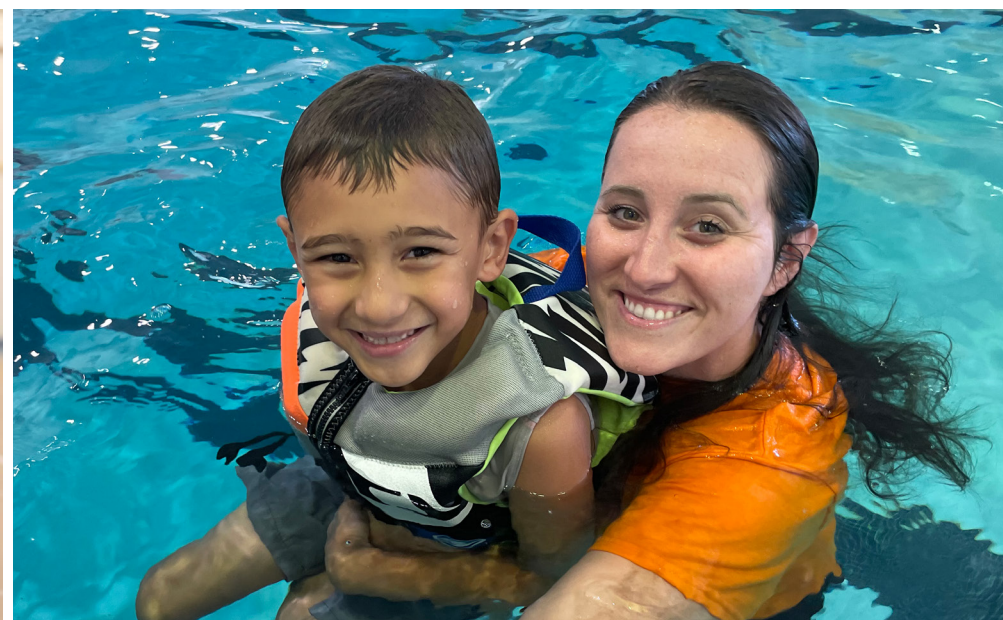




# NEEDS ASSESSMENT AND FEASIBILITY STUDY



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Chris Wingate, Past Milan Recreation Director

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## 1.0 Introduction

In January 2023, after a competitive selection process, a consultant team led by BerryDunn, including Barker, Rinker, Seacat (BRS), was chosen to conduct a Needs Assessment and Feasibility Study (Study) for the Saline Recreation Center (Rec Center). The process of developing the study was driven by feedback received from the City of Saline, Department of Parks and Recreation team members of all levels, community partners, and facility users. The included recommendations can be adapted depending upon available funding and partnership opportunities, while maintaining focus on the elements that Saline stakeholders determined to be critical to the long-term success of the Rec Center.





## 1.1 Purpose of Study

For more than 30 years, the Rec Center has been a valued and heavily-used asset in the community. To safeguard the Rec Center's continued success, this study seeks to conduct a thorough assessment and evaluate ways to maximize the community benefit provided by the facility.

The study aims to position the Rec Center for the next 30 years by:

- Identifying the market area and demographics of the region
- Determining if updates to the Rec Center are desired, feasible, and beneficial to pursue
- Recognizing programs and features that would meet the needs and interests of the community
- Developing conceptual design options based on the needs assessment
- Providing cost estimates for facility improvements

This Study is a crucial tool for the City to make well-informed decisions about investing in the Rec Center. It is intended to ensure resources are allocated effectively, and that the facility meets the needs and expectations of the community it serves.

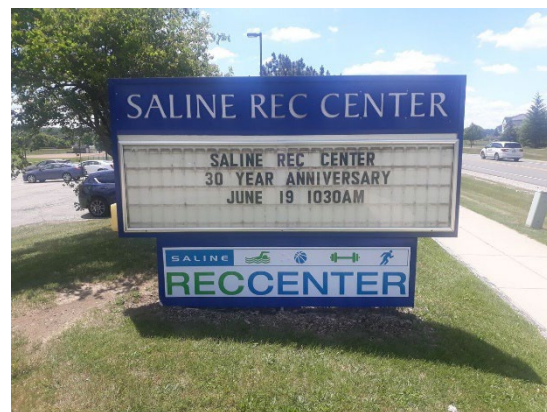
## 1.2 Background and Approach

Opened June 19, 1991, the Rec Center spans 43,000 square feet and serves both residents and nonresidents. It provides a range of amenities, including basketball, volleyball, and racquetball courts, an indoor track, swimming pools, a weight room, and an aerobics studio. The Rec Center also offers fitness classes, sports leagues, recreational programs, and childcare services.

When the facility first opened, the Saline City Council informally set a goal for the Rec Center to strive for self-sustainability or full cost recovery. Although this wasn't an official policy, it has been a practice that staff has aimed to uphold since the center's inception. In FY2001 the Rec Center reached its heights of membership with 3,204 memberships sold. Over its 30 years of operations the facility has maintained an average of 2,381 annual members.

Numbers declined during the Great Recession, but from FY2014 to FY2018, revenue generated through membership fees increased 24%, and the number of members at the Recreation Center increased by 16%. During these years the facility reached 100% cost recovery.

The COVID-19 pandemic had a significant global impact. It led to the temporary closure of the Rec Center for approximately 60% of the year. In FY2020 membership dropped to 1,100. As



nearly 90% of the Rec Center's operating budget relies on user fees, with minimal tax support, efforts to sustain services in 2020 involved implementing cost-saving measures, using reserve funds and securing funding through the CARES (Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security) Act.

Recognizing that the City seeks full cost from Rec Center operations it is vital that the facility is desirable to the largest user base and well maintained. At over 30 years old, the Rec Center is experiencing significant equipment and maintenance issues. In FY2017, the roof was replaced at a cost of \$1.3 million, and in FY2016, \$330,000 was spent on infrastructure improvements, including \$165,000 on the north parking lot and \$134,000 on the natatorium ventilation project. Staff is currently projecting \$900,000 in future capital improvement needs to be completed by FY2029. This includes projects such as resurfacing the pool deck and flooring, resealing the pool, equipment replacement, and parking lot improvements.

In 2022 the City of Saline Council took measures to shore up the Rec Center operations in the near-term, voting unanimously to approve a 6% across the board increase to membership fees beginning in January 2023.

To assess community needs and formulate recommendations for the Rec Center, the following methodologies were used:

**Community Needs Assessment:** Evaluation of current and future recreational needs and community preferences. This involves gathering data on population demographics, recreational interests, and participation levels in existing programs.

**Market and Gap Analysis:** Examination of the local market to determine potential demand for a recreation center, including assessing competition from other recreational facilities and private fitness centers.

**Facility Design and Programming:** Identification of amenities, programs, and services that the Rec Center could provide. Consideration is given to indoor and outdoor spaces, gymnasiums, swimming pools, fitness areas, and multipurpose rooms.

**Community Engagement:** Participation of community members in the planning process through surveys, focus groups, and public meetings to gather input, build support, and address concerns.

## Rec Center Sustainability Task Force (Task Force)

In 2010, former Mayor Driskell commissioned the first Rec Center Sustainability Task Force to assist Rec Center staff in developing policies and strategies to increase membership and stabilize the operation's finances. In 2013, Mayor Marl recommissioned the Task Force. The 2013 Task Force had two goals:

- Improve the financial stability of the Rec Center
- Grow memberships by improving the experience for its membership



In both cases the Task Force was successful in identifying several strategies to strengthen Rec Center operations.

In 2021, the Task Force was again commissioned to develop strategies and initiatives to enhance the vitality of the Rec Center. The 2021 Task Force recommendations centered on:

- Driving memberships to pre-pandemic membership numbers
- Implementing small and inexpensive upgrades
- Pursuing a feasibility study to transform the Recreation Center from a traditional recreation facility into a true community center

This Study engaged Task Force members as subject matter experts. The Task Force met periodically throughout the study to provide input on process, key issues, and the content of the study.



## 1.3 Rec Center Operations

BerryDunn assessed the Rec Center staffing structure, membership and cost recovery to evaluate its effectiveness and efficiency in meeting current and future community needs.

### Recreation Center Benchmarks

Agencies engage in benchmarking to assess their performance compared to industry standards or peers, identify best practices for improvement, and make informed decisions. This practice fosters continuous improvement, informs goal-setting, enhances accountability, and enables organizations to adapt to changing industry dynamics while striving for cost efficiency and quality. Keep in mind that benchmarking data should be considered in context. While it's useful for comparisons, it may not always be the best tool for making decisions.



Most recreation centers built today fall within the size range of 65,000 to 75,000 square feet.

#### Typical Facility Components:

- A pool area with competitive and leisure amenities
- Multipurpose gymnasium space
- Weight/cardiovascular equipment area

Additionally, centers often incorporate group exercise rooms, drop-in childcare services and versatile classroom or community spaces.



### Financial Sustainability:

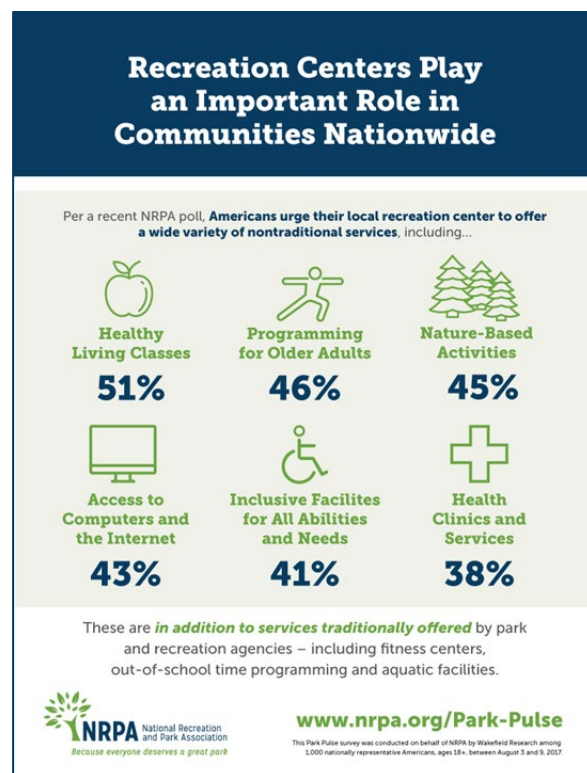
- A service population of at least 50,000 is typically necessary
- A fee structure reflecting market demand is essential
- Annual budgets for centers in the 65,000 to 75,000 square feet range usually range from \$1.7 million to \$2.5 million
- Centers in urban areas with market-driven fee structures aim for 70% to 100% recovery of operating expenses
- Centers in rural areas tend to achieve recovery rates ranging from 50% to 75%
- **Facilities consistently covering all operating expenses with revenues are relatively uncommon**

### Fee Structure:

- Most centers employ a three-tiered fee structure, offering:
  - Daily passes
  - Extended visit passes (usually punch cards).
  - Annual passes
- In urban areas, resident and non-resident fee structures are common. Non-resident rates often range 25% to 50% higher than resident rates, subject to discussion among elected officials

### Operating Hours:

- Most centers operate an average of 105 hours per week
- Weekday hours: Typically 5:00 am to 10:00 pm
- Saturdays: Generally 8:00 am to 6:00 pm
- Sundays: Typically 8:00 am to 6:00 pm, with a trend toward earlier Sunday opening times
- Summer months may have shorter operating hours



## Internal Engagement

Staff perspectives are extremely important; BerryDunn’s approach intentionally involves staff throughout the entire process, as they will have responsibility for implementing the recommendations. Through this effort, Rec Center staff were given the opportunity to provide their input regarding the direction and priorities for the Rec Center, insights on the organizational structure, and potential partnership opportunities. In January 2023 BerryDunn conducted an initial information gathering focus group session with Rec Center staff. The prioritized short-term improvements and long-term vision are provided in Table 1.

