# MARION, IOWA
# OUTDOOR AQUATIC CENTER
# FEASIBILITY STUDY

2021

waters edge
AQUATIC DESIGN

# Acknowledgements

The following individuals were instrumental in assisting the planning team in developing the Outdoor Aquatic Center Feasibility Study for the City of Marion, Iowa. We thank all those individuals who participated in the process through meetings, site visits, surveys, and ongoing conversations.

**City Staff:**
Seth Staashlem, Parks and Recreation Director
Karlene Hummel, Aquatics/Program Coordinator

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**Community Members**
For their time and input through participating in public input meetings and the survey processes.

**Consultants**
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Confluence - Patrick Alford, Principal, PLA, RA, LEEP AP, ASLA

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# 1. Project Introduction

## Background

The City of Marion is a growing community in the great Cedar Rapids area, with a robust parks and recreation offerings. The City of Marion offers one outdoor pool and three splash pads; Marion Pool in Willowood Park, Thomas Park Splash Pad, Gill Park Splash Pad, and Willowood Park/Marion Pool Splash Pad.

*Marion Pool*

Marion Pool was built in 1986 and opened in 1987. The pool includes:

- 50-meter lap pool with a 25-yard, cross-direction lap lane area (3'6" – 13'6" depths)
- Wading/baby pool (1'0" depth)
- Training pool (2'0" - 3'0" depths)
- Two 1-meter diving boards
- Splash pad (added in 2001)
- Bathhouse, concession area, and filter building

Over the last 10 years, attendance to the Marion Pool has decreased, and the aging facility is experiencing ongoing and increasing maintenance challenges. The pool is operating in a capacity that is expected for the character and age of the facility, and strong efforts are being made to continue the successful operation of the Marion Pool. In the near future, significant repair and improvement will need to be made to the pool to keep it in operation.

Through the Master Park Plan in 2016 and Marion's ImagiNEXT project, the need was identified for an updated outdoor aquatic center to fit the needs of a growing population and to attract visitors. The existing pool's condition, along with the identified need for an updated outdoor aquatic center, prompted the City to commission an Outdoor Aquatic Center Feasibility Study to develop a plan that will provide direction on aquatic options and elements that will meet the needs of the community.

## Objectives and Scope of Work

It is through the feasibility study that the City of Marion will begin planning for a new and robust outdoor aquatic center - one that will serve the diverse range of users in Marion, along with maximizing opportunities for activities and use for many years.

The primary objective of the study is to provide guidance and options for the development of a new outdoor aquatic center in Marion. Specific objectives include:

- Evaluating the current and future needs for a new outdoor aquatic center.
- Identify current trends and recommend proper elements and amenities of desired spaces and activities within an outdoor aquatic facility.
- Provide recommendations regarding size, location, and aquatic components.
- Provide recommendations regarding potential revenue-generating opportunities consistent with outdoor aquatic centers.
- Provide compiled census information and future projections of the market area.
- Help identify facility location, site analysis, and land acquisition.
- Provide conceptual and schematic design alternatives and associated costs.

The Scope of Work for the study includes:

- Public outreach
- Market analysis
- Business plan
- Facility programming/planning
- Site analysis
- Schematic design alternatives and costs
- Report

## Executive Summary

The feasibility study was conducted to explore options to meet current and future outdoor aquatic needs in Marion and to function as a guide for future decision making regarding outdoor swimming opportunities and enhancements. Along with that, an analysis was conducted on management, operating, and programmatic opportunities, and recommendations are provided for operations via a business plan.

When planning, it is important to merge perspectives from three key sources to develop the right plan. Those perspectives include the needs and desires of the community, city staff and operator goals, and industry trends and best practices.

Public outreach was central to the study, which included three public input meetings, two online surveys, Steering Committee meetings, a project web page, and pool tours with city leadership and staff. Through this process, it was clear that the public has an interest and high level of support for improved outdoor swimming facilities, and modern amenities and features are desired. It is also important that the fees and costs to utilize the facility are affordable. There is varied support for the location, with north and south Marion, along with Willowood Park, being the most common locations mentioned throughout the study.

The concept for Marion's new aquatic center was created with families, kids, swimmers, and spectators in mind. It includes six distinct areas, each with a unique focus and appeal. It was a goal of the project to create unique and "wow" amenities to attract visitors time and time again, along with ample seating, shade, and places to hang out. The new aquatic center was developed to serve as a regional destination, where Marion residents can utilize the facility along guests from outside of Marion, bringing business into the city and maximizing revenue potential. The six areas include:

- **Splash Pad** – numerous water features, seating, and shade
- **Kiddie Pool** – ideal for younger swimmers and their adults, with zero-depth entry, in-water bench and shade, toddler slide, family slide, basketball, and volleyball
- **Lazy River** – inner tubes and waves make this a truly leisurely river, with a zero-depth entry, rockscape to create a sense of being in nature, along with 3 large waterslides
- **Wave Pool** – the waves are the signature feature of this pool, allowing for all guests to find a space to enjoy the beach-like movements of the water and starting at a zero-depth entry
- **Lap Pool** – 8, 25-yard lanes that can hold swim team practice and competition, lap swimming, fitness, and other activities, with ADA access and a Ninja Cross obstacle course for fitness and competitive play
- **Dive Pool** – this deep-water pool holds a 1-meter diving board, 3-meter platform, and rockscape with an overflow edge to create the sensation of jumping off a cliff

Operationally, the new aquatic center is anticipated to operate in a cost recovery range of 72 – 100%. There is an opportunity to be at or above cost neutral by focusing on revenue-generating opportunities and closely monitoring expenditures, particularly for personnel.

Location is very important, however, there is mixed feedback regarding where a new aquatic center should be located. The two primary areas that are of interest to the community are at Tower Terrace and Winslow Road and around the area of Hwy 100. Willowood Park was explored, and community members were not as interested in having a larger aquatic center in this location, and it is a tight site for expansion. Due to the site conditions and proximity to the Highway, the area around 35th and Munier, north of Highway 100, is the recommended location for the new aquatic center.

# 2. Existing Marion Pool Conditions

Before planning for future aquatic options, it is helpful to understand what the City of Marion currently offers as a foundation. This includes a high-level review of the conditions of the Marion Pool, and how it operates. This allows the planning to include and expand upon those elements that are working well and helps identify goals.

The Marion Pool is in Willowood Park, at approximately 35th St. and Parkcrest Ct. The original facility opened in 1987 and offers a competition-focused 50-meter lap pool, separate shallow wading pool, and separate shallow training pool. In 2001, a splash pad was added to the park, however, currently operates independently from the pool (non-pool users can access the splash pad). The parking lot is located west of the facility, and residential property surrounds the facility on the north, east, and south sides.

The Marion Pool offers approximately 13,391 s.f. of water surface and holds approximately 537,863 gallons. The pool has continued to offer the same traditional design and amenities over the last 36 years, with the addition of a portable children's slide. Overall, the facility is in fair condition but offers a traditional 1980's pool character with minimal updates since its inception.

Waters Edge Aquatic Design performed a walk-through and visual assessment of the pool and pool systems at the Marion Pool in the summer of 2020. A summary of that visit follows below.

# Pool and Pool Systems

Wading Pool

The wading pool is 1'0" in depth and predominantly serves babies, toddlers, and very young swimmers. There are no play features. Perimeter decking is experiencing concrete failure, particularly at corners. The wading pool offers a skimmer gutter style, which is a dated style.

*Wading Pool*

*Skimmer Gutter*

Training Pool

The training pool ranges in depths of 2'0" to 3'0", and predominantly serves younger children. There are no play features. Perimeter decking is experiencing concrete failure, particularly at corners.

*Training Pool*

Lap Pool

The lap pool ranges in depths of 3'6" to 13'6". It is comprised of eight, 50-meter lanes with six, 25-meter cross-directional lanes. Two, 1-meter diving boards utilize the deep end of the pool. The concrete is showing failure along the perimeter decking and throughout the pool basin walls and floor. City staff have performed spot repairs and recoated surfaces to maintain operation over the years.

*Concrete Failure – Perimeter Decking*

*Concrete Failure – Pool Basin Floor*

*Concrete Failure – Pool Basin Floor*

*Concrete Failure – Pool Wall*

Piping

The piping for the pools is made of cast iron, an older piping material. The larger header pipes servicing the pools are believed to include durable pipe materials, however, the overall condition and remaining life is unknown. The smaller wall inlet pipes are in an unknown condition, but spot failures have occurred over time; remaining life is unknown.

*Pipe Break*

Mechanical and Filtration

The filtration system is made up of a vacuum Diatomaceous Earth (DE) system. The filtration system is functional with newer elements but is difficult to service and maintain; the filter requires significant efforts to manually clean the filters. Pool pumps and additional piping are in a room below grade under the main filter room, accessible by a ladder.

*DE Filter*

*DE Filter Cartridges*

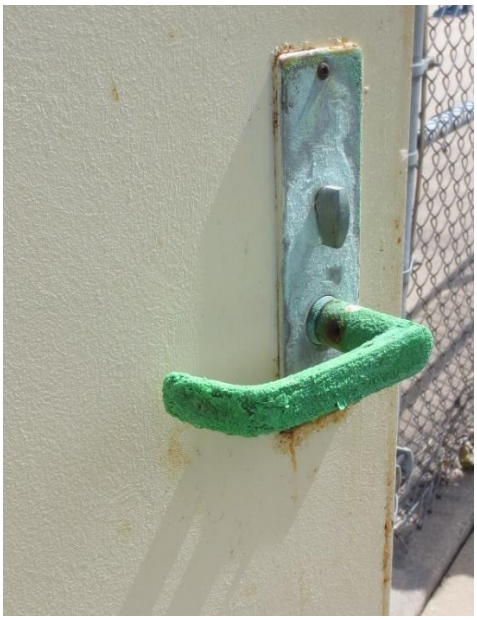
*Mechanical Area*

*Below Grade Pumps and Piping*

*Ladder Access*

Calcium hypochlorite is used for disinfection and is functional. Acid is used for pH control and is housed in a separate room. The acid room is experiencing rusting from acid fumes.

*Rusting in Acid Room*



## Buildings

There are two structures affiliated with the pool, including the bathhouse and concessions/mechanical building. The bathhouse contains the admission area, men's and women's restrooms, and staff/administrative areas. Both buildings appear to be in fair condition and provide reasonable support for swimming activities. The buildings appear to be in fair condition and provide reasonable support for swimming activities.

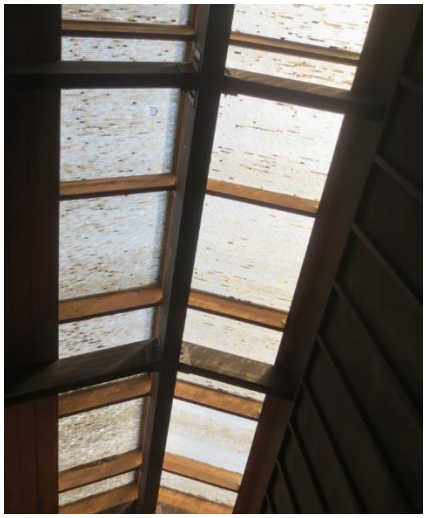
*Entrance and Bathhouse*

*Outside Seating and Concessions/Mechanical Building*

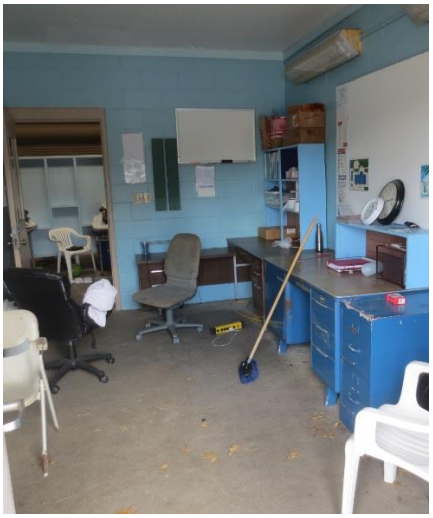
There are several notable exceptions to this. The entrance to the facility is an outdated, gender split entry, meaning guests must enter the pool area by entering either the men's or women's restroom first. There are clear skylight panels throughout the restroom areas, and they are brittle and break. The finishes and lighting throughout the bathhouse are outdated, and there is minimal air-conditioned space in the facility.

*Admission Area*

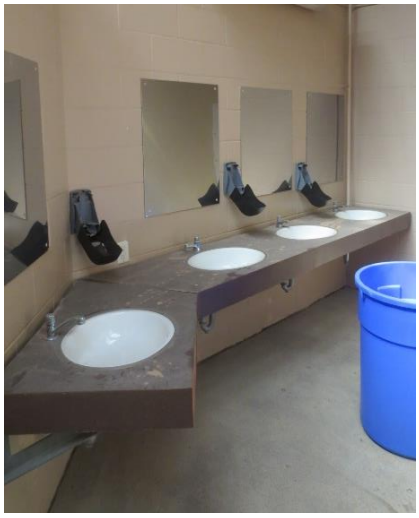

*Skylight Panels*



*Staff/Admin Area*



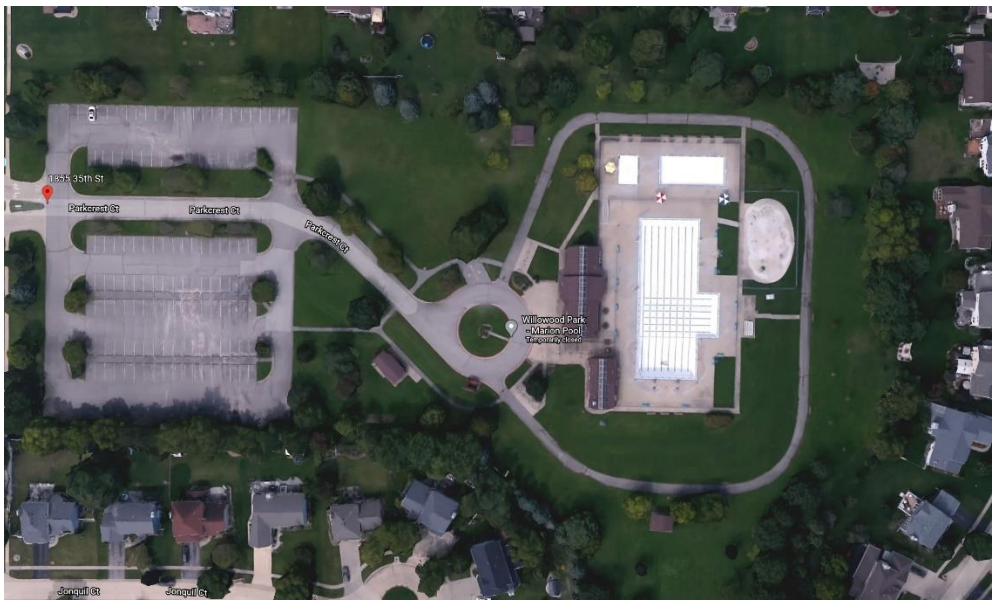
*Restroom Areas*



## Site

The pool is located within the greater Willowood Park, which offers an adjacent splash pad walking/jogging path, pavilions, grills, and restrooms.

*Willowood Park*




Willowood Park, and Marion Pool, are in a primarily residential neighborhood and are surrounded by residential properties. The pool has close adjacent neighbors to north, east, and south. Due to this proximity to residential properties, there are significant site constraints for growth and has very limited space to expand.

The parking lot is set back from the pool's entrance and has an incline from the parking to the entrance. It is reported that it is difficult to walk up that incline, particularly for those with impaired or limited mobility, or those who require the use of handicap parking. There are limited handicap parking stalls, which are located just outside of the pool entrance.

Willowood Park is valued by the Willowood Neighborhood, and there is interest in maintaining this as park space. It is of significant note that the park and pool were developed utilizing Land Water Conservation Funds, which were granted in 1984. Due to this, Willowood Park will need to remain an outdoor recreational space in perpetuity. If

the existing Marion Pool is significantly improved or removed, approval will need to be granted by the National Park Service ahead of beginning work.

*Land Water Conservation Fund Signage at the Marion Pool*

# Existing Operations

Operating Dates, Hours, and Fees

The Marion Pool is open from Memorial Day to Labor Day. The pool offers general open swim, lap swimming, swimming lessons, swim team, and pool rentals.

Regular Season: Memorial Day – August 21, 2021

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| • Rental Groups | Monday – Friday | 5 a.m. – 7 a.m. |
| • Swim Team | Monday – Friday | 6:45 a.m. – 8 a.m. |
| • Swimming Lessons | Monday – Friday | 8:20 a.m. – 11:50 a.m. & 4:30 p.m. – 8 p.m. |
| • Swimming Lessons | Saturday | 8:30 a.m. – 11:05 a.m. |
| • Lap Swimming | Monday – Friday | 11 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. |
| • Lap Swimming | Saturday | 11 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. |
| • Open Swim | Monday – Friday | 1 p.m. – 5:30 p.m. |
| • Open Swim | Saturday | 1 p.m. – 5 p.m. |
| • Family Swim | Monday – Friday | 5:30 p.m. – 7 p.m. |
| • Pool Rentals | Monday – Friday | 7:15 p.m. – 8:45 p.m. |
| • Pool Rentals | Saturday | 9:15 – 10:45 a.m. & 5:15 p.m. – 6:45 p.m. |

The adapted season runs throughout mid-August and early September. In 2021 that schedule is August 22 – Labor Day.

Fees to utilize the Marion Pool are as follows:

Daily Admission

| | |
|---|---|
| • Ages 3 & under | $2.75 / person |
| • Ages 4 & up | $3.75 / person |
| • Lap Swimming | $3.75 / person |
| • Family Swim* | $12 / family |

*(*Includes two adults and children, adults can be parents, grandparents, aunts/uncles, guardians)*

Membership

| | |
|---|---|
| • Individual | $100 |
| • Family | $190 |
| • Childcare Provider | $80 |

Programs

| | |
|---|---|
| • Swimming Lessons | $40 |
| • Swim Team | $80 |

- Pool Rentals (1.5 hours) $225

Revenues, Expenditures, Attendance, and Staffing

From 2010 to 2019, the Marion Pool collected approximately $137,000 annually in revenue on average. However, revenues have decreased by approximately 29% from 2010 to 2019, with total revenues in 2019 of approximately $107,000.

From 2010 to 2019, expenditures were approximately $203,500 annually on average. Expenditures have increased from 2010 to 2019 by approximately 10%, with total expenditures in 2019 of approximately $212,000.

Cost recovery is the percentage to which revenue offset expenditures. The higher the revenue that offsets expenditures, the higher the cost recovery level. The average annual cost recovery level from 2010 to 2019 was 68%, a lower level than what is typically expected for a municipal outdoor aquatic center (80% is a target, with higher levels for more inclusive, regional facilities). Cost recovery has been lower than that average since 2015, and in 2019 cost recovery was 50%, the lowest it has been in the last 10-years.

Attendance has seen similar patterns to cost recovery, which is expected. The average annual attendance number from 2010 to 2019 was just over 28,000 visitors. Attendance has decreased approximately 41% from 2010 to 2019, with total attendance in 2019 of 20,624 visitors. Of note, these numbers are for general admission only and do not account for program attendance, such a swimming lessons, swim team, and rentals.

To operate on a typical day, the Marion Pool requires approximately 14 staff, 9 of which are lifeguards.

# 3. Market Analysis

## Introduction

The Market Analysis conducted for the Marion Outdoor Aquatic Center Feasibility Study included taking inventory of aquatic facilities within the service area.

A review of the demographics of Marion was completed to understand the make-up of the community for which the outdoor pool services. Understanding the demographic make-up allows for informed alternatives and areas of focus for the facility and the activities that are explored. One of the key areas of study that is informed by demographics is the size and character of aquatic facilities within the system.

The information gathered was collected from the U.S. Census Bureau and online research.

## Service Area

The City of Marion is in Linn County, Iowa. Highway 13 / Highway 151 runs along the eastern portion of the city and connects to Highway 100 to the south. Highway 100 also intersects with U.S. Route 151 – Business which extends to the south into Cedar Rapids, Iowa, creating direct access between the two cities.

The service area for this study is identified as the area within a 10-mile radius from the Marion pool, not including drive-time or drive-mile radius.

