



"In time and with water, everything changes."

—Leonardo da Vinci

DELTA AQUATIC CENTER OF STOCKTON

Feasibility Study

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I. Purpose of the Feasibility Study

The Delta Aquatic Center of Stockton (DAC) will make Delta waterways accessible, welcoming, and educational for all, so that people of all abilities may safely use human-powered watercraft to enjoy and experience the Delta.

Early donors have already responded to this vision by giving more than \$20,000 and creating the *Delta Aquatic Center of Stockton Fiscal Sponsor Fund* at the San Joaquin Community Foundation. Through the DAC Fund, the Community Foundation will receive and administer future grants and donations until a more permanent operating structure is established.

The Delta Aquatic Center was awarded a \$60,000 seed grant by the City of Stockton in early 2022 to prepare a planning grant proposal to the Delta Conservancy for Proposition 68 funding and to develop this Feasibility Study and accompanying business plan. The San Joaquin County Board of Supervisors has also committed \$48,000 in funding to support consultants and other costs to move the project through the planning phase. This grant is to specifically support consultants in seeking and applying for grants to supplement funding needs for land acquisition, construction costs, programmatic costs, and other essential needs for the project.

The purpose of conducting this Feasibility Study is to determine whether an aquatic center on the Delta is viable and would be successful, based on the community need, the expected market, projected capital costs, and operating revenue versus expenses. The Feasibility Study is one tool the Community Advisory Board of the Delta Aquatic Center will use to determine whether it can develop the required resources to build and operate a world-class aquatic center.

The DAC planning team would like to express gratitude to the City and County leadership for their support and belief in this idea, and to the San Joaquin Community Foundation and United Way of San Joaquin for incredible administrative and staff support.

II. Executive Summary

The Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta is an incredible natural resource for the Northern San Joaquin Valley region, even apart from its crucial role in the state's water supplies. Its beauty, serenity, and array of wild plant and animal species literally cross into the urban center of San Joaquin County in Downtown Stockton, and yet relatively few Stocktonians and other local residents experience them. In 2007, a survey found that nearly half of Stockton residents had little idea that they lived in or near the Delta or understood what it is.

Human-powered watercraft – boats that are rowed, paddled, or pedaled – are a fun, easy, and affordable way to experience the Delta while getting good exercise. But despite a long history of boating in the region (going back to tule boats paddled by the indigenous Yokuts and Miwok residents), access to Delta waterways remains limited, and many residents have never been out on the water.

The Delta Aquatic Center (DAC) could help to make the Delta more accessible to local residents, while also establishing Stockton as the regional center for competitive and recreational water sports. By building ADA-accessible boat ramps and docks and a sizeable building to house training, fitness, instruction, and other activities, the DAC can offer multiple economic and community benefits to the region, including increased tourism, additional jobs, more opportunities for physical and mental health, environmental education, more local youth knowing how to swim, and a central community location for positive family experiences.

Although a formal study has not yet been conducted, the potential markets for these benefits are strong in a region with hundreds of thousands of residents within a close drive and few alternative providers. Other local providers have seen demand that outstrips their capacity. A long list of potential partners, many of whom are already at the table, could also greatly extend the DAC's reach and impact. The City of Stockton and County of San Joaquin

have already invested funds in early planning activities, and DAC leadership is currently applying for a pre-construction grant from the Delta Conservancy.

However, capital costs are likely to be substantial for a facility capable of fulfilling these expectations, and no source for those funds has as of yet been identified. Finding enough operating revenue to cover costs will also be a significant challenge, as other aquatic centers around the country still must seek donations and public funding to meet their needs.

Overall, the idea of a Delta Aquatic Center holds great promise for the DAC to become an essential asset for Stockton, San Joaquin County, and the larger region that gets more people out on the water. But translating that idea into a physical space and sustainable aquatic center will require careful planning and creativity in generating sufficient revenue.

“Stockton has so much diversity. We have something, a spark here. With this aquatic center in Stockton, we will see those sparks go off.”

– ABIGAIL MUÑOZ, 16, 2ND-YEAR ROWER AT DELTA SCULLING CENTER

III. Description of the Aquatic Center

A. VISION, MISSION, AND LEADERSHIP Vision of the Delta Aquatic Center

Stockton residents and visitors will flock to the Delta to play or compete on its waterways in human-powered watercraft, learn about the Delta’s environmental, historical and economic impact, attend special events, or just sit or amble along its shore.

Mission Statement

The Delta Aquatic Center of Stockton will provide world-class watersports facilities in Stockton, offer greater access to the Delta, increase recreation and tourism opportunities, foster health and wellness, preserve the unique cultural environment of the Delta region, promote environmental education, and increase the economic vitality of the region.

The long-term goal of the Delta Aquatic Center (DAC) project is to build an ADA-friendly facility on the Delta that will make it possible for all, regardless of ability or means, to access the Delta in small, human-powered watercraft. The proposed Delta Aquatic Center of Stockton will include ADA-accessible ramps and facilities for residents and visitors to safely use human-powered watercraft for rowing, paddling, sailing, and pedaling on the Delta. The DAC will also provide education about the historical, environmental, and economic impact of the Delta. By creating partnerships with local community-based organizations, schools, and other stakeholders, the DAC will offer a wealth of opportunities for Stockton’s most vulnerable populations to learn water safety and have equitable access to the Delta waterways.

The best way to explore the Delta is to get out on the water! However, access to the Delta can be challenging, even for locals. From the Delta Aquatic Center, locals and visitors will have a jumping-off point, using human-powered watercraft, to experience the Deepwater Channel with its myriad species of fish, thriving sea lions, and flocks of waterfowl as well as up-close views of urban Stockton, fertile farmlands, and ocean-going cargo ships from around the world destined for the Port of Stockton.

“A boathouse is a community gathering place, where people can reconnect with the river.”

–MICHAEL KNOPP, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, RIVERSPORT FOUNDATION (OKLAHOMA CITY)

B. HISTORY OF THIS PROJECT

In 2019, Delta Sculling Center, with the support of a consulting firm, hosted two community input sessions to gather feedback from the Stockton community on local interest for an aquatic center. Participants offered a great deal of encouragement for the concept. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, conversations about the Delta Aquatic Center were put on hold.

As the pandemic crisis began to ease, those conversations picked back up. A Community Advisory Board (see above) was formed to oversee the development of the DAC project. The Board provides guidance on site location, building and design, operations, maintenance, funding opportunities, and programming. Representatives from the Community Advisory Board have also held presentations and conversations about the DAC project to community groups, including: Reinvent South Stockton Coalition, Little Manila Rising, Restore the Delta, University of the Pacific, San Joaquin County Office of Education, San Joaquin Delta College, Dignity Health-St. Joseph’s Medical Center, local high schools, local Rotary clubs, and other groups.

Around the same time, the City of Stockton and San Joaquin County both invested more than \$100,000 of combined seed funding for the DAC to support pre-planning activities

The Community Advisory Board for the Delta Aquatic Center was formed to highlight local support for the project and to support the development of the Aquatic Center. Made up of Stockton leaders representing business, government, nonprofits, education, and health care, the Community Advisory Board members provide time, expertise, experience, and knowledge of the Stockton community and of other regional and national aquatic centers.