Table 1: Internal Engagement Findings

<b>Short-term Improvements</b>
Electronic waivers and online forms
Expand RecPro software capabilities
Membership key fobs, scan cards
Sound dampening in pool, aerobics, racquetball, free weights, etc.
Improved lighting
More efficient heating and cooling
Pool deck and surface repairs
<b>Long-term Vision</b>
Updated pool with family play features
Updated locker rooms - gender neutral
Elevated walking track
Improved front desk circulation
Improved accessible parking
Additional multipurpose program space
Expanded office spaces
Additional gymnasium space or indoor turf
More storage

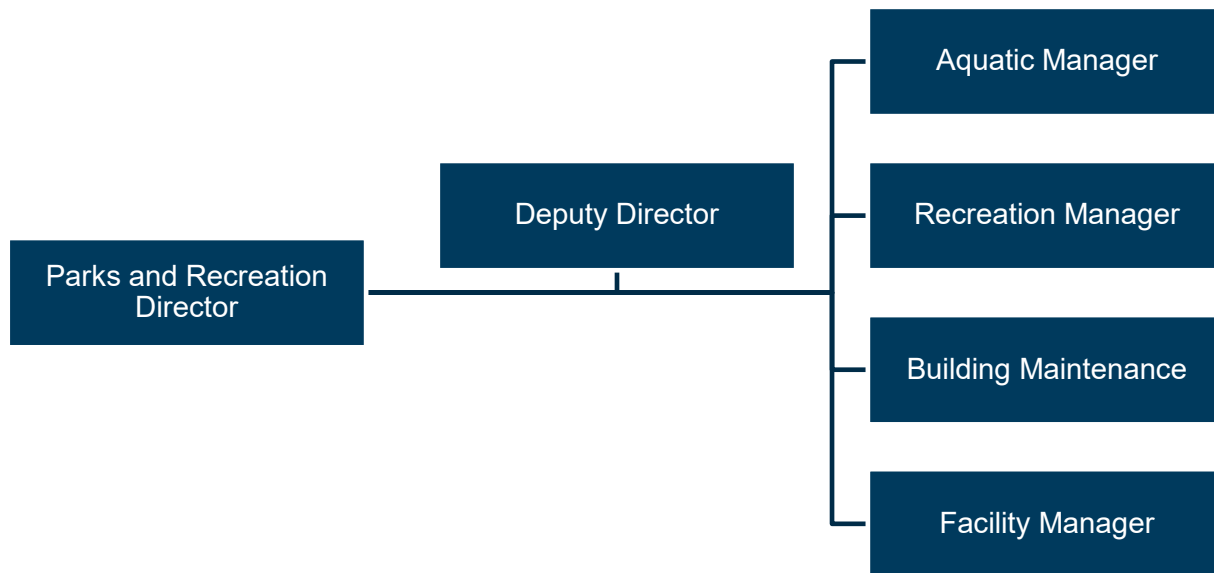


## Organizational Context

The Department is staffed by six full-time employees led by the Parks and Recreation Director. In addition, the Department has several seasonal part-time employees (lifeguards, camp staff, etc.) and at times utilizes independent contractors for instructors, coaches, and trainers. The number of part-time employees, and hours worked vary by season depending on programming and participation.

Rec Center staff not only provide programming for Rec Center members but also play a crucial role in offering recreation services to the broader Saline community.

Figure 1: Rec Center Organizational Structure



The Parks and Recreation Director plans, develops, and administers the Department’s recreation programs, oversees the Rec Center operations, and is responsible for managing the City’s park system. The Director provides budget oversight for the department, ensuring the fiscal sustainability and success of the Rec Center and its programs. Budget management involves both short and long-term planning and analyzing data to make recommendations and decisions regarding programming and the facility itself. The Director is also responsible for developing and cultivating partnerships within the community and identifying potential revenue opportunities for the Department. The Director is a staff liaison to both the Parks Commission and Youth Council.

Programming for the Department is the responsibility of three full-time staff: the Facility Manager, Recreation Manager, and Aquatic Manager. The Facility Manager is responsible for maintaining a master schedule of activities and coordinating rentals within the facility and the park system. The Facility Manager oversees fitness areas, equipment usage, youth sports, athletic programming, and manages the facility’s custodial contract. The Recreation Manager

coordinates several program areas including fitness, special events, the birthday party program, and childcare offered at the Rec Center. The Aquatic Manager is responsible for developing and overseeing the aquatic programming for the facility which includes swim instruction, lifeguard training, and water aerobics.

The maintenance of the Rec Center is the responsibility of Building Maintenance who oversees all building and pool operations and performs maintenance. The position is assisted by external contractors and Public Works staff when additional expertise and/or capacity is required.

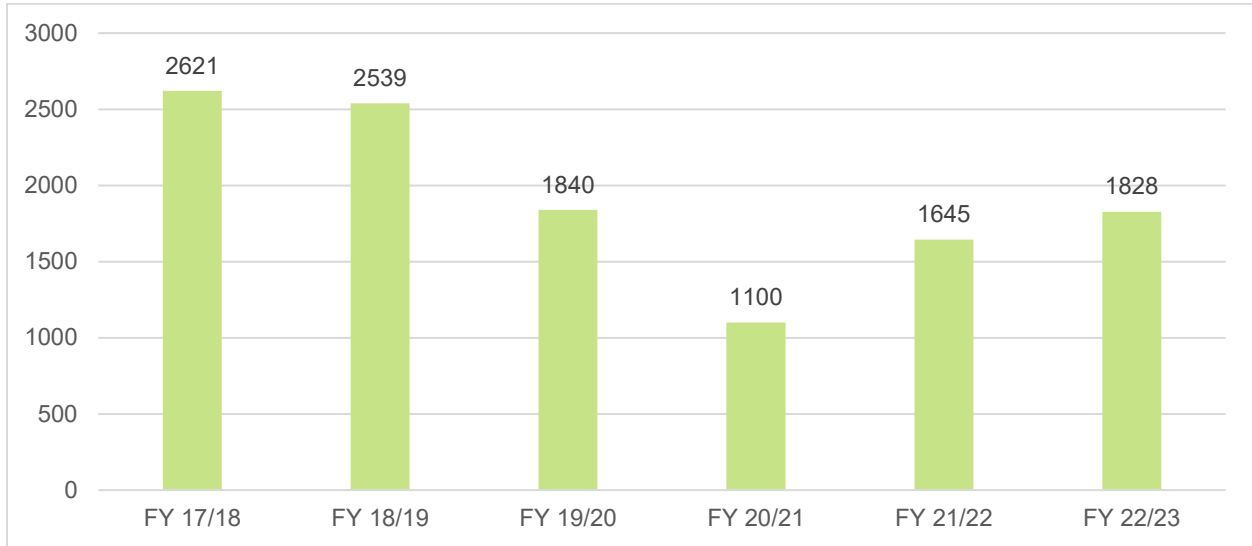
The Department also benefits from a Deputy Director who offers direct supervision and comprehensive oversight across all departmental areas, including parks, the Rec Center, camps, programs, community outreach, personnel, and equipment. The Deputy Director also provides operational guidance and technical supervision in alignment with established policies, procedures, and standards while supporting the Director in addressing operational requirements, managing projects, and cultivating positive customer relationships.



## Membership Trends

A history of membership over the past 6-years is provided in Table 2. The COVID-19 pandemic resulted in a 60% membership decline from FY 17/18 to FY 20/21. Since FY21/22 membership has been on the rise, but is still 30% less than FY17/18.

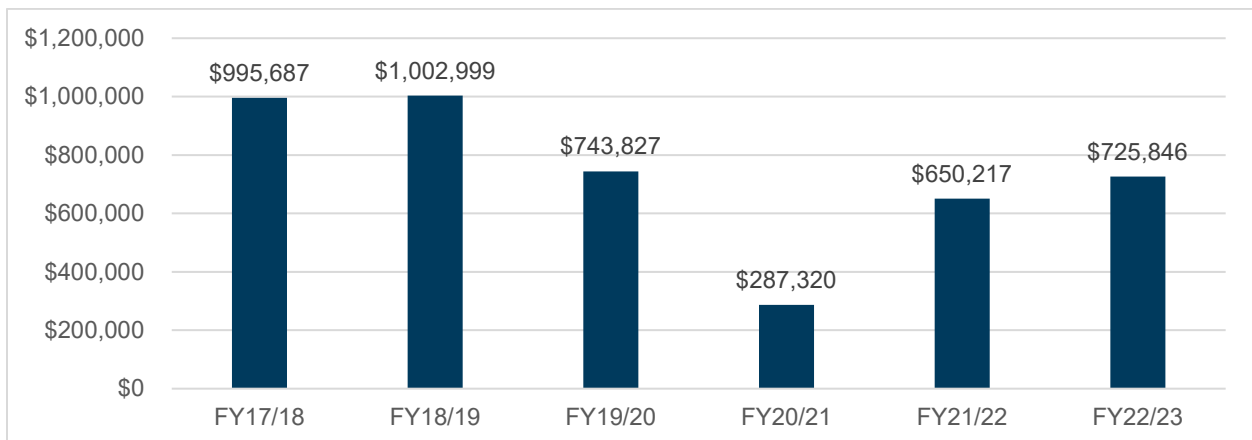
Table 2: Membership Trends



## Cost Recovery

The primary revenue strategies for most recreation centers typically revolve around membership fees, program fees, and facility rentals. Membership fees provide consistent income from regular patrons, while program fees cater to those seeking specialized activities and classes. Facility rentals open up opportunities for revenue through hosting events, meetings, and gatherings. Table 3 presents a revenue history for admissions, memberships, and rentals over the past six years. This analysis finds a difference of approximately \$270,000, equivalent to a 30% difference between FY 17/18 and FY 22/23.

