$45,000.00
Interactive Water Elements	Allowance	\$20,000.00
<b>Subtotal - Estimated Construction Cost</b>		<b>\$546,530</b>
Contingency on Estimated Construction Cost	15%	\$81,980
<b><u>TOTAL ESTIMATED CONSTRUCTION COST</u></b>		<b><u>\$628,510</u></b>
<b><u>Owner Expenses &amp; Project Fees</u></b>		
Project Fees (A & E)	9% x	628,510
Testing, Permits, Surveys & Soils Report	Allowance	15,000
Owner's F.F. & E. (Furniture, Fixtures & Equipment)	Allowance	50,000
<b>Subtotal Estimated Owner Expenses &amp; Project Fees</b>		<b>\$121,566</b>
<b><u>TOTAL ESTIMATED PROJECT COST (2004 Dollars)</u></b>		<b><u>\$750,075</u></b>
<b><u>Alternate / Optional Elements</u></b>		
Waterslide & Tower Complex(Three-Four Body Flumes)	1 LS	\$475,000.00
Splash Playground	1,500 SF x	\$135.00
Splash Playground Expansion	3,000 SF x	\$132.00
Drop-Slide & Tower	1 LS	\$73,000.00

**Notes:**

1. Estimated project cost represent completion of elements as a total project. Elements can be phased. Estimated construction cost includes contractor mark-up.
2. Estimate does not include additional contingencies for unusual soil conditions or unknown development risk items not identified in the soils report.
3. *Estimate of probable project cost is PRELIMINARY in nature. Further design development, including input from the CRRA is required before this estimate can be verified or refined. Actual cost will not be determined until construction bids are received.*





## Park Forest Community Pool CONCEPTUAL RENOVATION MASTER PLAN

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**WILLIAM L. WELCH COMMUNITY SWIMMING POOL**

It was asked by the CRRA and the Task Force to re-evaluate the existing Welch pool site taking into account new information pertaining to site development issues. In the original report, options were reviewed on how to renovate or re-develop the Welch/SCASD site. Based on the information available at the time, it was decided that the best course of action would be to re-locate the William L. Welch pool to another site and size the facility so that it met the needs of the community from both a population demand and a guest experience. Items left unresolved included the status of ownership of the existing site, actual physical boundaries of the site and development plans for the site as well as the adjacent site owned and operated by the State College Area School District (SCASD).

Since the publication of the original report, much legwork has been completed to resolve, as much as possible, many of these issues. The site is owned by the SCASD and the facilities on the site are owned by the CRRA. A property survey of the existing site was undertaken by CRRA to identify all of the currently-leased property that could be available for development. The SCASD has indicated a desire to cooperate by exploring a long term, 25 year lease for the site, permitting pool patron parking on the school parking lot and allowing the facility to expand so as to maximize the use of the existing leased tract. Also, members of the Aquatics Task Force and team consultants discussed site related issues with the Borough of State College and the SCASD.

The team was also asked to provide additional information regarding the status of the existing pool structure and recirculation system. The original report provided information pertaining to the quality of the existing pool structure and finish. The pool structure itself is now 45 years old. Although concrete is a strong material, in the case of the pool structure deterioration is occurring at the joints where leakage continues to be a problem despite inspection and repairs each year. Other, life-limiting, components of the pool structure contribute to shorten the life expectancy of the concrete shell. Typically these components are the items such as piping connections, overflow gutter interfaces and the pool finish. In the

case of the finish, it has been conveyed how the Thoroseal® product and chlorinated rubber paint used requires frequent re-coating and that eventually the base concrete surface will not support this coating. At this point, the coating will release from the structure taking some concrete material with it and create a surface that is extremely rough and porous. This can be seen in the images below. Combine this issue with the cost to continually patch penetration points, repair leaks, replace gutter, piping and filtration equipment and it becomes evident that it is financially prudent to construct a new structure with equipment that will last another 30 to 40 years. A design of a new facility will be such that it will allow the flexibility to respond to ever changing programming requirements of the public.



