



### OVERVIEW

Teton Valley Aquatics (TVA) was established in 2016 as a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization. TVA has teamed with the City of Driggs (Driggs) to complete a study to inform the planning, design and construction of an aquatic center in Teton Valley, Idaho. A survey conducted as part of the Teton County Recreation and Public Access Master Plan, completed in 2014, identified a strong need for an aquatic center located within the Teton Valley to provide learn-to-swim programs, aquatic recreation and aquatic therapy for the region.

Following this early survey, USA Swimming completed an Enterprise Plan recommending an aquatic center that includes a rehabilitation component, a learn to swim program as well as general aquatics for community health and a competitive swimming program. In 2016, a Teton Valley county-wide survey also found high demand and support for a year-round aquatics facility.

To further evaluate the study components created by USA Swimming, TVA and Driggs contracted with VCBO Architecture, Ballard King & Associates and Water Design to complete a feasibility study for a new aquatic center. This study includes the following:

- The project vision statement and priorities
- A summary of findings from an early community engagement survey
- A series of phases to achieve the vision
- Construction estimates for each phase
- Geothermal Considerations

## VISION AND GOALS

The Teton Valley Aquatic Center will provide a year-round aquatic facility for the residents of Teton Valley, Idaho. The new facility is anticipated to be located in Driggs, Idaho, which is on the western side of the majestic Teton Mountains. Driggs is the geographic center of a growing community (Teton Valley) of over 12,000 full-time, outdoor-oriented and active residents and a non-resident population of approximately 4,500. With nearly 3,500 visitors passing through the valley on a given day during the summer months, Driggs is part of, and can capitalize on the greater Yellowstone tourist industry.

As part of this study, VCBO conducted a community engagement meeting to solicit public input on size and attributes for a facility in Teton Valley. Throughout the summer of 2018 TVA continued to collect data at a variety of public events. The community selected a recreation facility with community pool, zero entry activity pool, multipurpose gymnasium, therapy pools, hot pools, indoor running track, childcare center, fitness rooms and other ancillary support areas. This facility is referred to as Phase 3 in this document.

Tests of a 1974 well drilled approximately 5 miles northwest of Driggs established the existence of a geothermal resource in the community. This opens up the potential for a geothermal hot springs in addition to the recreational aquatic components identified with the community. With this resource in mind, the project team has envisioned year-round outdoor hot pool facilities with associated competition, aquatic leisure and recreation facilities.

TVA will continue to research the likelihood for a significant geothermal resource in the Teton Valley that, if viable, could meet the heating needs of the facility.

With the above objectives established, a key outcome of this study is to define a financially achievable approach to obtaining an aquatic center that can grow with the Teton Valley, and adapt to the changing needs of the community.

## SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Two surveys have been completed to gauge interest in and the need for an aquatic center in the Teton Valley. The findings from each of these surveys are summarized below.

### Teton County Recreation and Public Access Survey

The Teton County Recreation and Public Access Survey (Teton County 2014) was completed in 2014 and provided a comprehensive study of outdoor and indoor recreation within Teton County, Idaho. Key findings from this survey that led to the feasibility study for a new aquatic center included:

- 62.3% of respondents were not satisfied with the availability of indoor swimming within the valley, and 32.2% were unfamiliar with available options.
- 46.3% of respondents were not satisfied with private swimming pools, and an additional 27.9% were unfamiliar with available options.
- If additional funding was available, 78.6% of respondents felt it should go toward a new indoor recreation center.
- An indoor pool was the top priority of respondents, with a 93.5% of respondents ranking it in the top three needs.

Additional insight from this survey included; 1) a willingness of respondents to pay some increase in property tax to fund additional recreation, 2) a majority of respondents support the creation of a county-wide recreation district, and 3) a majority supported a small increase in sales tax to support regional recreation.

## Feasibility Survey

The project team followed this broad recreation survey up with a more targeted survey to better understand the aquatic and recreation needs within the community. The survey and a summary of the results are provided in the Recreation Survey section of this study. The key information collected from this survey included:

- The desire for an indoor, year-round aquatic center
- A center focused on learn-to-swim programs and lap swimming
- A family-centric leisure pool area
- A therapy pool area
- While a hot spring is desirable if the resource is available, swimming for fitness, fun and therapy rose to the top of the survey for community priorities.
- If a recreation component is included in the aquatic center, the following recreation uses were a priority to the survey respondents:
  - Youth and teen fitness space and programs
  - Childcare for the parents using the aquatic center
  - Multi-sport gymnasium for basketball, volleyball, pickle ball, etc....
  - An indoor, year-round track

## PROJECT PHASING

A variety of options were developed following community engagement, and through an iterative process with the project team. Cost estimates and financial feasibility conversations led to the presentation of the final recommended option and phased approach presented in this study.

