

FAQ #2 – Generated from Survey #1

Site Questions

Q: Why don't you build this on another vacant site that's unused or undeveloped?

A: We have looked at all potential park sites in Eugene and Bethel Community Park is the only site that meets the criteria of both Eugene Parks and Open Space (POS) and the Y. If the Y were to select a different site that was not on park land, Parks and Open Space would likely not be as involved in the project.

For POS, the park site must be a community or metropolitan park large enough to accommodate the building and all associated parking. The *Parks, Recreation and Open Space Project and Priority Plan* and the Bethel Park Master Plan both include provisions for construction of a community center in Bethel Community Park.

The Y's criteria are that the site be adjacent to a school; within safe walking distance from a residential neighborhood and in an area that's currently underserved for the programs and services they provide. Additionally, Bethel Park has the benefit of providing park facilities for athletic/family activities adjacent to the community center.

Building Questions:

Q: Where will the building go?

A: This decision has not been made yet, but currently there are two proposed locations in Bethel Park – one on the west side of the Park along Legacy St, and the other in the northeast corner of the site, close to Haviture Way.

Q: How big will it be?

A: At its full build-out, it would be approximately 60,000 square feet (sf), which would include about 12,000 sf for a future pool and about 4,000 sf for the Bethel Branch Library. By comparison the nearby Echo Hollow Pool facility is about 20,000 sf.

Q: Do you have detailed plans?

A: No, not yet. The current site plan options are more general in nature – outlining approximate locations, footprints, paths etc. If a larger community center and location are approved, then more detailed plans would be developed with additional opportunities for public input.

Q: How long will it take to build?

A: Construction would not begin until the park planning process and land use permitting processes are completed. The project would most likely be built in phases, with phase one taking about a year. The current concept is that phase one would include the main portion of the community center and much but not all of the parking and landscaping, but not the pool.

Q: How much will it cost to build?

A: Cost for phase one is estimated at \$20 million and will be funded by the Y. Ongoing facility maintenance requirements will also be funded by the Y over the long term.

Q: How long would it take to get the Phase 2 Pool built?

A: Expectations are that a pool would not be built for at least 10 years.

Services Questions

Q: What services will actually be provided?

A: The services offered will be determined by the Y. Services at a Bethel Y would be very similar to what the Y provides at its Hilyard Street facility: family recreation programs, youth programs from neo-natal through teens, adult programs, nutrition, health and well-being programs, disease prevention and control programs, child care and camps. Community meeting space would also be available for local groups.

Q: Are services and programs evenly split among age groups?

A: The Y serves all age and income groups.

Q: Will the new facilities be affordable?

A: According to Y staff, no one is turned away from the Y for an inability to pay. Membership fees range from about \$50 for a single adult to \$90 for a two person family. Drop-in costs range from \$-7, and financial aid is available. Last year the Y provided about \$450,000 worth of financial assistance to their users to offset user fees.

Transportation Questions

Q: How will you deal with additional traffic and keeping our community and kids safe?

A: The safety of neighbors, park users and Y patrons is one of the top concerns for both POS and the Y. No design will be approved that endangers community members. Any design will need to meet all codes and regulations in regards to capacity and safety, and the approval process will include public review. Some of the ways safety might be enhanced is through lighting, marked pedestrian crossings, good visibility, etc.

Q: Where will you put all the parking?

A: The parking would primarily go on the north end of the park adjacent to the ball fields and the new Y building. Please review the two site plan options that show a larger community center (Option 1 and Option 2). These options conceptually show locations of all required additional parking spaces.

Q: Will LTD provide service to the site?

A: LTD does not currently have plans to provide bus service to the site; however they do provide service within six or seven blocks of Bethel Community Park.

Q: Could we build an underground parking garage to preserve green space?

A: Unfortunately, underground parking is extremely expensive to construct and the cost would be prohibitive for this project.

Q: Is consideration being made for bike, walking and transit trips?

