

Recommendations for Service Delivery

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Vision + Principles

Vision

Deliver a wide range of aquatic experiences for residents and visitors that support Vancouver as a highly-livable, world-class coastal city.

Principles

1 Recognize that water is only one component of the experience.

2 Expand the definition of 'aquatics' to include beaches, wading pools, spray parks and new innovative aquatic experiences.

3 Enhance social inclusion through aquatic experiences.

4 Support community and personal well-being.

Goals

1 Continue to increase annual swims per capita.

2 Accommodate Vancouver's growing and aging population.

3 Provide a wide range of vibrant and engaging aquatic experiences.

4 Provide aquatic experiences that are accessible to all.

5 Promote and encourage active living through aquatics.

6 Provide flexible and functional facilities.

7 Establish sustainability targets for aquatics.

8 Increase connection to nature in all aspects of aquatics.

FIGURE 19

Introduction

Based on the findings presented in the *Current State Report*, *Precedent Report*, and *Public Engagement Report*, as well as building directly on the 25-year vision, principles and goals, this section of the report presents the proposed recommendations and 10-year implementation plan.

As discussed in the introductory section of this report, the *VanSplash* recommendations must fit within a broader Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation mandate, supporting the overall *Strategic Plan*, *Sport Strategy*, and Park Board policies including *Parks and Recreation for All* as well as ongoing City-wide planning projects and objectives such as the *Greenest City Action Plan* and the *Healthy City Strategy*.

The recommendations in this section reflect the findings presented in the *Public Engagement Report*, and reflect the findings and feedback heard in the first phase of engagement which solicited feedback regarding subjects such: as current aquatic services people enjoy; barriers preventing users from accessing or enjoying aquatic amenities; activities people enjoy at indoor pools, outdoor pools, and public beaches; and what types of new innovative aquatic experiences locals want to see in their communities. The draft recommendations were modified to reflect the feedback we heard during the second phase of engagement.

The primary objective of the Phase 2 public engagement was to return to the public following the analysis of Phase 1, to share what we heard and learned, as well as share emerging draft recommendations for feedback before finalizing the strategy. The survey had over 1600 respondents. The only inconclusive results were regarding the support of indoor pool recommendations, which showed 34% of phase 2 respondents not in support. The majority of indoor pool recommendations were not significantly modified because we suspect the non-supporting responses

were directly related to the considered decommissioning of select indoor pools (Lord Byng and Templeton) as over a quarter of total written comments concerned this.

The recommendations are intended to enhance and support a number of current initiatives including the *Parks and Recreation Masterplan (VanPlay)*, the *Non-Motorized Boating Strategy (On Water)*, and the Northeast False Creek Redevelopment, as well as consider current Park Board planning initiatives. As noted in the introduction and shown in the vision and principles, *VanSplash* established a broader definition of success in aquatics, and was tasked with widening success measures of aquatic services beyond swims per capita to include social inclusivity, social engagement, health and well-being, connection to nature, and vibrant experiences.

While the definition of success was broadened, the initial key metric for success – swims per capita, was still a key driver for the work of *VanSplash*. The *2001 Aquatic Study* established a swims per capita recommendation target of 4.0. The *Current State Report* notes an increase in swims per capita to reach 3.4 after the implementation of the *2001 Aquatic Study* – a significant increase from the swims per capita rate prior to 2001, which was estimated at 2.4.

The 25-year vision sets a target of 5.0 swims per capita. However, recognizing that full pools can be perceived by some as over-crowded, the strategy supports a capacity of between 5.0 and 6.0 swims per capita. As context for this target, urban centres generally see a swim per capita rate of between 2.0 and 4.0, with smaller communities achieving higher swims per capita of closer to 7.0-8.0.

Indoor Pools - 4 New Facilities

- 1 City-wide added
- 1 new City-wide (replacement)
- 1 new Community (replacement)
- 1 new Community plus (replacement for Neighbourhood)



FIGURE 20

Indoor Pools

INDOOR POOL RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations for indoor pools focused holistically on the larger 25-year vision, with a particular emphasis on: continuing the renewal of indoor facilities reaching the end of their functional lifespan; increasing the capacity of the system to accommodate anticipated population growth and to achieve the renewed 5 swims per capita target; and providing a balanced range of aquatic experiences throughout the system.

