

Lawrence Outdoor Pool Renovation Project
Analysis of Omissions and Errors in Information Presented
to the City Commission and the Public
and
Request for Citizen Oversight and Advocacy Committee

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Overview of Informational Omissions and Errors in the Outdoor Pool Planning and Public Engagement Process

The Lawrence Parks and Recreation department and its consultants performed an extensive community engagement process for the pool renovation that included 3 community-wide opinion surveys, 3 public meetings, 2 pop-up meetings, and 9 focus group meetings.

The Director of Parks and Recreation, [Luis Ruiz, claimed that “the preferred option . . . has come up through that public engagement”](#) process.¹ The Aug 13 agenda item report claimed that the “Preferred Option [was] based on feedback” [\[pg. 2\]](#)², and in public and focus group meetings, Parks and Rec representatives asserted that the pool renovation design concepts arose from the community’s survey responses.³

In every stage of the community engagement process, our community requested open water for recreational swimming and retaining our 50m lap lanes. **The Parks and Rec department, Municipal Services & Operations (MSO), and their consultants ignored this extensive community feedback and only put forth design concepts that dramatically reduced the size of our pool** and its open swim space. These departments and their consultants also **failed to fully and accurately share the community’s input with the City Commission**, which made it appear as though the preferred design concept they presented was desired by our community.

One of the stated priorities for the pool renovation project was to “engage the community” using the International Association of Public Participation (IAP2) standards [\[pg. 21\]](#). The [IAP2 states that public participation](#) “includes the promise that the public’s contribution will influence the decision.” The IAP2 [Code of Ethics](#) commits its practitioners to:

- “incorporate the interests and concerns of all affected stakeholders,”
- “undertake and encourage actions that build trust and credibility for the process among all the participants,”
- “encourage the disclosure of all information relevant to the public’s understanding and evaluation of a decision,” and
- “ensure that stakeholders have . . . the opportunity to influence decisions.”

We believe the actions of the Parks and Rec department, Municipal Services & Operations (MSO), and their consultants **did not comply with** the IAP2’s Code of Ethics for the following reasons:

- **Our community provided 5,749 comments in the opinion surveys, which was the primary way citizens could express their opinions about the pool renovation project.** Vireo, the public engagement consultants, **did not analyze these 5,749 comments** and did not present information from these comments to the Commission to

¹ At 5:57. Click date next to the YouTube icon to be taken directly to quoted material. If you click the video directly, you may be taken to the beginning of the meeting.

² NOTE: Page numbers in the following citations refer to the number of the page in the pdf document. This is sometimes different than the number printed at the bottom of the page.

³ Interviews with Annette McDonald, Kent McDonald, and John Schmidt, September 16, 2024.

inform their decisions. Their reports did not mention that the surveys garnered these thousands of comments. and they did not properly publish the 3,028 comments from the second two surveys, hundreds of which expressed dissatisfaction with many elements of the proposed design plans. [Sections 1 & 3b]

- The Parks and Recreation department **did not indicate the square footage of the new and old pools in their public engagement materials**, so no citizens knew how much water space we would lose in the proposed plans when our community participated in the opinion surveys or meetings. [Section 2]
- Vireo's final report didn't give an accurate summary of the first opinion survey, which 1,651 people took. In its section about this survey, they incorrectly published the results from a meeting attended by 13 people instead of the survey results from 1,651 people. **So the City Commission only saw summaries of results from 1,651 respondents in one slide at their June 4 meeting and did not receive accurate data from this survey at the Aug 13 meeting when they approved the preferred concept.** [Section 3b]
- The three surveys' questions biased results by only giving people the option of voting for "open swim space" in 1 out of 25 questions, while they allowed people to vote for a "lazy river" in 5 out of 25 questions. [Section 3a]
- **Our community consistently indicated we wanted open swim space** and long course lap lanes in the surveys' multi-select questions, in hundreds of the surveys' comments, and in the public engagement meetings, but this public opinion was ignored and not used to direct the renovation design concepts. [Sections 1b, 1c, 3c, 4a, 4c, & 6]
- Two months after the preferred concept was approved, **the Parks and Rec department finally presented the analysis of comments from 2 of the 18 questions** that allowed comments. These results resoundingly show that **our community requested a larger facility** in their survey comments. [Section 1c]
- The Parks and Rec department told our community that it would be too expensive to retain our open water space, but they had not actually analyzed these costs. When these costs were finally estimated, our community discovered that repairing our current pool would cost less than the preferred concept. [Section 5]
- The engineering consultants do not appear to have shared with the City Commission and the public that the location of stormwater pipes may be the cause of the settling and cracking happening to the shallow end of our pool, and the consultants' preferred design concept located the lazy river in the same location that may be causing these problems with our current pool. [Section 7]

