

Frequently asked questions on the plans for the Swimming Pool Project

Q1. Why was the pool selected as a bond project?

- A. The Memorial Pool was built by the community in 1956 to support recreational swimming, high school competitions and community swim lessons. It is an important school and community resource. The district hosted a series of stakeholder meetings going back to 2010 to discuss facility needs in the Sonora Union High School District. The meetings included students, teachers, support staff and members of the community. In all of these meetings the need for extensive renovations and repairs to the Memorial Pool and pool locker rooms were mentioned frequently.

Q2. Why can't the old pool be repaired?

- A. The 57 year old pool underwent repair work in 1994 through the generous support of the community. While these repairs extended the life of the pool another 20 years, the network of plumbing that supports the pool underground is still from the 1950's. It is suspected that there are significant leaks in the original system of plumbing due to metal corrosion. The pool's location is spatially limited being pinned in between School Street and Wood's Creek. It is in a flood zone and the pool deck would have to be raised approximately four feet to be compliant with current zoning requirements. P.G.& E. has several testing wells immediately adjacent to the pool to monitor suspected pollution from prior industrial use on the property. The pool also does not meet current strict laws on Americans with Disabilities Act for access for the disabled for the pool deck, ingress and egress. The pool mechanical systems i.e. pumps, heater, filtration, drains are outdated and inadequate for a large public use pool.

Q3. Why is the current pool described as "unhealthy" by the architect and pool inspectors?

- A. Current health standards for public pools require that the entire volume of water move through a filtration system in a time frame of six hours or less. Because of the limited size of the original piping, filtration system and pump, it takes more than 10 hours for the Sonora pool to filter water. The filter backwash system piping that connects to the city sewer backs up into the mechanical room during the backwashing procedure. The drains do not meet new specifications for suction pipe size. There are also significant concerns with inadequate electrical protection. Finally, the pool fencing is unsafe due to the installation of barbed wire, climbable chain link and the lack of "panic hardware" on the gates.

Q3. Why is the district building a new pool?

- A. The architects first tried to fit a modern pool that meets the need for multiple use onto the current pool site. It simply would not fit within the existing footprint. A restoration of the old pool would involve demolition of the old decking and pool floor, new plumbing and piping, new electrical systems, plaster, pumps, heaters and tile while meeting the current codes and ADA requirements including new locker rooms and bathroom facilities. When completed, the restoration would continue to be a 60 year old pool that is too small for its intended

purposes. The district has determined that pouring more money into an inadequate facility is a bad investment of public funds. WLC Architects and the pool designer TwoRivers Architecture proposed building a new pool in an adjacent location that has the physical space to support community, school and competition requirements.

Q4. What does the current pool cost to maintain? Isn't a new pool more expensive to maintain?

A. Over the last five years the average annual cost to maintain the Memorial Pool is \$37,000. This includes heating, chemicals, repairs and equipment. As the pool ages, like an older car or house, the costs for repair and equipment continue to escalate. The pool costs do not include personnel dollars for district staff who work on the pool on a daily basis. New pool designs for example have a modulating surge tank that collects displaced heated and chemically treated water and then returns it to the pool. This saves chemical costs, water and energy use. With new energy efficient plumbing, mechanical systems and automated maintenance, the new pool will be more cost effective and require less maintenance by district staff.

Q5. Will the pool be a community pool? Will the district limit access to just students?

A. The Memorial Pool was built in 1956 as a gift to the community by its leading citizens. The Sonora Union High School District, in partnership with the Tuolumne County Recreation Department, will honor this legacy with a continued commitment to support recreational swimming in the summer, swim lessons for children and youth, increased access to community members for fitness, and a host of competitive aquatics activities. With improved heating and locker room facilities, the pool will be used year round.

Q6. Why wasn't the old pool adequately maintained by the district?

A. The district has a very hard working maintenance department. They have been trained in maintaining swimming pool surfaces, adjusting pool chemicals and assessing water quality. The Manager of Maintenance and Operations has been certified in pool maintenance. Unfortunately like any 50 year old facility and mechanical system, there is an escalation of needed repairs and maintenance.

Q7. How does the creek area impact the construction plans for a new pool? Are there any old gold mines or surprises that might complicate construction?

A. The architects and construction team have taken the creek and entire campus into consideration when designing the new pool. Underground survey work that included test boring and soil analysis has been completed to ensure that the new site can support the proposed pool. The architects and construction team are confident that location of the new pool will fit with the school's physical plant and will not face any underground challenges.

Q8. What sports teams or groups use the pool?

- A. The Sonora High Wildcat Athletic programs hosts competitive teams in Men and Women's Swimming and Water Polo at the Varsity and Junior Varsity level. In 2013 there were more than 50 students in competitive swimming and more than 50 students in water polo. The Emergency First Responder Program and the Wild Land Fire class use the pool to teach water rescue. The PE Department uses the pool more than 100 days per year to teach basic swimming, water safety and swimming as fitness. As one PE teacher said 'The pool is one of our most important classrooms at the school because it saves lives.' The old Memorial Pool has been an incredible community asset for 50 years. The new Memorial pool will support aquatics activities for the next 50 years.