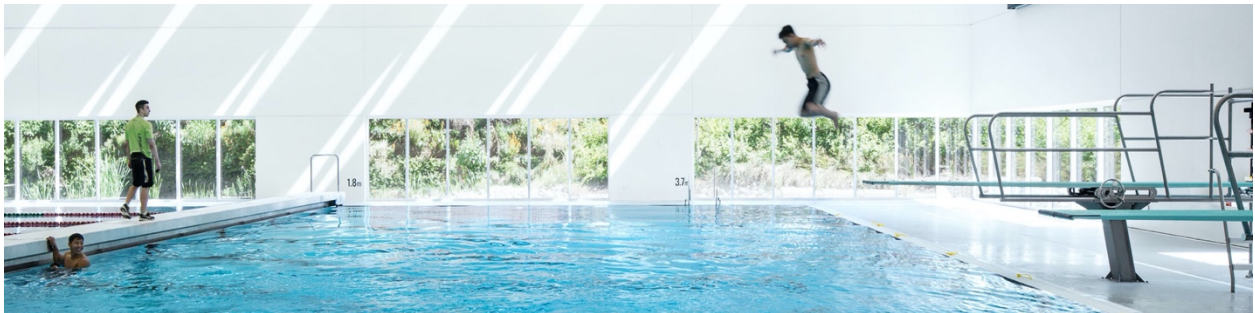


AN AQUATIC CENTRE FOR WESTERN CAPE BRETON: ENHANCING COMMUNITY WELL-BEING YEAR-ROUND



A Community Survey conducted by the Business Analytics Department
Cape Breton University

Cape Breton West Aquatic Centre Society

529

Total Responses

Date Created: April, 2024

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION.....1
QUESTIONS.....2
RESULTS.....3
SUMMARY.....21
METHODOLOGY.....22

INTRODUCTION

A feasibility study has been completed which positively supports the development of an indoor year-round aquatic and recreation centre for Western Cape Breton. An important feature of the facility is, it will be energy-neutral, which means it generates as much energy as it consumes, thereby eliminating the cost of power.

You can read more here :
<https://spaces.hightail.com/receive/e62FOaSL0x/bmVhbGxAbnMuc3ltcGF0aWNvLmNh>

The results of this research help us understand the community's perceptions of the facility which will help tailor the design and programming of the facility to better meet their needs and preferences. Ultimately, the research will contribute to the development of a more sustainable, inclusive, and community-oriented aquatic centre.

The outcome is to generate new knowledge about the perceived benefits of an energy-neutral aquatic center from the perspective of community members. This knowledge will inform decision-making processes.

It should be noted that 529 participants began the survey, and 443 answered all of the questions. The 86 participants who didn't answer all questions were not included in the analysis of the questionnaire.

QUESTIONS

- 1.** Consent
- 2.** Are you aware of the proposed Cape Breton West Aquatic and Recreation Centre?
- 3.** On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being not interested at all and 5 being extremely interested, please rate your interest in this proposed facility in Western Cape Breton (primarily Inverness County).
- 4.** Is it important to you that public facilities such as the proposed energy neutral aquatic centre be a model for future development and a facility that will be affordable and address climate change?
- 5.** How do you currently stay active during the winter months?
- 6.** What challenges do you face in maintaining physical activity particularly during winter?
- 7.** Regular physical activity provides proven health benefits, protecting against many chronic diseases such as stroke, diabetes, osteoarthritis and heart disease. Would you consider using the aquatic centre for therapeutic purposes?
- 8.** Aquatic facilities in Cape Breton offer a range of amenities and programs with a varied fee structure, for example the fee for a 10-week swimming lessons for a child at Northside Community pool is \$130. Public swimming costs \$6.25 for one hour for children and seniors. Memberships are offered with reduced rates for all programs and services. Would you be willing to pay a comparable amount for programs and services at the Cape Breton West Aquatic Centre?
- 9.** Would you be interested in being involved in the planning and development of this aquatic centre and if so in what capacity?
- 10.** Do you believe an aquatic center would positively impact the overall well-being of Western Cape Breton?
- 11.** Gender
- 12.** What is the composition of your household?
- 13.** If you live in a remote part of Cape Breton West, how far would you consider traveling to use this facility
- 14.** Do you think an aquatic and recreation centre will benefit residents in Western Cape Breton?
- 15.** If your answer to question 14 is yes, how do you think an energy-neutral aquatic centre will benefit residents in Western Cape Breton?
- 16.** If your answer to question 14 is No, kindly explain why.
- 17.** How likely are you to support the establishment of this aquatic and recreation centre?
- 18.** Any additional comments or suggestions regarding the potential aquatic and recreation centre?

RESULTS

Q1: By continuing with this survey, you acknowledge that you have read and understood the following information and voluntarily agree to participate in this research study.

Answered: 529 Skipped: 0

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	99.24%	525
No	0.76%	4
TOTAL		529