JESÚS ANDRADE, Director of Development, Improve Your Tomorrow

SCOTT BIEDERMANN, ED.D., Vice President for Development, University of the Pacific

TROY BROWN, ED.D., County Superintendent of Schools, San Joaquin County Office of Education

ANNIE CUNIAL, M.ED., Division Director STEM Programs, Educational Services, San Joaquin County Office of Education

BEVERLY KLUNK, M.A., Vice President and Senior Trust Officer, Bank of Stockton

TED LELAND, PH.D., Athletic Director Emeritus, Stanford University and Interim CEO, Stockton Homeless Shelter

MICHAEL MARONEY, M.ED., Water Polo and Swimming Coach & Professor, San Joaquin Delta College

ROBERT OPRANDY, ED.D., Professor Emeritus, University of the Pacific

LOUIS PONICK, M.B.A., Director of Donor Relations, Community Foundation of San Joaquin

WAQAR RIZVI, M.B.A., Department Information Systems Manager, San Joaquin County

PETE SCHROEDER, ED.D., Associate Professor of Sport Management, University of the Pacific

TAMMY SHAFF, Director, Community Health, Dignity Health, St. Joseph’s Medical Center

KRISTEN SPRACHER-BIRTWHISTLE, President/CEO, United Way of San Joaquin County

NADEJA MICHELLE STEAGER, Executive Director, Community Health Leadership Council

PATRICIA TIRONE, PT, DPT, ED.D., Founder and Executive Director, Delta Sculling Center

JASON WEINER, M.P.A., Senior Project Coordinator, Reinvent South Stockton Coalition

DOUGLASS WILHOIT, Retired Chief Executive Officer, Greater Stockton Chamber of Commerce

and the development of this Feasibility Study. Donors contributed another \$20,000 toward the DAC vision and writing an initial proposal. The San Joaquin Community Foundation stepped in to serve as fiscal sponsor and established a community fund to house and braid these contributions. United Way of San Joaquin coordinated the City and County funding applications and brought in consultants to conduct extensive research on aquatic centers locally and across the country, and to develop proposals for future funding. This expanded DAC team received very positive feedback from the Delta Conservancy on a concept proposal and has recently submitted a full proposal to access state Prop. 68 funds for pre-planning activities.

C. PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

Aquatic centers across the country offer different sets of programs to meet the needs of their communities, but all need to balance uncompensated “mission services” with revenue-generating activities. It is typical for as much as half of the income of aquatic centers to come through earned income, with the rest coming from a mix of government subsidy, grants, and philanthropic donations.

The DAC’s business plan will incorporate diverse revenue streams to operate robust programs and maintain the facility, but all programs will further its mission by connecting Stockton residents to the Delta. Where possible, the DAC will seek contract opportunities (e.g., with the San Joaquin County Office of Education and local school districts) to support programs for youth, disadvantaged communities, and residents who have been disconnected from Delta waterways.

The following programs and services are being considered by the Delta Aquatic Center team and will likely be offered in some form once the DAC is launched. All are provided at other aquatic centers and, in some cases, by other local organizations and businesses. However, as shown in the Needs Assessment (Section IV) and Market Analysis (Section V) below, there is strong demand in San Joaquin County for new capacity in all of these activities.

- Accessible boat launches and river access
- Rental of kayaks, paddleboards, and other human-powered watercraft
- Storage for privately-owned human-powered watercraft
- Instruction in the use of various kinds of human-powered watercraft for recreational and competitive purposes
- Nature and boating field trips and other experiences, including school field trips and camps
- Teambuilding events
- Practice space for teams and individuals at all levels
- Swimming lessons and diving instruction
- Adaptive boating and swimming classes for youth and adults with differing abilities
- Other health and fitness opportunities (e.g., yoga and tai-chi classes, strength-training, land rowing training)
- Regional, national, and international sporting tournaments, such as regattas, diving competitions, and Special Olympics
- Community and cultural events and festivals
- Renting multi-use space for special events
- Workshops on how to repair and construct boats
- Workforce development through construction jobs; ongoing coaching, maintenance, food service, and administrative jobs; and training and youth internships

D. FACILITIES

To support the range of programs described above and to provide access for more local residents to the Delta waterways, the Delta Aquatic Center will include the creation of new, ADA-accessible facilities, including the following:

- Docks with accessible ramps for human-powered watercraft
- Boat slips for coach/safety launches, and, in time, for dragon boats
- One or more boathouse facilities to house other functions
- Indoor and outdoor space to house paddling and sculling boats of all sizes used by the public, including adaptive boating equipment, and rental space to house privately owned paddling and rowing boats
- A pool for water safety instruction
- A diving tower
- Accessible gym and outdoor area to teach rowing and paddling
- Classroom and other instructional space for general educational and boat repair programming
- Accessible lockers and shower rooms
- A reception area to welcome visitors, students, and regular users;
- Spaces for events, meetings, classes, and indoor-rowing competitions
- Ample onsite parking
- Lighting for after-hour activities and events
- Power for sound and other temporary equipment
- Other amenities may include a café and outdoor spaces to bring in kiosks and food trucks

“We have built an activity center and a community center, not a theme park.”

–MICHAEL KNOPP, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, RIVERSPORT OKC

“Stockton has a lack of places to get into the water during the summer months, especially ones that aren’t dominated by motor boats. There are so many cool places to paddle to on the Delta, but it is hard to find access points to launch. I’m a flat water kayaker who does it for exercise and relaxation, so what I want is a safe, easy place to launch.”

– SHERYL MARKWELL, STOCKTON RESIDENT

IV. Needs Assessment

The Delta Aquatic Center will serve Stockton, California—the most racially diverse city in the United States, according to a January 2020 *U.S. News & World Report* [article](#). While the new 2020 U.S. Census put Stockton’s population at more than 320,000 people, and more than 789,000 people live in San Joaquin County, there are few other boathouses accessible to the public. None are suitable for high-level, competitive training.

The DAC will be located in close proximity to a large segment of Stockton’s most disadvantaged communities. It will also be within easy access from Downtown Stockton and the Port of Stockton, which are both high-job-concentration areas in the County. When opened, the Delta Aquatic Center will immediately address several important community needs.

Access for All to the Delta

One central community need is to make the Delta more accessible for all residents and visitors. Access to the Delta has generally been limited to those with private ownership of land on its waterways and/or

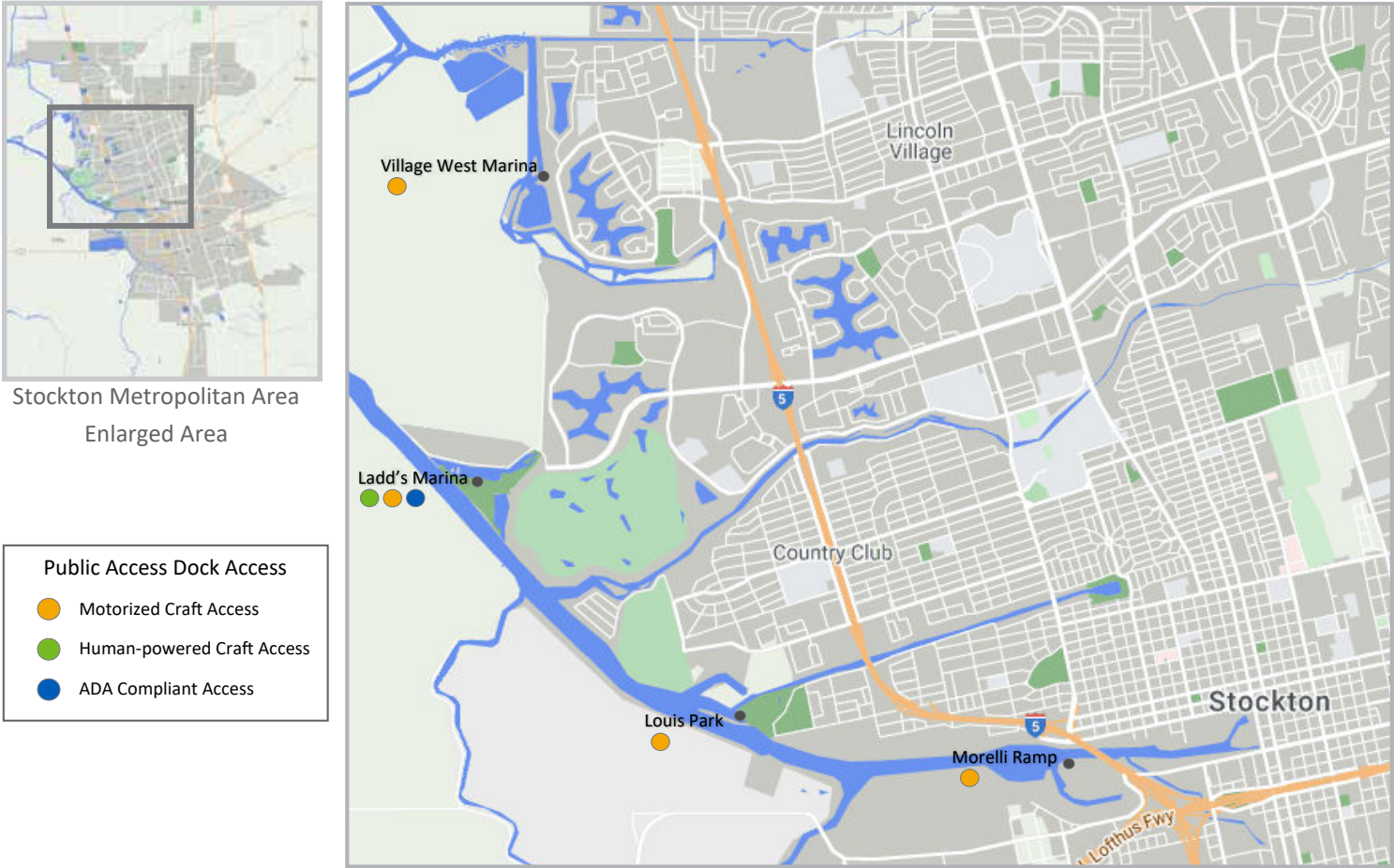
to individuals with motorized watercraft and economic resources. This was one of the main topics raised by community residents at the initial outreach meetings convened to discuss a local aquatic center, and focus group data indicates that there is inequitable access to the Delta.

