

# PHIL Aquatics

Empowering Lives Through Water



## Our Mission

*To enrich lives through a world-class, state-of-the-art Aquatic Center that promotes health, education, competition, and recreation, creating a community where all individuals have access to a healthier, safer, and empowered life*

## Our Vision

*A space where community connects, athletes compete, health and wellness are prioritized, and people of all ages and abilities are empowered through aquatics*

## Our Pillars – “4 Lanes Lead to One Vision . . . “

- 💧 **Advocacy** – Promoting access to aquatics and how it serves people of all ages, abilities, and health and fitness levels
- 💧 **Collaboration** – Partnering with a world class healthcare leader and with a community initiative to promote aquatics, fitness, and medical care all in one destination
- 💧 **Growth** – Promoting sustainability and inclusive community connection through a universally designed and eco-conscious building plan
- 💧 **Training** – Providing opportunities for competitive and recreational fitness, aquatic programming, and safety, for individuals of all ages

## Project Overview

The Greater Philadelphia Aquatic Association (d/b/a “PhilAquatics”) is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to bringing a state-of-the-art, multi-purpose aquatic center to the Greater Philadelphia Region. The Aquatic Center will provide a full range of activities, programs, and access for swimmers of all levels, including:

- 💧 High-level competition and training
- 💧 Inclusive swim lessons for all ages and abilities
- 💧 Aquatic fitness and aquatic cross-training
- 💧 Water programming for older adults, veterans, and persons with disabilities
- 💧 General family recreation, wellness, and fun

All programming will be designed to benefit and engage the widest range of swimming levels and interests to ensure broad community access.



The Greater Philadelphia Region has never in its history had access to a facility like this. Our research reflects that there is a clear, demonstrated need for the Aquatic Center, which will offer unparalleled instruction, recreation, competition, and wellness opportunities to enrich mind and body. The Aquatic Center will enliven individuals and the community as a shared, inclusive destination for all people regardless of background or ability, enhancing quality of life and providing a critical resource to attract and retain area residents and businesses.

We are particularly mindful that the Aquatic Center must be accessible to ALL in our community. We will strive to ensure inclusivity through intentionality in the design of the Center’s programming and funding plan. Importantly, the Aquatic Center will serve as an economic driver, drawing local, regional, and national events impacting local and regional businesses and the tourism industry.

## Facility & Programming Concept

Encompassing 87,750 sq. ft. of programmable and operating space across two levels, this visionary Aquatic Center will offer 4 to 5 different bodies of water with a wide range of depths, temperatures, and configurations to support a diverse range of aquatic programming for the entire community and region. Current design concepts include the following:

## Main Pool

- 66 meter pool with multiple 50 meter, 25 meter, and 25 yard course configurations
- Depth of 4.5' to 13', with competitive courses at a minimum depth of 7' 1 meter and 3 meter diving boards
- 3 meter and 5 meter diving towers
- Elevated spectator seating for 1,500 and competitor deck seating for 800
- Meets all national/international competitive and training requirements for swimming, water polo, and artistic swimming; meets high school and age group requirements for diving
- Well-suited to host national and regional level swim meets and aquatic events as the premier competitive swimming facility in the Northeast
- Also appropriate for water safety, aquatic recreation, lap swim, lifestyle aquatic programs, and social gatherings and parties



## Community/Program Pool

- 6 lane, 25 yard, shallow warm water pool (84°)
- Depth of 3.0' to 4.5'
- Designed for a wide range of community programming
- Suitable for swim lessons, water safety, aquatic fitness, lap swimming, therapy, rehabilitation, and recreational/family activities
- Specific focus on accessibility for seniors, veterans, and people with disabilities and special needs
- Also appropriate for event warm-up and staging



## Swim School Pool

- 60' x 30'
- Depth of 3.0' to 4.0'
- Temperature of 90°
- Ramp and stairs access
- Intended for full lesson program and community use even during major events within other areas of the Aquatic Center

## Spa/Whirlpool

- Small hot-tub type spa for use by program participants and members for recovery and relaxation
- 150 to 200 sq. ft.
- Temperature of 102° to 104°

## Wellness/Therapy Pool

- Purpose-built therapy/rehabilitation and wellness pool
- 1500 sq. ft.
- Temperature of 92°
- Adjacent treatment areas for therapy/rehab or sports medicine clinic
- Anticipated partnership with an area health care organization



## Community/Support Facilities and Amenities

- Flexible and accessible meeting space for classes, program support, community functions, special events, and rentals
- Workout, fitness, and cardio/strength training facilities to support team training and programs as well as member and community use
- Facilities for wide range of sport and youth training camps, summer camps, and sport clinics
- Office, support, safety, and storage spaces for operations and facilities management

## Site Requirements

The Aquatic Center will require a minimum site of 12 acres with the ideal site consisting of 20+ acres. The site will include parking for at least 425 cars for daily and mid-sized events, with shared use or remote parking for an additional 175 cars for the largest events. Green space will be reserved for recreational trails (walking, jogging, biking), outdoor activities, event staging, and family or community gatherings. The site also will include areas to support environmental and public access requirements (e.g., setbacks, retention ponds), as well as space for future expansion.



