City of Bartow Aquatics Community Survey Results

July 26, 2024

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**Overview**

The City of Bartow is planning to construct a new municipal pool for the purpose of restoring an aquatics program to the community. To provide insight into the decision on location, amenities and programming, the city conducted a survey which ran from June 24 to July 19. This report documents the results of the survey.

There were 962 surveys collected and validated for this project. The survey was not anonymous, however if a name was provided without an address, we included the survey results. Of the 962 survey respondents, 773 were submitted electronically and 190 were submitted and processed in paper form. It is also worth noting that 56 campers in our summer camp program completed the survey.

There were 681 residents who completed the survey and 19 business owners. There were 52 respondents who designated themselves as residents and business owners, and there were 36 respondents who selected not applicable to this question. In most instances these are people who completed the survey but live outside the city limits.

Below are heat maps to represent locations of respondents:

Map

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Of the 962 survey respondents, 930 approved with our initiative to construct a pool equaling 97%. Thirty-two respondents answered this question with either a no or not sure equaling 3%.

**Age Demographic**

There was a good distribution of age groups that participated in the survey with the largest segment being 35-44.

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| --- | --- | --- |
| Under 18 | 68 | 7% |
| 18-24 | 37 | 4% |
| 25-34 | 196 | 20% |
| 35-44 | 255 | 27% |
| 45-54 | 139 | 14% |
| 55-64 | 122 | 13% |
| 65+ | 145 | 15% |
| TOTAL | 962 |  |

**Location**

Of the respondents 617 selected the current Civic Center as the location for the new pool and aquatics program and 310 selected the Oaks Building in downtown. Thirty-five respondents answered this question by selected other and in some cases providing open ended comments which appear below.

**Additional Location Comments:**

* Cigar Factory
* Refurbish the existing pool/location
* Either (7)
* Both
* Splash pad
* Either location would be amazing because we wouldn't have to travel to Haines City anymore. And it would be so close. SO excited about this!
* Carver Rec (2)
* Whatever has the most space (2)
* Indifferent where located
* Country club and golf
* A location that can accommodate an indoor pool
* Neither option if competitive swimming in not a component.
* I don't know where the best place would be
* Large enough to have space for long and short course pool so swim teams can utilize.
* Both civic center and Carver recreation center and Polk community center. Three outdoor pools, outdoor courts. No air condition gyms. Eat right and you can handle the heat better. Stop poisoning our water with fluoride and crap, stop killing our soil with your poisoned fertilizer and you can think better. As a matter of fact, people should not make decisions for me if they don't care about the health and welfare of ALL ALL ALL people!
* Not sure
* None (5)
* Neither of these location is adequate to meet community need
* Use money else where better training police department

Below is the heat map representing site location selections:

Map

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**Amenities**

Constructing a pool that is equipped for swimming lessons and exercising received the highest ranking on the amenities question at 85% of respondents. Providing a children’s pool (73%) and splash pads (64%) were the next highest rated amenities.

**Additional Amenities Comments:**

* Shade!! (4)
* Renovate existing civic center building & pool, shaded areas. Add concessions.
* Competitive swim team (7)
* All of this can be done at the current location. Bartow Civic Center. It’s the best pool in Polk County. I worked their
* Indoor pool
* Water park with slides
* Lap Lanes (3)
* Pool for competition team-Long and short course (15)
* Slides for older kids & adults similar to Lake Eva center.
* Chairs and umbrellas to get in shade out of sun if too hot.
* Pool should meet minimum requirements for short course competitive swimming.
* Swim lessons for kids
* A separate 3-4' deep rec pool from the lap pool may be better suited for more family activities. as designed, we really cover the 10 and under range with pads and pools, and we cover exercise. i think instead of 2 kid zones, a traditional pool and a revised splash/kid pool may be a better investment long term.
* Fenced in playground to accommodate safety for toddlers and special needs children from eloping
* The civic center pool would be available to baseball, soccer, kids going to the library or playing on the courts once they are repaired. Also close to Mary Holland Park where families gather and kids go to play and fish. It is also safer for kids to ride bikes to the Civic Center.
* Year round pool access, concession at Sam griner pool, and shaded seating
* Deep end for scuba exercises
* Adult only swim times
* Both sites would require more lanes. These are not figuring in any further growth.
* Pool for exercise AND lessons AND competitive water sports
* Concession with no restaurant
* Wheelchair handicap entry
* Parking
* Lap pool for short course and long course swimming, heater, chiller (4)
* Would love to see a YMCA type facility that offers the pool, indoor gyms, basketball courts, etc. to expand sports programs for kids & adults
* We need more family oriented things to do that’s fun and safe and low cost
* Pool should be large enough for recreational swimming by teens and families
* Ample parking (2)
* Updated bathrooms.
* OT services for kids
* Pool open for everyone to swim not just lessons or exercise classes.
* Slides for older kids as well (ages 7-12)
* Walkable/bikeable for children on safer neighborhood areas
* ADA features installed throughout the facility.
* An area in the pool for leisure relaxation. Swim lanes are nice but I can see room for conflict if there is no designated leisure area also. Based on the proposed design, I would make the zero entry the full length of the pool. Or at least twice the size it’s currently shown.
* A pool that can accommodate the local Polk county competitive swimmers. It would help to accommodate 50 meter lanes.
* Gym at the same location
* Current civic center is a low traffic area and easily accessible for children on bikes and walking
* A place for adults to go and do swim aerobics
* Just a regular swimming pool
* Olympic style pool for swim program
* Handicap accessible/disability accommodations (4)
* Provide a facility for swim lesson and to support the BHS swim team
* The Oaks school site is too small. Most of us grew up going to the civic center daily in the summer. Certain local politicians want to change what makes Bartow what it is. We are a small town quit trying to make us turn in to something different.
* Parking availability and low vehicle traffic.
* Security
* No ladders. Walk in steps wide
* Room for plenty of family’s so we aren’t ontop of each other
* A place for families who can’t afford a pool
* By children's pool, I mean something for my 15 and 11 year old. We love swimming, and have been going to the Winter Haven pool for the last few years.
* Concessions & maybe a gym
* Polk community center to be purchased and own by the community due to neglect of care and concern.
* Not sure we need a new pool
* Swim lanes that our local athletes can use so they don’t have to go to Winter Haven.
* Diving Boards
* Repair sidewalks
* Drawing station

**Splash Pad Locations**

Respondents were asked to provide feedback on potential locations for splash pads in the community. Mary Holland Park was selected by 689 respondents, while Carver Recreation Center received 376 and Polk Street Community Center received 230.

**Additional Splash Pad Comments:**

* Cigar Factory (2)
* DEFINITELY MARY HOLLAND
* Nye Jordan Park (14)
* Corner lot at Maple and Stuart
* Right where the volleyball courts are. Move the volley ball court. There is plenty of land over there.
* Down town where the old fountain was
* All 3 above.
* Splash pad is a waste of money. No one will consistently use it. If the city wants one, put it at Nye Jordan or Mary Holland
* Cigar Factory
* At the Oaks Building (2)
* With the pool structure
* Oaks Building, to resemble set up of magnolia building/Barnett park in Lakeland.
* I think one good one in a place where parents can safely change and dry the kids is probably better than multiple
* Not sure, but would like them to be somewhere there is NOT a pool.
* Park on w stuart
* 555 Ball fields (2)
* Downtown park accross from old courthouse broadway and main st
* Nye Jordan, 555 ball park
* Downtown or North side of town
* Somewhere I’d feel safe- polk st and carver rec, I do not feel safe being alone with a child
* Nye Jordan or the new aquatics center
* Nye Jordan or McLeod
* In the new building area by Bartow Ford or somewhere in north Bartow
* Richland Manor Park
* I don't think they should create a new space for a splash pad. I'd rather see them put it into a space that is vacant.
* I do not support building these, as we have many facilities to maintain that we are currently unable to.
* Splash pads get extremely hot on the feet. Lakelands is to hot 85% of the time
* Bartow Civic Center and Oaks Building
* At all 3 parks Carver , Polk St, and Mary
* Splash pad at Merry Holland Park a central location for all of the community
* At the pool area
* All 3 are important areas
* Empty lot across from Tom’s Chicken Shack
* A site closer to downtown than these options.
* Richland Manor park - mccleod park
* Fort Blount Park
* Would love for these options to also be very walkable and likable, especially near downtown area. My family is very excited for these options and we are considering moving into Bartow should it become more walkable.
* Block between E Davidson & E Church/N Wilson Ave & N Florida Ave
* Fort Blount, Nye Jordan
* Oaks Building-splash pad only, a kids space here would be nice.
* Don’t think they should be built
* Park off of Stuart by McLeod Park
* I don't think a stand-alone splash pad would be a good draw. Including a splash pad in the planned project ( would embellish the overall site.
* Don’t build them, city has history of not maintaining water structures and splash pads have a limited time of year they would be able to be utilized fully
* Somewhere close to downtown to support local businesses and restaurants
* I think this should be considered separately, not now.
* Downtown (2)
* We can build our own splash pad when Polk Street is changed to Marcus Garvey Boulevard!
* Oaks school or civic center
* Civic Center Pool/Building Area next to library (6)
* Adjacent to the pool

