



Henrico County
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NEWSRelease

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Officials from Henrico, NOVA Aquatics, Regency announce plans for aquatics center at mall site

Henrico County, NOVA of Virginia Aquatics and Regency will partner to develop an indoor aquatics center, repurposing space that currently is vacant at the mall while supporting water-safety and healthy lifestyle initiatives for county students and others.

Officials announced plans today during a work session of Henrico's Board of Supervisors at the former Macy's South building, the proposed project site. The indoor aquatics center will feature an eight-lane, 50-meter pool and two three-lane, 25-yard pools, as well as spectator seating, locker rooms, a swim shop and other amenities. Overhead viewing would be accessible from a mezzanine level.

Officials estimate the cost of the project to be about \$18 million, including a mix of private and public funding. Henrico will contribute \$1.75 million over five years. In addition to a cash contribution, Regency will provide the building and will modify it to support the pools and related infrastructure. NOVA will construct and pay for the pools and will cover the facility's operating costs.

Supervisor Patricia S. O'Bannon, whose Tuckahoe District includes Regency mall, applauded the private investment and the "imagination that's breathing new life in this area."

"The future here is exciting because it's being shaped by creative, out-of-the-box thinking," O'Bannon said. "This is another strong public-private partnership that will be transformative for our community."

Mark Slusher, senior vice president of Thalhimer Realty Partners, noted that Regency is well positioned to host the aquatic center. The mall is owned by Thalhimer Realty Partners and The Rebkee Co.

"We are thrilled NOVA chose Regency to be the home of its new initiative," Slusher said. "The retail landscape is ever-changing and Regency is changing with it. Regency's location is ideally



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positioned close to area high schools and major highways, making it the perfect community gathering place.”

O’Bannon said the proposed facility will benefit Henrico’s high school swim teams as well as the county’s sports tourism efforts. She also noted that it will further support the Board’s initiative of making Henrico “drown-proof” by offering another site where students can learn to swim. Last fall, county officials announced plans for the Henrico Aquatics Center on Laburnum Avenue, featuring a program to provide swimming instruction for Henrico County Public Schools students; site work for that center is set to begin in the next few weeks.

Superintendent Dr. Amy Cashwell noted the potential lifelong impacts the swimming initiative and aquatic centers will have for HCPS students.

“We are excited about the opportunities the aquatic centers present for our students from second grade into high school,” Cashwell said. “These projects further strengthen our mission to prepare our students to be life-ready and develop the critical skills that will serve them throughout their lives.”

Ann McGee, executive director of NOVA of Virginia Aquatics, said the new center will expand access to swimming for the area’s young people and others.

“NOVA is extremely excited about the opportunity to build and operate an aquatics center at Regency in partnership with Henrico County, Thalhimer Realty Partners, and the Rebkee Company,” McGee said. “Additional water will result in greater community access to swimming, a lifelong sport that is growing in popularity because of its many health and social benefits. Teaching children to swim is a critical element of NOVA’s mission and we look forward to joining the regional effort to provide lessons to all school-aged children.”

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