*Marion, Iowa Map*

## Demographics of Marion and Service Area

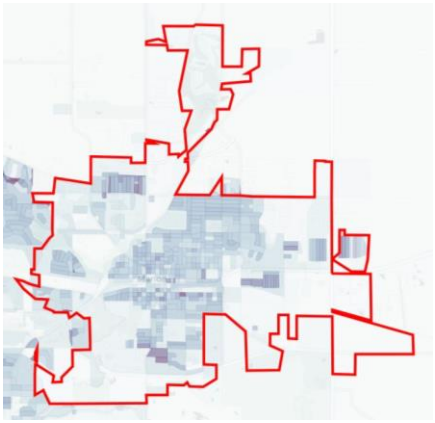
As of the 2010 U. S. Census, the population density of Marion encompasses 116.05 square miles with a population density of 2,166 per square mile.

Population Density Maps 1, 2, and 3 demonstrate the density of populations in Iowa and in and the surrounding areas of Marion. Maps provided by city-data.com.

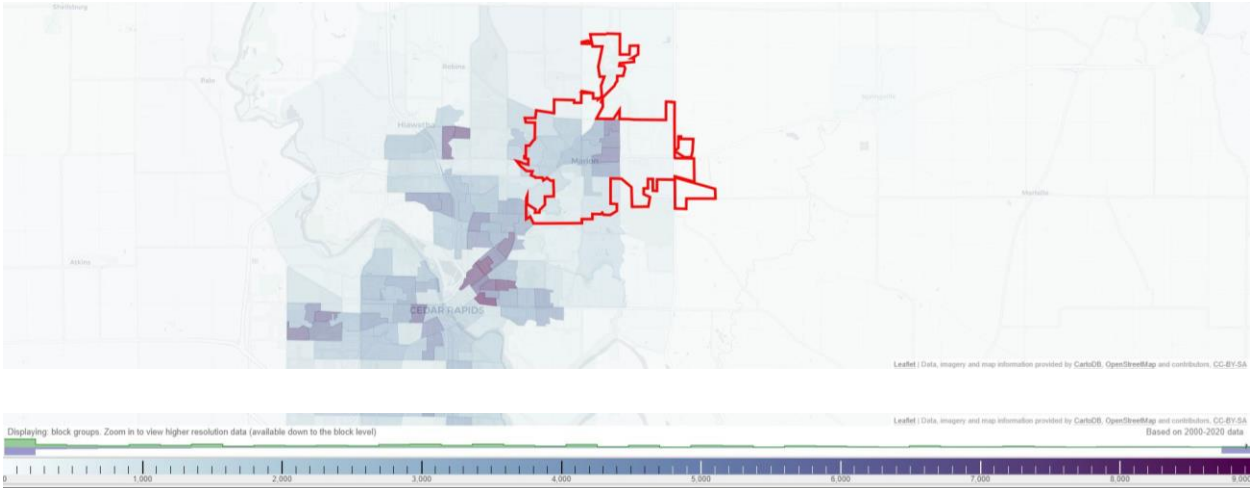
This is compared to the following cities in the area according to the 2019 U.S. Census Population Estimates at census.gov/quickfacts:

| | Total Population | Square Miles | Population Density (Per square mile) |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Marion, Iowa** | 40,359 | 16.05 | 2,166 |
| **Cedar Falls, Iowa** | 40,536 | 28.75 | 1,366 |
| **Cedar Rapids, Iowa** | 133,562 | 70.80 | 1,784 |
| **Davenport, Iowa** | 101,590 | 62.95 | 1,584 |
| **Dubuque, Iowa** | 57,882 | 29.97 | 1,923 |
| **Iowa City, Iowa** | 75,130 | 25.01 | 2,713 |
| **Marshalltown, Iowa** | 26,666 | 19.28 | 1,429 |
| **Muscatine City, Iowa** | 23,631 | 17.30 | 1,323 |
| **Waterloo, Iowa** | 67,328 | 61.39 | 1,114 |

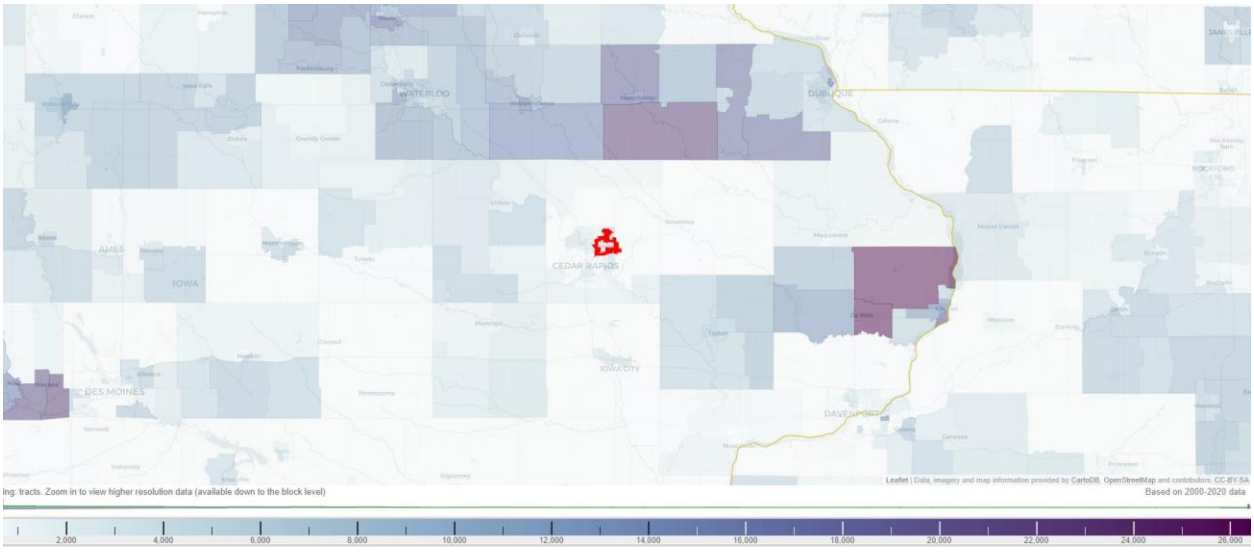
*Population Density Map 1*



*Population Density Map 2*

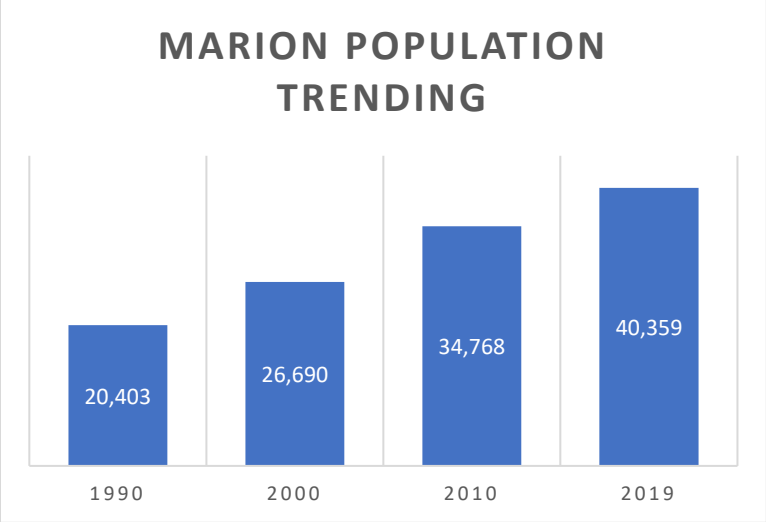



*Population Density Map 3*



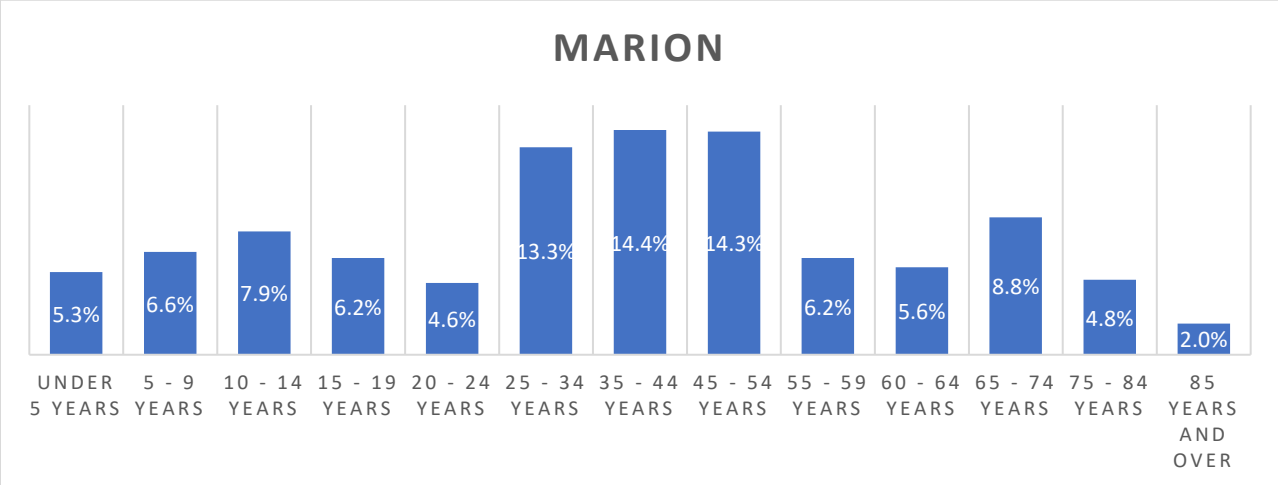

According to the 2010 U.S. Census, the population of Marion was 34,768, up from 1990 at 20,403 and 2000 at 26,690. The estimated 2019 population is 40,359, showcasing a population increase of approximately 98% in 30 years, or on average about 3% per year.

*U.S. Census Bureau – Total Population*




According to data.census.gov for 2018 population estimates, over 14% of residents are between the ages of 35 - 44 years and 45 - 54 years. Nearly 20% are under the age of 15 years.

*2018 U.S. Census Bureau Population Estimates – Age Breakdown*



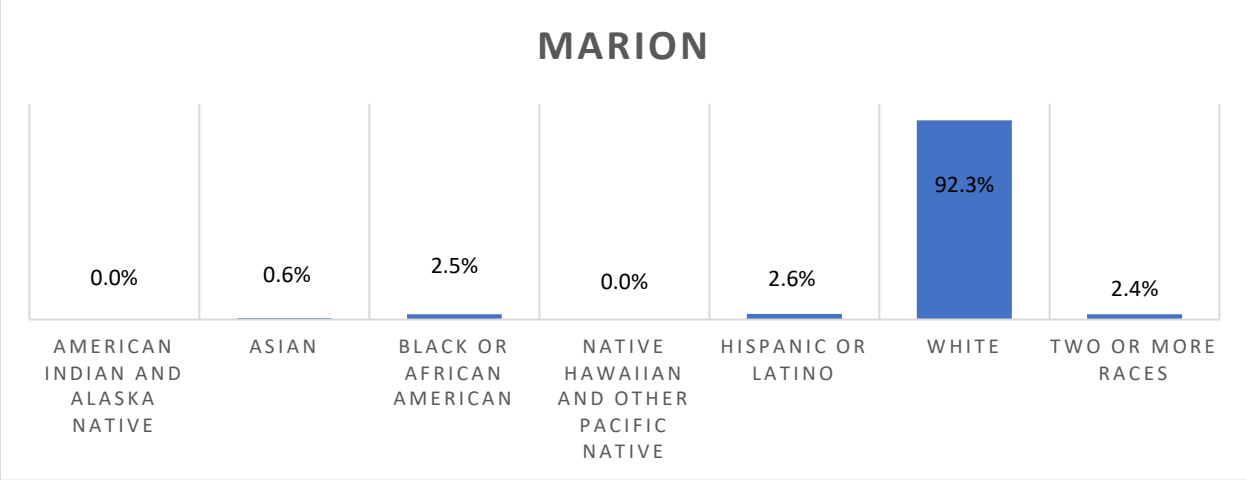
The service area for Marion is analyzed utilizing radii milestones at 2-mile, 5-mile, and 10-mile increments. To understand the demographic breakdown for the service area, the population within each of those radii milestones were considered utilizing mcdc.missouri.edu Circular Area Profiles (CAPS) – ASC. CAPS utilizes 2014 – 2018 aggregates of the American Community Survey (ACS) data.

*Circular Area Profiles (CAPS) ACS – Age Breakdown*

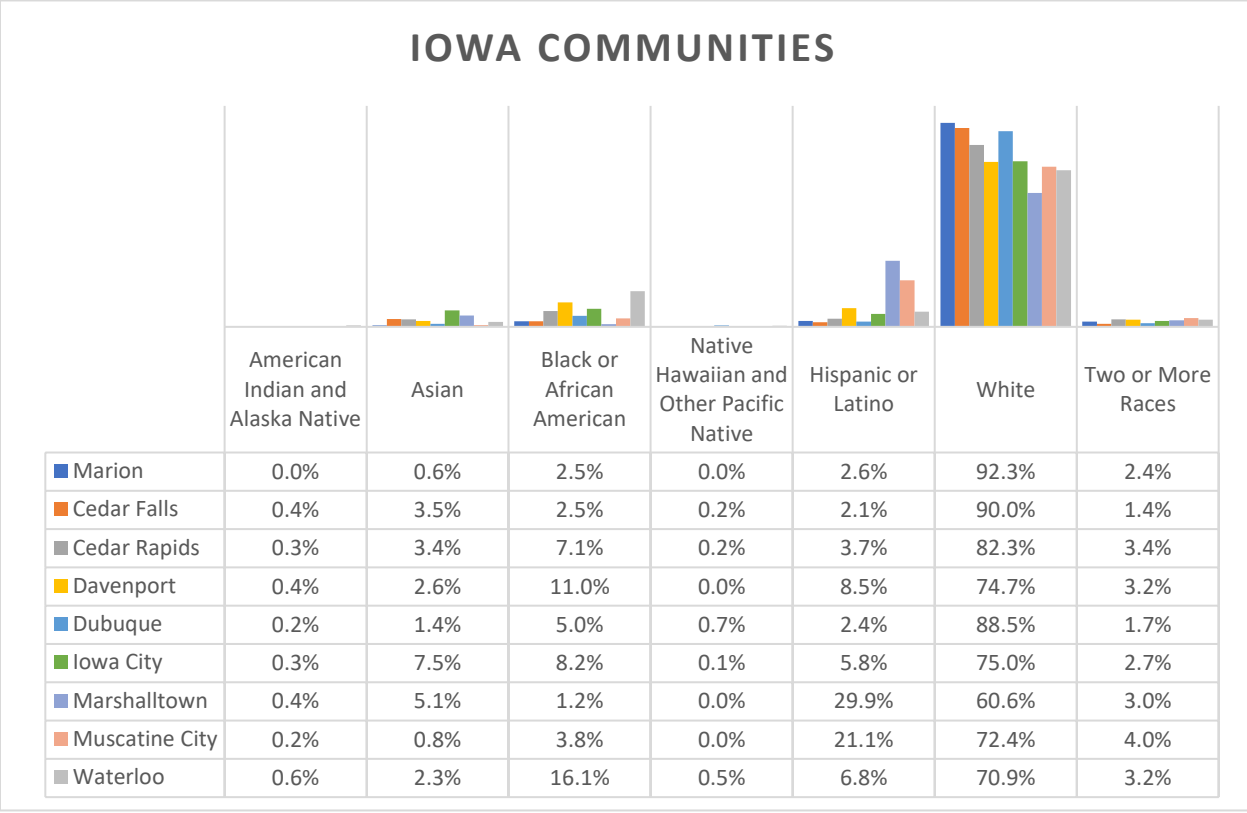
| | 2-Mile Radius | 5-Mile Radius | 10-Mile Radius |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Total Population** | 29,009 | 79,706 | 182,531 |
| **Under 5 Years** | 5.2% | 5.8% | 6.3% |
| **5 – 9 Years** | 6.7% | 6.7% | 6.2% |
| **10 – 14 Years** | 7.5% | 7% | 6.6% |
| **15 – 19 Years** | 5.9% | 5.7% | 6.5% |
| **20 – 24 Years** | 4.7% | 5.1% | 6.8% |
| **25 – 34 Years** | 13.4% | 14.3% | 13.9% |
| **35 – 44 Years** | 14.2% | 13.3% | 12.7% |
| **45 – 54 Years** | 13.7% | 13.8% | 13.1% |
| **55 – 59 Years** | 6.2% | 6.4% | 6.6% |
| **60 – 64 Years** | 6.1% | 5.9% | 5.9% |
| **65 – 74 years** | 9% | 8.6% | 8.4% |
| **75 – 84 Years** | 5.3% | 5.1% | 4.7% |
| **85 Years and Over** | 2.2% | 2.2% | 2.3% |
| **Median Age** | 39.8 years | 39.3 years | 38.5 years |
| **Median Household Income** | $66,189 | $71,552 | $66,328 |

Over 92% of the population of Marion is White per the U.S. Census 2019 Population Estimates. 2.5% and 2.6% of the population is Black or African American and Hispanic or Latino respectively.

*2019 U.S. Census Bureau Population Estimates – Ethnicity Breakdown*




*2019 U.S. Census Bureau Population Estimates – Ethnicity Breakdown (2)*




| | American Indian and Alaska Native | Asian | Black or African American | Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Native | Hispanic or Latino | White | Two or More Races |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Marion | 0.0% | 0.6% | 2.5% | 0.0% | 2.6% | 92.3% | 2.4% |
| Cedar Falls | 0.4% | 3.5% | 2.5% | 0.2% | 2.1% | 90.0% | 1.4% |
| Cedar Rapids | 0.3% | 3.4% | 7.1% | 0.2% | 3.7% | 82.3% | 3.4% |
| Davenport | 0.4% | 2.6% | 11.0% | 0.0% | 8.5% | 74.7% | 3.2% |
| Dubuque | 0.2% | 1.4% | 5.0% | 0.7% | 2.4% | 88.5% | 1.7% |
| Iowa City | 0.3% | 7.5% | 8.2% | 0.1% | 5.8% | 75.0% | 2.7% |
| Marshalltown | 0.4% | 5.1% | 1.2% | 0.0% | 29.9% | 60.6% | 3.0% |
| Muscatine City | 0.2% | 0.8% | 3.8% | 0.0% | 21.1% | 72.4% | 4.0% |
| Waterloo | 0.6% | 2.3% | 16.1% | 0.5% | 6.8% | 70.9% | 3.2% |

## Projected Population Growth

To project population growth in the future, the consultant team estimated the population growth utilizing the growth patterns of the City of Marion from 1990 to 2019. It is also reported by staff that Marion's population is expected to continue to grow into the future, particularly to the north and east.

The population is projected to continue to grow in Marion over the next 20 years, with a projected population of approximately 78,000. See the Population Growth table below.

*Population Growth*

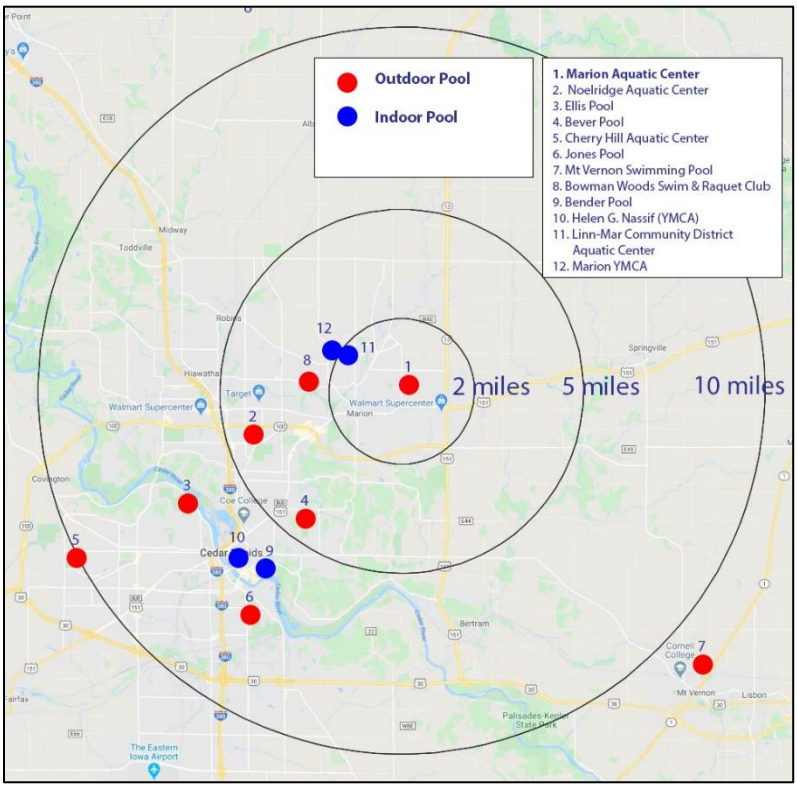
| | **Population Estimate** |
|---|---|
| **2019** | 40,359 |
| **2024** | 47,640 |
| **2029** | 56,234 |
| **2034** | 66,379 |
| **2039** | 78,354 |

# Facility Inventory

Taking inventory of service area facilities and how they serve the community is an important element in understanding aquatic service gaps and duplications, facility and activity saturation, and market competition. Facilities include those that are publicly and privately owned, outdoor and indoor, recreation and competitively focused, waterparks, and Splash Pads.