Evidence of deteriorating concrete surface due to continuous finish maintenance and joint deterioration

As of the spring of 2004, the state has changed how it regulates the design and construction of public swimming pools and spas (whirlpools). The task is now a function of the Department of Labor and Industry or the local

municipality. It has also changed the regulations for the construction of public swimming pools and hot tub, from “The Public Bathing Place Manual” published by the Department of Health to Pennsylvania’s Uniform Construction Code (UCC) which adopts the standards published jointly by the American national Standards Institute and the National Pool and Spa Institute, ANSI/NSPI-1 1991 and ANSI/NSPI-2 1999.

From an operations standpoint, the facility is not capable of meeting the filtration rates typically seen in today’s aquatic facilities or those published in ANSI/NSPI-1. Most pools being designed today are increasing the rate of turnover (the time it takes to move the total volume of water in a pool vessel through the filtration system) to respond to actual usage impact. It is understood that as pools see an increase in users, the water becomes dirtier quicker. To maintain water quality and clarity, pool operators strive to keep up with demand and require filtration systems to respond with faster turnover times and filtration rates. Instead of 6 to 8 hours to turnover the volume of water in the pool, many facilities, and regulatory agencies, are changing requirements to turnover the deeper water in 2 to 4 hours and shallower water as fast as every 30 minutes. ANSI/NSPI-1 requires that a turnover rate for a swimming pool be equal to 1-1/2 times the average depth, in feet, of the pool to a maximum of 6 hours. The existing pool has a turnover of 8 hours or more. To achieve the goal of meeting industry standards for turnover rates at the existing facility would require the replacement of most all of the pool piping, and total replacement of the pumps and filters and other filtration equipment.

From a programming standpoint, the existing pool lacks the ability to meet current programming demands let alone allow flexibility to respond to future changes. The existing pool is deficient in zero-depth water which is standard in aquatic facilities across the nation. Zero depth, as referenced in the original report, is the introduction of a beach-like entry into the pool. Most facilities have found this feature to be one that has received the most acclaim from patrons as it provides an ideal place for small children, and families to congregate as well as providing a way of entering the pool by

all users, especially those requiring assistance. Families have very little opportunity to be together as the only shallow water available for small children is a wading pool separated from the other features by fence and gates. Contemporary designs of aquatic facilities being constructed today encourage the interaction of all ages and the feedback has been tremendously positive. Parents and grandparents are requesting more opportunities for shallow water so as to interact with children and grandchildren of all ages and abilities.

Intermediate water (3 to 5 feet of water depth) is also deemed critical as it provides flexible programming space for older children to play & interact as well as area for swimming lessons, water aerobics, and exercise. Though the facility does have some suitable intermediate water depth (3 to 5 feet), much of this is taken up by the waterslide plunge area and ramp space.

One program area that is not a high priority in new design and construction is deep water. Many communities are reducing or eliminating this due to lack of interest (some communities do not have diving programs) or because of issues with liability and insurance cost. Those facilities that do include deep water for diving typically minimize the area for a single, one meter diving board so as to reduce capital cost associated with creating large, voluminous areas that increase re-circulation and filtration equipment sizes.

For this supplement, the project team re-evaluated the options based upon this new information and presents these here for the COG and CRRA to consider. Each option also contains a list of what are believed to be some of the challenges the COG and CRRA will encounter by following a particular option.

## **ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS FOR THE WILLIAM L. WELCH COMMUNITY POOL**

### **Replacement Of The Facility As It Currently Exists**

The existing site is limited in size. A simple replacement of the existing facility with a new facility in the same configuration and

systems could be undertaken provided that the adequate space for parking is coordinated and agreed to by the CRRA, SCASD and Borough of State College. This option would provide the community with a new pool and new facilities identical in form and function to the existing pool but would not provide the entertainment value (necessary for increasing interest, attendance, and revenue), level of service, or an increase in the capacity of the facility from its current levels, all of which are objectives that need to be met by the facility. Also, the cost to re-construct the existing pool and buildings, as is would be nearly identical to that of providing a new pool and buildings on the site that more appropriately met the needs of the patrons and responds to constraints of the site. It is therefore recommended that this option not be considered by the COG or CRRA at any level.

