



CITY OF CONCORD

REPORT TO MAYOR AND THE CITY COUNCIL

TO: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

FROM: Recreation and Parks Advisory Committee
David Gill, Parks and Recreation Director
Earle M. Chesley, P.E., General Services Director

Re: Garrison Pool Renovation

DATE: January 24, 2024

Recommendation

Approve this report and recommendation from the Recreation and Parks Advisory Committee and staff to convert the existing Garrison Park Pool to a splash pad.

Background

Over the past several years, the City has funded full pool renovations at Rolfe Park (FY2016), Kimball Park (FY2017), Keach Park (FY2018), Merrill Park (FY2021) and the White Park Pool (FY2023). The remaining two pools are located at: (1) Garrison Park currently listed as a FY25 project, and (2) Rollins Park listed as a FY26 project. Upgrades to the city's pools are listed in CIP 63.

In June 2023, we opened the city's first splash pad at White Park. It was extremely well received by our residents. At that time, we identified two main benefits of having a splash pad and are happy to report the success of the splash pad exceeded our expectations.

The two benefits of the splash pad operation are:

- Splash pads need only one employee to operate and that employee only needs to be certified in CPR and First Aide. The employee does not require Lifeguard Certification. Throughout the 2023 season, we had one employee onsite during open hours to supervise operation, administer first aid as needed, open/clean bathrooms, enforce posted rules and check resident requirements of splash pad users. During the 2023 season, we had 11,756 user visits at the splash pad at White Park which exceeded the previous attendance record from 2001 when we had 7,811 user visits. In

addition, the Parks and Recreation Department sold 127 of nonresident pool passes in 2023 which was double the number regularly sold.

- The second benefit is the ability to open earlier and stay open longer compared to regular pool season. The White Park Splash Pad opened on June 17, 2023, and remained open until Sunday, August 27, 2023, over two weeks longer than the regular city pools. Going forward, the Parks and Recreation Department goal is to have splash pad open starting in early June until Labor Day weekend.

The Recreation and Parks Advisory Committee at their December 21, 2023, meeting discussed the upcoming scheduled renovation of the Garrison Park Pool and voted to recommend the city consider making it a splash pad rather than keeping it as a pool. The committee also agreed the splash pad should be staffed when open to ensure safe operation, rules are being followed, and resident residency is being checked.

While the committee discussed the idea of making it free to all users, they agreed that all Concord/Penacook residents should be able to access the facility for free, similar to city pools, noting that City tax payers are paying the cost of the operation (capital and yearly operating costs). They agreed nonresidents should be required to pay a small fee.

In the current FY24 CIP, Garrison Pool is scheduled for renovation in FY25 budget at \$650,000. Rather than renovating the current pool, the Recreation and Parks Advisory Committee and City Staff jointly recommend to look at making it a splash pad. Due to staffing limitations since COVID-19, Garrison pool has not been open since the 2019 season.

By accepting this report, City Administration will schedule a public meeting with the residents near Garrison Pool by March 15, 2023, to review options for the renovation with the goal of reporting back to City Council as soon as possible.

Provided funding for the renovation of the aquatic facility at Garrison Park is approved in the FY25 budget, the General Service Department goal would be to start renovation this calendar year.

Cc Tim Thompson, Assistant Community Development Director
Jay Burgess, Public Property Superintendent