



City of El Centro
1275 W. Main Street
El Centro, CA. 92243

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Grand Opening of the El Centro Aquatic Center & State of the City Address

El Centro, CA – October 15, 2019 - The City of El Centro is excited to announce the long awaited opening of the new Aquatic Center located at 540 Park Avenue. The opening ceremony and State of the City Address will be held on **Saturday, October 26, 2019**, at 9:00 a.m. Visitors arriving for the grand opening and ribbon cutting ceremony of the Aquatic Center will receive free admission into the Aquatic Center on opening day.

"I believe our new Aquatic Center will be viewed as the recreational pinnacle of Imperial County for many years to come. This is truly a monumental accomplishment for the City and our residents that will enrich lives and provide a safer and satisfying environment for people to enjoy the water and the activities associated with it," states Councilwoman Cheryl Viegas-Walker. The new Aquatic Center sits on over 3.5 acres of land and will include a children's pool, 2,039 square foot warm-up pool, 1,605 square foot activity pool, 5,353 square foot lazy river and an eight-lane competition pool. Also included on the pool grounds is a 5,107 square foot aquatic building that will include lockers, a snack bar, party/training facility, restrooms and showers area. A 2,045 square foot utility building is also on the property that will house the mechanical, electrical, and plumbing equipment for the Aquatic Center. The hi-tech, modern filtration systems for the pool will provide clean, sanitary water for all swimmers. A parking lot will accommodate approximately 109 vehicles. Street parking is also available.

The City of El Centro's iconic Plunge, the City's only community swimming pool for decades, was demolished in 2010 after the 7.2 magnitude earthquake that struck near the area. Many years of use along with damaged infrastructure from the quake made ongoing repairs to the old facility costly and unreasonable. The idea of developing a new facility is not a recent decision, but one that has been in the works for the City of El Centro for well over a decade.

In 2010, California Governor Jerry Brown working to balance budgets and recover some \$25 billion dollars in deficit chose to freeze all funding and to dissolve RDA's (Redevelopment Agencies) eliminating funding for projects such as this throughout the State of California. Funding cuts made by the State affected El Centro and its plan to improve the quality of life for its residents by providing more recreational opportunities.



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The budget cut by the State not only affected the \$11 million dollars bond for the Aquatic Center but two other bonds totaling \$25 million dollars. In 2015, then Mayor Jason Jackson along with the members of the City Council arrived in Sacramento to negotiate the release of these funds (bonds) held by the State. Their negotiations were successful but only for the \$11 million-dollar bond for the pool. Additional funds were needed to make this new facility a reality and meet the needs of the El Centro residents. The total cost of the Aquatic Center is estimated to be approximately \$16 million dollars. "I'm excited that not only are we finally able to give our residents a much-needed swimming pool but also a state-of-the-art aquatic center that generations of El Centro residents will enjoy for years to come" stated Councilman Jason Jackson.

There are few cities that would launch a Facebook campaign to get input from residents, but it was important to the City of El Centro City Council to know what residents wanted in this new facility. The City's Facebook post received over three hundred responses, which the City took into consideration when reaching the final design process.

The City has developed a cost structure for using the Aquatic Center on a variety of levels from individual day use, family rates, summer passes, annual membership along with rates for private parties and events.

Aside from El Centro residents, the City foresees the Aquatic Center as a focal point for everyone living in and around Imperial County. With the size of the location and the variety of swimming and recreational water activities the center can offer, the Aquatic Center can be used for family fun, competition swimming and training, therapeutic activities, lifeguard training, and other events.

All media outlets are encouraged to attend this important event.

If you have any questions, please contact the Adriana Nava, Community Services Director at (760) 337-4543 or anava@cityofelcentro.org

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