We are deeply disappointed that our citizens and our City Commission were misinformed so often about so much through this process. We are hopeful that making this information known will prevent this lack of transparency from continuing in this project. We also request the appointment of a citizen oversight and advocacy committee to guarantee that this project adheres to IAP2's Code of Ethics going forward.

1. 5,749 Opinion Survey Comments Not Mentioned, Analyzed, or Presented

The three opinion surveys included 18 questions respondents could provide comments to. These comments allowed our community to express what was important to them for the pool renovation, and **our community provided a vast amount of our feedback through a total of 5,749 comments.**

Our community provided:

- [2,721 comments in the first survey](#), including information about what could be better about our pool. **This survey's data was gathered to direct the development of the pool renovation designs**, and Vireo's final report stated that one purpose of this stage of public engagement was to "incorporate participants' feedback into Phase 2" of the project [\[pg. 5\]](#).
- [2,493 comments in the second survey](#), including responses to four open-ended questions soliciting people's opinions about, "What would make Renovation Concept [#] BETTER?" **These four questions were the primary way our citizens could express their opinions about the four pool renovation design options.** [\[pg. 6-25, 30-47, 52-66, & 72-87\]](#)
- [535 comments in the third survey](#) that allowed our community to express **our opinion about the final preferred design concept.**

Many of the comments in the second and third surveys complained about the reduction in open water in the four proposed design concepts and in the final preferred design.

a. Survey Comments Not Mentioned to the Commission

Unfortunately, our community's primary feedback about the pool renovation in these 5,749 comments was not analyzed or presented to the City Commission.

- The public engagement consultants' final report mentioned that they gathered comments through the total public engagement process, but **none of their reports mentioned that thousands of comments were collected through the surveys.**
- At the end of one long paragraph, Vireo's final report mentioned that they gathered comments from the total engagement process of 14 meetings, Facebook engagement, and opinion surveys [\[pg. 4\]](#). They did not mention that the vast majority of these comments came from the thousands of survey comments, and **their 9-page report makes no further reference to any of these 5,749 survey comments, which were the vast majority of our community's input on the pool renovation project.**
- This report bullet-pointed two types of online engagement - online surveys and Facebook. This list includes no mention of the surveys' thousands of comments, but clearly innumerate Facebook's 75 comments [\[pg. 4\]](#).
- In the final report's sections about each survey, they made no mention of each survey's **comments** but did include the results of each survey's **multi-select questions** [\[pg. 4, 5-6, 7-8, 9-10, 16, & 18\]](#). Vireo's May 14 and June 4 reports did not mention these comments either [\[pg. 8, pg. 3-12\]](#). [The final report also incorrectly reported results from

a meeting with 13 people as the results from the first survey that was completed by 1,651 people - see Section 3b]

