



REGIONAL AQUATICS CENTER

**Greater New Orleans Executive
Association**
August 4, 2026

Outline

- I. Who's Who:** The Funding Committee
- II. The Project:** A World Class Regional Aquatics Facility in Jefferson Parish
- III. Why now?** The Region and State need this facility and we deserve to host it in Jefferson
- IV. Status and next steps:** Leadership commitment and support
- V. Ways to get involved**



Funding Committee

Fundraising and campaign efforts for the Regional Aquatic Center have been made possible by our dedicated team of funding experts, and swim enthusiasts!



Councilman Deano Bonano
Jefferson Parish Council, District 2



Senator Patrick Connick
Louisiana State Senate, District 8



Christine Briede
President & CEO
Jefferson Community Foundation



Gordon Wadge
President & CEO
YMCA of Greater New Orleans



Alex Gelpi Carter, AICP
President & CEO
Desire Line



Tim Coulon
Executive Director
Jefferson Business Council



Nathan Junius
President
Linfield, Hunter, & Junius Inc.



Byron Leblanc
President
Leblanc & Schuster Public Relations Inc.

Pat Leblanc
Managing Member
Leblanc Butler LLC



Lynda Nugent Smith
Risk Manager
Keller Williams Realty



Darryl Ward
Chief Administrative Assistant
Jefferson Parish President's Office



Who We Are

Founded in 2008, Jefferson Community Foundation (JCF) is the nonprofit, community foundation for Jefferson Parish dedicated to improving the quality of life for residents, visitors, and businesses in Jefferson Parish by focusing the *needs of the community and power of philanthropy*.

Why & Where We Give

We strive for a strong, equitable, and health community in Jefferson Parish. JCF has six focus areas for philanthropic investment to meet these goals:

EDUCATION

HEALTH AND
WELLNESS

NEIGHBORHOOD
SUPPORT AND
REVITALIZATION

RACE EQUITY
RECONCILIATION

SENIOR
INITIATIVES

TRANSIT

“

“Our mission at the YMCA of Greater New Orleans is **to help parents understand that educating their children about safety in and around water is one of the most important life lessons** they can provide.”

”

*Taylor Oelking
Executive Director of Community Aquatics
YMCA of Greater New Orleans*



YMCA of Greater New Orleans

Who We Are

The “Y” is a cause-driven organization that is for youth development, for healthy living, and for social responsibility. That’s because a strong community can only be achieved when we invest in our kids, our health, and our neighbors.

The “Y” is community centered. For more than 168 years, we’ve been listening and responding to our communities.

Our Mission

Our mission is to put Christian principles into practice through programs that build healthy spirit, mind, and body for all.

Our Challenge

Louisiana leads the nation in drowning deaths.

Ethnically diverse communities like ours have a drowning rate 2-3 times the national average. In a region where living near water is a fact of life, this must change.

Area youth struggle to find opportunity.

Many of our community's young people struggle academically and socially. During summers, few find jobs where they can grow their life skills.

Mental health challenges have hit youth the hardest.

The stressors of our modern world have led to an ongoing mental health crisis, with our youth hit the hardest. Between 2017 and 2021, diagnosed depression among youth increased by 60%. Anxiety diagnoses among youth increased by 31% in the same period.

Childhood obesity has doubled.

One in five children in the US is obese. This represents a dramatic increase in obesity, with the rate more than doubling between 1990 and 2022.

“

Louisiana consistently ranks at the top of all states for drowning deaths, a harrowing statistic. **Jefferson Parish needs a Regional Aquatics Center** to support the development of life-saving safety skills for our youth.

”

*Byron Lee
Jefferson Parish Councilman
District 3*

Our Challenge

Regional aquatics facilities are **nonexistent** and existing facilities are **inadequate**.

- Pools that are too short or shallow
- Insufficient spectator seating
- Lack of indoor/covered facilities contribute to lightening delays and weather cancellations
- Lack of space to teach and manage a vigorous program for swim lessons and coaching certifications

“ In Louisiana, we don’t support our swimmers and coaches, and we make it incredibly difficult to celebrate the sport’s positive outcomes and benefits to public safety.”

- Alex Carter, Swim Mom, CEO, and Funding Committee Member



State Championship @ LSU Natatorium, depicting parents in lawn chairs crammed against exercise equipment. (above)

Middle School Meet @ SUNO, depicting parents huddled at end of pool in standing water; 2 spectators fell in during this event. (below)