In the area surrounding the potential sites for the DAC – an urban area directly outside of Downtown Stockton that is a natural gateway to the Delta waterways – there are no ADA-accessible docks available for human-powered craft. Ladd’s Marina, about four miles upriver from the potential DAC sites, is the only ADA-accessible dock along Stockton’s Delta. The small dock, adjacent to docks frequented by those with motor boats and ski jets, is a relatively dangerous and loud place to carry out

the types of programs and uses envisioned at the Delta Aquatic Center. It is also located in a relatively much more affluent segment of the city.

Currently, active Delta participants are older, more affluent, and predominantly Caucasian, whereas underserved community members tend to be younger, less affluent, and racially diverse community members ([Economic Sustainability Plan Chapter Update, 2020](#)). Underserved community members provided the following reasons as barriers to accessing the Delta: safety concerns and reluctance to explore unfamiliar areas, lack of facilities and affordable options for families, and the perception that marinas mostly cater to Caucasians ([ESP Update, 2020](#)).

Boat Launch Access, City of Stockton



“The city needs a safer and longer dock for boat launches and a facility that can bring together all person-powered water sport enthusiasts. Being downtown would attract more diverse participants truly representative of Stockton’s colorful culture and population.”

– BOB OPRANDY,
DELTA SCULLING CENTER COACH

Health and Wellness

The [2022 San Joaquin Community Health Needs Assessment](#) and the [2023-25 San Joaquin Community Health Improvement Plan](#) identified Mental/Behavioral Health and Chronic Disease/HEAL (healthy eating, and active living) as the priority health needs for all of the public and private health systems in San Joaquin County. The COVID-19 pandemic has significantly increased mental health conditions including depression and anxiety ([Vahratian et al. 2021](#)).

According to the CHNA, physical inactivity was higher for youth and adults in San Joaquin County as compared to the rest of California; Black, Latino, and Pacific Islander youth had lower rates of physical activity and higher rates of obesity as compared to White Stockton youth. One contributor to this disparity is the lack of recreational facilities. To improve health overall and reduce health disparities, it is critical to examine the social determinants of health ([Braveman et al., 2011](#)). For example, disparities in social determinants of health exist when there are inequities in accessing recreational opportunities ([CDC; Healthy People 2030](#)). The Stockton community needs additional opportunities to improve their mental and physical health.

Youth Programs

Stockton – and the South Stockton and Downtown areas in particular – are in great need of additional out-of-school youth activity programs. The City of Stockton has more than 100,000 youth under age 20 ([Advantage Stockton](#)). Meanwhile, less than 11 percent of Stockton Unified School District 5th graders met all fitness standards ([Kidsdata.org](#)). The City of Stockton’s Community Services Department is continually seeking new community partners to provide afterschool and athletic activities for youth. Schools in the region, such as ABLE Charter, have also communicated that they are eager for more partners to host youth educational programs as well, including nature trips, outdoor experiences, and swimming lessons in a community with few accessible pools.

“I was assaulted when I was a child. . . I grew up in fear. . . I began to have terrible mental health issues. To the point that I tried committing suicide when I was 13. Until I met my school friends. Without them knowing, they helped me find the safety I needed. They introduced me to rowing. As soon as I entered that boathouse, saw your smile, I felt God’s love and embrace. Rowing has brought me that very needed peace and strength.”

– HIGH SCHOOL FEMALE PARTICIPANT IN A DELTA SCULLING CENTER YOUTH PROGRAM

Meeting Public Goals

The Delta Aquatic Center has already attracted support from multiple levels of government because it offers opportunities to simultaneously address several key public goals, as stated in planning documents:

- Both the [City](#) and [County](#) have set economic development goals to support the development of water recreation and water access facilities.
- The [City](#) is also committed to exploring the creation of a special services district (SSD) or an entertainment overlay district around Stockton's Waterfront, focused on infrastructure development, art installation, and entertainment/events.
- The City of Stockton [Waterfront Connections Plan's](#) purpose is to preserve the opportunity to provide public access to the waterfront.
- The [Downtown Stockton Opportunity Zone](#) plan envisions water recreation as a key component of redeveloping the area into a mixed-use neighborhood.
- The [Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Conservancy Act of 2010](#), the governing statute for the Delta Conservancy, supports efforts to advance both environmental protection and the economic well-being of Delta residents in a complementary manner, including promoting increased opportunities for tourism and recreation as well as promoting environmental education.
- The [Delta Conservancy's Strategic Plan](#) Goal 2 is "Support economically and ecologically sustainable working lands in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta and Suisun Marsh," Goal 3 is "Support and

enhance communities and economies in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta and Suisun Marsh," and Goal 4 is "Enrich understanding of the ecological, cultural, and historical value of the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta and Suisun Marsh; the importance of resilience, diversity, and inclusivity; and the need for stewardship."

- The [Delta Plan's](#) recommendations outlined in Chapter Five include "Protect and Enhance the Unique Cultural, Recreational, Natural Resource, and Agricultural Values of the California Delta as an Evolving Place." The Delta Aquatic Center aligns with the overall intent of Chapter Five to increase recreation and tourism in the Delta – particularly "enhancing opportunities for nature-based recreation and boating, especially non-motorized boating."
- The [Economic Sustainability Plan for the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta](#) (2012) and the 2020 Updated Chapter support investment in recreation and tourism and recommend focusing on areas that will have a high impact such as marinas, boating, legacy-related recreation, and tourism businesses including improving local boating and water access facilities. Both reports provide economic data that demonstrate the importance of recreation and tourism to the Delta economy and the potential to increase economic development for the Delta region.
- The DAC project aligns with many of the findings stated in California's [Proposition 68](#), including providing greater access to recreational areas that will result in health and wellness benefits, protecting the Delta as a natural resource, and driving economic development.

"My daughter was not just learning to scull—she was also part of a very supportive community... a community of inclusion, equity, and compassion for one another. As a parent, I couldn't have been prouder of these girls and this opportunity."

- PARENT OF HIGH SCHOOL PARTICIPANT IN A DELTA SCULLING CENTER PROGRAM

Economic Opportunity

The City of Stockton is an 80-minute drive across the Altamont Pass from the wealthy and job-rich Silicon Valley. Nevertheless, Stockton experiences the 18th highest level of child poverty in the nation, while 25% of all residents live below the poverty line. Census Tracts 1, 3, and 7, which are adjacent to the prospective sites for the DAC, are places where at 38 to 59 percent of residents live below the federal poverty level (compared to 15 percent countywide), unemployment rates range between 39 and 51 percent, and homeownership rates go as low as 2 percent (CT 1).

Stockton needs to develop additional economic opportunities for residents, including increasing the economic diversification of the city's economy. According to the U.S. Census, the median household income in Stockton is \$58,393, and there are significant racial and ethnic disparities when comparing the populations living in poverty: White (17 percent), Hispanic (29 percent), and Black (50 percent). A primary goal of San Joaquin County government is to diversify the base of the local economy, because the greater the number of industries, the more resilient the local economy will be in the face of a major disruption ([SJC CEDS, 2019](#)).