- The visual presentations before the Commission only included summaries of the surveys' multi-select questions and included no mention of the surveys' 5,749 comments [June 4 \[pg. 25-26\]](#) and [Aug 13 \[pg. 16 & 18\]](#)
- While the Commission did receive the full text of the [first survey's comments](#) in their May 14 packet, they **did not receive text of the 3,028 comments from the last two surveys** in any of their packets, in spite of the fact that these comments were our community's primary feedback on the proposed designs. The Commission did receive links to these surveys' results, but the report gave no indication that they needed to visit these sites to access the thousands of comments our community provided. [\[pg. 7 & 9\]](#)
- The 3,028 comments from the second and third opinion surveys were not publicly posted, as they are supposed to be, on the [City's community engagement page about the pool renovation project](#). So no one in the public had access to these comments until two weeks after the preferred concept had been approved when I discovered that these pages only reported the multi-select questions answers. The surveys' comments were finally published online on Aug 30 after I requested access to them.⁴

b. Survey Comments Not Qualitatively Analyzed

None of the 5,749 comments from the three opinion surveys were qualitatively analyzed to provide numerical values indicating how frequently our community expressed certain ideas and opinions. Without this data, it is impossible to extract and make use of the information gathered in these thousands of comments, which were supposed to be our community's primary way of influencing the pool renovation designs.

When an institution gathers comments in a community survey, it is their responsibility to acknowledge these comments, analyze their qualitative data, and present that information. Providing opportunities for citizens to comment leads them to believe that their voices are being heard and influencing the planning process. **Ignoring that feedback is a breach of trust between citizens and government staff**, which conflicts with both the IAP2 Code of Ethics and the City's commitment to Community Engagement in its Strategic Plan.

All of the comments from 14 meetings, Facebook engagement, and three opinion surveys filled out by 3,307 people were summarized in three sentences sandwiched into Vireo's report's summary [\[pg. 4\]](#). **The surveys' comments and their content were not mentioned any other place in their written and verbal reports.**

Many of the public's comments requested open space for swimming, longer hours and a longer season, more lap lanes, a lazy river, more shade, more seating, improved bathhouses, and a second location on the west side of town. But the Commission was not made aware of these comments and their meaningful data that should have shaped the designs.

⁴ Email correspondence with Mark Hecker, August 29 and 30, 2024.

c. Analysis of Comments from Two Questions Supports Larger Facility

At the Oct 15 Commission meeting, two months after the final pool renovation design had been approved, the Parks and Rec Director finally presented qualitative analysis of 2 of the 18 questions from the three surveys that received comments [\[pg. 23-24\]](#).

They analyzed the 673 comments from the question “What OTHER comments, questions, or concerns would you like to share about the Lawrence Outdoor Aquatic Center Major Renovation Project?” and 203 comment from the question “If you don’t use the Lawrence Outdoor Aquatic Center currently, what would make you use it in the future?”

In both of these questions, the two most common answers were requests for more hours and a larger facility. These comments requested that our City not only maintain our current pool size, but even increase its size and availability.

Many of the comments that have not been analyzed complained about the lack of open water in the proposed design concepts, and our community provided many other excellent suggestions in their thousands of thoughtful comments. **Our coalition requests that the comments to other survey questions also be qualitatively analyzed** to direct the next stages of development for our pool repair and renovation.

2. Square Footage Data Not Provided to Citizens

Near the end of the Commission’s Oct 15 meeting, [Commissioner Larsen asked Mr. Ruiz if the community had been made aware that the pool could be smaller in size.](#)⁵ His response was,

“We had visuals of what the options were. I don’t know that at the point, we had a final, until we started calculating the numbers, what that final was, so **I’m not sure at what point of the public engagement process. We certainly didn’t conceal it**, especially as we moved it through for consideration. And that was one of the reasons why we spoke to the consultants as we produced three options, which we wanted to make sure that everyone was aware that in order to get to, close to, the square footage, that it would cost that much more money. So, you know, it may not have been communicated directly at that time, but in our presentation, **we did hope that that was conveyed.** [emphasis added]”

As shown below, **the significant reduction in pool square footage was not made explicit to the community at any point in the community engagement process, but it was presented multiple times to City officials during this process.**

a. Square Footage Information Presented to City Officials

- The City Commission received square footage numbers of the current pool and the design concepts at their June 4 meeting, which was in the middle of Stage 2 of the 3-stage community engagement process [\[pg. 27-30\]](#).

⁵ At 2:19:59. Click date next to the YouTube icon to be taken directly to quoted material.