**Replacement Of The Facility With A Smaller Pool Facility That Incorporates The Latest Standards In Aquatics And Fits Within The Existing Welch/SCASD Site Limits**

Whereas this will generate demand and increase the entertainment value of the facility, capacity will actually be decreased. A facility that holds only a portion of the capacity required for a community will be crowded. After a point, people in the community will become disenchanted with the experience and abandon the thought of patronizing the facility. In order to be able to generate the revenue that is needed to meet the objectives outlined and to adequately meet the demands of the community, the facility should be properly sized for the community as it currently exists and with the flexibility to grow as the community grows. A facility as described in this scheme would not meet this philosophy.

**Replace The Facility With A New Facility That Fits On The Welch/SCASD Site And Will Meet The Budget Limits Set.**

This option is presented as the primary option as directed by the CRRA and is explained, in further detail, later in this section. This concept assumes that parking arrangements will be coordinated and agreed upon by the CRRA, SCASD and Borough of State College. Though it is

feasible financially, it is questioned whether a facility of this size will meet the demands of the Centre Region communities.

### **Retire The Welch/SCASD Site And Develop/Relocate To A New Facility Nearby**

Another option available is to relocate the William L. Welch Community Pool to a new, nearby site in the Borough and either 1.) Renovate to a new use such as a neighborhood park or other attraction or 2.) Return the use of the existing site to the SCASD. By doing this, the CRRRA could acquire property that would contain the proper amount of space to host a facility and ancillary elements appropriate for the size of the community while allowing for expansion in the future. The largest hindrance to this concept includes additional cost for acquisition of the land and modification to the infrastructure as required. There may also be additional costs due to site specific issues such as large building demolition or Brownfield development requirements. One possible site for consideration is the undeveloped tract behind the shopping center, across Waupelani Drive.



The two tax parcels totaling 25.68 acres are along Waupelani Drive, and are owned by State College Joint Venture, 708 3rd Ave, 15th floor; NY,



NY 10017 – the same owner as the Westerly Parkway Shopping Center. The 18.69 acre parcel in College Township is zoned R-1 and the 6.99 acre parcel in State College Borough is zoned R-3. R-1 in College Township allows uses for single-family homes, patio homes, child day-care, churches, schools, parks and farm uses. The R-3 district in State College Borough allows all uses as prescribed in their R-2 zone, as well as fraternity/sorority houses, multiple family dwelling, personal care home for adults. (R-2 in the Borough allows church, country club, single-family dwellings, student home, parks, schools, two-family homes, performing arts centers, museums, day-care center, neighborhood (community) center.) It does not appear that zoning setbacks will be an issue due to the size of the lot. Of course, the pool would not occupy the entire 25 acres. This site is very close to the easily-accessible Welch Pool site, and it also offers the possibility of continued cooperation with SCASD as they address their building and student and staff parking needs in their Master Plan.

**Leave The Welch Facility “As Is” On The Welch/SCASD Site And Build A New, Third Facility Elsewhere In The Community**

This concept was presented in the original report except for the status of the existing site. In the initial report it was described how three facilities would be stretching the capacities of the CRPR & CRRA and produces a negative effect on operational revenue. It is still the professional opinion of the project consultants that three facilities in the Centre Region is not a prudent idea, especially more now that the team was directed to incorporate a more conservative projection of population growth for the community and the limited resources for capital and operating expenditures by the CRRA.