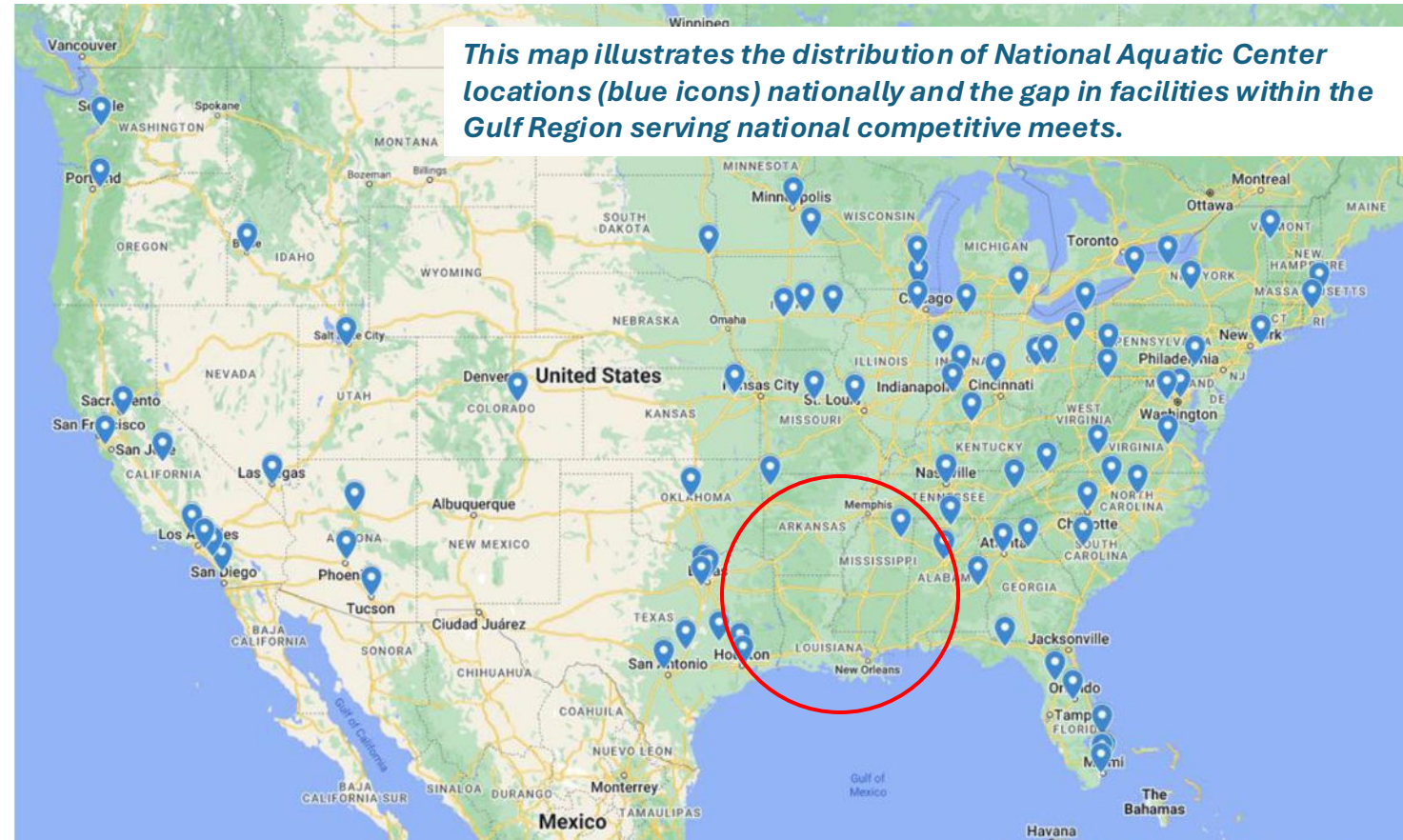


Swim Meet Clip –
9/20/25

Regional Need

The majority of National Aquatic Competitions are concentrated outside of the Gulf Region and Jefferson Parish.

- From the national perspective, there are facilities across the country that continually host competitive swimming and diving events in their respective areas.
- Host sites in Louisiana are located in Baton Rouge, Lafayette, Lake Charles, Ruston, Shreveport, Slidell and along the Mississippi Gulf Coast.
- **Local swim teams and families must travel one to four hours to participate in higher-level meets to facilities that are inadequate to meet the sports' need.**



We see the opportunity to make the Parish a national competitive swim meet destination in the Gulf South .

The Project: A world-class Regional Aquatics Center

- **Public-private-nonprofit partnership:** Jefferson Parish, Jefferson Community Foundation, and YMCA of Greater New Orleans
- **Leadership:** District 2 Councilman Deano Bonano and Louisiana State Senator Pat Connick
- Anchor to the redevelopment of the 15- acre **Hope Haven Campus** on the west bank of Jefferson Parish
- West Bank is the "future of the Parish" often over-looked and under-represented, but provides room to grow as an easily accessible hub for both locals and tourists

“

Building the Regional Aquatics Center represents a tremendous opportunity for our region. To make this vision a reality, we need a coalition of supporters across the region who believe in this facility's potential.

”

*Deano Bonano
Jefferson Parish Councilman
District 2*

The Aquatic Center Facility



Envisioned as a 72,675 square foot regional level competition, swim lesson, and recreation aquatics facility.