Of note, residential pools and fitness gyms were not included in the detailed facility inventory. Facilities that are utilized as reported by the community during the study can be found in the Public Engagement section in this report.

*Facility Inventory Map*



## Facility Inventory by the Numbers

Following the parameters of the service area and facility inventory, 8 facilities not including the Marion Pool fall within the market area, logged at 2-mile, 5-mile, and 10-mile radius increments; 1 additional facility was included just outside of the 10-mile radius due to its applicability for outdoor swimming.

The service area extends to a 10-mile radius because the City of Marion is in a metropolitan area, and throughout public engagement, it was reported that users visit facilities throughout the 10-mile service area. It is of note that community members also reported traveling outside of that service area for larger, more modern aquatic facilities. Additionally, in the Community Survey, 54% of respondents reported being willing to up to 15-minutes to participate in an outdoor swimming activity, and 27% are willing to drive up to 10-minutes. 22% are willing to drive more than 15-minutes. Most facilities within the service area fall within the 15-minute drive time, with those near the 10-mile mark are near 20 to 25-minutes.

Number of facilities within the service area:

- 1 – within 2-mile radius
- 4 – within 5-mile radius
- 5 – within 10-mile radius
- 1 – outside of the 10-mile radius

Indoor and outdoor pools were included in the inventory.

- 7 – outdoor pools
- 4 – indoor pools

To further understand the types of facilities and their applicability to the Marion Pool, facilities have been broken down into three (3) tiers as noted below.

| Tier Type: | Definition: | Quantity: |
|---|---|---|
| • Tier 1: | Public, outdoor pool and/or aquatic center | 6 |
| • Tier 2: | Private, outdoor pool and/or aquatic center | 2 |
| • Tier 3: | Private, large outdoor waterpark and/or indoor | 4 |

## Facility Inventory – Detailed

**Marion Pool** – Marion, IA
1855 35th St.

Features of Note:

- Wading and training pools
- 50-meter lap pool with 25-meter cross, directional lanes
- 2, 1-meter diving boards
- Splash pad

**Bever Pool** – Cedar Rapids, IA
2700 Bever Avenue SE
Tier 1

Features of Note:

- Zero-depth entry
- Water play features
- 6, 25-yard lap lanes
- Waterslide
- 1-meter diving board
- Shade
- Concessions
- Family changing room

**Bender Pool** – Cedar Rapids, IA
940 14th Ave SE
Tier 3

Features of Note:

- Indoor
- Lap lanes
- Slide
- Basketball hoop


**Bowman Woods Swim & Racquet Club** – Cedar Rapids, IA
6600 Brentwood Drive NE
Tier 2

Features of Note:

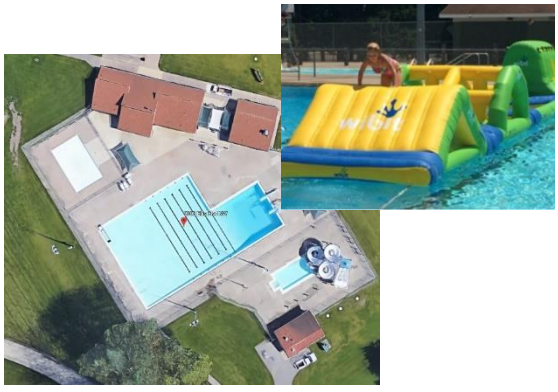
- Zero-depth entry
- Water play features
- 3 lap lanes
- 2 drop slides

**Cherry Hill Aquatic Center** – Cedar Rapids, IA
341 Stoney Point Road NW
Tier 1


Features of Note:

- Largest aquatic center in Cedar Rapids system
- Zero-depth entry
- Water play features
- Water play structure
- 8, 25-yard lanes by 6, 50-meter lanes
- Large waterslide
- Speed slide
- Drop slide
- 1-meter diving board
- Sand play area
- Shade
- Concessions
- Family changing rooms

**Ellis Pool** – Cedar Rapids, IA
2000 Ellis Boulevard NW
Tier 1



Features of Note:

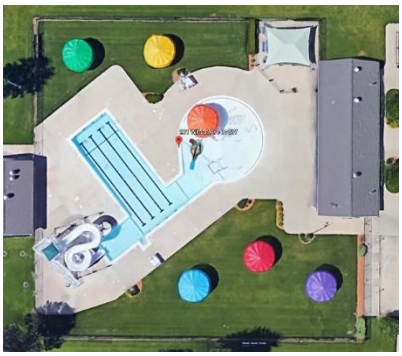
- Separate baby pool
- Shallow end (2 feet)
- 6, 25-yard lap lanes
- Waterslide
- 1-meter and 3-meter diving boards
- Shade
- Vending machines

**Helen G. Nassif (YMCA of the Cedar Rapids Metro Area)** – Cedar Rapids, IA
207 7th Ave SE,
Tier 3

Features of Note:

- Indoor pool
- Lap lanes
- Whirlpool

**Jones Pool –** Cedar Rapids, IA
201 Wilson Avenue Drive SW
Tier 1



Features of Note:

- Zero-depth entry
- Water play features
- 4, 25-yard lap lanes
- Waterslide
- Shade
- Vending machines
- Family changing room

**Linn-Mar Community School District Aquatic Center** – Marion, IA
Tier 3

Features of Note:

- Indoor pool
- 33 ½ meters x 45 yards
- Moveable bulkhead
- 2, w-meter diving boards
- Timing system
- Seating for 500 spectators

**Mt Vernon Swimming Pool** – Vernon, IA
919 2nd Avenue N
Tier 1


Features of Note:

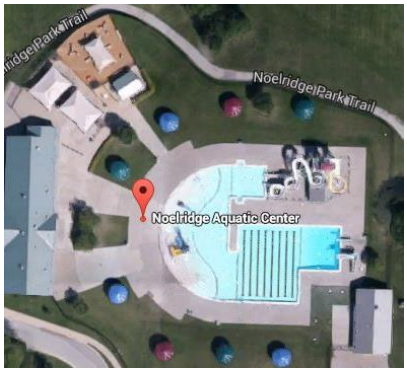
- Zero-depth entry
- Water play features
- 4, 25-yard lanes
- 2 drop slides
- 1-meter and 3-meter diving boards
- Shade

**Marion YMCA (YMCA of the Cedar Rapids Metro Area)** – Marion, IA
3740 Irish Dr
Tier 3

Features of Note:

- Indoor pool
- Spray zone on deck
- Tall, frog water feature
- Shallow water for classes
- 6-lane, 25-yard lap pool
- ADA ramp
- Spa

**Noelridge Aquatic Center** – Cedar Rapids, IA
1248 42nd St. NE
Tier 1




Features of Note:

- Zero-depth entry
- Water play features
- Water play structure
- 8, 25-yard lap lanes
- Two large waterslides
- Drop slide
- 1-meter diving board
- Sand play area
- Shade
- Concessions
- Family changing rooms

**Outdoor Pools of Note Outside of Service Area (11 – 40 miles):**

- Anamosa Aqua Court – Anamosa, IA
- Belle Plaine Aquatic Center – Belle Plaine, IA
- City Park Pool – Iowa City, IA
- Coralville Aquatic Center – Coralville, IA
- Coralville Indoor Pool – Coralville, IA
- Independence Aquatic Center – Independence, IA
- La Porte City Family Aquatic Center – La Porte, IA
- Manchester Aquatic Center – Manchester, IA
- Monticello City Pool – Monticello, OA
- Pacha Aquatic Center – North Liberty, IA
- Vinton Swimming Pool – Vinton, IA

**Indoor Pools of Note Outside of Service Area (11 – 40 miles):**

- Campus Recreation and Wellness Center – Iowa City, IA
- North Liberty Indoor Pool – North Liberty, IA
- Stoney Point YMCA (YMCA of the Cedar Rapids Metro Area) – Cedar Rapids, IA

**Nearby Splash Pad Locations**

Marion, IA

- Thomas Park Splash Pad – 323 Marion Boulevard
- Willowood Park Splash Pad – 1855 35th Street
- Gill Park Splash Pad – 3450 Hawthorne Street

Cedar Rapids, IA

- Cedar Valley Park, 2250 Blakely Boulevard SE
- Cleveland Park, 1600 8th Avenue SW
- Daniels Park, 940 Oakland Road NE
- Greene Square, 400 4th Avenue SE
- Hayes Park, 1924 D Street SW
- Hidder Park, 10th Street and 14th Avenue SE
- Jacolyn Park, Jacolyn Drive and Gordon Avenue NW
- Noelridge Park, 4900 Council Street NE
- Redmond Park, 3rd Avenue and 16th Street SE
- Time Check Park, 5th Street and J Avenue NW
- Twin Pines Park, 3500 42nd Street NE

# 4. Public Outreach

## Introduction

The Outdoor Aquatic Center Feasibility Study placed importance on hearing feedback from the Marion community, community stakeholders, and users of the Marion Pool. Solicitation and execution of public input were conducted to understand how the community currently utilizes pools, how they would like to use a future pool, and collect general household and program information.

Several methods of collecting public input were conducted, including:

- **Meeting with City staff and Aquatics Committee**
  June 29, 2020, via Zoom, July 16, 2020 @ City Hall, October 1, 2020, via Zoom, August 11, 2021, via Zoom, and ongoing project meetings

- **Online survey #1**
  Available October 5 through October 30, 2020

- **Open house meeting for public**
  October 21, 2020 @ Lowe Park Arts & Entertainment Center @ 4:30 – 6 p.m.

- **Zoom meeting for public**
  October 21, 2020, via Zoom @ 7 p.m.

- **Online Survey #2**
  Available May 4 through May 16, 2021

- **Willowood Neighborhood Meeting**
  May 3, 2021, via Zoom @ 5:30 p.m.

- **Zoom meeting for public**
  May 5, 2021, via Zoom @ 5:30 p.m.

- **Stakeholder phone calls**: Developers

Communication of each of the public meetings and the online survey was released via several different platforms, including social media posts on Facebook and the City's website, and newsletters. Marion Economic Development Corp (MEDCO) sent out messages about the study and feedback opportunities, and it was reported that printer flyers were dispersed around northern Marion (not City affiliated).

Full Public Outreach reports and surveys can be found in the Appendix.

## Public Meetings

**Public Meeting #1**

An open house meeting was conducted to meet and talk with community members, with a focus on presenting information about the existing facility, discussing their aquatic needs and ideas about future swimming facilities, and answering questions.

The Open House meeting was conducted on October 21, 2020, from 4:30 – 6 p.m. at Lowe Park Arts and Entertainment Center. 10 people signed in for the in-person open house meeting and 100% noted being a resident of Marion. 5 people participated in the virtual Zoom meeting that occurred just after the Open House; a recording was made available on the city's website. Waters Edge Aquatic Design staff and City staff were present for both meetings.

The following are key takeaways from the open house meeting:

- Support for an improved pool at the existing location
- Support for a new pool at a new location, primarily to the south at Hwy 100 and Hwy 13
- Support for new amenities and features
- Interest in multi-generational use and functions, safe, clean, shade

**Public Meeting #2**

A public meeting was conducted via Zoom to meet and talk with community members, with a focus on summarizing public engagement efforts, showcasing pool concepts, and answering questions.

The public meeting was conducted on May 5, 2021, from 5:30 – 7 p.m. via Zoom; a recording was made available on the city's website. Waters Edge Aquatic Design staff and City staff were present.

The following are key takeaways from the open house meeting:

- Fees and the costs to use will be very important
- Interest over what would happen with the existing Marion Pool if that location were not selected for the new facility
- Overall interest in a new, updated facility

**Willowood Neighborhood Meeting**

An open meeting was held for neighbors of Willowood Park to talk about the planning process, provide updates to the project, showcase concepts, locations for the new aquatic center, and talk about possible future uses at Willowood Park. To educate the neighbors on the meeting, 320 door hangers were dispersed in the area around Willowood Park.

The Willowood Neighborhood Meeting was conducted on May 3, 2021, from 5:30 – 7:30 p.m. via Zoom. 15 people called in. Waters Edge Aquatic Design staff and City staff were present.

The following are key takeaways from the meeting:

- Overall, there is support that the developed concept of a regional aquatic center is not best suited to be in Willowood Park
- There was sentiment that development should occur in southern Marion
- If a pool is not to be relocated in Willowood Park, redevelopment should include a wet feature, such as an enhanced spray ground, along with walking trails and activities for children
- There was an inquiry about a possible 2-pool system, with an updated neighborhood pool being in Willowood Park

# Online Surveys

## Online Survey #1

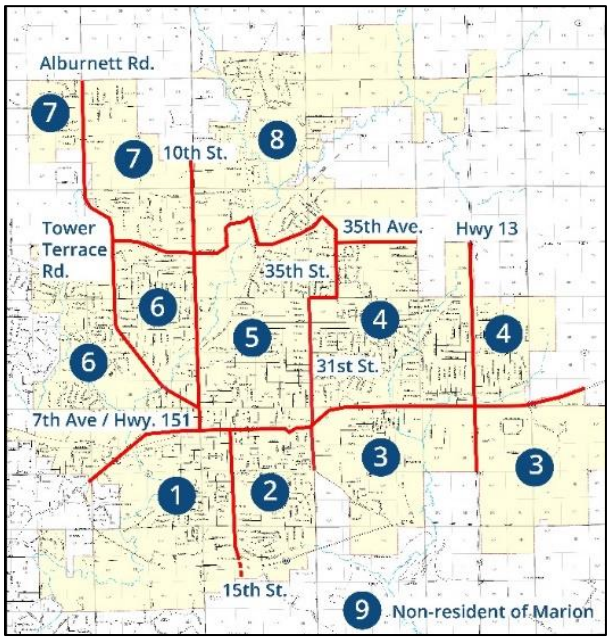
The first online survey was available October 5 – 30, 2020, and 1,365 online surveys were completed. Full survey results are in the Appendix. An overview of survey results can be found below.

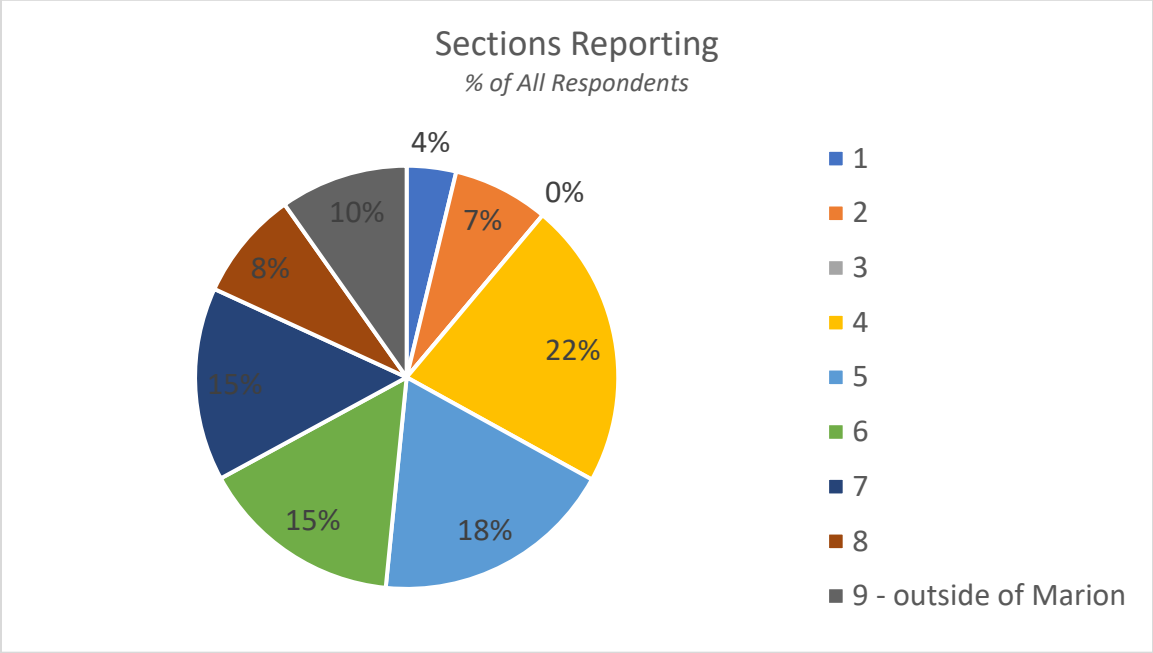
**Respondent Information**

Overall respondent demographics indicate that households from across the city submitted feedback through the online survey, with 89% reporting to be Marion residents. Most respondents were between the ages of 25- 44 years and have children in the household.

In the online survey was a question regarding where the respondent lived geographically, referred to as a "Section". Responses were distributed throughout the city, with representation in Sections 4 (21.5%) and 5 (18%) being the most reported.

*Section Map*



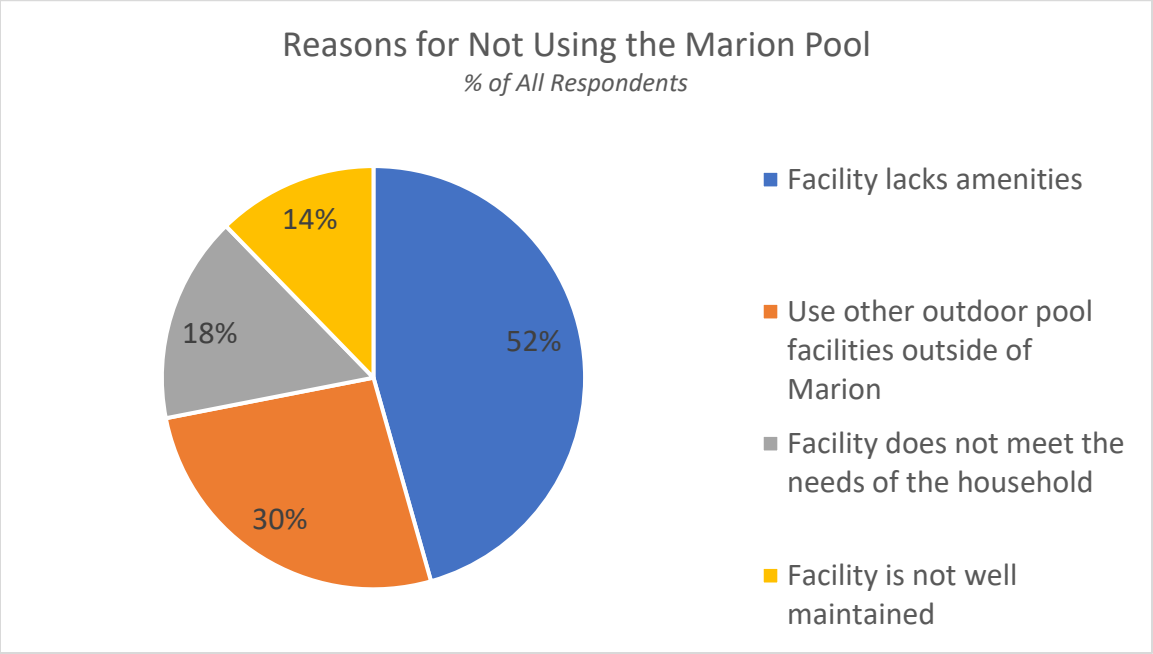



**Respondent Use Information**

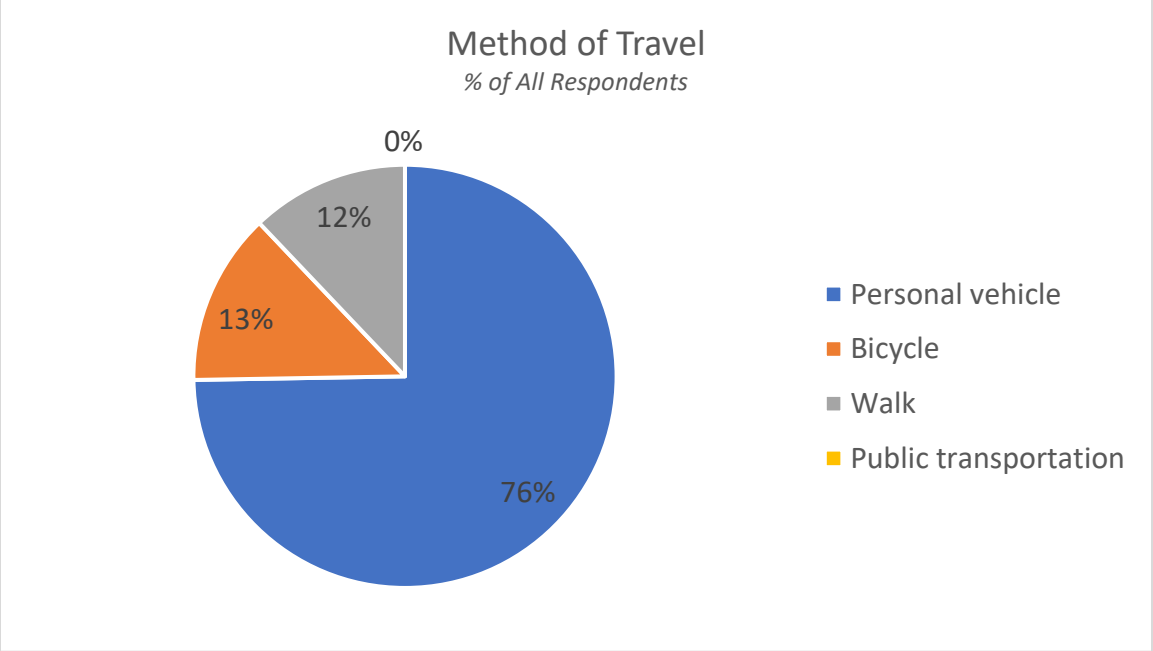
Most respondents do not have access to an HOA pool. Most have used the Marion Pool (62%) and most have used a Marion splash pad (60%) in the last 3 years. The Marion Pool is the most important aquatic facility in the city's aquatic system (77%). Although most have used the Marion Pool, even more have used another aquatic facility in the last 3 years (64%).