Protecting the Delta

The local community and all levels of government are committed to ensuring the Delta is protected as a natural water source for human health and the environment ([Delta Plan, Chapter 6](#)). The Delta is a vital water source for local communities and for much of the 39 million people who live in California ([Delta Plan, Chapter 3](#)). Two-thirds of the state's population depend on water from the Delta watershed for a portion of their water supply ([Delta Plan, Chapter 1](#)). Climate change will greatly affect water quality and water supply in the Delta and impact the Delta ecosystem. It is essential for everyone in the region to understand the importance of protecting the Delta.

"Community improvement starts with positive youth programs. We have some great youth programs here, but they are mostly geared towards just a couple of sports. If we could build an aquatic program that is as large as local soccer programs, a lot more families will have the chance to be active and out on the water. The Delta Aquatic Center will be a game changer."

-- MICHAEL MARONEY, PROFESSOR AND HEAD MEN'S WATER POLO & MEN'S SWIMMING COACH, SAN JOAQUIN DELTA COLLEGE

V. Market Analysis

It is clear that the Delta Aquatic Center could serve many important needs in the region, including goals identified by local residents and by multiple levels of government. However, any successful and sustainable institution needs to also ensure that it is sited, designed, and resourced in such a way to serve a large enough set of customers to have a significant impact on its mission and generate sufficient revenue. It also needs to understand those market segments and how it can attract their attention.

Following is some basic information about the size of the market that is likely to be served by the Delta Aquatic Center, and what populations the DAC is likely to target

for programs and marketing (while striving to remain open and accessible to all). The DAC’s Business Plan will go into more detail about all of these categories.

A. SERVICE AREA & MARKET SIZE

Primary, secondary, tertiary market ranges

Primary market range – within a 15-minute drive
This area includes nearly all of Stockton, French Camp, nearby County areas like Holt, and parts of Lathrop. According to the [NASA Sedac Population Estimator Service](#), 422,687 people live within a 12-kilometer radius of the likely DAC sites. As discussed above, this region is both extremely diverse and very underserved by rowing and boating programs. While there are a number of

boat access points along the rivers (with varying degrees of accessibility), the only comparable current programs are offered by the Delta Sculling Center, one of the primary partners in the Delta Aquatic Center, and the Stockton Rowing Club, which are both limited to rowing opportunities.

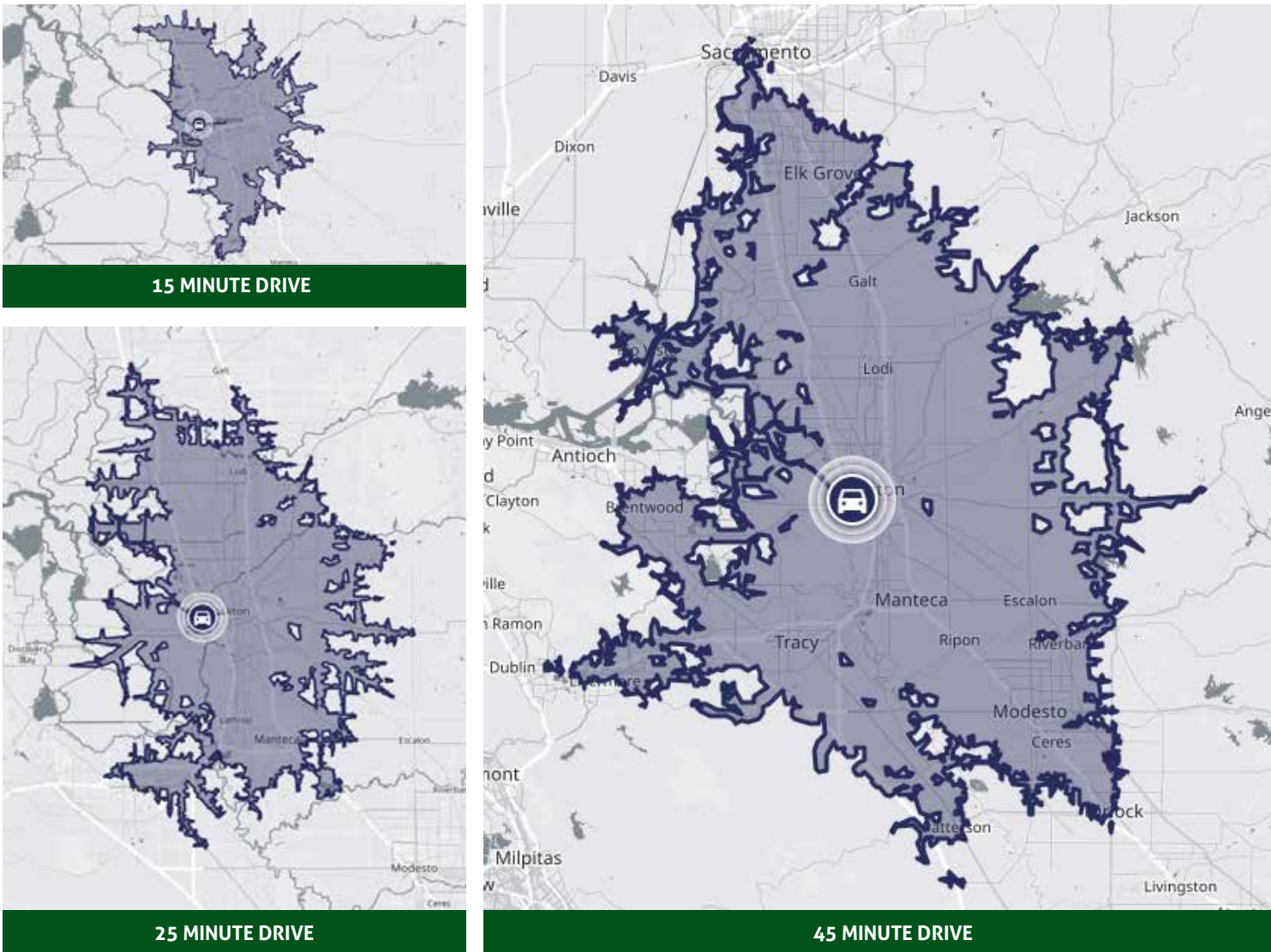
Secondary market range – within a 25-minute drive
Manteca, Ripon, and parts of Tracy, Lodi, and Linden. The [NASA Sedac Population Estimator Service](#) shows that 581,733 people live within a 20-kilometer radius of the likely DAC sites. These areas are still within a relatively short drive of the likely DSC sites, and residents there could easily choose to utilize the DAC’s facilities and enroll in programs. Within this area, although Lodi Lake offers boat launch facilities and rentals, it does not provide comparable programming at this time.

Tertiary market range – within a 45-minute drive
Modesto, Elk Grove, Galt, Brentwood, South Sacramento; parts of Livermore, Patterson, Turlock; and other unincorporated San Joaquin, Stanislaus, and Sacramento County communities. The [NASA Sedac Population Estimator Service](#) shows that 1,104,301 people live within a 40-kilometer radius of the likely DAC sites. The Delta Aquatic Center will be a regional attraction and amenity, and it is likely that residents of this wider area will use the DAC for weekend paddling on the Delta, for training, and to store their equipment. Most of this circle is closer to the DAC or roughly equidistant to the closest comparable facility, Sacramento State Aquatic Center on Lake Natoma.

opportunities to local residents who are disadvantaged and would otherwise not have access to water sports. The DAC will use revenue from other programs, find public and private grants, and seek contracts to provide these “mission services” to as many people as possible.

The DAC has identified the following groups as the primary market segments for programs and outreach:

- Local residents who experience poverty and/or are unable to pay for rowing, boating, and swimming access
- Seniors experiencing poverty
- Youth
- Local schools
- The disabled community and others who need adaptive equipment for water sports
- Minority groups underrepresented in rowing, boating, and swimming sports, such as African Americans
- Veterans



Maps: [TravelTime.com](#) mapping service

B. MARKETS FOR MISSION SERVICES

As outlined below in Section IX, the Delta Aquatic Center will provide many important benefits to its community. DAC leadership, including the Community Advisory Board, are committed to serving and uplifting the entire diverse community of the Northern San Joaquin Valley, including providing direct services and

“Man, I love this city. Where else in Inland California can a suburb be kept awake by an oceangoing vessel? Only a unique place. That uniqueness is something to be proud of. A plain, yet a Valley, yet a Delta. An interior region, yet a Pacific Rim city.”
– MICHAEL FITZGERALD, LOCAL JOURNALIST AND COLUMNIST (FROM A COLUMN PUBLISHED IN THE STOCKTON RECORD)

C. MARKETS FOR EARNED REVENUE PROGRAMS

The Needs Assessment above (Section IV), the experiences of local organizations like Delta Sculling Center, the growth of aquatic centers in other regions, and the community response in early discussions about building an aquatic center in Stockton show that there is significant demand for the facilities and services that the DAC can provide. By charging reasonable rates for providing those facilities and services, DAC leadership expects that it can generate sufficient revenue to support construction and operating costs, along with providing “mission services” in the community.