A: Yes, final designs would include consideration of bike and pedestrian travel to and within the site. This type of travel, however, is not necessarily accounted for in estimates of future vehicle trips generated by a new community center, and if many people walk or bike, traffic levels may be lower than currently projected. City Code will require provision of bicycle parking areas based upon building square footage and type. In addition Ys around the country experience a relatively high percentage of people who walk, bike or bus to their facilities.

City/Y Relationship Questions

Q: What is the specific nature of the relationship between the Y and the City?

A: The Y has come to the City with a proposal to develop a new Y facility in Bethel Park. While the City neither supports nor opposes the proposal at present, the City has made an initial judgment that the proposal is worthy of consideration for the following reasons:

- 1) The City considers the Bethel area underserved for recreational facilities and programs;
- 2) The adopted Bethel Community Park Master Plan and the Parks, Recreation and Open Space Project and Priority Plan show a community center as a future development here, and
- 3) The City is very unlikely to invest in a new community center for at least a decade.

The City is now facilitating a public involvement process to gather information and feedback from the public to help guide a final decision on whether the proposal should be approved or not.

Q: Will the land stay in City ownership?

A: Yes. If the proposal is approved, the land would remain in City ownership, but a long-term lease agreement for the facility would be negotiated with the Y.

Q: What are the costs/benefits for the City in the short term and the long run?

A: In the short term the City is incurring costs related to administer the public involvement process. Short term benefits of this process include making sure that the proposal is thoroughly vetted and largely supported by the public before City approval is given.

If approved, long term costs of the proposal would include maintenance of areas of the park adjacent to the Y facility, and the overall reduction in open space that would be available for other potential uses in the park. The City may fund or participate in funding the construction of additional parking that would serve both the park and the new Y facility. Long term benefits include expanding recreational service provision that improves the health and welfare of the residents of the Bethel area, which currently is comparatively underserved by recreational facilities and programs.

Q: Will the YMCA help with volunteer efforts for the whole site?

A: To date, this has not been discussed with the Y, but it is an intriguing idea.

Public Safety/Security Questions

Q: Will there be a higher crime rate with the addition of this facility?

A: A higher crime rate is unlikely. Our experience has been that on park sites like this, legitimate and good uses tend to drive out illegitimate and bad uses. As more legitimate participants use a site, there are decreasing opportunities for users to find times and places to do illegitimate activities.

Q: Will there be additional police patrols?

A: Frequency of police patrols is based on many factors including available budgets and staff, severity of issues, competing needs, and many other factors. We are not aware of any plan for increased service to this area. As explained above, our experience is that a new facility like a community center will drive away illegal uses. As always, if a problem is noticed, it should be called into the police who will respond based on the severity of the problem and availability of officers.

Miscellaneous Questions

Q: Will this increase our taxes?

A: Not directly as the project construction and maintenance will be paid for by the Y. As with all development though, overtime community improvements can lead to improved property values, which can in turn lead to higher taxes.

Q: Will there be a lot of noise generated from the new facility (traffic, cars, crowds, etc.?)

A: Some increase in noise is expected from the increased activity on the site and from trips to and from the site. However, as most of the community center activity would be indoors, a significant increase in noise is not expected. Typically it is outdoor activities, such as sports games, that cause the greatest noise.

Q: What are we going to lose?

A: If the proposal is approved, a higher level of daily activity would be expected on the site, and increased traffic to and from the site: more people, bikes and cars. So some loss of quiet, and probably fewer times when visitors would feel they had the park area to themselves. A significant amount of land that is now open grass area will be converted to parking lots, landscaping, and the community center itself. Some planned facilities in the adopted Master Plan would not be able to be developed due to lack of available space – specifically there would not be enough room left over for a dog park. Choices would need to be made about which other planned facilities (e.g., sand volleyball, basketball, tennis courts, water play should be built in the future and which dropped) as there would not be space for all planned facilities.