- The Parks and Recreation Advisory Board saw these square footage numbers twice, both at their June 10 meeting and at their July 8 meeting, both of which occurred during the public engagement process [[pg. 15-19](#) & [pg. 15-19](#)].
- The City Commission saw these numbers again on August 13 when they voted to approve the preferred design concept [[pg. 20, 25, & 28](#)].

b. No Square Footage Information Presented to the Public

This square footage information for the current and proposed pool was **not presented to the public at any point before the final design was approved.**

- It was not included in the Stage 2 community engagement materials, which presented the four renovation design options between May 20 and June 13, 2024 [[pg 14-17](#)].
- It was not presented in the [Stage 3 community engagement materials](#), which presented the final design option between June 21 and July 10, 2024.
- Vireo’s final presentation on Aug 13 also shows the images used in Stage 2 and 3 of the community engagement process, which all lack square footage numbers [[pg 15 & 17](#)].

Finally, in Mr. Ruiz’s answer above, he referenced producing three options to prove that his office provided square footage numbers. But

- these three options with square footage numbers were produced **after** the community engagement process was finalized,
- these options were only presented to the City Commission at the Aug 13 meeting, and
- the square footage information about the old pool and the proposed design concepts wasn’t known by our broader community until [the Lawrence Journal World](#) and [The Lawrence Times](#) published these numbers just before the final plan was considered and approved.

c. Square Footage Misinformation in the August 13 Report

This consistent misinformation about the pool renovation square footage continued in the Aug 13 presentation [[pg 20](#)]. It stated that the preferred concept is “3000 SF LESS THAN EXISTING POOL.” This statement indicates that the pool’s water area would only be 3,000 square feet less than our current pool.

But in actuality, the number that was 3,000 square feet less than our current pool was the “total water recreation area,” not the actual water area in the pool. This “total water recreation area” included 2,300 square feet of a splash pad that is not part of the pool. So the preferred pool design was actually 5,300 square feet smaller than our existing pool, but this official documentation stated that it was only “3,000 SF less than existing pool.” Unfortunately, this documentation led the [Lawrence Journal World](#) to publish these inaccurate numbers after the final plan was approved.

The Aug 13 presentation also misrepresented the lap pool size in the preferred design as 7,600 square feet because it included 1,500 square feet of the deep end in the “lap pool” square

footage [\[pg 20\]](#).⁶ The deep end is not part of the length of the lap lanes, and during public hours, the 1,500 square feet of the deep end is only open for people landing from the diving boards and yellow slide. So it was inaccurate to indicate that the deep end was part of the lap lane section of the pool, and the “lap pool” square footage should have been 6,100 square feet.

3. Multi-Select Survey Questions - Biased Answers and Ignored Data

The public opinion surveys offered many multi-select questions that let respondents select multiple features that they wanted to see in our newly renovated pool. The first opinion survey asked three main multi-select questions about what six aquatic spaces, features, and programs people would most like in the pool renovation [\[pg. 59, 66, & 71\]](#). People could select six out of 11 or more options.

a. Surveys Biased by Emphasizing, De-emphasizing, and Omitting Predefined Answers

A critical flaw of multi-select questions in surveys is providing predefined answers, while neglecting to include responses that would have been important to participants.

- In one question about aquatic spaces the community would most like, “open swim space” was provided as one of 11 options listed. This was the only question, out of 25 total questions in the three surveys, that respondents could vote for “open swim space” [\[pg. 59\]](#).
- In 5 of the 25 survey questions across three surveys, citizens could select “lazy river.” [\[pg. 59\]](#), [\[pg. 26 & 48\]](#), and [\[pg. 1 & 27\]](#)
- The surveys included no questions asking how our community would feel about losing more than a quarter of our water and more than half of our swim space, or if we wanted to exchange that space for a lazy river and a splash pad.