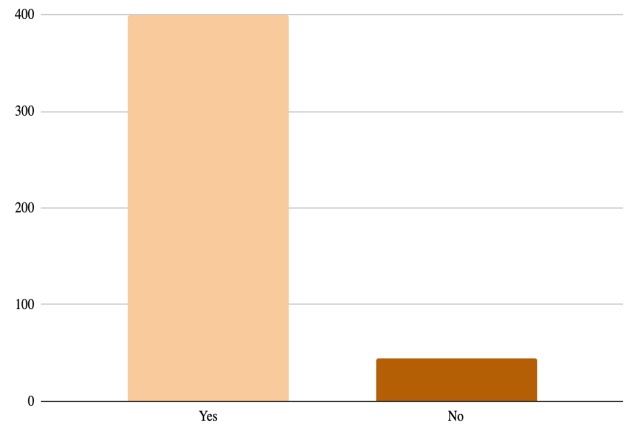
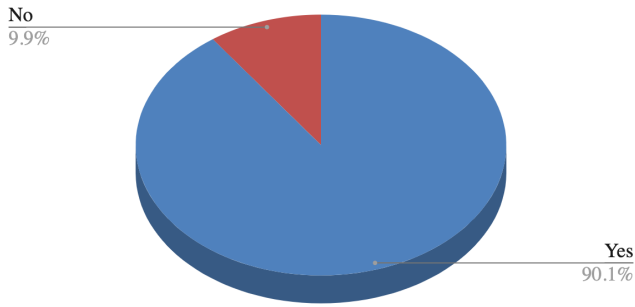
This statement serves as an informed consent declaration for participants to acknowledge their understanding of the survey's purpose, procedures, and potential risks or benefits. By agreeing to continue with the survey, participants indicate their voluntary participation and consent to be part of the research study

The high percentage of 99.24% agreement indicates a strong level of willingness among participants to engage in the research study.

Q2: Are you aware of the proposed Cape Breton West Aquatic and Recreation Centre?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	90.07%	399
No	9.93%	44
TOTAL		443

The aim of this question is to understand whether respondents are familiar with the project, its purpose, and its potential impact. The result indicates that the majority of respondents, 90.07%, are aware of the proposed Cape Breton West Aquatic and Recreation Centre, while a smaller proportion, 9.93%, are not aware of it.

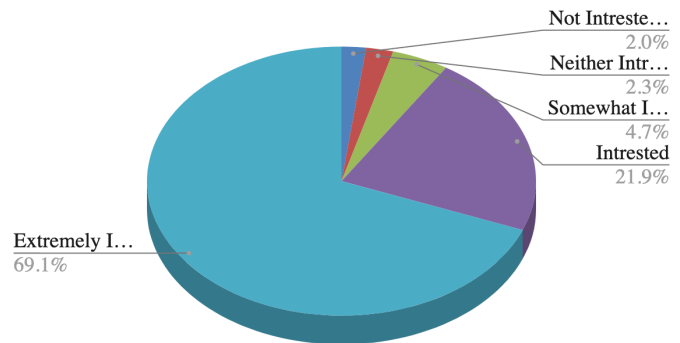
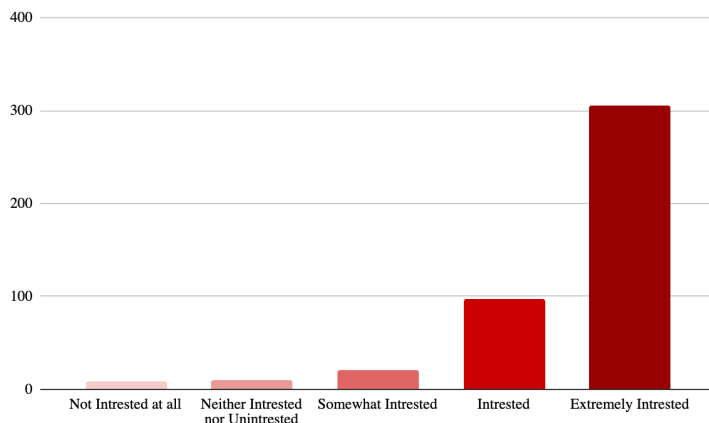


This information provides insights into the level of community awareness regarding the proposed project. It tells that a significant portion of respondents are knowledgeable about the Aquatic and Recreation Centre

Q3: On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being not interested at all and 5 being extremely interested, please rate your interest in this proposed facility in Western Cape Breton (primarily Inverness County).



	NOT INTERESTED AT ALL	SOMEWHAT INTERESTED	NEITHER INTERESTED NOR UNINTERESTED	INTERESTED	EXTREMELY INTERESTED	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
☆	2.03% 9	4.74% 21	2.26% 10	21.90% 97	69.07% 306	443	4.51



The majority of respondents appear to be either extremely interested or interested in the facility, with fewer respondents indicating lower levels of interest. This information is valuable in assessing the overall level of support and enthusiasm for the proposed facility among survey participants.

Q4: Is it important to you that public facilities such as the proposed energy neutral aquatic centre be a model for future development and a facility that will be affordable and address climate change?

Open-Ended Question

378 participants responded Yes - 85.3%

31 participants responded No - 7%

34 participants had comments.

Among these comments, a recurring theme was the affordability of the center and these two comments are a representative of the other comments

- We as a community need places like this as we continue to grow. We have lots of families here and this would be beneficial to us all

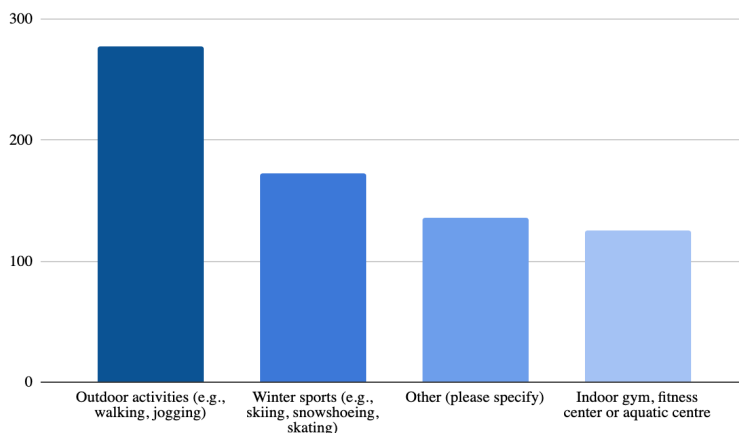
- Yes, it is. We must have modern infrastructure that does not further burden the energy sector or worsen the climate crisis.