The overall recommendations for changes to the indoor pool service offerings are summarized in Figure 20 and 21. In addition to the broader overarching recommendations presented on page 56 the following are more detailed recommendations and supporting rationale for additions and renewals to the current indoor pool service offering:

Replace Britannia neighbourhood pool with a new Community-plus¹ scale pool on the Britannia site. This work should be carried out as part of the current overall masterplan work and, as with all recommendations for new and replacement aquatic facilities, the particular amenities and balance of aquatic offerings should be determined in consultation with the community and as part of the VPB's vision to provide a broad and balanced mix of aquatic services.

Once the Britannia Community-plus pool is fully operational, engage with pool users, community members, and key stakeholders to determine the impact of the new Britannia Pool on Templeton Pool.

Provide a new City-wide destination pool with a sport-training focus, at Connaught Park as part of a future arena and/or community centre renewal. This proposed facility would replace and improve the current sport-training capacity of the Vancouver Aquatic Centre, and

would consider potential for hosting of competitions to a level that the site can accommodate as part of the detailed planning. The location is near the proposed Arbutus station of the Broadway subway line in an area of anticipated growth nearby the Arbutus Corridor. As noted above, community consultation and broader VPB service delivery objectives would be considered in the detailed planning and delivery of this proposed new facility, along with a detailed site study to determine the capacity that the site can accommodate. Regional distribution of other competition and training facilities must also be considered at the time of facility planning.

A test-fit exercise was undertaken during the development of this strategy to test the fit of a sport-training focused aquatic facility located at Connaught Park. Conceptual site plans and basic massing determined the feasibility of accommodating this scale of pool along with an ice arena, community centre, childcare centre, and associated parking with in a principle of no net loss of park space.

Once the Connaught pool is fully operational, engage with pool users, community members, and key stakeholders to determine the impacts of the new Connaught Pool on Lord Byng Pool.

Replace the Vancouver Aquatic Centre with a new City-wide destination pool with a health and wellness focus, with co-located outdoor aquatic amenities. The Vancouver Aquatic Centre (VAC) has almost reached the end of its functional lifespan and does not meet current seismic requirements. This facility should be replaced as soon as the sport-training and hosting capacity of the current facility are operating out of the replacement sport-focused City-wide destination pool (at Connaught Park). Given the projected population growth, and the expectation that the demographic will shift towards older adults in the community surrounding the VAC, planning of this facility should consider greater emphasis on therapeutic and wellness use, with warmer water tanks in

¹ Note that community-plus refers to a facility designed between the capacity of a City-wide pool and a Community scale pool.



Indoor Pools

Recommendations



- 1** Move away from a predominantly neighbourhood scale pool system and deliver a greater diversity of swimming experiences at larger, community and destination scale facilities.



- 2** Where feasible, co-locate outdoor pools with indoor pools to offer a greater range of aquatic experiences at each facility and to maximize operational efficiencies.



- 3** Decommission existing stand-alone whirlpools in community centres which have safety and operational challenges.

FIGURE 21

INDOOR POOL RECOMMENDATIONS (CONTINUED)

addition to lane swimming. In consideration of the spectacular siting along the beach, the replacement facility has the opportunity to take advantage of the views, access to nature, and provide year round outdoor amenities adjacent to the pool deck, potentially in the form of a hot pool and/or sauna and steam (see also Innovation recommendations on page 69).

Replace Kerrisdale Pool with a new Community scale pool, as part of a future Community Centre and/or arena renewal to take advantage of co-location synergies including energy savings, operational efficiencies, and the community interest in larger facilities offering a diverse range of amenities and services in one location.

Renovate Kensington Pool to enhance accessibility and increase opportunities for adaptive and therapeutic swimming.

Continue to consider **building partnerships** with other agencies to gain opportunities for public use of non-park board aquatic facilities.

The recommended additional and replacement pools would bring the capacity of pools in Vancouver in alignment to support the new target swims per capita of up to 6.0.

The proposed sequencing for recommended new and replacement indoor pools is shown on the following page.