## Equity and Accessibility

PhilAquatics is engaged in thorough and intentional planning to ensure accessibility to diverse and traditionally underserved populations. Initial concepts include:

- Universally designed to meet all individuals' needs, strengths, and abilities
- Community engagement/outreach to create pathways for inclusive practices and programs
- Sliding scale or subsidized program fees for qualifying individuals and groups
- Budgeted facility time designated for free or low-cost community use
- Consideration of public transportation, bike, and pedestrian access in determining site selection
- Developmentally appropriate resources for special needs families



## Organizational Readiness

### Governance

The PhilAquatics Board of Directors is well positioned to make the Aquatic Center a reality. The Board includes members with expertise in business, health and wellness, education, community organizations, real estate, and nonprofits. All members share a passion for and commitment to aquatics, and to ensuring that the full breadth of community will have access to the life enhancing programming and benefits of the Aquatic Center. Through their professional and personal connections, the Board also is assembling a broad network of highly aligned stakeholders to support the creation and funding of a facility of this size and scope.

Current Board members include:

- |                                |   |
|--------------------------------|---|
| • Michael D. Morgan, Chair     | • Geoffrey A. Meyer, Executive Director |
| • Stephanie Graaf, Vice Chair  | • Dan Cooke                             |
| • Frank Geraci, Secretary      | • Kire Filipovski                       |
| • Stephen Dougherty, Treasurer | • Jeremy Gross                          |
|                                | • Allison Therwhanger                   |

## Due Diligence

Laser-focused on project success, sustainability, and accountability, PhilAquatics is undertaking a rigorous, data-driven, due diligence process to support a comprehensive and strategic approach to the planning and development of the Aquatic Center. This includes retaining needed expertise, as well as extensive research of, and site visits to, similar facilities and potential building locations.

Thus far, the Board has retained professional services covering:

- 💧 Aquatic physical plant requirements and associated programming opportunities
- 💧 Aquatic business operations planning, including utilization, staffing, budgetary needs, and revenue expectations and projections
- 💧 Project feasibility, including costs, benefits, economic impact, and funding potential
- 💧 Architectural design
- 💧 Nonprofit practices and compliance (e.g., governance, operations, fundraising, and communications)



Moreover, the Board has participated in 10 site visits to date, to explore comparable aquatic facilities in 6 states across the country, in order to capture best practices and “lessons learned” which will inform every aspect of project development. Regionally, the Board already has explored 19 potential building sites to focus market research and determine the best possible location for the Aquatic Center. The Board has narrowed the site selection to the 4 most viable options determined to be the most suitable to achieve mission priorities.

The Board also has already begun socializing the Aquatic Center concept with identified stakeholders, meeting with potential strategic partners, funders, and connectors such as governmental representatives, school districts, community organizations, businesses, healthcare providers, convention and visitors’ bureaus, and prospective donors.

Future plans include a fundraising feasibility study, to assess and document funding opportunities and additional leadership support, and prepare for a comprehensive/capital fundraising campaign. The initial response from stakeholders has been overwhelmingly positive, evidencing an early consensus that the Aquatic Center will fill a regional resource gap and bring an abundance of benefits to area businesses and residents.

## Project Costs & Funding Plan

Total project costs for the Aquatic Center are estimated to be in the range of \$74-\$88MM, plus \$7-\$14MM+/- in site acquisition costs, based on comparable projects across the country, with an annual operating budget of approximately \$3MM in Year 1, growing to \$3.5MM by Year 5.

Capital funds will derive from a mix of public and private dollars through community, business, and organizational partnerships, as well as philanthropic support from foundations, corporations, and individual donors.

Sustainable operating and program funds will comprise both earned and charitable revenue. Earned revenue will include a broad range of fee-for-service and contract opportunities such as memberships, classes, training rentals, community and business partnership uses, aquatic and community events, and individual rentals. PhilAquatics intends to grow a robust development infrastructure to support diversified charitable revenue such as corporate sponsorships, governmental and foundation grants, major and planned giving, and individual “pipeline” donors, through grant writing, campaigns, appeals, and special events.



## Utilization & Associated Economic Impact

The Aquatic Center will generate significant annual economic impact as a result of the many competitive aquatic events, training camps, and sports clinics to be hosted at the facility (estimated at 90–100 full or partial event days per year), as well as the daily user load. Initial estimates are listed below and reflect utilization rates and related economic impact by Year 3 (unless otherwise indicated), with Year 1 at 75% and Year 2 at 90% of Year 3 projections, respectively. *Detailed projections for Years 1 through 3 are available upon request.*

### Event-Specific Utilization/Impact

- 💧 Event attendance: 110,000 visitors/year
- 💧 Hotel room nights: 20,000/year
- 💧 Direct spending: \$11,730,000/year (e.g., hotels, meals)
- 💧 Total economic impact: \$23.5MM/year (based on a 2.0% multiplier capturing the overall economic impact of the direct spending)

### Total Annual Utilization/Impact

- 💧 550,500 visitors and users (inclusive of 110,000 event attendees/year) (calculated based on total separate visits, rather than total unique visitors)
- 💧 Related substantial spending within the community (financial analysis in progress)
- 💧 \$6.5MM–\$7MM in combined Aquatic Center salaries, wages, and benefits, for Years 1–5
- 💧 5–6 full-time employees plus 30–35 full-time equivalents (FTEs) in part-time flex positions (estimated to include 100+ individuals per year)



## Project Timeline

Once the initial site is secured along with site development funding, PhilAquatics expects that the project design and permitting process will require approximately 12 months. Actual construction is projected to require 18 to 24 months after capital funding is secured.

## Additional Information

To learn more about this exciting project and help make the Aquatic Center a reality, please contact:

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*Greater Philadelphia Aquatics Association (d/b/a PhilAquatics) is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) charity. All contributions are tax-deductible to the fullest extent of the law. The official registration and financial information of GPAA may be obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of State by calling toll free within Pennsylvania, 1 (800) 732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.*