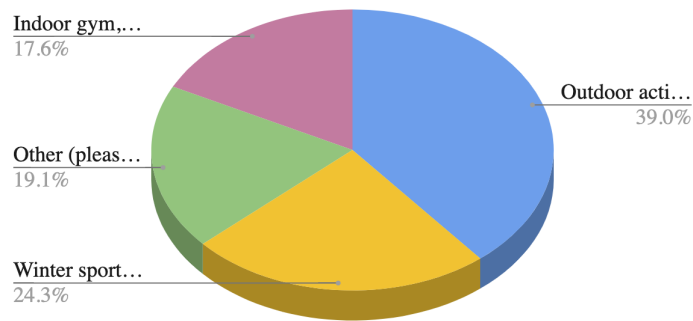
These comments reflect the broader sentiment regarding the importance of public facilities in the community's development while considering sustainability and affordability concerns.

Q5: How do you currently stay active during the winter months? (Select all that apply)

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Indoor gym, fitness center or aquatic centre	28.22%	125
Outdoor activities (e.g., walking, jogging)	62.75%	278
Winter sports (e.g., skiing, snowshoeing, skating)	39.05%	173
Other (please specify)	30.70%	136
TOTAL		712

These figures represent the distribution of preferences among respondents for staying active during the winter months. The majority of respondents engage in outdoor activities like walking or jogging, followed by winter sports and other unspecified activities. A smaller proportion opt for indoor gym, fitness center, or aquatic center activities.





Understanding these preferences will help make informed decisions related to the provision of facilities and services to promote physical activity and well-being during the winter months.

Q6: What challenges do you face in maintaining physical activity particularly during winter?

Open-Ended Question

Several concerns emerged from their responses - here are a few

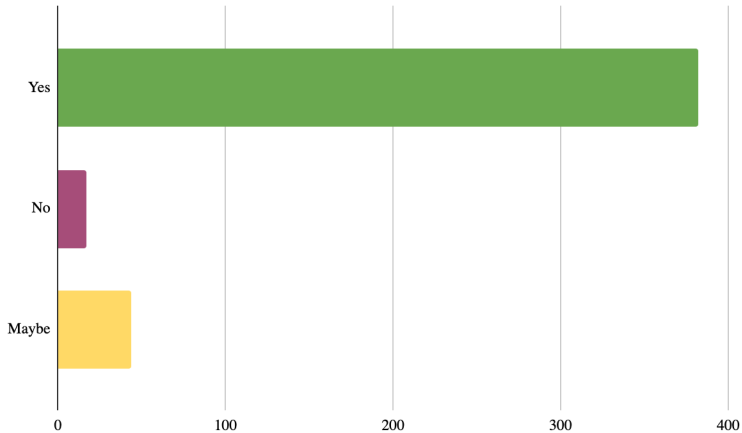
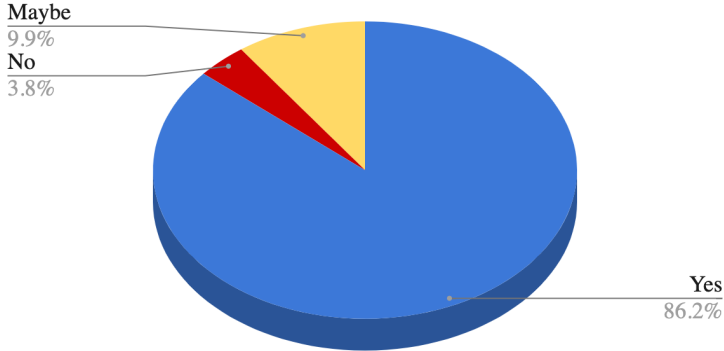
- Cost of transportation: Some individuals highlighted the financial barrier associated with accessing fitness facilities or outdoor recreational areas during winter months.
- Lack of indoor facilities nearby: Many respondents mentioned the absence of conveniently located indoor facilities, making it difficult to engage in physical activity during inclement weather.
- Lack of motivation due to hostile outdoor environment: Participants expressed feeling demotivated by the harsh outdoor conditions prevalent in winter, such as ice, snow, wind, cold temperatures, and shorter daylight hours.
- Unsafe walking surfaces outdoors: Concerns about safety were raised regarding icy or slippery walking surfaces outdoors, posing risks for injuries during winter months.
- Depression: Some individuals mentioned experiencing feelings of depression during winter, which negatively impacted their motivation to engage in physical activity.
- Climate change affecting outdoor activities

These challenges emphasize the different types of barriers to maintaining physical activity during the winter months and highlight the need for targeted interventions to promote and support active lifestyles year-round.

Q7: Regular physical activity provides proven health benefits, protecting against many chronic diseases such as stroke, diabetes, osteoarthritis and heart disease. Would you consider using the aquatic centre for therapeutic purposes?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	86.23%	382
No	3.84%	17
Maybe	9.93%	44
TOTAL		443

The majority of respondents (86.23%) expressed a willingness to consider using the aquatic center for therapeutic purposes. A small proportion (3.84%) indicated that they would not consider it, while some respondents (9.93%) were uncertain about the idea.