Aquatic Centers are community resources providing people a gathering place for fitness, health (mental and physical) recreation and competition but like other public works, they often do not operate as a full cost recovery enterprise. The project team provided VCBO with the assumption that the local community could not support more than \$150,000 in annual financial net operating cost for a new facility. Operating costs for each phase are provided in Table 1. The detailed costs and revenue estimates for each phase are provided in Detailed Cost and Revenue Estimates. The community demographics used to help develop the operating costs and revenue are provided in the Community Demographic Analysis section of this study.

It is important to note that based on funding availability and community growth, Phase 1, 2 or 3 may be able to be implemented at any time.

## Geothermal Resource

The feasibility study also considers the potential for using a geothermal resource for the facility. If a geothermal source is located and can be economically developed, year-round, outdoor hot pools could be constructed with any of the project phases. The financial implications of hot springs have also been considered in the Geothermal Considerations section of this study. (See Figure 4 - Conceptual Layout of Phase 3 with Geothermal Hot Springs Facility on page 7 for a diagram illustrating the potential geothermal hot springs.)

This study represents the most conservative scenario which assumes there is no geothermal resource on-site and the community remains at the general demographic configuration as 2019. If a geothermal resource is proven viable for the project site, and sufficient funding is available for construction, Phase 3 may be financially viable.

## Phase 1

The aquatic features planned in the first phase include a seasonal, heated 6-lane community pool, a zero-entry wading/activity pool, a spa and a water slide. The balance of the facility includes an indoor reception area, locker room facility, and a small party room. Figure 1, below, provides a conceptual layout of Phase 1.