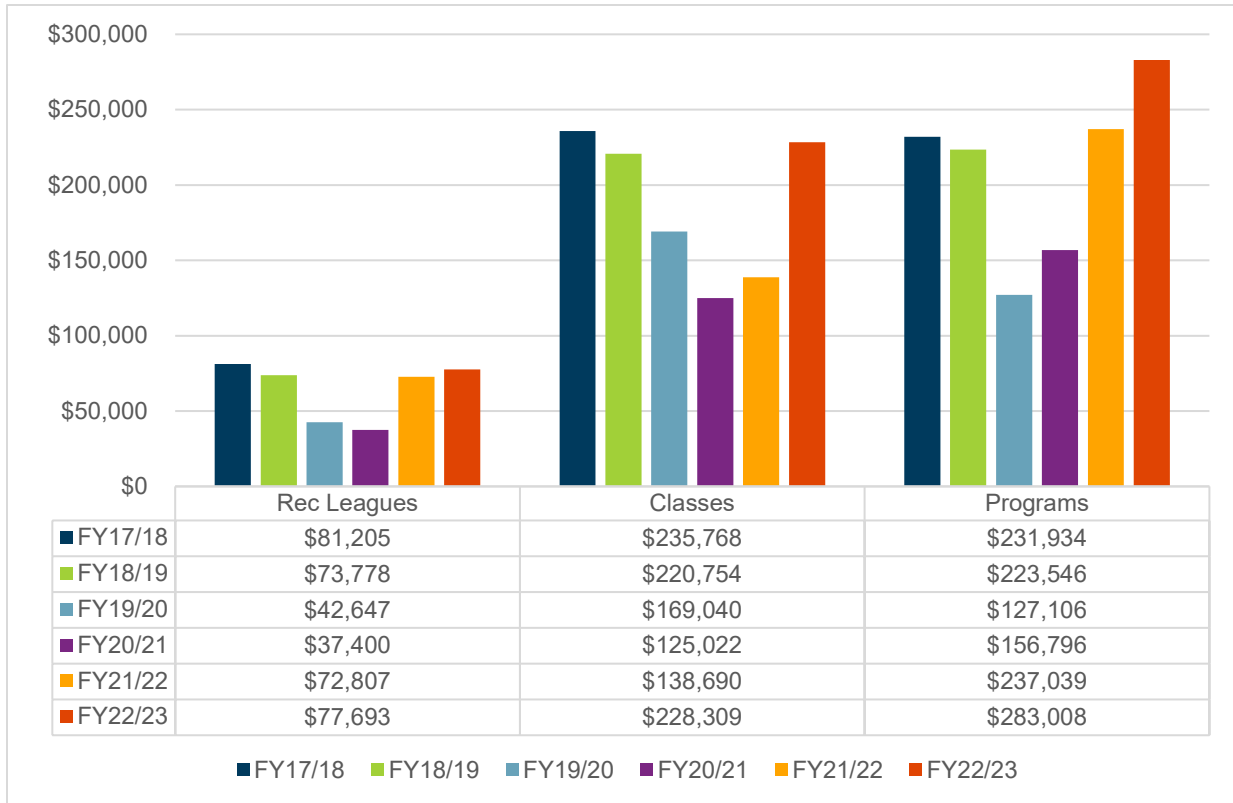
Table 3: Membership and Rental Revenue





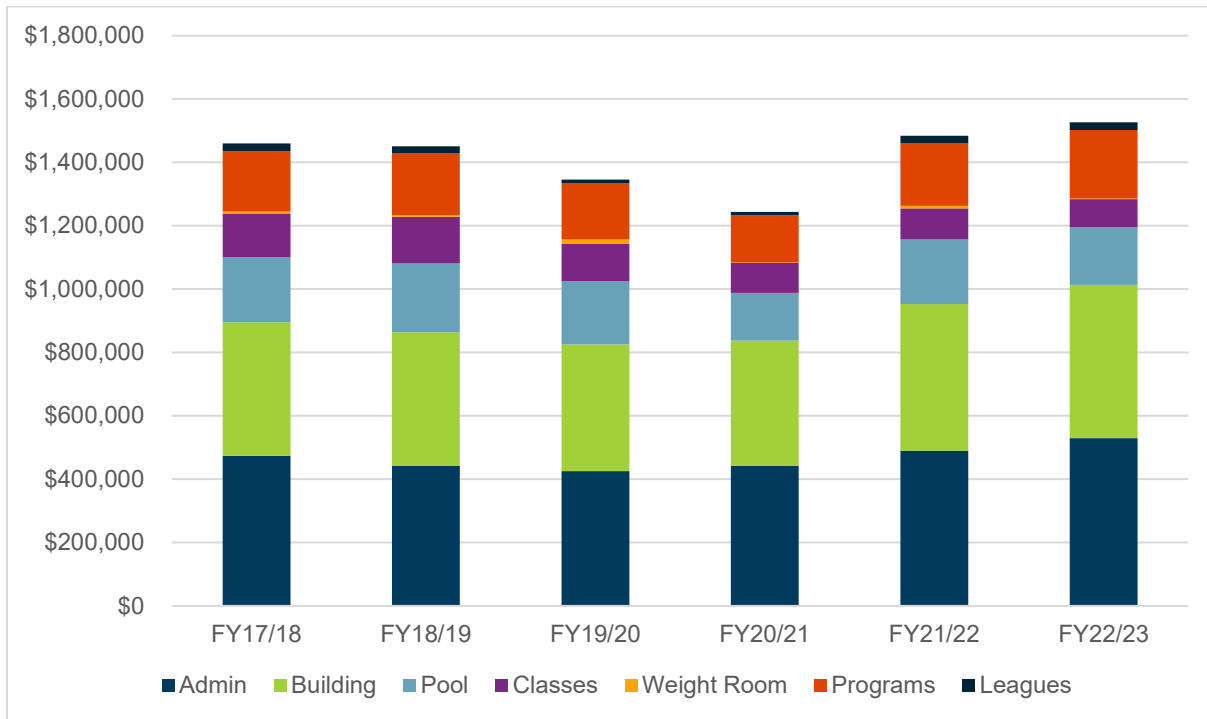
Programs represent a significant source of revenue for the Rec Center and are categorized into three groups: Rec Leagues, Classes, and Programs. Rec Leagues encompass activities like adult soccer, softball, volleyball, pickleball leagues, and flag football. Classes include fee-based fitness programs such as water aerobics, Zumba, and personal training. The third category, Programs, encompasses various events and camps. Table 4 indicates that all program categories have either met or exceeded FY17/18 revenue levels. Notably, youth camps play a pivotal role in the programs category, driving a 22% revenue increase compared to FY17/18.

Table 4: Revenue by Category



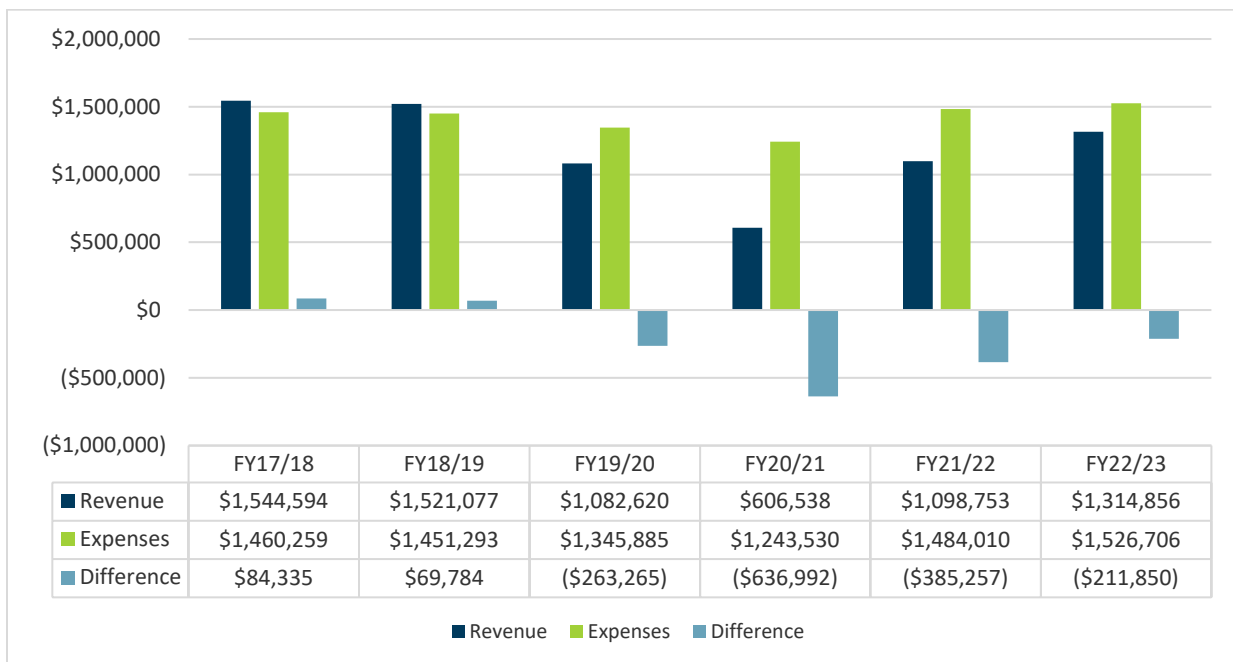
In terms of expenses, the Rec Center has experienced a mere 4% increase since FY17/18. This modest rise is noteworthy, especially when considering that the Consumer Price Index indicates an 25% (3.82% per year) inflation rate since 2017. It also takes into account wage hikes and incentives introduced for part-time employees in FY2022.

Figure 2: Expense by Category



Related to cost recovery, the Rec Center achieved full cost recovery in FY17/18 and FY 18/19. However, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic halved cost recovery in FY20/21. As of two years post-pandemic, the Rec Center has not fully rebounded but stands at an 86% cost recovery rate. Table 4 provides a year over year expenses and revenues for the past 6-years.

