Board of Directors Statement on the Closure of Splashland Pool

For nearly 70 years, Splashland Pool was one of the facilities where families learned to swim, cooled off on summer afternoons, and made lasting memories. The Board of Directors recognizes how much this facility has meant to our community, and we did not reach this decision lightly. We have board members, staff, and families with great memories at this facility as well. This statement explains why we made the decision, how we arrived at it, and how we will continue to serve Goat Hill and nearby neighborhoods.

The Decision at a Glance

Splashland Pool is permanently closed. Several factors have converged to bring us to this point:

- **The facility has reached the end of its useful life.** The 70-year-old facility infrastructure is beyond what routine repairs and continued maintenance can address.
- **Hyland Hills does not own the property.** The lease ended, and the District chose not to renew it.
- **Operating costs continue to rise.** Our community pools operate at a growing deficit during a short, roughly 60-day season.
- **Our community asked us to use resources wisely.** Comprehensive resident input from the District's Strategic Plan and an independent aquatics consultant both pointed toward this decision.
- **We are committed to additional recreation opportunities.** We are expanding recreational programs for youth and adults as well as enhancing aquatic access and Learn to Swim programs for our communities, including Goat Hill.

Honoring Splashland's Legacy

Splashland Pool opened in 1957 and served our community for generations. In 2002, the District invested more than $1.3 million (roughly $2.3 million in today's dollars) in an ADA pool entry, a new pool surface, gutter system, mechanical building/upgrades, a splash pad, and a main building shell, giving the pool many more years of service. Like many pools built in the postwar era, however, Splashland has now reached the point where routine repairs no longer keep it functioning reliably.

Why This Decision Was Made

A Facility at the End of Its Life

Significant water leakage at Splashland (estimated to be at least 18,000 gallons a day) has been an ongoing concern under continuous investigation, but it is only part of the picture. The facility as a whole, including the systems guests never see, has reached the end of its useful life, with the risk of infrastructure failure.

The independent aquatics report estimated that immediate work on the facility, including leak repair, would require an investment of up to $1.56 million, with the risk of exposing other issues at additional costs. This would be a short-term investment that would not guarantee longevity of the facility and would not replace the 70-year-old pool shell. Replacement of the pool shell and other infrastructure, including the main building, would cost between $4 and $7 million.

Property We Do Not Own

Splashland sits on property owned by Westminster Public Schools. The pool operated under a lease, and when the lease ended, Hyland Hills chose not to renew it. IIn addition, the aquatics study showed that the usable space on the site is challenging for the modern facility that upgrades would require.

Operating Deficits

Hyland Hills has some of the lowest park and recreation mill levy rates in the Front Range (a typical $425,000 home paid $127 in taxes in 2025), in part because revenue from enterprise operations such as Water World supports community facilities, parks, and recreation. There is pressure on limited resources, and our community pools operate at a deficit each season.

Season	Facility	Operating Deficit*
2021	Splashland	$170,495
2022	Splashland	$104,247
2023	Splashland	$102,920
2024	Splashland	$142,104
2025	Splashland	$182,582
Total Operating Deficit	**2021–2025**	**$702,348**

*Operating deficit figures do not include insurance or other overhead expenses.

A Thorough Public and Expert-Informed Process

This decision followed years of careful study and discussion:

- **Prior to 2020:** Board and staff had discussions about the future of the District's aging community pools.
- **2023:** Staff and the Board continued discussing the challenges facing all community facilities, culminating in the District's 10-year Strategic Plan. This process included extensive community engagement over the course of a year, including two events at Splashland on July 18 and July 26, 2023. The District Strategic Plan can be viewed at Plans & Reports - Hyland Hills Park & Recreation District.
- **2025:** The Board hired Ballard King, an independent aquatics consultant, which worked with Water Technology, Inc. (WTI) to evaluate the District's community pools. Their August 2025 report assessed each facility's condition against modern standards and presented four options. You can find the full report at Plans & Reports - Hyland Hills Park & Recreation District.
- **Public Board meetings:** The Board discussed Splashland in study sessions and public meetings, including Ballard King's presentation on August 12, 2025, and a special meeting on August 21, 2025, when the Board decided not to renew the lease. Agendas and minutes are at hylandhills.gov, and meeting videos are on our YouTube channel: Hyland Hills Park and Recreation District - YouTube.
- **September 2025:** The District announced the Splashland closure through on-site signage and the District website.