Three Indoor Pools

Competition Pool

- Olympic-sized
- 50 meters
- 8 lanes

Warm-up Pool

- 25 meters
- 6 lanes

Therapy, Swim Lesson Pool

- 25 meters
- Bench seat included
- 3 feet deep
- Wheelchair entry ramp

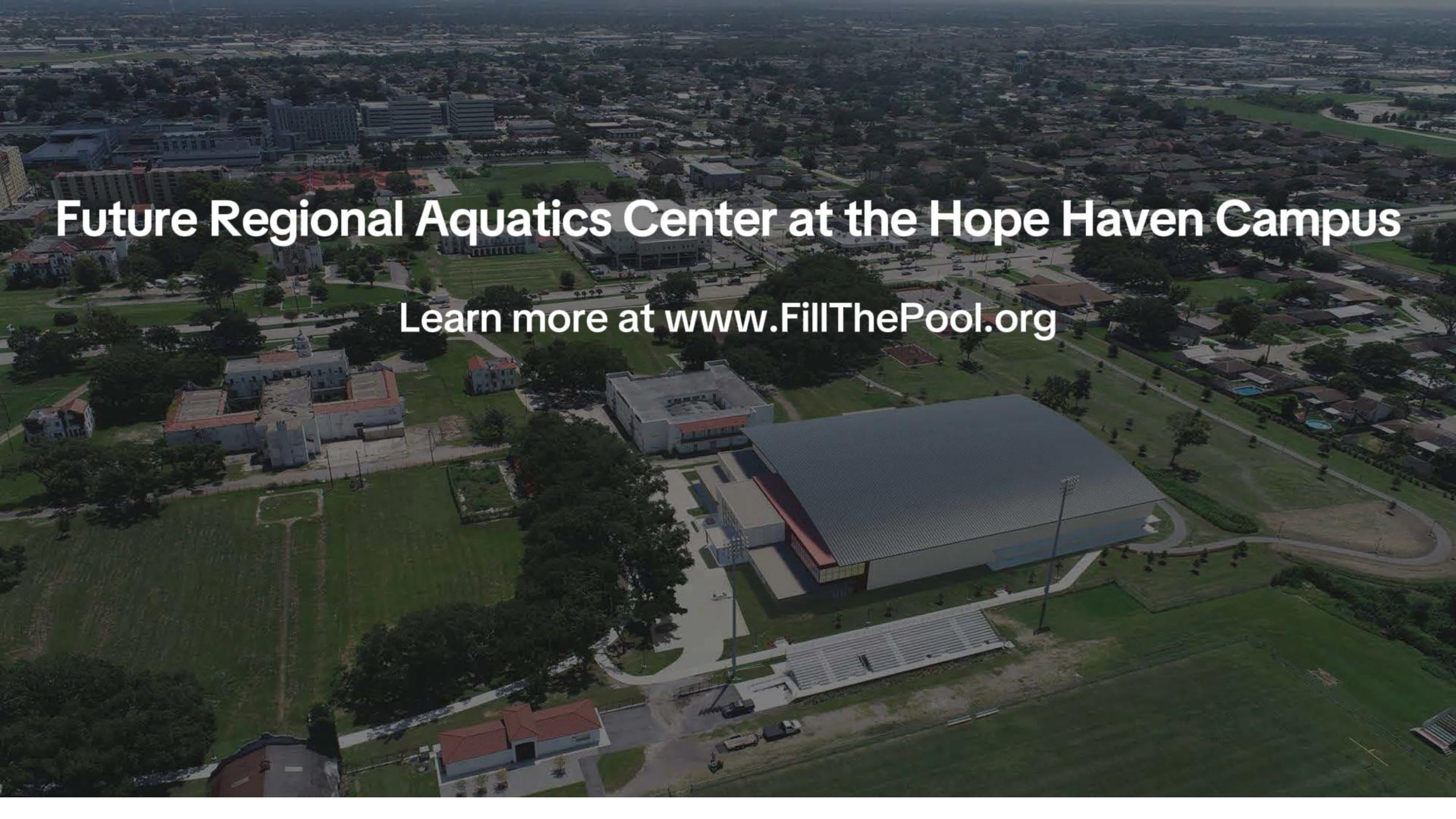


Swimmer Support

- 1,500 Spectator Seats
- 709 “On Deck” Seats
- Scorer’s Office
- Locker Rooms
- 2 On-site Concessions
- Meeting Rooms

Additional Recreation & Community Uses

- Outdoor splash pad (future phase)
- Training facility
- Senior citizen aquatic exercise/rehab
- Lifeguard training classes
- Resource for WB schools' swim teams



Future Regional Aquatics Center at the Hope Haven Campus

Learn more at www.FillThePool.org

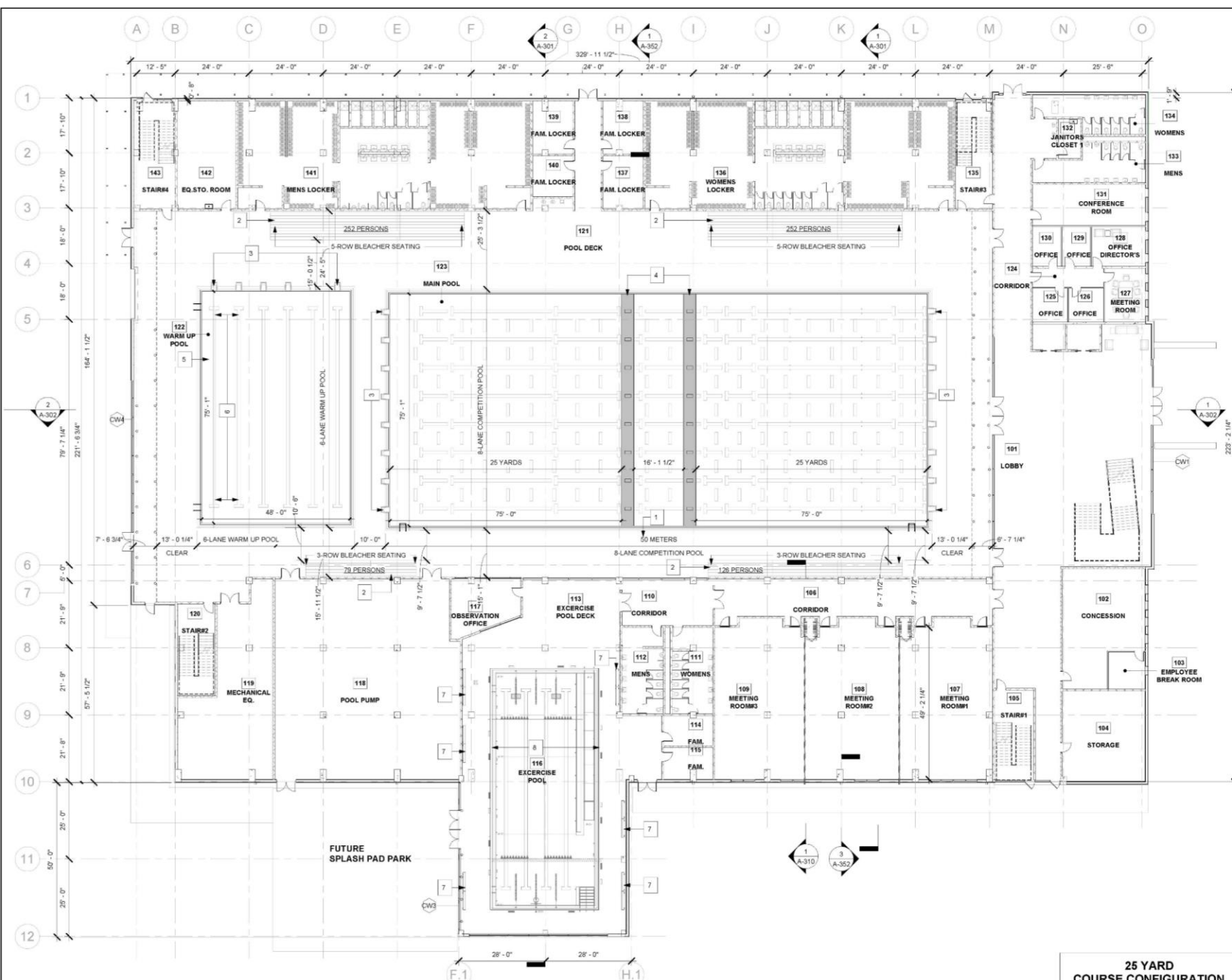
9/26 (in person) & 11/29 (online) Coaches' Listening Sessions

Coaches from across the region were introduced to the project and the Design Team.