The frequency of use of the Marion Pool varies, with the most respondents indicating that they used to use the facility but do not anymore (25%). 20% use it several times a season, and 12% use it several times a week.

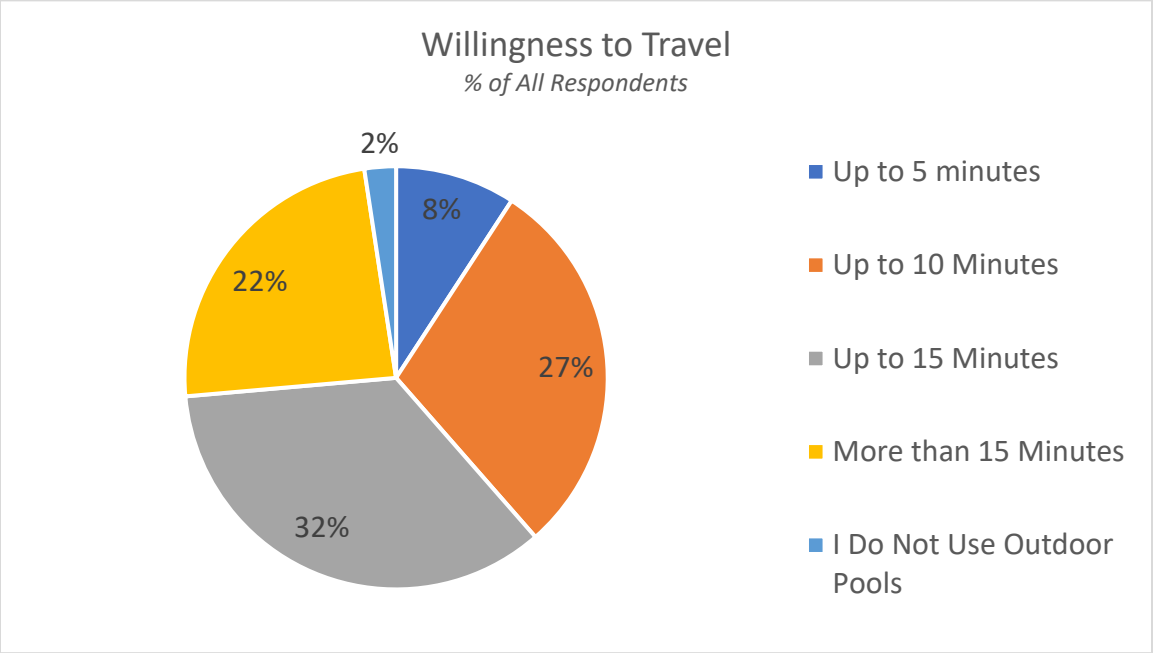
The top four reasons respondents do not use Marion Swimming Pool are:




Most respondents utilize a personal vehicle to travel to outdoor pools/splash pads most often (76%), and 13% ride a bicycle.

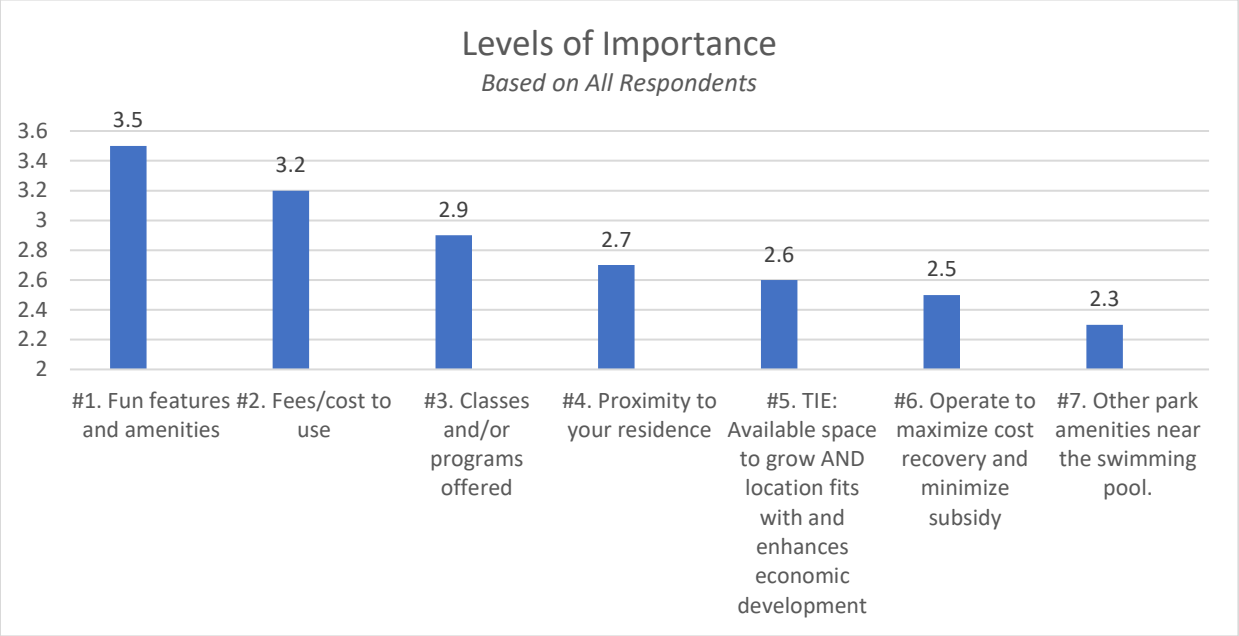


The highest percentage of respondents are willing to drive up to 10-minutes for an outdoor swimming activity.

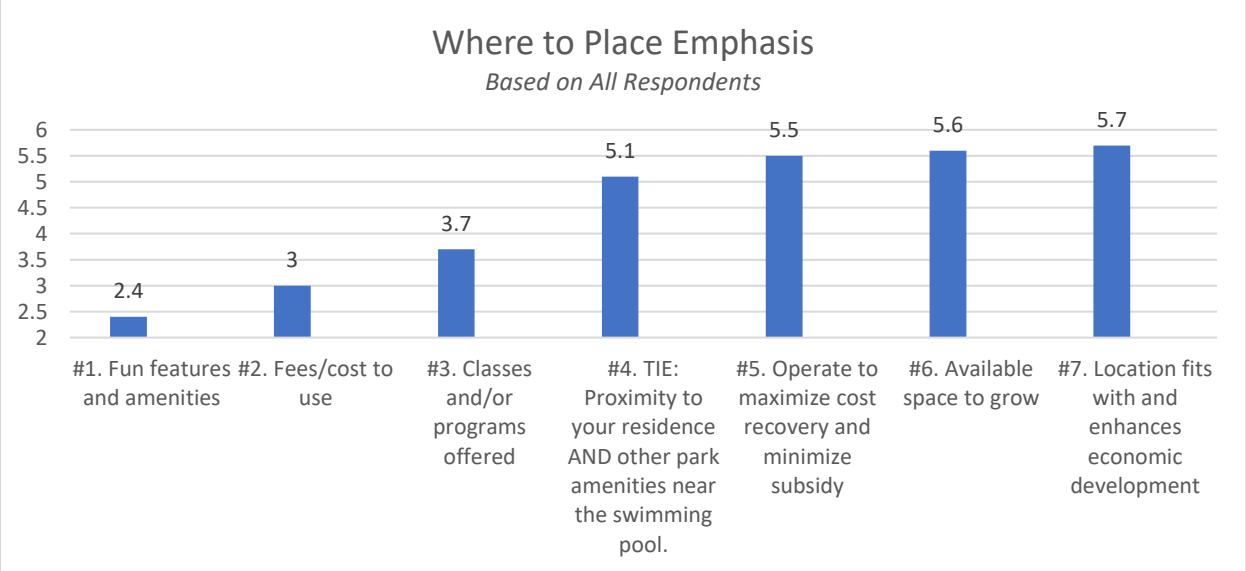


## Future Aquatic Needs and Goals

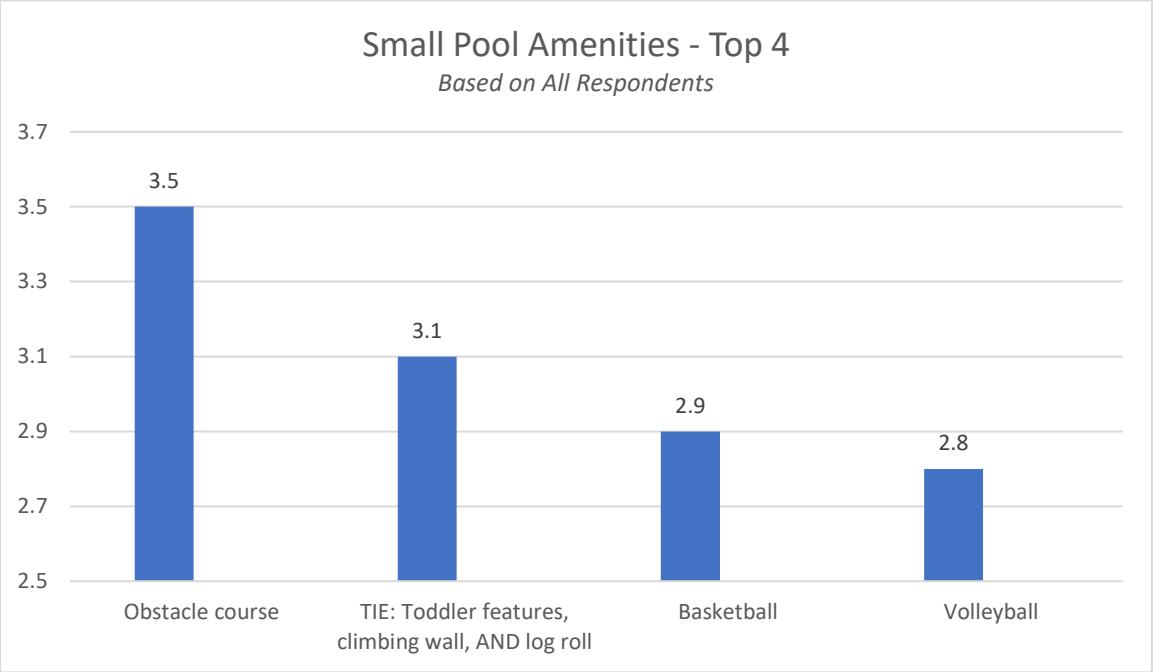
The following are the top four considerations for an outdoor pool according to their weighted score for level of importance (higher score ranks highest).



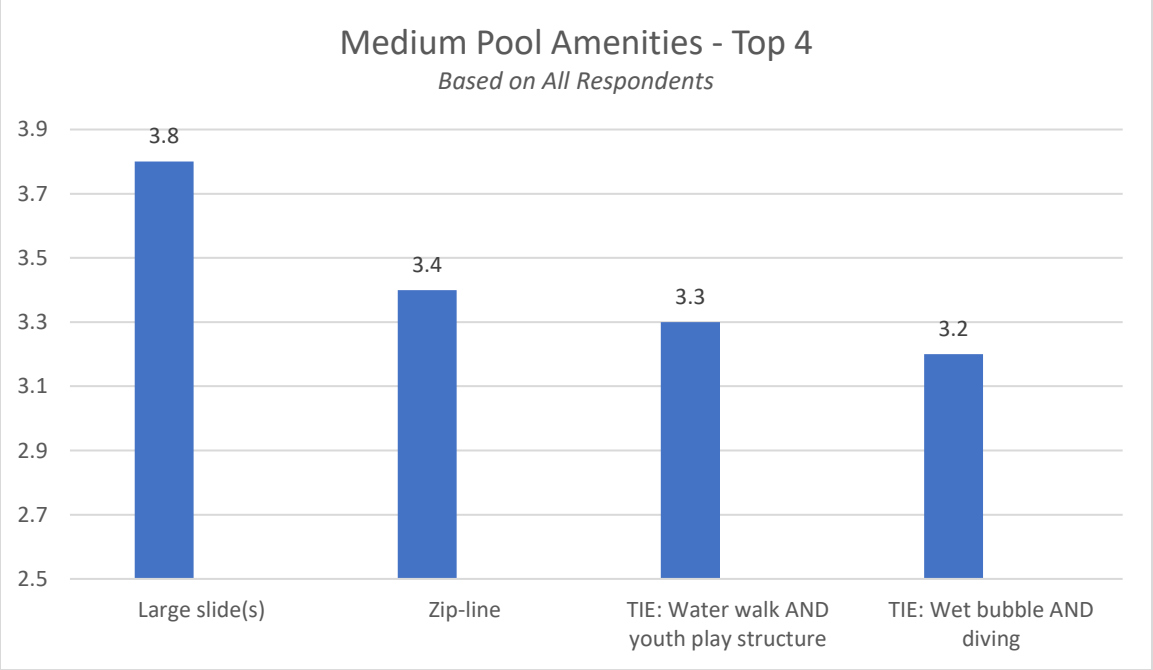

Respondents were then asked to rank each consideration regarding where emphasis should be placed when planning for an outdoor pool. Those rankings are listed according to their weighted score for level of importance (lower score ranks highest).



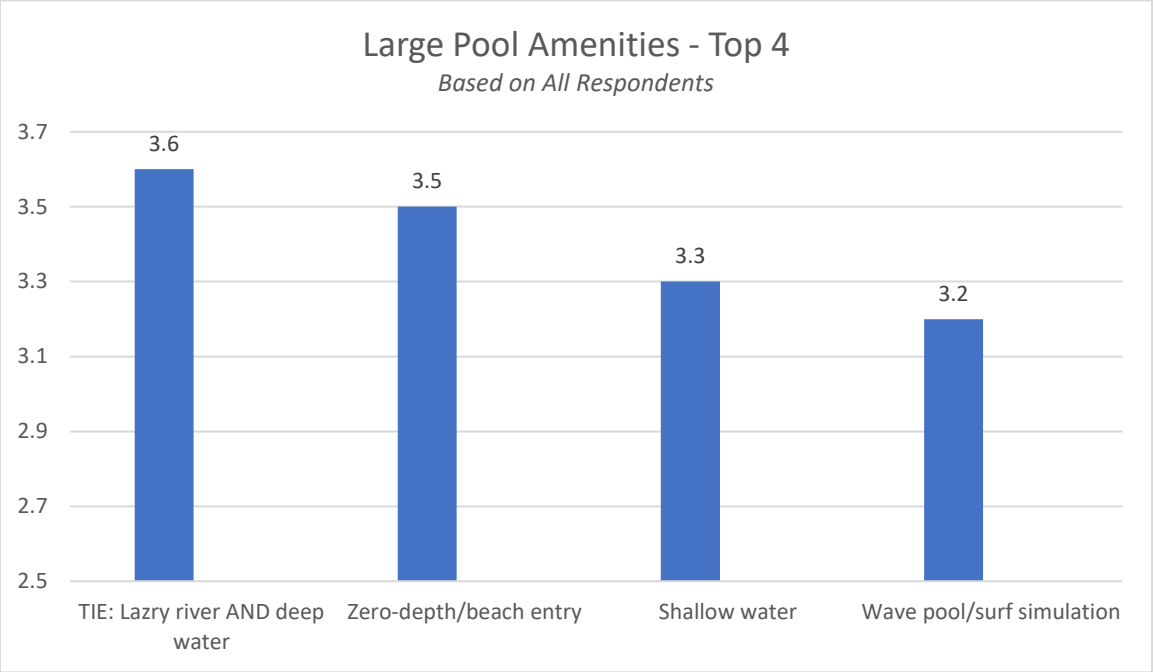
The top four small pool amenities of interest are listed according to their weighted score (higher score ranks highest).




The top four medium pool amenities of interest are listed according to their weighted score (higher score ranks highest).



The top four large pool amenities of interest are listed according to their weighted score (higher score ranks highest).




If features and amenities were included that are of interest, respondents marked that they would visit the pool several times a week (37%) and every day or nearly every day in a season (16%). This is up from the current utilization of several times a week (12%), every day or nearly every day in a season (5%).

**Additional Findings**

Throughout the study, there was expressed support for aquatics in Marion, including enhancement or development of more aquatic offerings, including features and amenities, and programs and activities. Feedback, comments, and questions submitted indicate that the costs associated with future use at a new pool is important and should be affordable.

Location support for the new aquatic center is varied, and primarily is focused on development in the following areas:

- To the north, where new development is growing.
- To the south, away from other aquatic facilities and due to lack of perceived growth in the south
- At the existing pool location in Willowood Park.

## Online Survey #2

The second online survey focused on collecting feedback on concepts and water slides, and was available March 4 – 16, 2021. 539 online surveys were completed. Full survey results are in the Appendix. An overview of survey results can be found below.

