



## **New pools cool off east-side center**

Lease Crutcher Lewis past halfway point of project to create a sustainable, long-lasting aquatic facility

Posted: Monday, June 23, 2008  
BY NATHALIE WEINSTEIN

The temperature is finally rising in Portland, along with a new aquatic center for the East Portland Community Center, located at 740 S.E. 106th Ave.

General contractor Lease Crutcher Lewis is 60 percent complete with the \$12 million Portland Parks & Recreation project. The center, which was built in 1998, had always planned on having a pool. But at the time, there wasn't enough funding.

"The city is attempting to fund investment on the east side now," said Richard R. Bosch, an architect and project manager with PPR. "It's underfunded, there's no public art, but it's a very active neighborhood. We received \$6.6 million for the project as part of the 2002 parks levy and another \$5.3 million from city council in 2006."

And at 25,000 square feet, the pool complex will be 25 percent larger than the aquatic center at Mt. Scott Community Center, making it the biggest pool in the parks system. Open year round, it is expected to take some of the pressure off of Mt. Scott, located three miles away.

Architect SERA Architects designed the all-indoor center, which will feature two pools – an old-fashioned lap pool and a leisure pool, complete with a twisting water slide and other interactive water features.

"At the center, the water forms a whirlpool," said Bosch. "It will be this big eddy getting sucked into the center, but luckily there's no drain."

The leisure pool also has a zero-depth area for small children and a therapeutic spa for people with disabilities. Outside of the pool area is space for family changing rooms, birthday party rooms with kitchenettes, a lifeguard station and staff offices.

One of PPR's goals for the center is for it to be Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design platinum certified. The main pool area has large windows on the north and south sides to let in more daylight, and photovoltaic panels on the center's roof will provide 15 percent of the entire community center's energy.

A pool filtration system called The Defender is the touchstone of the center's sustainability plan, saving up to 1.5 million gallons of water per year.

"Pool filters get clogged with debris and have to be backwashed with a strong jet of water to clear and send the debris down the sewer," said Bosch. "This happens anywhere from once a week to several times a day. The new system will only have to drain one-tenth as often and it removes debris without water blasting."

The pool's sanitizing system uses ultraviolet rays to clean the water, reducing the amount of chlorine used. When faced with constructing the center, Lease Crutcher Lewis project manager Tony Church decided to wait on installing the pool until after the main structure was erected.

"The pool was very close to the exterior wall, which could have potentially undermined the pool when we dug exterior footings for the structure," said Church. "Building the structure first also gives longevity and protection to the project. We were very concerned about keeping the ground dry and the property de-watered."

A waterlogged site can mean disaster for a pool project, as Bosch learned when a pool at the Southwest Community Center lifted 4 to 6 feet off its base a few years ago.

"Concrete pools are like boats," Bosch said. "If the ground beneath them gets too saturated, the pool will rise up and have to be demolished."

Another issue LCL faced was how to increase the longevity of a structure that is constantly filled with moisture. LCL is currently sandblasting the structure's roof deck and hoists to prepare them for a high-performance coating system called Tnemec, which keeps corrosive chemicals in the pool from affecting the structure.

"Parks and SERA have done a good job designing a long-lasting and efficient facility," said Church.

Construction on the center will be completed by the end of October.