Related to this is the proposed Circleville Farms development which has proposed an aquatic center and is located in close proximity to the area of projected growth. It is not known, at this point in time, if the development will move forward or what their proposed aquatic facility



would contain. As of the date of publication for the Centre Region Growth Forecasts, the property in question was zoned rural agriculture. It should be noted that, pending re-zoning & development plans, any development of an aquatic facility in this location will have an impact on any renovation & redevelopment at the existing site or any other facilities proposed in the Centre Region area.

The scale of the impact on the existing aquatics infrastructure of the proposed Circleville Farms aquatic facility would be a factor of what types of programs and features the developers propose. It is unknown whether this facility is simply a pool for the members of the development or a full service, regional facility open to the public as defined in the original report. Assuming a full-service, regional aquatic facility is developed, it is assured that there would be some fall off of attendance and revenue of the existing facilities. It is not possible, at this time, to properly gauge the financial and programming impact a proposed facility will have until there is a firm understanding of what is to be built.

### **PROPOSED SITE OPTION**

The CRRA has asked the Aquatics Task Force to focus on the option of re-developing the existing Welch/SCASD site for a new pool and facilities that will meet a budget of \$3.5 million. This option is presented here. As part of this process, discussion were held with representatives from the Borough of State College and the SCASD in regards to site issues including the land lease, site drainage and parking.

The SCASD will begin development of a master plan for the use of the adjacent high school properties in the fall of 2004. Initial indications are that SCASD will retain the agreement for lease of the land for Welch Pool on a long-term basis as noted in the initial report and will cooperate in development for a facility as it relates to the sharing of parking and ancillary facilities. It is also understood from preliminary planning documents and information provided by the Borough, that a storm water management plan has been identified for the site – using the athletic fields

behind the Welch Pool. The proposed dam structure and emergency spillway design has been incorporated in the design considerations of the site. It is quite important to note that much of this information is preliminary and will require further discussion with all parties to ensure that both plans for the sites are acknowledged and agreed upon before being committed to by CRRA.

As with the Park Forest site, the Aquatics Task Force provided a priority list of aquatic program elements felt essential for a renovated facility. This list included as priority features a 10,000 square foot pool (the current pool is 7,225 square feet in area) with zero-depth (beach-type) entry, water slide(s), diving board(s), at least six (6) swim lanes, a new change facility with staff, control, storage and shared space with SCASD, enlarged infence area for circulation and landscape spaces, shade features, new mechanical building/room and re-designed drop-off area and parking. Additionally, highly recommended features included increasing the swim lanes to eight (8) lanes, adding an additional competitive pool, a concessions stand, play features, and a group picnic pavilion.

The project team evaluated this list and identified those elements that could be designed for phased additions to the facility. Some amenities/features such as smaller activity components (sprays & water toys) add very little to development cost if designed properly and are considered necessary for a successful facility. Larger, more expensive elements such as multi-level play units and waterslides can be added in the future as long as sufficient allowance of the infrastructure is designed for the addition of these features. Other items, such as increasing the swim lanes from six to eight should be considered as long as there is sufficient user demand and physical space available. Addition of lanes onto an existing pool is expensive and difficult.

The consultants also reviewed the physical opportunities and constraints of the site. As noted, the CRRA undertook a survey of the physical boundaries of the site. The existing site is composed of 3.15 acres (the original report identified that a regional aquatic facility should be

comprised of a minimum of 6 to 7 acres). Also, as part of this evaluation, it was noted that the storm water management plan indicates a swale or emergency spill way running along the South portion of the site towards the East then follow the property line North towards Westerly Parkway.

Another site consideration included parking and zoning requirements and the SCASD Master Plan. Parking considerations were discussed with both the State College Borough and the SCASD. It was noted that off-site parking for the facility would require either:

- 1) A variance from Borough Council,
- 2) An off-site parking agreement with the SCASD, or
- 3) A shared parking agreement between the SCASD & CRRA.

