

**335 West Lutge Avenue
Burbank, California 91506-3321
May 19, 2009**

Mayor and City Council Members, City of Burbank
275 East Olive Avenue
P.O. Box 6459
Burbank, CA 91510-6459

Subject: City Council Goal: Year-Round Aquatics and Lap Swimming

Dear Mr. Mayor and Council Members,

I've communicated with the City Council, Park, Recreation & Community Services department and the Park, Recreation & Community Services Board many times on swimming since becoming a Burbank resident in 1990. I am attaching my communication to the PRCS Board delivered at their last meeting. These are my current observations on the year-round aquatics program and lap swimming:

1. Why isn't McCambridge pool open now?

As of May 13, there is water in the pool, the deck is clean but the pool is closed! How does this further the City Council goal of year around swimming?

2. The City Council – School District MOU on high school pool use is done, but there is no use by swimmers until June 15.

Early in September 2008, the MOU was forecast by “the end of October” – this MOU was originally intended to continue the extended swimming of 2008. Why did it take so long? Six months of swimming opportunities are gone and continue to be missed every day.

3. Why is McCambridge under-utilized?

1/3 of the pool capacity (use time) is being ignored. Based on schedules of other area pools, there are **90.5** hours potential use of McCambridge Pool each week. The Aquatics Brochure shows a scheduled use of **60.25** hours per week.

4. Why aren't adults scheduled at McCambridge?

It's an improvement that lap swimming is (only) planned for [John Burroughs High School \(JBHS\) Swimming Pool](#), but why are adults “ignored” at McCambridge pool?

It seems there will be three pools open in Burbank: McCambridge, Burbank high school and Burroughs, but only swim lessons are scheduled for Burbank high school. Is this really efficient? Instead of “outsourcing” swimming, why isn't a year around schedule built around use of McCambridge pool?

5. Why are lap swimmers paying more?

According to a [Burbank website update](#), lap swimming will be \$5 per visit, \$1 more than for any other activity. I emailed the Sports Office and got this reply: "There are fewer swimmers in the pool per hour during lap swim versus rec swim, so the cost per person to operate the pool and staff safety personnel is greater."

This rationale for a higher fee, plus the scheduling of lap swimming almost entirely at the high school pools, implies that the Park, Recreation & Community Services Department still considers lap swimming as "extra" and not really part of the (limited) aquatics program. It is easy to envision that if anything becomes "difficult" at the high school pools, lap swimming will disappear in a minute.

6. What is the status of the City Council "Year Around" pool opening goal?

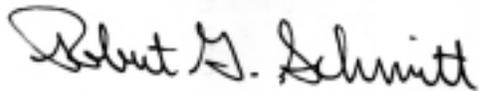
After 15+ years of writing letters and talking with other discouraged Burbank swimmers, I wonder what it takes to get reasonable use of Burbank's pool facilities.

Rather than keep asking the City Council and the Park Department to extend the pool season, I think the question should be:

"Who is responsible for keeping the pools closed?"

Thanks for your consideration of this letter.

Very truly yours,



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cc: Gary Bric, Mayor
Anja Reinke, Vice Mayor
Dave Golonski, Council Member
[Dr. David Gordon, Council Member](#)
Jess Talamantes, Council Member
Chris Dasté, Park, Recreation &
Community Services Director

Burbank Aquatics, Pools and Lap Swimming – May 14, 2009

Recent comments from Burbank residents to the TeamBurbank.com website:

“It is just SO discouraging..... I ended up buying a six-month membership to the Rose Bowl Aquatic Center - it has fabulous hours, two Olympic sized pools, and isn't too bad a drive. But Verdugo was certainly closer and more convenient in every way..!”

“We moved from OC to Burbank recently. Daughter (17) is a speed swimmer and synchronized swimmer. We are shocked to find that we have no pool access here. She is home schooled so that keeps us out of the HS Circuit.”

