

**UPPER KITTITAS COUNTY COMMUNITY RECREATION CENTER
COMMUNITY MEETINGS – OCTOBER 2023**

I. Executive Summary

An in-person meeting was held on October 25, 2023. Virtual meetings were held on October 26 and November 1, 2023. Over 100 people registered for the meetings; approximately 50 attended.

The focus of the meetings was to review the Schematic Design and obtain feedback from the community. Future meetings will address facility financing, operations, and other topics. A narrative summary of the feedback from these three meetings is provided here, and detailed responses are listed below.

As expected, there were varying opinions about what is “right” for our community. The Project Committee will do its utmost to determine, both qualitatively and quantitatively, the preferences of the majority of residents.

Schematic design forms the basis moving forward into detailed design and bid documents. While minor changes can be made in future phases, certain features must be decided now.

One key point of contention is the size of the aquatic facilities. The community was presented with a four-lane lap pool, which could accommodate lap swimming but not competitive swimming (i.e., swim meets). We will estimate the incremental cost of the larger option, then survey the public to determine whether they would be willing to fund the incremental cost of the six-lane competition pool. Another solution might be pose “trade-offs” in the facility (e.g., Would you forego the running track for the extra lanes?)

Another primary question is the overall size of the facility. We are attempting to “build for growth and longevity” while not overestimating the requirements of the current and near-term population. One solution might be to defer development of all external facilities (e.g., splash pad, pavilion, outdoor patios, etc.) to a future phase.

II. Detailed Feedback

Below is the “raw data” from the three sessions. Readers are encouraged to recognize that the opinions presented here represent the thoughts of approximately 50 participants and may or may not represent the opinions of the community as a whole. **Where possible, responses to the ideas presented are included in red.** In some cases, the comments were not detailed/clear enough for us to interpret.

A. Overall Facility – Benefits and Concerns

Benefits – What are the biggest benefits the facility will bring to the community as a whole?

- Get fit, stay healthy, meet old friends and make new friends.
- An awesome place for the community to gather, from young to seniors, especially in the winter months! We so need this!!
- Great place for young and elder to recreate during the long winters.
- It looks like a full-service facility!
- Beautiful space to recreate indoors. Access to amenities in Cle Elum that are in other communities. Variety – something for everyone. Can't be big enough.
- A beautiful amenity for indoor recreation and community-building. Something for everyone. Community park area. Really like the look and feel of the facility.
- All of it!
- Love the trails between the parking area and the outdoor exercise spaces.
- Senior activities – water/exercise classes & walking
- Swimming pool is a big advantage for this community.
- Community gathering place – all ages.
- Recreation, such as swimming for those with mobility issues, will increase health for all.
- Indoor exercise during inclement/seasonal weather will lead to increased health.
- More available space for sports teams.
- Possibility of playing pickleball in winter.
- Activities, more meeting spaces, pool (love it), looking for stuff to do with them, location, basketball space for kids sports, indoor area to move around during the winter. Pool is a huge deal. Track is great. Something for every age group.
- Indoor, multi-sport space. The swimming pools. Activities for kids and adults. Teen activities.
- Pool for community year-round recreation and high school swim team. **Note that this facility is intended for community use. While all of the schools in CERSD can access the facility (and we are working closely with CERSD), club teams (UKC Basketball Club, potential club swim team for people of all ages, etc.) are also a focus.**
- Welcoming multi-purpose space. Like the way the parking is dispersed and kept “forest-like.”
- Public place to swim and open gym space for teams and adult competition (open gym).
- Walking track; exercise space year-round, variety. Pool is a must – swim lessons, lap swim, injury recovery, kayaking training and safety; high school needs access to court spaces; club sports opportunity. Time line – when?
- I like all of the components.

Concerns – We understand that the biggest hurdle we face is financing the facility. Beyond financing, what are your biggest concerns about the project overall?

- Business plan – understanding operations; this should pay for itself; reserve funds for operations & maintenance **The operating budget has a generous fund for capital replacement, but with the current fee structure, will likely operate at a loss, at least until the population/memberships grow significantly.**

- Doing too much
- If Bullfrog Road is already inadequate, how will this facility contribute to the problem **Good question. We will talk to city/county about road improvements.**
- Community use versus school use **We believe that this facility is primarily for the community. While we are working closely with CERSD on the facility design, it is not our goal to focus on school needs to the exclusion of other needs. With proper scheduling, we can accommodate everyone inside the facility.**
- Timeline – it has taken us 10 years to get to this point **It's true that previous efforts have been made for more than 10 years. This particular effort has been in place for two years.**
- Get rid of splash pad. Build something less seasonal. **The majority of respondents want and are willing to pay for a splash pad. We have heard that some splash pads can be used as ice skating rinks in the winter. We are looking into this possibility.**
- No trees in parking lot – **The majority of respondents want to preserve trees. Would like to better understand why you feel the trees need to go.**
- Outdoor integration/climbing rock
- Maintenance cost. Economic impact on local businesses that already provide the same service.
- Taking business away from Swiftwater Fitness **We do not want to compete with local businesses. We invite all business owners to discuss opportunities to partner. We have met with Swiftwater Fitness, and, while there are no firm agreements in place, we agree in principle to partner.**
- Affordability for full-time residents versus part-time.
- Ideally we'd have a tennis court and pickleball.
- Competes with bonds for schools.