**Concepts**

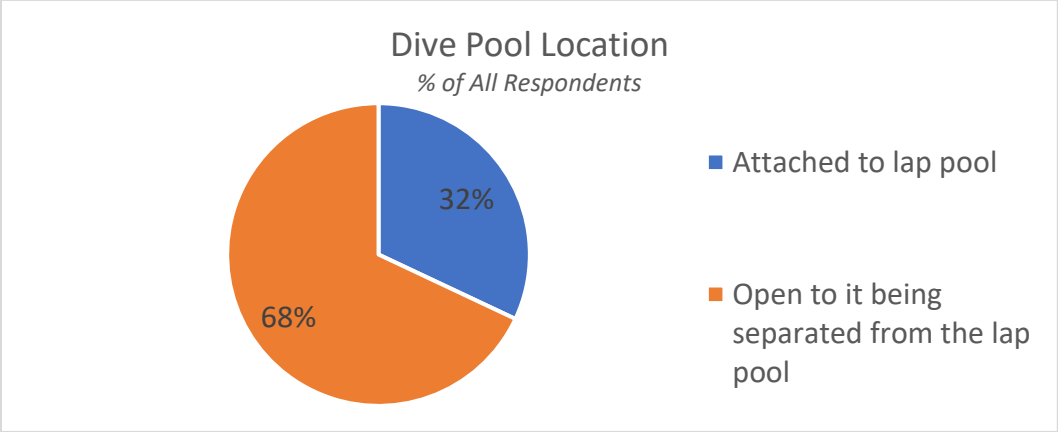
Three concepts were presented for respondents to vote on regarding which concept was of most interest to the household. Those concepts were:

- Concept A: Wave pool to the left and lazy river at the top, and dive pool separate from lap pool
- Concept B: Walkway over lazy river, wave pool facing lazy river, and dive pool attached to lap pool
- Concept C: Lazy river to the left, wave pool at the top, and dive pool separate from lap pool

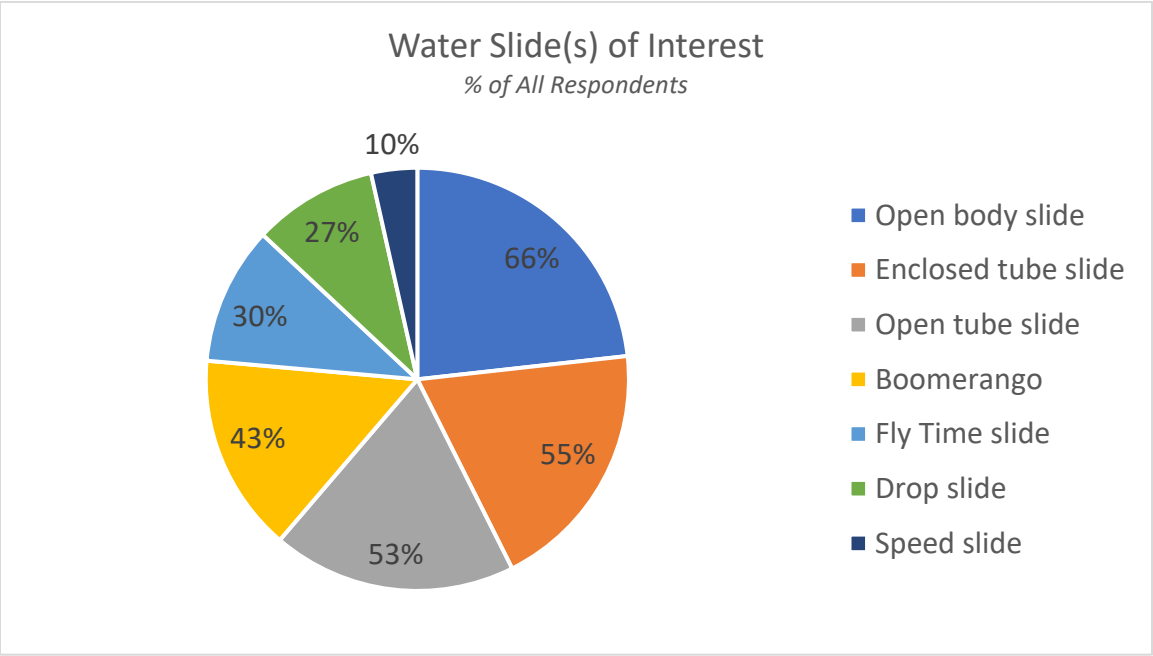
Concept B received the most amount of interest, followed by Concept A and then Concept C.

1. Concept B: 48%
2. Concept A: 29%
3. Concept C: 23%

One of the differences between Concepts A/C and Concept B is that in Concept B the dive pool/area is attached to the lap lanes, whereas in Concepts A/C it is separated. A question was asked about if the dive pool/area should be attached to the lap pool. Majority of respondents are open to it being separated.

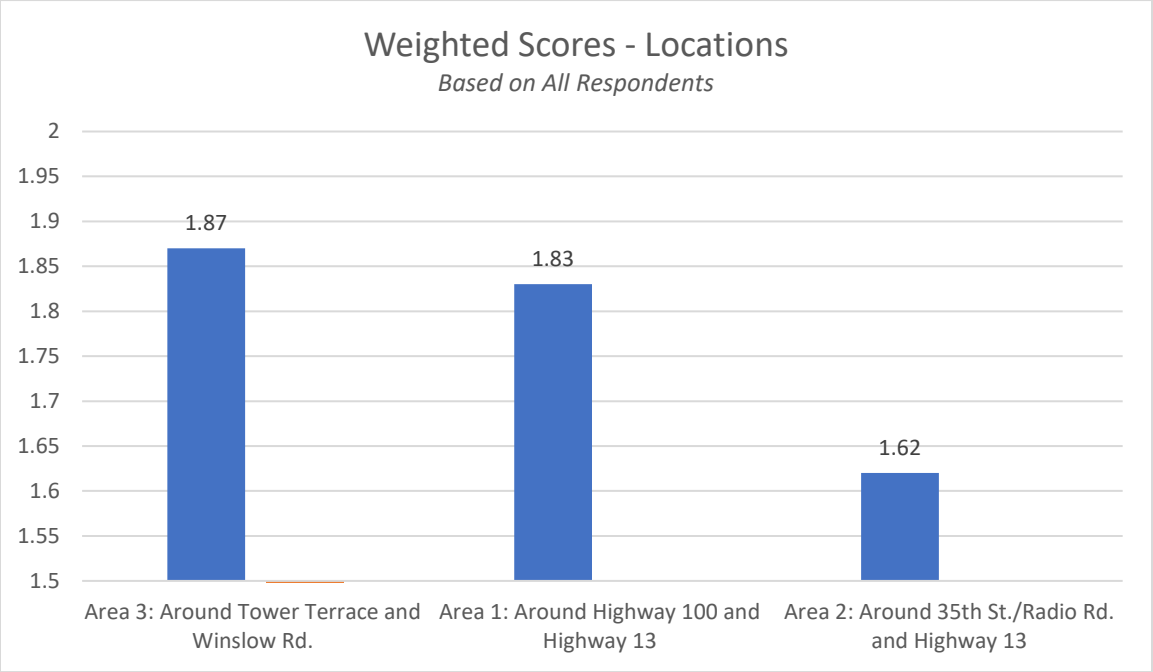


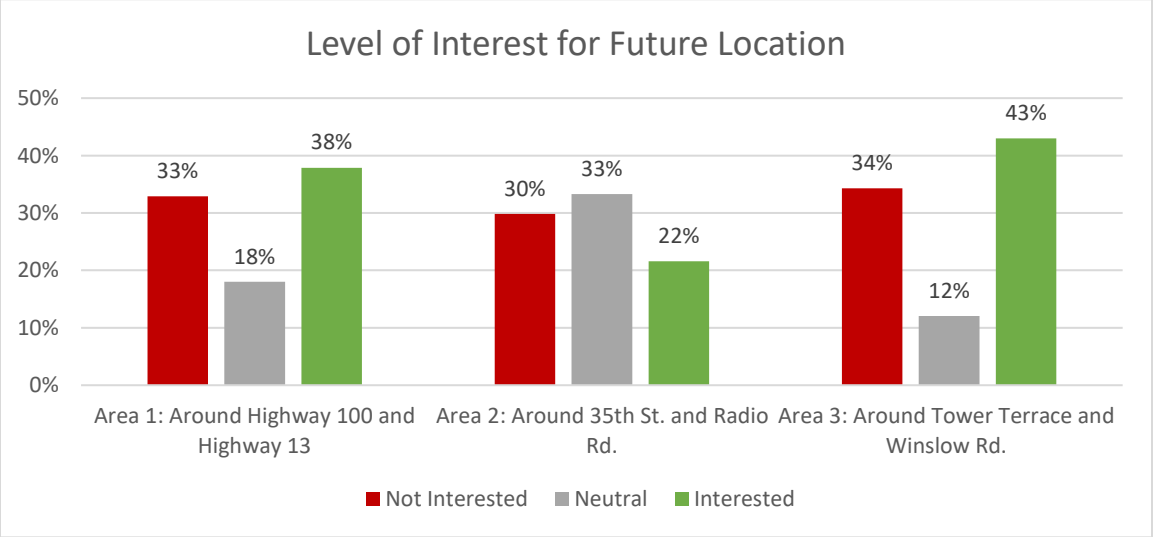
Water slide(s) were identified in the first online survey as a priority (first choice for medium amenities). To gauge community interest in specific water slide(s), respondents were able to select which specific slides were of interest to them. The open body slide, open tube slide, and enclosed tube slide were the top slides of interest. Based on feedback, the Fly Time, drop, and speeds slides are not priorities at this time.



**Location**

Respondents provided feedback on their level of interest in three different areas in Marion, all new locations for an aquatic center. There was no consensus on which location is of most interest or least interest. When weighted, Tower Terrace and Winslow only slightly outranks Highway 100 and Highway 13, and 35th St./Radio Rd. and Highway 13 ranks third.



Written feedback included the following:

- There is split feedback on if the new aquatic center should be located near highways/on the edge of the city to increase accessibility and that it should be in closer proximity to neighborhoods so kids can ride a bike/walk to the pool.
- Marion residents should receive a discount or fees need to be adjusted for differences between residents and non-residents.

# 5. Design Alternatives

## Introduction

Design alternatives developed for this study are intended to explore a new outdoor aquatic center in Marion and were developed based on the needs and interests identified throughout this study. The Design alternatives are intended to demonstrate project capital and operating costs, revenues, and expenditures. This is not intended to be the final design but to be used as a guide for future development.

The following primary goals are appropriate when considering development of a new aquatic center:

- The right mix of modern amenities:
    - Unique and varied features to capture attention, excitement, and continued use
    - Certain features should be considered as a foundation, including waterslides, a lazy river, lap lanes, diving, and zero-depth
    - Varied water depths, from zero-depth to deep water
- Existing and future programs can be accommodated, with flexibility in use of the pool spaces
- There is space to offer desired amenities now, and in the future if/when expansion is needed
- Create a positive experience for the guests, with comfort amenities such as shade, seating, family changing rooms, and rentable areas
- Maximize revenue potential and offer reasonable fees
- Appropriate size for a growing population

Multiple Alternatives were explored throughout the duration of the study, varying in size and offerings. After completing the public outreach and narrowing down the City's goals for the new facility, one final design alternative was developed. Design alternatives that were smaller in scale were eliminated due to not meeting expectations and goals of the public and City. Subsequently, a business plan was created for that final design alternative.

## Sizing

When developing a concept, the first step is to determine what is the appropriate size for the facility. This is based on population. Marion's population is just over 40,000 but is expected to continue to grow. When developing sizing recommendations, projecting the population in the future is a better guide than utilizing the population as it is today, as the pool space created to meet today's demand may not be large enough for the growing population in the future.

It is anticipated that this project would be developed in approximately 2026, with an opening in 2028. The population is projected to be around 54,500 at this time. This would put Marion in the population category of 50,000 – 90,000. It is expected that Marion would be in this category for 15-20 years, which makes it the target population category for sizing.

Midwest communities in the 50,000 – 90,000 population range offer an average water surface area of .48 s.f. per capita (range .21 - .78). If we apply this average to the projected Marion population at opening, this means Marion would have a target size of approximately +/- 26,000 s.f. of water surface.

Once the City reaches 90,000 or higher, more water surface may be needed to accommodate the swimming needs. This could come in the form of a second pool facility or an expansion to the new aquatic center.

# Benchmarking and Case Studies

## Benchmarking

Benchmark facilities allow for the study of how comparable facilities operate. The benchmarking exercise allows comparison between revenues, expenditures, and attendance across facilities as available. It includes assessment of:

- City population
- Estimated water surface area
- Expenses & revenues
- Cost recovery
- Attendance

To analyze performance and to develop parameters for projecting operational performance for the new aquatic center, up to nine benchmarked facilities were utilized to study the areas noted above; outliers to the data were removed if they showed atypical to other metrics and/or other facilities so as not to draw the average one way or another.

Benchmarked facilities used to gather financial data and projections were selected due to meeting at least one of the following criteria:

- Population size and/or surrounding population size like Marion
- Water surface area like the new aquatic center
- The character of the facility is like that of the new aquatic center, with more modern features and amenities

Of note, there is a wide variation in how agencies track finances for aquatic facilities, and at least one agency studied does not separate revenues, expenses, and attendance from its second pool location; due to this, formulas were implemented to best project metrics not made available.

The metrics found from this analysis are used as a guide to project operations of the new aquatic center. Expenses and revenues are impacted by facility size, and to account for this, expenses and revenues are broken down into these categories:

- **S.F. Ratio** Amount of square footage of water surface per capita
- **Expense Ratio** Cost per square foot of water surface
- **Revenue Ratio** Revenue per square foot of water surface
- **Cost Recovery** Level to which revenue offset expenses
- **Attendance Ratio** Amount of usage per capita

| | S.F. Ratio | Expense Ratio | Revenue Ratio | Cost Recovery | Attendance Ratio |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Average of up to 9 Benchmarked Facilities** | .54 s.f. | $27 / s.f. | $24.51 / s.f. | 95% | 2.33 |
| **New Marion Aquatic Center** | .49 s.f. | $26 - $32 / s.f. | $22.71 - $26.43 / s.f. | 72 – 100% | 1.87 – 2.33 |

## Case Facilities

Studying case facilities allows for quick comparison in what each facility offers, the fees the charges, and when and how guests can utilize the facility. These case studies assist in setting fees and schedules and allows for understanding service gaps and duplications.

There are no comparable facilities in the service area that offer larger, more modern offerings like what the City of Marion is exploring. However, this analysis helped to inform the Business Plan. A breakdown of case facilities and their operating dates, hours, and fees are in the Appendix.

# Design Alternative – New Marion Aquatic Center

The final design alternative for the new aquatic center offers 26,486 square feet of dynamic water surface. The aquatic center offers six distinct pools, each offering a different experience. A breakdown of each space is provided below.

## Concept Details

Splash Pad 4,070 s.f.

The splash pad offers a variety of interactive sprays for infants, toddlers, and young children to enjoy water playtime, with shade and seating for all. It is located adjacent to the concession stand, with the lap pool just behind it. Accessibility between the Kiddie Pool and Splash Pad is quick and easy, and with the fence and surrounding landscape, younger guests in the Splash Pad have their own space to safely play.

Features include:

- A play structure with water sprays and slide
- A Labyrinth Water Journey feature that allows for deck level, interactive water play
- Multiple deck level sprays, medium size sprays, and taller sprays
- Bench seating
- Multiple shade structures around the perimeter
- A fence surrounds the spray pad so that it can operate independently from the pool if desired, such as in the spring/fall and/or before the pool opens during the summer season

Kiddie Pool 6,097 s.f.

The Kiddie Pool is designed to offer a fun and inviting space for younger and older children, with shade and seating for all. It is located at the front of the facility and is the first pool guests see when they enter the aquatic center.

Features include:

- Depth: 0'0" - approximately 2'0" - 3'0"
- Zero-depth entry
- Small sprays
- In-water bench and shade
- Toddler slide
- Family slide
- Basketball and volleyball

Lazy River 6,775 s.f.

The Lazy River is truly lazy, with 692 l.f. of floating space that can accommodate inflatable tubes. Integrated into the Lazy River are waves that add to the thrill of the river for those times guests want a little extra excitement; those waves can be turned off for programs and/or other use. Rockscape with waterfall features are incorporated in several areas to add visual interest and an additional interactive element; for those who do not want to get water on them from the sprays, the ride path is such that they can avoid them.

Attached to the Lazy River is a zero-depth entry area meant for riders to get on/off tubes, and for spectators to sit and watch riders go by. It provides another opportunity for families to be near each other while entertaining varying ages and interests.

The slide plunge pool is located just off the Lazy River, allowing for a centralized space for those seeking a high-energy space. Riders can enjoy large slides (up to 3) and will end in the plunge pool below; these riders and their tube(s) are contained in this area and do not enter the ride path of the Lazy River.

Features include:

- Depth: 0'0"- approximately 3'6"
- Zero-depth entry
- Waves
- Rockscape with water features
- 3 large waterslides (what is shown in the concept are: open body slide, open tube slide, and the Boomerango slide
- Storage for inner tubes
    - An idea that was explored during the study was to add an inflation capability to this area for ease.
- Staff bridge (to allow access to the interior of the Lazy River, such as for lifeguarding)


waters edge
AQUATIC DESIGN

Wave Pool 4,452 s.f.

The Wave Pool offers an experience in and of it itself, with waves that create an experience similar to the waves in an ocean. Children, teens, and adults alike will enjoy the Wave Pool because of its varying depths and movement of the water. Surrounding the Wave Pool is shade and seating, with a natural spectator space in the middle of the facility.

Features include:

- Depth: 0'0"- approximately 4'0" to maximum of 6'0"
- Zero-depth entry
- Waves
- Rockscape with water features
- Seating and shade

Lap Pool 5,167 s.f.

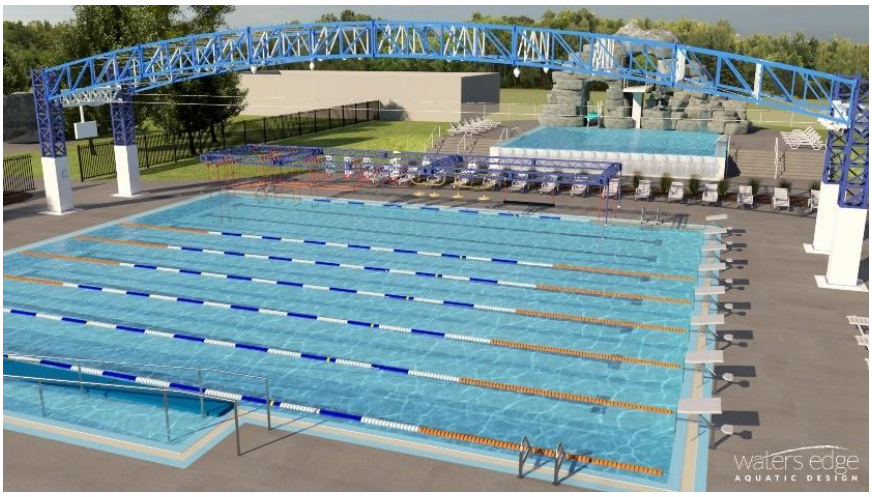
The Lap Pool offers space that will serve swim teams, lap swim, fitness, and open swim activities. The Lap Pool is set up to be able to accommodate swim team practice and meets, along with deeper water programs and use. Access is available for those of all abilities via an ADA ramp.

Uniquely, a Ninja Cross obstacle course will allow for additional programming opportunities, such as through fitness programs, competitions, or just for some fun competition between friends. The Ninja Cross would not impair use for swim team, as the play elements can be raised up and secured out of the way, and the structural columns sit back enough to allow for lining up and starting. Additionally, with the Ninja Cross oriented with the lanes, this allows for lap swim or other open swim use at the same time as the Ninja Cross.

Fencing surrounds this area to allow for swimming events or other programs to be held without having to close the rest of the facility and/or operate other portions of the facility. For example, a swim meet can be held at 6 p.m. and those athletes and spectators can enjoy the meet independently from the rest of the facility. When not being utilized in this way, the fencing is opened so that general users of the facility can also enjoy the Lap Pool and Diving Pool. Accessibility for this type of scheduling is made easy by the addition of a second, small admission building adjacent to the Lap Pool; this building would also include 1-2 family changing rooms for quick and easy restroom access.

Features include:

- Depth: 0’0” at the ADA ramp
- Depth: 4’0” to 6’0” in the lap area
- 8, 25-yard lap lanes
- Starting blocks
- Ninja Cross obstacle course
- Shade and seating


waters edge
AQUATIC DESIGN


waters edge
AQUATIC DESIGN

Dive Pool 1,675 s.f.

Offering its own oasis, the Dive Pool offers all deep water. With a 1-meter diving board and 3-meter diving platform, the user will have the sensation that they are jumping off a cliff into the water below. The raised pool wall in front of the diving equipment will give the appearance of an infinity edge, with cascading water coming over the side as jumpers enter the water.

Features include:

- Depth: Deep water throughout
- 1-meter diving board
- 3-meter diving platform
- Rockscape
- Raised pool wall with cascading waterfall
- Seating

Additional Amenities

Comfort amenities are included throughout the facility, which increases guests' experience and are often requested as much as, or more than, "fun" features. They also contribute to increased revenue through rental opportunities and maximizing the amount of time guests can spend at the facility because comfort needs are being met.