**Programming**

Swim lessons were the top selection in the programming category with 67% of respondents. Party rentals were next with 49% of respondents.

**Additional Programming Comments:**

* Place to let my son burn energy during the summer!
* Classrooms in renovated civic center building for dance lessons, art lessons, meetings
* Family swim days
* None of these
* Diving Boards like we used to have. It’s an Olympic Sport.
* Recreational swim (2)
* Somewhere to cool off in the summer!
* Just swimming with the family
* Leisure swimming
* Venue walkable from Bartow Middle, BHS is a plus. Nearby field trip for Floral Ave, Jean O’dell.
* Just wanna be able to go swim and have fun!
* Swimteam for High School/competitive swim team (11)
* Open swim/free swim (4)
* Swimming for fun? (most of these are activity based and we don't really just have 'stand in pool water because it's hot' as an option.
* Splash pad (3)
* Getting to swim and use diving board
* Lifeguard classes
* I have a pool and because of my age I probably would not participate.
* General swim fun
* Scuba
* Family fun
* Adult only swim time
* AAU , Masters swimming
* Unless it was built soon the only thing we would use is for fun. Soon I could utilize for swim lessons.
* Leisure
* Party rentals should NOT override the everyday use of the Citizens of Bartow.
* Enjoy with family and friends
* Recreational swim (not a team just for leisure) (4)
* Swimming in general
* OT services
* Laps with fins allowed
* Just fun swim time
* We would want to be able to just come and enjoy the pool.
* Master swimming group
* Concessions
* Pool for swim lessons, lap swimming, exercise should be deep enough to be utilized for competitive swimming and have a shallower area for beginning swim lessons. Pool should be 25 meters, not yards. Also should be 8 lanes, not 6. One meter diving board should be included as well. Gandy pool in Lakeland is excellent! A salt water system, with heater and chiller, is preferred.
* Outdoor events fitness classes all types
* A sauna/ steam room/ hot tub/ plunge pool facility pass
* Take grandchildren when they visit us.
* Open daily for residence to just go swim
* Space to be more than one at a time.
* Leisurely swim
* Splash pad and recreational swimming
* Open swim with kids
* Senior swimming/walking/ floating area
* Wedding
* Birthday parties held at the Civic Center out of the adult lounge with access to the pool deck
* Take the kids swimming
* Not so interested in programming - access to non-scheduled water recreation seems most important
* Scuba lessons in the pool
* None as we have a swimming pool (6)
* Disability accommodations are a major concern for our family. Family/group changing area/locker room for assisting disabled children and adults with disabilities.
* Recreational swimming with grandchildren
* A swim team similar to what Coach Sam Griner had back in the day
* Sports spike volleyball/basketball

**Open Ended Comments**

Following is the list of open-ended comments provided from respondents. This are provided in their entirety without editing.