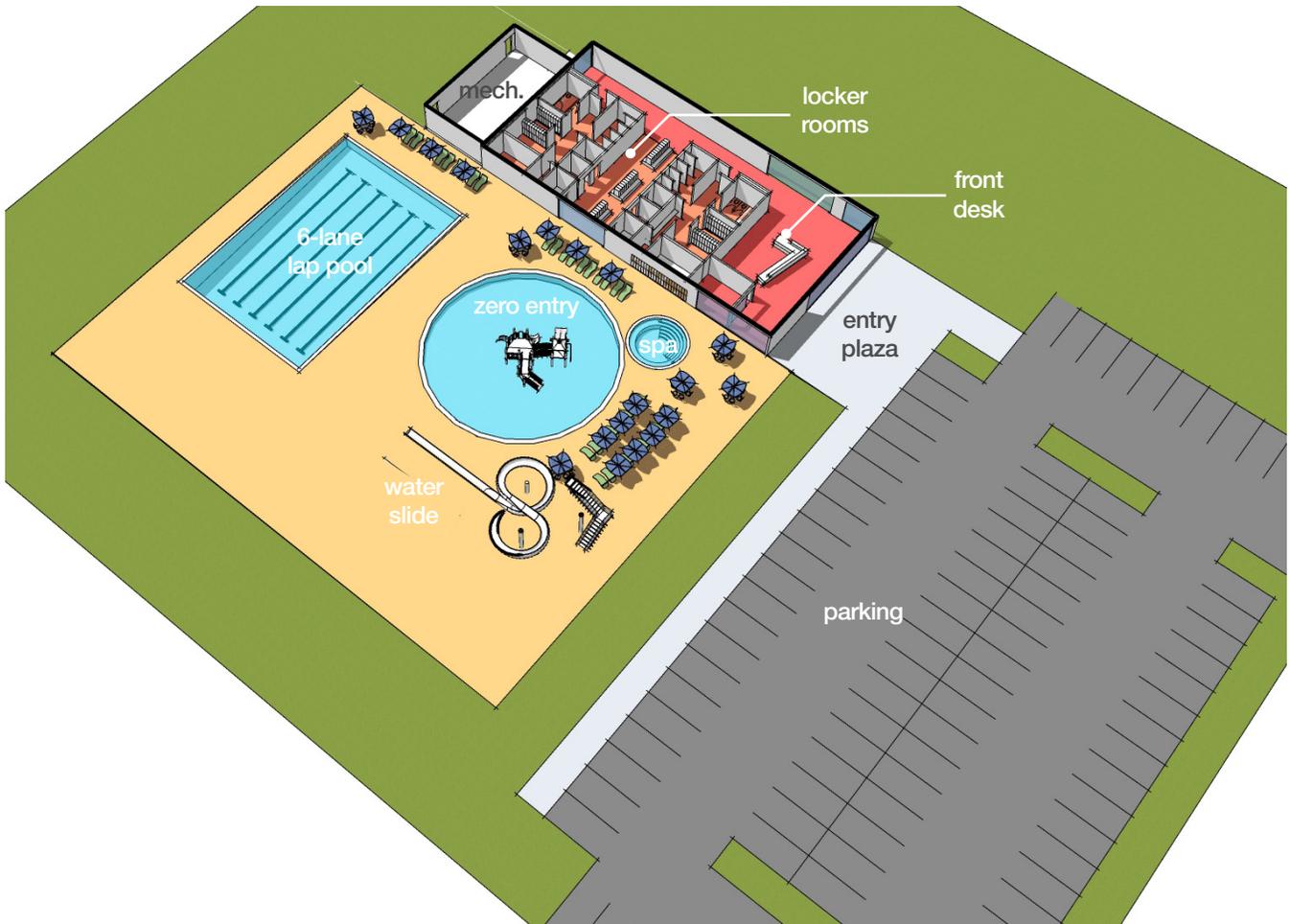


Figure 1 - Conceptual Layout of Phase 1

## Phase 2

As funding becomes available for the construction of an enclosure and operation of a year-round facility, the outdoor aquatic facility will be covered with a permanent or semi-permanent enclosure. This will enable the aquatic facility to operate on a year-round basis. This phase includes two additional features to increase revenue; a dedicated therapy pool and wave-rider or similar surfing feature within the facility. Figure 2 provides a conceptual layout of Phase 2.