Pending more detailed analysis and planning, following are several key, specific market segments that will be targeted for paid services:

- Current casual paddlers and rowers who care about fitness and water recreation

- People new to paddling and boating who are seeking rentals and instruction
- High-performance and elite water athletes, including Para and masters athletes
- Local human-powered boat owners who need a safe location to store their human-powered equipment
- New rowing programs at local schools, colleges, and universities who need practice space
- Sport federations and other organizations that present water athletic competitions – regional, national, and international
- Parents seeking physical fitness and team sports activities for their children
- Schools, school districts, and the County Office of Education
- Businesses and other organizations seeking teambuilding and physical fitness programs

PROOF OF MARKET OPPORTUNITY – DELTA SCULLING CENTER

One example of the sustainability of the Delta Aquatic Center is to consider the case of one key partner – Delta Sculling Center. DSC began in 2013 as a small organization to help adult civilians and military veterans with and without disabilities to get out on the water in Stockton. It has grown exponentially over the past nine years to meet the needs of a variety of people by promoting both adaptive and non-adaptive sculling. From the same single dock where it started, DSC now serves dozens of local residents weekly.

On average today, 46 adults participate two times a week in the non-adaptive sculling programs. 12 additional adults are in its twice-a-week adaptive program, which includes six military veterans. Twenty-three other military veterans with disabilities have participated in special programs, and 35 disabled veterans have participated in Delta Sculling Center clinics virtually from around the country.

In addition, 68 youth participated in its 2021-2022 after-school programs, 70 youth participated in its free 2021 Sample Sculling lessons, and 43 youth participated in last summer’s camps. Regattas and other competitive events bring out larger numbers of youth and adults. Also, there are over 1,000 middle and high school participants annually in the Erg Ed™ program that DSC administers in local public schools.

Delta Sculling Center participants are representative of the entire Stockton community. Data from the after-school programs demonstrate this diversity: Asian (7 percent), Black (12 percent), Hispanic or Latino (22 percent), Pacific-Islander (1 percent), White (38 percent), unknown (3 percent), and multi-race (16 percent). Delta Sculling Center participants are also diverse in their economic backgrounds, as a third of the youth and over three-fourths of the participants in the adaptive programs do not pay a fee to participate in the sculling programs. The demand for Delta Sculling Center’s programs keeps growing beyond its capacity.

See the DAC Business Plan for more information about the DAC’s plans for services that will appeal to each group.

D. PARTNERSHIPS

Partnerships and collaborations with local and national organizations will be essential to successfully developing both the DAC’s revenue programs and its mission services. Already, many cornerstone institutions in San Joaquin County have come together to support the DAC and help to develop concepts and plans (see those marked as “current partners” below). Others will be approached for business and community partnerships as the Delta Aquatic Center becomes a reality.

Potential local partners:

- San Joaquin Community Foundation*
- United Way of San Joaquin*
- Delta Sculling Center*
- Stockton Sailing Club
- Visit Stockton
- Stockton Sports Foundation
- City of Stockton*
- County of San Joaquin*
- Sacramento – San Joaquin Delta Conservancy
- San Joaquin County Public Health Services
- San Joaquin County Office of Education*
- Stockton Unified School District*
- San Joaquin Delta College*
- University of the Pacific*
- Dignity Health St. Joseph’s Medical Center*
- Kaiser Permanente
- Adventist Health
- Health Plan of San Joaquin
- Health Net

- Community Health Leadership Council*
- Downtown Stockton Alliance
- Housing Authority of San Joaquin County
- Greater Stockton Chamber of Commerce*
- African American Chamber of Commerce of San Joaquin County
- San Joaquin County Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
- WorkNet San Joaquin
- Edge Collaborative
- Rising Sun Center for Opportunity
- Reinvent South Stockton Coalition*
- Rise Stockton
- NAACP
- Little Manila Rising
- Stockton Chinese Benevolent Association
- Public Health Advocates

Potential national/international partners:

- Trust for Public Land*
- California Department of Public Health
- California Department of Education
- U.S. Department of Education
- President’s Council on Sports, Fitness & Nutrition
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
- USRowing
- Special Olympics
- U.S. Olympic Committee
- U.S. Paralympic Committee
- Up2Us Sports
- George Pocock Rowing Foundation
- Swim Strong Foundation

**Current partner*

Again, more information about how the DAC will engage with each potential partner can be found in the DAC Business Plan.

E. COMPETITORS

While there are other docks in the Stockton area—at Lincoln Village West Marina, Lodi Lake, the City of Stockton dock at Buckley Cove, Ladd’s Marina, Stockton Sailing Club, Stockton Yacht Club, Morelli Park, and Louis Park – the Delta Aquatic Center will provide a much more comprehensive suite of facilities, training, and activities than any existing facility. It will also offer the only ADA-accessible docks for human-powered craft on the San Joaquin Delta, other than one at Ladd’s Marina. And, given the current sites being considered (see Section VI), the Delta Aquatic Center will be located much closer and in a more accessible location to Downtown Stockton, Southwest Stockton, Southeast Stockton, French Camp, and Midtown/Magnolia, all communities with large, diverse potential markets that are not currently on the water in large numbers.

In recognition of the substantial space in the market for new facilities and the potential for more exposure to water sports to increase overall interest, the Delta Sculling Center, Stockton Sailing Club, and the Headwaters Boathouse at Lodi Lake have all been generous in sharing their information and experiences with the DAC planning team. Similarly, the Sacramento State Aquatic Center, the only regional competitor of similar size and amenities as the DAC plan (though located over an hour’s drive away) has provided key financial and program information and written a letter of support for the DAC.

F. CHALLENGES

Interviews with local organizations and other aquatic centers around the U.S. reveal that all of them face a number of challenges in reaching and serving their markets, which they have been able to address to differing extents.

One significant challenge, especially in the initial stages of designing, building, and launching a new center, is finding sufficient capital and revenue to construct a facility that is sufficient to support robust program offerings and draw enough revenue to then meet operating needs. As Brian Dulgar, the Director of the Sacramento State Aquatic Center, said, “The day that we built it, I knew it was too small.” Although the current facility on Lake Natoma is as capacious as any in Northern California, the SSAC has had plans for a “Phase 2” of additional building on hold for more than two decades awaiting sufficient funds. Some organizations have chosen to start with small, inexpensive facilities – like using shipping containers to store boats next to a public dock – and slowly building up from there. The Delta Sculling Center used this strategy but has found that their capacity remains very limited compared to their needs.

“Water safety is not just about swimming. It is about teaching boating safety as well, for any kind of boat that people use.”
–BRIAN DULGAR, DIRECTOR, SACRAMENTO STATE AQUATIC CENTER

Safety planning is a critical factor for every center, but especially for those that put small human-powered boats in the same waterways with skyscraper-sized freighters. Since the Delta Aquatic Center will be located adjacent to the enormous Port of Stockton, which attracts four million tons of cargo annually from around the world, it will be included in this group. The Foundry Community Rowing & Sailing Center in Cleveland, located on the congested Cuyahoga River and Lake Erie, has a 64-page safety manual that includes detailed maps of “safe passing zones” and procedures to promote safe, recreational use of the river. The Foundry also convened a Regional Safety Task Force to bring together all of the agencies that utilize

the water around Cleveland. DAC planning will need to include similar components alongside essential personal water safety instruction.

