March 17, 2015

Submissions of Louise Lamb, Jocelyn McGuire and Shirley Stone as representatives of certain Former Users of the Sherbrook Pool,

TO: The Executive Policy Committee of Winnipeg City Council

Submission to be delivered by Louise Lamb, member of Sherbrook Seniors' Aquacize classes :

We three represent a coalition of former patrons of the Sherbrook Pool, including patrons of Seniors' Aquacize Programs, Specialty Arthritis and Fibromyalgia Aquacize Programs and Scheduled Lap Swim Opportunities, as well as cancer survivors who trained at Sherbrook Pool for dragon-boating events in which they participate as members of Chemo-Savvy Dragon-Boaters Team.

For all of us, Sherbrook Pool's uniquely suitable features and programming were vital to our health and quality of life and helped us realize significant savings for the health care system by managing our health issues through safe and effective exercise tailored to our needs.

I attended Sherbrook Pool aquacize classes for almost 10 years. After the Pool was closed for safety reasons, my classmates and I have followed our wonderful Sherbrook Aquacize instructor to alternate and far less satisfactory pool venues and all of us eagerly await the reopening of a safe and refurbished Sherbrook Pool.

We are here to urge EPC to adopt the amendments to the aquatics budget as proposed by the Standing Policy Committee on Protection and Community Services last week. One of us, Ms. Mcguire, will also speak on our behalf to the proposal by that Committee relating to the wider role of community development workers, the library budget, and how those relate to enhanced use of other community services, such as pools.

In advocating for the repair and reopening of the Sherbrook Pool over the past two years and four months, we have joined with other former users and supporters of the Sherbrook Pool, including the Sherbrook Sharks Youth Swim Club, the West Broadway Youth Outreach Program, a Muslim Women's Association, Friends of Sherbrook Pool and various other community and user groups both from within Daniel McIntyre Ward and from across the city (because pool users came from across the city), to advocate strenuously for of the Sherbrook Pool.

We and other former Pool users have endured a far from satisfactory "accommodation" of our former Sherbrook programs at other pool venues while the City has commissioned Probe Research to study the "recreational needs of Daniel McIntyre Ward" and then while the City wended its way to a decision about the fate of the Sherbrook pool, and now while the City's

bidding process relating to the repair and refurbishment of the Pool is underway with a view to finally reopening the pool in early 2016.

(See appended material that we submitted to the previous City Council and to Probe Research, including information about:

- ***the health reasons why we aquacizers and senior swimmers used and benefited greatly from Sherbrook's programs (Winnipeg Free Press Article May 6, 2013)***
- ***the many problems we have encountered, since Sherbrook has been closed, at substitute pool venues that were ill-suited to our programs and needs and the needs of certain youth groups that were not satisfactorily accommodated at other venues or were cancelled altogether .(Memo originally dated Nov. 21, 2013)***

Probe Research, after careful analysis, community surveys and meetings with stakeholders, confirmed to City Council what we and our compatriots had already told the City: that aquatic recreation opportunities in general and the Sherbrook Pool in particular were highly desired and well patronized recreational opportunities in Daniel McIntyre Ward and that Sherbrook Pool's unique features and programs attracted patrons from across the City.

(*See appended excerpt from the Probe Report: pp 21-26*)

Our quest seemed finally to be realized when the City made the decision to proceed with the necessary rehabilitation work to reopen the Sherbrook Pool, after securing financial contributions from the province and a promise of one million dollars from the Kinsmen to help enhance the facility so as to encourage its wider use by the residents of Daniel McIntyre Ward and Winnipeg citizens at large.

Now we find ourselves fighting once again to secure and defend the integrity of our former Sherbrook Pool programming in the wake of the City's current budget deliberations which are helmed in part by new members of council who were not involved in the deliberations to repair and re-open the Sherbrook Pool.

First, there was the suggestion that pools and other vital community amenities were on the chopping block, then it appeared that "only" hours of operations and programming were to be cut.

Then, there was the fear (as yet unsettled, so far as we understand) that the City's recent actions may have jeopardized the Kinsmen contribution to the Sherbrook Pool's repair and reopening when the work of repairing the pool is just poised to begin.

We and many other community groups and individuals worked long and hard to obtain the City's commitment to reopen the pool. The sorry state of the pool building and lack of proper

maintenance of the building for years even before the roof support beam issues were discovered constituted a major disgrace and a grave disincentive to expanded use of the facility. Nevertheless, we and our fellow pool users persisted because of the unique aspects of Sherbrook pool, including ease of accessibility by public transit, the tank size and configuration, the warm water temperature and the wonderful programs that made it a mecca for many of us.

If cuts to pool hours and programming are made in 2015 or in 2016 (when the Sherbrook Pool is to reopen) many of us and many other users of the pool from the Daniel Mac Ward and from all over the City (including youth groups who held swim nights at the pool, youth swim teams who held evening and weekend practices at the Pool, and those who work during the day and attend evening specialty arthritis aquacize classes) may be shut out of using the pool.

Lately, a City Official[1] has attempted to reassure us that, at least at Sherbrook, Community Services will likely be looking only to finding administrative and staffing efficiencies that will have "minimal if any impact on facility access and programming for citizens" and "no affect" on "major users".

This is not an adequate reassurance, nor necessarily forward looking, because of our past experience as detailed in the accompanying "Previous Memo to Council (Edited).

Also :

- ***a refurbished and revitalized Sherbrook Pool should be expected to attract more interest than its rundown, ill-maintained, ill-supplied, and neglected-to-the-point-of unsafe predecessor***; thus money spent now on more Community Service staff hours to permit working with communities to develop and promote additional pool programming will be well spent;
- given the needs and interests of the community as reiterated by the Probe report and the time and expense that has and will go into refurbishing and reopening the Pool, it is in the interests of all to expand programming and if necessary, hours of operation of the pool. This will also of course generate additional pool revenues.
- There is real danger that ***a penny-pinching mindset will lead to cost savings at the expense of <u>the integrity and utility of existing programs</u>,*** such as our seniors and specialty aquacize programs , by;
    a) putting incompatible programs into the pool at the same time due to limits on pool hours and space : in our case, noise and distraction from competing programs can ruin our ability to hear our instructor or to relax sufficiently to exercise safely or enjoyably - as has

[1] E-mail from C. Wightman, Director, City of Winnipeg Community Services Department, to Louise Lamb dated March 10, 2015

happened at one of our alternate venues during the period Sherbrook has been closed;

b) crowding too many people into a class or limiting the pool space available to our class such that we cannot properly and safely do the full range and variety of our necessary exercises , as has also happened at certain of our alternate pool venues while Sherbrook has been closed;
c) denying us access to the full width of the pool (all lanes) and access to both the shallow and deeper sections of the pool, such that we can't do the full range of our exercises or accommodate both shorter and taller members of the class (the latter risk injury to joints by exercising in too shallow water), as has also happened at certain of our alternate pool venues while Sherbrook has been closed;
d) scheduling our classes at times when it is more difficult for us to access public transit or at times less safe for us to travel, as has happened at certain of the alternate venues.