WHAT WE HEARD IN PHASE 2

- 82% chose new indoor pools or upgrades to indoor pools in their top 5 recommendations.
- 55% said they think the recommendations for indoor pools respond well to what we heard and learned in Phase 1. 34% said they think they do not respond well, and the rest were unsure. *
- 35% said they think the recommendations will improve indoor aquatic experiences in Vancouver. 33% were unsure and the rest said they think they will not improve experiences. *

* We suspect the inconclusive results are directly related to the considered decommissioning of Lord Byng and Templeton indoor pools, as over a quarter of written comments concerned this.



Indoor Pools

Sequencing: Recommendations

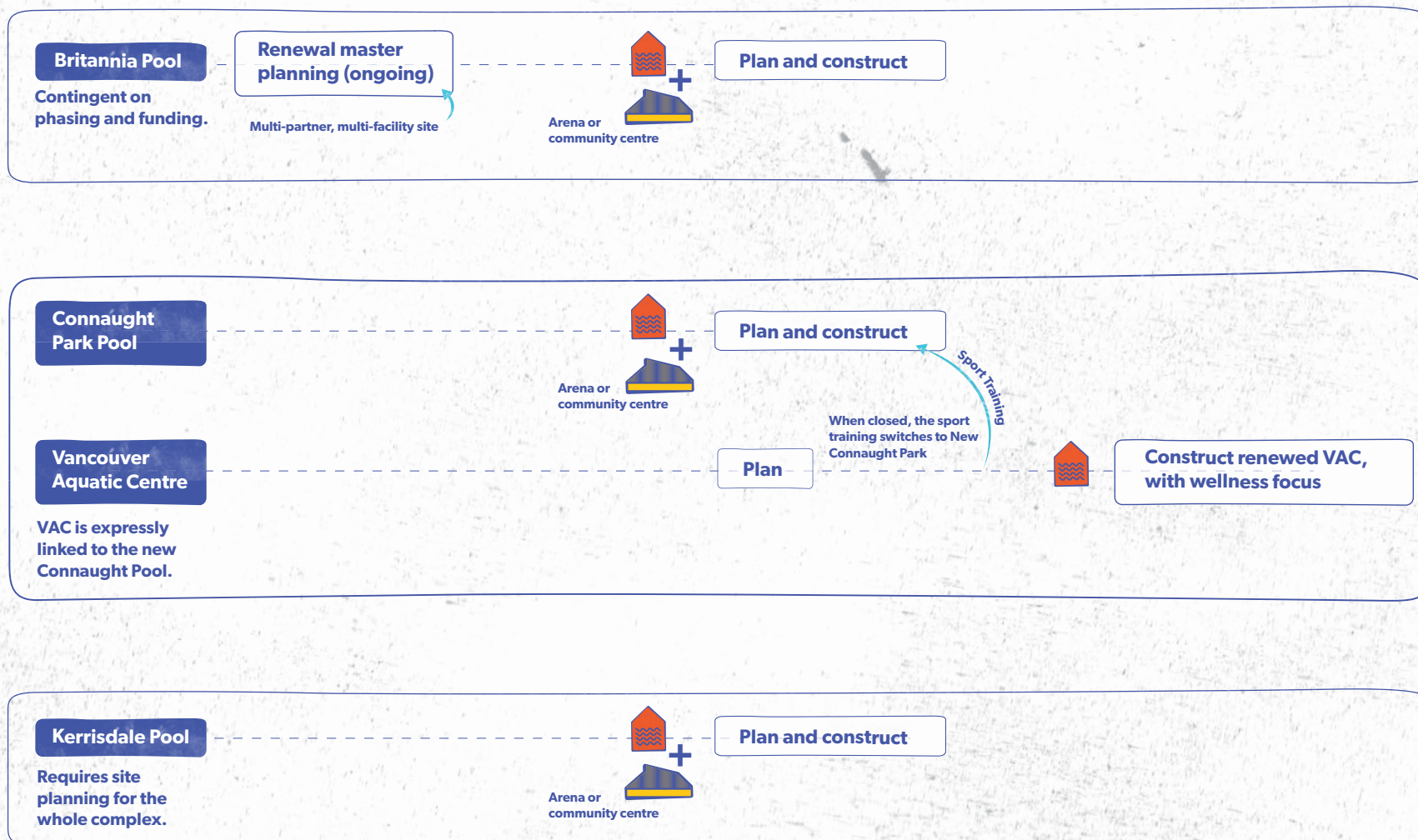


FIGURE 22

5 Outdoor Pools



Park Board Committee Meeting - December 11, 2017

Outdoor Pools

OUTDOOR POOL RECOMMENDATIONS

As with indoor pools, recommendations for outdoor pools are based on achieving the larger 25-year vision. It was recognized during this study that each of our existing outdoor stand-alone facilities are distinctive City-wide destination pools. It was also clear from the engagement that they are a much-loved component of the current aquatic system and they play a key role in the broader social targets for the renewed aquatic strategy. The recommendations for outdoor pools therefore place a particular emphasis on: renewal of outdoor pool facilities that are considered jewels in the system but need investment to maintain and extend their functional lifespan; and improving the geographic distribution of outdoor pools while providing a balanced range of aquatic experiences throughout the system.

The *2001 Aquatic Services Review* recommended that neighbourhood stand-alone outdoor pools be phased out and future outdoor pools be co-located with indoor pools. The benefits of a co-located indoor and outdoor pool include: a high number of swim opportunities and swim participants, a lower cost per swim, an extended outdoor season, shared staff (ie: life guarding, maintenance and customer service), shared operation systems (ie: admissions, marketing, program development), shared infrastructure (ie: facility change rooms and shared mechanical systems) and access to more services, amenities, and features. *VanSplash* has expanded the scope of study to include non-traditional aquatics, which include innovative aquatic services such as a naturally filtrated City-wide destination outdoor pool. Precedents of these kinds of innovation demonstrate that innovative aquatic services attract enough visits to warrant a stand-alone amenity.