Another important challenge is finding enough skilled, experienced coaches to teach all of the planned programs, teams, and physical fitness classes. This problem can be compounded when attempting to offer multiple specialized disciplines ranging from kayaking to competitive diving. Other centers have become very creative at training their own coaches, starting with cross-training their current staff across different boat types and sports. Sacramento State Aquatic Center, as part of the University, partners with its kinesiology programs and trains student volunteers. The Foundry established a national center for coaching education to attract more coaches to come to Cleveland and possibly stay.

There are many other current and possible challenges to consider. Among the most perplexing will be the effects of climate change on the DAC’s selected site, the Delta,

and the region as a whole. Projections show that flood risk around the Delta is increasing significantly, while at the same time the ongoing drought is having its own effects. Higher temperatures in summer and fall are expected, along with many more unpredictable changes. It will be necessary to build a set of facilities that is as adaptable and resilient as possible.

VI. Site Analysis

While several potential properties have come to their attention, the DAC Community Advisory Board and local leaders are currently evaluating two locations to determine the best site to build the Delta Aquatic Center. Both sites are located on the San Joaquin River and are within San Joaquin County and the City of Stockton. Both offer quick access to Delta waterways, the San Joaquin River, the Stockton Deepwater Shipping Channel, McCloud Lake, Atherton Cove, Smith Canal, and 14-Mile Slough.



Site 1: 601 Carlton Avenue
Site One is located inside the legal Delta. It is located at the end of Carlton Avenue between the Corrections Department Parole Office and Bekins Moving and Storage. The property is 1.89 acres and has 278 feet of water frontage. The owner of this property has indicated that they are willing to consider a long-term lease of the property.



Site 2: 2894 Monte Diablo Avenue
Site Two is located on Klamath Harbor and inside the legal Delta. The property contains 36.82 acres and 1,724 feet of Stockton Deep Water Channel frontage, with a project area of approximately 3 acres. The property contains three metal industrial buildings. Utility services are adequately sized on site. This property is currently for sale.

“The perfect facility would be a place where we can rinse off our kayaks after we paddle – and ourselves too!”

– DEBBY GINN, STOCKTON RESIDENT [NEED PERMISSION TO QUOTE]

VII. Economic Impact

While an economic impact study has not yet been conducted for the proposed Delta Aquatic Center, it is likely to bring significant positive benefits to the City’s, County’s, and regional economies. The economic impact of the DAC for the Stockton/San Joaquin region will depend on many factors – the location, the facilities that are built, the timeline, choices about programs and partnerships, the market for events. But it is clear that existing aquatic centers in other regions have brought enormous direct and indirect benefits to their communities.

For example, the RIVERSPORT OKC facility in Oklahoma City recently completed a [study](#) that showed it has a direct annual impact of \$24-25 million in its region through earned revenue, jobs created, and an extensive list of events that drive tourism. The RIVERSPORT facilities, part of a series of private and public investments along the Oklahoma River and across the core downtown area, also helped to catalyze a revitalization of Downtown Oklahoma City and gave people a vision of an active urban river. Benderson Park in Sarasota, Florida, [contributed](#) \$34.8 million in economic impact in the 2018-19 fiscal year through a mix of local events and services and national competitions. The Greensboro Aquatic Center in North Carolina, a 78,000-square-foot indoor pool and diving facility built in 2011, [calculated](#) that it had made an economic impact of more than \$130 million in its first five years, in part by hosting major national and regional sports competitions. The

Sacramento State Aquatic Center has identified at least 18 local hotel partners that benefit from events held there.

The Delta Aquatic Center will provide greater economic development and diversification for residents, as it will create new jobs and encourage a more robust recreation and tourism economy. Recreation is an important economic driver for the Delta and contributes to the economic vitality of the region ([San Joaquin Co. General Plan 2035, 3.4](#); [ESP Update, 2020](#)). According to estimates, residents and visitors to the Delta generate a total of roughly 12 million visitor days of use annually and a direct economic impact of more than 200 million dollars in spending per year ([ESP Update, 2020](#)). However, this number has remained constant over the last decade. Increasing recreation and tourism opportunities has the potential to lead to further diversification of the Delta economy and increasing economic development ([San Joaquin Co. General Plan 2035, 3.4](#)). Tourism is a way for rural communities to further economic development, and water-based recreation resources have the potential to provide communities with new forms of economic activity to further diversify and grow rural economies ([Mimbs et al., 2020](#)).

Moreover, the ability of the Delta Aquatic Center to draw more regional, national, and even international sporting competitions will also bring significant economic activity into the City and County. While the “Sports Tourism Strategic Plan” published by Visit Stockton in 2021 did not specifically look at water sports competitions, it estimates that by adding 21 new athletic tournaments to its calendar, Stockton could generate more than \$28 million annually in direct visitor spending and more than 51,000 hotel room nights, leading to total tax collections (city, county, and state) of more than \$3.1 million per year.

From 2008 to 2020, economic data indicates a decrease in the number of local marinas, boat builders, and other water-recreation businesses; there has also been a 26 percent decrease in the number of jobs involving tourism and recreation in the Delta region ([ESP Update, 2020](#)).

This reveals that there is not enough capacity to meet the recreational demand, making the goals of the Delta Aquatic Center timely. The Center will specifically support economic development through:

- **Job Creation:** The Delta Aquatic Center will provide economic development opportunities and additional jobs for Stockton residents as there will be a need to build, operate, and provide programs at the center. The Delta Aquatic Center will offer instruction on the use of various kinds of human-powered watercraft for recreational and competitive purposes as well as workshops on water and boat safety, and potentially on how to repair and construct human-powered watercraft. The Center will create a demand for boat sales and repair work.
- **Increasing Tourism:** A five-minute drive from historic downtown Stockton, the Delta Aquatic Center will support Stockton’s downtown development by attracting more visitors to Stockton’s arena, museums, minor league ballpark, hotels, and restaurants. The Delta Aquatic Center will also host competitions and other special events that will bring visitors to Stockton.

VIII. Community Impacts

The vision and mission for the Delta Aquatic Center extend beyond sustainable revenue and economic impact. DAC leaders and supporters are committed to bringing positive change to their community in other ways, including the following:

Increasing Awareness of and Access to the Delta

The Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta is an incredible natural resource and place on our planet, both for its own unique environment and because of its key role in the state’s water supply. The California State Legislature wrote this into state statute in the Delta Protection Act of 1992, stating that “The Legislature finds and declares that the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta is a natural resource of statewide, national, and international significance, containing irreplaceable

Sports Tourism

The Stockton/San Joaquin region has set a goal to become a strong sports tourism destination in Northern California. In 2021, Visit Stockton, a nonprofit organization that is charged with the promotion and marketing of the city of Stockton as a meetings, events, and travel destination, commissioned a “Sports Tourism Strategic Plan and Facility Recommendations.” This report, written by The Huddle Up Group, cites studies to show that the market for regional sporting events is enormous, bringing more than \$15 Billion annually to regions across the country (this total does not include “mega events” like the Super Bowl).

The authors also write:

Stockton offers event rights holders and visiting teams a hospitable and inviting family friendly community that is well situated to host state, regional, and select national level tournaments. The destination is safe, affordable, and geographically well positioned to access via air and ground. Stockton’s location is ideal for regional tournaments as it sits in the center portion of the state and is also within a half day’s drive of three major metropolitan areas (Sacramento, San Jose, San Francisco). Stockton has a good inventory of sports market friendly hotels, several team friendly restaurants, and a select number of attractions in the area. Save for the lack of “anchor” facilities, these factors make Stockton a desirable host site for tournaments and special events. [emphasis added]

resources... the cities, towns, and settlements within the delta are of significant historical, cultural, and economic value and that their continued protection is important to the economic and cultural vitality of the region.” (Public Resources Code sections [29701](#) and [29708](#)).

However, not all Delta users, visitors, or residents know about or recognize the Delta’s value. In a statewide survey in 2012, 78 percent of Californians said they had not heard of or did not know about the Delta ([Probolsky Research 2012](#)). Locally, an earlier survey in 2007 found that nearly half of Stockton residents had only a vague idea—or none at all—that they lived in or near the Delta ([Stockton Record 2012](#)). This problem is likely more pronounced in neighborhoods and communities where few people venture out on the water to experience it themselves – an activity that brings a multitude of benefits.