* An option was made available for respondents to add additional comments. These comments are offered in completion below.
* The Cigar Factory site has ample space for the new swim facility and plenty of room for parking in the area. Please consider this site.
* I think using the existing site of the pool makes the most sense to me. There is ample parking, it is close to the library and 2 parks. I do believe the oaks building should be used however turning it into an arcade or place for young people to go makes more sense to me. We need a place for our teens to have fun. Use that location for yard games and event space. It is in walking distance to restaurants and treat shops that would be great for our young people to visit while downtown. Kids aren’t going to utilize the lawn space at the civic center. There will be nothing to bring them down there. Whereas having it downtown would allow them to visit the areas shops and restaurants.
* Shade on some of the splash pads or at the aquatic program would be amazing!! all of these plans look sooo nice!
* While it would be wonderful for the Oaks building to be renovated, because it’s unique & historical, the available funds should first be used on the existing facilities. Also, what would happen to either of these buildings that are not used for the aquatic program? Would it continue to just sit there vacant?
* This would be great for the families of Bartow, Fl. As a resident this is much needed. Almost every other city in Polk county has aquatics. This would bring more tourism and business to the city. Having an aquatic program would greatly benefit the county.
* I believe this would be great for the community. Please make the cost reasonable.
* I feel like the Civic Center is the best location and would bring life back to the center. It would also provide plenty of parking space as opposed to the other location in Downtown. I do not feel being within walking distance of shopping is necessary. Most people going to swim are not going to go shopping during the same outing.
* A city pool facility does not need to be built downtown where there is limited parking and it’s next to power lines, transformer, etc.
* I would prefer to have a larger pool that is more consistent with competition swimming.
* I definitely think the splash pad should be at Mary Holland park. It's a better space for everyone in the community to visit comfortably. Thanks
* As a Bartow High School Swimmer and a swimmer competitive on the Bartow Imperial Flyers, swimming has alway been important to me. I think the city of Bartow should fix the pool we have in the area we have it in currently. Sam Grinder pool is a big part of Bartow’s history and should be a major part of Bartow’s future.
* You should also have lockers available for those using the facilities. Additionally also have evening events as well. Senior type swim meets etc
* It would be nice to use local contractors if possible. I own a small epoxy flooring business in town and would be happy to be give an estimate on epoxy flooring.
* I believe the civic center location would give the youth good access to a positive recreational outlet. In addition it would give our high school a place for aquatic sports. I believe the restoration of the existing space would complete a wonderful sport complex of soccer, baseball, volleyball and tennis.
* Remember there are Bartow residents on the other side of the airport. Something by airport would be nice.
* Bartow needs more activities for kids and families in the summer
* Fix what we have. It’s a great facility. As anything else it just needs to be maintained. Make it Great again !!!!
* Indoor pool would be good for hot days
* I like the idea of revitalizing the existing Civic Center. Parking for Wilson Avenue would not be conducive to the amount of traffic to the pool.
* The entire county is lacking in a good pool for long and short course seasons. Club and high school swimmers need a pool that can do both seasons. Swim is an incredible sport that needs some additional help in Polk!
* I am a life time resident of Bartow Fl! I would love to see Bartow create an aquatics program along with the listed activities/rentals mentioned! Bartow needs to step it up more and stop building/opening so many restaurant's by instead building/creating more family like centers such as the aquatic's program! A bowling ally, skating rink and/or movie theater options would be amazing as well, maybe something to think about for the future. Raising my 4 children here and having to travel out of town to do anything besides eat was always a challenge. Hopefully by the time Im a Grandma I wont face those same challenges with my grandbabies!!
* Option one has lack of parking and you will not get the crowd you are looking for for the other 2 locations of that splash pad. If City of Bartow kept up with maintenance, we wouldn't be in the situation we are in now.
* As a former swimmer/coach and also a mom of 7, I urge you not to be short sighted in this plan. Less than 8 lanes is the greatest design flaw of Lake Eva. You can have both a rec pool for families to enjoy and a facility that can accommodate the local high school swim meets/seasonal swim team or masters team if you do 8. Anything less greatly limits programming/income potential from them
* I need water rehab to help come back from a bad hip and pelvis break
* I personally feel the oaks building would be a great location for an outdoor event space. Having a pool there would be a nightmare for parking. I understand the city would be adding more spaces but the parking that is currently there is also shared parking with city hall along with the church. Crossing a major road with Children is also not a great idea. I also feel it would cause issue with the PD being directly next to it. The civic center has plenty of parking and there’s no need to cross a road to get to the building. The civic center is also in the middle of a sport complex. A lot of people didn’t know we had a pool when it was open and with the new growth in our area it would be great if the city would advertise that we have a pool once it is open.
* Mary Holland could use an upgrade period there's so much that could be done with that space (similar to Bonnet Springs) or just in general. It's the best place for a splash pad, but I'd suggest one at carver or polk street too to prevent over crowding. Or do a larger one at Mary Holland.
* We need a pool again in Bartow!!!!
* We desperately need a small water park with pool and slides for pit kids
* We live just north of Bartow and would come to Bartow instead of going to Kelly Rec.
* Bartow is the county seat and so many of its amenities appear to be subpar at best.
* If the Polk County School Board is interested in using the pool for school swim team training/events then they should participate in the capital funding and maintenance costs. The oaks school location is a bad choice. Sufficient parking is not available, it is to close to city utility infrastructure and it is surrounding by emergency routes for fire and police vehicles that move rapidly from stations to incident locations.
* This would allow our youth to become lifeguards!
* No need to reinvent the wheel. use what we have and fix it.
* Another good location for the splash pads would be the 555 ball fields.
* I grew up in Bartow, spent every summer at the Civic Center pool. Miss those opportunities for my own son in town. Would LOVE to see a splash pad in town. MHP is such a beautiful space and already ample parking for splash pad attendees.
* The pool needs to be at the old Civic Center where it has always been. All sports are in this central area. There is plenty of parking and will be enjoyed by all.
* Save the $1M and provide a nice pool like we all had growing up in the current location
* This materials about this seem skewed towards getting people to choose the Oaks School site, for instance by considering “bikeability” from businesses rather than homes. Let’s let people, including kids, bike through residential neighborhoods to the Civic Center rather than on downtown streets. Why is there no option to create a rental facility at the Oaks School? That would be a safer use for that site, keeping the kid and family attraction at the Civic Center. The Civic Center also has ample parking and is a hub for other family activities with Mary Holland Park and the library and soccer fields.
* Why cant they just open the pool that is already there? Why spend millions rebuilding something you already have? Seems like wasted money a resources.
* I love the artist rendering of the old Civic Center and would love to actually see that renovation happen, but to have it turned into an arts center/ museum.. The location would greatly enhance and contribute more to the existing downtown( Historical Museum, downtown events).. The current Civic Center as stated already has the locker rooms, event spaces and of course is within walking distance of our middle and high schools, making it easier for school athletic programs ... It makes more sense as that location is also home to so many other athletic programs, it would be our Sports Center...
* 30 yrs ago Bartow civic center pool was the best option for my children’s swim lessons. I also had opportunity to attend water aerobics and would love to see the return and bring my grandchildren and continue water aerobics.
* Bartow has been way too long without a pool. I"ve been driving to Lakekand YMCA because our city doesn't have a pool for kids to cool off or adults to swim or exercise. Florida is too hot to be without in each city. Our City needs this again.
* This would be such a great thing for the young families within out community. So thankful Bartow has started investing in our youth and families.
* As a resident of Eagle Lake and growing up in Bartow, having swim lessons as a child I believe the pool is needed. Swim lessons are needed! Bartow High School swimteam should be have a pool in Bartow to practice!
* Would love to see a proposal plan for the splash pad before it is built to ensure it is worth the money. The winter haven one has a really nice setup but the actual pad it's self is a bit dull and not worth the 1.5m to construct. Would love to see something a bit more interactive with plenty of shaded seating and tables.
* This doesn't seem to be a "pool" in that the concept is either entirely kid themed or entirely activity based. unless that's intentional in design, there may be an opportunity to consider just a rec pool: 3-4' deep water to just float around in. As designed, options are either lap pools, pads, or play spots. If i'm not athletic or a child, there isn't much to do here. With that said: i'm also counting about 30 spots for families. I'm not sure if that's enough, but do keep in mind deck space. It may just be nice to have a nice spot to come lay out and tan. With or without kids.
* It is very important to offer swim lessons here in Florida where we are surrounded by water. It does not make sense to put the aquatic center in the downtown area with the parking situation.
* I love all of the concepts presented!
* It would be so nice to have somewhere to take my family to swim and cool off on those hot days like a pool instead of going to a beach or spring! And it would be local and good for the community!!