Table 5: Cost Recovery



Historically, the Rec Center has consistently outperformed many publicly funded recreation centers in terms of cost recovery. While it has yet to reach pre-pandemic levels, it continues to surpass peer agencies in performance. Financially successful public recreation centers typically exhibit the following characteristics:

- Located in larger markets with strong demographic support.
- Offer amenities that drive high utilization and revenue, often with a significant fitness component.
- Set clear cost recovery goals and prioritize revenue generation.
- Implement an aggressive fee structure.
- Emphasize and continuously track annual pass/membership revenue.
- Boast a strong and capable management team.
- Vigilantly monitor performance metrics and make timely adjustments.
- Provide a diverse range of programs and services that cater to various community needs.
- Foster partnerships with a variety of organizations to expand markets and revenue potential.

An evaluation of Rec Center operations aligns with these principles.





## 2.0 Community Needs Assessment

A Community Needs Assessment is a vital process for understanding, prioritizing, and addressing the needs of a community. It enables agencies to make informed decisions, allocate resources efficiently, and develop targeted programs or interventions. Assessing both present and future recreational demands and community preferences involves the collection of data regarding population demographics, recreational interests, and current participation rates in existing programs.

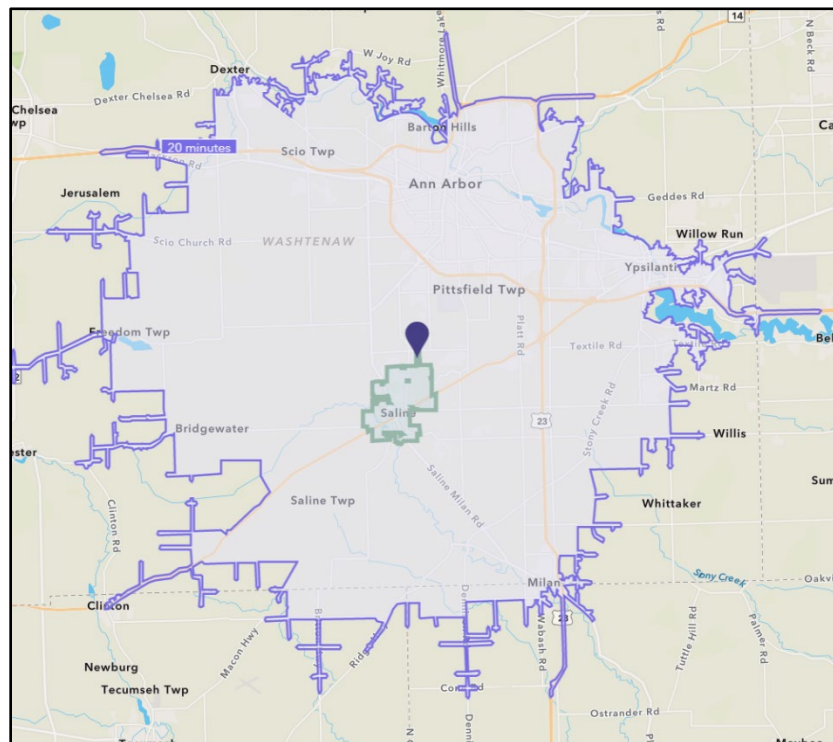


## 2.1 Demographics

To better understand the changing population in the community, a demographic profile of the Saline service area was developed. This analysis provides a current and projected view of household and economic trends in the region, offering data to support market opportunities for recreation services and programs.

For this report, BerryDunn gathered various data points—including population, income, age distribution, race/ethnicity, and other household characteristics—from Esri Business Analyst; this information was accurate as of March 2023. At the time of data collection, Esri’s primary source for demographic information was the 2020 U.S. Census, and the estimates were generated in July 2022. The Saline service area encompasses a 20-minute driving radius around 1866 Woodland Drive in Saline. Adjacent communities include Chelsea, Dexter, Ann Arbor, Ypsilanti, Lincoln, Milan, and Manchester. Figure 3 shows the geographic boundaries of the Saline service area.

Figure 3: Saline Service Area Geographic Boundaries



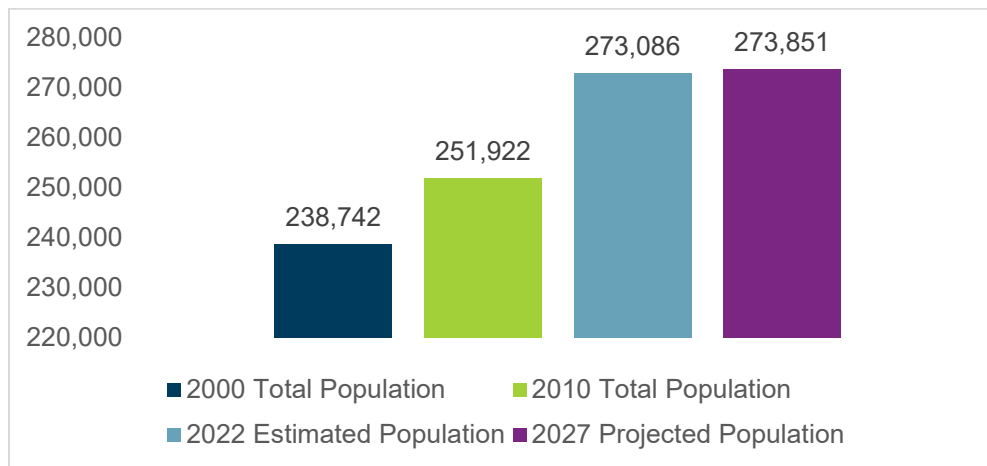
Source: Esri Business Analyst, 2023

## Population

As shown in Figure 4, the estimated population for the Saline service area in 2022 was 273,086 residents—an 8.4% increase from 2010. For 2027, the projected population will remain stable at 273,851 residents. The compound annual growth rate between 2010 and 2022 was 1.06%. The estimated growth rate between 2022 and 2027 is 0.06%.

The Saline service area encompasses a 20-minute driving radius around the Rec Center.

Figure 4: Historical and Projected Population Growth, Saline Service Area, 2000 – 2027



Source: Esri Business Analyst, 2023

## Household Information

A household characteristics analysis within the Saline service area indicates higher median incomes and more residents living below the poverty level than in both MI and the U.S. The following facts (Esri 2022) demonstrate the key highlights regarding household information compared to MI and the U.S.

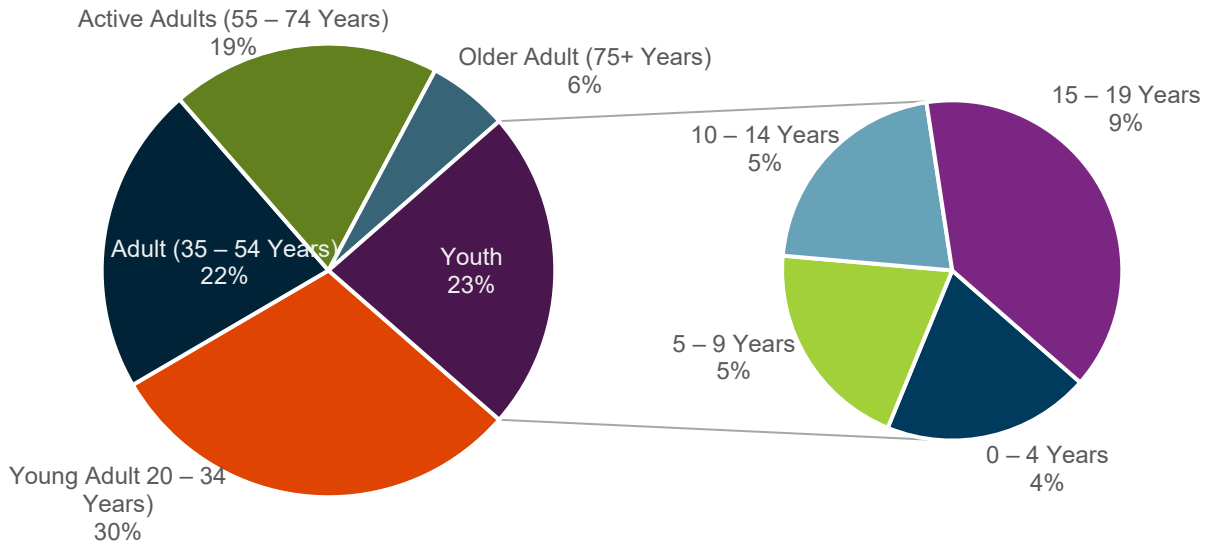
- The area’s median household income was \$81,999, which is higher than MI (\$63,818) and the U.S. (\$72,414).
- The area’s average home value was \$376,074, which is similar to the U.S. (\$347,078) but significantly more than MI’s average home value (\$247,974).
- In 2020, 14.7% of the area’s population lived below the poverty level, which is higher than MI (13.1%) and the U.S. (12.5%).
- The average household size in the area (2.2) is slightly lower than MI (2.4) and the U.S. (2.5).



## Age

Figure 5 shows the 2022 median age in the area was 32 years, and the expected median age in 2027 is 33 years. The youth (0 – 19 years), adults (35 – 54 years), and active adults (55 – 74 years) age cohorts are similarly distributed, falling between 19% and 23%. Young adults (20 – 34 years) make up the largest of the distribution with 30%, whereas older adults (75 years and over) make up the smallest distribution with 6%.

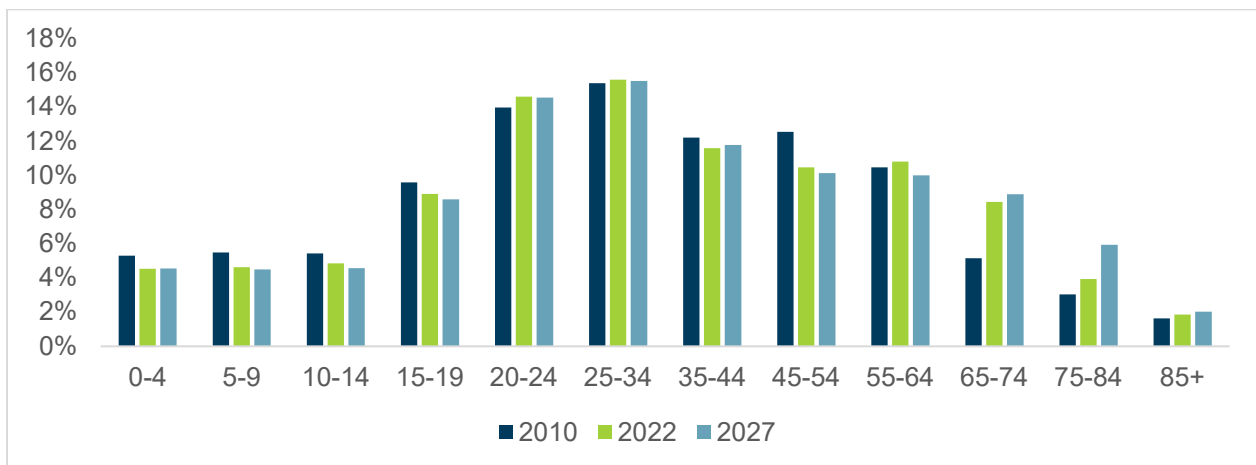
Figure 5: Age Distribution, Saline Service Area, 2022



Source: Esri Business Analyst, 2023

The most notable age distribution changes between 2010 and 2022 were a 2.7% decrease in residents aged 45 to 54 years and a 3.4% increase in residents aged 65 to 74. The age distribution change from 2022 to 2027 will be minimal—apart from residents 75 to 84—which is expected to increase by 2% (Figure 6).

