

Staff Report

**FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS REGARDING THE FITCH FAMILY INDOOR AQUATIC
CENTER SPECIFICATIONS**

December 19, 2023

BACKGROUND:

Staff presented proposed plans and specifications for the Fitch Family Indoor Aquatic Center for approval on November 28, 2023. At this meeting, the City Council approved the plans and specifications and set the bid due date on January 11, 2024, and the date of hearing on the bids on January 23, 2024. **During the discussion, Council directed staff to research different flooring options for the walking area where the plans currently call for a epoxy resinous coating applied to the concrete. The question was raised as to whether this area should have some type of cushioned surface.**

Additionally, other questions highlighted below were raised about various aspects of the design which also will be discussed in this report.

WALKING AREA FLOORING:

RDG researched multiple products as an alternative to the epoxy resinous flooring currently specified for the walking area. Information regarding potential options was reviewed by staff with the Gerflor Taraflex Sport M Plus being the best option if Council chooses to direct staff to do something other than the epoxy resinous flooring. Information related to these two products follow.

Product: Epoxy Resinous Flooring

Cost:

- Approximately \$11.20/sf installed (per Story Construction estimate)

Thickness:

- Basically 0 mm or 0 inches

Pros:

- Easy to maintain
- Slip resistant in wet and dry conditions
- Negligible height transition from lobby concrete
- Lifespan of 10 years
- Transition to multipurpose room will meet ADA requirements
- Easiest surface to transition if space is changed to another purpose
- Unlimited color options
- Designed for multi-use applications
- Least expensive to repair

Cons:

- No cushion to material
- Transition needed into multipurpose rooms

Product: Gerflor Taraflex Sport M Plus

Cost:

- Approximately \$13/sf installed (per manufacturer)

Thickness:

- 7.5 mm or .27 inches

Pros:

- Easy to maintain
- Slip resistant in wet and dry conditions
- More cushion than epoxy resinous flooring
- 15-year no moisture failure and anti-mold warranty for Gerflor Dry-Tex System
- Inhibits growth of bacteria
- Transition from lobby area to Taraflex will meet ADA requirements
- Designed for multi-use applications
- Lifespan of 20 years
- No transition needed to multipurpose room

Cons:

- Height transition needed from lobby area to walking area
- Potential seam separation over time
- May be more costly to repair than epoxy resinous flooring
- Minimal color options

Taraflex has twice the lifespan and offers more cushion than the epoxy resinous flooring. It also requires a transition edge from the lobby area and costs slightly more than the epoxy resinous product. Staff is concerned with the cost estimate of the Taraflex since it is the same product recently installed in the Community Center Aerobics Room and the flooring cost for that project was \$25/sf. Based on this information, Staff recommends bidding the Taraflex as Add Alternate #4. After reviewing all bids in January consider the available funding, staff will make a final recommendation at that time.

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS:

Council asked various questions related to the various aspects of the plans and specifications. The questions and responses are explained below.

Rails on Roof for Future Solar Panels

The question was asked if support rails for solar panels should be installed now even though a solar array won't be installed until later. **RDG and KCL Engineering understand the desire to prep the building for future solar array as well as protect the integrity of the roof membrane, however, they do not recommend this approach.** Multiple factors go into laying out a solar array regarding location, orientation, and arrangement. KCL does not perform this design, but performance specifies it, as each manufacturer/vendor has unique components and methodology. Staff has been told that if rails were to be installed, there's no guarantee they'd be in the correct locations or that the layout would

optimize the potential of the array. **They are recommending a ballasted system for the existing roof to keep the roof membrane intact for installation after construction is complete.**

Natatorium Acoustics

Since there is a lot of concrete and glass in the natatorium, it was asked if an acoustical engineer reviewed the natatorium space. RDG did not have an engineer review the space. RDG has indicated that by nature these spaces are very active spaces, much different than a conference room or most every other space in the facility. **They believe the dovetail acoustical ceiling deck is very good at absorbing much of the noise within spaces like these. It would be one thing if the City were holding numerous swim meets within the space that would potentially require a higher level of acoustical control, but with the recreation activities and lap swimming being planned, RDG feels the space will operate well. This space is designed to the same specifications as other natatoriums RDG has designed, and the owners of those facilities have not added acoustical dampening materials post construction.**

Accessible Parking Spots

The plans call for concrete to be installed where the accessible parking spots are to be located. Permeable pavers are installed in the adjacent row to the north of the accessible parking spots. A comment was made regarding the pavers in the west City Hall parking lot being snow and ice free sooner than the non-paver area. A question was then asked as to whether the pavers could be moved to the south and would this be better for individuals with mobility issues.

RDG Planning & Design indicates the pavers in the row north of the accessible parking spaces are a component of the stormwater management plan for the site. RDG does not recommend moving the pavers as that would trigger a redesign of the stormwater management plan in that area. Another option would be to just replace the concrete in the accessible parking spots with pavers. This could be done at an estimated cost of \$22,388.

RDG and Story Construction do not recommend putting pavers in this area as the pavers will settle over time, require more maintenance, and safety concerns (i.e. trip hazards) may develop over time. RDG could also not find any data to support pavers being snow and ice free quicker than asphalt or concrete.

CAT GRANT FUNDING:

As stated at the November 28, 2023 City Council meeting, staff collaborated with the Ames Chamber of Commerce to submit an application which was due November 15. Dylan Kline, Ames Chamber, along with Keith Abraham, Parks and Recreation Director, presented to the CAT Committee on December 7. The Committee approved a \$500,000 grant to the City of Ames to be used for the construction of the aquatic center.

OPTIONS:

Option 1

City Council can direct staff to include in the bid documents the Taraflex flooring in the walking area as Bid Alternate #4 and not change the plans and specifications for any of the other items listed above.

Option 2

City Council can direct staff to include in the bid documents the Taraflex flooring in the walking area as Bid Alternate #4 and change the plans and specifications for any, or all, of the other items listed above.

Option 3

City Council can decide not to make any changes to the original specifications recommended by the design consulting team, including remaining with the epoxy resinous flooring in the walking area.

STAFF COMMENTS:

The design team (RDG, Subconsultants, and Story Construction), along with City staff, has spent months discussing, debating, and developing plans and specifications for the FFIAC. City Council provided staff direction on its project priorities including quality of materials, energy efficiency, minimizing maintenance, impact on operations, and service levels. Staff and the design team has had these priorities at the forefront throughout this process, while trying to keep the base bid construction cost estimates to \$20.5 million or less. This has not been an easy task and difficult decisions have had to be made over the past year to accomplish these priorities and financial goals. **Therefore, staff is recommending Option #1 be supported by the City Council thereby directing staff to include in the bid documents the Taraflex flooring in the walking area as Bid Alternate #4, and not change the plans and specifications for any of the other items listed above.**