* While the Oaks Bldg location is very attractive in part due to restaurant proximity, etc., I believe we would lose sight of accessibility to locals if we didn't go with the Civic Center option. Locals are the ones paying for it--let's serve them.
* If the Oak Building site wins, the recreation pool must be zero entry, not just the kids pool. We have so many with mobility issues that need the pool to be accessible without drawing attention like the lift. Also, keeping the civic center location ensures more people are getting to the library which is down there by itself.
* We need a pool. It should be central for the community and affordable.
* Lifeguard training program for youth would be cool. Like for age 14-18 And maybe a jr lifeguard program for 11-13 year olds just as a hands on learning tgpe thing
* The downtown location would be too dangerous for children crossing streets. They get excited about going swimming, will break away from parents, and will run and dart into traffic.
* I would LOVE to see the Oaks building finally revitalized!!! However, parking appears limited in the site plan shown.
* As a senior I love water aerobics I tried to go to the YMCA in Lakeland but they are so expensive and so far away and so crowded that I have stopped doing it, I would love to start again here.
* I think there should be lap pool/exercise/swim team practice availability at the CIVIC CENTER, AND children's play, splash pad, concessions, etc. at the Oaks Building location.
* Thank you for asking for the citizens of Bartow input.
* About time! Good job, Parks & Recs Dept!
* Please do this I have multiple sons that live right down the road from me in bartow with their mom, and while I technically live in bartow my family and sons would love something like this!! Thank you, Bartow!
* Being a stay at home mom having this option for my two kids would be a blessing in this Florida heat. It is a walkable distance for many family’s with children in this area
* I remember taking swimming lessons and going to a summer program at the civic center as a young child all the way through my teen years! It is some of the greatest memories I have and I would love my children to experience the same and not have to drive out of town 35 minutes.
* The Lakeland YMCA currently has six laps. Many times I have had to wait 30 to 40 minutes to begin my swim due to full lanes. Six lanes is not enough lanes for a new facility within our Community especially with our anticipated growth. Has it been considered to partnership with the PCSB to assist Bartow high school with a regulation approved standard swim meet facility. The Rowdy Gaines pool currently has 10 lap lanes that are heated. Will either of these facilities be heated? In the article it says, providing year-round facilities. If the cost of heating has not been considered, I don't think these would be used as year-round facilities. My recommendation would be to remove the Center Pavillion at the Civic Center site and increase the size of your “lap pool” and move the kiddie pool to the lower right hand corner of your drawing. It looks like a grassed area with bushes. Make it a twelve lane pool. Even if three of the lanes are considered shallower. Will there be more than 1 public meeting? I will not be pWhile I am legally a NC resident, I am in Bartow once a month caring for my parents. Growing up in the 70s in Bartow, the Civic Center was home to the area’s most pristine, state-of-the-art Olympic sized pool, turning out world class swimmers such as Susie Thayer, David Martin, Annie Lett, Rowdy Gaines, Tommy Thayer. I’ve always been proud of that pool in our once little bitty Bartow; a pool with 4 or 6 lanes for laps is pointless & insufficient for our sized community. Why not keep & rehabilitate the entire existing pool, which could provide a rebirth of competitive swim teams, anti drowning courses, swim lessons, water aerobics & general frolicking in the water. Also redo a ‘kiddie pool’ or add a splash pad for the little kids/ non swimmers. We don’t need another venue in Bartow, nor do we need a recreational lawn or outdoor rental venue.
* I grew up going to the pool everyday during summer break and I really miss having a pool here in town. This would be a great addition to our community and something that's long overdue.
* Moving the pool to the already congested downtown area does not seem to be the best fit. The current pool location is familar to most Bartow residents.
* As a mom of 2 under 5 I would like to see more public places I can take my little ones to. This town needs to be more geared towards children and entertainment. less towards the court house and where to grab lunch.
* Civic Center would be wonderful addition.
* I think Bartow really needs some water activity here.
* Please bring back our pool on Floral. I took swim lessons there as a child, life guarded as an adolescent, and wish the same for my family.
* Thank you for the opportunity to complete this survey and provide input for this very important quality of life matter for the citizens, residents, and visitors to the City of Bartow. Investment of available City funds in such projects should be a priority as it significantly impacts -in a positive way- the quality of life in our City and it represents appropriate public investment which I believe will spur private investment and creat economic opportunity for all of the City’s citizens and residents- thus having a very good return on investment (ROI). In addition investing in the location of the old Civic Center ( option 1) will also have the added benefit of furthering the goals and objectives of the City’s Community Redevelopment Plan. Further the central location of this property will enhance accessibility and promote interest in our downtown.
* The City of Bartow and it's residents have been without a pool for several years now, something that the community misses. I would love to see an aquatics center at the Civic Center where the pool is currently located, and splash pads located at Carver Recreation Center and Polk Street Community Center. Mary Holland Park is in close proximity to the Civic Center. Having the splash pads at Carver and Polk Street will allow more residents easier access to the facilities.
* We need this! This could be great for party’s and events for years to come. Much less entertaining familys for even more days out of the year. Bartow would keep familys here spending money instead in Lakeland. Or Haines city
* I'm not sure downtown is a good place for an aquatic center. The Civic Center area is still accessible to all citizens of Bartow. I believe the restoration of the Oaks Bldg. could be done later on to be used for events, meetings, etc.
* I purchased my home 6 years in July it would be. I have a house of 8 children ranging from teens to 2 years of age. I live literally right on the corner by mosaic park/ soccer field. Unfortunately it’s been boring here with nothing to do with teens & some children. This would be perfect the have the old civic center pool up and going with a splash pad. I love this idea. I was very disappointed when we purchased and the same month the pool was shut down. Tired of hearing the teens Bartow is boring. I would say entertain more for the youth to stay out of trouble in this society. Sincerely: a mother of 8
* Our family loves this! I think this would be a wonderful addition.
* A splash pad only (like Winter Haven) targets small children under 6 only. Hopefully the option of separate standing splash pads is in addition to the pool.
* Please provide lap lanes that a competitive swim team could utilized.
* It’s crazy that the pool can’t be both competitive and leisure. Keep the competitive lanes and use the rest for family things. IT DOESN’T HAVE TO BE EITHER OR,
* The civic center location is the most viable to put a pool at. It has ample parking, and the civic center can serve as a summer program location for the children. In addition, it would be less to build out and maintain.
* Floral Ave site only. Downtown site NO
* We just want something soon. My kids are already ages 5-9
* The Oaks location would bring people into the downtown area for shopping and restaurants. I would like the pool to accommodate the High School swim team.
* The City of Bartow needs to quit trying to keep up with other cities and worry about what the City of Bartow can afford and maintain. Things that need to be considered is the maintenance as I have been in maintenance as an electrician my whole life and when people build things they never seem to think about how much it will cost to maintain. This will be the overall big expense. However just repairing the old pool with small renovations would be better than nothing at all or sitting empty for years like it has been. Thanks for asking for everyone's opinions I think it will make the decision easier and remember you will never please everyone.
* Need a good facility in bartow
* I think this idea for a place for families to bring children is amazing! Our kiddos desperately need free places to be, especially in the summer, that are low cost or free. As a person who regularly spends time with nieces and nephews, it can be a huge struggle to find safe places to take them where they can expound energy. I would suggest making the children’s areas special needs friendly.
* This is AWESOME!!!
* The Bartow Imperial Fliers were a premier club program when I was in HS and after. Most of the older kids went onto swim in college and the Olympic Trials. Bartow HS needs a pool to swim in and call their “home” pool to host meets. You could even have a Masters Program (18+ yr olds) to also include triathletes. Building a pool with 8-10 lap lanes would definitely be more beneficial, for teams and swimming lessons. I have coached in Lakeland for 29 yrs and now teach swimming lessons for the City of Lakeland. For Red Cross Learn-To-Swim 3-5, they need to be able to swim lengths of the pool.
* Concessions are not necessary. Save money and provide all the necessary things. People can easily pack a lunch or purchase from a vending machine. A rental place isn’t necessary either as the civic center can be rented and small businesses could use the rental business more.
* I think it would be great for the Aquatics Center to have a room where we could pay for gym use. Also to have additional rooms that could be rented by businesses to hold classes (kick boxing, children dance classes, gymnastics, karate,etc). I would pay to bring my kids here to enjoy a Saturday of playing in the splash pad area or recreational swim. Having food or concession area is a good idea but probably an administrative burden. I would recommend a food truck area with room for up to 3 trucks and charge a small rental fee to gain money to help with the expenses of the building or look for options that our current restaurants in downtown Bartow could be a part of to gain business for them. If it is at the Oaks Center maybe the local restaurants could look at delivery options. When we have Main Street events how can we incorporate this space into the events? I love the splash pad idea for Mary Holland park but how do we keep the homeless people out of it? I noticed several that live in their cars out there. We mostly use Nye Jordan and not because it’s close to us but it’s more enjoyable with a very family friendly atmosphere to go to. It feels safe.