Past users of the pool, including the patrons of our aquacize programs, can only hope the City's definition of "major" users includes them, and that the City will consider our very specific needs and will understand why accommodating them properly will make the difference between a safe and effective exercise program and one that is frustrating and dangerous.

Thank you for your kind attention.

Comments to be delivered by Jocelyn Mcguire, patron of specialty arthritis aquacize classes at Sherbrook Pool and former librarian at Centennial/ Millenium library

Re: effect of restored library and other funding on use of City recreational and other amenities including pools such as Sherbrook.

The activities and services provided by Community Services often succeed in engaging people with their city and can encourage them to volunteer, to vote, and to feel they are an important asset to all of us. ***We urge you to support Councillor Eadie's and the Community Service and Protection Committee's recommendation that $660,000 be added to its budget.***

Promotion of available programs, activities and services is important since not all Winnipeggers even open the Leisure Guide***. Promotion is best carried out by community service workers familiar with their neighborhoods.*** New Canadians, low income families, aboriginal families and seniors would benefit.

There are many areas of Winnipeg that could use community development workers – areas in the Daniel McIntyre Ward, Brooklands, parts of St. James, parts of Ft. Garry near U of M, the West End, Point Douglas, the North End and others areas. In these areas wading pools, swimming pools and community centres provide respite from summer heat. Community gardens provide people with a way of growing their own vegetables.

Additionally, wading pools, swimming pools and community centres provide high school and university students with summer jobs.

Libraries (at least during the 22 years that I worked at Centennial, then Millennium, library) have seen their budgets cut every year. The service they provide to all Winnipeggers is worthy of more financial resources.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE:

Ms Mcguire will present an additional document on the merits of using community development workers to help identify needs and wants of low income areas, and on the negative impact on civic engagement of inner city residents that will result from closures and cuts to hours and programs at recreational facilities.

Comments by Shirley Stone, cancer survivor, Dragon Boater, Sherbrook seniors'aquacize class member and participant in Dragon boat practices at Sherbrook Pool

I'm representing the ChemoSavvy Breast Cancer Dragon Boat team who used the Sherbrook Pool for training.

Dragonboating began in ancient China, but is now popular everywhere and Breast Cancer teams are now a part of this worldwide endurance sport. Dragon boating has proved very effective in enhancing the health of breast cancer survivors. It requires extreme upper body strength and synchronicity, therefore teamwork and training are critical.
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In places like Winnipeg, with long winters and resulting limited access to outdoor practice, Dragonboaters rely on pool time to keep up our skill levels, and as teams get more competitive the more they will hone their skills in pools.

Sherbrook Pool is centrally located and large enough to handle our teams and the bleachers are an ideal spot for our coaches to brief and debrief. Parking could be better, but the streets are accommodating and the bus service from all parts of the city is excellent.

I also use the pool myself because its warmth soothes my arthritis and twice weekly aquasize and swim classes have helped me keep up the fitness required in the very tough sport of dragon boating.

During races, we are pulling approximately two and a half tons of boat and paddlers across 500 meters at 60 strokes per minute. Dragon boating is a growing and very competitive sport in Winnipeg and I am aware other teams are using the pools for pool practise.

Our team has approximately 70 members -some retired, many still working, ***so evening pool hours accommodate our practises.*** In the pools, we practise precision paddling, water safety training, life jacket viability and water fitness.

Thank you for listening.

Winnipeg Free Press - PRINT EDITION

Seniors fighting to save Sherbrook Pool

Sherbrook best-suited for mobility issues

By: Randy Turner

Posted: 05/6/2013 1:00 AM |



JOHN WOODS / WINNIPEG FREE PRESS Enlarge Image

Rose Kamins: desperately need pool. Photo Store

THERE'S an argument the Sherbrook Pool, closed last November, is too old and decrepit to worry about rehabilitating.

A waste of money.

There are those who don't share that feeling: seniors who suffer from multiple sclerosis, arthritis or fibromyalgia who say their health has deteriorated since the 80-year-old core-area facility was shut down abruptly five months ago for a "detailed structural engineering assessment" by the city.

"We so desperately need that pool," said Rose Kamins, 76, who has MS, arthritis, osteoporosis "and God knows what else."

"I felt I've gone a little downhill. My health has declined."

Kamins began attending Sherbrook aquacise classes in 2006. Now, she and her workout mates have been treading water in other facilities, such as the Cindy Klassen Recreational Centre and the North Centennial Pool, but with less-than-ideal results.

After all, Sherbrook was most often recommended to those suffering mobility issues, including hip and knee replacements, because it was "unusually well-suited" to swimmers with muscle atrophy or inflammatory issues, said Louise Lamb, who is organizing seniors in an effort to lobby city hall to reopen the pool. There were stairs into the pool, which had a gradual depth, and also equipment to lower wheelchairs into the water.

Sherbrook also contained what users agree is the warmest water of any public facility in the city.

"That's why all the arthritis and other sufferers went there," Lamb noted. "People were able to maintain their independence and stay out of high-cost (medical) situations. If we can't maintain our fitness, we're going to be a larger burden on the taxpayer."

The seniors have joined forces with Friends of the Sherbrook Pool, a community organization that lobbied government for more than $1 million in the 1990s to renovate the building. Both groups are awaiting the assessment report, which will be the basis for recommendations to the city's property development committee, which meets on May 7.

"We want assurances this won't be rushed though," said Marianne Cerilli, a spokeswoman for FOSP and a former city councillor. "We still don't have the report. Our concern is (a final decision) is going to be dumped on people and (a final decision) barrelled though. We've been kept completely in the dark."

Donna Pollock suffered a stroke 15 years ago and had attended Sherbrook classes for the last five years.

"The only therapy that's really helped me is swimming," she said. "It made such a difference in my movement. I'm in constant pain, and the pool makes a big difference because I can walk in the pool without fear of falling down and breaking anything. I feel safe.