Key feedback included:

- Align facility design with the national and regional major competition bid requirements.
- Increase warm up pool lanes, seating for swimmers, number of diving blocks, and space for at least 2 bulkheads/dividers for the competition pool.
- Additional considerations for ventilation, pool layouts, and facility attributes.





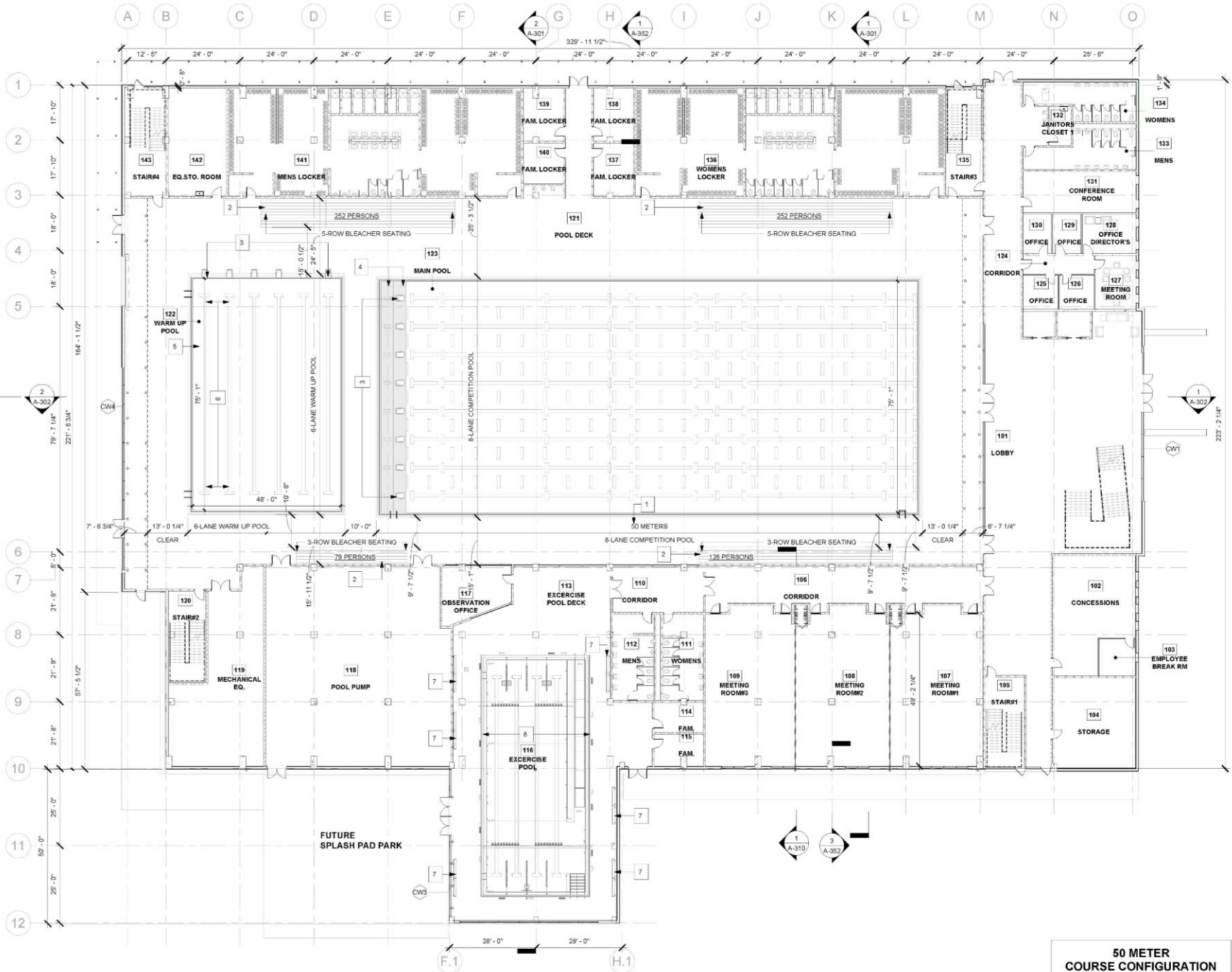
- SWIM COACH MODIFICATIONS LEGEND**
- 1 SHOW ALL POOL LENGTHS IN METERS. (NOT YARDS)
 - 2 ADD BLEACHER SEATING ON THE MAIN DECK (FOR COACHES & TEAMS) - **700 PERSONS**
 - 3 ADD DIVING BLOCKS ON (3) SIDES @ "OLYMPIC SIZE POOL"
 - 4 ADD (2) SETS OF BUMPERS @ "OLYMPIC SIZE POOL"
 - 5 MOVE "WARM UP POOL" BEHIND "OLYMPIC SIZE POOL"
 - 6 ADD (2) MORE LANES TO THE "WARM UP POOL". (8 LANES OVERALL)
 - 7 ADD BENCH SEATING ALONG THE LONG SIDE OF THE "PHYSICAL THERAPY POOL" FOR SWIM LESSONS W/ LITTLES & THERAPY FOR ADULTS
 - 8 "PHYSICAL THERAPY POOL" SHALLOWER (3 FEET) ACROSS ENTIRE POOL TO REDUCE RISK AND SUPPORT WATER AEROBICS CLASSES