Broad recommendations are summarized in Figure 22. The following are more detailed recommendations and supporting rationale:

Revitalize existing outdoor pools. Each of the existing outdoor pools require investment to extend their lifespan and to provide users with supporting amenities that meet current best-practices and can support increasing usage. Specific upgrades proposed are:

- **Improve or replace changing facilities** at each outdoor pool to meet current City and VPB policies to provide safe, accessible, and inclusive environments for all, to support current and future usage demands, and to improve effectiveness of on-going maintenance.
- **Improve food and beverage service offerings.** A significant usage of outdoor pools is related to socializing, and providing food services that are on the pool deck, convenient and affordable, and allow patrons to extend the time spent in the facility are likely to result in longer stay-times and increased socialization. (Addressed through VPB Concession Strategy)
- **Improve or replace mechanical equipment** and pool basins where required. In order to keep these facilities long-term in investment into some of the pool systems is necessary to prevent more significant costs in the future.
- **Improve new spray features** to increase the diversity of aquatic amenities at each outdoor pool and offer a wider appeal to a broader age range.
- **Improve deck areas to enhance quality of experience.** Offer shaded areas, and consider increasing the deck area at particular outdoor pools (New Brighton) that do not include green space to accommodate sunning and relaxation. Consider improving wind protection around deck areas.

As a first step, undertake a facility assessment and detailed implementation plan.



Outdoor Pools

Recommendations



- 1** Continue to invest in the existing outdoor pools to keep them as unique city-wide (destination) facilities within Vancouver.



- 2** Prioritize locating new outdoor pools to fill current service area gaps in south-central and south-east Vancouver.



- 3** Provide a balance of recreation, fun, socializing and fitness, through a range of outdoor pool facilities and experiences.



- 4** Consider an outdoor pool or spray feature with every new indoor pool facility where possible with site constraints and site planning objectives.

FIGURE 24

OUTDOOR POOL RECOMMENDATIONS (CONTINUED)

Provide a new co-located outdoor pool in South Vancouver, considering Killarney or Marpole Community Centres as possible locations. Refer to Appendix 2 for details in location comparison.