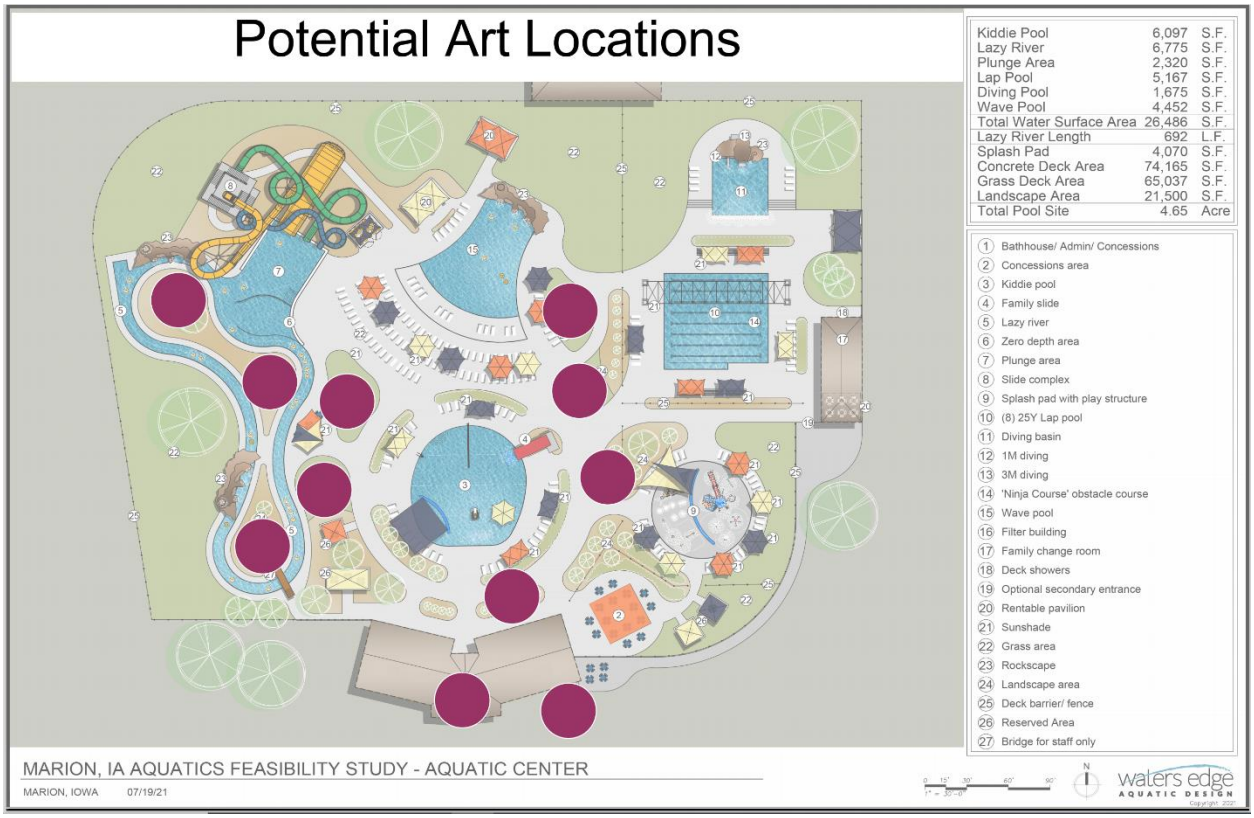
Features include:

- Deck space for seating and chairs
- Shade throughout the facility
- Concession area
- Family changing rooms
- Rentable shade/cabanas for parties or special use

## Art Inclusion

One of the unique elements identified is that art should be included in the design of the facility. Art guidelines as specified in the 2012 ImaginArt: A Public Art Plan for the City of Marion report should be incorporated in the final design.

For this study, an art allowance of $150,000 was allocated for budgeting purposes. As an example, art could include kinetic, taller art sculptures in the island of the lazy river to create vertical interest. Art integration in the entrance area via murals or ornamental gates are other ideas. Specific art was not selected; however, possible locations were identified. See the art location diagram below for potential art locations.



## Opinion of Costs

The table below demonstrates the opinion of a magnitude of costs for the development of the project, which include capital costs, design costs, other soft costs, and testing. Operational projections for expenditures, revenues, and cost recovery are also provided.

It is anticipated that this project will not be in development for approximately five years (2026). We developed costs in today's dollars to begin and added an inflation rate of 12% to account for the increase in costs over time, which is listed as the Magnitude of Project Development Costs in the table below. It is expected that costs will continue to go up every year.

To understand the capital costs of each body of water, an opinion of probable costs per pool in today's dollars is also noted below to demonstrate the costs per pool area. Site work, electrical, design, and other projects costs are not included in the individual pool and area breakdown but are included in the total Magnitude of Project Development Costs.

| **Opinion of Costs** | |
|---|---|
| **Magnitude of Project Development Costs (2026)** | **$22 - $27 Million** |
| Splash Pad | $589,500 |
| Kiddie Pool | $1.93 Million |
| Lap Pool (with Ninja Cross) | $2.15 Million |
| Diving Pool | $826,000 |
| Wave Pool | $1.44 Million |
| Lazy River (with slides) | $4.1 Million |
| Shade | $337,000 |
| Buildings | $2.5 Million |
| **Operating Budget** | |
| Expenditures | $700,000 - $840,000 |
| Revenues | $600,000 - $700,000 |
| Cost Recovery | 72% - 100%+ |

A detailed cost worksheet for Opinion of Probable Cost for facility development can be found on the following pages. Further information on operational projections can be found in the Business Plan section of this report.

waters edge
AQUATIC DESIGN

**Marion, IA - Feasibility Study**

Opinion of Probable Cost: Final Design Alternative

**Opinion of Probable Cost**

8/9/2021

| Component | Quantity | Units | Total Cost, $ |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Site Work** | | | |
| Demo/excavation | 12,000 | sf | $ 42,000 |
| Pool subgrade/grading | 26,486 | sf | $ 927,010 |
| Site utilities | 26,486 | sf | $ 264,860 |
| Site parking | 13,000 | sy | $ 975,000 |
| | | | $ 2,208,870 |
| **Deck and Landscape** | | | |
| Pool deck (excluding splash pad) | 74,165 | sf | $ 593,320 |
| Fencing and gates | 1,890 | lf | $ 103,950 |
| Grass turf areas | 5,078 | sy | $ 20,312 |
| Landscaping | 21,500 | sf | $ 107,500 |
| Rock (slide area) | 6,463 | sf | $ 25,852 |
| Post and rope | 90 | lf | $ 5,400 |
| | | | $ 856,334 |
| **Splashpad: Structure and Treatment Systems** | | | |
| Wet deck slab and treatment systems | 4,070 | sf | $ 264,550 |
| Play structure (Playnuk 02 shown) | 1 | ea | $ 200,000 |
| Water Journey (Labyrinth) | 1 | ea | $ 45,000 |
| Concrete bench | 1 | ea | $ 10,000 |
| Jet Stream No 1 | 3 | ea | $ 1,500 |
| Water Weave Spray | 2 | ea | $ 1,000 |
| Simple Spray | 2 | ea | $ 900 |
| Silhouette No 3 | 1 | ea | $ 3,500 |
| Silhouette No 4 | 1 | ea | $ 4,000 |
| Silhouette No 5 | 1 | ea | $ 4,000 |
| Snail No 4 | 2 | ea | $ 13,000 |
| Luna No 1 | 1 | ea | $ 11,500 |
| Oak Tree | 1 | ea | $ 17,500 |
| Fumbling Five | 1 | ea | $ 13,000 |
| | | | $ 589,450 |
| **Kiddie Pool: Structure and Treatment Systems** | | | |
| Pool basin and treatment systems | 6,097 | sf | $ 1,829,100 |
| Concrete bench and Sunshade - 20' Hexagon | 1 | ea | $ 10,000 |
| Sprays (Bubblers) | 7 | ea | $ 5,110 |
| Basketball goal | 1 | ea | $ 5,000 |
| Volleyball net | 1 | ea | $ 1,000 |
| Family Slide | 1 | ea | $ 70,000 |
| Toddler slide and safety pad | 1 | ea | $ 10,000 |
| | | | $ 1,930,210 |
| **Lap Pool: Structure and Treatment Systems** | | | |
| Pool basin and treatment systems | 5,167 | sf | $ 1,550,100 |
| Ninja Cross (obstacle course) | 1 | ea | $ 600,000 |
| | | | $ 2,150,100 |

waters edge
AQUATIC DESIGN

**Marion, IA - Feasibility Study**

Opinion of Probable Cost: Final Design Alternative

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Diving Pool: Structure and Treatment Systems** | | | | |
| Pool basin and treatment systems | 1,675 | sf | $ | 527,625 |
| 1-meter diving stand/board | 1 | ea | $ | 30,000 |
| 3-meter diving platform | 1 | ea | $ | 100,000 |
| Rockscape | 1,400 | sf | $ | 168,000 |
| | | | $ | 825,625 |
| **Wave Pool: Structure and Treatment Systems** | | | | |
| Pool basin and treatment systems | 4,452 | sf | $ | 1,335,600 |
| Rockscape | 850 | sf | $ | 102,000 |
| | | | $ | 1,437,600 |
| **Lazy River Pool: Structure and Treatment Systems** | | | | |
| Pool basin and treatment systems | 9,048 | sf | $ | 2,714,400 |
| Wave generation | 1 | ea | $ | 200,000 |
| Open body slide | 1 | ea | $ | 240,667 |
| Tube slide | 1 | ea | $ | 255,667 |
| Boomerango Slide | 1 | ea | $ | 410,667 |
| Rockscape | 1,700 | sf | $ | 204,000 |
| Bridge (wood) | 1 | ea | $ | 70,000 |
| | | | $ | 4,095,401 |
| **Shade** | | | | |
| Sunshade - 20' Hexagon | 12 | ea | $ | 108,000 |
| Sunshade - 12' x 20' (2 posts) | 12 | ea | $ | 102,000 |
| Sunshade - 20' x 30' (2 posts) | 3 | ea | $ | 39,000 |
| Sunshade - 15' x 15' (1 post) | 3 | ea | $ | 21,000 |
| Sunshade - 17' x 32' (4 post) | 1 | ea | $ | 10,600 |
| Sunshade - 30' x 30' (4 post) | 2 | ea | $ | 23,000 |
| Sunshade - 23' x 33' (5 post) -near lazy river | 1 | ea | $ | 15,000 |
| Sunshade - 40' x 40' (6 post) - near splashpad | 1 | ea | $ | 18,500 |
| | | | $ | 337,100 |
| **Buildings** | | | | |
| Main Bathouse | 4,000 | sf | $ | 1,200,000 |
| Main Bathhouse - entry/breezeway | 1,000 | sf | $ | 175,000 |
| Seconday Bathouse | 2,280 | sf | $ | 649,800 |
| Filter Building | 2,500 | sf | $ | 475,000 |
| | | | $ | 2,499,800 |
| **Electrical/Lighting** | | | | |
| Misc. Electrical | 26,486 | ea | $ | 715,122 |
| Lighting for night swimming | 14 | ea | $ | 126,000 |
| | | | $ | 841,122 |
| **Pool Heater** | | | | |
| Pool Heaters | 1 | ea | $ | 160,000 |
| | | | $ | 160,000 |
| **General conditions, supervision, etc…** | 1 | ea | $ | 853,764 |
| | | | | $18,785,376 |
| Contractor's O & P | 12% | | | $2,254,000 |
| **Total Construction Subtotal** | | | | $21,039,376 |

**Marion, IA - Feasibility Study**

Opinion of Probable Cost: Final Design Alternative

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Contingency | 5% | $1,052,000 |
| Design and Construction Admin | 7% | $1,473,000 |
| Testing | 0.25% | $46,963 |
| Geotech and Survey | | $20,000 |
| FF&E Allowance | | $150,000 |
| Art Allowance | | $150,000 |
| **Total Project Subtotal** | | **$23,931,339** |
| | | |
| Budget Factor (vs. Bid) | 0% | $0 |
| Construction | | $18,785,376 |
| Project | | $23,931,339 |
| | | |
| Inflation *(Projected 2026)* | 12% | $2,871,761 |
| Construction | | $21,039,621.01 |
| Project | | $26,803,100.06 |

## Phasing Options

Updating and adding new features to a facility over time is recommended, as it allows for new experiences to be added to renew interest once the facility has been open for several years. It is recommended to add or change features every 8 – 10 years to maintain a modern, fresh facility. Phasing features in also allows for capital improvements to be planned for well in advance, including long-term budgeting

There are opportunities to phase-in elements of the final design alternative over time. Those features and elements that are prime candidates for phasing in over time are listed below, along with their costs in today's dollars (includes costs for features, but not for misc. site work, deck, electrical, landscaping, design, and other soft project costs).

- Art — $150,000 Allowance
- Splash Pad — $589,500
- Ninja Cross — $600,000
- Wave Pool — $1.44 Million
- Boomerango Slide — $411,000
- Shade — Each structure ranges from $7,000 - $19,000. Several of the larger, periphery structures could be added at a later time.

*Phasing Option - Shade*

As an example, if the Splash Pad, Ninja Cross, and Boomerango slide were phased in and removed out of the initial budget, the Magnitude of Project Costs would reduce to $20 - $24.5 Million. If the wave pool was also removed, that would take the Magnitude of Project Costs down to $18 - $22.5 Million.

Several additional options and opportunities have been identified to reduce costs on the project. Other ideas include:

- Reduce the total amount of deck. For example, we are showing approximately 74, 200 s.f. of deck to allow for ample seating and a feeling of more openness. This number could be reduced to approximately 55,000 – 60,000 s.f., which would account for approximately $150,0000 - $155,000.
- Reduce the number of pools being heated. There is a budget for $160,000 for pool heaters, with additional expenditures for utilities.
- Omit the secondary bathhouse building, reducing the budget by approximately $650,000 - $655,000
- Offer usable and modern buildings but keep the finishes simple.
- Reduce the amount of Rockscape (wave pool, dive pool, lazy river).

# 6. Business Plan

## Introduction

Planning for a new aquatic facility is multi-faceted, and successful and informed planning includes both what it will take to build the facility and how it could operate once the doors are open. This planning will help guide how guests can utilize the pool and will demonstrate what it will take to meet operational goals for cost recovery.

The business plan is created utilizing past operating data from the Marion Pool and historical operating data from benchmark facilities of like character. The business plan includes information for:

- Programs
- Hours and schedule
- Fees
- Revenues
- Expenditures
- Attendance
- Staffing
- Future Programming Opportunities
- Alternative Funding

# Programs

Programs are what bring guests to a facility, both formal and informal, and it is important to understand what their needs are and how they may utilize the facility. Different activities will require and prefer different spaces and schedules. To begin the business plan, an inventory was taken to understand what programs are anticipated to need time at the facility, and what spaces may be allocated towards them.

| | Splash Pad | Kiddie Pool | Lazy River | Wave Pool | Lap Pool | Dive Pool | Rental Cabanas |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Open Swim** | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| **Lessons (swim/dive)** | - | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | - |
| **Aqua Fitness** | - | - | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | - |
| **Water Walking** | - | - | ✓ | - | ✓ | | - |
| **Lap Swimming** | - | - | - | - | ✓ | | - |
| **Swim Team** | - | - | - | - | ✓ | | - |
| **Pool Parties & Birthdays** | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |

# Hours and Schedule

The projected operating season for the new Marion Aquatic Center is anticipated to be Memorial Day to Labor Day. From approximately the last week of August to Labor Day there will be an adjusted schedule due to school going back in session.

Hours for the facility are broken down by day, as each day is slightly different. The tables below demonstrate projected schedules for known programs and general open swim.

**Monday – Friday:** Open Swim Noon to 8:00 PM

**General Pool Schedule : Memorial Day - Labor Day** *(adjusted hours August 22 - Labor Day)*

| Monday - Friday: noon - 8 p.m. | 5:00 - 6:30 AM | 7:00 AM | 7:30 AM | 8:00 AM | 8:30 AM | 9:00 AM | 9:30 AM | 10:00 AM | 10:30 AM | 11:00 AM | 11:30 AM | 12:00 PM | 12:30 PM | 1:00 - 6:00 PM | 6:00 PM | 6:30 PM | 7:00 PM | 7:30 PM | 8:00 - 10:00 PM |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Splashpad | | | | | | Open (not the pool) | | | | | | Open (to the pool) | | | | | | | |
| Kiddie Pool | | | | Swim Lessons (8:20 start) | | | | Little Swimmers (Toddler Time) | | | | Open Swim | | | | | | | |
| Lazy River | | | | | Aqua Fitness/Water Walking | | | | | | | Open Swim | | | | | | | Rental Option(s) |
| Wave Pool | | | | Swim Lessons (8:20 start) | | | | | | | | Open Swim | | | | | | | |
| Lap Pool | MOU Groups | Swim Team (6:45 start) | | Lap Swimming/Swim Lessons | | | | Lap Swimming/Swim Lessons/Adult Sunbathing | | | | | | Open Swim | | Lap Swim/Swim Lessons | | | |
| Dive Pool | | | | | | | | Dive Lessons | | | | Open Swim | | | | | Dive Lessons | | |

*Notes: Cabana Rentals not included on this schedule.*
*Daycare: 9 - 10:30 (2021: MWF)*

**Saturday:** Open Swim 11:00 AM to 8:00 PM

**General Pool Schedule : Memorial Day - Labor Day** *(adjusted hours August 22 - Labor Day)*

| Saturday: 11 a.m. - 8 p.m. | 8:30 AM | 9:00 AM | 9:30 AM | 10:00 AM | 10:30 AM | 11:00 AM | 11:30 AM | 12:00 PM | 12:30 PM | 1:00 - 6:00 PM | 6:00 PM | 6:30 PM | 7:00 PM | 7:30 PM | 8:00 - 10:00 PM |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Splashpad | | Open (not the pool) | | | | Open (to the pool) | | | | | | | | | |
| Kiddie Pool | | Little Swimmers (Toddler Time) | | | | Open Swim | | | | | | | | | |
| Lazy River | | Aqua Fitness/Water Walking | | | | Open Swim | | | | | | | | | Rental Option(s) |
| Wave Pool | | Swim Lessons | | | | Open Swim | | | | | | | | | |
| Lap Pool | | Lap Swimming/Swim Lessons/Adult Sunbathing | | | | | | | | Open Swim) | Lap Swim/Swim Lessons | | | | |
| Dive Pool | | | | | | | | | | Open Swim | | | | Dive Lessons | |

*Notes: Cabana Rentals not included on this schedule.*

**Sunday:** Open Swim Noon to 7:00 PM

**General Pool Schedule : Memorial Day - Labor Day** *(adjusted hours August 22 - Labor Day)*

| Sunday: noon - 7 p.m. | 9:00 AM | 9:30 AM | 10:00 AM | 10:30 AM | 11:00 AM | 11:30 AM | 12:00 PM | 12:30 PM | 1:00 - 7:00 PM | 7:00 - 9:00 PM |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Splashpad | Open (not the pool) | | | | | | Open (to the pool) | | | |
| Kiddie Pool | | | | | | | Open Swim | | | |
| Lazy River | | | | | | | Open Swim | | | Rental Option(s) |
| Wave Pool | | | | | | | Open Swim | | | |
| Lap Pool | | | Lap Swimming/Adult Sunbathing | | | | | | Open Swim | |
| Dive Pool | | | | | | | Open Swim | | | |

*Notes: Cabana Rentals not included on this schedule.*

# Fees

Fees for memberships, daily admissions, and programs were all of interest to community members during planning, and they set the tone for revenues and cost recovery. Fees are provided below for all known activities, programs, and general access to the facility. Fees are based on case study facility fees and are in-line for the size and character of the facility.

