

AWG Consultation Report for Crystal Pool and Wellness Centre Replacement Project

July 31, 2018

On July 9 2018, the AWG (Linda Bartram, Susan Gallagher, Paul Jones, Chris Marks, Chris Dobbie, Steve Bertrand) met for a second consultation with the Crystal Pool team (CPT), Derrick Newman, Manager, Construction & Parks Infrastructure, Navdeep Sidhu, Assistant Director, Parks, Recreation and Facilities, Adam Fawkes, HCMA Architecture and Design. They were joined by Doug Nutting, Recreation Integration Victoria, Jennifer Blome, Accessibility Services, Rick Hansen Foundation and Doug Copley, Access Assessor and Consultant, Rick Hansen Foundation as well as Brad Dellebuur, staff liaison and Christine Brinton.

On July 6, 2018 the Crystal Pool Development Team shared the following responses to the concerns raised in AWG's report after the initial consultation held in February, 2018. These are followed by AWG comments raised at the July 9, 2018 consultation.

AWG Recommendation 1: Going forward, the Project should ensure **information and engagement accessibility**, so that members of the public with disabilities can comment individually and that information can be readily shared within specific disability communities. A written description should be made available electronically and accompany all on-line drawings.

CPT Response: Written descriptions will be included alongside all drawings and presentation materials going forward to ensure the information is accessible to all. The new website currently under development will include this.

AWG Recommendation 2: To ensure that **AWG feedback** can be incorporated effectively the AWG recommends that the project staff:

- Consult the AWG at all stages of the project in a timely manner;
- Inform AWG of the project recommendations (including an explanation as to why an AWG recommendation is not being incorporated) prior to presenting them to Council, enabling AWG to provide further information; and,
- Report all of AWG's recommendations to Council including those which are not being recommended by the project.

CPT Response: It is the intention of the project team to consult with the Accessibility Working Group on a continuing basis as the project design continues to be refined. This consultation will describe specific items that need consideration, highlight areas where recommendations have been incorporated and discuss any recommendations that the team has been unable to integrate.

AWG Recommendation 3: That the Project undertakes a **comprehensive accessibility study** (if not already undertaken) of research and consultation to look at potential barriers and mitigations for a wide variety of disabilities and provide documentation of this study so that those affected can comment.

CPT Response: The Rick Hansen Foundation has compiled an accessibility guide specific to this project that contains all key accessibility criteria that need to be considered for the project design. This guide considers the needs of those with physical, sensory and cognitive impairments.

AWG Follow-Up Response: The AWG contends that the RHFAC guide may not include “all key accessibility criteria that need to be considered”. The RHFAC states that it assesses for physical, sensory and cognitive impairments and the cognitive considerations appear to be limited to simple language for signage. The RHFAC does not assess the accessibility needs for persons with several disabilities protected under human rights legislation such as environmental sensitivities and allergies, morbid obesity, mental health challenges and autism to name a few. Upon provision and review of the RHFAC guide, AWG will be in a better position to determine if the needs of all persons with disabilities are covered by the RHFAC process. In the meantime, AWG will continue to advocate for a broader spectrum of disabilities than appears to be included by the RHFAC.

AWG Recommendation 4: That the Project access information in the results of the **Accessibility Survey** in a privacy-protecting way.

CPT Response: The project team has reviewed the results of the survey in a privacy protected manner and intends to consider relevant items through the design of the project.

AWG Recommendation 5: That the project:

- Consider the needs of **staff with disabilities** when designing the staff-only areas of the facility;
- Document staff with disabilities considerations at all stages of the project; and,
- Research **government funding** which may be available for facilities promoting employment of persons with disabilities.

