



BALLARD KING
*
& ASSOCIATES LTD
Recreation Planning and Operations Consultants



OUTDOOR POOL ASSESSMENT

CARROLL BUTTS AND SPLASHLAND

AUGUST 2025

Executive Summary

Ballard*King & Associates (B*K) has been contracted to complete the assessment for Hyland Hills Park and Recreation District for reviewing aquatics and outdoor pools. B*K is a recreation consulting and facility planning firm based out of Denver, CO specializing in feasibility studies, master plans, operational assessments, and provide some short-term management solutions in the parks and recreation industry. It is important to note that B*K is an operational and planning firm. As such we provide third party, independent analysis regarding operations, and have no financial gain associated with the facility being built and/or operated.

Facility Assessments

Barker Rinker Seacat Architecture (BRS), Water Technology, Inc. (WTI) and B*K performed facility assessments to evaluate the condition and functionality of Carroll Butts and Splashland Aquatic Centers. While the facilities are in fair condition, they do not meet current standards for accessibility, lack modern amenities and have reached the end of their useful life. While maintenance efforts have prolonged the life and use of the facilities, and staff have operated efficiently, the pools no longer provide the quality swimming experience users are seeking that increase use and revenue. The cost per attendee is approximately \$35.

Community Engagement

Hyland Hills Park and Recreation District (HHPRD) surveyed residents in 2023 and again in 2025 to gauge their opinion of the facilities, their current usage and future of aquatics. The facilities were deemed good to fair, although half had not participated in an aquatic program or attended Carroll Butts or Splashland. There was support for providing accessible and affordable outdoor pools with additional features.

Recommendation

B*K developed 4 options for consideration.

Option 1 – Status Quo

HHPRD continues to operate the outdoor pools and make a decision on the future of each pool on an individual basis when it has a catastrophic failure.

Option 2 – Consolidate to a single outdoor community pool at one of the sites

HHPRD closes Splashland and invests in minimal improvements to Carroll Butts to remain open.

Option 3 – Consolidate to a single outdoor community pool at new site

HHPRD closes Carroll Butts and Splashland and invests in a new pool with ADA accessibility, modern amenities, recreation and swim lesson orientation and enhanced program opportunities.

Option 4 – Consolidate to a single outdoor community pool at one of the sites and construct an additional outdoor community pool.

HHPRD closes Splashland, renovates Carroll Butts and invests in a new pool with ADA accessibility, modern amenities, recreation and swim lesson orientation and enhanced program opportunities.

Through our analysis, B*K recommends Option 3 which includes reimagining an outdoor pool through consolidating to one outdoor community pool. This is a cost effective option while preserving a valuable asset like an outdoor pool that has limited attendance. Moving forward, the strategic focus should include ADA compliance, operational modernization, and enhanced programming, to continue affordable access, increase usage, improve cost recovery, and align with national trends in aquatics. The comprehensive evidence within this report enables more informed decision-making. Delays in determining a direction for these facilities will increase both financial cost and community dissatisfaction.

The rationale for this recommendation is based on a number of factors with the recognition this may take time to implement.

- HHPRD has a population that comparatively provides 2 outdoor aquatic facilities. While Water World provides a world-class aquatic experience, it does not provide recreational programming specifically swim lessons and is a challenge for a portion of the community to access. There are additional providers within the HHPRD boundaries for indoor aquatics and just beyond for indoor and outdoor.
- Distribution and level of service should be equitably distributed. HHPRD stretches north to south and a centrally located facility reaches most residents of the district with a typical drive time. Providing a facility covering the north and another one in the south would be optimal, however a challenge operationally. While major highways and roadways can be seen as barriers to access, enhanced partnerships with other providers minimizes this.
- There is strong interest in swimming. HHPRD has a higher percentage of households with children compared to the state of Colorado and United States. Children are significant users of aquatics related programs and facilities.
- Existing facilities have limited recreational appeal. Pool users are seeking attractions such as zero depth entries, play structures, slides, lazy rivers and features to be entertained. Providing swim lessons is a core program of HHPRD.
- Current outdoor pools are at a point of requiring significant capital dollars. Funding is limited for both operations and capital. Splashland is failing and requires an annual investment in personnel and financial resources. HHPRD does not own the property at Splashland. The site is not conducive to updating due to the small size. Carroll Butts has deferred maintenance as well but not as extensive.

Additional recommendations include enhancing partnerships with other providers. The ongoing partnership with the City of Westminster can be further promoted to bring awareness of access to aquatics facilities. This type of partnership could be extended to Apex Park and Recreation District. These partnerships can be further refined to not duplicate services and streamline programming opportunities.