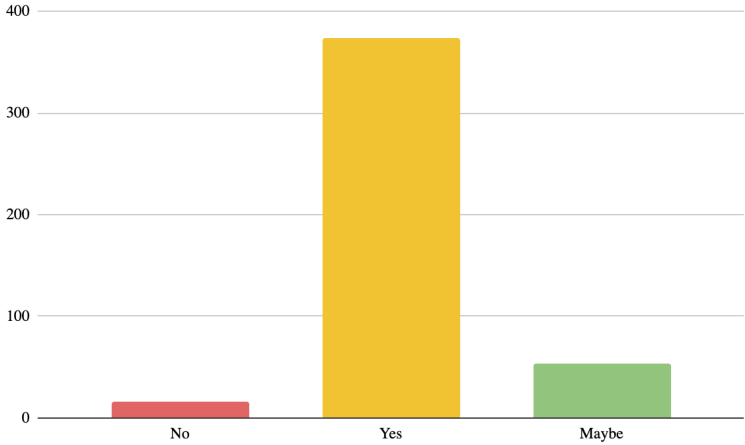


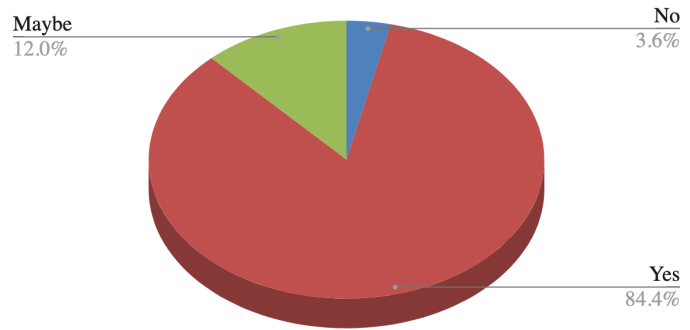
These results suggest a strong level of interest among respondents in utilizing the aquatic center for therapeutic purposes, which aligns with the known health benefits of regular physical activity, particularly in managing or preventing chronic diseases. Understanding this interest can inform planning and programming efforts aimed at promoting community health and well-being

Q8: Aquatic facilities in Cape Breton offer a range of amenities and programs with a varied fee structure, for example the fee for a 10-week swimming lessons for a child at Northside Community pool is \$130. Public swimming costs \$6.25 for one hour for children and seniors. Memberships are offered with reduced rates for all programs and services. Would you be willing to pay a comparable amount for programs and services at the Cape Breton West Aquatic Centre?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
No	3.61%	16
Yes	84.42%	374
Maybe	11.96%	53
TOTAL		443

The majority of respondents (374) expressed a willingness to pay a comparable amount for programs and services at the Cape Breton West Aquatic Centre. A smaller proportion (16) indicated that they would not be willing to pay, while some respondents (53) were uncertain.





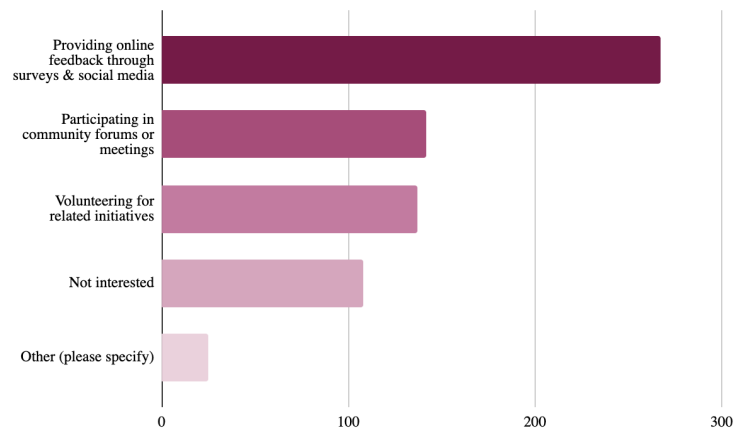
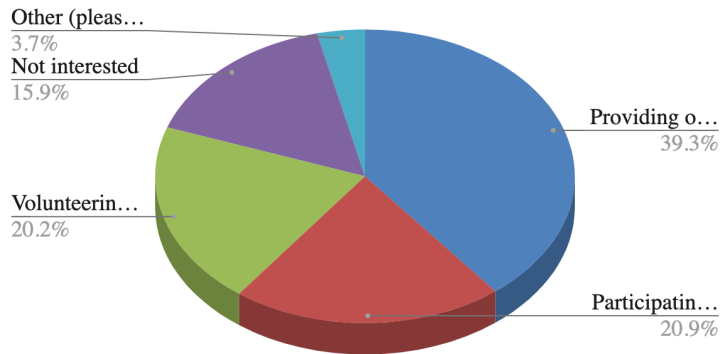
These results provide insight into the willingness of respondents to financially support the aquatic center and its programs and services. Understanding this willingness can help inform decisions related to fee structures, membership offerings, and program development to ensure accessibility and sustainability of the aquatic center within the community.

Q9: Would you be interested in being involved in the planning and development of this aquatic centre and if so in what capacity? (Select all that apply)

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Participating in community forums or meetings	32.05%	142
Providing online feedback through surveys & social media	60.27%	267
Volunteering for related initiatives	30.93%	137
Not interested	24.38%	108
Other (please specify)	5.64%	25
TOTAL		679

The majority of respondents (267) expressed interest in providing online feedback through surveys and social media. Additionally, a significant number of respondents (142) indicated a willingness to participate in community forums or meetings, while others (137) expressed interest in volunteering for related initiatives.

A smaller proportion of respondents (108) indicated that they were not interested in being involved in the planning and development of the aquatic centre. Some respondents (25) provided other specified capacities in which they would be interested in participating.