Omitting and de-emphasizing some predefined answers, while emphasizing others, inherently bias surveys and produce misleading results.

b. Survey Results from 1,651 People Omitted and De-emphasized and Results from 13 People Emphasized

Vireo’s report about Stage 1 of the community engagement process was presented to the Commission at their May 14 meeting. This report included **4 ½ pages** of information [\[pg 4-8\]](#) about the first public engagement meeting that **13 people** participated in. They proceeded to write 3 sentences about the public opinion survey that **1,651 people** participated in, with only a link to the survey results and no analysis of those results [\[pg 8\]](#). In two visual presentations and two written reports about the pool renovation project, the results of this public meeting with 13 people were always presented before the results from the opinion survey that 1,651 people completed, implying that the 13 respondents were of greater significance.

⁶ Email correspondence with Mark Hecker, August 30, 2024. “The 7600 sq ft area, shown in all options, is the 25-meter lap lane section of the pool, plus the deep end.”

A particularly egregious error in Vireo's final report inaccurately reported the results from the first opinion survey's multi-select questions, which were supposed to drive the design concept designs. **This report replaced the results of the survey that 1,651 people filled out with the results of a meeting attended by 13 people** [\[pg. 5-6\]](#). (You can verify that these are the results from the 13-person meeting here [\[pg 4-8\]](#) and [\[pg. 25\]](#).)

Therefore, **the only time that the City Commission even saw the results of these main questions from the first survey**, which were supposed to direct the design plans, **was on one slide** in the Commission's June 4 meeting [\[pg. 26\]](#), and **the Commission did not receive accurate information about the first survey's multi-select questions or comments in Vireo's final report provided at the Aug 13 meeting when the Commission approved the preferred concept.**

c. [Data from Multi-Select Questions Ignored in Design Options](#)

A primary purpose of Stage 1 of community engagement, as stated in Vireo's final engagement report, was to "incorporate participants' feedback into Phase 2" of the project [\[pg. 5\]](#), but the preferences our community indicated in these multi-select questions were ignored in the development of the four pool renovation design concepts.

In the Stage 1 opinion survey:

- "Open swim area" was the third top aquatic space requested by the community [\[pg. 59\]](#). In spite of the fact that some people might not have thought they needed to vote for water in a pool because open water is the defining feature of a swimming pool, 63% of respondents still requested "open swim space" in the only one question out of 25 that they could vote for it.
- People could indirectly express their desire for swimming space in one other multi-select question, which asked people about their most desired programs for our pool [\[pg. 71\]](#). The top two programs requested were "recreational/open swimming" and swimming lessons, both of which require open swimming space.
- Despite our community's clear request for open water in these two primary survey questions, almost 60% of our current open swim area was eliminated in the four pool design concepts proposed after the first survey concluded.
- Splash pads ranked 6th out of 11 possible "aquatic spaces" our community desired, and yet, a splash pad was included in every single design concept, while top features the community requested were ignored [\[pg. 59\]](#).
- Finally, the number one most desired feature our community requested was shade, but the final plan eliminated our primary shade structure and didn't appear to have fully replaced its area, much less increase the available shade as our community requested [\[pg. 66\]](#).

4. Data from Meetings Ignored and Data Not Gathered from Users at Appropriate Stages of Planning

Vireo, the public engagement consultants, held 3 public meetings, 2 pop-up meetings, and 9 focus group discussions as part of the community engagement process. These meetings were held to gather community input to direct the project so it would reflect the needs and desires of our community [\[pg. 4\]](#).

a. Requests from Three Public Meetings Ignored in Design Options

Swim team representatives attended each of the three public meetings. At each meeting, they requested that the City retain the pool's long course lap lanes.

At these meetings, Parks and Rec asserted that retaining the 50m lanes was not even an option due to cost, even though they had not evaluated that cost. They also indicated that the surveys supported the design concept they put forth⁷, even though we now know that surveys supported maintaining open water.