An analysis of the existing parking indicated that, under current requirements, the existing pool requires 97 spaces of which there are currently only 37. The 60 remaining spaces will have been grandfathered which, according to preliminary discussions with the Borough, will be maintained under the proposed development.

Under Phase One, according to parking requirements, the facility should have 187 parking spaces, 60 of which are to be grandfathered. With the proposed addition of a separate competitive pool, an additional 127 spaces would be required. These figures were developed in concert with the Borough of State College Planning Department. Taking out the 60 grandfathered spaces, a total of 254 parking spaces would be required at full “build-out” of the facility. Allowing for 300 square feet per parking space (including circulation space), this would require 76,200 square feet of site area or 1.75 acres. This would be greater than half the site if all 254 spaces are required. By comparison, proposed program elements take up approximately two (2) acres.

To make matters more difficult, zoning requirements for the site require a maximum of 50% impervious area on the site and setbacks of 30 feet on the front and rear facing yards and 20 feet on the West, Side yard. This

leaves a net, developable area of 2.43 acres for the site, of which only 1.58 acres can be impervious.

As seen by these numbers, it is physically impossible to contain all the required program elements on the existing site. The main aquatic elements and ancillary support features, with the exception of the parking, as currently proposed, will be difficult to accomplish given the site constraints. Other issues, such as access off of Westerly Parkway and the relocation of the existing bicycle path must also be incorporated into a final plan. The concept presented, to allow for all program elements identified in the priority list, makes the assumption that parking for the facility would be off-site, shared with the SCASD.

The Aquatics Task Force also reviewed the cost to create a new facility on the Welch/SCASD site. Accordingly, a new facility on the existing site would not provide the CRRA with substantial cost savings. The primary difference will be the cost of infrastructure, parking and land acquisition. If properly selected, a new site would provide the opportunity for continued growth and to create a facility that is well designed and pleasant for patrons. Re-development of the Welch/SCASD site would, in-turn, mean the inability to expand or add attractions or service related amenities such as parking except at the discretion of other entities or groups.