* As the area is growing the community is in desperate need of a 10 lane Olympic size lap pool for competitive swimming. It is a growing sport in our community and the other local pools cannot hold the amount of swimmers in the area. The pool will need a chiller for summer months and heater for winter months.
* Parks have been recently updated. Just keep that up with addition of splash pads etc. Civic Center could be a wonderful location for many things.
* Love the idea of adding an aquatics program. As mentioned above, Bartow is growing rapidly with the endless housing developments that continue to pop up. We could certainly benefit from having a multi-plex facility, similar to a YMCA, where we could have fitness options, adult & youth sports (indoor soccer, basketball, swimming), yoga/pilates, indoor track area, etc. along with child care/summer camp options - similar to carver rec center, but enhanced services & amenities - that would be a great place to have a pool.
* I don’t personally know which areas are better than others for this project however I think it would be great for Bartow
* PLEASE bring back our pool! I have to drive my daughters to Lakeland for Swim Lessons and would much rather support the Bartow economy! The civic center is designed to support this type of traffic. The Oaks development would congest downtown traffic as is and parking would be limited.
* I never understood why there needs to be two gyms at Carver Recreation Center when the old pool was to be replaced by a new one but instead a second gym was built with limited use.
* Putting the Pool downtown causes risk for accident when kids are crossing the street and potential complaint from business owners when wet feet are in their storefront.
* hot tub and jacuzzi options
* Bartow is a beautiful town but with out these types of amenities for young families we will be forced to move closer to the city where we commute for these entertainment. The Oak building should be a multipurpose space filled with restaurants and small shops. As someone that works downtown there is so much more potential for small businesses. The Recreation center is a perfect location to add a splash pad to the existing pool rehab for small concession stand and for more options add an additional splash pad to Mary holland park.
* I trust that our elected officials will make the most economically feasible and beneficial decision for Bartow and its residents. Thank you all for the great job that you do!
* I do love the idea of bringing The Oaks School building back to life!! I agree with others who suggest it be a museum/arts type of space and the aquatic complex at the Civic Center. These would be great additions to our town!
* Bartow needs something for families and children.
* Polk County is in desperate need of a pool that can be utilized for a competitive swim team. One that can accommodate both long course (50 meter) and short course (25 yards). It’s also important that the pool have both a chiller and heater so it can be used year round by athletes.
* Having these aquatic amenities reintroduced to our city would greatly increase the ability for our local residents to stay healthy and safe. As a father of young children the ability for them to be able to swim safely whether for pleasure or in an emergency is vital to their love of the outdoors. While other cities and sites offer this being able to do so without leaving town is not only economical but establishes a sense of community and belonging.
* Why are we abandoning our long history of incredible competitive swimming? Why is that not an option? The Civic Center Pool was full to capacity for decades!!!! Downtown swimming will not benefit downtown business much like the "bypass road" through Stuart land didn't reduce traffic volume. (The bypass road was never really meant to reduce traffic volume.) People that go swimming somewhere go home when they're done. They don't go shopping or out to eat with wet clothes, wet hair, smelling like chlorine. They also don't go shopping and out to eat and then go swimming. If city leaders want another pool, they should consider putting it somewhere where there is room, not on downtown property. Why are city leaders determined to abandon the Civic Center and people of South Bartow in lieu of growth and development that will only degrade our town's sense of community? Fix the Civic Center and provide quality programs to serve the established community. Keep it separate from the growth and development aspirations our city leaders are so focused on.
* Love the idea of refurbishing the Oaks Building and putting it to good use. I have always thought It is a shame the City does not try to keep the historical buildings in use. So hope they do the right thing now.
* The Oaks building needs to be utilized somehow but it isn’t the best location for an aquatic center. It would be nice if it was used as some type of recreational facility in the future.
* Drownings are the no. 1 cause of death for children besides auto crashes. The city should make every effort to ensure underserved children have access to affordable swimming and swim lessons. As for swim meets, only Winter Haven has an Olympic sized pool. This could be a huge separator for Bartow to host sanctioned swim meets. I am a Bartow native who grew up swimming competitively at the civic center as a child and teen. Was a huge part of my life and Bartow’s children deserve this. I now reside in Lakeland but would be willing to commute to Bartow if the civic center was renovated.
* The citrus connection service could assist residents in accessing the pool if transportation is an issue.
* Great idea to add water features like this to Bartow. Especially since it get so hot.
* I would love to see the recreation area at the Wilson St property. It's central and easily accessible. Plus it's a historic building that deserves to be remodeled. I think the civic center should be turned into the event space to allow it to remain a revitalized civic center where activities and rentals can occur.
* We do not have anything that kids can play and get cool for the summer like they have in winter haven and Haines City, I was looking for something to do withy grandkids this summer and nothing closer than those two towns.
* Thank you so much for working towards more amenities for families with small children! This is something we are lacking food options for in Bartow and have to travel to Lakeland for often.
* A pool is needed, especially to help teach younger children how to swim. Bartow is growing rapidly and we need a swim program. It’s also a way to keep active during the hot summer.
* Thank you for bringing this great amenity back to Bartow. I loved the Civic Center as a kid and I'm excited to share something like that with my future kids, no matter where it's located.
* We need this is Bartow and we need a place that offers year round swim lessons and not just summer! This is Florida our children are exposed to many bodies of water all year long!!
* Bartow definitely needs an aquatics program. Water is part of our lives in Florida.
* This would be so amazing for Bartow! Especially to have something for kids / teens to do!
* We already have plenty of pavilions and outside areas with playgrounds for kids. The pool is the important part of the project. Entry fees and concession prices upon completion should be minimal to city of bartow residents. I am glad this is finally happening.
* I think this would be a wonder addition to the city of Bartow.
* It just makes more sense to leave at Civic Center where the space is already available-fix up what we already have. The area where the Oaks used to be is too much of a congested area, doesn’t make any sense.
* I support the Civic Center location. However, I would like the swim lanes to be lengthened to support the high school swim team and the ability for Masters swimming and meets to be held in the city. This would provide the Civic Center area to become a multi sport area to attract families.
* We are the fastest growing county in the united states, we should really consider expanding this venture to be able to host swim teams and meets. I would really like to be able to support my city instead of driving to Winter Haven to train, but my worry is that both locations will be too small to accomodate the growing population/ as well as be overcrowded (just like Winter Haven and Lakeland). I cant even find a free lane to lap swim at either city’s facilities
* We definitely need something like this in Bartow. All the exercise programs and swim lessons are great, but there also needs to be times or an area where families can just come and enjoy the pool.
* Lake Eva water park but better, please!!!
* I believe using the current location for the new pool would be cheaper and more convent. This would allow families to visit the library and be a part of the children activities at the library and then have lunch and pool time all in one spot. This has been done in other cities such as Winter Haven and Haines City and is a great way to keep children active and less stress on parent having to load and unload children. With money that is saved you could possible build a bridge behind the library so that you can connect MH park and give people to enjoy the garden that most don’t know about behind the library.
* Provide swim lesson vouchers for kids.
* I think the civic center is still the best location for the pool. The current design definitely has some room for improvement. First off, I’m not sure a splash pad and a children’s pool are necessary. I would be interested and willing to help collaborate with the designers.
* Using the building and space that is already there, along with all the nearby parking seems to make the most sense for the pool. As a parent to two small children, it would be great to not have to continue to drive to Lakeland for swim lessons.
* We have only 2 pools in Lakeland to accommodate all the high school teams and our Riptide competitive swim team has to break up our season between the pools to share. We also have been deprived of access to the only 50 meter pool Simpson Park offers due to maintenance. Bartow would be the closest city to accommodate and support our USA swimmers.
* I grew up in Bartow. Learned to swim and later compete as a Bif swimmer. I coached BHS swimming.. BIF..life guards.. swim coaches.. and lessons at Sam Griner and Carver Rec. I fought to keep a competative team in Bartow traveling all over Polk county for warm water in exchange for lifrguarding and teaching aquatics. Bartow lost so much when things became sloppy and inundated with red tape never once considering the incredible loss of swimming to our community. Restoring swimming to Bartow is way way way overdue. This will give our community a place that makes our children water safe and builds family memories. The memories that I have of growing up at the Bartow pool , parks and library are the absolute best! Thank you for all the efforts.
* Both long course and short course pool for local swim teams. Both heater and chiller for year-round use.
* Entrance free on your birthday 👍🏻
* Having a place for our kids to swim and play is extremely important. Not everyone has a family member with a pool. While I would rather see the pool at the Civic Center, we need an aquatics center somewhere. Both are good options, but if the Oaks building is chosen, I would be interested in seeing some development of the lot across the street (by the train tracks, where Oaks School pickup line used to be) for additional parking.
