

## Funding for Wascana Pool

Appearing before City Council is not something that I am comfortable doing, or that I wish to be doing. However, I consider Wascana Pool to be an absolute gem in Regina, and my hands-down favourite place in the city. That brings me here this evening.

I fully support the City funding a replacement for Wascana Pool. My family and I are the demographic that the new Wascana designs are theoretically geared to, yet I am totally opposed to the current designs.

My entire family (which includes a 6 year old just learning to swim, a 9 year old who loves swimming, parents who are definitely recreational swimmers, and a grandma who loves to swim outdoors) all want a 50 x 25 meter pool. Wascana is the only pool in Regina that I love to swim at because it is NOT CROWDED. On the rare occasion that we've gone to much smaller Massey pool, it is so crowded that I can only swim a couple strokes - if that - while I'm in the shallow side of the pool with my kids.

Wascana was like heaven to all of us, and was truly perfect for all ages. I took my kids there when they were babies, and took them and their friends there all day as the years went by. It was our go-to spot. It was fun, it was serene, it was beautiful, and most of all, it was versatile.

Diving boards and a deep end for the bigger kids. We personally never needed zero-entry, as we used floaties, or I held my kids when they were very little. And I could actually get in the water and swim too, unlike being stuck in 2-3 feet of water like at Massey Pool (no offense to Massey - just pointing out that a LARGE classic, rectangular pool can work beautifully for families with people of all ages, in addition to lap swimmers, water polo players, etc...).

Wascana Pool is the kind of place that it's easy for parents to be at. You can read a book in the parklike oasis while your kids get exercise. You can swim and dive with them. The kids never seem to tire of swimming or making up games in the pool with their friends, and it's wonderful for the kids to see skilled swimmers and divers.

When we're in other cities and towns, we make a point of going to their outdoor pools. We've been to versatile, classic rectangular pools in big cities like Toronto and Vancouver, new gimmicky ones, with a spray pad, lazy river, and climbing wall, like in Casper, Wyoming (which our family enjoyed for one day, but didn't want to return to for a second visit), and lovely small town pools in Saskatchewan and Montana, yet none as yet none quite as perfect as Wascana, due to its idyllic setting.

I am mostly trying to forget what this summer will be like with my soon-to-be 10 year old and 7 year old without our beloved Wascana. I want the City to make this right, with a 50 x 25 meter/yard pool that will allow all swimmers to swim without being crowded, and in a non-gimmicky, versatile pool (whose design doesn't dictate how it is to be used) that one would want to go to every day. Summer is the one time I get a City recreation pass, and I like waterslides a couple times a year, but can't imagine going to a gimmicky pool everyday. It's better to have a nice, big pool and let the swimming fun be open-ended.

Everyday at Wascana was new, because for kids they made their own fun, and they actually SWAM, instead of just splashing/walking around because that is what the classic, rectangular design of the pool encourages. The Lawson design encourages swimming, the Sandra Schmirler design encourages just

hanging out in the water.

A 50 x 25 meter/yard pool where you don't have people a couple feet away from you at all times, and where everyone from babies to kids to teenagers to adults to seniors to lap swimmers and synchronized swimmers and water polo players want to swim is ideal. Wascana was the only pool we went to that had a real range of ages - not only families with children - and that made it a more relaxing, enjoyable place for my family with young children to go. It has to be big, like the old one, and it has to be versatile.

Fiscal restraint. A rectangular pool must be more budget-friendly and easier to maintain than a "destination waterpark". What about saving funds for a new Dewdney pool in North Central, which was threatened with closure in 2013.

Rectangular design is the most versatile accommodates families, seniors, and long course lap swimmers.

There has already been enough controversy about what has been built and sacrificed in Wascana Pool over the past few years. Reginans do not want office buildings, retail space, and I would argue they do not want a "destination waterpark" with the extra parking that would inevitably accompany it, and more trees cut down, as I hear is part of the current plans for a destination waterpark.

By all means, build something like this in one of Regina's suburbs that could clearly benefit from an outdoor pool, with ample parking and no mature trees, but let Wascana Pool remain a classic, timeless, oasis that serves everyone from babes in arms, to synchronized swimmers, to water polo players, to recreational swimmers like myself, to lap swimmers, to seniors.

The beauty of Wascana Pool lies in its large, rectangular design. It is more fiscally prudent, it serves the people who will actually use Wascana Pool best, and it is the most respectful and responsible decision for our beautiful park, our oasis in the Queen City.