It is of note that fees change over time; as area facilities modify and increase their fees, it will be a consideration to review and modify these fees at the time of design and construction.

| Proposed Fees | |
|---|---|
| **Season Passes** | |
| Individual | $130 |
| Senior (60+) / Military | $98 |
| Family | $230 |
| Childcare Provider | $80 |
| Non-Resient: Individual | $163 |
| Non-Resident: Senior (60+) / Military | $122 |
| Non-Resident: Family | $288 |
| **Daily Passes** | |
| Child - 1 & Under | $3 |
| Child - 2 - 3 Years | $6 |
| Individual | $8 |
| Senior (60+) / Military | $6 |
| 10-Punch Pass | $48 |
| **Rentals (During Hours)** | |
| Shelter Rental - Small | $25 / hr. |
| Shelter Rental - Small (Peak Time) | $35 / hr. |
| Shelter Rental - Large | $35 / hr. |
| Shelter Rental - Large (Peak Time) | $50 / hr. |
| Pool Party (2.5 hrs) - Small Shelter | $310 |
| Pool Party (2.5 hrs) - Small Shelter (Peak Time) | $310 |
| **Rentals (After Hours)** | |
| Full Facility | $1,640 |
| Lazy River, Wave Pool, & Kiddie Pool | $1,365 |
| Kiddie Pool & Splash Pad | $550 |
| Lap Pool, Dive Pool, & Splash Pad | $550 |
| **Programs** | |
| Swim / Dive Lessons | $45 |
| Non-Resident: Swim / Dive Lessons | $56 |
| Private Swim Lessons | $20 / half-hr. |
| Swim Team | $90 |
| Aqua Fitness - Session | $24 |
| Aqua Fitness - Drop-In | $8 |

## Revenues

Revenues include fees collected for season passes, daily admission, rentals, programs, concessions, and other methods. Based on benchmarked facilities, along with facilities in the market area, fees and sales have been assessed to generate a revenue projection.

It is projected that the new aquatic center will bring in approximately $600,000 -$700,000 in revenue annually.

A detailed Revenue Projection can be found in the Appendix. A comparison of this projection to the benchmark facilities can be found in the Benchmark section on pages 47-48.

## Expenditures

Expenditures include ongoing costs that can be anticipated annually. That would include personnel, utilities, chemicals, and contractual/commodities. Expenditures often are more set than revenues, and therefore slightly less variable.

It is projected that the new aquatic center will cost $700,000 - $840,000 in expenditures annually.

The personnel line item is often the most expensive expenditure line item in the budget, often up to 60% - 70% of total expenditures. In creating a Business Plan for the new aquatic center, a detailed staff schedule was created to generate an accurate expenditure for personnel, which was created at 100% staffing levels to get the "worst-case scenario" for this line item. It is expected, however, that this line item is conservative and staffing efficiencies will be considered for actual operation. The staffing schedule can be found in the Appendix.

A detailed Expenditure Projection can be found in the Appendix. A comparison of this projection to the benchmark facilities can be found in the Benchmark section on pages 47-48.

## Cost Recovery

Cost recovery is the amount of revenue generated to offset expenditures. The higher the cost recovery, the less amount will have to be used from another financial fund to cover the gap, such as the city's general fund.

Modern, regional aquatic centers tend to have higher cost recovery levels than their smaller, community pool peers because they offer more amenities and features that are attractive to a wider audience, thus increasing utilization. These facilities often have unique offerings, and guests do not often experience them. This attracts guests from outside of the area in addition to community members who currently travel elsewhere.

The key to cost recovery is to maximize revenues and reducing/keeping expenditures down. Several key areas to plan for and monitor to increase cost recovery levels are:

- Increase participation by offering programs and activities that are revenue-generating, and by maintaining brand awareness and communication with the community. Programs and activities can help to offset the costs for general operation.
- Monitor fees to ensure your fees are competitive in the area; if neighboring facilities increase fees, it may indicate your fees need to be evaluated.
- Closely monitor personnel expenditures, including day-to-day and hourly schedules. This is the largest line item in the expenditure budget, and close monitoring and maintaining staff efficiency is one of the most effective ways to keeping costs down. However, safety guidelines and requirements should always be met.
- Reducing the number of days pool heaters are operating can reduce operating expenditures; natural gas can get expensive.
- Monitor discretionary spending in the contractual/commodities line items. Researching costs for goods and services, and competitively bidding when applicable, is another way to manage costs.

## 10-Year Projection

Revenues, expenditures, and cost recovery are not flat year after year. It is common for revenues to slightly decrease, expenditures increase, and overall cost recovery to decrease over time.

To demonstrate cost recovery over time, we utilized past performance at the Marion Pool in combination with performance at benchmark facilities over time to determine annual average changes. No two facilities or communities are the same; a facility should focus on maximizing revenue and reducing expenditures over time to ensure cost recovery goals are met. As the facility ages, the costs to operate and maintain the pool go up.

This projection was completed with an initial cost recovery range of 72% - 100+%.

Included in the Appendix is an Example Maintenance Expenses plan that showcases types of ongoing maintenance that could be expected to occur after the facility is opened.

waters edge
AQUATIC DESIGN

## Operating Options - Projections

| | Alternative Design - Year 1 | Revenue | Expenditure | Cost Recovery | Rev. per S.F. | Exp. per S.F. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Step 1:** Identify direct rev. and exp. | New Marion Aquatic Center (Lower Cost Recovery Limits) | $601,381 | $836,399 | 71.90% | $22.71 | $31.58 |
| | New Marion Aquatic Center (Middle Cost Recovery Limits) | $650,000 | $704,032 | 92.33% | $24.54 | $26.58 |
| | New Marion Aquatic Center (Higher Cost Recovery Limits) | $700,000 | $700,000 | 100.00% | $26.43 | $26.43 |

| | New Marion Aquatic Center (Lower Cost Recovery Limits) | Year 1 (Opening) | Year 2 | Year 3 | Year 4 | Year 5 | Year 6 | Year 7 | Year 8 | Year 9 | Year 10 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Step 2:** Apply annual % change and breakdown | Revenue | $ 601,381 | $ 595,367 | $589,413 | $583,519 | $577,684 | $571,907 | $566,188 | $560,526 | $554,921 | $549,372 |
| | Expenditure | $ 836,399 | $ 853,127 | $870,190 | $887,593 | $905,345 | $923,452 | $941,921 | $960,760 | $979,975 | $999,574 |
| | Cost Recovery | 72% | 70% | 68% | 66% | 64% | 62% | 60% | 58% | 57% | 55% |
| | | | **Revenue**: Used a decrease of 1% annually | | | | | | | | |
| | | | **Expenditure:** Used an increase of 2% annually | | | | | | | | |

**After 10-years, revenue can be planned to reduce by 1.5-2% annually, and expenditure to increase by 3-4% annually.*

| | Limits) | (Opening) | Year 2 | Year 3 | Year 4 | Year 5 | Year 6 | Year 7 | Year 8 | Year 9 | Year 10 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Revenue | $ 650,000 | $ 643,500 | $637,065 | $630,694 | $624,387 | $618,144 | $611,962 | $605,842 | $599,784 | $593,786 |
| | Expenditure | $ 704,032 | $ 718,113 | $732,475 | $747,125 | $762,067 | $777,309 | $792,855 | $808,712 | $824,886 | $841,384 |
| | Cost Recovery | 92% | 90% | 87% | 84% | 82% | 80% | 77% | 75% | 73% | 71% |
| | | | **Revenue**: Used a decrease of 1% annually | | | | | | | | |
| | | | **Expenditure:** Used an increase of 2% annually | | | | | | | | |

**After 10-years, revenue can be planned to reduce by 1.5-2% annually, and expenditure to increase by 3-4% annually.*

| | Limits) | (Opening) | Year 2 | Year 3 | Year 4 | Year 5 | Year 6 | Year 7 | Year 8 | Year 9 | Year 10 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Revenue | $ 700,000 | $ 693,000 | $686,070 | $679,209 | $672,417 | $665,693 | $659,036 | $652,446 | $645,921 | $639,462 |
| | Expenditure | $ 700,000 | $ 714,000 | $728,280 | $742,846 | $757,703 | $772,857 | $788,314 | $804,080 | $820,162 | $836,565 |
| | Cost Recovery | 100% | 97% | 94% | 91% | 89% | 86% | 84% | 81% | 79% | 76% |
| | | | **Revenue**: Used a decrease of 1% annually | | | | | | | | |
| | | | **Expenditure:** Used an increase of 2% annually | | | | | | | | |

**After 10-years, revenue can be planned to reduce by 1.5-2% annually, and expenditure to increase by 3-4% annually.*

| | Alternative Design - Cost Recovery | Year 1 (Opening) | Year 2 | Year 3 | Year 4 | Year 5 | Year 6 | Year 7 | Year 8 | Year 9 | Year 10 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Step 3:** Project Cost Recovery | New Marion Aquatic Center (Lower Cost Recovery Limits) | 72% | 70% | 68% | 66% | 64% | 62% | 60% | 58% | 57% | 55% |
| | New Marion Aquatic Center (Middle Cost Recovery Limits) | 92% | 90% | 87% | 84% | 82% | 80% | 77% | 75% | 73% | 71% |
| | New Marion Aquatic Center (Higher Cost Recovery Limits) | 100% | 97% | 94% | 91% | 89% | 86% | 84% | 81% | 79% | 76% |

## Occupancy and Attendance

Our design process will follow the applicable codes as they pertain to the City of Marion. At the time of this report, the City of Marion follows the 2018 IBC and the Iowa Department of Health Code. Under the IBC, the facility could accommodate up to 1,909 guests at a given time. However, with this patron count comes significant needs for water closets, lavatories, and showers. If the maximum occupancy is reduced to 1,200 - 1,500, the number of these units is reduced to be more in line with the budget and what we would expect for a facility of this type.

Based on benchmark facilities and the revenue projected, annual attendance is anticipated to be in the 100,000 range, with an average daily attendance of approximately 1,030 guests. This is in line with comparable facilities that report seeing an average of 600 – 1,200+ guests per day.

## Staffing

The New Marion Swimming pool is projected to utilize 29 to 37 staff at any given time. The breakdown of positions on any given day includes:

- Pool Manager: 1
- Head/Lead Lifeguard: 1
- Lifeguards (on pool): 17 – 21
- Break/First (Lifeguards): 5 – 6
- Admissions: 2 - 3
- Concessions: 2 - 3
- Deck Attendant: 1-2 (as needed)

The Lifeguard position will require the greatest number of staff, and due to that, a breakdown was created for the total number of hours needed to be filled by Lifeguards to understand the total number of Lifeguards that may need to be hired. It is estimated that there will be approximately 23,560 hours to be filled by Lifeguards. At 20 hours per week per Lifeguard, the new aquatic center would need to hire approximately 98 Lifeguards.

A preliminary Detailed Staff Schedule can be found in the Appendix, which demonstrates hours per day and number of staff at a time.

## Future Programming Opportunities

The Marion Pool currently offers core programs and activities, such as swimming lessons, aqua fitness, lap swimming, and swim team, and new programs have been added to the schedule for the new aquatic center, such as water walking in the lazy river and little swimmers (baby pool/toddler time).

Additional activities to supplement current offerings and/or attract both youth and adult users are listed below. Providing programs and activities that encourage the public to utilize the facility and help them feel a sense of place is encouraged; this increases the number of users who want to utilize the facility, bringing revenue with them.

- Adults only time/events (morning or evening)
- Adaptive aquatic classes
- Boy scout/girl scout classes for badges
- Corporate Challenge
- Fit mat / Glide Fit fitness classes
- Homeschool groups, gym classes
- Infant survival classes
- Ninja Cross competitions/races
- Post-summer season dog swim
- Special events: boat races, movie night, membership appreciation
- Specialty work-out (aqua cycling, yoga, etc.)
- Splashball – USA Water Polo (for youth)
- Swim conditioning training
- Triathlon training

# Alternative Funding

Alternative funding methods are revenue sources for the new aquatic center to cover expenses, and there are various options outside of being funded by a general fund or other City budget.

## Bond Sales

Further evaluation of exiting bonds and debt service will need to be conducted further, however, this is an option for financing a new project.

## Capital Campaign

A capital campaign is typically coordinated for capital improvements. This study, and associated imagery and Business Plan, can be used to create a capital campaign that solicits support from other alternative funding sources, such as charitable contributions and sponsorships.

## Charitable Contributions

Charitable contributions include gifts, endowments, trusts, donations, etc. At the time of this report, no known charitable contributions were identified to assist in funding operations or capital improvement, except for possible partial land donation by the property owner of Tower Terrace and Winslow Rd.

Other options for charitable contributions are for the targeted donation for development of specific areas of the facility. Examples could include:

**Shade and Cabana Spaces**
Donor Type: Multiple Donors

The shade and cabana spaces will be utilized daily by guests. These areas can become donor-paid areas, where a donor could reimburse the city for the capital costs of a shade or cabana structure and receive naming rights for that space, including adequate signage. Packages for naming rights for capital reimbursement could range from $8,000 for a smaller structure to $20,000 for the larger structure.

**Pools and Features**
Donor Type: Multiple Donors
The pool spaces themselves, along with the larger features, are available to receive donations for development. Any of the bodies of water could be developed utilizing funding from outside resources, either during development of the project or to add amenities later. Nice signage or placards could accompany the sponsorship, along with naming rights.

Sponsorship costs for these areas may vary by amenity, but packages could range from $20,000 - $50,000+. Possible options to sponsor would include:

- Any of the pools or the splash pad (6 areas)
- Ninja Cross
- The slide complex or the Boomerango slide

## Applicable Grants

There are grant opportunities available for development of aquatic facilities. Each program varies in the amount of funds available and where priorities rank year-to-year, however, these have been known and viable opportunities for grant funding.

- American Academy of Dermatology (AAD) Shade Structure Program provides an opportunity to purchase permanent shade structures.
    - Up to $8,000 for permanent shade structures
    - Deadline to submit is December with award in March the following year

- Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) – to develop viable urban community development needs, possible bathhouse opportunity (pool ineligible)

- Land Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) – a federal program that matches funds up to 50% for the development of outdoor recreation, including swimming pools.
    - The existing Marion Pool (1985 for $125,000) and Hanna Park (1973 for $12,556) were both developed using grants from the LWCF.
    - Marion would be eligible for up to $150,000 based on population size.
    - Deadline to submit is in March with award in April of the following year.

- The following grants are available for non-development purchases and are available for funding for facility supplies.
    - Association of Aquatic Professionals – lifejackets and swim lessons
    - Pool & Hot Tub Alliance – helps promote pool safety

Additional grant opportunities that are less known and affiliated with aquatic projects are listed below. Although these are not traditional or known to be viable options to receive funding for aquatic projects, they do assist in funding parks and recreation-related services and are options to explore.

- Coca Cola Foundation – support active healthy living and recycling
- Hydro Flask Parks for All – development, maintenance, and accessibility of public green spaces
- LL Bean Charitable Giving Fund – support to ensure access to outdoor recreation
- Lowes Community Partners Grant Program – helps build communities by giving support for grounds improvements and building renovations and upgrades

## Partnerships

Partnerships are considered a method of alternative funding because there can be a financial benefit when more than one agency or group cooperate to operate a facility. The financial benefit can come through direct compensation or through non-monetary support. At the time of this report, no known partnerships were identified, however, several non-monetary partnership ideas are offered. Those include:

- Work with neighboring communities without pools to market and offer services to those residents, increasing use and revenues.
- Coordinate or combine pool usage with a surrounding community (ex. offer memberships or agreement for Marion residents to utilize a neighboring community pool, and vice-versa).
- Offer a multi-jurisdiction pass, to allow for non-residents to add the new aquatic center onto their local pool pass at a reduced rate.
- Work with a local food establishment to offer unique or atypical concession food out of the concession stand. This could also reduce the resources needed to cook and prepare food, and the company would get their name out to the guests via packaging, signage, advertisements, or other incentive.
- Continue working with the YMCA on promoting and/or selling combination passes or other cooperative agreements.

## Sponsorship

Sponsorships are like partnerships, with a major distinction that one party will financially contribute to the other party for the exchange of promotional advantages or other perks. Sponsorships can be used to support operations in a variety of ways at varying levels of contribution, and often are renewable and/or available annually.

Sponsorship packages could be sold per season, or in bulk for a multi-season package that provides a discount. Additionally, sponsorships could be structured in a tiered format, where there is a lower-end, cheaper tier to a higher-end, more expensive tier that is more inclusive.

**Inner Tubes**
Sponsorship Type: Singular Sponsor

A business or businesses can reimburse the city's purchase of inner tubes and put their logo on the tubes. Day passes can be provided to hand out to family members and friends as an additional incentive. This sponsorship could also be combined with other types of sponsorships, such as Radio Advertising, due to the capital costs of purchasing inner tubes. This could range from approximately $7,000 - $10,000 first year, with a reduced rate in subsequent years.

A variation of this program would be that the city would purchase the tubes, and a business would contribute a lump sum to have their logo put on them. Day passes could also be provided as an incentive. This could range from approximately $2,000 - $5,000 annually or bi-annually.

These options are thought to be either / or and would not be offered concurrently.

**Radio Advertising**
Sponsorship Type: Multiple Sponsors

Utilizing a proprietary system for radio, Splash Radio, for example, is a way to offer not only music, but also customized messages, PSA's, advertisement for facility programs and city events, along with advertisements for businesses. Packages could range from $1,000 - $2,000 annually.

**Other Ideas**

- Some aquatic facilities offer sponsorship packages that allow for signage to be displayed prominently on fence lines of the facility (e.g., baseball fields). Packages for this could range from $500 - $3,000 annually.
- Offer specific sponsorships for targeted programs, such as swim team or swim lessons that would come with advertising mentions, website presence, and/or a combination of other advertising methods. Packages could range from $500 - $2,000 annually.

## Marketing Strategy

Developing a plan for communicating and marketing a facility is an integral part of generating revenue and attendance. Marketing the facility and offerings inform, educate, and provides opportunities for users to prepare schedules, purchases, and plans in both a preparatory and reactionary way. Well-timed and strategically executed

marketing techniques target the appropriate audience at a time that captures attention, awareness, and ultimately revenue.

Most respondents to the online survey (66%) report that they utilize the City's Facebook page to receive information about the Marion Pool, and 46% utilize the City's website, followed by 37% receive information by word of mouth. This suggests that a well-planned online approach is important to generate interest and use from community members and should receive adequate resources to maintain their effectiveness.

Platforms for marketing include digital, printed, and word-of-mouth, each with a strength and consideration to optimize their respective reach.

- Make the City's website easy to use. Examples include:
    - Update the website for the following season by December.
    - List prices on the web page for passes and programs to reduce the need for clicks.
    - Create a program page that includes swimming lessons and swim team, but also all other programs available to make it easy to understand what is available. It may also be a benefit to include a separate rentals page that includes during and after-hours rentals (e.g., birthday parties and pool rentals).
    - Include photos and video of the facility to increase interest and showcase what fun can be had.

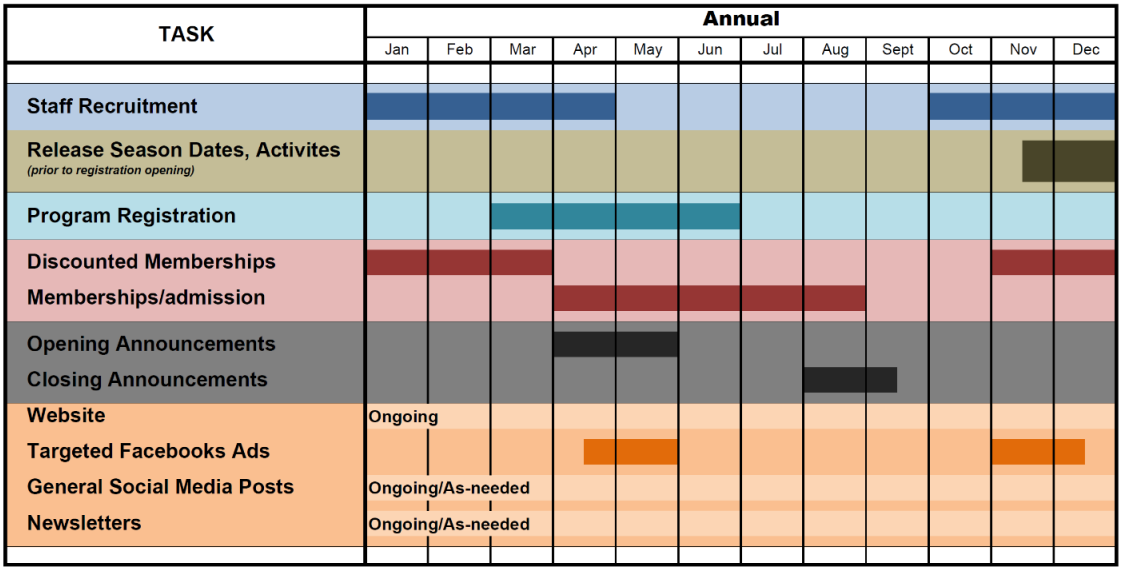
- Social strategy
    - Have social media callout buttons on the main pool page to educate on the platforms and what community members can expect from them (e.g., if updates are made on social media and to follow those accounts for up-to-date information for unplanned modifications to the schedule).
    - The City's and Parks Recreation Department's Facebook pages can contain general facility information such as hiring, general hours, season, season pass, and program information. Cross-promoting on other city pages is also an option.
    - Targeted advertising to certain groups of people who may be interested in fitness swimming, pools, family, and outdoor activities.
    - Using an automated messaging system for alerts, weather cancellations, and other announcements could be useful in communicating with the community, including for open swim and programs.