"If they don't open that pool, I'm going to be in trouble."

randy.turner@freepress.mb.ca

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4.2 Aquatics

4.2.1 Current Participation in Aquatics

Swimming is one of the most popular recreational activities in the ward. The telephone survey indicated that one-quarter of adult residents have swam in the past 12 months (24%), making this the ward's most popular indoor recreation activity. It is also one of the main recreation activities that children in this ward take part in, with more than one-half of those with children between the ages of 5 to 18 years (43%) and one-in-three parents of children under the age of 5 years (35%) reporting that their children take part in swimming. When respondents were asked to indicate which activities they would like to see offered to a greater extent in the area, swimming also stood out as the main activity people (and particularly those with children) want to see enhanced.

4.2.2 The Importance of Sherbrook Pool



The entrance to Sherbrook Pool, pictured here in early November 2013.

The popularity of swimming is just one of the factors which made it understandable that aquatics would become the predominant recreation issue discussed as part of this needs assessment. The importance of Sherbrook Pool, in particular, was an overarching topic of discussion among community members. There is quite clearly a great deal of passion among Sherbrook Pool users and members of the broader Daniel McIntyre community to keep this facility open, as it is perceived to be important recreation asset not only for those living in the immediate vicinity of the pool, but also for users living throughout Winnipeg.

Indeed, the issue of the 'scope' of this recreation needs assessment proved to be a challenge when facilitating a discussion about aquatics and general community recreation needs. Many of those who took part in the community forums felt that the focus on the Daniel McIntyre ward's recreation needs diminished the reality that the Sherbrook Pool is an asset for the whole city. Even though this pool is located within the ward, it draws users who live south of Portage Avenue in the West Broadway neighbourhood (which is in the Fort Rouge-East Fort Garry ward). As well, Sherbrook Pool has been used by a number of individuals who access the pool because the water temperature is warmer than other city pools and because, unlike other pools, the shallow end features a more gradual slope. Individuals with medical conditions such as fibromyalgia, multiple sclerosis and arthritis (among others) use this pool (upon the advice of their physicians) for therapeutic reasons. Because of the pool's close proximity to the Health Sciences Centre and the medical services available in that area, it is regarded as serving an important community health need. Many of those who used the pool for medical reasons live outside the ward, in practically every city neighbourhood. These individuals consistently stressed the importance of Sherbrook Pool as a city asset that fulfills an important and unique purpose. Many of these former pool users lamented the closure of the facility and said this has had a detrimental impact on their quality of life.

Beyond this, however, Sherbrook Pool is also hailed by many as an accessible and affordable recreation asset for those who may not otherwise afford to take part in recreation programs. Prior to its closure in late 2012, the Friends of Sherbrook Pool delivered the KidSwim and TeenSwim programs at this facility. These programs offered free swimming lessons to children and youth who may not otherwise have access to this activity. After Sherbrook Pool closed, the KidSwim program was moved to Eldon Ross Pool, which is located in the Brooklands neighbourhood, and the TeenSwim program (which had 30-40 participants in 2012) was cancelled. Since moving the KidSwim program to Eldon Ross Pool, Friends of Sherbrook Pool reports that participation in this program has decreased by approximately 15 percent since the pool was closed in November 2012.[9] The Sherbrook Sharks competitive swim program, meanwhile, reports that their numbers have decreased by more than 30 percent.[10] These decreases in participation were attributed to the fact that these alternative locations are more difficult to reach for those living in the eastern part of the Daniel McIntyre ward or in the adjacent West Broadway neighbourhood.

Many of the parents whose children continue to take part in the KidSwim program explained that the relative accessibility of Sherbrook Pool is a key feature of its community value. As one parent (who is a recent newcomer to Canada) explained, *"We believe that the swimming pool's improvement will give many children (a) chance to take swimming lessons... it will (make) a big difference for the children as they grow up."* Given that the ward has a relatively high number of new Canadians (particularly in the Spence and Central Park neighbourhoods), many key informants stressed that it is particularly important for newcomers to have access to accessible and affordable water safety programs.[11]



A plaque outside the Sherbrook Pool commemorates the history of the facility, including the fact that it was the first pool in Winnipeg to offer Red Cross Swimming Lessons.

Until its closure, Sherbrook Pool also offered frequent free and low-cost ($2 for adults, $1 for children) open swim times. These free/low-cost swim times were regarded by many key informants and community forum participants as an extremely important recreation program for those living in the area who may have difficulty affording the full cost of a swim admission as well as those who may not be able to access free/reduced cost swim times at other city pools. This affordable recreation option was regarded as being particularly beneficial to children and youth in the neighbourhood. One key informant pointed out that the closure of the Sherbrook Pool contradicts the City of Winnipeg's LiveSAFE Crime Prevention Strategy, which states that it is critical to "...to

[9] Correspondence with Matt Austman, Friends of Sherbrook Pool program coordinator, December 4, 2013.

[10] Key informant interview, November 5, 2013.

[11] A study conducted by the Lifesaving Society showed that recent immigrants to Manitoba were at higher risk of drowning if they are participating in activities in/around water, such as boating or swimming. The Lifesaving Society now offers a Water Smart Program for New Canadians which provides water safety education and teaches basic water safety techniques. See Lifesaving Society, Manitoba Program Guide, http://lifesaving.mb.ca/files/2012ManitobaProgramGuide.pdf, p. 7 and Carol Sanders, "Immigrants Susceptible to Drowning: Study", Winnipeg Free Press, July 26, 2010, A10.

address the root causes of crime through integrated and strategic actions aimed at promoting the wellbeing of the community through social, economic, health, educational and recreational measures, with a particular emphasis on children and youth."[12] Furthermore, this policy advocates an interconnected approach to crime prevention that seeks to integrate all relevant civic economic and social policies/programs. This view is also echoed in previous research conducted regarding the benefits of the Sherbrook Pool, which states that low-cost/free swimming provides skill-building opportunities, as well as important physical and psycho-social benefits to youth.[13]



Cindy Klassen Recreation Complex

It was noted at several junctures that the City of Winnipeg has taken steps to accommodate those who were displaced from Sherbrook Pool at other aquatic facilities, including the Cindy Klassen Recreation Centre. Indeed, the Sherbrook Sharks swim club currently uses this facility to train. However, Sherbrook Pool users noted that they have a number of concerns with the alternative arrangements offered by the City. These are as follows:

- **Capacity**: The Cindy Klassen Recreation Centre pool, in particular, is viewed as being too busy for users, particularly competitive swimmers from the Sherbrook Sharks Swim club who use the centre section of the pool for lane swimming.
- **Pool Features**: Many of those who use alternative aquatic facilities for health/therapeutic reasons indicated that these are insufficient for a variety of reasons, including colder water temperatures and shallower pool bottom than affects the joints of taller people who participate in aquasize classes. The fact that these pools are also visible to those standing outside the pool area is also a specific concern raised by a group of Muslim women, who used to use the Sherbrook Pool for private swimming times when the facility would be closed to any male spectators.
- **Location**: As noted earlier, those who live in the Spence, Central Park, Colony and West Broadway neighbourhoods perceive other pools as being difficult to reach, particularly among those living in these neighbourhoods who rely on public transit. Given its central location just west of downtown, the Sherbrook Pool is regarded by many of its former users (including those who live outside the ward) as highly accessible, given that it is located close to the intersection of two major city thoroughfares (Portage Avenue and Sherbrook Street) and is on a major bus route (Winnipeg Transit Route 29). Other alternative pools in or close to the Daniel McIntyre ward (i.e. Cindy Klassen, Eldon Ross and North Centennial) are regarded as being more difficult to access than the Sherbrook Pool was when it was open.