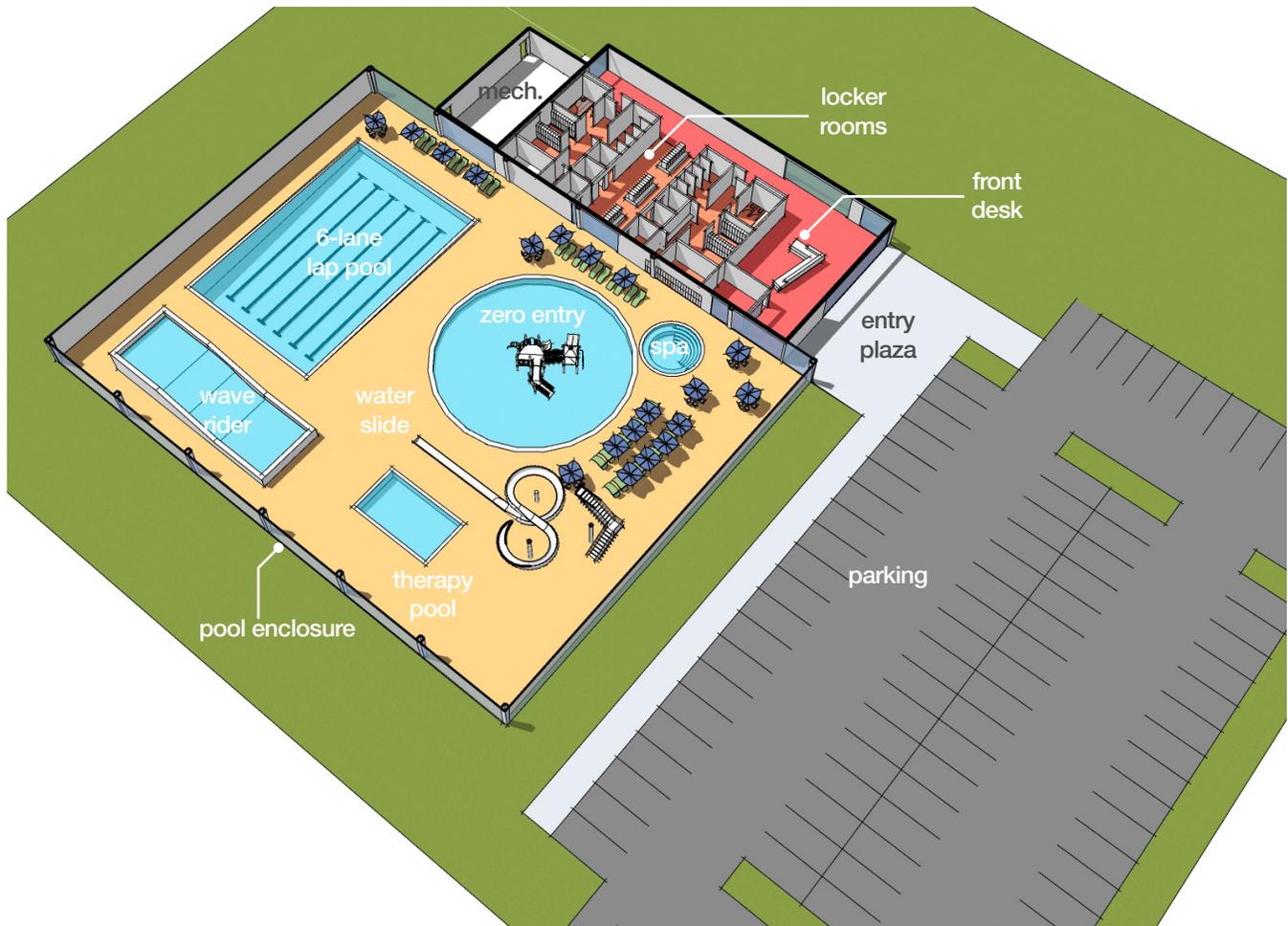


Figure 2 - Figure 1 - Conceptual Layout of Phase 2

The pool enclosure shown above may be a semipermanent enclosure such as a sprung structure, or it may be a permanent constructed enclosure, depending on available funding. Either option should enable year-round operation of the pool facility

### Phase 3

The third phase of the project provides the addition of a multi-purpose gym, fitness rooms and an indoor track. These improvements complete the vision for a comprehensive aquatic and recreation center for the Teton Valley.