Greater recreational access to the Delta will provide residents and visitors with the opportunity to relax in an outdoor setting and connect with nature. The Delta Aquatic Center will provide opportunities for communities to come together to heal, bond, and improve their overall quality of life. Recreational opportunities also promote overall youth development by developing decision-making skills, cooperative behaviors, positive relationships, and self-efficacy (Reed et al. 2022; California State Parks, 2005). Recreational facilities also strengthen and maintain a healthy community by bringing diverse residents together and encouraging a cleaner and safer community environment.

The Delta Aquatic Center will provide affordable access to the Delta for all residents and visitors, including community members who lack disposable income and those with disabilities. To reduce barriers for underserved community members, the Delta Aquatic Center will have programs that provide free and sliding fee scales so that individuals with less disposable income can also enjoy the benefits of using the Delta. Partnerships with schools will mean that thousands of local students will get out on the water without paying a fee. The DAC will have

ADA-compliant docks and facilities so that individuals of all abilities can also access the Delta. To serve the most diverse city in the nation ([US News and World Report, 2020](#)), the DAC is exploring programs and competitions for Chinese dragon boats and ways to honor the region’s [long history](#) and [current culture](#) of tule boats, created by indigenous tribes across the Delta and Bay.

Improving Physical and Mental Health and Wellness

By providing recreational opportunities on the Delta and within the new facility, the DAC will offer many opportunities for improving the health and wellness of residents and visitors. According to the San Joaquin County 2022 Community Health Needs Assessment, among the highest priority health needs was “Chronic Disease / Healthy Eating and Active Living (HEAL).” The assessment stated, “Poverty, lack of access to healthy food **and safe places for physical activity**, and easy access to unhealthy foods were frequently mentioned as barriers by key informants and focus group participants” (emphasis added). Evidence-based research demonstrates the importance of physical activity for improving many health outcomes including increased fitness, better cardiovascular function, reduced blood pressure, and reduced levels of obesity (Einenschenk et al, 2019; Gladwell et al., 2013). Doctors are now prescribing time in nature, through the [Park RX movement](#), to improve patients’ health and wellness.

Participating in outdoor activities also provides mental health benefits related to attention and cognition, memory, stress and anxiety, sleep, and emotional stability (Bartman et al. 2019; Buckley et al., 2018; Cooley et al., 2020). Spending time in nature improves cognition, lowers stress, and reduces the risk of psychiatric disorders (APA, 2020). The rhythmic, repetitive nature of the rowing stroke and the need to concentrate on every stroke lends itself to meditation and healing on the water. Studies exploring connections between physical activity and exposure to nature demonstrate that these two factors work synergistically to provide greater positive impacts on physical and mental health than physical activity alone (Jackson et al. 2021; Bartman et al. 2019). By getting out in nature and rowing or

paddling on the Delta with others, individuals gain greater physical health and mental health benefits than working out in a gym alone. The DAC will provide opportunities for residents to increase their time in nature out on the Delta. This will result in positive mental health benefits for both youth and adults.

Programs at the DAC will teach rowing and paddling technique development, rowing machine workouts, strength training, and mind-body practices like yoga. Swimming confidence instruction will also be offered. Participants who sign up for on-going activities at the Center may wish to compete in rowing and paddling competitions, including Special Olympics or para-rowing events for those who require adaptations to equipment to take part in competitions. Programs will be available for individuals of all skill levels and abilities and for both youth and adults.

“It’s that added benefit of being outside and in nature. It’s so beautiful out here, and it’s so calm. It’s a way to get a lot of our youth out here together, to build unity and community.”

– HANNABETH MAGNUSSON, COACH, DELTA SCULLING CENTER

Teaching Water Safety & Swimming

According to the [Swim Strong Foundation](#), drowning is the second largest cause of death for children 14 and under in the United States. Nationally, African American children have the highest rates of death by drowning, three times higher than any other demographic group. And while local rates are not available, [national estimates](#) from USA Swimming Foundation show that 70 percent of African American children and 60 percent of Hispanic children do not know how to swim.

While the City of Stockton and some local high schools have pools, resources for local youth to learn to swim are limited. This is even more acute for swimming and water safety in open water. Through Learn to Swim pool programs and water safety training in and out of boats, the DAC will help to fill that gap locally. Given the opportunity to learn basic water safety, more of the Stockton community will be safe from drowning accidents and more apt to engage in water sports and recreation. Learn to swim programs can also foster a lifelong love of swimming.

“I’ve been teaching adults and children to learn to swim for 20 years, and there is a lack of capacity in this community to do that at scale. A lot of people fall through the cracks.”

–MICHAEL MARONEY, PROFESSOR AND HEAD MEN’S WATER POLO & MEN’S SWIMMING COACH, SAN JOAQUIN DELTA COLLEGE

Offering Positive Youth and Family Experiences

As noted in the Needs Assessment of this study (Section IV), local cities and schools seek many more after-school and athletic activities for youth – more than 100,000 of whom live in the City of Stockton alone. Moreover, families, especially in more disadvantaged communities like South Stockton, are in great need of safe, accessible positive family experiences and activities. The DAC’s diverse programs will offer opportunities for youth activities, sports, and family recreation in an easily accessible location. Community events like seasonal floating festivals will provide further chances for families to have fun together.

“[Rowing] made me more motivated to continue to work harder on my academics and my time management, so that I can come here and do my best both on the water and in the classroom.”

– ABIGAIL MUÑOZ, 16, 2ND-YEAR ROWER AT DELTA SCULLING CENTER

Providing Environmental Education

The DAC will provide environmental educational opportunities for residents and visitors to learn about and directly experience the Delta ecosystem. Research indicates that environmental education has a positive impact on individuals’ environmental knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors (Ardoin et al., 2020; O’Flaherty & Liddy, 2018). Environmental education programs will help students and other individuals develop a greater connection with the environment and better understand current environmental stressors as well as the importance of protecting the Delta, leading to future stewardship behaviors.

The DAC will integrate environmental education about the Delta with recreational and sporting activities. The DAC’s environmental education programs will increase individuals’ environmental knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors by teaching them how to engage with their local ecosystem in sustainable ways. By learning more about the Delta and using non-motorized watercrafts, individuals will be more likely to develop a greater appreciation for the Delta as an important natural resource. Biologist and environmental steward Marie-Odile Noel Goodman helps to coach youth at the Delta Sculling Center and stands ready to co-develop education programs for the public about environmental issues related to the Delta.

DAC leaders have launched early conversations with the County Office of Education about providing environmental education alongside recreational, team-building, and workforce development activities. The DAC will also partner with community-based organizations in the Northern San Joaquin Valley region who are already strong providers of environmental justice education and who welcome a facility that would allow them to do more research and education. CBOs doing work in this area with whom DAC leaders have already begun conversations include Little Manila Rising and Restore the Delta.

Investing in Natural and Park Spaces

Increasing and restoring natural and park spaces will help mitigate the effects of climate change and protect the Delta for future generations, especially when thoughtfully integrated with climate mitigation projects like flood prevention and tree canopies. There has been historic underinvestment in parks, trails, and outdoor infrastructure in disadvantaged areas and many communities throughout California. According to the 2022 Park Score Report from Trust for Public Land, Stockton received the lowest possible ranking for the level of investment in public parks – last out of the 100 largest cities in the country. The Delta Aquatic Center project will offer unique opportunities to restore riverfront property to a more natural state, while also providing a park space for active use with minimal environmental impact.

IX. Project Timeline

Current timelines project that the construction phase will begin in late 2025, once property and capital funds have been secured and the community-driven design process is completed.