1. The City Council – School District MOU is done, but why did it take so long?

We've missed six months of swimming opportunities. Early in September 2008, the MOU was forecast by “the end of October” – this was originally intended to continue the extended swimming of 2008.

2. Why isn't McCambridge pool open?

As of May 13, there is water in the pool, the deck is clean but the pool is closed! What has happened to the City Council goal of year around swimming?

3. Why is McCambridge under-utilized?

1/3 of the pool capacity (use time) is being ignored. As I've previously presented, there are **90.5** hours potential use of McCambridge Pool each week (based on schedules of other area pools):

Monday through Friday: 6 am to 8:30 pm = 72.5 hours

Saturday and Sunday: 8 am to 5 pm – 18 hours

But the current total scheduled use is **60.25** hours per week use, according to the Aquatics Brochure:

Recreation swim: 23 hours per week

Classes, water polo, etc.: Monday through Friday 8:30 am to 11:30 and 4 pm to 7 pm. (30 hours per week)

Aqua Trim (adult): 3.5 hours per week

Beginning Swimmer (adult) 3.75 hours per week

4. Why aren't adults scheduled at McCambridge?

Adults only have 12% of the pool time. Or should the Recreation swim time be counted?

2000 US Census concluded that adults (persons over 18) are 77.7% of Burbank's population!

5. Why isn't lap swimming scheduled at McCambridge in the early mornings, at noon, or in the evenings?

Every other area pool does this. This was the schedule at Verdugo pool. These hours are open at McCambridge.

6. Why is lap swim only planned for [John Burroughs High School \(JBHS\) Swimming Pool](#)?

With Burbank high school and Burroughs, it seems there will be three pools open in Burbank, but only swim lessons are scheduled for Burbank. Is this really efficient? Instead of "outsourcing" swimming, why isn't a year around schedule built around use of McCambridge pool?

7. Why are lap swimmers paying more?

According to a [Burbank website update](#), lap swimming will be \$5 per visit, \$1 more than for any other activity. I emailed the Sports Office and got this reply: "There are fewer swimmers in the pool per hour during lap swim versus rec swim, so the cost per person to operate the pool and staff safety personnel is greater."

This rationale for a higher fee, plus the scheduling of lap swimming almost entirely at the high school pools, implies that the Park, Recreation & Community Services Department still considers lap swimming as "extra" and not really part of the (limited) aquatics program. It is easy to envision that if anything becomes "difficult" at the high school pools, lap swimming will disappear in a minute.

8. What is the status of the City Council "Year Around" pool opening goal?

After 15+ years of writing letters and talking with other discouraged Burbank swimmers, I wonder what it takes to get reasonable use of Burbank's pool facilities.

Rather than keep asking the City Council and the Park Department to extend the pool season, I think the questions should be: "Who is responsible for keeping the pools closed?"

9. What new approaches has the Park, Recreation & Community Services Department tried?

Last year there was some use by the Disney triathlon programs, but there is untapped potential for other business support. I've suggested Parks & Rec contact Glendale to determine if there could be a joint promotion of the pools and share expenses. There was a private age-group swimming program years ago that withered away when Burbank did not open its pools after October.

The money is available from 2008 to open McCambridge pool before June 15 and start a comprehensive aquatics program. Burbank should review what other pools are doing - the wheel does not need to be re-invented!

I am personally very disappointed that NO pool is open now nor are there any apparent plans to run the pools other than "business as usual", during the summer only. My goal is to get any pool opened on a year around basis; this is almost totally unconnected with any "facilities" issue.

However, there seems to be an "entrenched mindset" in Burbank that swimming only takes place in the summer and is primarily for kids' swimming lessons and recreation. I swim in many pools and challenge the idea - seemingly widely accepted in Burbank - that it is necessary to enclose a pool to have a year around program. This is NOT Chicago (where I grew up)!

Bob Schmitt (TeamBurbank.com)