Provide a new City-wide naturally filtered destination outdoor pool in South Vancouver, i.e. non-chlorinated. Continue to build on the successful strategy of providing City-wide destination pools that each offer a unique experience. While the majority of Vancouver is geographically well served by current outdoor pools, there is a service gap in the outdoor swimming opportunities, beaches, and natural swimming experiences in South Vancouver along the Fraser River. Naturally filtered pools are anticipated to be of increasing interest to aquatic users concerned about the potential health impacts of chlorine to both users and operators. There are hundreds of precedent facilities in Europe, and the first in North America opened recently in Minnesota. However, implementing a natural pool adjacent to the Fraser River would require a site and regulatory revision, making this recommendation a longer term idea.

WHAT WE HEARD IN PHASE 2

- 71% said they think the recommendations for outdoor pools respond well to what we heard and learned in Phase 1.
- 59% chose new outdoor pools or upgrades to outdoor pools in their top 5 recommendations.
- 47% said they think the recommendations will improve outdoor aquatic experiences in Vancouver. 14% said they think they will not improve experiences and the rest were unsure.



Beaches

Recommendations

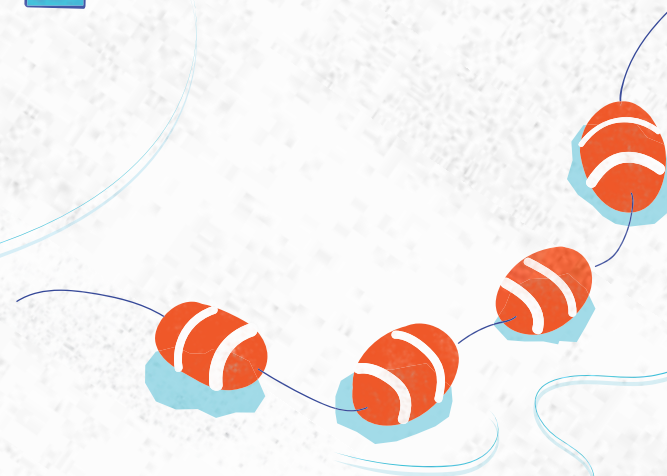
1 Consider activating or enhancing the range of aquatic experiences offered at beaches, i.e. temporary water play.



2 Find a better way to collect information on how many people use our beaches and how they use them.



FIGURE 25



Beaches

BEACHES RECOMMENDATIONS

As shown through the public engagement process, Vancouver beaches are very well used by locals and tourists alike, are much-loved by locals for the range of aquatic services they offer, and score very highly in terms of the broader social impact targets that are part of the 25-year strategy for aquatics in Vancouver. However, it was noted in the *Current State Report* that the range of data on beach usage and operation costs were not as robustly tracked as for pools (and that more focused data collection could help to inform possible future improvements).

The recommendations for beaches place a particular emphasis on building on the current success of our beaches, and are as follows:

Invest in maintaining and enhancing existing beaches.

- **Upgrade or replace changing facilities** at beaches to meet current City and VPB policies to provide safe and inclusive environments for all, to support current and future usage demands, and to improve effectiveness of on-going maintenance of change facilities.
- **Upgrade food and beverage service offerings** to meet current user expectations and to support social and community building targets through shared food experiences and increased stay times. The VPB has undertaken a separate Concession Strategy that will provide recommendations regarding improvements to food and beverage offerings.
- **Provide opportunities for shade.**

Consider enhancing the diversity of experiences offered at/from the beach including ocean play and floating structures (see also Innovations Recommendations) and ocean swimming lessons.

Invest in swimming improvements at Trout Lake. As desire for natural swimming continues to rise, look at ways to provide an improved outdoor swimming experience at Trout Lake, potentially through improvements to water quality, beach quality and change facilities and concessions. Refer to draft *John Hendry Park Master Plan* for further details.

WHAT WE HEARD IN PHASE 2

- 75% said they think the recommendations for beaches respond well to what we heard and learned in Phase 1.
- 44% said they think the recommendations will improve beach experiences in Vancouver. 10% said they think it will not improve and the rest were unsure.
- 28% chose upgrades to beaches in their top 5 recommendations.

Wading Pools + Spray Parks

WADING POOLS AND SPRAY PARKS RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations for wading pools and spray parks are as follows:

To facilitate the emerging spray park system, continue to convert wading pools to spray parks or decommission them, pending locational criteria and consultation with communities.