Figure 6: Age Distribution Change, Saline Service Area, 2010 – 2027

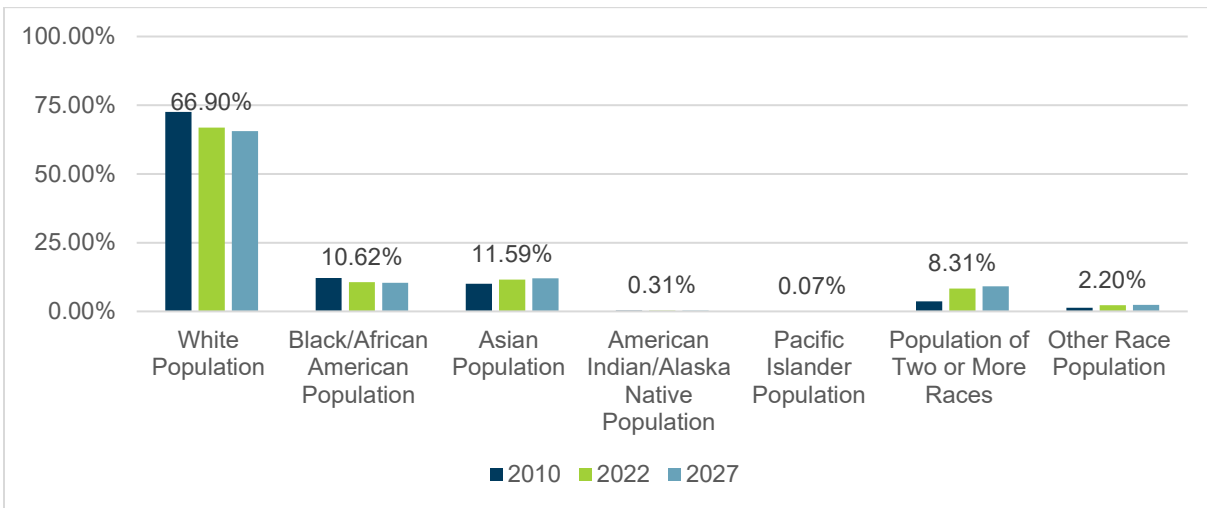


Source: Esri Business Analyst, 2023

## Race and Diversity

Between 2010 and 2022, the Saline service area experienced a 5.6% decrease in white residents and a 4.7% increase in residents who are two or more races. The racial and ethnic makeup, as of 2022, is as follows: Of residents, 66.9% are white, 10.6% are Black or African American, 11.6% are Asian, 0.3% are American Indian/Alaska Native, 0.07% are Pacific Islanders, 8.3% are two or more races, and 2.2% identify as another race. This racial distribution is expected to be stable in 2027.

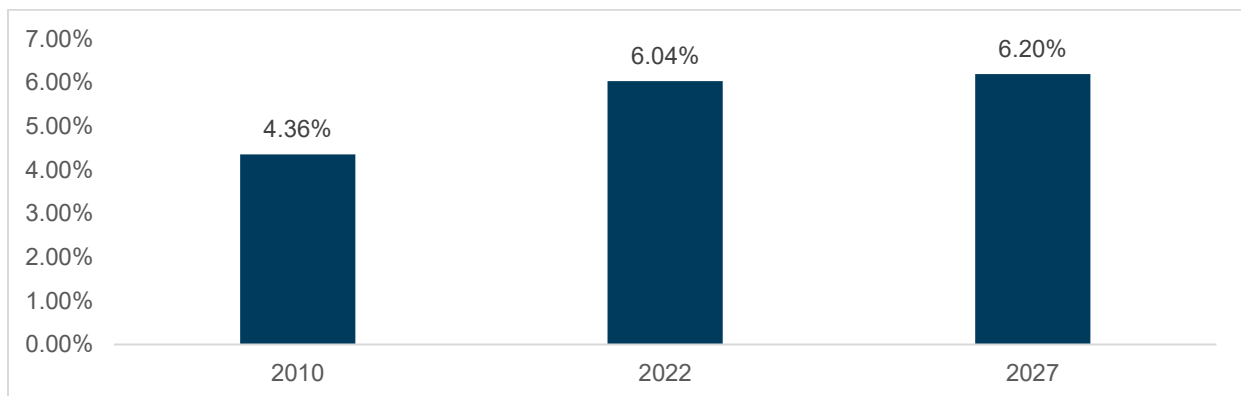
Figure 7: Change in Population Race/Ethnicity, Saline Service Area, 2010 – 2027



Source: Esri Business Analyst, 2023

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, “Hispanic origin can be viewed as the heritage, nationality, lineage, or country of birth of the person or the person’s parents or ancestors before arriving in the United States. People who identify as Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish may be any race.” As of 2022, 6% of area residents identify as Hispanic—an increase from 4.3% in 2010. This is similar to MI (5.6%) but lower than the U.S. (18.9%).

Figure 8: Hispanic Population Growth, Saline Service Area, 2010 – 2027



Source: Esri Business Analyst, 2023

## 2.2 Trends in Recreation

The following sections summarize regional and national trends that are relevant to the Saline service area. Awareness and understanding of trends and research findings can help an organization determine how best to build its service portfolio. This information can also help determine where to direct additional data collection efforts within an organization.

### Service Area: Recreation Expenditures

In 2022, the estimated average expenditure on membership fees for social, recreation, and/or health clubs in the area was \$335.40, totaling over \$36 million in expenditures by area residents. Expenses for sports, recreation, and exercise equipment for the area totaled over \$25 million with an average of \$236.58 per area resident. Additional information regarding average and total amounts spent on fees for participant sports, recreational lessons, tickets to parks or museums, and bicycles are detailed in Tables 6 and 7.

Table 6: Estimated Average Per Person Recreational Expenditures, 2022

	Saline Service Area	MI
Membership Fees- Social/Recreation/Health Clubs	\$335.44	\$237.94
Fees for Participant Sports Excluding Trips	\$151.19	\$110.43
Tickets to Parks or Museums	\$44.26	\$32.36
Fees for Recreational Lessons	\$177.86	\$124.56
Sports/Rec/Exercise Equipment	\$236.58	\$182.26
Bicycles	\$40.75	\$29.66
Admission to Sports Events Excluding Trips	\$84.24	\$63.57
Camping Equipment	\$29.12	\$18.36
Hunting & Fishing Equipment	\$60.73	\$55.08
Other Sports Equipment	\$9.58	\$9.51
Water Sports Equipment	\$9.60	\$6.91

Table 7: Estimated Total Recreational Expenditures, 2022

	Saline Service Area	MI
Membership Fees- Social/Recreation/Health Clubs	\$36,818,767	\$965,021,971
Fees for Participant Sports Excluding Trips	\$16,595,094	\$447,878,844
Tickets to Parks or Museums	\$4,858,049	\$131,222,687
Fees for Recreational Lessons	\$19,523,022	\$505,193,313
Sports/Rec/Exercise Equipment	\$25,968,007	\$739,203,082
Bicycles	\$4,472,683	\$120,291,110
Admission to Sports Events Excluding Trips	\$9,246,851	\$257,818,299
Camping Equipment	\$3,195,989	\$74,445,014
Hunting & Fishing Equipment	\$6,665,543	\$223,373,497
Other Sports Equipment	\$1,051,166	\$38,585,118



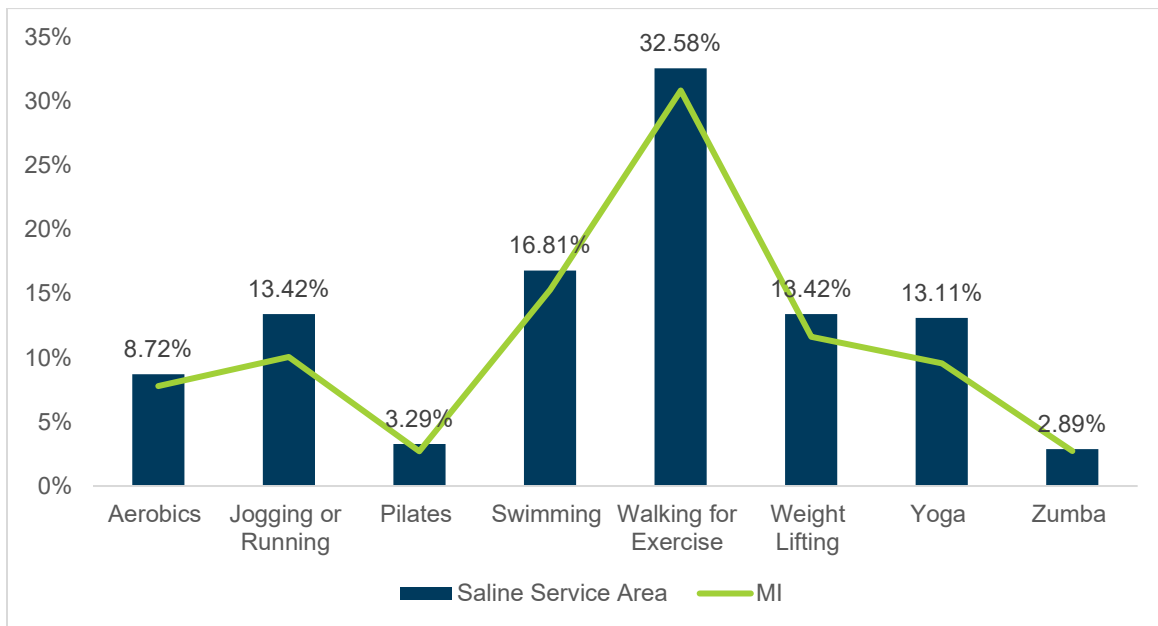
Water Sports Equipment	\$1,054,110	\$28,042,168
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### Service Area: Estimated Participation

This section showcases the participation in fitness activities, outdoor recreation, and sports teams for adults 25 and older in the area compared to the state. Activity participation and consumer behavior are based on a specific methodology and survey data to makeup what Esri terms “Market Potential Index.”