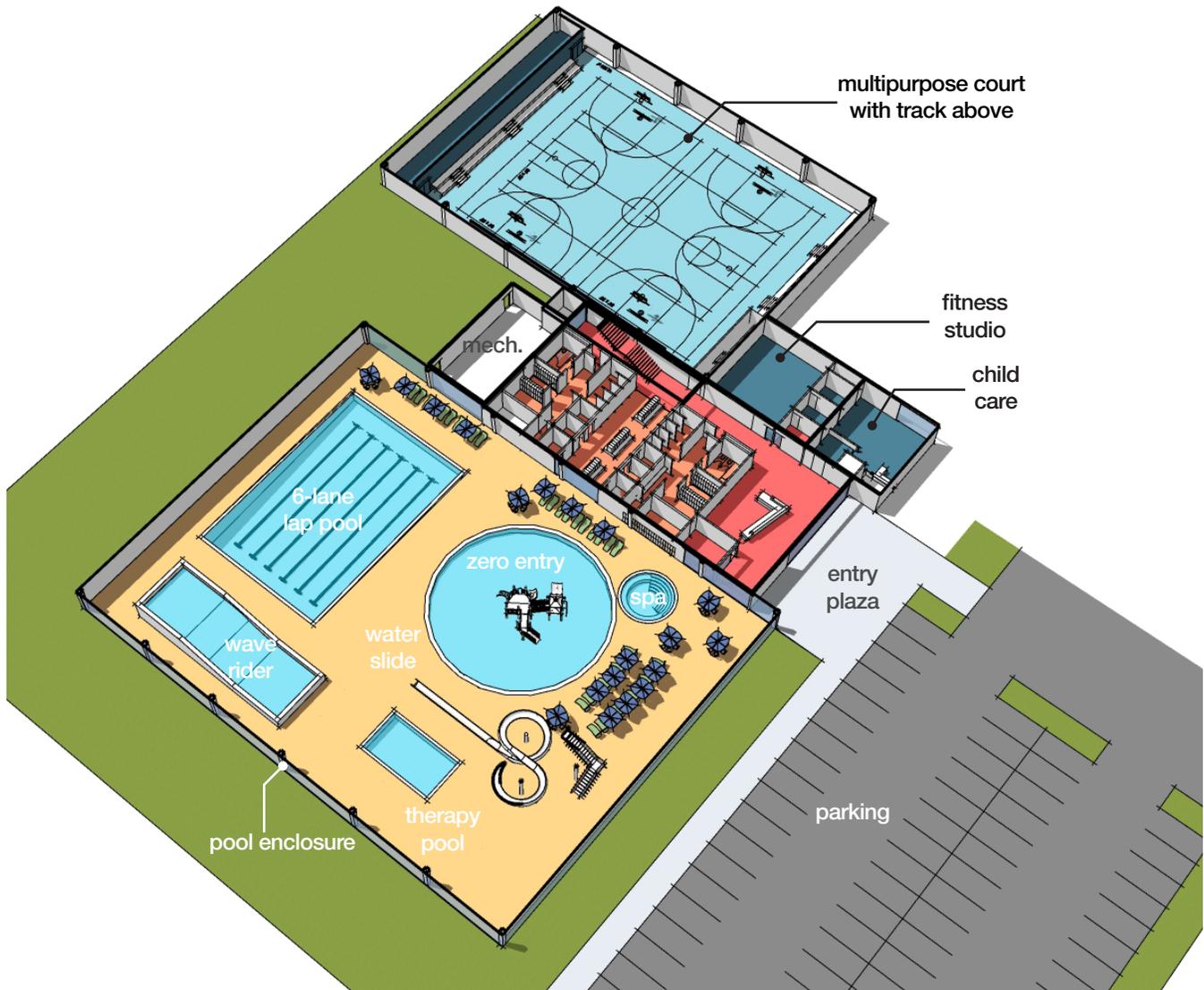


Figure 3 - Conceptual Layout of Phase 3

Table 1 Summary of Operating Costs by Phase

Phase	Total Expenses	Total Revenue	Total	Recovery %
1	\$371,790	\$227,322	(144,468)	61%
2	\$1,188,391	\$511,002	(677,390)	43%
3	\$1,585,575	\$949,209	(636,366)	60%

The operating costs noted above assume no geothermal resource, and limited population growth to be conservative.

## CONSTRUCTION ESTIMATES FOR EACH PHASE

The construction costs for each phase is provided in Table 2. A more detailed division of costs is provided in the Construction Budget Estimate section of this study. The construction cost estimate is based on 2019 costs and includes a 5% increase for construction in the Teton Valley. The cost does not include land or off-site utilities and excludes geothermal costs.

If funds are available for the construction of phase 3, phase 2 may be bypassed, and the expansion to phase 3 approached directly after phase 1. If the full facility could be constructed without phased construction, there may be considerable project/construction cost savings. The revenue generated by the full facility is significant. The option for initial construction of the full facility will be explored in subsequent business plan and design studies. The project is currently constrained by assumed funding availability for both the construction and operation of the facility. A fiscally responsible plan to accomplish the facility envisioned by the community led to the phased approach.

**Table 2. Construction Cost Estimates for each Phase**

Phase	Project Cost Estimate	Notes
1	\$6,901,766	Base Seasonal Facility
2	\$3,197,628	Enclosure for Year-round Operation
3	\$6,442,202	Community Vision

## Geothermal Potential

The facility study considers the potential for a geothermal resource serving this aquatic center. The only way to confirm the presence of this resource is to drill a geothermal exploration well at the site of the aquatic center. The parameters describing the potential geothermal resource are described in Geothermal Considerations section of this study. All of the phases can easily incorporate a year-round, outdoor hot springs and make use of the energy in the geothermal resource. The financial implications of this hot springs have also been considered as a separate operational analysis and can be plugged into any of the phases of the aquatic center to bolster the financial well-being of the facility. Cost savings are also generated by using the geothermal water through heat exchangers to heat pool water and to heat the buildings using hydronic floor heat. Power generation and sale would enhance the project economics. Partially cooled geothermal water will have many potential uses downstream from the aquatic center and since it is fresh, it could be eventually discharged on the surface to improve the environment and wildlife habitat, in compliance with applicable local, state and federal regulations.



**Figure 4 - Conceptual Layout of Phase 3 with Geothermal Hot Springs Facility**

*References*  
Teton County Recreation and Public Access Master Plan (2014)