

DISCUSSION PAPER ON  
"THE PROMOTION OF A SWIMMING POOL"

By  
J. P. Thompson  
Portland Cement Association

In promoting a new swimming pool the first major activity is to develop favorable public sentiment. This can generally best be accomplished through one or more civic organizations such as Chamber of Commerce, American Legion, Kiwanis, Rotary or Lions. Possibly several of these may cooperate. However, as with any project, most of the work must be done by one or two persons or at least the responsibility and active leadership must be in the hands of someone with considerable initiative.

While a community can be made conscious of the need of a swimming pool by the use of only general information, a complete job of selling to obtain definite action requires at least a preliminary plan, estimate and method financing. These are so interrelated that they must be developed together. Local conditions will determine which will carry the most weight and which will be the easiest to establish first.

Possibly the easiest way is to determine the approximate size of pool desired, obtain a rough estimate of cost for such a pool and then see if it can be financed satisfactorily. When a preliminary balance has been obtained between desirable size and funds available, a fairly complete design and estimate should be prepared and a detailed method of financing determined.

At least a reasonable plan should be complete before any idea as to the size or cost is given to the public. It is bad psychology to advance a grandiose scheme and then find that the available funds make it necessary to reduce the scheme very materially. However, to command attention and obtain support, the advance publicity should be based on as pretentious a scheme as may reasonably be expected to be followed.

The importance of proper design and equipment will be discussed in the next portion of the program, but I want to join Mr. Roos in emphasizing the necessity of obtaining qualified personnel in making the preliminary plans as well as in making the final design.

Pools have been financed in several ways and the method selected will depend upon local conditions. During the last few years practically all public pools have been built as work relief projects either through the WPA or the PWA. This has materially reduced the direct cost to the sponsoring body. However, most of the methods used in past years of raising funds for the entire project can still be applied to obtaining the money needed for the sponsor's share.

A properly designed and operated pool is not a drain on the public treasury. By charging reasonable fees, the pool may be made not only self supporting but also self-liquidating. When considering the original financing, it must be decided how much of the expense of operation and of initial cost is to be obtained from the income of the pool.

Many public bodies consider a swimming pool as a health and recreation service to the community the same as public parks, playgrounds, etc., and expect the pool to pay only its operating costs and sometimes only part of these. In other cases the public's financial condition is such that the returns from the pool must also retire the initial investment. These different conditions will be reflected both in the schedule of admission charges and in the financing.