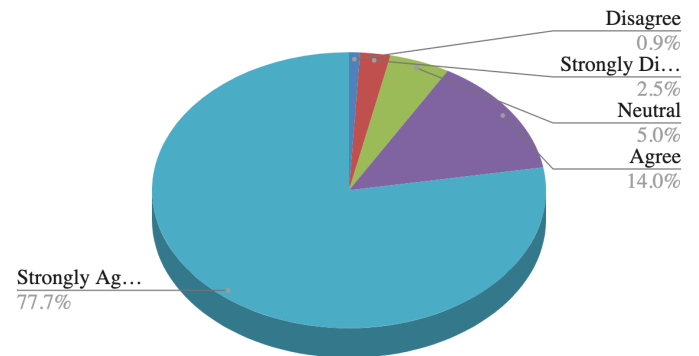
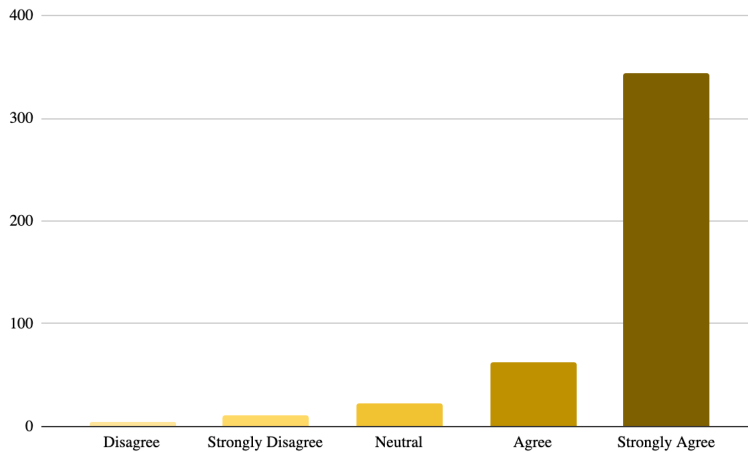
These responses provide valuable insight into the level of community engagement and potential avenues for involving community members in the planning and development process of the aquatic centre. Understanding these preferences can help guide outreach efforts and engagement strategies.

Q10: Do you believe an aquatic center would positively impact the overall well-being of Western Cape Breton?



	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	NEUTRAL	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
☆	2.48%	0.90%	4.97%	14.00%	77.65%	443	4.63
	11	4	22	62	344		

The majority of respondents (344) strongly agreed that an aquatic center would positively impact the overall well-being of Western Cape Breton. Additionally, a significant number of respondents (62) agreed with this statement. A smaller proportion of respondents were neutral (22), disagreed (4), or strongly disagreed (11) with the statement.

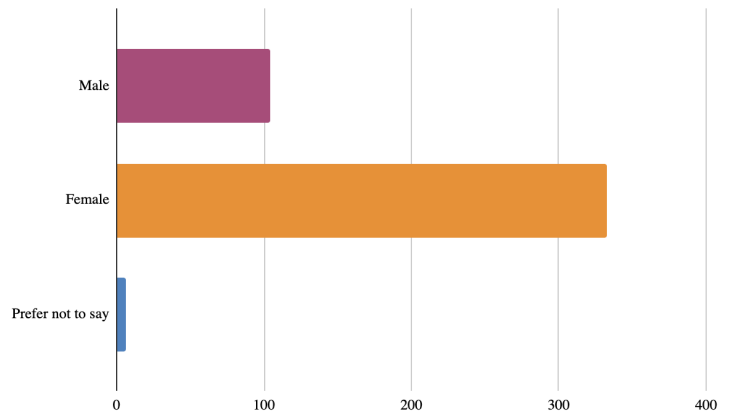
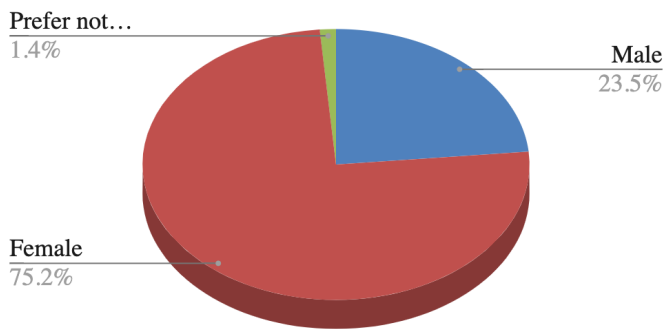


These results suggest a strong level of support and belief among respondents regarding the positive impact of an aquatic center on the overall well-being of the community. This perception aligns with the potential health, social, and recreational benefits that aquatic facilities can provide to communities.

Q11: Gender

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Male	23.48%	104
Female	75.17%	333
Prefer not to say	1.35%	6
TOTAL		443

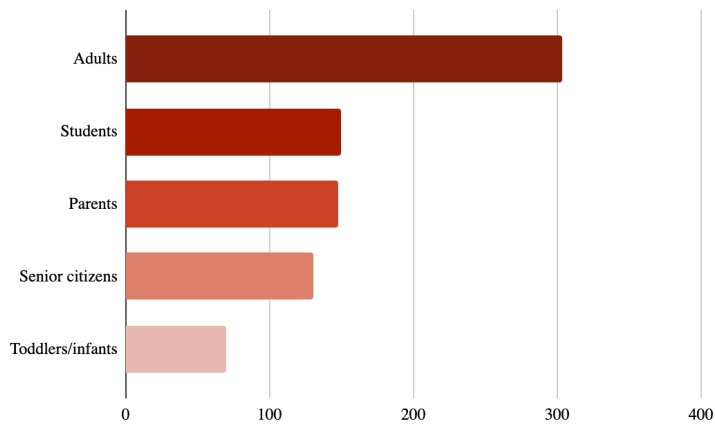
These numbers represent the gender distribution among the survey participants. Understanding the gender demographics of the respondents can provide insights into the composition of the surveyed population and help ensure inclusivity and representation in the decision-making processes related to the aquatic center.