**AQUATIC FEASIBILITY STUDY**

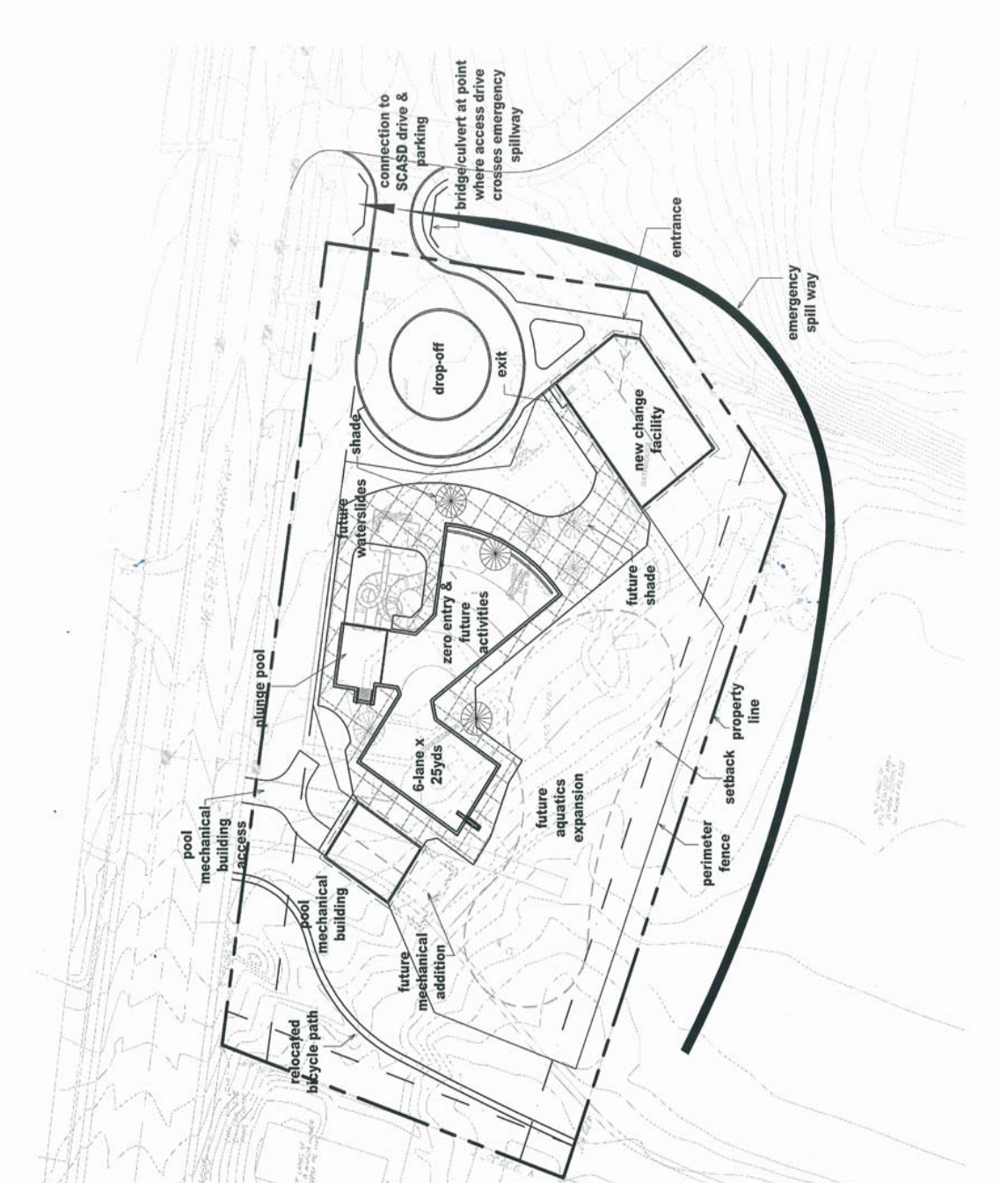
**William L. Welch Community Swimming Pool**

**ESTIMATES OF PROBABLE PROJECT COST**

ELEMENT	QUANTITY	ESTIMATED COST
<b><u>Site Elements</u></b>		
Demolition/Earthwork	Allowance	\$125,000.00
Site Utilities (Excavation & Backfill)	Allowance	\$50,000.00
Drop-off & Site Access	Allowance	\$200,000.00
Shade Structures	2 EA x \$3,360.00	\$6,720
Decks/ Deck Drainage (Interior)	11,400 SF x \$5.25	\$59,850
Sod	5,500 SF x \$1.50	\$8,250
Irrigation	Allowance	\$15,000.00
Landscape	5,000 SF x \$5.60	\$28,000
Site Lighting (Aquatic Night Use)	Allowance	\$35,000.00
Sound System	Allowance	\$10,000.00
Fence- Perimeter	720 LF x \$23.00	\$16,560
Fence- Barrier	300 LF x \$35.00	\$10,500
Site Signage	Allowance	\$8,500.00
<b><u>Architecture Elements</u></b>		
Change Facility/Admin. Building & Concessions	5,900 SF x \$120.00	\$708,000
Pool Mechanical Room	1,470 SF x \$100.00	\$147,000
Surge Tank	LS \$40,000.00	\$40,000
<b><u>Aquatic Elements</u></b>		
Outdoor Leisure Pool	10,000 SF x \$120.00	\$1,200,000
Interactive Water Elements	Allowance	\$20,000.00
<b>Subtotal - Estimated Construction Cost</b>		<b>\$2,688,380</b>
Contingency on Total Estimated Construction Cost	15%	\$403,257
<b>TOTAL ESTIMATED CONSTRUCTION COST</b>		<b>\$3,091,637</b>
<b><u>Owner Expenses &amp; Project Fees</u></b>		
Project Fees (A & E)	9% x 3,091,637	\$278,247
Testing, Permits, Surveys & Soils Report	Allowance x 30,000	\$30,000
Owner's F.F. & E. (Furniture, Fixtures & Equipment)	Allowance x 100,000	\$100,000
<b>Subtotal Estimated Owner Expenses &amp; Project Fees</b>		<b>\$408,247</b>
<b>TOTAL ESTIMATED PROJECT COST (2004 Dollars)</b>		<b>\$3,499,884</b>
<b><u>Alternate / Optional Elements</u></b>		
50 meter competitive pool	9,200 SF x \$125.00	\$1,150,000
Mechanical & Site Development for 50 meter competitive pool	Allowance	\$250,000.00
Waterslide & Tower (Two Inner-tube Flumes, mechanical & piping)	1 LS \$375,000.00	\$375,000
Additional Interactive Water Elements	Allowance	\$82,000.00
Additional Shade Features	15 EA x \$3,360.00	\$50,400
Splash Playground (mechanical equipment & piping)	2,500 SF x \$135.00	\$337,500
Drop Slide & Tower	1 LS x \$75,000.00	\$75,000

