



CITY OF ST. ALBERT  
**ADMINISTRATIVE BACKGROUNDER**

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**AQUATICS PRE-REGISTRATION ANALYSIS**

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**BACKGROUND:**

Based on the City Council direction, Administration offered Aquatics program pre-registration for St. Albert residents and Servus Place Annual member holders beginning in the Fall 2016 program season.

Administration has carried out an analysis of the impacts of the pre-registration for the Fall 2016 program season. The results of this analysis have been attached.

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# Aquatics Program Pre-Registration Analysis

## Recreation and Parks

2016



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## BACKGROUND

### Overcapacity Issues

St. Albert continually experiences high demand for aquatics programs due to many internal and external factors including:

- Limited pool space within facilities.
- Pool space allocated based on program need and skill level.
- Only one other indoor aquatic facility within a 10km radius.
- Proximity of bordering municipalities, naturally non-residents frequent nearby recreation, health, business and other services.
- Municipal and regional population growth.

This high demand has resulted in wait lists for specific programs during specific times.

### City Council Direction

At the January 25, 2016 City Council Meeting, Councillor Hughes provided notice in accordance with Section 23 of Procedure Bylaw 35/2009 that she intended to bring forward the following motion:

*“That Administration prepare a report for Council's review by Q2 2016 that evaluates options to address the aquatic program oversubscription issues, including but not limited to an advance registration period for residents, a cap on the percentage of non-resident enrolment permitted, and the implementation of residential and non-residential aquatic program fees.”*

On March 2, 2016 Councillor Heron provided notice in accordance with Section 23 of Procedure Bylaw 35/2009 that she intended to bring forward the following motion:

*“Whereas St. Albert pool facilities are at capacity for swim lessons: I move that registration for swimming lessons be opened to St. Albert residents and annual Servus Place holders one week prior to general registration.”*

This motion was approved and Administration implemented the following changes for the Fall 2016 program season.

## PROGRAM CHANGES

Based on the City Council direction, Administration implemented the following changes for the Fall 2016 program season:

- The open registration date for Fall Aquatic programs changed from August 3 to August 10 at 8:00 am.
- St. Albert residents and Servus Place Annual Members were able to register one week earlier, starting at 8:00 am on August 3.
- 228 additional spots were added in Preschool and Swimmer 1-2 programs on Saturday afternoons and Sunday mornings for Fall aquatic programs.
- Registration for Servus Place programs did not change and opened at 8:00 am on August 3.



### Communication Plan

The communication to the public in regards to the program change included signage in Servus Place and Fountain Park, advertisement in the St. Albert Gazette and Edmonton Examiner, email to previous program registrants, social media notifications, and a website update.

## RESULTS OF PROGRAM CHANGE

### Public Response to Program Change

Feedback from the public was collected through several methods in order to provide the community with ample opportunity to provide their input into this program change. General responses were collected in person, via telephone and through submission to [rpquestions@stalbert.ca](mailto:rpquestions@stalbert.ca). A formal survey was available in paper form, electronically onsite and online.

As of August 24, 2016, three emails and 317 formal survey responses were received.

## Survey Results

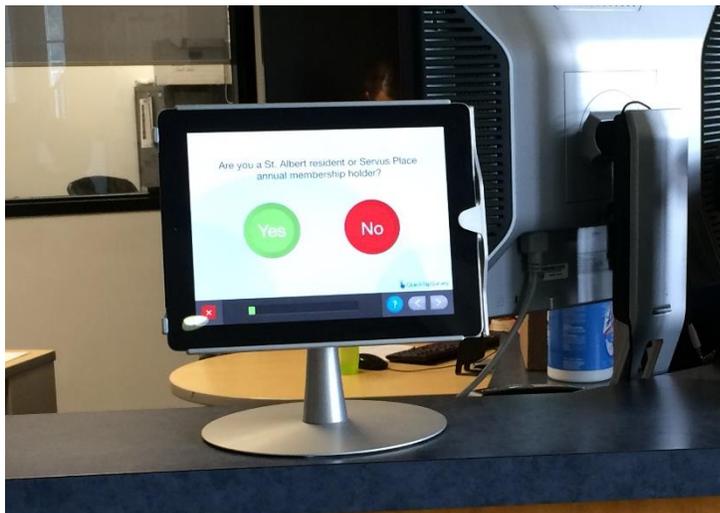
The respondents to the survey did result in a sample that was representative of the resident/non-resident breakdown of Aquatics programs, with 64% of resident/Servus Place annual membership holder respondents and 36% non-resident respondents.