* Keep it where people are already familiar with the area, where it use to be. Keep it close to Mary Holland, where it is walkable. That way there is no true need to build a playground structure. It is close enough that it is not needed. Keeping it away from downtown will ease out any potential traffic it may cause. Considering that one option is too close to the fire and police department. We do not want our emergency services to have any trouble getting to their emergency response calls.
* Heated pool available all year round will be great. Aquatic zumba for seniors is a big help to the community.
* We need this! Thank you for expanding opportunities for our community.
* If Bartow’s growth becomes what I read in news reports (doubling), then the Oaks Building is a poor choice. Parking at Oaks would require crossing streets with fast moving traffic. Dangerous planning for families with young children. Disappointed that cost of radon mitigation was not factored into cost at Oaks. The Oaks estimate is not realistic if this is not taken into consideration. Commission should strongly consider the recommendation of the city’s recreation board, as spoken by Bill Bohde. Their foresight and opinions for the future needs of our citizens should weigh heavily on the Commission’s decision. Strongly advocate for the Floral Ave Civic Center location. Safety, cost savings and room! Thank you.
* This is so exciting to see! As someone who spends a lot of time at the tennis courts, I know we have some beautiful land and space to be restored!
* We definitely need this! With food and rentals available
* Although I don't live within city limits, I do utilize Bartow Electric. I would use a pool for lap swimming, water aerobics, etc, several days a week. I've lived in Bartow or nearby since 1966. Bartow is home for me. I am very excited at the prospect of Bartow having this new aquatic facility that will be enjoyed by so many people! My concern however is the size of the pool. The plans show it to be 25 yards long and 6 lanes wide. The depth is not indicated. I urge you to consider asking Straughn Trout for a revised feasibility study with a few adjustments to the pool dimensions. To increase the pools use, I suggest making it 25 meters instead of 25 yards (a difference of approximately 84 inches), 8 lanes instead of 6, and a depth of 6'7". I know the cost difference in the size of the pool would be a bit more but it shouldn't be a huge amount. Option 1 (Oaks site) is over $1 million more than option 2 (civic center site). If the new aquatic facility is located at the current civic center, you'll be saving a good bit of money since the infrastructure is already there. Having the pool built as illustrated will not be suitable for a high school or club swim team as well. All swim competitions are held in meters, not yards, so even timing a swimmer's speed would not be accurate. All competition pools have 8 lanes, not 6. A more shallow depth does not allow for flip turns or starts from the blocks. If we have a pool that is usable for a swim team, Bartow may develop a strong high school team once again. Once we have a strong high school team, a club team will ensue. This can bring in much more revenue to the city and help pay for some of the pool expenses. Bartow had an excellent high school team and club team back in the 70's with Sam Griner. Sam produced an Olympic swimmer (Susie Thayer), an All-American swimmer (Annie Lett), State Champions and Florida Swimming Age Group Champions. Dozens of his swimmers earned college scholarships, with some going on to make a career out of swim coaching at the club, high school, and college level. Without the right pool, none of that is possible. A swim club pays thousands per year for pool rental. When there are swim meets, that brings in more money, especially if it's a 2 or 3 day meet with several teams participating. That also brings swimmers and their families to our local hotels and restaurants. A swim club with multiple age groups (approx. 100 swimmers) may rent the pool at $200-$300 a day, nearly year-round. A club may hold 3-4 meets a year, possibly bringing in about $100,000 per meet in revenue to the city. Pinellas County Sports Commission did a study of sports competitions and what events bring in revenue. Having a pool that allows only lap swimming and open swimming will only bring in a small revenue that won't even pay for the upkeep of the monthly costs of the pool. When the city has added or improved so many recreation facilities - pickleball courts, ball fields at 555, soccer fields, tennis courts, basketball courts, youth league ball fields, gold course, etc. - they were done according to the standards for that particular sport. Bartow is only going to build one pool. It's a big investment so we need to get it right. Please consider the cost difference between the standard pool and the sub-standard pool. If all other recreation facilities were built for fun, exercise, recreation, and competition, we need a pool that meets those purposes as well.
* There should be rooms that are multipurpose for classes/events and a working kitchen
* I like the current location it's been there since 1965 . Safe to access
* Let's make Bartow great again.
* I don't support either option.
* I personally don’t have children but would love an area to where we can not actively have to swim laps. If I want to swim or just be in water just a regular pool would be nice. An adult pool would be an amazing option. Everything is always catered to children but what about the people who choose to move to Bartow, with no children and put money into the economy?
* Civic center has adequate parking and is centrally located. It also gives an opportunity to create additional summer programs for school aged children. There’s already a shortage of summer programs and after care with the closure of Kidz Life. Consideration of after school care programs and summer programs at the civic center would create addition revenue to the city.
* This would be great for Bartow. There need to be fees though. A lower fee for residents - higher fee for non residents. It needs to be kept CLEAN!
* I just want to go with my teenagers to swim for fun
* Build a outside basketball court with built in shade on top.
* The pool location should absolutely remain at the current, Floral Ave Civic Center location. It is a safer location for bike riders as well as senior citizens. The pool and buildings need to be maintained on a regular basis so that they don’t need to be shut down for years. Our kids have missed out on several years of swim lessons & community. They made several friends just in the year they were able to go to the community pool. Please keep the location at the civic center and be proactive in the maintenance.
* I love the idea of using the old downtown building again, however parking is a real concern at the Wilson st location. Perhaps at the Floral Ave location, food trucks could park regularly, in place of a concession/Cafe building.
* A place where I can take my great grandchildren to
* Pool should have heater AND chiller
* The Oaks building does not provide sufficient space for the proposed facility and will cost too much of the city finances. The civic center is in appropriate vicinity to other activities, like the park, soccer, football, baseball, and many schools.
* The people of Bartow have really wanted a pool for a long time. This pool seems so small!!
* I would love to see the historic Oaks building restored and put to good use. Plus this is a more centralized location for Bartow’s citizens. Also the proximity to downtown would provide more opportunities for those utilizing the aquatic center, and would benefit the downtown businesses. Thank you for taking steps to bring swimming opportunities back to Bartow.
* There’s not much to do in Bartow for any age residents, much less young people. While I’m middle aged and would like to have local access to adult aquatic programs, I think it’s more important to engage the youth in the area.
* Our Civic Center needs to be dedicated to children
* Polk county desperately needs more aquatics facilities for lap swimming and swim team training both short course and long course.
* Our town needs this so bad. A splash pad would be a great addition to our town having a recreational swim team option for our children would be a great addition as well as utilizing that beautiful building for our town pool! We desperately need some thing. As our town grows, we need to have facilities that are going to keep our residence here instead of going to Lakeland or Winter Haven.
* There is a desperate need for high quality long-course swimming facilities for competitive swim in this county.
* We constantly drive to other towns to beat the heat with their splash pads. I have a toddler and baby on the way, and this would be a huge blessing.
* I live across from Mosaic Park, I would volunteer to help with any fundraisers to have the pool at the civic center restored. I also think that any pool or splash pad should have adult supervision for any child under 15. I hope the pool will be for recreational swimming g as well.
* I like the idea of renovating the old Bartow Civic Center. I am concerned that this building is not large enough to support an aquatics center and aquatics program. How does it compare to Haines City's Lake Eva Aquatics Center and Lake Wales' Family Recreation Center (which incudes a dive well). The proximity of the old civic center to the downtown is a big plus. I believe it is awful that the City of Bartow neglected the Civic Center pool for so many years and it makes me mad every time I think about that!!! I am sad that the old pool cannot be replaced! I have 2 grandchildren who are on swim teams and are very accomplished swimmers.
* A pool of sufficient size for our own high school swim team to both practice and host swim meets is important to bring back to our community
* Please meet the needs of the Highschool swim team.
* Revitalize the pool. It is in a perfect location.
* It's a shame that the city has waited so long to invest in the kids can bike to that need a place to swim , take lessons etc Please move this up the needs ladder. thank you
* Great idea!
* Replacing Sam Griner pool to Aqutic center would honor the history of swim program that developed and the man that identified amd trained MANY Olympic swimmers . Option 1 just seems to have many more environmental and hazardous chemical issues that could really up the cost.
* We are not technically Bartow residents but our home is zoned for Bartow Highschool. We visit Bartow for shopping more than we do Lakeland. Water activities are much needed in this area!
* We are so excited for this project and know it will be such an amazing addition to the Bartow community!
* This is very much needed in Bartow!
* This is such a great idea. We don't mind driving to Lakeland water stuff, but to have one close is amazing.
* The Oaks building shouldn’t be applicable, it is far from all the other recreation areas and parks in the town. Also there is never any parking in the downtown area, I believe parking would be an issue.