**Notes:**

1. Estimate includes pool excavation and structure, pool gutter, pool finishes, deck equipment, safety ropes, pool mechanical systems, and water activities with mechanical systems and piping.
2. Estimate does not include additional contingencies for unusual soil conditions or unknown development risk items not identified in the soils report nor cost for land acquisition.
3. Estimated construction cost includes contractor mark-up and prevailing wage rates.
- 4. Estimate of probable project cost is PRELIMINARY in nature. Further design development, including input from the CRRA is required before this estimate can be verified or refined. Actual cost will not be determined until construction bids are received.**



**W.L. Welch Community Pool  
CONCEPTUAL RE-DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

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PROJECT No.: 24030  
JULY 30, 2004

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## **FINANCES/OPERATIONAL CONSIDERATIONS**

The original report recommended the development of a new regional facility that would be sized for a capacity of 1,200 and annual attendance of approximately 82,000 per annum (summer). By this projection and a conservative per cap of \$4.00 (the amount spent per person at a facility per visit, including things such as entrance fee and concessions), it was projected that this new facility would show a positive balance of approximately \$27,000 per year. The concept presented in this report limits the capacity at the Welch pool to 750. By reducing the capacity, the CRRA would be put into the position of either increasing fees to make up for the decrease in attendance, or lowering fees to artificially increase attendance. This second option is highly unfavorable as overall attendance would be limited by the capacity of the facility and could only provide positive revenue by reducing operating cost while increasing per cap spending (the amount spent per person at a facility per each visit). In addition, the CRRA would be subject to complaints of over crowding, congestion and the “Not Enough” syndrome typical of communities that have facilities that are undersized.

As an example, WTI looked at six similar communities that have facilities with capacities of 750 to 850. For the 2003 operating season (the latest figures available), operating expenses for these facilities ranged from \$140,000 to \$210,000. The largest variable to this range is the rate of pay for personnel. Attendance ranged from 22,900 to 85,000. The facilities on the high end complained of overcrowding, lack of water area and congestion. Revenue for these facilities ranged from \$99,700 to \$166,000 with none of the facilities showing positive revenue. A caution to this information is that revenue could be increased to reduce or eliminate the difference if per cap spending is increased. Methods for doing this include raising admission fees and increasing consumption of goods from concessions and retail components.

Financially, the location of the existing site for the proposed facility comes with its own concerns. A limit for Phase One capital investment for the

site of \$3.50 million will require a lot of attention to detail by the planners and CRRA. The attached estimate of probable construction cost makes an effort to identify features required for the initial development and items that can be “phased” or added in the future as funds become available. As shown, the features and amenities considered essential for the first phase of development meets the \$3.50 million budget allowance.

