

To: Office clerk, City of Regina

Re: Proposed closing of Maple Leaf Pool

---

The City of Regina has proposed changes to community structures in the 2019 budget. Among these is the permanent closing of Maple Leaf pool and restructuring of Wascana Pool as a destination facility. As a former Maple Leaf pool lifeguard and frequent patron at Wascana pool, I'd like to express concern with the proposed changes.

Pools are expensive to run. They require maintenance and staff. And Maple Leaf, as a free pool, represents a monetary cost to the City. I believe, however, that our City benefits from the services provided at Maple Leaf pool. The children who attend Maple Leaf pool include gang kids (who are not permitted to wear gang colours and share space at the pool), children with a history of family violence and alcoholism, hungry kids, and children without responsible adult care. Although operating the facility is expensive, I contest that the adult staff operating Maple Leaf pool are inexpensive social workers. I've seen lifeguards play with kids in the park, get in the pool and swim with kids, take music requests, feed the children from their own lunches, set up dance and dive parties, and interact with the children as a support community. These young adults provide an invaluable service to the community at \$15 per hour.

The City has proposed that children from Maple Leaf travel to Wascana pool. The pools are 5K apart which is too far for children to travel. Bus travel is untenable.

The City has proposed PlayScapes for Maple Leaf children, but these activities only capture the youngest demographic and require adult permissions. I conjecture that we need to meet the needs of youths aged 9-13 with adult attention, and this demographic requires more sophisticated infrastructure (such as a pool with diving boards!). Maple Leaf pool provides entertainment and adult supervision to youths who are otherwise on the streets, and therefore creates value through lower cost of policing.

Wascana pool is used by adult lap-swimmers and families who need to cool down in the summer heat. It is a beautiful park pool because of its simplicity. Although the city could benefit from increased family recreation, we need to look at an indoor facility that would satisfy the needs of user groups (water polo, competitive swimming, triathlon, etc). Let's look at Kelowna indoor pool (YMCA) as an illustration of effective use of recreation pool space. An indoor facility would be functional year-round.

I propose rebuilding Maple Leaf and Wascana pools in their current form, then designing (much needed!!) indoor pool space to keep kids healthy and active year-round.

Thank you for your time and consideration. Please contact me for further discussion.

Kind regards,

Jacqui Munro, CPA, CGA, MRes.