**PRELIMINARY
FOR REVIEW ONLY
NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION**
THIS DRAWING IS SUBJECT TO
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LINFIELD, HUNTER & JUNIUS, INC.
PROFESSIONAL ENGINEERS, ARCHITECTS
AND SURVEYORS
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Metairie, Louisiana 70002

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**Design
Updates:
25-yard
configuration**



- SWIM COACH MODIFICATIONS LEGEND**
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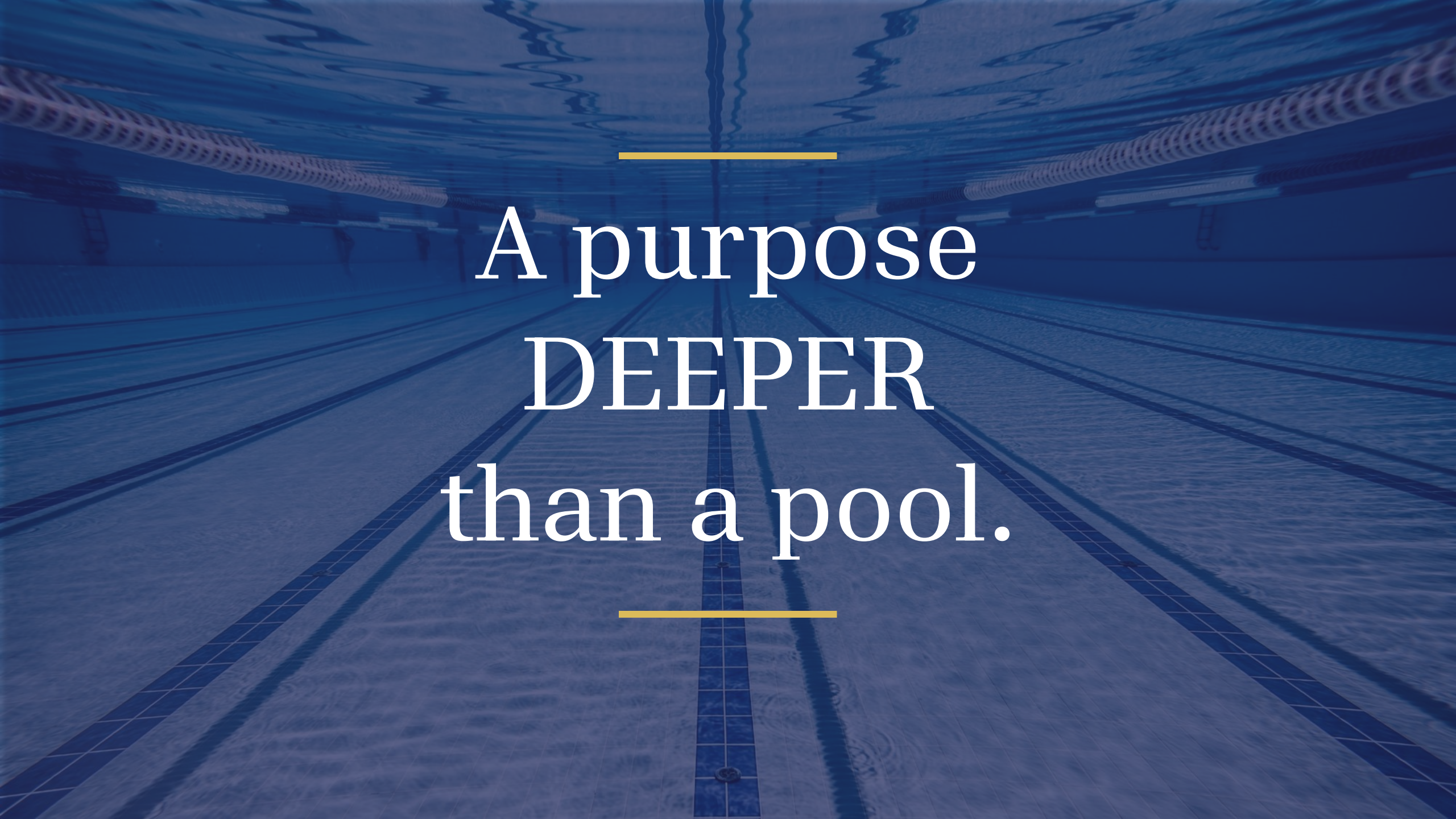
© 2012 by Linfield, Hunter & Junius, Inc.

**Design
Updates:
50-meter
configuration**

SECOND FLOOR PLAN
1/16" = 1'-0"

FIG. NO. 25-089
DATE: 02.10.2025
SHEET NO.
A-102
OF SHEETS

- Lobby, Seating areas, and Media Space on Second Floor
- Second Concession Area (above the 1st floor concession area)
- Spectator Seating
- Judges Box
- Men's, Women's, and Family bathrooms on either side of the facility



A purpose
DEEPER
than a pool.

Historical Preservation

- The complex includes **two large, century-old buildings of around 30,000 square feet each**; a gymnasium dating back to 1930, and several smaller buildings.
- Since Jefferson began leasing the property from the archdiocese in 2018, the parish and state have spent nearly **\$5 million gutting, shoring and stabilizing the historic main building**.
- **All historic buildings will be preserved**; the Aquatics Center is planned as new construction on vacant land (bottom).