The concern here is that not enough will be done to sustain a higher attendance level so as to meet the financial goals of the project. To build the facility to \$3.5 million means that many of the features that create a rounded guest experience and keep people coming back - are left for future additions such as the waterslides and spray areas. This also pushes back the development of other future add-ons such as a 50-meter competitive venue which would provide the CRRA with more programming opportunities and an additional source of revenue from hosting of competitive events and a training facility. The biggest concern is determining when these would be added. What is the impact of delaying the addition of these amenities? Unless the CRRA provides, and follows, a timetable for these additions, they will continue to limit the capacity and experience opportunities of the facility.

Features such as the size of the Change Facility have an impact on the budget, program opportunities and, subsequently, operating & revenue numbers. If reduced in size to meet budget requirements and the minimum standard for fixtures and capacity, the facility will be limited to future growth unless substantial capital improvements are undertaken to provide the appropriate spaces and amenities. While a facility reduced in size will have a lower personnel and maintenance expense budget, it can be expected that there will also be a reduction of attendance. If proposed future features and amenities are not added and/or another facility, such as the proposed Circleville Farms Aquatic Center, is introduced, attendance and revenue will decrease.

The numbers provided here are estimates only and reflect an understanding of current market trends and material cost. Actual numbers, if followed,



will vary vastly across the area at any given time and further development of the design and selection of materials is required before numbers can be confirmed. There are some items that are identified as allowances that will be further defined during schematic design and may come down in price

As noted in the original report and through presentations to the CRRA, COG and community, to have a successful aquatic facility it must have a proper balance of recreational features and programs as well as capacity. Facilities that are over-crowded and those that do not have enough features to keep guests entertained suffer when it comes to the bottom line. On one hand, potential revenue is lost if people are turned away at the door and facilities gain a reputation of being congested, hot and tiresome. On the other hand, a facility may be of sufficient size for a community or service area but a lack of attractions, amenities and programs to entice people to the facility will create a wasteland of water. It is cautioned that the design being proposed is a bare minimum of what is believed appropriate for the Centre Region and that the programs & needs are closely reviewed and an appropriate budget be established for the development of these facilities.

## ■ CONCLUSION

As it was with the original Aquatics Feasibility Study, it is the goal of the COG and CRRA to provide for the aquatic needs of the community now and in the future, while at the same time being fiscally responsible with respect to development and operations. The Aquatics Task Force, Water Technology, Inc. and HP Architects present this supplemental document in an effort to provide the COG and CRRA with the information necessary for these bodies to make informed decisions as it relates to the future of aquatics in the Centre Region.

It is the opinion of the project team that the CRRA be authorized to prepare a Master Site Plan for the Park Forest facility – to include the addition of a splash playground and improvements to other site amenities can be considered. The team recommends that the CRRA proceed to select a consultant to assist in the preparation of the Park Forest Pool Master Site Plan with detailed phasing and cost estimates with the goal to have

documents ready for bidding and development of the first phase to be complete by the 2006 season. By beginning the process now, the CRRA will be able to further develop the program and design for the facility and begin the route to an energetic aquatics program that will serve the residents of the Centre Region.

The team does not believe that it is in the best interest of the CRRA to proceed with the renovation of the Welch/SCASD site as presented in this supplement from either a programming or financial standpoint. The fate of the Welch facility should continue to be evaluated over the next few months in conjunction with the SCASD Master Plan Development. This will allow for many of the unresolved issues to be discussed and agreed upon before a final decision is made. It is believed that many of the issues left to be resolved will provide the CRRA with the necessary direction as it relates to the issue of whether to abandon or to renovate. Also, a delay in the outcome of the Welch facility site will allow for the completion of renovations to the Park Forest facility and, ideally, generate greater support from the community for creation of a Welch facility that will meet the goals of the CRRA and COG. Once finalization of the decided action is complete, the CRRA should begin the process for development of the site Master Plan and construction of the project per the Park Forest facility recommendation.