- Word-of-mouth
    - Cross-marketing to other programs can increase the interest of those people who are active and already participating
    - Focus on positive customer service and educating staff on the facility and its offerings, particularly when it is new, will help build trust and confidence in the facility.

- Additional Opportunities
    - Coupons, or perks, for early-bird or combination purchasing.
    - Special events or admission discounts, for example on Father's Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, or for Parks and Recreation Month.
    - School e-backpacks, bulletin boards, or paper distribution (*if permitted*).
    - Concessions is a high revenue area. To maximize revenue, a diverse menu with pre-packaged and cooked items would add a benefit to guests; particularly those who are staying for the day. Updated and attractive signage, for the concession stand and the displayed menus, will help drive attention and interest in buying food and drinks.

An example timeline is included to demonstrate when certain elements of communication could occur throughout the year to maintain interest and visibility of the facility. Key dates will be shown with short and acute time frames, emphasizing the importance of the timing of completion.

**Marketing Timeline**



# 7. Aquatic Trends

Aquatic trends are created when the experience and perspectives of guests, operators, designers, and manufacturers/suppliers come together, with guest experience and operator feedback leading the charge. Budgets and goals are also considered when exploring and selecting which trends are the best fit for your facility.

Trends change over time and do not replace fundamental offerings, such as zero-depth entry, lap lanes, water slides, and diving boards, but they influence what guests expect and can enhance the appeal of the facility. Current and up-and-coming trends for larger, regional facilities that focus on optimizing functionality that we are seeing include:

- Forethought on activity programming during the early planning and design process
- Multi-generational spaces – features and spaces that appeal to varying ages, abilities, and interests
- Flexibility in use of space
- Moving water, such as a lazy river or wave generation
- Inclusive use play for all abilities
- Signature feature(s), such as an innovative waterslide
- Increasing or skill improvement-based features
- Focus on aesthetic, experience, and comfort/periphery support spaces
- Sustainability and efficiency, in operations and systems
- Staffing considerations, such as lifeguard requirements

Specifically, regarding construction, materials, and systems, there are several areas that are trending in aquatics and that could be explored during design:

- Use of UV treatment for pool water to increase disinfection
- Use of regenerative pool water filtration systems allow for smaller pool mechanical rooms, lower water waste, reduced chemical waste, reduced heat loss, and improved water filtration
- Use of recent innovations in pool water heating systems has reduced energy consumption and allowed for longer equipment life
- Use of VFD's (variable frequency drives) for pumping systems has allowed for fine-tuning operation points and therefore reduced energy consumption

Each of these areas have been considered and incorporated into the concept for the new aquatic center. A few examples include:

- Separate bodies of water that can service varying groups of people simultaneously, each its own unique offering
- The facility is set up to provide a more active side (kiddie pool, wave pool, lazy river) and a more relaxed, quiet side (lap pool, dive pool, and splash pad)
- Each pool has been assessed for programming opportunities and scheduled in the Business Plan to maximize use and identify opportunities for future activity planning
- The long lazy river and wave pool are unique features and add interest and excitement to the facility
- The wave pool and Boomerango slide are two specific signature features that help set the facility apart from others, along with increased seating areas and art throughout the facility
- The Ninja Cross is skill-based and allows a user to increase in skill
- The concept is designed in a way that portions of the facility, the lap/dive pool section, and the splash pad, could operate independently for programs or closed off from the remainder of the facility

# 8. Site Analysis

## Introduction

The Marion Pool resides in Willowood Park and is approximately nine acres. The new aquatic center is planning to require 8 – 10 acres for the pool and parking lot, with the goal to utilize an estimated 10 acres of adjacent space for green space or additional park development. Additionally, Willowood Park is surrounded by residential streets and properties, limiting the opportunity for growth and increased traffic.

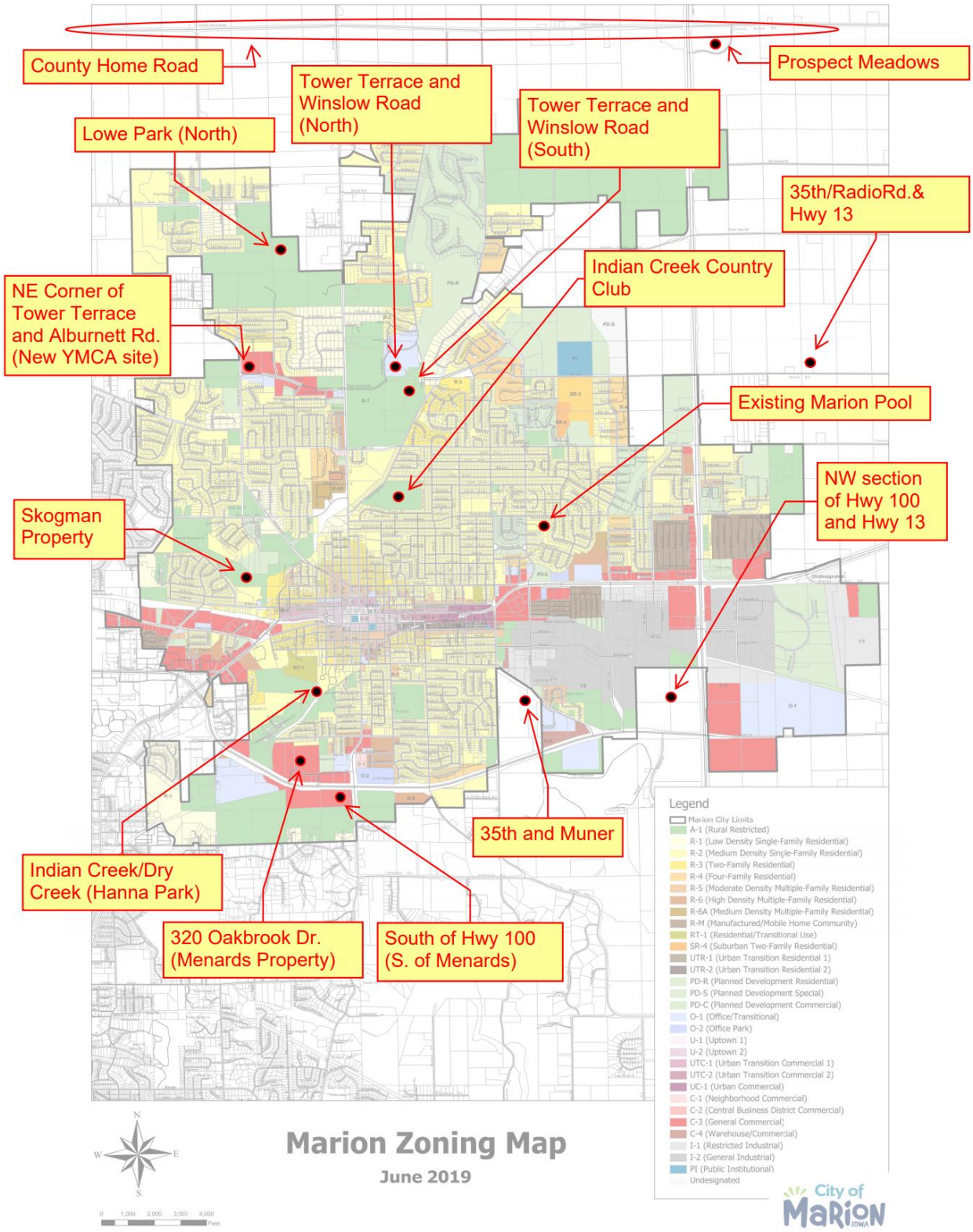
Due to these conditions, in addition to needing to maximize attendance and access, new sites were explored as part of this study to locate a new aquatic center.

## Sites

A total of 15 sites were reviewed for the development of a new aquatic center, including the existing Marion Pool site in Willowood Park. A Site Map is provided on the following page. Sites included:

- New Site 1: 35th & Munier
- New Site 2: Hwy 100 & Hwy 13
- New Site 3: 320 Oakbrook (next to Menards)
- New Site 4: Tower Terrace & Winslow Rd. (North)
- New Site 5: Tower Terrace & Winslow Rd. (South)
- New Site 6: Tower Terrace & Alburnett Rd.
- New Site 7: 35th/Radio Rd. & Hwy 13
- New Site 8: North section of Lowe Park
- New Site 9: County Home Road
- New Site 10: Prospect Meadows
- New Site 11: Skogman Property – Alburnett Rd.
- New Site 12: Hanna Park
- New Site 13: South of Highway 100
- New Site 14: Indian Creek Country Club
- Existing Site 15: Willowood Park

*Site Map*


County Home Road
Prospect Meadows
Tower Terrace and Winslow Road (North)
Tower Terrace and Winslow Road (South)
Lowe Park (North)
35th/RadioRd.& Hwy 13
Indian Creek Country Club
NE Corner of Tower Terrace and Alburnett Rd. (New YMCA site)
Existing Marion Pool
NW section of Hwy 100 and Hwy 13
Skogman Property
35th and Muner
Indian Creek/Dry Creek (Hanna Park)
320 Oakbrook Dr. (Menards Property)
South of Hwy 100 (S. of Menards)
Legend
Marion City Limits
A-1 (Rural Restricted)
R-1 (Low Density Single-Family Residential)
R-2 (Medium Density Single-Family Residential)
R-3 (Two-Family Residential)
R-4 (Four-Family Residential)
R-5 (Moderate Density Multiple-Family Residential)
R-6 (High Density Multiple-Family Residential)
R-6A (Medium Density Multiple-Family Residential)
R-M (Manufactured/Mobile Home Community)
RT-1 (Residential/Transitional Use)
SR-4 (Suburban Two-Family Residential)
UTR-1 (Urban Transition Residential 1)
UTR-2 (Urban Transition Residential 2)
PD-R (Planned Development Residential)
PD-S (Planned Development Special)
PD-C (Planned Development Commercial)
O-1 (Office/Transitional)
O-2 (Office Park)
U-1 (Uptown 1)
U-2 (Uptown 2)
UTC-1 (Urban Transition Commercial 1)
UTC-2 (Urban Transition Commercial 2)
UC-1 (Urban Commercial)
C-1 (Neighborhood Commercial)
C-2 (Central Business District Commercial)
C-3 (General Commercial)
C-4 (Warehouse/Commercial)
I-1 (Restricted Industrial)
I-2 (General Industrial)
PI (Public Institutional)
Undesignated
Marion Zoning Map
June 2019
City of Marion Iowa

Of these 15 sites, five were selected for additional study due to the land available (amount of space), community acceptance, proximity to highways and/or streets, and overall location in relation to the population and city.

1. 35th and Munier
2. Hwy 100 and Hwy 13
3. 320 Oakbrook
4. Tower Terrace and Winslow Road
5. Willowood Park

Based on community feedback, city goals, and consultant evaluations, the list was narrowed down to a final two sites:

1. 35th and Munier
2. Tower Terrace and Winslow Road

**35th and Munier**

The 35th and Munier site has good access to Highway 100, with good visibility from the highway and residential streets. Future road extensions of 35th St. (down to Highway 100) and Grand Ave. to a new, extended 35th St., allows for more connections to residential areas and northern Marion; 31st St. also provides connection from northern Marion.

There is available space for future expansion, adjacent green space, and/or other park development, and there are no other aquatic facilities in this area. Utilities are believed to be easily accessed, and the general location is supported by some members of the community.

To test out this space, the final Design Alternative was placed on the site, along with soccer fields to demonstrate size and capacity.

*Proposed Site Plan – 35th and Munier*

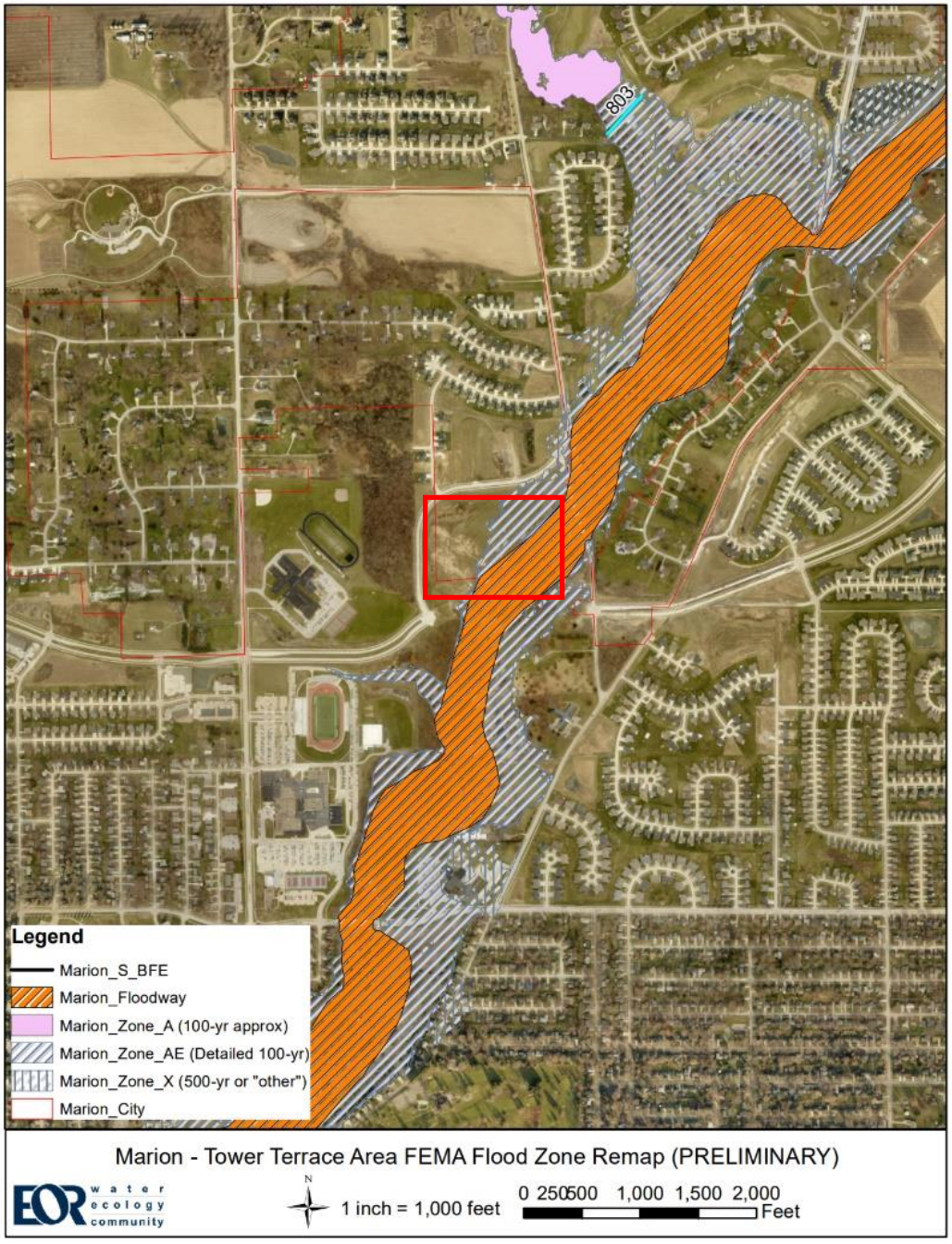
**Tower Terrace and Winslow Road**


The Tower Terrace and Winslow Road site has good access to utilities. The overall location is supported by some members of the community and offers good walkability potential. The property owner has shown interest in utilizing this property for the development of a new aquatic center.

This site is in a residential area, which could be both a benefit and challenge. A larger, regional aquatic center it will bring traffic, noise, and light congestion to this area. Currently, Tower Terrace does not connect to Highway 13, however, it is planned for future development.

The most significant consideration for this site is that approximately half of the property is in either the floodway or floodplain. It is not acceptable to locate any portion of the facility in the floodplain, and it is recommended that the pool not be in the floodway. It would be acceptable to locate the parking lot in the floodway.

*FEMA Flood Map – Tower Terrace and Winslow Road*




A detailed Site Analysis can be found in the Appendix.

# 9. Recommendation

We believe there are specific goals to be considered for the future of Marion's outdoor aquatic services. Recommendations developed should create a solution for the community as a whole, and three perspectives should be considered: public goals and needs, city goals and needs, and industry trends/consultant experience.

**Primary Goals**

- To offer a modern and attractive aquatic center that offers fun amenities, flexible-use spaces, and that can offer enjoyment to the maximum amount of people.
- Offer an appropriately sized facility that can accommodate the anticipated attendance.
- The location should serve the city's residents, along with visiting guests, in a location that is easily accessible and supported by the community.

**Recommendation #1**

The recommendation is to develop a modernized, regional aquatic enter with the right mix of amenities.

This approach would best serve the community and meet the needs as identified throughout public outreach and as seen in communities like Marion. Offering a regional facility will accommodate all the city's aquatic programs and result in the maximum efficiency for operational performance.

Constructing a more inclusive, regional facility would allow for more amenities to be constructed at a larger scale, making the facility more attractive for higher attendance and revenue. Similar facilities, such as Cascade Falls in Ankeny and unique features like at Lost Island Waterpark in Waterloo (e.g., slides and wave pool), are examples of facilities that offer the character and features representative of what is being recommended for Marion.

Recommended features include:

- Comfort and Support Amenities
    - Shade areas
    - Deck chairs and space for lounge seating/observation
    - Rentable areas

  - Concessions
  - Bathhouse with family changing areas and bathrooms
  - Adequate parking

- Pool Features
  - Zero-depth/beach entry
  - Sprays and toddler features/slide
  - Shallow water (2 – 4 feet)
  - Deep water (5+ feet)
  - Lap lanes (with option to dedicate lap lanes without obstruction)
  - Lazy river
  - Large water slide(s)
  - Diving board(s)
  - Unique amenities and features (e.g., wave pool, Boomerango slide, art, etc.)

It will be important to accommodate all existing and future programs without major service interruptions of other groups or programs, which is feasible under this approach. The separate lap pool area is an example of this, where the fence can be closed to the main portion of the pool and activities can occur in the lap area independently.

**Recommendation #2**

At the end of the study, two sites were being explored: Tower Terrace and Winslow Road and 35th and Munier. Consultants and staff were in contact with both property owners during the study. Although neither owner provided consultant staff with costs for land acquisition, it is believed that further discussions could be had to explore options.

There is support for these site areas from the general community, however, there is no consensus between community members nor between study committee members.

Our recommendation is to develop the new aquatic center at the available property located at approximately 35th and Munier for the following reasons:

- Proximity to Highway 100, Highway 13, and 31st and 35th Streets connecting to north Marion. Visibility from Highway 100 is a strong benefit.
- It is located near residential properties, but due to other adjacent land use, the area is conducive for increased traffic, sound, and light pollution.

- There is space to expand or grow in the future, along with development of adjacent park land/use.
- This property is anticipated to be zoned Commercial on the south and north ends of the property, and with the right mix of development, could help to support use of the aquatic center (e.g., gas station, restaurant, etc. are ideas of commercial development that would complement the aquatic center).
- Would spread out aquatic offerings in the city, with two facilities to the north and one to the south.
- The location has a slightly higher population reach at the 5-mile, 10-mile, 15-mile, and 20-mile radii.

**Recommendation #3**

Utilize the Business Plan and/or further develop the plan to ensure maximum use and cost recovery potential. This would include offering a variety of activities and programs that are of interest to different groups of guests, including different ages and abilities.

Regularly monitoring fees, detailed participation reports, and soliciting feedback from users are all methods to study performance for the facility. This close attention allows the facility to continue to offer what works but also to identify and adjust areas that are not meeting goals.