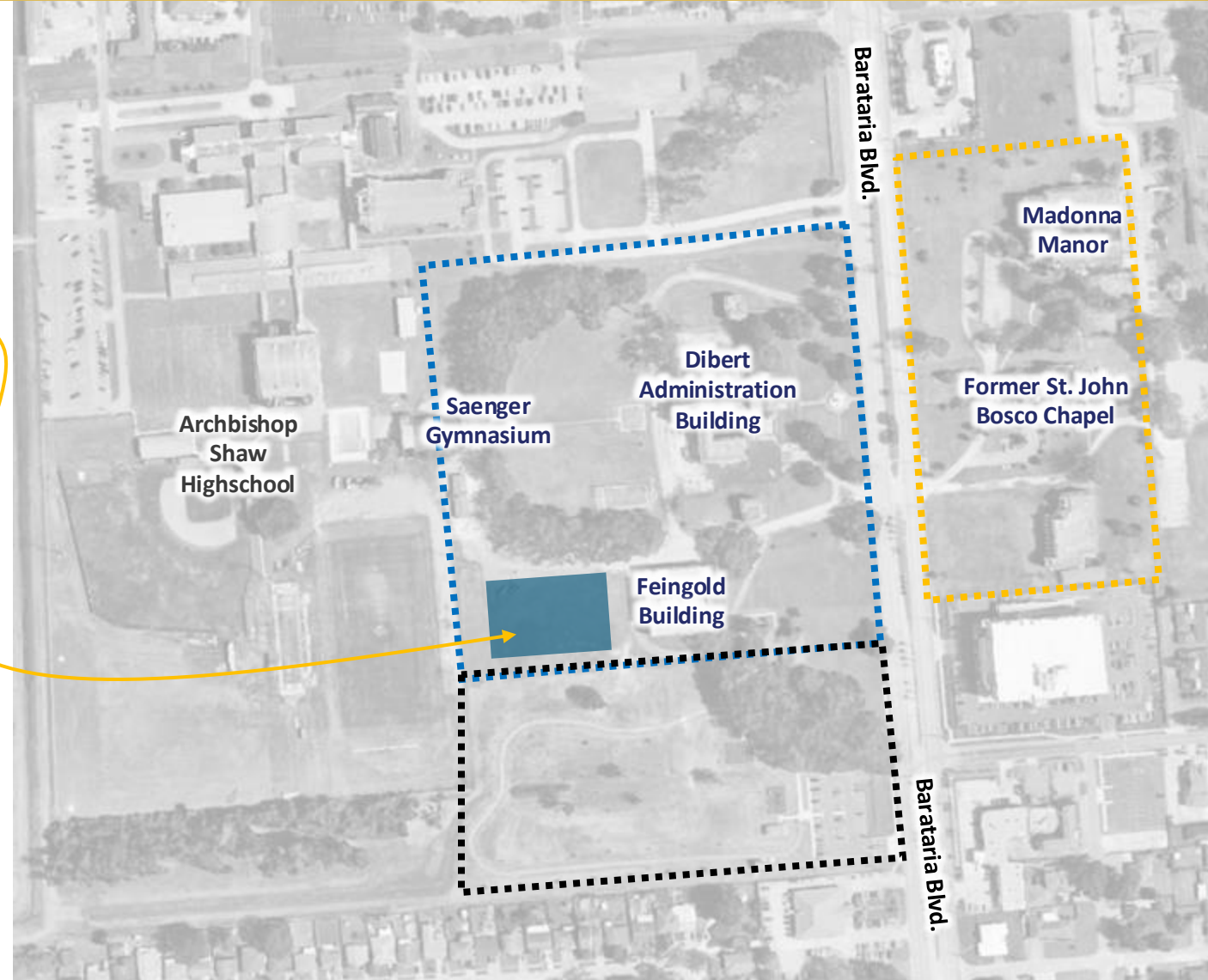
The Campus and the Aquatics Center

Main focus is the **15-acre west side of the campus**, which also includes 6 historic structures.

 15-acre site recently purchased, includes future site of the Aquatics Center

 East site of the Campus

 Fitness Trail



The Campus Master Plan: Hope Haven

- **9 historic, vacant buildings** to be redeveloped to benefit public wellness and community engagement, potentially including:
 - Health clinic/medical offices
 - Youth education/Children's museum
 - Senior services/assisted living facilities
 - Apartments
 - Restaurants/hotels/shops
- **Green space for cultural events**
- **An existing recreational walking path**

Parish leaders envision Hope Haven as
***“the center for health and fitness in West Jefferson,
much as Lafreniere Park is on the East Bank,”***
- Councilman Bonano, District 2



