



Plainfield Charter Township Frequently Asked Questions Proposed Construction of New Community Center

Project Background

In 2019, the Board of Trustees established the Community Center Advisory Committee to develop plans for the construction of a new facility. The majority of the work by the committee was completed prior to the COVID-19 pandemic and before concerns were raised about the proposed construction site at the Northview High School Campus. Due to COVID-19 and the site challenges, the project was paused.

In 2021, staff worked to identify a new site location in partnership with the YMCA that would enable the facility to be constructed at the Belmont location of the YMCA of Greater Grand Rapids, which is more centrally located in the Township. Since then, plans have been moving forward for a new facility. Additional details are below about the work of the committee and current plans for the facility.

1. Why a new Community Center?

As part of the Board of Trustees' current strategic plan, a new Community Center was identified as an opportunity to improve the quality of life in Plainfield Township.

The size and amenities of the existing facility severely limit the Township's ability to serve the community. The space is completely filled by the Northview Senior Citizens program on weekdays, and weekend and evening schedules are often fully booked for other groups to use the facility. Additionally, the size of the current space is not favorable for larger events such as graduation open houses, baby and bridal showers, luncheons and reunions.

2. What/Who is the Community Center Advisory Committee?

The Community Center Advisory Committee was created by the Plainfield Township Board to participate in the review and planning process for a new Community Center. The Committee is comprised of a total of 11 members, of which, five are residents of Plainfield Township, three members of the Board of Trustees, and the other members include the director of Northview Senior Programs, a representative from Northview Public Schools and the Township superintendent.

The Committee spent a significant amount of time visiting other community and senior center facilities in the area. The Committee's work was supported by the architectural and engineering firm Fishbeck, which was retained by the Board of Trustees to complete the conceptual design and schematic design process.

All the committee's meeting agendas and notes are available [here](#).

3. Who will manage and oversee the new Community Center?

The staff at the Belmont location of the YMCA of Greater Grand Rapids will be responsible for managing and operating the facility at no cost to the Township. In return, the YMCA will be able to utilize the space to enhance YMCA programming when it is not in use by the senior program or another Township program and service.

4. What is the estimated cost of the new facility and how will it be funded?

The estimated cost to construct the facility is \$23.5 million. Plainfield Township voters will consider a millage proposal to finance the construction of the building during the Nov. 2 election. The millage proposal would increase property taxes by an estimated 0.9067 mills over the next 20 years, costing the average Township homeowner approximately \$87 per year.

A mill is 1/1,000 of a dollar, or 0.001 cents. If a tax rate (or millage rate) is one mill, a resident is taxed 0.001 cents for every dollar of the taxable value of their property. Currently, the average taxable value of a home in Plainfield Township is approximately \$95,500. A property's taxable value is located on each homeowner's annual property assessment, which can be found [here](#).

Property owners can calculate their own millage rate by dividing their taxable value by 1,000, then multiplying by 0.9067 mills.

For example: $\$95,500/1,000 = 95.5 \times 0.9067 \text{ mills} = \87 per year .

5. What amenities would the new Community Center have?

The 52,000-square-foot multiuse facility would serve as a center for community activity and engagement in the Township. The space would feature an indoor walking track, flexible meeting spaces for a variety of classes, a demonstration kitchen, areas for senior programming, fitness classrooms and a gymnasium.

6. Would there be a membership fee to use the Community Center?

No, the Community Center will not have a membership fee. Programs offered are intended to be available with minimal fees to cover the cost for class instructors or room rentals. Features such

as the indoor walking track would be available to residents at no cost during all times the facility is open. Specific programs offered at the Community Center, such as the Senior Program, set their own programming fees and would still be available to residents and non-residents.

7. Where can I find the conceptual design plan that was presented to the Board of Trustees in May 2019?

The interim report of the Community Center Advisory Committee provided the analysis of the space needs for the new facility. A copy of the report is available [here](#). This information has been used to redevelop the draft floor plan for the new site.

8. Where can I find the draft floor plan for the new Community Center?

The draft floor plan of the new facility is available [here](#) and is based on a [report](#) from of the Community Center Advisory Committee that analyzed the community needs for a new facility.