Of the overall respondents, 83% responded that they were satisfied with their registration date and 88% were able to get into the program that they wanted.

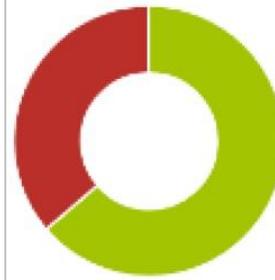
Although the community is able to get into the programs that they desire, program times continue to be a source of the community dissatisfaction with 27% of respondents not able to get into the program time that they wanted. Of the 27%, 8% of these were residents and the remaining 19% were non-residents.

Fifty-two open ended responses were received from individuals who indicated that they were unsatisfied with their registration date. The most common responses were that:

- They were dissatisfied because they disagreed with any sort of pre-registration or;
- They were dissatisfied because they did not get into their desired program/program time.

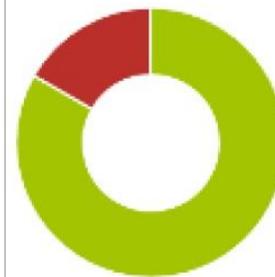


1. Are you a St. Albert resident or Servus Place annual membership holder?



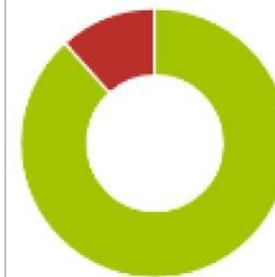
63.72% (202) Yes  
36.28% (115) No

2. Are you satisfied with your registration date?



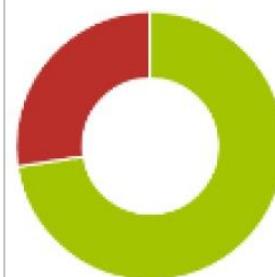
83.28% (264) Yes  
16.72% (53) No

4. Were you able to register in the program that you wanted?



88.33% (280) Yes  
11.67% (37) No

5. Were you able to register for the program time that you wanted?

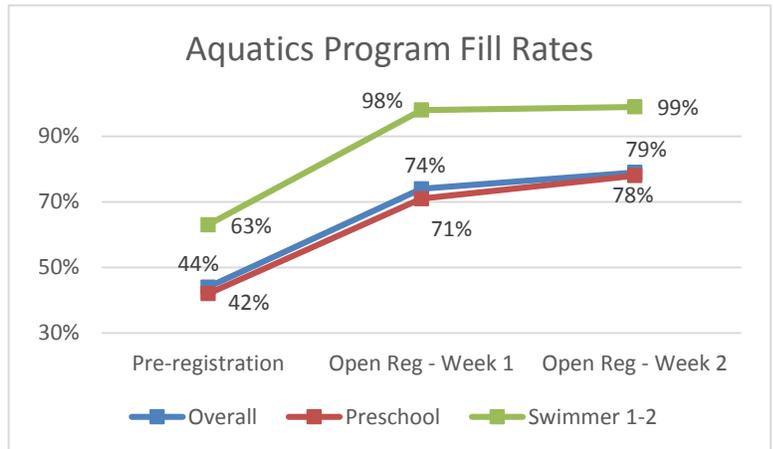


72.56% (230) Yes  
27.44% (87) No

## Pre-Registration Results

After the initial pre-registration week, overall programs were at a 44% fill rate with 97% of the registrants St. Albert residents and no individuals on wait lists.

However, at the conclusion of the third week of registration, the overall program fill rate was 79%. High demand Preschool and Swimmer 1-2 were at 78% and 99% fill rates respectively.



## Schedule Changes and New Programs

The programs that are in the highest demand are Preschool and Swimmer 1-2 programs and have been for the past three years. These programs typically have an annual combined wait list of over 1,000 individuals.