What Our Hyland Hills Community Told Us

The District's 10-year Strategic Plan drew on 6,237 direct contacts through community pop-up events, discovery interviews, statistically valid surveys, and online comments; the "Where Do We Grow from Here?" campaign promoted these feedback methods and reached an estimated 300,000 impressions. The residents strongly supported taking care of what we have as a key priority.

The plan also directs the District to "Improve, repurpose, or consolidate high-cost, low use, and low-cost recovery facilities to shift limited resources to higher priorities." The decision on Splashland follows this guidance directly, along with the recommendations of the Ballard King aquatics study. The District will also continue to build partnerships with neighboring providers, such as the City of Westminster, to expand residents' access to pools and programs without duplicating services.

Why Carroll Butts Pool Remains Open

Carroll Butts Pool is in better physical condition, sits in a central location within the District, has better parking, and received extensive updates to building features in its 2002 renovation. For these reasons, it remains the better place to continue offering a traditional neighborhood pool.

Understanding the Summit Canyon Adventure Investment

Some residents have asked whether the Summit Canyon Adventure project at Water World took funding away from Splashland. It did not. The project replaced aging infrastructure at Water World and added a community mini park with its own gate and community access. The project's costs will be repaid through Water World operations, which means this new aquatic facility will largely be paid for by visitors from outside the District. The Learn to Swim Pool at Summit Canyon Adventure was built in part with matching grant funds, with Water World funding the remaining amount.

Recreation Options Near Goat Hill

Goat Hill residents have a strong and growing network of recreation options nearby (estimated driving distances from the Splashland Pool location are shown in parentheses):

- **Westminster Swim & Fitness Center (about 1.6 miles away):** Open year-round after $6 million in improvements in 2024. Through our partnership with the City of Westminster, Hyland Hills residents pay Westminster resident rates (currently $6 per day).
- **Baker Community Center (next door):** The facility was renovated earlier this year and now includes new programming for youth and adults. This facility is open year-round. We want to hear from the community on programs that would further fill recreational needs. A new playground and shade shelter is coming in 2027.
- **Clear Creek Valley Park (about 2 miles away):** A signature regional park with more than $15 million in initial investment and more planned. Includes basketball and pickleball courts, a fitness court, playground, picnic shelters, and multi-use fields.
- **Westminster Station Park & Nature Playground (about 0.5 miles away):** A $5 million project with water play that opened in 2021.
- **Hyland Hills Hidden Lake Park (about 0.3 miles away):** Master planning begins in 2027 to renovate the park and enhance amenities.
- **Free or low-cost transportation & recreation*:** Transportation was provided from Baker Community Center to Water World, Summit Canyon Adventure, and Learn to Swim. Additional pickup options were Sherrelwood, Perl Mack, Federal Heights and Mapleton. Expanded programming will continue in 2027.

*Free or low-cost through the Hyland Hills Foundation.

Looking Ahead: Our Commitment to the Community

Closing Splashland does not mean stepping back from Goat Hill or any part of the greater Hyland Hills community. The Board and staff are committed to new experiences and programs for Goat Hill, Sherrelwood, Perl Mack, unincorporated Adams County, and Federal Heights, including:

- **2026 Goat Hill and Hidden Lake Neighborhood Needs Survey – this fall.** Tell us what recreation programs you want to see in your community! What do you want to see included in the Hidden Lake Park master plan and reimagining? Participate in our survey to share your ideas.
- A world-class, low-cost community aquatics mini-park at Summit Canyon Adventure, with updated offerings for 2027 based on community feedback.
- Expanded Learn to Swim opportunities, including evening and alternative class times.
- New free or low-cost programs and transportation for residents who need them.
- Supervised field trips to Hyland Hills facilities, with transportation provided.
- Community nights at Summit Canyon Adventure, including for specific neighborhoods.
- Greater efficiency and safety across District aquatics operations.
- Increased programming at the recently remodeled Baker Community Center, including arts classes, summer camps, and other programs for all ages.

We are grateful for the memories Splashland created. While the District will not reopen this facility, we look forward to working with Goat Hill and Hidden Lake residents and all of our neighborhoods to shape the future of recreation in Hyland Hills. Please share your ideas and stay involved as these programs and Hidden Lake Park take shape.

— Hyland Hills Board of Directors