

October 18, 2002
City of Burbank City Hall

David Laurell, Mayor
c.c Stacey Murphy, Vice Mayor
c.c. Bud Ovrom-City Manager

Dear Mayor Laurell;

We appeal to you as the elected legislative and policy-making body of the City of Burbank, with regards to concerns over the future use of the city pools and the lap swimming program. We were disappointed by the lack of support demonstrated by the Parks and Recreation Department on September 24, 2002, in a public meeting at McCambridge Park, regarding future pool usage.

As some of you may be aware, the City of Burbank has two 50-meter pool facilities, Verdugo Park Pool and McCambridge Park Pool. They are both nice facilities and maintained well for a public facility. The lifeguards and staff are wonderful, as well as the daily swimmers. The cost is \$45.00 per month, or \$5.00 per swim for Burbank residents and \$55.00 or \$7.00 per swim for non-residents. As you can see, lap swimming at these pools are not cheap. For the same price, the Aquatic Center at the Rose Bowl in Pasadena offers longer hours: 6am to 9pm., year round, using conventional water heating methods. Currently the McCambridge Park Pool is open M-F 7:30 pm to 9:00 pm; and S-S 10:30am-12:30pm.

Prior to September 24th, several rumors had been circulating in regards to the closing of McCambridge Pool. Verdugo was closed in August, and McCambridge remains open for swim team and lap swim. We were concerned about the possibility of a closure, and a meeting was set for September 24th 6:30 pm, compliments of the Burbank Parks and Recreation Department.

We were told in the meeting by Mr. Garth Nelson several things, among them:

1. Burbank did not budget for a year round aquatic program;
2. Burbank's intention is not to have a year round swim facility;
3. It will cost \$160,000.00 a year to keep the McCambridge Park pool open;
4. Burbank cannot just give in to any "special interest group;"
5. Burrough's High School pool might be able to set aside evening swim time; (very late in the evening 8:00pm-9:00pm, and shorter hours as well);
6. The solar panels will only cut cost by \$30,000, if that much.

1. To our surprise, we have discovered information for the City of Burbank in the form of a Strategic Plan '2001-'2010, pg. 37, item 18, which was never mentioned at the 9/24 meeting which states:

"Develop options and identify cost with providing a year-round aquatic program. This process would include exploring the option of maintaining one pool operational on a year round basis." (Please see attached handout)

It is nice to know that Burbank City Council does have an intention to operate a year round swim facility, and the fact that it was not budgeted for the '2002-'2003 year, is an error on the Park and Recreation Department. The Burbank community should not be burdened by this oversight.

2. We also became aware of Burbank's Water and Power Department's involvement in McCambridge Park Pool as stated on their web site:

"In July 2002, City of Burbank began heating the McCambridge Park Pool with a solar water heating system...The water returned to the pool is naturally heated, free of charge, and with no adverse environmental impact...There are 4,500 square feet of solar collecting panels on the southern exposure of the McCambridge gym roof....This system has the ability to pay for itself within 2 years if used year round. However, if in use just during summer months, the project will pay for itself in natural gas savings in about 6 years."(Please see attached BWP website printout.)

To simplify things: The heating from the sun heats the panels which heat the water, and for 8 months of the year, this will supply warm water at 100% efficiency. No gas cost. The remaining 4 months, will still be assisted by the solar panels but at a 1/3 efficiency, depending upon the weather, and the sun's strength. The digital control which sets the temperature is electric.

We would like to know where the amount of \$160,000.00 to keep one pool in operation is arrived at? A complete bracket of costs would be helpful to us. Furthermore, we wonder why swimmers should come up with the money to support it, as indicated by Mr. Nelson? This is your job as elected officials. Cities may not profit from certain activities that is why there are taxes. This is a community service to benefit the community, and should not be thought of as an economic money making endeavor.

3. Swimmers are not a special interest group! We are members of the community who pay taxes, and elect our representatives and officials. Burbank is a city of much diversity; age, sex, race, and handicaps. Burbank appears to be cutting edge on environmental concerns, but keep in mind that 61% of the adult population in the U.S is obese. We are people who are concerned about our health and longevity. We will be senior citizens living in Burbank one day.

4. Burrough's High School Pool should not be an option for lap swimmers, when there is a 50 meter pool with natural heating, free of charge, at McCambridge Park. We do not feel comfortable walking onto a high school campus at night, and the liabilities attached to it, reciprocally.

We thank you for your good intentions. You obviously have put thought into a year round swim program as evidenced by solar panels, your strategic plan for Burbank, and the conjoined efforts of Burbank Water and Power.

We are asking City Council to step to the plate and continue to keep McCambridge Park Pool open on a year round basis starting now. One of the goals of City Council as stated on the City of Burbank web site is:

"to provide and enhance the high level of leisure, information and other human services available to Burbank citizens."(See attached website printout)

We look forward to your response and to work toward a common stated goal of having a year round pool facility in Burbank.

Thank You

Sincerely,

Concerned citizens of Burbank. (See attached lap swimmers contact sheet)