[12] City of Winnipeg, LiveSAFE in Winnipeg – An Interconnected Crime Prevention Strategy, http://winnipeg.ca/clkdmis/DocExt/ViewDoc.asp?DocumentTypeId=2&DocId=5741., March 19, 2008. P. 7.

[13] Ali Millar and Lissie Rappaport, Winnipeg's Best-Kept Secret: A Community Development Vision for Sherbrook Pool, Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives – Manitoba, December 2009, p. 18.

4.2.3 Potential Improvements to Sherbrook Pool



Temporary scaffolding is currently stabilizing the roof of the Sherbrook Pool, as shown in this photograph taken in November 2013.

A major focus of the discussion with stakeholders was to talk about what should specifically happen with Sherbrook Pool. The overwhelming consensus among pool supporters who came to community meetings (as well as among many who were interviewed) is that the pool should be opened as soon as possible, and that the city should undertake the structural repairs identified in the June 2013 report to council without delay. There was a great deal of resistance to the possibility of making significant "enhancements" to the Sherbrook Pool structure when this idea was raised during community forums. Participants (most of whom indicated that re-opening the Sherbrook Pool was their main recreation-related concern) stated that they did not want to present the City of Winnipeg with a "wish list" that may add significantly to those costs ($6.2 million, which includes $1.05 million in immediate structural repairs, $1.68 million to repair the HVAC/mechanical/electrical systems and $3.5 million in additional unidentified capital improvements over the next 20 years) that have already been identified as being required to bring the pool up to the necessary standards.

Other specific improvements to the pool that some individuals suggested were relatively modest, included the following:

- Improvements to the lower level change rooms, including new lockers, sinks, showers, etc.;
- An improved and expanded change room on the main level of the pool for persons with disabilities and/or mobility issues – or alternatively, an elevator to transport individuals with mobility issues to and from the existing change rooms);
- Improvements to the pool floor that would allow it to be raised so that it would be easier for persons with disabilities/mobility issues to enter/exit the pool;
- A multi-purpose space (or small gymnasium) that could be used for community events, meetings, child care, classes or for other recreation activities, such as yoga. It was suggested that this type of room could replace the pool's east stands (which are currently unusable).

Citizens were not as keen to contemplate a more thorough redevelopment of the area surrounding Sherbrook Pool, either through a major expansion to the building or developing activities on adjacent pieces of land (such as the vacant lots on the west side of Sherbrook Street or the parking lot immediately to the south of the pool). Some key informants urged the City to investigate the feasibility of capturing heat released by the Manitoba Hydro sub-station immediately north of the pool and using this energy to heat Sherbrook Pool. Others indicated that the City should discuss with Hydro its long-term plans for this building, as there may be an opportunity in the future to develop this space as part of an expanded recreation facility.

It should be stressed that there was a significant resistance among community members to the concept of a major transformation of the Sherbrook Pool. However, two key informants

who were interviewed suggested that this space would be an ideal location to build a water park,[14] as it is in a central location and may serve as a potential catalyst for redevelopment in this area. But when this idea was raised during meetings with community stakeholders, it was quickly dismissed by those advocating for Sherbrook Pool to re-open. The key concerns raised were that a water park would not be accessible to those with low incomes and that it would reconfigure the pool in such a way that it would no longer serve the needs of those who have been using this facility for specific health-related and sport-related purposes. A major development such as a water park was also regarded as something that would be "imposed" on the surrounding community and would not really meet users' needs or preferences.

Sherbrook Pool is perceived by community members to be an important recreation asset that serves many unique and important purposes, including as an accessible/affordable recreation option for low-income families as well as a place of healing for those with specific medical conditions. The broad consensus among community stakeholders is that this pool should be re-opened immediately and that required repairs should be undertaken. The long-term vision for this facility, however, is for community organizations (including Friends of Sherbrook Pool and the Spence Neighbourhood Association, among others) to play a more collaborative role with the City in its operations. A governance/operations model based on that used to operate the nearby Magnus Eliason Recreation Centre - where the City owns and funds the operation of the building and supports community service providers that deliver programming in the facility – was offered as a potential model to implement for Sherbrook Pool in the future.



The west-side bleachers in Sherbrook Pool

[14] Since 2008, the City of Winnipeg has set aside $7 million that could be used for the purpose of building a privately-operated, publicly accessible water park. In May 2012, a proposal to build a water park at the Forks (next to a proposed hotel development) was withdrawn, and to date this money has not been used.

Key Findings – Section 4.2

- Despite the closure of Sherbrook Pool in November 2012, swimming is one of the main indoor recreation activities that adults and children living in the ward participate in.
- There is unmistakable and passionate community support for re-opening Sherbrook Pool that manifested itself during group discussions and community forums. This pool was seen by many to serve not only the immediate communities adjacent to the pool, but its unique features meant that it drew users with specific needs from other areas of Winnipeg.
- For those who used this pool (as well as other community stakeholders), the immediate priority is for the City of Winnipeg to find the necessary funds needed to re-open this pool and conduct the requisite structural repairs. Looking forward, these users want to see relatively modest improvements to the facility (such as improved change rooms and the addition of a multi-purpose meeting room) as opposed to more comprehensive or ambitious redevelopment into a multi-use facility or even a water park. Furthermore, there is a strong desire on the part of community groups to develop a shared governance model that incorporates community input into the programming offered at this facility.

To Whom It May Concern

(Edited version –March 2015) with personal identifying information removed because of personal nature of information)

From: **A Committee (Louise Lamb, Peggy Day and Rose Kamins) acting on behalf of a Group of Former Users of the Sherbrook Pool, including those who attended Sherbrook's specialty aquacize programming for seniors and for people with chronic health conditions, and certain other former users of Sherbrook Pool**

Original Date: November 21, 2013

Re: Nearly a Year After Abrupt Closure of the Sherbrook Pool, Former Users of the Pool Continue to Suffer from Inadequate Alternative Programs and Unsuitable Venues while they await news of the Pool's Fate

In the spring of 2013 we surveyed our members about the suitability of the alternate pool accommodation made available by the City while it pondered the fate of the Sherbrook pool. Friends received a copy of that feedback and some of our members were interviewed by the press.