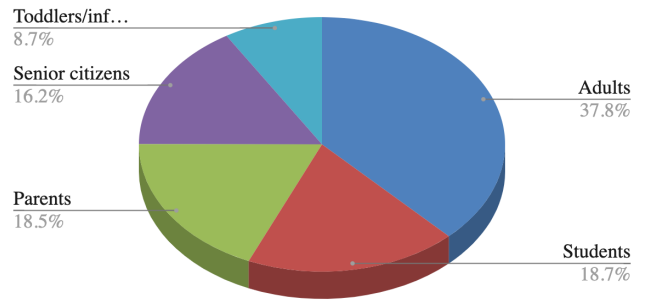


Q12: What is the composition of your household? (Select all that apply)

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Senior citizens	29.35%	130
Adults	68.40%	303
Parents	33.41%	148
Students	33.86%	150
Toddlers/infants	15.80%	70
TOTAL		801

These percentages illustrate the distribution of various household compositions among the survey respondents. It's evident that adults comprise the largest percentage of respondents, followed by students, parents, senior citizens, and toddlers/infants.

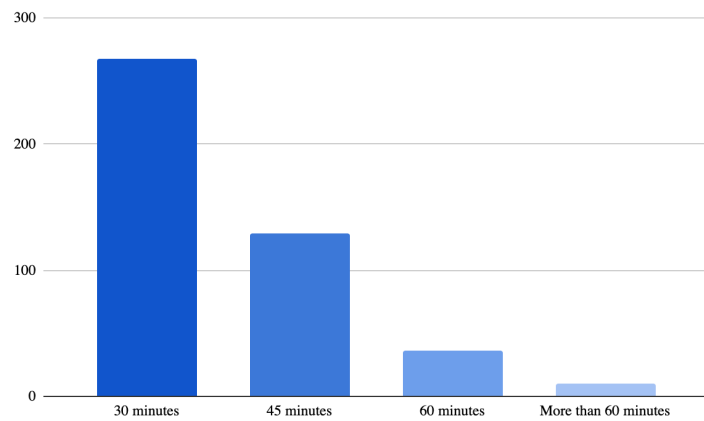
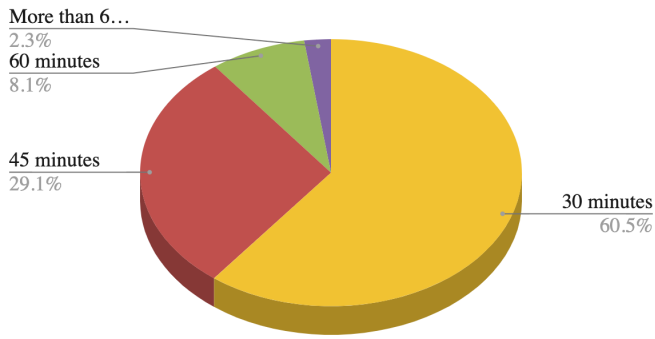




Q13: If you live in a remote part of Cape Breton West, how far would you consider traveling to use this facility

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
30 minutes	60.50%	268
45 minutes	29.12%	129
60 minutes	8.13%	36
More than 60 minutes	2.26%	10
TOTAL		443

These numbers represent the distribution of travel distances that respondents would consider reasonable to access the facility. The majority of respondents (268) indicated they would consider traveling up to 30 minutes, followed by 45 minutes (129), 60 minutes (36), and a smaller proportion (10) were willing to travel more than 60 minutes.



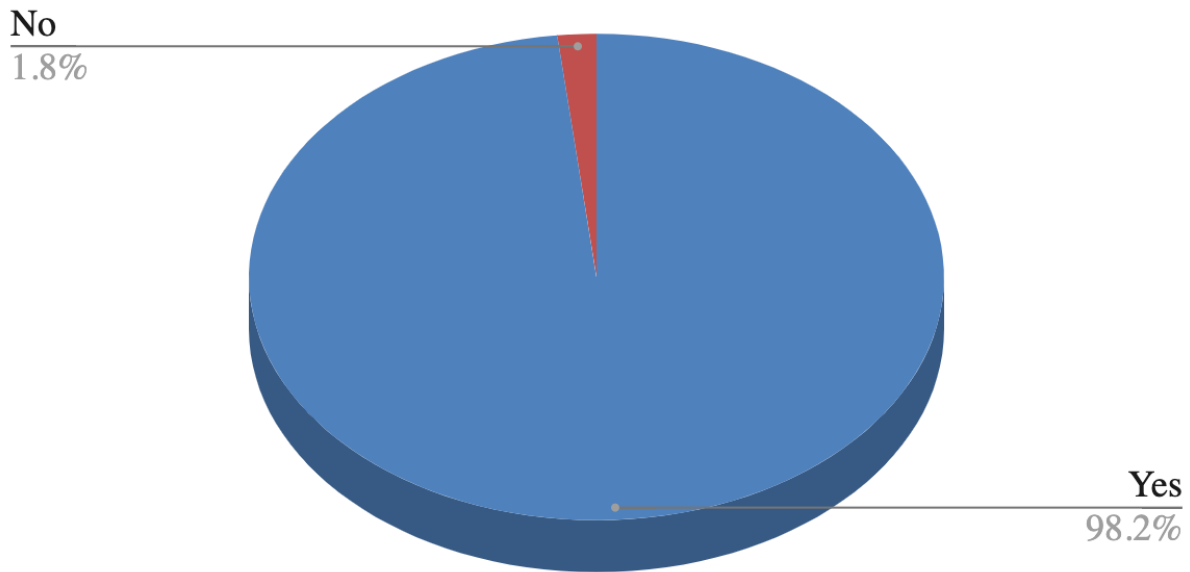
Understanding the willingness of respondents to travel certain distances provides valuable insight into the catchment area and potential user base for the facility. It will help inform decisions related to the facility's location, accessibility, and marketing strategies to attract users from remote areas of Cape Breton West.