At the first public meeting, at least 6 of the 13 attendees were associated with swim teams, and their primary request was to retain the 50-meter lap lanes. But the section of Vireo's final report about this meeting only mentions lap lanes in parentheses in its last sentence [\[pg. 5\]](#). When our organizers met with Parks and Rec administration, Mark Hecker continued to assert that there had not been much public support for retaining the long course lap lanes⁸ even though citizens requested it in every public meeting, as well as in survey comments and focus group discussions.

b. Outdoor-Pool Users Not Informed in Pop-up Meetings

The consultants held two pop-up meetings this summer to share the pool plan with the community at large [\[pg. 7 & 9\]](#). Even though the outdoor pool was open when these pop-up meetings were held, the consultants held these meetings at the indoor pool and at the Douglas County Fairgrounds. It's as though they actively avoided receiving feedback from the outdoor pool users who would be most affected by this decision.

c. Focus Group Meetings Held After Design Was Finalized

The City Commission directed Vireo to meet with all four of our community's swim teams, but these meetings did not occur until July 3-25, 2024, during and following the last week of Stage 3 of the community engagement process, when the preferred design concept had already been completely finalized [\[pg. 10\]](#). These meetings were not an opportunity for the swim teams' needs to inform the pool renovation plans, but were merely logistical meetings to figure out how to mitigate the consequences of cutting the size of our community's swim teams' critical training infrastructure in half.

⁷ Interviews with Annette McDonald, Kent McDonald, and John Schmidt, September 16, 2024.

⁸ Meeting with Mark Hecker, Luis Ruiz, and Lindsay Hart, September 9, 2024.

5. Misinformation about Costs of Retaining Current Pool

The Parks and Rec administration did not assess the costs necessary to repair the existing pool before or during the community engagement process. In spite of not having this financial data, they repeatedly informed the community and the City Commission that repairing the current configuration of our outdoor pool would be too expensive.⁹ At the August 13th Commission meeting, [Luis Ruiz said that retaining the open swim space eliminated in the preferred concept would “add a lot of money to this budget”](#) and that “we likely wouldn’t even fall in budget if we were to replace with the same.”¹⁰

At the Oct 15th Commission meeting, we learned that these assertions were incorrect and that retaining the open swim space would cost less than the preferred concept [\[pg. 1\]](#).

6. Renovation Designs Not Based on Public Input

The Parks and Rec department has consistently claimed that the pool renovation designs were based on community feedback. [Mr. Ruiz claimed that “the preferred option . . . has come up through that public engagement”](#) at the beginning of his Aug 13 presentation. The Aug 13 agenda item report states, “The four concept options presented to the community in the second survey were narrowed to a Preferred Concept based on feedback, and it has since been refined based on the continued community engagement [\[pg. 2\]](#).” And Parks and Rec representatives asserted the same thing during meetings, claiming that the design concepts arose from the surveys’ results.¹¹

But the renovation design options did not align with our community’s feedback. Lawrence citizens consistently requested that we retain our open swim space and 50-meter lap lanes in the opinion surveys and in meetings. [See Sections 1, 1b, 1c, 3c, 4a, & 4c]. But the four pool renovation design concepts offered to our community all eliminated almost 60% of our current open swim space and half the length of our lap lanes. This alone indicates that these proposed plans were not developed in response to our community’s input.

This is further demonstrated by the timing of the release of the four design concepts. Stage 1 of the public engagement process ended on May 1, 2024 when the [first opinion survey](#) closed. Stage 2 began when the [second opinion survey](#) started 19 days later, on May 20, 2024, and the four proposed design options were released to the public at this time.

One of Stage 1’s primary purposes was to “incorporate participants’ feedback into Phase 2” of the project [\[pg. 5\]](#), yet the four design concepts were released only 19 days after Stage 1 concluded.

In 19 short days, it would be impossible to

- qualitatively analyze the 2,721 comments citizens provided in the first survey,
- use that data to create new designs,
- produce four versions of that design, and

⁹ Interviews with Annette McDonald, Kent McDonald, and John Schmidt, September 16, 2024.

¹⁰ At 30:59. Click date next to the YouTube icon to be taken directly to quoted material.

¹¹ Interviews with Annette McDonald, Kent McDonald, and John Schmidt, September 16, 2024.

- develop public engagement materials to present the designs to our community.

