Agency of the Year  
Class I  
City of McKinney

To provide our 208,487 citizens with accessible water safety and wellness opportunities, the City of McKinney has four aquatic centers, two of which offer programming year-round. Our central mailing address is 222 N. Tennessee St., McKinney, TX, 75069. The McKinney Parks and Recreation’s mission is to “Enrich the quality of lives for all McKinney citizens by providing diverse social, educational and recreational opportunities.” We believe we have fulfilled this mission throughout 2020 by offering swim lessons, public swim times, water exercise opportunities, and facility rentals. Even though this year has had difficult circumstances, it has become a priority for The City of McKinney to offer Aquatics programming to its customers.

The McKinney Senior Pool is an indoor facility with a focus on providing recreational programs for adults ages 50 and over. From January to March of 2020, 22 water exercise classes were offered each week. 16 of these were dedicated for adults 50+, with the other 6 open to all ages. Five types of classes were available, ranging from the low-impact, water walking *Aqua Help.U.Get.Started* class to the high-impact, cardio conditioning *Hydrotraining*. Every afternoon, open swimming times were available for adults ages 50+ to lap swim or water walk. The Senior Pool is also home to the synchronized swim team the “Mermaids,” a group of ladies ages 50+ who have been practicing twice a week at the Senior Pool since 2004.

The Senior Pool and the Apex Centre are the two locations that offer year-round swim lessons through the McKinney Swim School. Also offered seasonally at Juanita Maxfield Aquatic Center, this program was created by the McKinney Aquatics division in 2011 and is taught by Swim Instructors certified by the McKinney Swim School. It includes seven class levels: the *Parent & Child* class, designed for children 6-months to 3-years; *Swim 101*, an introduction to the fundamentals of water safety for children ages 3-years to 5-years; *Swim 102*, teaching children ages 5-years to 12-years to swim independently; *Swim 103*, *Swim 104*, and *Swim 105*, refining stroke technique and teaching competition strokes to children 6-years to 12-years; and *Adult Swim*, an adaptable course for ages 13+ that teaches water safety, swimming independence, and stroke refinement. In addition, the McKinney Senior Pool has been a welcoming host to *Adapted Aquatics* a swim lessons program designed to teach children with special needs and physical disabilities.

On March 16th The City of McKinney shut down all Parks and Recreation facilities and furloughed 56 part-time staff. During our closure, full-time staff developed the Covid-19 playbook. The Playbook created a detailed opening phase plans, Covid-19 safety procedures, sanitation practices, and various modified training for staff. All full-time, part-time, and seasonal employees attended COVID-19 training as well as a webinar with Dr. Picchioni on effective communication, customer service, and empathy. Additional precautions put into action included providing PPE for all staff and members. All staff were required to do temperature checks before clock in and masks were required at all times while on shift, with the exception being lifeguards on stand only. On May 18th we began the process of bringing our staff back. Within two fast-paced weeks we hired 38 new employees, and rehired the previously furloughed part-time staff. We also ran two Red Cross lifeguarding classes certifying 14 new lifeguards. It was clear that the Aquatics divisions needed to prepare for the impending opening of outdoor facilities. Preparations were made to incorporate signage to assist with social distancing, provide sanitation stations and put in place limited occupancies levels to comply with the Texas Governor’s orders and CDC guidelines.

The Apex Centre re-opened its indoor competition and leisure pools for exercise purposes only on June 1st with a staff of 176 team members. The outdoor pools and features opened shortly after on June 29th. With more than 250 team members across the city’s four aquatics facilities, we provided more jobs in our community this year than we ever have before. The Apex Centre was also able to certify 50 new lifeguards for their facility and the surrounding community.

Throughout the summer the Apex Centre offered public swim times, water exercise classes, and lap swimming times and implemented online registration to aid in the observation of social distancing. At its peak in 2020, the Centre served over 15,000 customers. The outdoor pools and features kept to a normal schedule and continued to provide activities to the public through Labor Day. The Apex Centre saw at least 20,000 in attendance for their outdoor pool during the summer season. Upon reopening on June 1st, the indoor pools resumed the regular schedule of operating 363 days a year, only closing on Thanksgiving and Christmas Day.

McKinney’s 51-year-old outdoor facility Juanita Maxfield Aquatic Center opened for the season on June 15th, offering water exercise classes and water walking times, by registration only, exclusively for adults ages 50 and over. Floor markers were used to indicate the appropriate social distance at or near the facility’s entrance, front window, guard stands, diving board, rock wall, and floating dragon bridge. Designated deck attendants were present throughout the day, and were tasked to sanitize frequently touched surfaces and pass out exercise equipment. The deck attendant position was created solely for these efforts. In previous years, swim instructor aides assisted with swim lessons. However, we realized that we would have to modify this position to better utilize them for sanitization purposes. Removing them from swim lessons also allowed social distancing and provided limited occupancy lessons. To provide additional coverage, dedicated custodial staff were added to sanitize the deck, bathrooms and office facilities and to ensure customer safety and prevent contamination.