We recently asked some of our members to tell us how they are presently faring as the anniversary of Sherbrook's closure approaches and there is still no decision by the City on Sherbrook's fate.

The City has relocated some of the classes our long-time instructor gave at Sherbrook to four different pools: Cindy Klassen ((CK), Eldon Ross, North Centennial Recreation and Leisure Facility (NCRL) and St James Civic Centre Pool (SJCC). The timing of the classes varies with the availability of space at each of the alternate venues. Each of these pools is different in terms of size, water temperature, pool tank depth and slope and the size of the areas that have the water depth that we require. (City Pools vary from having a separate shallow end of uniform depth (eg. Cindy Klassen) to those that transition from shallow to deep water either fairly gradually over a larger area (as Sherbrook did) or more abruptly, due to overall smaller pool size (eg. St James Civic Centre Pool and Eldon Ross)

Adequate change room and shower space is also critical for us. Crowded change rooms, narrow locker room bays and inadequate size and number of showers pose special dangers for people with chronic joint or mobility problems. The facilities at Eldon Ross Pool, St James Pool and Cindy Klassen Pool are all problematic in this regard. Sherbrook Pool was much better suited to our needs.

The alternate pools are much less convenient than Sherbrook in terms of accessibility by public transport, and some of our members who rely on Handi-transit have spent hours waiting at the pool (or on the street, in the case of Eldon Ross Pool) before and after their classes. (See comment #9 below.)

Unlike some of the callisthenic-type aqua programs at other pools (where participants tend to exercise mostly standing in place and many people can be accommodated in a relatively small area), our special exercises involve much actual striding across the full width of the pool while making contact with the pool floor, as well as using pool noodles or other flotation devices as we move across the pool. Thus, we require more room to exercise safely without colliding with other participants. Accordingly, it is the amount of space that meets our particular program needs, and not merely the overall size of the pool, that determines whether a particular pool will work well for us.

For our purposes, the particular and often unique advantages of Sherbrook Pool (either not available at all or not available in their totality at other City Pools) were:

1. the warmest water, and warm ambient temperature in the pool area generally;

2. an undivided tank with graduated depth (no abrupt changes in depth for a great length of the pool) that allowed each of us to exercise in a depth appropriate to our height and then to easily move into deeper water to do higher heart-rate “bicycling” exercises on our swim noodles

3. easy access for physically challenged people (special chairs to be lowered into the water and steps for those who could get in by themselves but couldn’t use the ladders)

4. Sherbrook’s tank is larger (with the exception of Cindy Klassen Pool –which is unsuitable for other reasons) and Sherbrook made more room available to us than any other venue, including Cindy Klassen Pool, such that we didn’t have to stay in one place and do only limited, “on-the-spot”, exercising; but could move freely and safely across the entire width of the pool with sufficient room not to bump into each other or any swimmers who might be swimming across the deeper end of the pool.

5. lesson times such that we could enjoy a calming atmosphere that wasn’t noisy or chaotic and in which we could easily hear our instructor, who actually got into the water to do the exercises with us and closely monitor our form to make sure we were doing them properly and without risk of injury,

6. a generously sized locker, change room and shower facility in which we had full size lockers and lots of space to change, shower and to generally move about easily, and useable (although hardly ideal) change, shower and washroom facilities for the disabled

7. a properly trained instructor (Pam Schlamp) who has special training from the Arthritis Society and has otherwise familiarized herself with the exercise needs and requirements of people with various forms of arthritis, people with other joint problems and mobility issues, those who are awaiting or recovering from hip and knee replacements, and those with other medical conditions such as MS and fibromayalgia.

Sherbrook was never just a "neighbourhood pool", as the City <u>now</u> chooses to call it. Of course, it is an invaluable resource for the under-served communities in Daniel McIntyre Ward, but as one of our supporters (see comment # 15 below) has stated, "It was built as, and remains, an important central recreation facility of the [entire] City of Winnipeg."

Members of our group come from across the City.

<u>Below is recent feedback from some members of our group and from some other former users of the Sherbrook Pool. We can seek their permission to provide direct contact information, if necessary.</u>

1. **From A, a senior with arthritis who lives in St. Vital Ward:**

I continue to attend Aquasize classes 3 times a week in order to maintain my mobility while suffering arthritis, particularly in my knees. I have to go to 3 different pools over the week, in order to remain with the same instructor. The 3 pools are; Eldon Ross on Monday evenings, North Centennial Recreation & Leisure Facility on Wednesday afternoons and Cindy Klassen Recreational Centre on Friday afternoons. The gas costs are adding up considerably as I live in St. Vital. The amount of time it takes for me to go to and from the pool is more than doubled. I am on a limited budget as I am retired, so money costs are important.

The city suggests that I attend classes at a closer pool but I have developed a good and trusting relationship with the Instructor, Pam, over the 5 years I have been attending classes at Sherbrook. She knows and understands my needs. Why should I have to start that process over again with someone else? Also, I have developed good social relationships with the other people who attended the same classes as I did. Why should I have to start that process again as well?? We all chose Sherbrook because of its warm water, its location, and its physical accessibility (getting in and out of the pool) and stayed because of the good instruction and people.

In the spring term, my class at Cindy Klassen was cancelled because not enough people had registered. Most of the people I knew chose not to go there because of the water temperature, the depth of the pool areas and location. I was not given my money back but received a credit. I had difficulty replacing that class and attended only 2 classes a week, which affected my mobility.

I have been trying to help others with transportation issues. On Wednesdays I have been giving rides towards home to a lady who has to take buses to get to and from the pool, in order to cut down the time it takes her to get home in rush hour traffic. I will soon be helping another lady by picking her up from work so that she may follow her doctor's orders to use swim therapy. I have just recently started giving a third lady a ride towards home on Monday evenings. She has just started coming to our class. She has been using the bus. The bus schedule is such that she had approximately an hour to wait after class at a bus stop near a pub, at night and in the cold.

I do not appreciate the extra time, stress and costs that all of us who need to use the [specialty] swimming programs have been enduring. I hope this information will help the City to make a decision to quickly repair and open Sherbrook Pool as soon as possible. It would help make many peoples' lives easier.