* I was the Bartow High School swim coach from 2006 to 2013. It is sad to see such a great facility just sitting there after we worked so hard to bring life back to the swim team. Whatever gets built needs to involve at least 6 25 yard lanes so swim meets can happen again. Bartow High School and surrounding schools need more pools to compete at during swim season. Yes it is great to make splash pads and such, but children and adults need to know how to swim and that can only take place if a real pool is built. I am very excited to see something is finally going to happen to Bartow’s aquatic program and will be following the progress.
* Rehab swimming it great for it
* None love the idea great to have a community pool again
* My children used to swim at the civic center each week. It would be nice to have that for my grandchildren. Using existing facilities will reduce construction costs. You could build a splash pad with the savings over choosing the Oaks building. Build an outdoor venue at the Oaks building instead of a pool.
* Polk County is in need of a swim facility/ water sports for our local swim teams (high schools and Clubs) along with potential water polo teams. This is an area I believe would help the community.
* Civic Center area is already a sports complex so I feel that it makes sense to keep the pool there. I do love the idea of renovating The Oaks building as an event venue.
* I really hope y’all consider Polk Street because we never have nothing on that side
* I grew up in Bartow.
* There is plenty of space to redesign the pool for a swim teams to compete and build a kids swimming pool area with a splash pad. Removing the volleyball courts and expanding to the east and adding concessions between the kids area and adults area would add safety and convenience for all patrons. Remolding and updating the building is long overdue. The fact that the city let it get to this is poor management. I feel not just this but I as a citizen of Bartow could draw up plans and present to an architect for final detail. Building all new and then still spending additional money would be a waste of tax payer dollars. If you are looking to do something with the downtown development property, I would suggest an area for adult concerts or movies, that would be better suited to bring additional traffic to the downtown businesses. Bringing a pool to the downtown area is not gonna bring people to shop and eat at restaurants, something aimed at adults is what is needed.
* Although having something new seems nice, I think the city would do better keeping the pool at the civic center and using any additional monies to redesign or restructure that building (such as cleaning up the bathrooms and redesigning the pool’s entrance). The city took away the skate park, filled in the reflecting pool at Blount Park, closed the pool for a few years, and now want to move it. That doesn’t leave much for the kids in this part of Bartow. Let’s also consider that it doesn’t matter if the pool is in walking distance of shopping/restaurants if it’s moved to downtown as there is supposed to be a concession stand at that location. So figure out how to include a concession stand at the civic center and keep the pool there.
* This is a great idea! Thank you for surveying the residents.
* We are very excited for more kid friendly activities in Bartow. Looking forward for progress towards a vibrant downtown with lots of activities and community.
* This would be great for kids of all ages and also adults and the elderly
* This would be a nice addition if properly maintained, staffed, secured, and funding is not from infrastructure capital.
* For Family enjoyment too but most of all for the children/teenagers.
* Having the pool and activities at the Civic center will not only save tax dollars but you are just needing to update the area not do all new construction.
* The pool has always been at the Civic Center and I don’t see the need to change that. And the project at the Civic Center appeared to cost less. That’s common sense when using tax payer money.
* It is a shame that our local high school, who has a track record of having a competitive swim team, has to travel to nearby cities to practice and attend meets. Having the ability to host meets for other schools in the county will bring in revenue and attention from other cities. It would make no sense to invest so much money into an aquatics program and still not provide our school with a place to compete.
* Put it in a safe area with parking available.
* Keep up the great work
* The civic center provides more expansion space as grants and other funds come available as well as provides showers/restrooms and rental spaces that we do not have available is this area. It also allows for a "rec complex" keeping it alongside the tennis courts and baseball/soccer fields. We need to utilize what we have instead of leaving it to fall apart after years of pushing it to the back burner.
* Option 1 proposed area is too close to large homeless populations walk way/path and too in town . The ball parks and play ground and soccer fields being right there makes it feel safer for family and children
* I believe the pool that we already have should be restored. It was a huge part of not only my childhood but many residents in Bartow!
* Indoor pool we could use year round would amazing
* Bringing this particular building back to life would help draw more people in to the downtown area. Having it more centrally located would help those parents who juggle their schedules with after school activities by making it feasible for the kids to walk to either walk to their parents place of work or have a safe location to wait until pick-up. It's directly behind both first responder operations in the event of an emergency and it allows the community to see their tax dollars being put to good use.
* I am very much looking forward to this development.
* This should be in a central location and the oaks would be central close to law enforcement and fire in case of incidents. I believe it will be better kept up and used accordingly by citizens. I do not believe it should be an event place or venue as their are other places for that. Community centers and carver rec already uses its space for events. This should strictly be for swim and leisure. While I do not live there my parents and some other family do and if it is there I would feel safer for my special needs family members.
* Bartow needs more for children to do with family and help them from poor decisions. We need a clean community pool and splash pad. We shouldn't have to travel to Lakeland or Winter Haven for swim lessons.
* Please consider the needs of the Bartow high school swim team-big need for lanes and competition pool in this area!
* Kids need this asap
* Paying for a new build, then paying to cover the existing pool seems like a waste of funds. The current civic center is a great location, with ample parking, on non busy roads, making the trek to the pool easier for families with littles. Oaks building would be better designed as an art museum, center for arts, community class venue, etc.
* These are all excellent ideas in my opinion. We also respectfully request allowed access to the areas south east of the civic center. Great fishing spots, and open activities area. Thank you.
* Excited to see what can happen in this community. Thank you!!!
* I do want to see something done with the Oaks Building to serve the community but there is not enough space there logistically for an aquatic center, traffic and parking that this would generate. It would heavily digest an area that the infrastructure cannot support is that area.
* I believe that renovating the existing pool at the Civic Center would be far more economical than building an entirely new facility in the downtown area. If economics are an important consideration, which I believe they should be, then it would be far better to add a few amenities to the Civic Center location and to draw more people to that location. Thank you.
* Love the Oaks location being utilized and refurbished and the fact that CRA funding is available.
* Be good if they had a dog pool to for really hot days for dogs to have fun as well
* I like the idea of renovating the existing pool at the civic center. It has plenty of parking and is a great location.
* If the downtown location is chosen please increase the non pool size so family aren’t into of each other (summer time it will be full)
* I think the Oaks school is a staple to what Bartow is. I think tearing it down would be very heartbreaking but that it should be fixed up and available for its original self.
* I think that if you are considering building the freestanding event venue at the oaks building even if we don’t put the pool there, why not go ahead and kill two birds with one stone and do the aquatics center at the oaks building as well. Also, those freestanding splash pads seem like more money than they’re worth. $1m to build with $70k annual costs is crazy.
* PLEASE do not put Splash Pad at Polk Street or Carver Rec as I would not feel comfortable or safe taking my children there alone.
* Splash pads for kids would be great!
* The Civic Center already has parking. Oaks would need parking. Environmental studies would need to be done for the radon at Oaks. I think we should repurpose what we already have rather than taking up space that could be used for something else.
* Very concerned about the water park being accessible to ALL kids, no matter where and on what side of Bartow they were raised.
* I would like to my daughters to go to swim lessons in Bartow instead of driving to Lakeland. The Civic center can accommodate the parking and not in the busy area of downtown like the Oaks.
* Can not believe the Oaks site is viable (too much phosphate emission's) . That site should be retained for future police and fire buildings.
* Drove by the proposed oaks venue and there are a ton of electric lines including high voltage transmission lines and would be next door to the power substation. None of that seems safe for a myriad of reasons. I’d also like to add that many residents would still prefer a pool for swim meets over both of these options.
* We need more options for younger children like splash pads and pools for the other ages.
* I was raised at the bartow civic center pool. Started beginning swimming lessons and went up to swim team. We tolerated the heat by swimming and making friends. Would love to take granddaughter to swimming lessons!! Thank you for considering this again!
* We NEED this!! An event space with water activities!! We are lacking event spaces at affordable prices in Bartow
* This would be good for the community and stop folks from traveling all the way to Lakeland and Winter Haven for these amenities
* Oak Street facility would be nice as an event location like the design you have designed, without the pool.
* I feel like a splash pad alone would not be a sufficient draw; it would be more beneficial to include it in the overall project (line at the Oak Street location).
* We need a pool again In bartow please!!