Q14: Do you think an aquatic and recreation centre will benefit residents in Western Cape Breton?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	98.19%	435
No	1.81%	8
TOTAL		443

The majority of respondents (435) expressed a belief that an aquatic and recreation center will

benefit residents in Western Cape Breton. A small minority of respondents (8) indicated that they do not believe it will benefit residents.

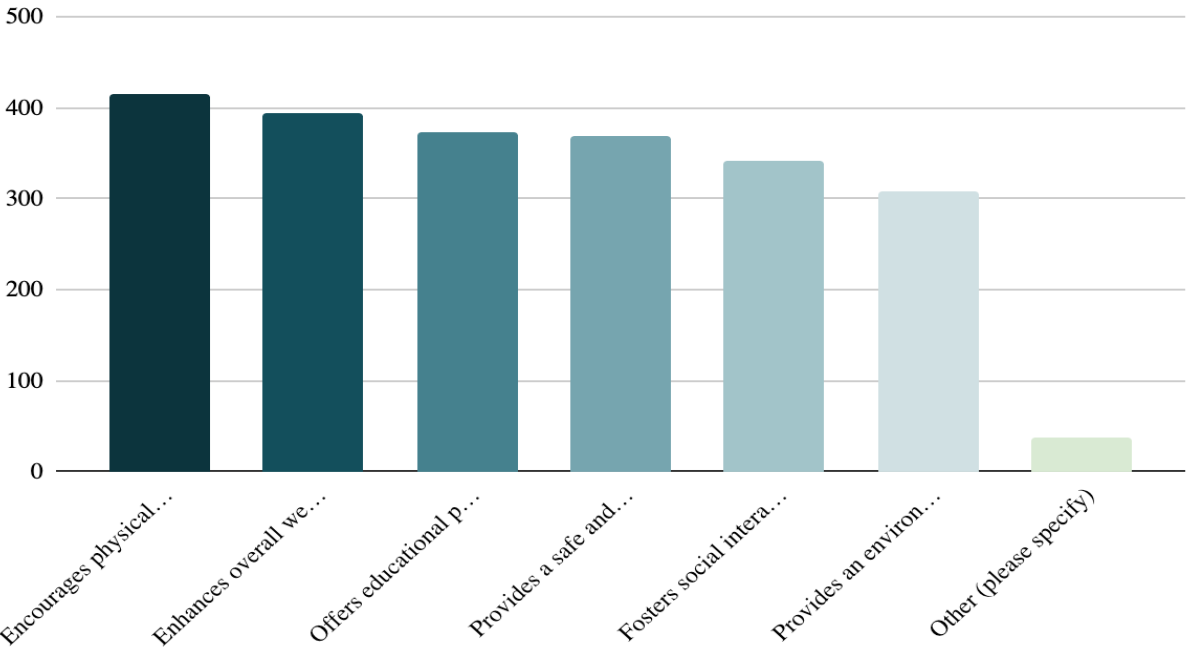


These results suggest strong support for the idea of an aquatic and recreation center among the surveyed population. The belief in the potential benefits of such a facility aligns with the perceived positive impact it could have on the community's health, well-being, recreation opportunities, and social cohesion

Q15: If your answer to question 14 is yes, how do you think an energy-neutral aquatic centre will benefit residents in Western Cape Breton? (Select all that apply)

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Encourages physical activity and a healthy lifestyle	416	93.91%
Enhances overall well-being and mental health	394	88.94%
Offers educational programs related to water safety and swimming	373	84.20%

Provides a safe and supervised recreational space	369	83.30%
Fosters social interactions and community engagement	341	76.98%
Provides an environmentally responsible example for future development	309	69.75%
Other (please specify)	37	8.35%
TOTAL		2239



These numbers represent the distribution of perceived benefits of an energy-neutral aquatic centre as perceived by respondents who believe it will benefit residents. The majority of respondents identified benefits such as encouraging physical activity and a healthy lifestyle, enhancing overall well-being and mental health, offering educational programs related to water safety and swimming, providing a safe and supervised recreational space, fostering social interactions and community engagement, and setting an environmentally responsible example for future development.

Q16: If your answer to question 14 is No, kindly explain why.

Open-Ended Question

- Cost will be too high: Some participants expressed concerns about the potential high cost associated with building and maintaining an aquatic and recreation center, especially considering the existence of a pool in Port Hawkesbury.
- Population is too small to support this: Others indicated that the local population may be insufficient to sustain the facility, suggesting that the demand for such amenities may not justify the investment.
- Tax base is inadequate: Concerns were raised about the financial feasibility of the project, with participants noting that the tax base may not be sufficient to cover the expenses associated with constructing and operating the center.
- Need more things than a pool in the community

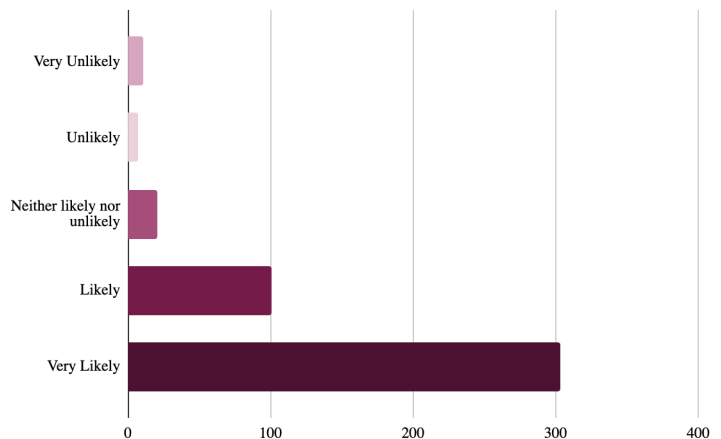
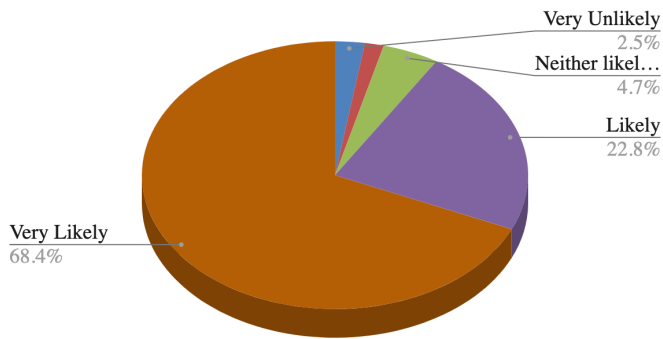
These responses reflect various concerns and considerations regarding the potential benefits and feasibility of establishing an aquatic and recreation center in Western Cape Breton.