2. **From B, who lives in River Heights/Fort Garry Ward, has chronic knee and hip problems and has undergone joint replacement surgery**

I knew after trying aquasize classes twice in the shallow end of the Cindy Klassen pool that that venue simply would not ever be able to work for me, as the CK pool bottom is not sloped and therefore is too shallow to allow me to exercise in enough water to absorb the impact to my knees and hips. I tried lap-swimming there instead, but even in the midmornings (which used to be our class time at the Sherbrook and is an "off-peak" time), I could never get a lane to myself for more than about 10 minutes, and more often than not the available space was further restricted by groups of special needs children, who took precedence.

The class at the alternate North Centennial Recreation and Leisure Facility (NCRL) venue was only offered once a week, in the afternoon rather than the morning, and it was also clear there that they were trying to accommodate us in a portion of a space that had already been scheduled for special needs children. Once July rolled around I was hopeful that we'd have adequate space and a more tolerable noise level in the absence of the special needs kids, but our space actually became more restricted because a swim club was scheduled at the same time and their practice involved using the entire length of the pool. Thus I gave up on that venue as well.

I have been attending the seniors' aqua drop-in classes at the St James Civic Centre pool since sometime in June, 2013. The pool is significantly smaller than the Sherbrook and the classes are

often extremely overcrowded such that it is difficult to get a reasonable workout. During September I counted usually between 8 and 10 of us who used to be Sherbrook regulars at each of the Mon and Fri 10:15 classes, which of course contributes to the overcrowding. For example, there were over 30 women at the 9:30 class yesterday (a Wed.) but there are only 8 showers and room for about 12 people to sit while dressing. The change room is really small such that we often have to get showered and dressed in (so-to-speak) shifts, especially seeing as many of us with physical problems need to be sitting down while dressing. There isn't nearly enough seating and what there is is very low for people who have knee and hip issues. Winter clothing will only make it that much more difficult to accommodate these oversized classes.

I'd also like to add that I phoned the Head of Aquatics Programming, to report that there were 30-40 people at recent Wednesday St James Civic Center seniors' drop-in aquafit classes, and to request the city consider adding a class to alleviate the overcrowding. He did not phone me back but passed my name along to a regional programming director, who did phone me back and who then passed me along to the programmer for the Civic Centre pool, to whom I repeated my complaint and request. I also noted that the closure of the Sherbrook pool was contributing to the general overcrowding of classes. She said she'd consult with her colleagues and get back to me, which she did about 2 weeks or so later.

When the programmer called me back, she said her group had decided there was no need to add another class. She said that the pool could legally have over 60 people (I think she actually said 72) in it, and so she didn't consider 40 to be too many. When I reminded her that almost everyone is crowded into about two-thirds of the shallow end and that that made it virtually impossible to get a reasonable workout, she said that it was up to the class instructor to change how the class was conducted because it was perfectly possible to get a good workout with that many people because the instructors know how to do it. Furthermore, if someone felt it was too crowded, they should go to another venue. She also said that a complaint about overcrowding was a really good problem for a programmer like herself to have. I also pointed out that the overcrowded classes consisted almost exclusively of women, with 2 or 3 men at most, and that the women's change room had only 8 showers and very limited seating. She simply said that that's the way they built change rooms when the Civic Centre was built and she didn't think there was the money to expand this one to make it big enough, nor would it be fair to take over the men's change room. But she did not consider the limitations of the change room to be a relevant factor in deciding appropriate class size. She did say that she would bring to those who are responsible for the building itself (as opposed to programming) my suggestion about adding more places at an appropriate height for us to be able to put our soap and shampoo without having to bend over to floor level all the time .

3. **From C, who lives in Daniel McIntyre Ward and has MS:**

I'm feeling extremely disillusioned about our efforts to save the pool and city hall's shocking complacency. In the city's terms, perhaps 10 months to set up a review is the ultimate in bureaucrat speed. For me, 10 months without the soothing, warm waters of the Sherbrook pool has seen my health slide more than it has in 25 years with MS. By the time the pool is repaired and ready -- if that happens -- I probably won`t be able to walk in my current graceless fashion.

4. **From D, who resides in the Corydon and Stafford area and has arthritis:**

I was not able to register for Pam's arthritis class this past summer because the scheduled times conflicted with my working hours. I managed to attend as a drop-in twice when I was on vacation. This fall has been frustrating in that the pool (Eldon Ross) is too crowded to accommodate our Monday group with enough space at a good depth for our exercises. Pam is stretched to the limits of her creativity by depth issues. There are many beneficial exercises that we cannot do there. Further, I find the water and air temperatures too cool. The 3 showers (female change rooms) are not enough for the many users. Once it's colder and the snow arrives it will be more difficult for me to get to the pool on time owing to a longer time required to take the bus home from work and take the car to the pool. I can't afford to park downtown and come straight to the pool. This was never a problem at Sherbrook because it was so close to where I live (Stafford & Corydon area). I will not likely register for the January session as things stand now, but hope that "my pool" will reopen sooner rather than later.

5. **From E, who lives in Fort Rouge –East Fort Garry Ward and has arthritis and fibromyalgia:**

I am a 60'ish female who works full time while suffering from arthritis and fibromyalgia. I had for many years (at least 10) been attending the water classes at Sherbrook to help out my health concerns. In spite of my not living in the area, the location was convenient because I work at Health Science Center and the class times at Sherbrook fit well with my hours of work. Sherbrook's water temperature was the best for someone like me who suffers from fibromyalgia: cold water causes muscles to not only seize up but can cause me much grief for days and nights after. In turn, this affects my mobility and subsequently my quality of life.

Since Sherbrook has been closed I have dropped most of my water exercise classes. I did try Cindy Klassen but the water temperature caused me problems. Being restricted to a narrow lane of the pool for classes caused me problems also. I also have heard of too many break-ins in the locker rooms to feel safe at this facility.

I also tried the NCRL Pool, but I have found the pool width to be too narrow to do a proper workout. The water temperature and shower facilities are OK.

I am attending SJCC Pool and its temperature is more tolerable for me. I find the pool crowded and the surface of the pool floor is slippery, which impedes my progress when I am trying to get involved in my workout. The change room is too small and the floor is always very wet and, in my opinion, is dangerous to walk on. The lower benches are not good for me because of having had a knee replacement. However, the biggest problem with this site is the distance for me to go to my work place.

In summary: The quality of my life has been greatly affected by the closing of the Sherbrook Pool due to:

a) lack of proximity of an appropriate alternative (a pool where I can exercise safely and effectively), and
b) the loss of the social interaction with my classmates at Sherbrook.