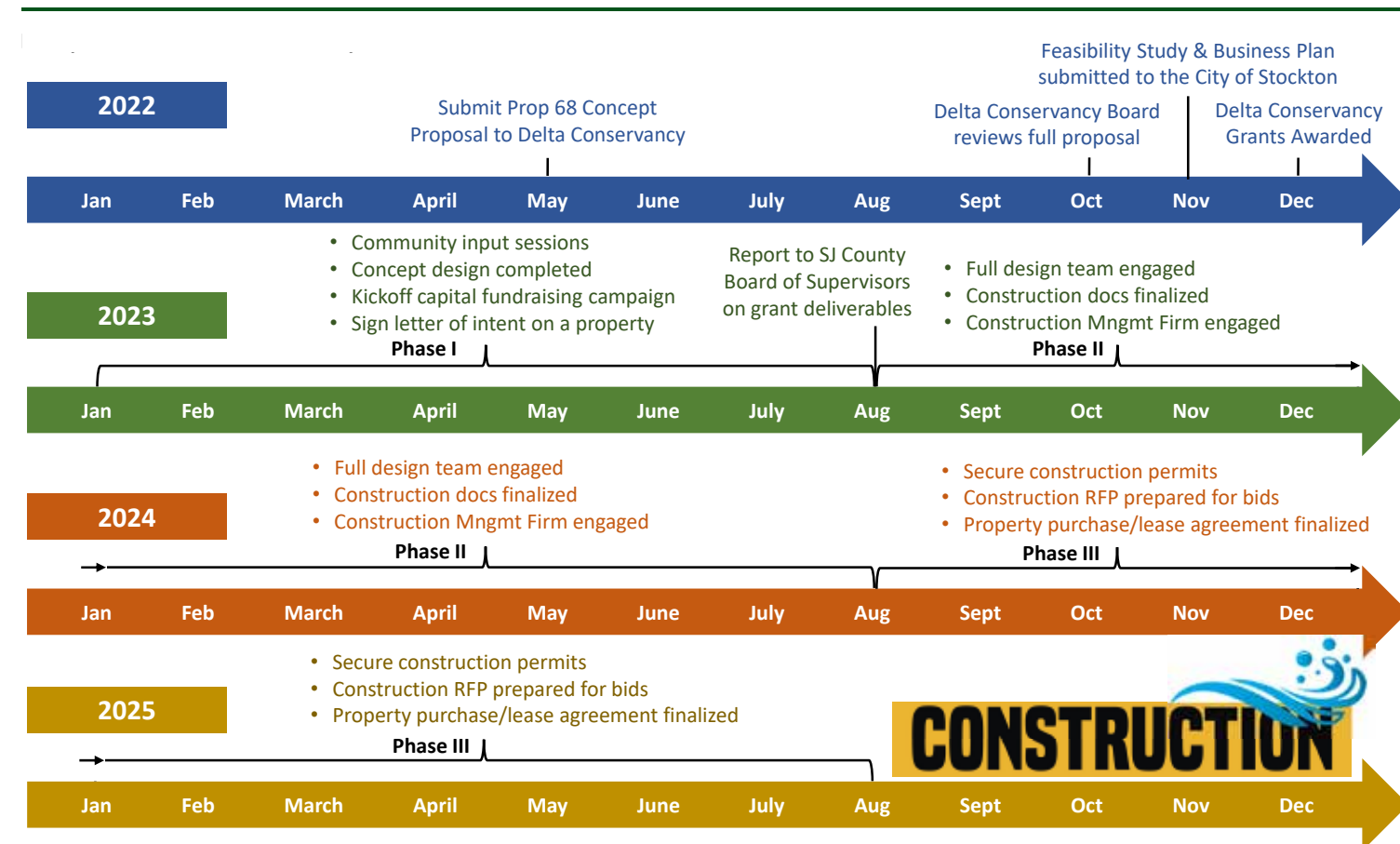
- **Phase I. Programming and Planning (10% completion - \$205,510): Jan 2023 – Aug 2023**
- **Phase II. Master Plan and Engineering (65% completion- \$1,143,000): Sept 2023 – Aug 2024**
- **Phase III. Permitting and Construction RFP (90% completion- \$435,000): Sept 2024 – Aug 2025**
- **Phase IV. Implementation (construction begins): Sept 2025 – Dec 2025**

X. Financial Needs

A. CAPITAL CONSTRUCTION

The Delta Aquatic Center has engaged WMB Architects to provide early land acquisition, permitting, and construction cost estimates as part of the Prop. 68 application process. If the DAC is selected to receive a grant by the Delta Conservancy, one immediate step will be to issue an RFP to hire a firm to manage the site master planning process (square footage and conceptual design).

WMB Architects estimates that pre-construction project expenses will total more than \$2.1 million, including architect and engineer fees, project management, permit fees, and a 10 percent contingency factor.



Construction costs are extremely variable and will depend on internal (site choice, design specifications) and external (material costs, labor costs, financing opportunities) factors. Using a building size of 20,000 square feet on a 3-acre site, WMB Architects has made an early estimate for construction costs of \$14.5 million (Site: \$20/SF; Training & Office Building: \$700/SF; Boathouse: \$500/SF). This does not include land acquisition, project management, or environmental consultants.

If awarded, a Delta Conservancy planning grant is likely to cover many pre-construction planning costs, including site investigation, 90 percent design for the aquatic center and docks, engaging the design team, identifying a construction management firm, and securing the necessary permits. It will not pay for construction of DAC facilities, so that funding must be secured from other sources.

While Stockton does not currently have a dedicated funding source to support building new aquatic, sports, or community amenity venues, the “Stockton Sports

Tourism Strategic Plan” recommends that Visit Stockton and its partners develop one. Should that proposal move forward in the near term, the DAC project would likely be a natural fit.

At this time, DAC leaders do not anticipate this becoming a bond-funded project. However, the foundation is in place for bond discussions should the project require such funding. For example, support for the project has already been established at the City and County level. Partnerships are also in place with local CBOs, healthcare institutions, local schools and universities, and within the philanthropic community. The biggest hurdle to overcome may be garnering the level of public trust and taxpayer support for a bond measure. However, the planning phase of the project involves community design and input, which will further inform potential bond measure discussions should the project move towards that direction.

Example: RIVERSPORT OKC

A comprehensive watersports center that spans three sites in the downtown core of Oklahoma City and was created as part of the \$53 million restoration of a dry river, RIVERSPORT OKC is an important example of how an expansive vision can lead to widespread community support and financial success. The aquatic center was built as part of a larger set of community capital improvement investments in the river area known as Metropolitan Area Projects, or MAPS. The first building on the site, the Chesapeake Boathouse, cost \$3.5 million and has boat bays to store up to 124 rowing shells, a fitness/training room, and an event room.

Other facilities, which include additional boathouses along with lighting and a tower specifically designed to make RIVERSPORT a desirable venue for international rowing competitions, were funded by a mix of private and public contributions. A dedicated sales tax increment approved by city voters in 2009 supported the creation of a whitewater center and artificial rapids. Overall, RIVERSPORT OKC has built a \$125 million set of facilities over 15 years.

B. OPERATING BUDGET

With the opening of the Delta Aquatic Center not likely until at least 2026, the annual operating budget is equally difficult to predict as the total capital cost. The equipment and staffing costs will depend on – and, in turn, will influence - the scope of programs offered and the revenue that they can bring in.

Until DAC leadership selects a model of expected programs and facilities, examples from other aquatic centers can provide some guidelines for expectations about operations costs and revenues:



SACRAMENTO STATE AQUATIC CENTER, SACRAMENTO, CA

(operated by Associated Students of CSU Sacramento, Inc.): The operating budget has ranged from \$2.1 million to \$3.1 million, though both expenditures and revenues were reduced during the early stages of the pandemic. In 2021-22, the SSAC brought in more than \$1 million (nearly 62 percent of its revenue that year) from program charges. The same year, it only took in about \$53,000 in donations, but more than 30 percent (\$525,000) of total revenue came from CSU student fees.



FOREBAY AQUATIC CENTER, CHICO, CA

(operated by Feather River Center): The operating budget for this relatively small facility is about \$300,000. About 60 percent of revenue comes from earned income; 40 percent is found via grants and donations. Three-fourths of income from boat rentals is generated from schools, while 25 percent comes from affiliated clubs.



RIVERSPORT OKC, OKLAHOMA CITY, OK

(operated by RIVERSPORT Foundation): This world-class facility has built an \$8 million annual budget. Program revenue is \$4-5 million annually, and the center receives \$1.5 million from local government each year to support its programs and impact. They raise about 40 percent of their annual budget through grants and donations.



FOUNDRY COMMUNITY ROWING AND SAILING CENTER, CLEVELAND, OHIO:

Their \$1.6 million budget supports seven fulltime staff members and a number of part-time staff. While more than half of their budget depends on donations and contributions, \$800,000 of that amount comes from earned income and state funding. The Foundry has diversified its earned income streams to include a fitness center for adults, parking lot fees, and rentals from an on-site Airbnb apartment.