* Location and cost of aquatics center in the downtown area is not very logical nor practical. Lack of parking is the biggest problem, no parent wants to drive around looking for a parking space and then have to walk with their children across busy streets. Investing additional money to rennovate a building that has been closed for close to 20 years does not seem very practical nor does spending money to add additional parking spaces. It's hard enough to find a parking space during lunch time for one car, imagine what it will be like if the pool is put in the downtown area and the additional traffic looking for a place to park. If I had a choice between a fire station and a pool, I am voting for a fire station. Just using some common sense on whether or not I want my home to be saved if it catches on fire or I have access to pool to lounge by. Sometimes it is better to fix what we already have, than to spend money the city really does not have for a pool that may or may not get used very often. How often was the pool being used before it was left in disrepair and neglected by the city. The current civic center is a more reasonable choice and a better location to renovate what we already have without the additional cost of parking and fixing up a 20 year old building. My hope is that the citizens of Bartow will take the time to complete the survey so that everyone has a chance to share their thoughts.
* The aquatics center concepts look great! However, I feel the splash pad locations options are less than ideal. There is commercial land for sale in the middle of downtown. That would be a great place to pull folks into Bartow for a splash pad.
* It appears the city is only presenting the static costs, not the projected costs over at least 5 years, adjusted for inflation. Where are those numbers? Also, how are we paying for this? Will there be an entry fee (which is strongly advisable) or is the city planning on taxing us for this? If they are going to tax us for this, I don't think we should do it. Also, what about cost overruns? We KNOW this will happen. It's a fact of life, and something most politicians refuse to address or to incorporate into their planning. So far, all the "plans" I see raise a lot of concerns with inadequate financial planning for this.
* Use what already in place and make it work. Don't congest down town anymore.
* I believe a community pool is essential for teaching our kids to swim and promoting health. However, I have concerns about the current plan. Our local swim teams, including Special Olympics athletes, shouldn't have to continue to travel to Winter Haven to train and compete. We need a pool that meets Olympic standards right here in Bartow so we can host swim meets and nurture our talent and pride. We're talking about spending millions of dollars on this project, yet we’re struggling to pay our police, firefighters, and city employees enough. It’s crucial that our investments don't compromise essential services and over due infrastructure repairs. The proposed pool's maintenance costs are based on current pay rates, which haven't kept up with the cost of living, making these estimates inaccurate. There are major, glaring safety issues in our city that still need to be addressed. This project feels rushed, and even moving the date of this meeting adds to that impression, despite any legitimate reasons. As for placing the pool downtown, it may seem beneficial for businesses, but modern traffic poses dangers to the youth we hope to attract and could deter potential swimmers. We need to prioritize fixing our current infrastructure before taking on new projects that don’t meet our present let alone future needs. Only once those infrastructure issues have been resolved should we create a plan that keeps the pool open year-round, and is financially self-sufficient. I urge the commission to consider a better plan that meets our long-term needs and truly benefits all of us. Let's build a facility that serves our present and future. Thank you for your time and commitment to Bartow.
* If a pool is to be built it should be at the oak building. Adding or vamping up the old pool would not be the right move. You would have to close the civic center down making you loose more money. Or even if it was to be open it would cause many people to not like seeing the construction and stuff from the windows. Causing them to find other venues for there events. If you were to expand the civic center venue building to where the pool is. You could get more events and more people coming into Bartow. I will admit I am slightly against there even being a aquatic center in Bartow. Because you did not pay your life guards well and had them work too long of hours for anyone to do. Yes I was a lifeguard and had to work from 7am to 8pm, 5 to 6 days a week. Without over time pay. If you are to go through with this then you better be hiring a lot more people. I can just see the horror stories that are going to come from the kids playground pool if you do build it and not have enough people.
* I have a vision for West Bartow and will share it when the time is right. We are no longer interested in hand me downs. We want for our children and elders just as much or more as you want for yours. And officials who willingly violate our rights to freedom, justice, harmony, and peace such as giving public land away cared for by us to friends instead of to the ones who deserves it. They will be sued!
* I listened to meeting and if this is being done so schools can have a competitive swim team then why is the school board not helping with the funding. I would like information on the following: Use of pool when it was functioning Cost estimated to use the new pool What is cost of the operation of the pool if we have to hire an agency to run What will annual cost estimate be of maintaining this pool I feel that until a new fire station and police station are constructed that we can wait on another recreation facility. The fire tax increase was supposed to raise funds for the fire station building and equipment but I have not seen any of that mentioned since it was passed.
* My concern with the civic center location is the amount of traffic coming through what is a residential area. The civic center would be closer to me, but I would prefer the traffic be kept in the downtown area. The parking at the Wilson Avenue location is a concern. Not having the pool at the civic center and having the outdoor area I think would be a better use for that space. It would make it a more desirable event space. Plus it would be less of a liability when renting out the civic center for events.
* This is a lot of money to invest in something that has gone defunct already in the past twice. We have crumbling infrastructure and utilities that barely support downtown business. Fix utilities to support and make successful what we already have first, then branch out to amenities.
* Given the other areas of need in our city infrastructure repairs and the fact that the pool areas offered do not meet the community needs (i.e. not able to be used for meets for swim teams, only open part of year except weekends etc.) I feel we should wait until we can build a facility that both meets athletic need for our youth and can be offer enough amenities to support itself.
* The money that would be use to build and maintain should be used for police and fire departments. You only use the pool for 4 months out of the year. The city should not be in the pool business
* Housing affordability is already a challenge. Using these significant funds to reduce property taxes, which just had a huge hike, would be a better investment to keep housing in our community more affordable. Spending $4M of taxpayer dollars on a pool, when so many folks are struggling to afford the cost of homeownership, seems a misappropriation of resources.
* Taxes are too high now I pay both city and county tax. It’s ridiculous. I’m on a fixed income and the taxes Just keep going up and up and up. If the city wants to make money bring in name-brand restaurants, not fast food bringing businesses that will bring in attract People to come to Bartow example Sam’s Club. Olive Garden, a name-brand steakhouse example, Longhorn. They were good. I ate them. No stop raining that downpour now. See that shit that downpour that was all chemicals. Bartow is already complaining about water shortages, but they keep building all these apartment buildings.
* I do not think a pool is a wise investment. The old pool was barely used by the community. I personally was at the civic center many times and only saw 5-6 people max. Too many pools are in back yards and apartment complexes in today's society. City owned pools for a town like Bartow are a romantic but antiquated idea.
* We need some kind of water park at Carver Recreation
* It's a real shame and embarassment that the city that used to have a premier Jr. olympic size pool and diving area now has nothing
* Aquatics program needs many revisions and so does the Civic Center. History of Bartow. This is important. Someone should allow people or residents to explain the history of old buildings such as the civic center called the Oaks, and how it got its name. For years, the Oaks was called the Bartow Civic Center.
* The Oaks Building has a history of racism and the African American community, as stated by some, would not utilize the facility if renovated. The civic center is also less expensive.
* Option 2 is the best location. Start with Phase 1 fixing a swimming pool. No heated pool, necessary or ever used with the cost vs. use
* Our pool and the community events is what I love most about Bartow
* Repair sidewalks on Main Street. Serve no beer or wine at Friday Fest.
* Our kids need this and other things to keep them out of trouble.
* As a retired radon chemist, I am concerned about the old oaks building which I understand has a high level. I assume that is has also been for gamma rays.
* I feel the Oaks building is too expensive and could cost more once you get into it. More room at the Civic Center Parking and locker rooms. Oaks building is too old.
* Big Pool for kids 13 and under at the Carver Recreation Center
* I agree that it might be worth it to spend more money now to build a competitive qualified pool that could be rented for swim meets to offset the expense of the pool. Should this issue go to a vote to the residents of Bartow, rather than just a survey.
* Please give us another pool
* Please include people with physical and non-physical disabilities in your planning committees. Not people who work with those who have disabilities, actual disabled people. There is no substitute for lived experience in recognizing potential needs and risks
* Why would you build a 6X25yd pool and not make it usable or convenient to have a local swim team. Civic Center is reasonable for all children sports and outdoor activities without having to be overly concerned with traffic from businesses as the county seat.
* The pool should be big enough to host swim meets. Parking should not be in a heavy traffic area.
* Need availability for teens and younger children in Bartow area.
* While I see the Oaks School is a good concept, respectfully I think the Civic Center is a better choice. The Civic Center is closer to schools and nearby neighborhoods. Thank you for all of your hard work in making Bartow a great place to live and play.
* Hope you will fix the civic center pool - an excellent facility. Glad to hear you plan to resume an aquatics program. It's important for safety as well as recreation.