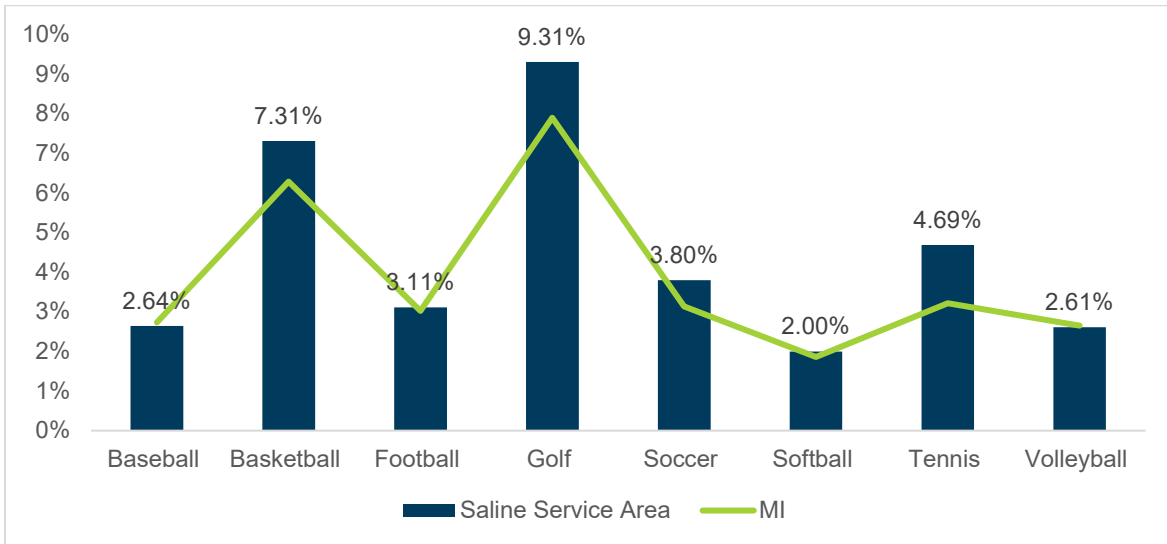
Walking for exercise was the most popular fitness activity in 2022, with 32.5% of adult participation. Swimming followed next with 16.8% of adult participation. Jogging or running (13.4%), weightlifting (13.4%), and yoga (13.1%) are also common fitness activities.

Figure 9: Adult Participation in Fitness Activities



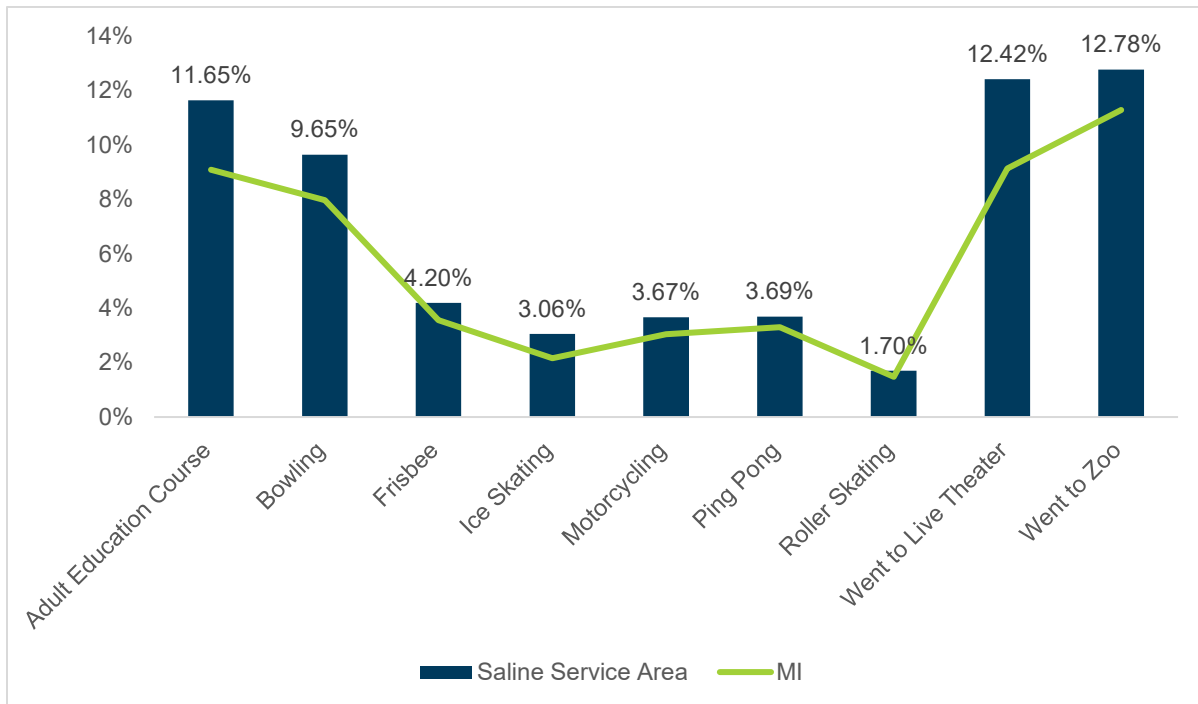
The most popular sport among area adults in 2022 was golf with 9.3% adult participation. The other two most popular sports were basketball (7.3%) and tennis (4.6%).

Figure 10: Adult Participation in Sports



The most popular leisure activities among adults included visiting a zoo (12.7%), attending a live theater show (12.4%), and attending an adult education course (11.6%).

Figure 11: Adult Participation in Leisure Activities



## 2.3 Community Needs Assessment

The goal of the community engagement process is to help ensure an inclusive approach to gathering community input to help determine the community’s vision, unmet needs, and priorities for the Rec Center. BerryDunn firmly believes in the value of using strong methods to engage and gain information from all stakeholders (anyone who has a “stake” in an outcome and wants to be heard) in our projects.

### Focus Group Sessions, Stake Engagement Stations

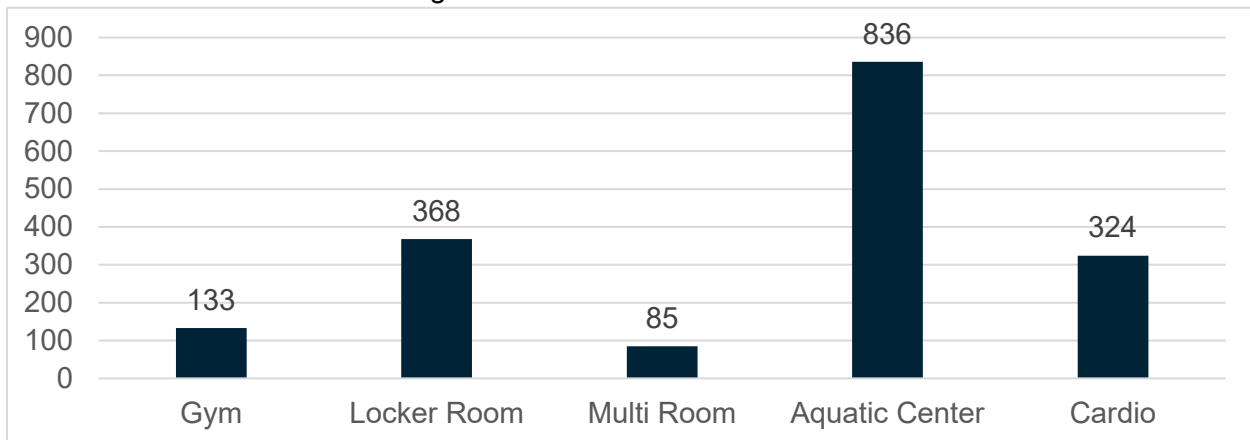
In February 2023, BerryDunn conducted three focus group sessions to gain insights from user groups regarding current strengths, opportunities, and priorities. The objective was also to determine if the Rec Center effectively meets user needs. A series of questions facilitated comprehensive input from all participants. The collective sentiment from the focus groups highlighted a user-wide consensus on staffs responsiveness and receptiveness.

Other reoccurring themes included:

- Add kids leisure pool amenities, zero entry
- Renovate the pool deck
- Update the Locker Rooms
- Modernize for next 30 years
- Add evening fitness class hours
- Update lobby area with comfortable furniture, coffee, snacks
- Add a walk track
- Diversify classes
- Incorporate a community wellness focus
- Offer personal trainers
- Add activities/amenities for teens & tweens
- Add multipurpose space for programming
- Add key fob entry
- Provide a kiosk to sign up for programs
- Provide an ala carte menu for membership fees
- Add pickleball courts
- Provide a cross fit area

Understanding community investment preferences is an alternative way to evaluate community priorities. This was done with an inviting activity asking users how they would allocate \$10 among certain priorities. One-dollar tokens and voting boxes were used to guide participants to their decision-making. The findings in Figure 12 reveal of the five key areas surveyed the aquatic center received the most support.

Figure 12: Investment Preferences



### Stakeholder Interviews

BerryDunn interviewed individual stakeholders to gather insights and feedback Rec Center operations. These interactions revealed a shared enthusiasm for the Rec Center, evident in their valuable insights and contributions to strategies for an improved facility. Recurring themes included the need for a forward-looking plan that helps ensure sustainability, increased use, and a strategic approach that acknowledges the importance of fostering partnerships.





## Community Survey

Following the focus group sessions, an online survey was used to further explore reoccurring themes. Questions focused on facility use, short-term needs, and long-term improvements. The survey was available in late-February through mid-March. Business cards containing directions for accessing the survey were designed and supplied to the City for distribution. The survey garnered 124 responses, with 73% coming from facility users and 27% from non-users. Among users, 43% have a family membership, while 15% hold a senior membership. Key findings from the survey include:

- 68% of respondents are satisfied or very satisfied
- 43% of respondents feel the Rec Center meets their needs
- 73% of respondents feel the Rec Center should be renovated
- 40% of respondents feel the aquatic center is the most valuable part of their membership
- Respondents ranked the aquatic center, locker rooms and lobby as the 3 top areas for improvements
- 25% of respondents ranked aquatic family play as the most desired indoor aquatic activities
- Respondents ranked health/wellness and nutrition classes, classic games and cooking classes as the most desired community or educational activity need



The complete survey report is available in Appendix B.

## 2.4 Market and Gap Analysis

The Market and Gap Analysis identifies alternative service providers, to further understand other organizations and businesses that offer similar fitness-related programs and services. In April 2023 a comprehensive list of similar service locations in the Saline service area was collected and organized.

