



GOVERNMENT

Cumming Aquatic Center Coming Along Swimmngly

City officials hope to have the beautiful new center opened by June.

By **Bill Johnson** February 21, 2011



Cumming's new \$13 million aquatic center is coming along swimmngly.

Project Manager Ray Neal said it will be completed in mid-May. City officials will take a couple of weeks for a final inspection before opening the doors to visitors sometime in June.

The 50,000- square foot facility was designed by the Howell Group of Marietta and was loosely modeled after the [Frances Meadows Aquatic Center](#) in Gainesville.

"We're very excited about this project," Cumming Assistant Administrator Steve Bennett said recently. "It's going to be a great benefit to the community."

Swimming has become a very popular sport at the high school level and Bennett anticipates being able to host regional and state meets. "When you have special events like that, it has a ripple effect on the local economy with people coming here and staying at the hotels and motels and shopping locally and eating at our restaurants."

The center will include two indoor pools, one of which will be a 10-lane, Olympic-sized 50-meter competition pool with permanent seating for more than 700 spectators and temporary seating for an additional 300. Permanent seating is on the second level and every seat has an excellent view of the pool.

The second indoor pool will have a therapeutic pool with four lanes that is wheelchair accessible. There also is a spacious dressing area with lockers.

Outdoors there is a kiddie play pool plus a lazy river spray and mushroom area surrounded by cabanas. Like most capital projects the city builds, the aquatic center will be fully funded before it opens.

Forsyth County agreed to be a partner, committing \$10 million from a \$100 million green space SPLOST.

"Like everything we build, it's a county facility too," Bennett said. The facility will be open to everyone, but Bennett noted, "We're going to take care of city and county residents first."

"City officials haven't decided on how to charge for admission yet, but they have decided not to sell memberships. Day passes for individuals and families are being considered.

Bennett also anticipates renting swim lanes in the competition pool to local high schools and community swim teams that want to practice in an Olympic-sized pool.

Sadly, City Park pool which was built in 1972 where so many Forsyth County natives spent their summer days, has outlived its usefulness and will be closed.

Bennett said the pool started falling in attendance when the building boom hit and so many new subdivisions began building their own community pools. But it was those community pools that seemed to spark an interest in competitive swimming.

"That's the biggest project going," Bennett said. Cumming news, events, and deals, delivered straight to you.

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City officials expect to hire a manager, assistant manager and operations manager. Applications will be accepted at the end of February.

Will you be using the aquatic center when it opens in June? [Tell us in the comments.](#)

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COMMENTS (4)

Paul Baron

9:09am on Monday, February 21, 2011

Are there plans for Masters Swimming programs? Dedicated times for adult lap swimming?



Bill Johnson

4:27pm on Monday, February 21, 2011

Hi Paul, and thank you for reading CummingPatch.

Cumming officials are still developing their operational plan. Steve Bennett didn't mention a Masters Swimming program, but it is definitely something that should be looked at. City officials are anxious to have all area swim teams reserve lane times at the new facility. Dedicated times for adult lap swimming is a strong possibility since the aquatic center won't be selling memberships. Give Steve a call at 770-781-2010. He's heading things up for now. I'm sure he'll be glad to answer any other questions you may have.

Walt Taormina

3:19am on Tuesday, February 22, 2011

I can't wait for this swim center to open. I just learned about it today, I have been a Cumming resident for just over a year and live in Hampton Golf Village where we do have an awesome outdoor pool, but of course it is seasonal and I want to swim year round for exercise. I drove thru the lot today and the architecture is quite impressive, it appears it will be a feather in the cap, for Forsyth County.



Bill Johnson

3:02pm on Tuesday, February 22, 2011

Mayor Ford Gravitt and the City of Cumming are to be commended for their foresight in bringing this facility to Cumming. County Commissioners also showed sound judgment in partnering with the city. It will be a tremendous asset to the community and the good news is it is already paid for.

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