Hope Haven site plan shows future location of Aquatics Center

Campus Phased Development

Phase 1: Walking Path

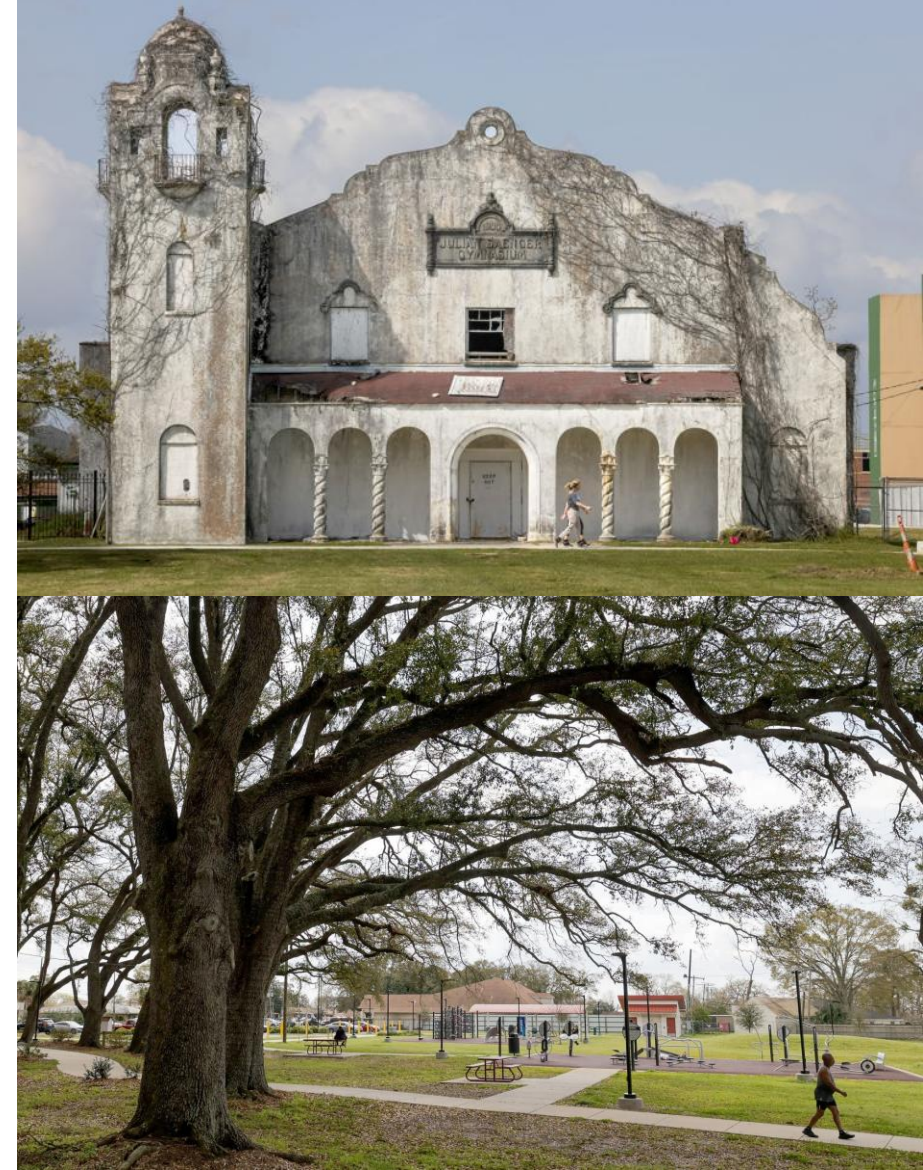
The Parish began leasing the 15-acre campus, with its sprawling grounds and century-old, Spanish mission-style buildings, from the local Roman Catholic Church in 2018. A 1/3-mile walking trail that snakes around the campus, a children's playground and an adult fitness/recreational area have already been constructed.

Phase 2: Regional Aquatics Center

A new build on an undeveloped portion of the site, the Aquatics Center is envisioned as a keystone attraction that meets regional needs and serves to attract investment opportunities to transform existing, historic buildings on site.

Phase 3: Historic Buildings Restored

As the Aquatics Center is funded and construction activities begin, economic development opportunities will be pursued to support the historic restoration and re-use of existing buildings on site.



Timeline – Continued Progress

					Now
2018 - 2019	2020	2021	2022	2025	2026-2030
Master planning process began.	Feingold Center stabilization complete (\$1.2M).	Diebert Administration Building stabilization complete (\$2.4M)	- Walking trail (phase 1) complete (\$1.3M). - Design & Engineering work for Aquatics Center began.	- Parish purchases west side of Hope Haven Campus (\$3.8M). - Campaign for Aquatics Center began.	- Funding goals reached. - Aquatics Center opens. - Walking trail (phase 2) complete. - Campus buildout complete.
					



Our Opportunity: Hope Haven Campus Revitalization

“

For the past 100 years, this treasured campus has served our community. We are planning now for the next 100 years.

”

*Pat Connick
Louisiana State Senator
District 8*



Swimming is part of
the solution.



Our Partners



JEFFERSON
COMMUNITY
FOUNDATION



Jefferson
Parish
State of Louisiana



LOUISIANA
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



GREATER
NEW ORLEANS
FOUNDATION



JPRD

Jefferson Parks & Recreation Department



Greater New Orleans
Sports Foundation



JEDCO

Jefferson Parish Economic Development Commission



VISIT
JEFFERSON
PARISH



GREATER NEW ORLEANS
INC
REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



NEW
ORLEANS
& COMPANY

Funding & Support

\$41M
Needed

Individual Giving
Corporate Sponsors

Private philanthropic support is essential to unlocking the full funding package and moving the project into construction.

\$34M
Identified or In Progress

\$10M Parish Funds
\$4M Federal Funds
\$15M State Funds
\$5M Individual Giving

Meetings with corporate and philanthropic partners are in progress.

Giving Levels & Naming Opportunities

Donors have a once-in-a-generation opportunity to create a transformational community asset that **saves lives, improves health, expands opportunity, and drives economic growth.**

We invite individuals, foundations, and corporate partners to become founding supporters of the Regional Aquatics Center.

Founding Level	Contribution	Recognition & Benefits
Founding Visionary	\$20M	Building Naming Rights Partner <i>(1 available)</i>
Legacy Leadership	\$10M	Competition Pool Naming Rights <i>(1 available)</i>
Community Wellness Level	\$5M	Warm-Up Pool Naming Rights <i>(1 available)</i>
Public Safety & Access Level	\$5M	Recreation / Therapy Pool Naming Rights <i>(1 available)</i>
Community Gathering Level	\$5M	Atrium & Lobby <i>(1 available)</i>
Program Partner Level	\$100K+	Meeting Rooms
Lane Sponsor Level	\$50K+	Swim Lane Sponsorship
Aquatics Supporters	\$1,000-\$49,999	Founders Wall Recognition

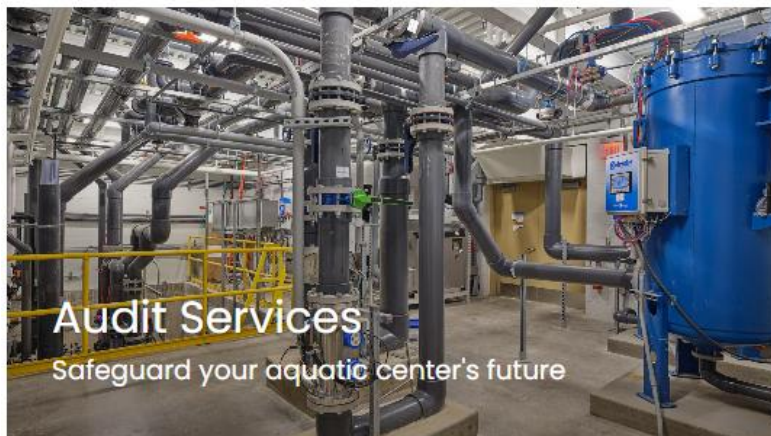
Mission Based Giving Opportunities

Donors may prefer to make **mission-based giving contributions** to help swimmers of all ages and backgrounds to gain life-saving skills, expand opportunities, and improve access to health & wellness.