Within the twenty-minute drive time radius 62 facilities were found to have offerings similar to those provided through a Rec Center membership. Facilities were categorized into two types:

- Fitness Centers/Gyms (45)
- Aquatic Centers/Facilities (17)

The list of alternative service providers prepared for this study offers a snapshot in time. Service providers are continuously updating their offerings. The goal of the market analysis is capture 90% of alternative service providers at the time of the study.

While not every similar facility is considered a competitor, other providers may impact the need or exclusion for a particular program or facility space. Strategic planning and implementation can reveal alternative service providers who can serve as valuable partners, offering new and unique programs and opportunities to the entire community.

## Fitness Centers/Gyms

There are 45 fitness centers or gyms, within or near the Saline service area. Each facility has its own unique layout, space, and equipment. Some facilities have certain spaces that focus on a particular area, like yoga or Pilates; others have tanning, saunas, and more specialized amenities.

For this study fitness centers are categorized based on their amenities as described below:

- **Small gyms** have a specific focus. They may include some free weights and cardio machines, but tend to specialize in one area such as, circuit training, yoga or Pilates. There were 2 small gyms identified in this analysis.
- **Mid-size gyms** have with a more significant volume of equipment available for use. These facilities include cardio equipment, free and plate-loaded weights, and selectorized weights. There were 14 mid-size gyms identified in the Table 8.
- **Large gyms** include the amenities provided by mid-size gyms but also include childcare and an at least one additional significant amenity such as a gymnasium or pool. There were six large gyms identified in the study.



The Rec Center has many amenities that justify its classification as large. The Rec center provides childcare, includes a 25-yard lap pool, a leisure pool, a hot tub, a gymnasium for basketball and volleyball and racquetball courts.

In addition to evaluating facility amenities, pricing models were researched and organized based on the following categories:

- Low-priced (\$): Between \$20 to \$40 month (8)
- Moderately priced (\$\$): Between \$41 to \$60 per month (13)
- High-priced: Between \$61 to \$100+ per month (24)

These price ranges should be considered as estimates only and are subject to change.

Based on the individual adult monthly rate of \$38, the Rec Center is considered a low-priced facility. Among the 45 facilities assessed, only the Rec Center and one other large facility fall into the large and low-priced category. In contrast, three large gyms are categorized as high-priced, and two are considered moderately priced.

Table 8: Fitness Providers in the Saline Service Area

Facility Name	Address	City	Size	Cost
Meri Lou Murray Recreation Center	2960 Washtenaw Ave	Ann Arbor	Large	\$
Ann Arbor YMCA	400 West Washington Street	Ann Arbor	Large	\$\$
LA Fitness Signature Ann Arbor	2500 Jackson Avenue	Ann Arbor	Large	\$\$
Liberty Athletic Club	2975 W. Liberty Road	Ann Arbor	Large	\$\$\$
The Health & Fitness Center at Washtenaw Community College	4833 East Huron River Drive	Ann Arbor	Large	\$\$\$
Dexter Wellness Center	2810 Baker Road	Dexter	Large	\$\$\$
Crunch Fitness	2723 Oak Valley Dr	Ann Arbor	Mid-size	\$
3N1 FITNESS REVOLUTION	1952 S Industrial Hwy Ste H	Ann Arbor	Mid-size	\$\$
Anytime Fitness	2744 Jackson Ave	Ann Arbor	Mid-size	\$
Applied Fitness Solutions	4710 S State Rd	Ann Arbor	Mid-size	\$\$
Optimum Fitness Training	4477 Jackson Road	Ann Arbor	Mid-size	\$\$\$
Planet Fitness	2350 W Stadium Blvd,	Ann Arbor	Mid-size	\$
Wolverine Strength and Conditioning	680 State Cir	Ann Arbor	Mid-size	\$\$\$
Anytime Fitness	7050 Dexter Ann Arbor Road	Dexter	Mid-size	\$
Go M.a.d	1015 Dexter Street	Milan	Mid-size	\$
03 Strength & CrossFit 1on1	1382 Industrial Dr	Saline	Mid-size	\$\$
Planet Fitness	932 E. Michigan Avenue	Saline	Mid-size	\$
Powerhouse Gym Ypsilanti	1326 Anna J Stepp Road	Ypsilanti	Mid-size	\$\$
Crunch Fitness	3020 Washtenaw Ave	Ypsilanti	Mid-size	\$

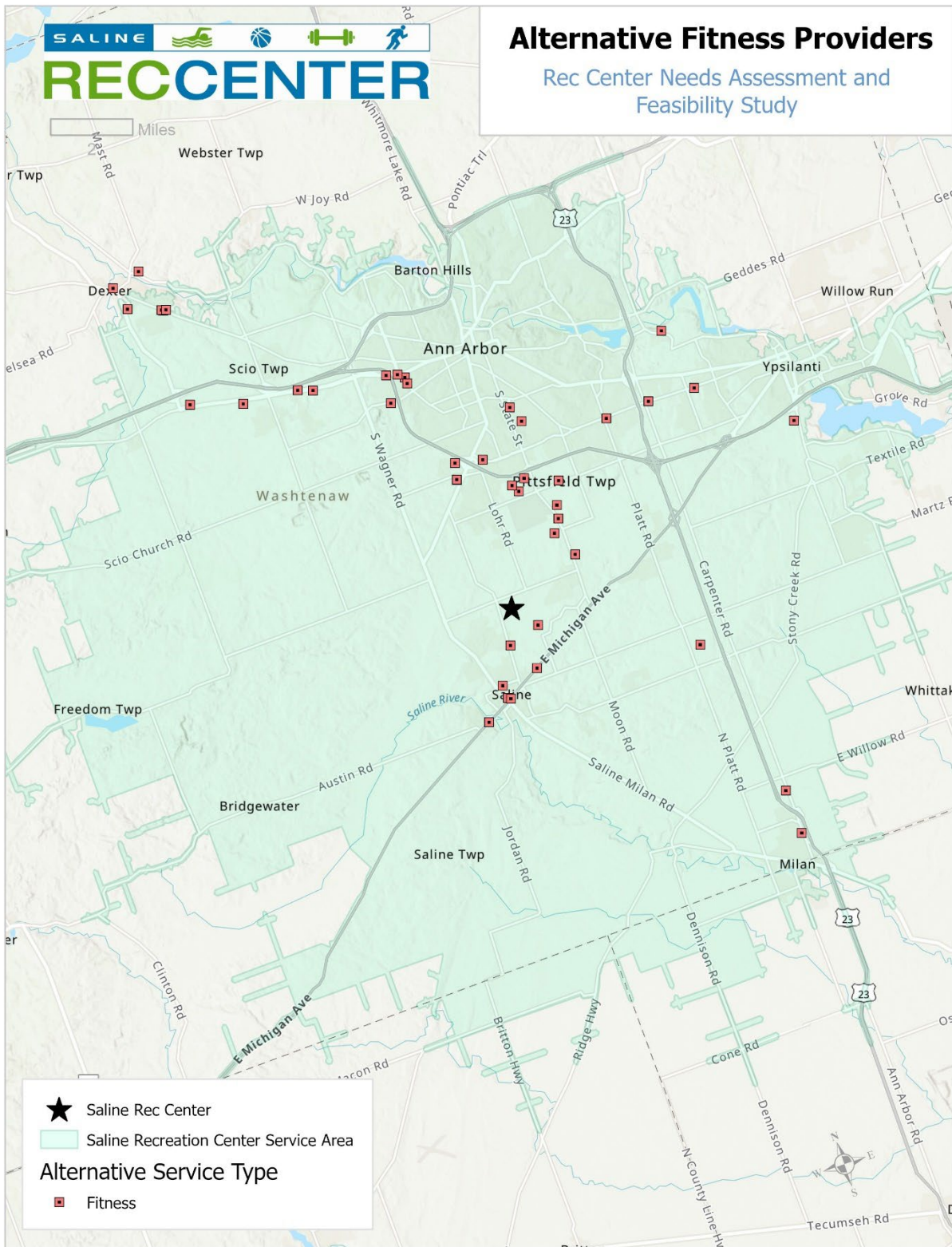
Solidcore	3081 Oak Valley Dr	Ann Arbor	Small	\$\$\$
All Out Fitness	540 Avis Drive, Suite D	Ann Arbor	Small	\$\$
Balance Wellness & Fitness Center	2308 S Industrial Hwy Ste A	Ann Arbor	Small	\$\$\$
Balance Point Fitness	4072 Packard St.	Ann Arbor	Small	\$\$
COVAL Fitness	834 Phoenix Dr Ste B	Ann Arbor	Small	\$\$\$
Fit Body Boot Camp	6095 Jackson Road Suite 200	Ann Arbor	Small	\$\$\$
Integrative Fitness Concepts	210 Collingwood Drive	Ann Arbor	Small	\$\$\$
Pure Barre	3139 Oak Valley Drive	Ann Arbor	Small	\$\$\$
SPENGA	859 W Eisenhower Pkwy	Ann Arbor	Small	\$\$\$
Sea Lotus Yoga	4201 Ann Arbor-Saline Rd	Ann Arbor	Small	\$\$
Orange Theory	2246 S Main St	Ann Arbor	Small	\$\$\$
Yoga Focus	1527 Eastover Pl Ste 5	Ann Arbor	Small	\$\$\$
Yoga House Ann Arbor	3286 Mc Comb St	Ann Arbor	Small	\$\$\$
Best Life Pilates	2500 Packard St Ste 105	Ann Arbor	Small	\$\$\$
Arbor Pilates	E Textile Rd	Ann Arbor	Small	\$\$\$
Balanced by Fitness	7035 Dexter Ann Arbor Road	Dexter	Small	\$\$\$
Jazzercise Dexter Fitness Center	7073 Dexter Ann Arbor Road	Dexter	Small	\$\$
Trvfit Fitness Dexter	3219 Broad Street #105	Dexter	Small	\$\$\$
Mitten Fitness Group	7275 W Joy Road	Dexter	Small	\$\$\$
Underground Athletics	12350 Carpenter Road	Milan	Small	\$\$\$
Body Shop Fitness	106 N Ann Arbor Street	Saline	Small	\$\$
Workout1	1408 E. Michigan Avenue	Saline	Small	\$\$\$



Yoga Centric	135 E Bennett St	Saline	Small	\$\$
BodySpecs Inc	2955 Packard Rd, Ypsilanti	Ypsilanti	Small	\$\$\$
Reach and Root Movement	7268 Cypress Point Dr	Ypsilanti	Small	\$\$\$
The Pilates Difference	915 Grant St	Ypsilanti	Small	\$\$



Figure 13: Service Aquatic Providers





## Aquatic Facilities

Aquatic facilities identified in this study include indoor and outdoor pools in the Saline service area. Eighteen area aquatic opportunities have been located. Nearly, all locations only provide a traditional rectangle-shape pool. Nationally municipal or public pools have shifted away from the traditional rectangle shape, and instead have moved to facilities that include zero-depth entry, spray features, small to medium slides, and lazy rivers. Lazy rivers can serve as a versatile component of aquatic facilities. They can be used for both recreation and rehabilitation purposes, such as water therapy and exercise programs. Some outdoor facilities in the service area offer slides, but only the Rolling Hills Water Park offers a unique aquatic experience. Aquatics opportunities designed for play or therapy are limited in Saline service area. Additionally, of the 18 Aquatic facilities evaluated only 11 offer year round opportunities.