Provide destination spray parks at destination and highly urban parks serving large populations.

Provide neighbourhood spray parks based on greatest social and geographic need and through consultation with local communities.

Consider co-locating accessible* spray parks with indoor or outdoor pools, and/or with washrooms and community centres.

Where possible, **design spray parks in a way that water can be recycled for park use**, i.e. adjacent irrigation or water features.

Distribute spray parks more evenly throughout the City corresponding to population distribution and density.

*No perimeter fencing or admission required.

WHAT WE HEARD IN PHASE 2

- 46% said they think the recommendations will improve spray parks + wading pool experiences in Vancouver. 9% said they think it will not improve and the rest were unsure.
- 69% said the recommendations for spray parks + wading pools responded well to what we heard and learned in Phase 1.



Innovation

"Non-traditional" aquatic amenities that add opportunities for recreation, fun and relaxation.



1 A combination of temporary and permanent recommendations.



2 Provide wellness amenities, connected with existing and future pools.



3 Add outdoor hot tubs to outdoor pools that aren't co-located with an indoor pool or hot tub.



4 Build destination spray parks for fun and cooling aquatic experiences in urban areas.



5 Create urban beaches for relaxation and play.



6 Build a harbour deck for improved access to our inlet.



7 Provide play structures in the ocean at existing beaches.



8 Build a naturally-filtered outdoor pool for better connection to nature.



9 Assess feasibility of a floating pool in False Creek.



FIGURE 26

Aquatic Innovations

INNOVATION RECOMMENDATIONS

Global aquatic trends are showing a broad range of amenities and services that extend beyond the traditional indoor or outdoor pool. As learned through the public engagement process, Vancouver residents are showing a keen interest in non-traditional aquatic services providing a range of innovative experiences. The goal of aquatic innovations is to support the enrichment of Vancouver's aquatic services to offer fun, spectacle, diverse, and vibrant experiences.

The recommendations for aquatic innovations places emphasis on enhancing the overall service offering and complement the more fixed aquatic infrastructure, and are as follows:

Provide a combination of temporary (ie: urban beaches) and permanent aquatic innovations to provide new and more equitably distributed innovative services around the City.

Provide wellness amenities connected with existing and future pools such as saunas, pools of varying temperatures, and relaxation spaces.

Add outdoor hot tubs at larger destination outdoor pools that aren't co-located with an indoor pool or hot tub to offer a greater range of aquatic experiences at outdoor pools, including socializing and relaxation.

Build destination spray parks for fun and cooling aquatic experiences in urban areas such as water play structures combined with public art and urban water features, creating a more 'mature' environment that appeals to a wider range of people. (See also Wading Pools + Spray Parks Recommendations.)

Build a harbour deck for improved access to our inlet.

Provide play structures in the ocean at existing beaches such as installations that deliver an exhilarating experience, provide excitement, and in some cases deliver a high level of fitness.

Build a naturally-filtrated outdoor pool for better connection to nature and an enhanced and unique aquatic experience (see also Outdoor Pools recommendations).

Assess feasibility of a floating pool in False Creek to provide a treated and filtered pool in an ocean-swimming setting.

Consider installing temporary urban beaches to provide a beach experience in more urban settings and to offer more equitable access and geographic spread of the sun and social aspects.

WHAT WE HEARD IN PHASE 2

- 67% said they think the recommendations for aquatic innovations respond well to what we heard and learned in Phase 1.
- 42% said they think the recommendations will improve innovative aquatic experiences in Vancouver. 14% said they think it will not improve and the rest were unsure.
- The top 3 innovations were a Natural Outdoor Pool, a Harbour Deck, and a Floating Pool in False Creek.

¹ Huseyin Naci; John P. A. Ioannidis, (June 11, 2015). "Evaluation of Wellness Determinants and Interventions by Citizen Scientists". JAMA. 314: 121.doi:10.1001/jama.2015.6160

25-Year Vision



FIGURE 27

25-year Vision and 10-year Implementation Plan

The range of proposed new and replacement facilities included in the Recommendations are illustrated in Figure 27. While there are complex factors that impact the potential sequencing of the range of service improvements recommended in the 25-year vision, the time line below is an illustration of the proposed 10-year implementation plan sequencing of the projects included in the recommendations. Other recommendations may be achievable in 10-years. The 10-year implementation plan is pending capital planning processes.

