

Community Center Interest Survey: What We Heard

Thank you to everyone who participated in the Community Center Interest Survey. The survey gathered input from residents about the potential need for a multipurpose community center, the activities and services they would value, and ways they might participate or support the project.

A total of **51 responses** were received, with the large majority coming from residents in the Garden Plain area and surrounding communities.

Strong Interest in a Community Center

The responses indicate substantial community interest in a multipurpose community center.

- **84%** rated the importance of a multipurpose community center a **4 or 5 out of 5**.
- **100%** of respondents said they would be either **very likely or somewhat likely** to use the center if it opened within the next three years.
- **51%** said they could see themselves visiting **weekly**, while others anticipated monthly, seasonal, or event-based use.
- Most respondents were willing to travel **10–30 minutes** to participate in activities or events.

Overall, the results suggest that residents see value in a facility that could serve multiple purposes and multiple age groups.

What Residents Would Like to See

The most frequently selected activities included:

- **Family events – 45 responses**
- **Weddings and private events – 40**
- **Fitness classes – 40**
- **Cultural and community events – 37**
- **Faith-based and pro-life programs – 35**
- **Youth sports – 32**
- **Community meals – 29**
- **Educational workshops – 24**

The responses also emphasized the importance of flexibility. Rather than designing a facility for one particular purpose, many residents expressed interest in spaces that could accommodate recreation, gatherings, youth activities, celebrations, classes, and community events.

Most Desired Facility Features

The most commonly requested features were:

1. **Indoor and outdoor gathering spaces – 48 responses**
2. **A 24-hour fitness center – 43**
3. **A large outdoor patio – 35**
4. **A basketball-court-sized multipurpose space – 33**
5. **A commercial kitchen – 20**

Several written responses also mentioned the importance of adequate parking and bathrooms, ADA accessibility, flexible rooms, an indoor walking or fitness area, and spaces that can serve different age groups.

Youth Programs Are a Major Priority

Youth programming was one of the strongest themes throughout the survey.

The most frequently selected youth needs were:

- **Youth sports – 35 responses**
- **Arts and music programs – 32**
- **Faith-based youth groups – 32**
- **Leadership development – 23**
- **Pro-life youth education – 19**
- **Mentorship programs – 17**
- **After-school tutoring – 17**

When asked which age group should receive the greatest focus, **school-age children (0–17)** were the most frequently selected group.

Written comments also highlighted the desire for safe, affordable places where young people can gather after school, during the summer, on weekends, and for organized activities.

Interest in a 24-Hour Fitness Center

There was particularly strong interest in including fitness facilities.

- **39 respondents said “Yes”** to joining a 24-hour fitness center.
- **12 respondents said “Maybe.”**
- Among those indicating a potential interest in membership, the most common expected monthly price was **\$30–\$50**, followed by **under \$30**.

This suggests that a fitness center could be an important component of a larger multipurpose facility.

Community Participation and Volunteerism

The survey also showed considerable interest in helping operate and support a future center.

- **27 respondents said they would volunteer.**
- **20 said they might volunteer.**
- The most common volunteer opportunities included **hospitality/community meals, youth mentoring, event planning, fundraising, and maintenance or improvement projects.**
- Among those who indicated a frequency, **monthly volunteering** was the most common response.

Time and scheduling were the most frequently identified barriers to volunteering.

Financial Support

There was also meaningful interest in financially supporting the project:

- **21 respondents said they would consider providing financial support.**
- **22 said they might.**
- The most frequently selected forms of support were **event participation and volunteer support**, followed by **one-time donations and monthly donations.**

For businesses and employers, interest in sponsorship opportunities was more mixed, with several respondents indicating that additional information would be needed.

Comments made it clear that potential donors want transparency before making financial commitments. Frequently requested information included project costs, a clear mission and strategic plan, the proposed building and its uses, a timeline, long-term operating costs, and a clear explanation of how donated funds would be used.

Community Priorities and Concerns

Several consistent themes emerged from the written comments.

Flexibility: Residents want a facility that can serve many purposes and age groups rather than being overly specialized.

Affordability: Keeping costs reasonable for families and making programs accessible were recurring concerns.

Youth and families: Many respondents see youth recreation, family gatherings, and community activities as important potential uses.

Long-term sustainability: Respondents expressed interest in understanding how the facility would be staffed, maintained, funded, and operated over the long term.

Location: Where the center would be built was identified as an important consideration, including accessibility to Garden Plain, Goddard, and surrounding communities.

Community support: Several responses emphasized the importance of continued community input and sufficient participation to make the project successful.

Transparency: Clear financial information, project costs, funding requirements, and plans for ongoing operations were repeatedly identified as important.

What We Heard Overall

The survey results demonstrate **strong interest in exploring a multipurpose community center** that brings together recreation, fitness, youth programming, community events, private gatherings, educational opportunities, and spaces for people of different ages.

At the same time, respondents recognize that a project of this size requires careful planning. Cost, location, long-term operations, staffing, community support, and financial sustainability will all be important considerations as the concept develops.

These survey results are intended to help inform the conversation and identify community priorities. They do not represent a final building design, program schedule, funding plan, or commitment to a particular project.

Thank you to everyone who shared their ideas, priorities, concerns, and willingness to participate. Continued community input will be an important part of determining what comes next.