Q17: How likely are you to support the establishment of this aquatic and recreation centre?



	VERY UNLIKELY	UNLIKELY	NEITHER LIKELY NOR UNLIKELY	LIKELY	VERY LIKELY	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
☆	2.48% 11	1.58% 7	4.74% 21	22.80% 101	68.40% 303	443	4.53

These numbers represent the distribution of likelihood to support the establishment of the aquatic and recreation centre among the respondents. The majority of respondents (303) indicated that they are very likely to support the establishment, followed by 101 respondents who said they are likely to support it. Smaller proportions of respondents expressed neutrality (21), unlikelihood (7), or strong unlikelihood (11) to support the establishment.



Understanding the level of support among respondents is crucial for gauging community interest and potential backing for the project. It provides insights into the perceived value and importance of the aquatic and recreation centre within the community and can inform decision-making processes regarding its development and implementation.

Q18 Any additional comments or suggestions regarding the potential aquatic and recreation centre?

Open-Ended Question

221 participants gave suggestions - here are a few:

- I think this would be a game changer for health and wellness in our community. It would also attract more families and seniors to our community.
- I am 100% in favor of an aquatic and recreation centre in our community. I think the motivation is there to build one and the support is there to maintain it. I am already dreaming about becoming a certified aqua-aerobic instructor! Let's do this!!!
- 1) Recommend changing your map of western CB to include Victoria County or at least portions of it. I reside near the county line in Victoria County and would use the facility. 2) I suggest broadening the scope of this project to include more recreation. Maybe a field for sports or a gym. Given the financial states of pools in urban areas (Sydney Mines,

Halifax), how could a similar facility in a rural unpopulated area sustain itself without more attractions.

- Having a safe form of exercise for especially the aging population is crucial and water is therapeutic for so many. I am not old but I have a connective tissue disorder and to be able to swim all year round would be amazing. I also have children who love to swim. This center would be well used.

Overall, the feedback provided valuable insights into community preferences and aspirations for the aquatic and recreation center. It highlighted the importance of promoting health, fostering community engagement, and ensuring inclusivity in the facility's design and programming. Incorporating these suggestions into the project planning process can help create a facility that truly meets the diverse needs and desires of Western Cape Breton residents.

SUMMARY

The feasibility study conducted to assess the viability of establishing an indoor year-round aquatic and recreation center in Western Cape Breton yielded valuable insights into community perceptions and preferences regarding the proposed facility. Here are the key findings from the research:

Community Awareness and Interest

A significant majority of respondents (90.07%) are aware of the proposed Cape Breton West Aquatic and Recreation Centre, indicating a high level of community awareness regarding the project. The majority of respondents expressed interest in the facility, also indicating that it is important for public facilities like the proposed energy-neutral aquatic center to be affordable and address climate change.

Perceived Benefits of the Aquatic Center

Respondents strongly believe that an aquatic center would positively impact the overall well-being of Western Cape Breton, citing benefits such as encouraging physical activity, enhancing mental health, and fostering community engagement.

The majority of respondents are willing to pay comparable amounts for programs and services at the Cape Breton West Aquatic Centre, underscoring their support for the facility.

Community Engagement and Support

A significant proportion of respondents expressed interest in being involved in the planning and development of the aquatic center, particularly through providing online feedback and participating in community forums or meetings.

The vast majority of respondents (98.19%) believe that an aquatic and recreation center will benefit residents in Western Cape Breton.

Suggestions for Improvement

Several respondents provided suggestions for the establishment of the aquatic and recreation center, emphasizing the importance of affordability, accessibility, and the incorporation of educational programs and environmentally responsible practices.

Conclusion

The findings of the feasibility study highlight strong community support and interest in the establishment of an indoor year-round aquatic and recreation center in Western Cape Breton. The perceived benefits of the facility, coupled with the willingness of respondents to actively engage in its planning and development, underscore its potential to contribute to the health, well-being, and overall quality of life of the community members. As the project progresses, incorporating the community's feedback and addressing their concerns will be essential for ensuring the success and sustainability of the aquatic center.

METHODOLOGY

The survey questionnaire was meticulously designed to capture relevant information related to the proposed aquatic and recreation center in Western Cape Breton. Questions were structured to address various aspects such as community awareness, interest, perceived benefits, challenges, and willingness to support the establishment of the facility.

Responses from participants were collected systematically using Survey Monkey and Microsoft Excel was utilized for data analysis, providing a robust platform to process and interpret survey responses. Various statistical techniques and functions were used to analyze the data, calculate percentages, generate charts, and derive meaningful insights.

Overall, the survey methodology employed a systematic approach to gather and analyze data, leveraging Survey Monkey and Microsoft Excel for data collection, processing and analysis to derive insights that inform decision-making regarding the establishment of the aquatic and recreation center.