Fund	Mission	Use, & Impact
Swim Lesson Scholarship Fund	Saving Lives through Access to Swim Education	This Fund will ensure that children and families—regardless of income—have access to high-quality swim instruction and water safety education.
Senior Wellness Program Fund	Promoting Healthy Aging through Aquatic Wellness	This Fund will support therapeutic and low-impact aquatic programming designed to improve mobility, independence, and quality of life for aging residents.
Adaptive Aquatics Fund	Expanding Access for Individuals of All Abilities	This Fund will support inclusive aquatic programming for individuals with physical, developmental, sensory, or cognitive disabilities, and will help ensure that individuals of all abilities have access to safe, welcoming, and professionally supported aquatic experiences.
Lifeguard Workforce Program	Building Workforce Skills & Community Safety	This Program will create employment pathways and workforce development opportunities for local youth and young adults. Beyond teaching lifesaving skills, the program will provide participants with leadership development, certifications, first-aid training, and meaningful employment opportunities.
Underserved Youth Access Fund	Ensuring Every Child the Opportunity to Participate	This Fund will provide equitable access to aquatic recreation, education, and competitive opportunities for children and families who may otherwise face financial or transportation barriers.

Economic Impact Analysis & Feasibility Study

The Funding Committee, through a contract with the Parish, worked with **Aquatic Center Experts, Counsilman Hunsaker**, to conduct an Economic Impact Analysis & Feasibility Study to determine the projected economic impact that the proposed Hope Haven Campus Aquatic Center would have on Jefferson Parish, and to determine the facility's total operating budget and cost recovery.

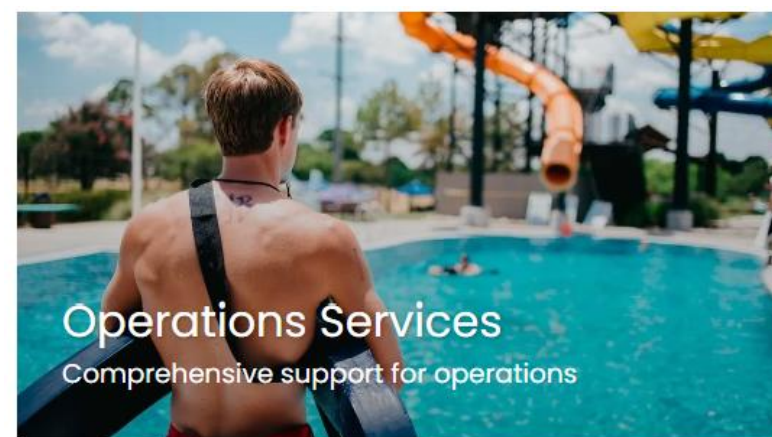


\$5.8M Total projected direct-spending economic impact from the additional competitive aquatic events hosted by the Regional Aquatic Center in year 1

52,000+ Estimated annual visitors to the Center



Counsilman · Hunsaker
AQUATICS FOR LIFE



Economic Impact Analysis & Feasibility Study

- **\$5.8M** total projected **direct-spending economic impact** from the additional competitive aquatic events hosted by the Regional Aquatic Center in year 1
- **52,000+** estimated **annual visitors** to the center
- **\$450K** operating **capital maintenance fund** included in annual expenses
- **\$646K** cashflow shortfall anticipated ***without partnerships***, solely reliant on swim lessons and competitive swim events
- **Over \$1.7M** anticipated in partnerships to more than overcome projected shortfall

Sampling of Strategies	Estimated Annual Revenue
School Board Partnership (swim safety curriculum)	\$500K - \$700K
Healthcare Partnership (aquatic therapy use)	\$150K - \$300K
Facility-Run Competitive Swim Team	\$300K - \$600K
Existing YMCA Grants	\$100K
Total	\$1.05M - \$1.7M

Why Now?

This is a rare opportunity to shape a transformational regional asset from the ground floor.

- Parish acquisition of Hope Haven property complete
- Design and engineering complete
- Strong swim community and local user public support established
- Initial private commitments secured
- Economic & Feasibility Study complete
- Opportunity to establish founding donors before public campaign launch



Aquatic Center **Real** Community Impacts

- Providing **year-round swim lessons** for underserved youth
- Expanding **therapeutic aquatic programming for seniors** and rehabilitation patients
- Creating **jobs and workforce opportunities** for local youth
- Supporting **local swim teams** with affordable lane access
- Hosting **regional competitions** driving tourism and generating positive economic impact
- Kickstarting the **revitalization of the historic Hope Haven campus**
- Increasing **access to healthy recreation** on the West Bank





“ Swimming is critical to supporting **safe, healthy, and resilient youth** in Jefferson Parish and we need to elevate the Regional Aquatics Center as a priority and investment in our future.

”
*Rep. Troy Carter
U.S House of Representatives
Louisiana District 2*



“

I grew up swimming at the Metairie YMCA. I would love to see every child in Jefferson Parish have the same opportunity.

”

*Cynthia Lee Sheng
Parish President
Jefferson Parish*



Together we can
fill the pool.



For More Information

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FillThePool.org