



R-20

Date: August 3rd, 2021

To: Honorable Mayor Robert Garcia and Members of the City Council

From: Vice Mayor Rex Richardson, 9th District
Councilmember Mary Zendejas, 1st District
Councilmember Suzie Price, 3rd District
Councilmember Al Austin, 8th District

Subject: Studying the Establishment of a Public Pool in North Long Beach

RECOMMENDATION:

Recommendation to direct the City Manager and the Parks, Recreation, and Marine Department to explore the feasibility of, locations for, and funding options for the construction of a public pool to serve the North Long Beach community and return to council with a report within 120 days.

Discussion

The 90805 zip code is Long Beach's largest zip code, home to more than 90,000 people, the 8th and 9th council districts, and more children than any other zip code in the city. Despite being the hottest council district by average temperature, Long Beach's 9th District is unique among its peers in its lack of a year-round public pool within 4 miles of the district border.¹ The city of Long Beach should evaluate closing this critical gap by evaluating the creation of the city's fourth public pool, located in North Long Beach.

<u>Council District</u>	<u>Distance to Nearest Public Pool (in miles)</u>
1	1.28
2	1.99
3	0
4	3.06
5	3.44
6	0
7	0
8	2.07
9	4.57

¹ "California Interactive Heat Zones Map." <https://www.plantmaps.com/interactive-california-heat-zones-map.php>

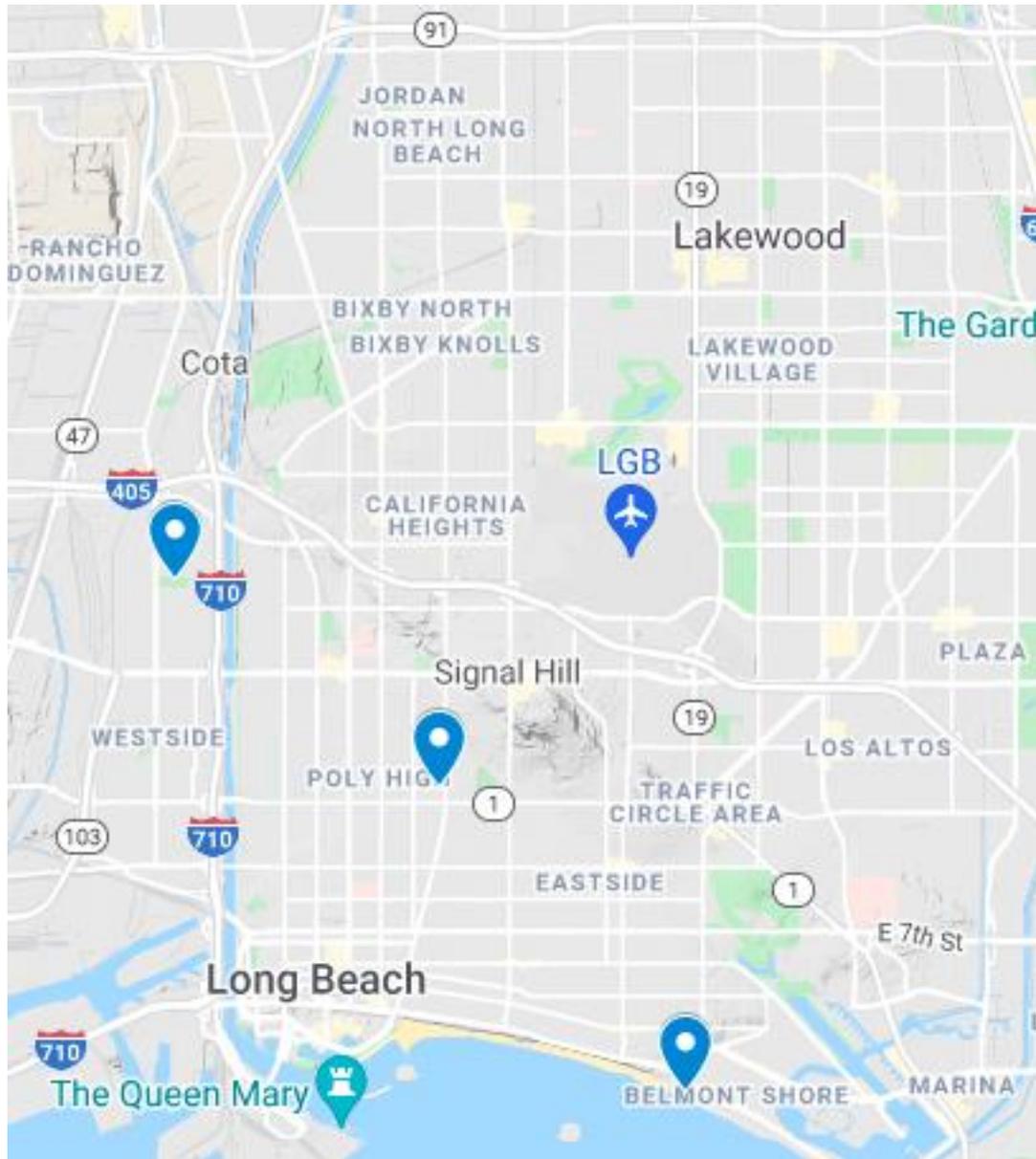


Figure 1: The locations of the three public pools in Long Beach



Public pools provide important exercise facilities, offer a space for social gathering, and allow year-round access to aquatic sports equipment for members of the community. The positive public health impacts of public pools are well established. In a 2003 study published in the Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health, researchers discovered that “use of [a] pool facility for social contact was directly linked to reports of relief of stress and isolation, and improved mental health,” and “[a] pool opening was associated with local area regeneration.”² In the realm of physical health, the British Journal of Medicine reported in 2017 that swimmers faced a 41% lower risk of death due to heart disease and stroke compared to non-swimmers.³

Though the YMCA, Pools of Hope, and Jordan High School all have pools in North Long Beach, the YMCA and Pools of Hope pools are not open to the public, and Jordan High School’s pool is only open in the summer, with limited capacity.

In a city where beachgoing is also a common recreational activity, providing easier access to swimming lessons for young children is also an important public safety priority. A new North Long Beach pool would give parents the ability to send their children to swimming lessons if their schedules during the summer conflict with the currently available swim times at Jordan High School.

Finally, an investment in a public recreational space is also an investment in youth. A pool in North Long Beach would provide after-school opportunities for elementary and middle-school aged children to participate in aquatic sports. The same BJM study referenced above also showed that swimming starting from a young age had positive effects on youth development, the promotion of which is of vital importance to our city’s future.

For the above reasons, and in order to ensure Long Beach’s long and storied history of aquatic sports can be shared by all, the establishment of a public pool North Long Beach should be explored.

Fiscal Impact

No Financial Management review was able to be conducted due to the urgency and time sensitivity of this item.

² “Assessing the health impact of local amenities: a qualitative study of contrasting experiences of local swimming pool and leisure provision in two areas of Glasgow.” Sep. 2003.
<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/12933769/>

³ “Health and Wellbeing Benefits of Swimming Report.” Jun. 2017.
<https://www.swimming.org/swimengland/new-report-shows-health-benefits-swimming/>



Equity Statement

The Framework for Reconciliation, under Goal 4 (“Improve health and wellness in the City by eliminating social and economic disparities in the communities most impacted by racism”), Strategy 1 (“Advance health equity”), action E, calls on the city to “increase access to park space and recreation programming to foster physical activity, community connections, and safe places for children and families to play.” A public pool in North Long Beach, the area of the city with the least access to pools year-round, would serve as one of those spaces.

Suggested Action

Approve recommendation.