

August 1, 2013

Bloomington City Council
Normal Town Council

We are very excited to share with you the details of a unique opportunity to satisfy a number of significant needs of families and young people in our community that will enhance both Bloomington and Normal in ways that are immeasurable. As you are all aware, the current YMCA facility, located just south of Downtown Bloomington, is in deplorable condition. The building is beyond practical rehabilitation and the operation of the YMCA is not financially sustainable due to this outdated and outmoded facility. A beautiful new state of the art Community Center will not only fill many unmet recreational needs in our community for young children to senior citizens, but it will also fortify the financial viability of the operation so that it can continue to serve the needs of our community for many years to come. Many of our social agencies that service our communities youth (Boys & Girls Club, Big Brothers Big Sisters, Western Avenue Community Center, etc.) are in need of upgraded facilities and funding these groups have many overlapping programs. In a new facility managed by the YMCA, these groups could share space and combine programs. Boys & Girls Club, Big Brothers Big Sisters, Western Avenue Community Center, etc. would stay at their current locations on the west side of Bloomington but also share space and programming in the new Community Center.

We believe you are also aware of the decision by the Federal Aviation Administration to require that the airport soccer facility cease to operate after 2017. Due to Homeland Security and other safety regulations, the FAA will no longer allow these kinds of recreational activities to take place on properties close to major municipal airports. As a result, the Central Illinois Regional Airport Board of Directors has approved a five year lease extension with the Prairie City Soccer League with the understanding that there will be no extensions beyond the current five year lease period.

Consequently, it is necessary to locate a new soccer facility elsewhere in the community or risk dismantling our extremely popular youth soccer program in the community serving over 3,000 kids today. We have found a location and have developed a design for a new community soccer facility that will not only serve the youth recreational soccer needs of the community but will also allow our community to attract state and regional soccer tournaments that will ultimately have a substantial economic impact on Bloomington- Normal much like Champion Fields has done over the past several years.

The total project cost is \$32,000,000 (Community Center \$16,575,000, Soccer Complex \$14,925,000, upgrades to Boys & Girls Club and Link Center \$500,000). Short-term financing has been arranged with Busey Bank. It is proposed that the loan be retired by a use of ¼% sales tax increase in Bloomington-Normal. This sales tax increase would pay off the debt and have a sunset clause of 8 years. The details regarding this are enclosed in this presentation.

We think it is very important for the City of Bloomington and the Town of Normal to maintain some type of control over the real estate that will be involved in these projects, since they are being paid for with sales tax dollars. The Community Soccer Center will be owned and maintained by the Town of Normal in the same fashion that they operate Champion Fields. The new Community Center will be owned by the City of Bloomington. They would lease the building to the YMCA for a nominal amount, per year. The YMCA would then work out with the other agencies to share space and programs (Boys & Girls Club, Big Brothers Big Sisters, Western Avenue Community Center, etc.) This lease will state that the YMCA will not be able to sublease the property without the permission of the City of Bloomington. If the YMCA should cease to function, the land and building would revert back to the City of Bloomington and could be used as a community center or sold and the proceeds would go to the City of Bloomington. This would be a triple net lease. The building expenses would be paid for by the leasee.

There currently exists a YMCA Foundation which was established to provide for the maintenance of the Bloomington-Normal YMCA facilities and equipment. A new Foundation has successfully obtained pledges of financial support sufficient to maintain the new Community Center. This fund will be in excess of \$3,000,000.

Details of each project are included in this booklet along with specific funding recommendations. We believe that both projects have overwhelming community support and we have included a number of letters of support in this document to demonstrate not only how important these projects are to our community, but also the urgency associated with moving forward with both initiatives as soon as possible.

None of the citizens involved in this proposal have any financial or economic interest in these projects. We are simply community leaders interested in advocating for area youth and bettering the community for years to come.

Best regards,