Beginning on June 29th, both Juanita Maxfield and Old Settler’s Aquatic Centers opened with a reduced capacity and similar schedule of public swim times and facility rentals as had been available in previous years. The two facilities were able to book 81% of all facility rentals compared to fiscal year 2019. The Apex Centre was able to rent out 100% of rentals as compared to 2019. Overall, rentals saw good numbers as patrons were willing to spend more to have the facility to themselves to stay distanced from other families. Accounting for the reduced maximum occupancy limit, the facility observed a 93% attendance of open swim times as compared to 2019. Changes were made to the schedule to accommodate the McKinney Senior Recreation Center/ Senior Pool, as it was just about to go under construction for needed updates to the facility. This closure led us to the decision to extend our season, by continuing to offer activities for our senior population through October 5, 2020. We provided evening and weekend public swim times and water exercise programming for adults 50+.

On July 6th, Juanita Maxfield Aquatic Center held the first McKinney Swim School classes of the 2020 season. The City of McKinney believed it was essential to offer swim lesson programs during the phased re-opening. To ensure our citizens were given this life-saving opportunity, the McKinney Swim School was restructured to remain safe during the pandemic. Class sizes were changed from a maximum of seven students to three; parents of non-swimmers were required to join them in the water; and Swim Instructors were provided additional training in offering effective instruction while maintaining social distancing. Swim Instructors maintained social distancing by teaching on the deck and providing instruction to the parents and students. Throughout the summer a total of 3 sessions of Learn to swim lessons were offered at Juanita Maxfield, and from September 8-October 1 a fall session was held.

The Apex Centre began offering Learn to Swim classes on June 29th with class sizes shifted to allow for a maximum of two participants in each class. Understanding that the need for swimming lessons would be higher than usual due to the lack of availability during the spring, more private swim lesson options were provided than 2019. A total of 385 students participated in the Learn to Swim program at Apex this year, 149 of those taking classes after the facility’s reopening.

Public officials state that exercise and socialization were so important during Covid-19. Exercise specifically has shown to have immune boosting benefits that may help the human body when fighting off the virus. Following our mission was a priority for Aquatics divisions. We have offered diverse social, educational and recreational opportunities all while following Covid-19 guidelines to help City of McKinney residents and surrounding communities to stay safe and healthy during this time. What we’re doing speaks volumes to those who have participated.

The McKinney Apex Centre and City of McKinney Aquatics divisions led the way at the time of our reopening in June. We were one of the first cities in our region to begin offering water exercise classes and swim lessons programming to not only our citizens, but also for surrounding communities. Despite the Covid-19 impact on our operations, our customers expressed their deep appreciation and satisfaction with the programming and services we have been able to provide during this difficult situation.

The City of McKinney would like thank the North Texas Aquatics Association for the opportunity to compete in this year’s aquatics award submissions.

2020 Customer Comments

“PS staff at Juanita Maxwell have been great at keeping us seniors swimming!”

“I just wanted to reach out and say thank you. My kids have been begging to go swimming. Most summers we frequent Old Settlers. I was hesitant to go, but wanted to let kids swim.  
I called Old Settlers and the lifeguard who answered was very helpful with all the protocols you all have in place. She explained everything very well, and we headed to pool. When we got there the young man at the window explained very politely that they were at capacity, but he could take my name and number and text when space was available.  
We were happy to wait. We received a text and entered. There was plenty of spacing between sears, and plenty of space for social distancing!! I was beyond please to see the employees wiping all areas when they switch positions as well as wiping all public rails and areas every 15-20 minutes. All please with all of the sanitizer stations.  
Anyway I just wanted to say thank you. Staff was beyond polite and helpful! We felt very safe and will be back. Thank you for all of your planning and thought put into opening pools. It is greatly appreciated.”

“We had a great time yesterday. Can I reserve again for Aug 30th?”

"Some areas exceeded expectations such as cleaning all the equipment used in a water aerobics class"

"I can’t say enough for the aquatic center & how clean and careful the staff is. Thank you" 8/7/2020 7:05 PM

"I am not at all surprised by the cleanliness of the Apex. It was clean prior to COVID and well organized and efficient"

"Outdoor pool is always so clean & safe for us to use!" 8/8/2020 9:00 AM

"I am so thankful you are open and I feel like you are being very careful. All your employees have great attitudes and are so friendly. Those of us who use the pool really suffered while you were closed so thank you again for being open"

"Impressed with the efforts to this point and gradually and safely reopening the facilities. Makes me feel better as a member to know that you guys are taking these matters seriously."

"I water walk every weekday morning at 5:30. The desk staff, life guards and cleaning staff are wonderful, hardworking and professional. I really enjoy coming to the Apex Leisure pool for this activity"

"I think the Apex under the strict rules is doing an excellent job. People have different comfort levels. It’s difficult to meet the public’s wishes under these circumstances. You’re doing a great job."

"I have returned. I swim laps several Times a week. I am SO THANKFUL that you reopened!!"

Hoyt Dunn Water Aerobics at Apex Centre Testimonial <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XGwpPC59D8w>