9. Did the Committee conduct any public feedback/outreach activities?

Yes. A significant amount of effort was put forth by the committee to seek out public feedback regarding the facility. A copy of the public outreach report is available [here](#).

10. What programming is provided at the existing Community Center on Grand River Drive?

The current facility primarily hosts the operation of the Northview Senior Program. The facility is also available to be rented to the public for various activities which have included family reunions, baby showers, receptions and luncheons.

11. How is Northview currently connected to the Community Center and Northview Senior Programming?

Established in the 1980s and updated in 2003, the Township reached an agreement with Northview Public Schools to transfer the building to the Township for the operation of the senior program. The Township maintains and operates the facility and the utility costs are split between the Township and Northview. Costs are also shared to fund the senior program and its staff through fees it assesses for programming. Should the senior program move from this location, the building will revert back to the ownership of Northview, which may use the building for any purpose it deems necessary.

12. How did the YMCA become involved in these discussions?

At the direction of the Board of Trustees, the Township looked for alternative sites that were more centrally located than the originally proposed location at Northview High School. During this process, the YMCA reached out to the Township as a potential partner. The YMCA is centrally

located in the Township and provides the appropriate infrastructure to manage the flow of traffic from the proposed Community Center.

13. Where exactly on the YMCA's property will the new building be located?

The proposed building would be built southwest of the current building. An enclosed walkway would connect the building to the existing YMCA facility. A draft site plan can be found [here](#).

14. How will the Township benefit from a partnership with the YMCA?

Under the current proposal, the Township will enter into a 99-year ground lease agreement with the Belmont location of the YMCA of Greater Grand Rapids to construct the facility. The YMCA will charge the Township \$1 dollar per year. The YMCA will operate and maintain the facility at no cost to the Township and be able to use the facility for its community programming when the facility is not being used by Township, senior citizens, or other planned programming. This partnership will save Plainfield taxpayers hundreds of thousands of dollars each year in operating costs for staff, supplies and routine maintenance.

15. When will the walking track be open?

The walking track will be open at all times during the YMCA's normal business hours.

16. Will there be open-gym times?

Yes, the gym will have regularly scheduled open-gym times that would be determined at a later date.

17. If a new Community Center is built, what will happen to DW Richardson Park?

DW Richardson Park is a Township Park and will not be impacted. The Township will continue to maintain the park and the parking areas will still be available for visitors.

18. Can the new Community Center be built where the existing Community Center is located?

The existing site for the Community Center on Grand River Drive does not have the space that is necessary for the construction of the new building as well as the necessary parking to accommodate visitors to the facility.

19. Will the public be able to rent space at the new Community Center?

Yes. Rates and fees will be determined at a later date.

20. Is the Township buying the land from the YMCA?

No. The YMCA has offered to enter into a long-term lease agreement for the land to be used by the Township for the construction of the facility. This reduces the costs of the project for land acquisition as well as for installation of utilities at the site.

21. When will the facility begin construction?

If a funding source can be secured in early 2021, construction could begin as early as the spring 2023.

22. Is the cost less or more than the original Community Center proposal in 2020?

The cost of the facility has increased due to higher building material prices as a result of the supply shortages created by the COVID-19 pandemic. However, the tax increase being proposed now is less than in 2020 because the YMCA would be operating the facility. Operational expenses will be covered by the YMCA in exchange for the organization being able to use the space when it is not in use for other community programming.

23. What is the question that will be on the November ballot?

On July 26, the Township Board members approved specific ballot language that will be presented to voters on the November ballot that, if approved, will authorize the Township to issue bonds to construct a new Community Center. The ballot language is below:

Shall Plainfield Charter Township, Kent County, Michigan, borrow the principal amount of not to exceed \$23,500,000 and issue its general obligation unlimited tax bonds for all or a portion of that amount in one or more series payable over not to exceed twenty-one (21) years from the date of issues of each series to pay the cost of designing, acquiring, constructing, furnishing, and equipping a new community center building, including site work and other related improvements which will be used by the Township and other community organizations for their programs?

The estimated millage to be levied in the first year of levy is 0.9074 mills (\$0.9074 for each \$1,000 of taxable value) and the estimated simple average annual millage rate required to retire the bonds is 0.9067 (\$0.9067 for each \$1,000 of taxable value).