CPT Response: The RHFAC addresses staff spaces and places where the staff interacts with the public through the following RHFAC categories:

4.2.1 Desk/counter is accessible height or variety of heights

4.2.3 Clear space for approach for public and staff

4.2.6 Desk/counter is colour contrasted with surroundings.

8.1.1 Circulation to all work areas

8.1.2 Chairs are adjustable

8.1.3 Outlets and switches are at accessible heights

8.1.4 Desk height adjustable

8.1.5 All workstations are appropriate size for expected usage

8.1.6 Task lighting is available

6.4.2 Assisted listening device/system where information is exchanged.

AWG Concern/Potential Barrier: **Lack of privacy** due to glass walls adjacent to the pool and fitness area. Persons with disabilities may have different body features or do things in a different way that draws attention, and therefore generally do not wish to be watched when exercising or swimming and may choose not to use the facility if not addressed. The project may find that other vulnerable groups such as women escaping violence are similarly affected.

CPT Response: Considering the early design phase that the project is currently in, detailed decisions regarding types of glazing and window coverings have not been made yet. The project team will carefully consider the input provided as the design continues to be refined through later phases of the project.

AWG Concern/Potential Barrier: **Glass walls creating glare and hazard for persons with low vision.** If the environment limits an individual's ability to navigate independently, safely and comfortably they may choose not to visit the facility.

CPT Response: Considering the early design phase that the project is currently in, detailed decisions regarding types of glazing (transparent, translucent or opaque) and measures to ensure safety for persons with low vision have not been made yet. The mitigation of glare within the facility is important for the comfort of all occupants and critical for lifeguards within the natatorium. The project team will carefully consider the input provided as the design continues to be refined through later phases of the project.

Additionally, the RHFAC address glazed areas within the building through the following categories:

3.1.10 Glazed doors have colour contrasted strip or markings.

3.3.7 Glazed walls have colour-contrasted strips.

AWG Concern/Potential Barrier: **Way finding** is not just about text and picture signage. For persons with vision challenges, way finding must include both visual and non-visual cues and promote maximum independence.

CPT Response: The RHFAC promotes strong Wayfinding to support meaningful access for all facilities through the following categories:

6.1.9 Wayfinding includes a variety of techniques (landmarks, surface treatments, colour, sound, scents, lighting).

6.2.2 Signs includes Braille, raised lettering and/or symbol.

6.3.3 Raised lettering, Braille and tactile maps where appropriate.

6.1 Innovation: RHF addresses the benefit of the installation of iBeacons or other similar technology as an innovative feature.

AWG Concern/Potential Barrier: **Décor such as striped walls/ceilings** may set off an episode for persons with epilepsy or autism. Current conceptual design drawing indicates a hanging valance on overhang over a walkway with a repeating vertical stripe which could set off a rhythmic flashing as people walk past.

CPT Response: The RHFAC supports the objective of creating a facility that meets the needs of users with a range of abilities through the following categories:

3.3.6 No strongly patterned carpet or flooring.

4.1.6 Floor finishes are firm and slip resistant, with no glare or strongly patterned carpet or flooring.

4.3.3 Upholstery is matte, non-slip without bold pattern, and contrasts with environment

4.1 Innovation: A focused interior design plan to address the needs of those with autism/epilepsy would be considered innovative within this section.

AWG Concern/Potential Barrier: **Large open lobby area.** Large open noisy areas can be problematic and disorienting for persons with autism and behavioral or mental health challenges as well as for those who rely on their hearing to navigate. They also increase the risk of persons with environmental disabilities and food allergies to exposure to allergens from food and those allergens brought in by other patrons such as scents and pet dander.

CPT Response: While a broad goal to have an inviting and active community hub is an important aspect of the project, the possibility of including an access path that avoids the active lobby space will be carefully considered as the design continues to be refined. The inclusion of food service within the facility is being considered as a possible

future amenity and the implications of its inclusion will also be considered as the design continues to be refined.

