**Forest River Outdoor recreation & Nature Center – FAQ**

[**https://www.salem.com/forestriverpark**](https://www.salem.com/forestriverpark)

**Updated 12/7/20**

1. ***What does the project include?***

The project includes these main elements:

* + Replacement of the pools (one lap/adult) one kiddie, with deck and grass areas surrounding
	+ Renovation of the bathhouse – to include restrooms, lockers, family changing rooms, office, and a new community room with associated patio
	+ Concessions and water interactive public art area
	+ A new filter building with first aid/lifeguard station
	+ New entrance with automatic gate and parking for accessibility
	+ Restored cove and marsh areas
	+ New accessible pathways and natural educational opportunities
1. **Why does the project include 2 pools and a “splash pad”**

Two pools offer separation between adults and smaller children, which is a benefit to both users. In addition, if there is a reason to shut down a pool (which can happen with an “accident’, only one pool needs to be shut down. The “splash pad” is more of an artist designed space near the concession area that will have water interactive features and seating. Pools can only realistically be open 2-3 months during the summer, largely because of available staff and weather. The infrastructure for the splash pad will already be there, and Salem can have very hot days in late May and in September. Therefore, this area allows residents a place to cool off in the off seasons. For the rest of the year, it will be a space for visitors to relax or can be used as an outdoor classroom. The bathhouse can support off season water related activities such as kayaking, scuba, or other activities.

1. ***What is the history of the pool and why was the pool closed?***

The pool started as a tidal area that had a gate to hold high tide waters in the early 1900’s. There was a small bathhouse, which was replaced in the 1930’s with the current structure you see (a similar building used to exist at Smith Pool near the Willows). In the early 1970’s, the two pools were built and the building upgraded, and in the early 1990’the building was upgraded, and the pools were turned into chlorinated including the addition of the filter building. The City has invested in this area every 20-30 years, and the current facilities are at life and in need of major upgrades. The pool was closed prior to the 2018 season as the existing pool had deteriorated to the point where it could no longer be fixed to provide a safe environment. In addition, the storms of 2018 inundated the filtration plant, causing it to fail.

1. ***What is the project’s schedule?***

The project is starting early work in November 2020. The goal is to have the pool open the summer of 2021, with final work (pathways, final building elements not related to the pool, and cove restoration) in the Fall of 2021. Weather and other unforeseen conditions could affect this schedule.

1. ***What are the community benefits of the project?***

This project will provide a modern recreational facility for residents and regional visitors. It will provide a place for people of all ages and abilities to learn how swim or to cool off during a hot summer day. This will also provide space or support other outdoor activities, such as, running, biking, walking, bird watching, kayaking, frisbee, and photography.

This project also will have the following benefits:

* High levels of sustainability, including zero net energy, & efficient heating/cooling
* reduced runoff and green infrastructure, native plantings
* Renovation of a historic structure
* Educational opportunities along the restored cove and in the community room
* Fully accessible pool and facilities
* Public art and space for camp and Park & Recreation programs
* Year-round community space for post pool season activities and small events.
* New security cameras and improved safety and emergency systems.
* Resilient design located several feet out of projected storm surges
1. ***How will this project the park & neighborhood?***

The park will remain open during construction, however the Western Access road, the pool and tennis areas will be off limits during construction to ensure safety. The construction is during normal construction hours, and neighbors will get updated regularly. There will be truck traffic.

1. **What are the safety plans and COVID-19 requirements?**

The contractor has filed their Health & Safety Plan and their COVID 19 plan, all in compliance with local, state, and federal regulations.

1. ***What is the cost of the project and how is it being paid for?***

The estimated construction cost is $11M, and the total cost, including soft costs such as design, construction oversight, testing, and contingency brings the total to $13.1M. Most of the cost is being paid from City bonds. Other sources of funds include CPA and water and sewer bond to pay for the new sewer and water lines. Additional grants and donations will be sought to enhance the project.

1. ***How will Forest River facility be operated and maintained once the improvements are completed?***

The facility is under ownership and operation of Park and Recreation. Park and Recreation will operate the facility and may contract out for the pool operation. Maintenance of the buildings and the pools will be part of the major contract for the first few years for major equipment, and then will be managed by Park and Recreation and Engineering moving forward.

The City has done an Operation & Maintenance plan for the facility, and will use revenue generated from the pool for the maintenance and for a capital reserve for future needs.

1. **Who is the team for this project?**

This project is being led by Park and Recreation & Engineering. The lead designer is bh+a Architects and the Owner’s Project Manager is Anser Advisory. The General Contractor is Colantonio. Significant coordination has occurred with DPW, Fire, Police, IT, Health, and Planning Depts. If you have any questions, please contact Jenna Ide at jide@salem.com or 978-618-5699.