B. Design – Positives and Negatives

Positives – What activities provided in the design are most important to the community?

- Focus on youth activities/youth sports **While there are certainly advantages to having a targeted focus, our belief is that there will be something for everyone in this facility. We want it to be a Community center with social activities in addition to physical activities.**
- Nailed it. Wouldn't change a thing
- Amphitheatre outside is super exciting. **An amphitheater and other outdoor amenities will likely be added/decided upon in a future phase.**
- Love the outdoor festival space (keep it small); Love the indoor track Love keeping the forestry as much as we can; Event spaces inside and outside; Options for the parents to recreate AND watch their kiddos! Also, the teen center would be amazing!
- Child care area.
- Pool & splash pad, Track
- Pool, splash pad, exercise classes, community meeting space for informal gathering, running track
- Swimming pool; indoor track
- Bringing nature indoors. Open at 5 a.m.

- I like the new park space away from the main road.
- Youth activities (2)
- I think it is well done.
- Solar panels in the parking lot.
- Physical therapy use.

Negatives – What do you like least about the design? What is missing?

- A flying squirrel/ropes course might be more usable than a splash pad for year round.
- Splash pad uses in the off season? Ice skating rink? Putt-putt green? Lawn bowling? Something that will utilize it in the winter months **The majority of respondents want and are willing to pay for a splash pad. We have heard that some splash pads can be used as ice skating rinks in the winter. We are looking into this possibility.**
- Indoor turf field would be great and would benefit the high school football team, along with opening up a more wide variety of sports during winter, fall spring. **We agree! We are trying to balance the needs of the school with the preferences of the entire community. Unfortunately, a turf field is not currently a top priority for the community, but swimming and court sports are.**
- Outdoor volleyball pit? **Great idea! We will put it on the list of possible outdoor uses (in a later phase).**
- Add 2 lap lanes(to six lap lanes); Rock climbing
- Access – by public transportation – bus from Roslyn, Cle Elum to provide easier access for younger kids **We'd love to partner with HopeSource on this possibility, but discussions are VERY preliminary.**
- Competition from Suncadia/Nelson Farm
- More swimming lanes - 6 to 8 lanes
- More swim lanes
- Need large pool to accommodate swim team 2 more swim lanes. 4 is not enough for the anticipated busyness. Missing: voices of the students, lower income families/households. **Great point. We will gather more information in those areas.**
- Need a six-lane competition pool.
- Six-lane pool will have many advantages over 4 lanes.
- Flexibility – flex pool and additional lap lanes for high use lap swim time.
- 6 lane pool should be larger than other pool. Climbing walls inside and outside. Amphitheater unnecessary; Keep the trees where the open field is planned.
- Large field (trap?) for winter running
- Solar panels on roofs/solar power. **Many people mentioned this. We will be working in the upcoming detailed design phase to determine most cost-effective energy solutions.**
- Food/coffee. Side kitchen. **Consultants have strongly advised against putting in kitchen infrastructure. We've been told to rely on food carts/trucks/vendors in order to be most cost-effective.**
- Bait & switch; Taking business away; cost; massages, Less official than KVH; solar power.