This demonstrates that the proposed pool renovation plans could not have been crafted in response to our community’s feedback provided through the first opinion survey.

7. Stormwater Drainage Information Not Presented to the City Commission

An important section of our City’s stormwater drainage system runs under the western portion of the 800 block of Kentucky/Tennessee that houses the outdoor swimming pool. [[Scroll to “Project Needs” on this page to see the current stormwater drainage configuration.](#)]

The first picture below is of the relevant section of the stormwater system. The second picture overlays this stormwater information on the preferred design concept to show how the stormwater piping sits just to the west of the current shallow pool. This picture also indicates how the lazy river in the preferred design would have been positioned in the same location that houses the pool’s shallow end that’s currently sinking.



Nick Hoyt, the City Engineering Project Manager for the Jayhawk Watershed Project, says that this portion of our City’s stormwater piping was built within a natural creekbed that runs to the river and that there were “conversations between MSO and Parks & Rec about how the storm tunnel and/or the soils may be contributing to the failures of the zero-depth area.”¹²

Mr. Hoyt shared geotechnical data obtained for the stormwater project with the pool design team, but suspects the City did not have this specificity of geotechnical data when they built the shallow end in its current location in 1995 and. He says that “additional geotechnical investigation and analysis is needed specific to the pool project” and that this would be “completed within the pool design.”¹³

This geotechnical investigation may indicate that the soils are contributing to the current failure of the shallow end. I am concerned that if the pool renovation design is finalized before obtaining this geotechnical data and it maintains the current shallow pool location, the design could set the shallow end up to fail again in the future or could require greater costs to stabilize the soil.

¹² Email correspondence with Nick Hoyt, City Engineering Project Manager, Nov 7, 2024, and interview with Nick Hoyt, Oct 18, 2024.

¹³ Email correspondence with Nick Hoyt, Nov 7, 2024, and interview with Nick Hoyt, Oct 18, 2024.

Mr. Hoyt believes that if the soil conditions under the current shallow end are affecting its structural integrity, potential options would “include removing/replacing the existing poor soils, install[ing] additional foundation or moving the pool features where the geotechnical situation is not an issue.”¹⁴

Our petition requested that the shallow end be separated from the main pool, which the preferred design would have also done. We believe that these concerns about potential soil stability under the current shallow end further supports our request to separate the shallow end, which could be re-located over more stable soils farther north and east of its current location.

Finally, the stormwater pipe that runs under the very western edge of the pool is set to be replaced in the Jayhawk Watershed Project, but Mr. Hoyt doesn’t expect this portion of the project to be funded for a decade or two.¹⁵ So the pool solution implemented now needs to accommodate the current stormwater system arrangement.

Request for Citizen Oversight and Advisory Committee

The City’s first commitment to its citizens in its Strategic Plan is Community Engagement to “drive action and build trust in City government,” and the pool renovation project committed to following the IAP2 Code of Ethics, including incorporating stakeholders’ concerns, building trust and credibility, disclosing all relevant information to the public, and ensuring that stakeholders influence decisions.

Our coalition believes the above analysis shows that the pool renovation planning and community engagement process did not comply with these commitments to our community.

Our coalition presented 1764 signatures, 75 letters, and a coordinated presentation to the Commission given by over 20 community members all saying that the preferred design concept did not reflect our community’s opinion, yet [the Parks and Rec Director concluded the Oct 15 meeting by stating that “we have not ignored public opinion in any way.”](#)¹⁶

Our coalition is concerned that our community’s input will continue to be dismissed and ignored. For this reason, **we request that you appoint a citizen oversight and advisory committee to provide continued community engagement and a transparent planning process throughout the remainder of this project.**

We have many well-informed pool users who would be happy to serve on this committee and provide valuable user input to inform the renovation so our community receives a pool renovation that reflects the community’s desires and serves our needs.

¹⁴ Email correspondence with Nick Hoyt, Nov 7, 2024.

¹⁵ Interview with Nick Hoyt, Oct 18, 2024.

¹⁶ At 2:32:52. Click date next to the YouTube icon to be taken directly to quoted material.