RHFAC addresses open public spaces and noise dampening efforts through the following categories:

3.2.5 Open-plan areas are well defined and include tactile direction indicators.

4.1.1 Logical arrangement of circulation routes and facilities in area

4.1.3 Location of key facilities easily identified

4.5.1 Sound damping where spoken word is expected

4.5.2 Volume of speakers and voice paging systems adjustable per area

4.5.3 Double-glazed windows are installed.

AWG Follow-Up Response: The latest design does allow for an individual to enter the facility and go directly to the reception desk along the edge of the open lobby area but there is no wall separating the lobby from this access route. Further discussion is required to determine if this design will be adequate for those with environmental sensitivities and autism or whether a separate direct entrance is needed to avoid exposure to the lobby area.

AWG Concern/Potential Barrier: **Smaller change rooms.** Public education as to the use of the universal changing facilities.

CPT Response: Facility staff intend to provide any required guidance and education required to ensure that patrons understand the correct use of the universal change room.

AWG Follow-Up Response: AWG continues to have concerns regarding the reduced size of the gendered change rooms. Although the CPT anticipates that more people will use the universal change room over time, AWG believes that seniors will not be comfortable doing so. The woman's change room is already overcrowded after aquafit classes and a smaller change room will lead to more overcrowding.

AWG Concern/Potential Barrier: **Pool temperature.** Water which is too cold can cause spasms for some persons with spinal cord injuries and other disabilities.

CPT Response: The leisure pool is intended to be kept at a higher temperature than the existing lap pool and is now large enough and specifically designed to accommodate wellness and therapy functions. The current design also includes two hot tubs that can be maintained at different temperatures to suit the needs of a wider range of users.

AWG Follow-Up Response: AWG is concerned about the placement of the hotter hot tub. It needs to be close to where seniors exit the pool after an aquafit class.

AWG Concerns/Potential Barriers: If **food** is to be sold/encouraged, those with food allergies will be at risk and may choose to avoid the facility in order to stay safe. Some potential solutions will also benefit people who are immunocompromised because they will not only stem the spread of allergens but also pathogens. Hand washing will also decrease the need for hand sanitizer, which introduces contaminants into the air, helping those with environmental sensitivities and scent allergies.

CPT Response: The inclusion of food service within the facility is being considered as a possible future amenity and the implications of its inclusion will be carefully considered as the design continues to be refined.

AWG Follow-Up Response: A hand wash station in the lobby area utilizing the roughed in plumbing, currently for possible future food services, needs to be included regardless of whether food is sold on the premises. This can be incorporated into a bottle fill station. A hand wash station/bottle fill station also needs to be included in the fitness area enabling patrons to wash their hands before and after using exercise equipment.

AWG Concern/Potential Barrier: Counter height shown in conceptual drawings all at one height.

CPT Response: The **counter height** has been adjusted to be at the accessible height prescribed by the building code.

AWG Concern/Potential Barrier: Amount of **chlorine** needed and chloramine gas produced when chlorine mixes with urine, creating a barrier for those with various lung conditions, asthma and environmental allergies and exacerbating eczema and other skin conditions. Note: exposure to chlorine is known to cause allergies in children.

CPT Response: To use chlorine in the pool is determined by the BC Health Act. The mechanical system is being designed specifically to minimize the presence of chloramines in the critical zone above the surface of the water. The current design also includes washrooms near the pool deck. Additional features to address this concern will also be considered by the project team as the design continues to be refined.

AWG Follow-Up Response: The BC Health Act deals with research information and a health status registry. AWG requests that the CPT provide the correct references to the statutory and regulatory requirements re. chlorine in public swimming pools. The AWG is aware that different chlorine amounts are required according to the temperature of the water. There are minimum and maximum acceptable levels and the maximum level can

be twice the ppm of the minimum level. There is a significant health difference if the maximum levels of chlorine are used and the City will need to develop procedures to ensure that levels are kept as close to the minimum required level as possible.

Additional AWG Concern/potential barrier: Need for **cubicle walls in universal change room to be adjustable** to facilitate the addition of another accessible changing area in the future. As the facility will be promoted as barrier-free it is anticipated that the number of persons with mobility challenges using the facility will increase and some will require an accessible changing room.