6. **From F, who has fibromyalgia and lives in the Maples area:**

I was a patron of Sherbrook Pool for ten years. I attended 2-3 times weekly. I have fibromyalgia and I believe that my attendance at Sherbrook Pool has kept me in a relatively normal lifestyle. I live 2 blocks from Maples Pool; however I cannot attend there due to the cold water temperatures, so I made a 20 minute drive to Sherbrook. Many senior citizens and people with MS and Fibro travelled to Sherbrook Pool for the same reasons. This is to say nothing about all the area residents who used the pool.

Since the pool closed almost a year ago, we have had to find other facilities. I personally attended 3 pools before finding a workable alternative. This took months and costs (from having to enroll in classes to try them and then cancelling my registration when I found them unsuitable for my needs). It is very disappointing that no one at the City bothered to determine what the Sherbrook patrons' requirements were when they shunted us off to inappropriate alternatives and failed to expand class choices to provide for our needs. It has been very frustrating.

The pool I have settled on has too many participants in the one class (up to 60 people!) My message to those in charge of pool programming is, *"Hello, perhaps you have a BIG demand and need to add another class or two???"*

This city needs to re-open Sherbrook Pool for the local community and for the "special needs" patrons who come from elsewhere in the City because they are trying to stay healthy and NOT be a burden on the health system.

7. **From G, who is a senior with MS and lives in Point Douglas Ward:**

Here we go again - It's been almost a year since Sherbrook Pool was closed very suddenly and we still have no answers as to status of repairs or replacement. We, the users of the Pool, are

getting tired of the many delays in trying to get some answers. With the present "Gong Show" going on at City Hall, I hope that not another year goes by without some positive answers to our questions. We seniors and individuals with mobility Issues need Sherbrook Pool opened and operating as usual - Sherbrook Pool offered very unique programs adapted to individuals with health issues such as MS, Arthritis, and fibromyalgia. I myself suffer from MS and my health has deteriorated since Sherbrook closed. I have tried other venues offered us but they have some or all of the following problems: water that is too cold, limited pool space, overcrowding, and limited locker and shower space. Since Sherbrook was closed, my energy level has dropped, my balance is worse, and I am scared of falling.

I can only exercise in water that's not too cold, and this has limited me as to where I can go. I was interviewed by Randy Turner of the Winnipeg Free Press, in the May 6, 2013 edition. His article describes our situation to a "T".

My classmates and I are exercising to stay healthy and not become a burden on our health care system. I will finish off by quoting Peggy Day, one of our members, who said, while addressing a meeting of the City Council's Property and Planning Committee in June 2013,

> "We're not just a bunch of little old ladies splashing around in the water."

8. **From H, who has osteoarthritis and lives in Daniel-McIntyre Ward:**

I am a lap swimmer who needs steps rather than ladders in and out of a pool. My dilemma may be less acute than some others, but reduced options have been my ongoing experience. North Centennial closed in August for upkeep and only just reopened; lap swim is only MWF at noon hours and it can overcrowd unsafely. St James Civic Centre I found too small and crowded. Pan Am has more generous times, but all these involve new driving time, unnecessary carbon emissions, and disrupt my normal routines, where I could easily bus/walk to Sherbrook on the way to work.

9. From I, a senior who, until recently, escorted another senior (J.) with substantial mobility issues to class, where they both participated; and who now attends by herself while her colleague undergoes a hip replacement (both I and J live in Fort Rouge-East Fort Garry Ward) :

We stopped going to classes for a while because there seemed to be no proper alternatives.

J. and I did go to the Eldon Ross pool during the summer but it was very far and involved a lot of travel time and waiting for handi transit. We were often dropped off before 11 am but the pool

didn't open until noon so we had to stay outside…there was no place to sit. Most of the time the weather was not too bad but we went rain or shine and came home very tired.
For the fall session G. has not been able to go but I am attending classes at North Centennial: it is a long bus ride and a walk at the other end but so far I have been able to do it; I'm not sure I will be able to continue once it gets icy.

The Sherbrook pool is so much easier for us to access. We hope the city will do whatever needs to be done and open it soon.

10. From K, who lives near Corydon and Edgeland :

I was at NCRL until early August. It was very crowded sometimes and I had to take 3 buses to get there. This was OK during the summer and spring, however it could be another story in the winter because the last bus I took to get there either got me there about I hour early or, if I took the next one, I was 5 minutes late I also had to change classes from morning to afternoon and I definitely preferred the mornings at Sherbrook and the convenience of the bus service on Portage Ave. The water temperature of the Sherbrook pool was also a plus.

I have looked into attending the classes Pam is offering at Eldon Ross Pool, and the bus service from my area (Corydon and Edgeland) is just abysmal.

11. From L, a stroke survivor who lives in River Heights -Fort Garry Ward:

I suffered a stroke 15 years ago and lost the use of my left arm and leg. At the time, I was told I would never be able to improve my physical condition. Approximately 5 years ago, I began attending Pam Schlamp's aquacize classes at the Sherbrook Pool. I attended 6 classes a week with Pam for the 6 months of the year that I resided at my home in Winnipeg. As of this year, I will be residing in Winnipeg for 11 months of the year. Even when I attended for only half the year, my physical condition and mobility improved significantly as a result of attending Sherbrook, (more so than with any other therapy I tried) and I was able ultimately to participate in the aquacize classes without a volunteer accompanying me in the water. Exercising in the warm water of Sherbrook was not painful for me whereas other therapies, including physiotherapy, are painful.

The alternate venues I attend while Sherbrook is closed are not as good for me due to colder water temperature and other factors such as water depth, pool access, the restricted room we have in the pool, noise, etc. and until recently I could only attend 2 classes a week rather than the 6 classes I enjoyed at Sherbrook.

Although I now take 4 classes a week (2 at Cindy Klassen in the shallow end and 2 at North Centennial (NCRL), pool conditions at these venues create problems for my workouts and have caused my physical condition to deteriorate.

The water at Cindy Klassen Pool isn't as warm and at my height of 5 ' 9", the shallow end is too shallow for me to get a safe and effective workout doing the exercises the rest of the group are doing. Pam has had to modify her exercises for me so that I do a lot more exercising that involves floating on my back (no contact with the bottom of the pool), which isn't as efficient and doesn't get my heart rate up as much as I'd like. As a result of this reduced and less effective exercise regimen, I find it harder to control my weight and that makes it harder for me to move around.

NCRL has excellent change room and wash room facilities for the disabled and it is easy for me to enter the pool. Because of the long ramp I can enter by myself and the water temperature is OK. Adequate pool space has been a problem. So long as we aren't crowded into the pool with other user groups and given inadequate space –as we were for most of the past year at NCRL – I find my workout at NCRC useful and enjoyable, but I would prefer to return to Sherbrook Pool

I also miss the frequency of social contact with my exercise group because of the reduction in the total number of classes I can attend per week. Social contact is very important for my well-being.

