

# A Proposal for a Healthy Alternative for Year-Round Swimming in Gainesville: Eco-Friendly Pool Heating and Sanitation for H. Spurgeon Cherry (Westside) and Andrew R. Mickle (Northeast) Pools

*The Makos Swim Team has over 60 year-round swimmers who swim currently under the auspices of North Central Florida YMCA. We are in the process of forming our own 501c3 non-profit organization to provide quality swim opportunities to swimmers of all ages and abilities in our community. Part of our team's mission statement is to promote eco-friendly pool heating and sanitation systems. We are proposing, as a citizen initiative, to raise funds to purchase and install the most efficient and effective equipment necessary to heat the City's Westside and Northeast pools in exchange for free or low-cost usage of said pools.*

## **What are the benefits to the City?**

- No capital outlay for ecologically-responsible pool heating systems. Solar and/or geo-thermal heat will result in low annual heating costs.
- A year-round heated pool will promote fitness and combat obesity, enable many more public aquatics programs and improve water safety:
  - In addition to being great exercise, competitive swimming programs teach kids goal-setting techniques, team camaraderie, self-confidence and respect for authority, making them productive citizens throughout their lives. The challenge of competition strengthens their minds and the regular routine of practice instills healthy, life long habits.
  - Local diving, synchronized swimming, and rehabilitation programs will have access to more heated pool space.
  - In Florida, drowning is, by far, the leading cause of death in children 1-4 years old. Learn-to-swim programs enable more kids to be safe around water.
- Progressive eco-friendly systems for heating and sanitizing year round pools will continue to improve Gainesville's reputation as a Green City.
- The swim team will host 2 or more meets per year which will bring hundreds of out-of-town families to Gainesville for 3 days each, resulting in considerable revenue to area businesses.
- Difference in tiered rates for City residents/non-city residents can be used as a scholarship fund to provide free swim opportunities for children in need of financial assistance.
- No interference with current city pool functions:
  - The team will use the pool during times of low public usage or before and after public hours.
  - The swim team will require all competitive swimmers to belong to USA Swimming which provides general liability insurance for swimmers and coaches.

## **Phases**

- Phase I -- Heat Westside Pool in order to start year-round swim programs. Start fall and spring Novice/Pre-competitive programs at the Northeast pool.
- Phase II -- Heat Northeast pool and expand year-round programs
- Phase III -- Implement low/no chlorine sanitation systems in both pools.
  - Low/no chlorine sanitation systems have been shown to reduce health risks and increase user satisfaction by 75%. Disney water parks use such systems.