- Sun deck on the shade side. Splash pad very far from pool makes it impossible for families to use both. We'll survey to see whether the community wants a free to the public splash pad as part of a community park or one near the pool that is for members only.
- Snack/coffee bar.
- Climbing wall; Southern "park" – why not a park with trees? Teaching safe mountaineering – classroom? Increase pool size and number of lanes; need six lanes for swim team/club swimming; kayak practice use.
- No older youth/adult softball field. Four-lane lap pool is too small with so much interest in a pool. Bicycle racks? EV charging stations? Solar panels?
- Parking lot (2) – tree roots big problem.
- Bullfrog roundabout/ 4 lane. Revenue/food trucks. Bond approval.
- Need to think about how we are thinking of staffing.
- Interested in if original expandable design will still include a covered soccer space? That was included in Feasibility Study but is missing from plans. The Feasibility Study recommended a six-lane pool, two basketball/pickleball/volleyball courts, a running track, and a splash pad. Additional community wants cannot all be accommodated on the 12.2 acre-site, but we are leaning towards developing the outdoor spaces in a later phase, so stay tuned.
- How O&M expenses would be covered? Think adding swim lanes for swim teams.
- Traffic impact; parking; cost to run/maintain/operate facility. Ice skating rink winter; splash pad summer; restaurant/eating area.
- Pathways and mini-trails from parking to building; pool must be set up for swim team practice and competition; shade over splash pad; trail/path from school to center; solar panels; increase radius of track corners so it doesn't feel like a square.
- Splash pad – need shade cloth during hot summer days. Maybe have it located closer to the natatorium.
- Softball fields; covered section at splash pad; solar panels.
- Play pool too big compared to lap pool – need six-lane pool; amphitheater – is it an appropriate amenity?; cut trees on SE "park" area; climbing wall.
- Splash pad is right on the edge of the parking lot, and far from pool. Concerns of heavy traffic on shared road with future development.

C. Making It Happen – What do you think are the three most important things the Project Committee needs to do to make the project succeed? What would you commit to doing to help the project succeed?

- Design an operational business plan We have one, and we plan to share all the financial information with the community once the financing and governance of the facility is determined. This process has been much slower than we had hoped.
- Simplify.
- Community involvement. Willing to volunteer for fundraising initiatives – sponsorships, legacy, paid programs.
- Explore funding from Suncadia Enhancement Fund We have developed a fundraising plan targeting individuals, private foundations, state, county, and local governments, etc. We estimate we can raise approximately \$7-8 million in outside funding.

- Marketing the project plans and updates online and through social media as much as possible. Willing to help with this and any other admin or project management type support.
- Sharing the project and its thoughts and ideas out with the community as much as possible through social media. **We're trying! This is a complex project with many facets, and it's difficult to get the community to read and understand this much complexity! Trying to balance brevity and thoroughness. Lots of detail is/has been on the website for those who can wade through it!**
- Communicate the project to UKC communities
- Ongoing funding and employee cost; Fundraising – donate services; grant writing
- Creative funding
- Is State Funding an option? Our local reps could help with that. **We have made contact with the local reps and are planning on submitting applications for funding. There are certain "windows" when it's possible to do this.**
- What is current funding plan? **We are nailing down a few key specifics before we present the funding plans to the public. Hope to have it within a month or two.**
- Selling to community most important
- Community participation.
- Word of mouth, website, feasibility study, Facebook
- How to fund long term for ops and maintenance is a concern.
- Get it built sooner rather than later. I'm happy to promote to my rural neighbors and friends (flyers?)
- Affordability – lots of people and families of limited means who significantly benefit. Help with bond & levy campaign.
- Willing to help in any way. Background in engineering and plant operations. Able to support finance and planning or just promote.
- Promote vote to friends in community via Facebook and word of mouth. Fundraise, help with donations & matching funds.
- Many Suncadia homeowners are frustrated by the pool overcrowding, ongoing maintenance issues, and cost. Would welcome a community option.
- Help with levy campaign and fundraising.
- Possibly help with value-add trail connections to school and Suncadia.
- I will spread the word.

D. Additional Comments

- We are new residents. We came from much larger towns with rec centers. I really commend the effort, and we are super impressed, but it is okay if the rec center is proportional to the size of the community. **Thank you. The Project Committee is working hard to "right-size" the facility – keep it small enough but still provide for "expected future growth."**
- Need to get the community to help us prioritize the features and help phase the project out – definitely need a multi-year approach to building and funding it. **Will try to find you and learn more about your thoughts. While we do intend to leave most of the outdoor amenities for a future phase, we have found it difficult, if not impossible, to come up with ways to phase the costly "infrastructure."**

- Very impressed!
- My biggest concern is developments like Suncadia, Pineloch Sun, etc., have facilities and may be reluctant to vote for a levy that could substantially increase taxes.
- So many ideas/wishes raised, I think of this: Remember the CRC “purpose.” You won’t be able to please everybody, and you can’t, but make “purpose” the center of decision-making when considering adds/idea. **Great reminder. The architects encouraged us to document the “Guiding Principles” we’ve shown to the community, and these “guiding principles,” are to help us do what you are suggesting.**
- Regular planning meetings need to happen.
- This could be a good place for after-school activities. Swim team practice.
- Side kitchen. Coffee area.
- Can be a point of contact for tennis communities and our coach (Cameron Nix). Not a leader, just can help make/build connections. Need to communicate a schedule.
- \$30-35 million build cost; \$2 million + operating costs.
- Thanks for being so thorough.