12. From M, who lives in River Heights-Fort Garry Ward and has arthritis and bursitis:

I am not happy with the alternate venues provided by the City for seniors' and other specialty aquacize classes. We gave very precise information to City Officials last spring about our needs regarding replacement venues (in terms of necessary pool conditions and the nature of the exercises we do in our classes), yet it has been ignored by the officials in charge of pool programming. This is despite our instructor Pam Schlamp's valiant efforts to get adequate accommodation for us, and despite Peggy Day 's efforts (see comment # 2 above) to make the program coordinator for the St James Civic Center Pool understand why our needs are not met by the regular aquacize classes offered at many of the City's pools. The consequences of the City's inadequate response are frustrating, stressful and dangerous.

Serious overcrowding has occurred from time to time at some of the alternate venues such as NCRL and SJCC. (I gave up on Cindy Klassen Pool long ago because our classes are in the shallow end and, given my height (5' 8"), there wasn't enough depth or buoyancy for me to avoid injury to my joints and my feet.)

The SJCC pool is a smaller pool than Sherbrook Pool and has an even smaller area of the tank that is suitable for our specialty aquacize classes. I have often felt unsafe in a class of up to 30-

40 women (including both former Sherbrook patrons and regular users of the regular Civic Centre aqua classes). There was a real danger of collision and possible injury if you tried to exercise at an aerobically useful pace.

During the winter and spring sessions at NCRL, our class was crammed into an inadequate space that was frequently traversed by people (adult supervisors and the children they were supervising) who were using the spaces on either side of us. The noise was deafening. Thus, the class I attended in order to exercise vigorously and de-stress actually resulted in less exercise and more stress.

The Eldon Ross Pool is so small that a class of more than 7 or 8 people was too large to be adequately accommodated –especially for the taller people who were sandwiched between the sharp drop-off to the deep end and those classmates who were occupying the shallow end that was adequate for their height. The pool is so narrow that you couldn't move vigorously for more than a few moments before you reached the other side and lost your momentum. The change rooms were very small and narrow and unsafe for people with mobility issues when there were more than a few other people there. Two elderly classmates of mine, one of whom used a walker, were put in a dangerous situation several times when a large group of elementary school age children used the pool immediately before our class. The change room was pandemonium and my classmate with the walker couldn't even access the disabled persons' washroom because a group of able-bodied children were already there and using it as a change room. I was afraid for my classmates' safety.

13. From N, who has MS and lives in Charleswood:

I attended the MS water exercise classes at the Sherbrook pool for 10 years plus. When Sherbook pool was closed our classes were transferred to the Cindy Klassen Recreational Centre. Not only myself, but others who had attended the classes at the Sherbrook pool, found the pool at the new location to be too crowded, too cold and not deep enough to provide the buoyancy to allow the lower body to flex and be supported by the water. The cold water caused my legs to cramp immediately, which completely eliminates any ability I have to move myself.

I must point out that the Sherbrook pool not only serviced people of the Donald McIntyre Ward. I live in the Charleswood area of the city and other members of the MS class lived throughout the city.

14. From O,

I would like to add my voice to the long list of swimmers wanting the reopening of Sherbrook Pool. I have been to exercise classes there for 4 or 5 years until the pool closed last November. In trying the North End Centennial and Eldon Ross pools, I find them small and very much overpopulated at Centennial. The change room at Eldon is far too small for our classes. I did not attend Sargent Park because of its ladder entrance. I liked the entrance into the pool at Sherbrook, the location, the familiarity, the warmth of the water, and the decent parking. Please get Sherbrook Pool up and running again!

15. From P, a senior who regularly swam laps at Sherbrook and lives in Daniel McIntyre Ward:

Sherbrook Pool was built as, and remains, an important central recreation facility for the entire City of Winnipeg. It is not simply a neighbourhood Pool, although it served as an invaluable resource for residents of Daniel McIntyre Ward.

The people I've met there over the past ten years include many people who use the pool for noon-hour exercise. Most of them live well beyond the Daniel McIntyre Ward,

For me the inconveniences of not having Sherbrook have not been as serious as they must be for other users, especially the young, the elderly, and the low income-- many of whom are all three. I have been using other pools to swim laps, especially North Centennial Rec and Leisure, and Pan Am, but I doubt that others are as fortunate as I, especially those without time and means or who relied on Sherbrook for aquasize and other classes and programs not available elsewhere.

I hope that the firm hired by the City will conduct its survey in a manner that will elicit an accurate measure of the needs of all concerned, and that the City will act accordingly. On the matter of "consultation", what else does the City call our input over the past six months?

16. From Q, who lives in Charleswood -Tuxedo Ward and has had two knee replacements:

I never really know where to go now. I attended classes at Sherbrook Pool 3 times a week for about 30 years. Now we really have no home. Running back & forth to other pools uses a lot more gas, etc....I also miss the other ladies that attended the classes. I am still a refugee from Sherbrook & follow my instructor Pam.

17. From R, who lives in Daniel McIntyre Ward and has osteo-arthritis:

I am a 71 year old who suffers from Osteo-Arthritis. I had been attending the Seniors Aquacise Class at Sherbrook Pool for about a year and a half before the pool was closed. The classes made a great difference to my physical mobility. The arrangements the City made for us after the Sherbrook pool was closed have been very unsatisfactory. The noise levels at Cindy Klassen and North Centennial Leisure Centre were very hard on the nerves and I finished the classes more stressed than before starting. The water levels at Cindy Klassen were too shallow for my height and I couldn't get a good workout.

I have been without the Sherbrook Pool for almost a year now and, although I continue to attend seniors aqua classes, the stress dealing with the inadequacies of alternative pools continues. The class sizes at St James Civic Centre Pool are so large that movement is restricted and frustrating. This overcrowding continues into the dressing rooms and showers, where movement is similarly restricted and frustrating. A Large part of the reason for exercising for seniors is to lower high blood pressure. This situation is having the opposite effect.

As a senior who strongly believes that physical fitness is extremely important for people of all ages, I feel we who appreciate all that the Sherbrook Pool has to offer are being cheated out of our right to be as healthy as we aim to be. For every healthy citizen, the cost of health care decreases. The cost of repairing the pool would be far less that looking after the elderly in hospital.

As the older population in the city continues to grow, the healthcare problem will continue to grow unless the city takes a very serious look at what it is offering the citizens who believe in keeping their health.