

Hello Mayor Fougere & City Counsellors,

My name is Hannah Ostlund, I will not be present to speak on December 10th, 2018 at the Budget meeting. But, I am here writing to express my concerns about the closure of Maple Leaf pool. I am not from the heritage neighborhood myself but I have significant ties to this community. I have worked at Maple Leaf pool as a lifeguard and in Thomson Community school as a nursing student. I have seen first hand the positive impact this pool has on the people who utilize it, which is made up mostly of low income children; who are our most vulnerable population. I find the closure of this pool specifically devastating due to the abundance of the resources and the positive environment it provides to the children who attend on a daily basis. This pool provides children with a nutritious meal, eight hours of unguided supervised play 7 days a week, physical activity throughout the day and most importantly provides these children with a safe place for them spend their days. By having a facility such as Maple Leaf pool in this area provides these vulnerable populations with access to a positive role model, a constant and dependable adult to spend their day with and most importantly provides these children with a safe place in which they know they can be themselves and express their feelings and concerns.

In my experience with this vulnerable population from many different stand points whether it be the lifeguard they spend their summers with or the health care perspective that I can provide, it is clear to me that this community needs a positive asset and 'safe place' for this vulnerable population to spend their time. I have seen first hand that as soon as these children get bored or are unsupervised they turn to activities that lead to trouble and crime. This facility is often one of the only positive resources these underprivileged children have access to during the summer months. Of course, I understand that Maple Leaf has out lived its life but my main

concern with the closure is what are these children going to do during the summer months. By closing Maple Leaf, we are taking away the 'safe place' and financially accessible place for this population to spend their time.

The proposition of closing Maple leaf pool has been done in an inappropriate and irresponsible way, the proposed plans and resources that have been suggested for the members of this community are unrealistic and unlikely to be carried out through how they are envisioned. The majority of patrons at the pool are unsupervised children which is unfortunate but it is the reality for this community. By arranging busses to take patrons to and from the new Wascana pool (which most of which will be children) is unrealistic as I would imagine no parent would feel comfortable bussing their child across Regina to attend the pool alone.

Throughout the *City of Regina Core Neighbourhood Sustainability Action Plan*, it refers to Maple Leaf pool as a 'positive asset' numerous times, the plan also elaborates on the positive impact this pool has on the community and how it draws the community and its surrounding communities together in a positive way. Action two in the Sustainability Action plan also states "*Rehabilitate the Maple Leaf Pool or build a new recreational facility and pool on the old site*", in the closure of Maple Leaf pool there has been little to no mention about 'rehabilitating' or 'rebuild' of a new facility on the current site. I understand that to rebuild would be costly and there is a limited budget, but I would like to emphasize the question of do we need a **16.5 million dollar** 'Destination Aquatic Facility'? Or would a less costly aquatic facility suit our community and allow for resources to be dispersed throughout the community that is most impacted by the closure of Maple Leaf pool.

I do understand that many people see the benefits of the new Destination Aquatic Facility, but I also encourage you to take into account the populations that it is negatively

effecting. In the Neighborhood Profile of the Heritage Neighborhood in 2015 it shows that the percentage of persons in low-income households under the age of 18 was a shocking 48% in comparison to the youth as a whole in Regina being 19%. I also would like to note that the remainder of the Heritage neighborhood sees a significantly higher low-income rate than the rest of Regina. This demonstrates the need for affordable and accessible resources in the community to create a positive environment for this vulnerable and underprivileged population to thrive in.

In your decisions about maple leaf pool I hope that you keep in mind how much of a positive attribute this facility is to this community and that by keeping the pooling or replacing the pool with an appropriate facility can continue to strengthen this community as a whole. By providing this community with a new facility it would be a large investment in the City but would generate a positive outcome for many of the members of this community. This could be done by collaborating with the community association, members of the community and even third-party organizations to create an ideal and appropriate facility for this community.

Thank you for listening. I am open to any questions.