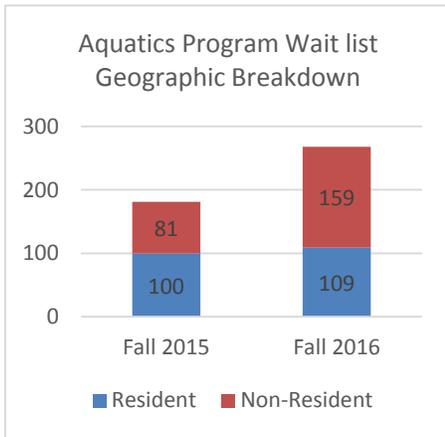
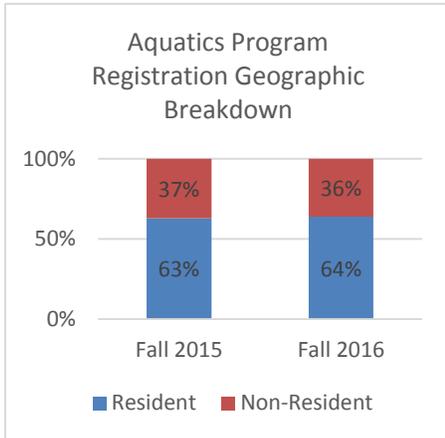
Based on the schedule changes implemented by Administration, 39 additional programs (228 additional spots) were added in Preschool and Swimmer 1-2 on Saturday afternoons and Sunday mornings for Fall 2016, with the potential to accommodate approximately 23% of the typical annual waitlist.

At the conclusion of the second week of open registration, the new Preschool and Swimmer 1-2 program offered on Sunday mornings were at 97% fill rate. The Swimmer 1-2 offered on Saturday afternoons was at an 98% fill rate, and the Saturday afternoon Preschool experiencing a lower fill rate of 63%.

Overall, these programs were able to accommodate an additional 191 registrants, approximately 19% of the typical annual waitlist.

The most desirable times for aquatics programs are **weekdays from 6:00-8:00PM and Saturdays 9:00AM-12:00PM.**





Specific program times continue to be in **high demand and experience wait lists** of both residents and non-residents.



## Overall Program Analysis

At the conclusion of the first three weeks of registration, program registration was at a 79% fill rate which is inline with the fill rate for 2015 of 78%.

Overall, both residents and non-residents are satisfied with their new registration date, with the significant majority able to get into the specific program that they desired; however, specific program times continue to be in high demand and will be until additional aquatics space is made available through schedule changes or additional pool space.

Non-residents continue to represent a significant portion of the overall aquatic program registrations. Prior to the implementation of the pre-registration, the mix of resident/non-resident Aquatics registrants was 63% resident to 37% non-resident. This split has only changed slightly with 36% of non-resident registrants after the first three weeks of registration in Fall 2016.

As in Arenas, there is very specific prime time hours that are more desirable than others. These Aquatics programs times fill first and have the most significant wait lists.

Administration was able to provide 228 new programs spots of which, after three weeks of registration, only 37 remain vacant. However, after the first three weeks of registration, there were still a significant number of individuals (268) on wait lists for specific program times, despite the 1,000 remaining vacant program spots.

The implementation of pre-registration allowed for St. Albert residents and Servus Place annual membership holders to access the high demand programs first. However, after the first three weeks of registration, of the 268 individuals on the Fall 2016 wait lists 109 (41%) are St. Albert residents. This is very similar in volume to the same period for Fall 2015, where the 100 (55%) of the 181 of those on the waitlist were St. Albert residents.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis, Administration has concluded that following the implementation of the Aquatics pre-registration, in Fall 2016, the overall trends (member geographic breakdown wait list length, wait list geographic breakdown) are in line with Fall 2015.

However, the addition of 39 Preschool and Swimmer 1-2 programs has allowed Fountain Park Recreation Centre to accommodate almost 200 more registrants into program times that they were satisfied with.

Moving forward, Administration will continue to offer one-week pre-registration to Servus Place annual member holders and St. Albert residents.

Administration will continue to evaluate the pre-registration process including pre-registration date, those that are included in the pre-registration, etc. Opportunities to accommodate additional programs will also continue to be explored from an operational perspective, including evaluation of pool schedule and mixed use of aquatics space.

Aquatics programs are a highly valued service and provide an essential life skill to the community. The evaluation of the provision of these programs will continue to be a focus of Administration moving forward.