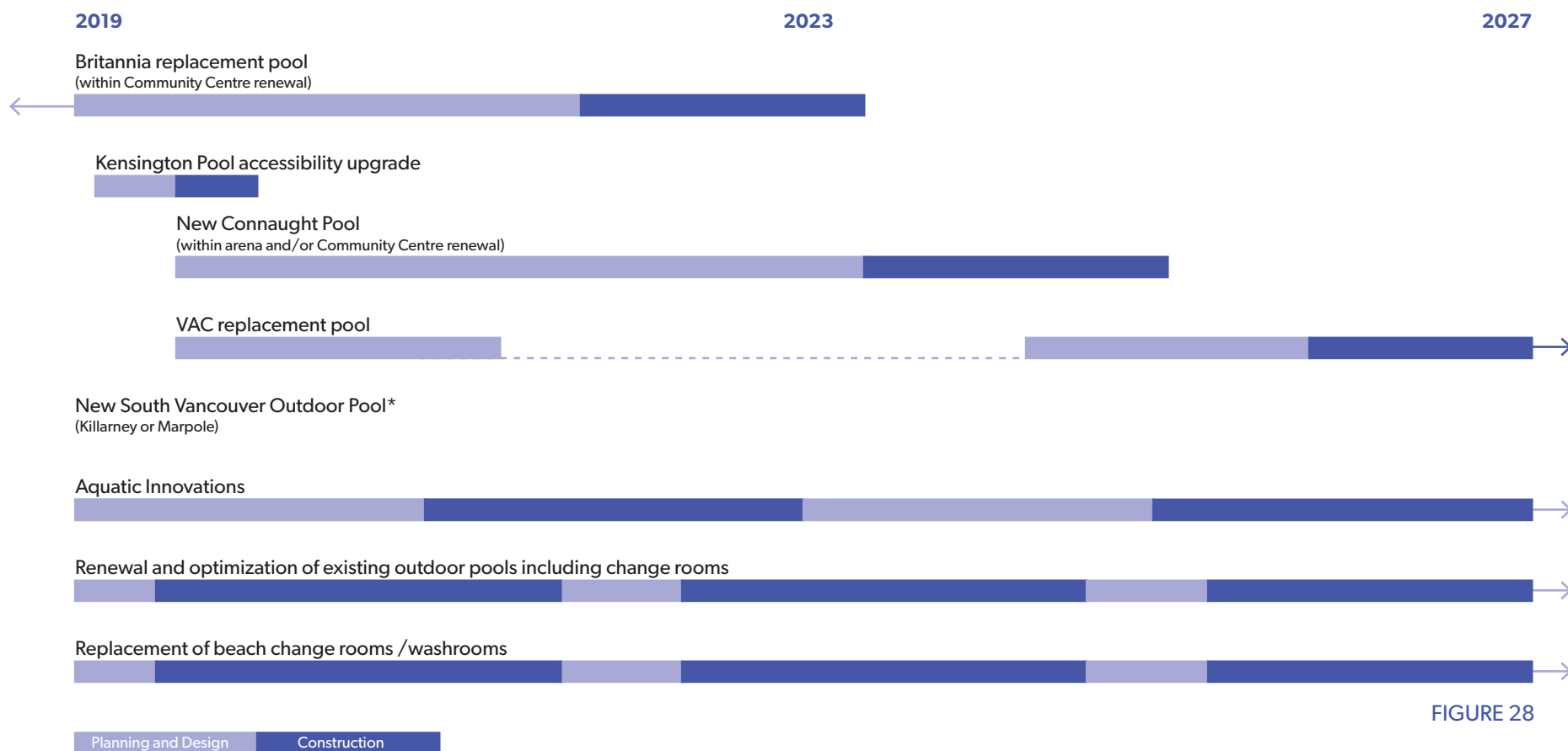


FIGURE 28

*Timing TBD depending on location

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- 3 **Current State Report**
- 4 **Precedent Report**
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