Table 9: Service Area Aquatic Facilities

Facility Name	Address	City	Description	Availability
Mack Indoor Pool	715 Brooks St	Ann Arbor	Indoor lap pool and warm water pool	Public, Year-round
Michael H Jones Natatorium	100 Olds/Robb	Ypsilanti	Indoor competition pool	Public, Year-round
Dexter Community Pool	3060 Kensington St	Dexter	Indoor lap pool and warm water pool	Public, Year-round
Whitmore Lake Community Pool	7430 Whitmore Lake Rd	Whitmore Lake	Indoor lap pool and warm water pool	Public, Year-round
Meri Lou Murray Recreation Center	2960 Washtenaw Ave	Ann Arbor	Indoor lap pool and warm water pool	Public, Year-round
Ann Arbor YMCA	400 West Washington Street	Ann Arbor	Indoor lap pool and warm water pool	Public, Year-round
Buhr Park	2751 Packard St	Ann Arbor	Outdoor lap pool	Public, Seasonal
Fuller Park Pool	1519 Fuller Rd	Ann Arbor	Outdoor lap pool, diving well, play pool	Public, Seasonal
Veterans Memorial Park Pool	2150 Jackson Ave	Ann Arbor	Outdoor lap pool, diving well, play pool	Public, Seasonal

Rolling Hills Water Park	7660 Stony Creek Road	Ypsilanti	Outdoor water park	Public, Seasonal
Saline High School Pool	1300 Campus Parkway	Saline	Indoor competition pool	Private, Year-round
Goldfish Swim School	2107 W Stadium Blvd	Ann Arbor	Indoor lesson pool	Private, Year-round
University of Michigan: Donald B. Canham Natatorium	500 E Hoover Ave	Ann Arbor	Indoor competition pool	Private, Year-round
University of Michigan: North Campus Recreation Building	2375 Hubbard Rd	Ann Arbor	Indoor lap pool	Private, Year-round
Willow Run Pool	235 Spencer Ln	Ypsilanti	Indoor lesson pool	Private, Year-round
Huron Valley Swim Club	4601 Park Rd	Ann Arbor	Outdoor lap pool	Private, Seasonal
Chippewa Club	2525 Golfside Rd	Ypsilanti	Outdoor lap pool	Private, Seasonal
Forestbrooke Athletic Club	2609 Yost Blvd	Ann Arbor	Outdoor lap pool	Private, Seasonal

There are over 60 different agencies or businesses in Saline service area who offer similar or relevant services as the Rec Center. Analyzing the service area demonstrated that while there are many alternative providers in the service area, considerable research did not indicate that the market was oversaturated or without opportunity. In fact, only four facilities in the Saline service area provide the extensive amenities that are available at the Rec Center.





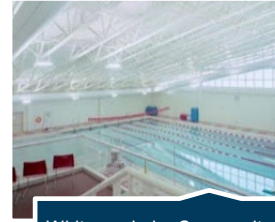
Mack Indoor Pool



Michael H Jones Natatorium



Dexter Community Pool



Whitmore Lake Community Pool



Buhr Park



Fuller Park Pool



Veterans Memorial Park Pool



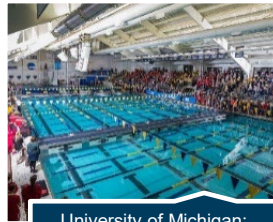
Rolling Hills Water Park



Saline High School Pool



Goldfish Swim School



University of Michigan: Donald B. Canham Natatorium



University of Michigan: North Campus Recreation Building



Willow Run Pool



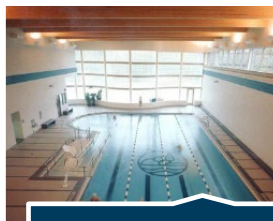
Huron Valley Swim Club



Chippewa Club



Forestbrooke Athletic Club

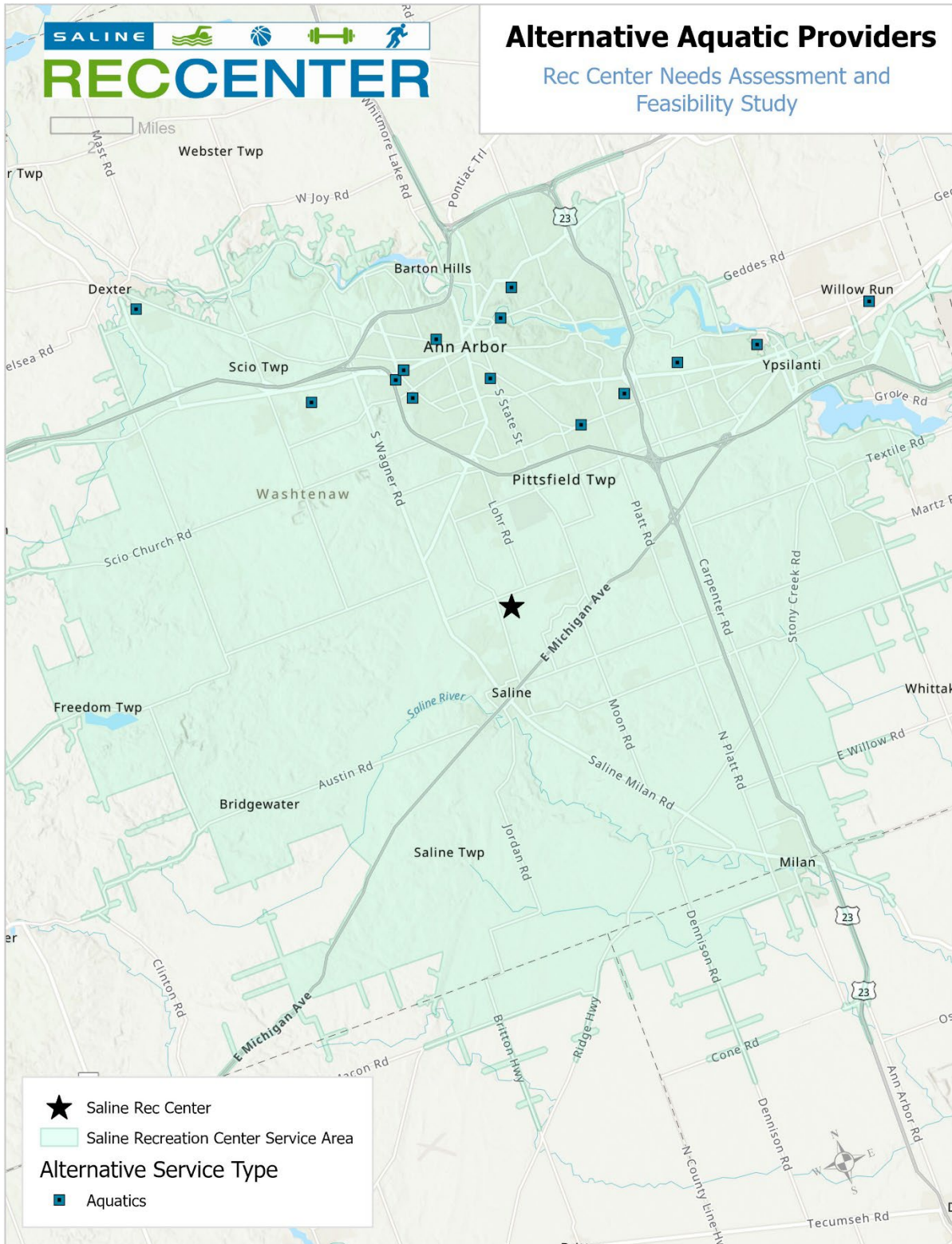


Meri Lou Murray Recreation Center



Ann Arbor YMCA

Figure 14: Service Aquatic Providers





### 3.0 Concept Plan

BRS conducted an exploratory study of the Rec Center with the goal of recognizing potential areas of improvement within the existing facility's building design. BRS conducted six meetings with the Rec Center staff to develop a concept plan. The concept plan is based on the community needs assessment, the market and gap analysis and a combination of current and predicted needs for the building coupled with financial realities.



### 3.1 Existing Conditions

The Rec Center is located within Tefft Park, providing easy access to the park's amenities, such as tennis courts, ball fields, playgrounds, and ample parking spaces located adjacent to the Rec Center. Inside, the Rec Center boasts an aquatics center featuring a 6-lane, 25-yard lap pool, a leisure pool, and a spa pool. Additionally, it houses a spacious 74'x120' gymnasium, a fitness area, a short-term child watch area (Kid's Corner), two multi-purpose classrooms, a party room, administrative offices, locker rooms, and storage and mechanical rooms. Notably, the aquatic center is located on the south side of the building and opens onto a fenced outdoor deck, while the gymnasium is situated on the north side, with the surrounding landscape bermed to reduce the apparent height of the building.



During a visit by BRS in January 2023, the Rec Center is in good condition for its age and capable of meeting the demands of the activities conducted within it. The staff utilized the time during the COVID-19 pandemic to update some of the building's finishes. Additional observations include:

#### **Building Condition:**

- BRS observed no obvious air leakage which is common for a building of this age.
- The pool deck is visibly deteriorating and needs rehabilitation.
- Outdated building controls and aging pool equipment, including boilers for pool heating, require replacement.
- The paint in the gymnasium is peeling and needs repair. Peeling paint is likely due to degradation of waterproofing behind the berm. Repair involves excavating the berm to inspect and replace protection board and waterproofing if necessary.

#### **Accessibility and ADA Compliance:**

- The building predates the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). While it appears accessible, there is an issue with the lift; it requires manual door and gate operation. Occupants with disabilities unable to perform this action may not be able to use the lift.
- Significant renovation might necessitate replacing the lift with an automatic elevator to meet ADA requirements.



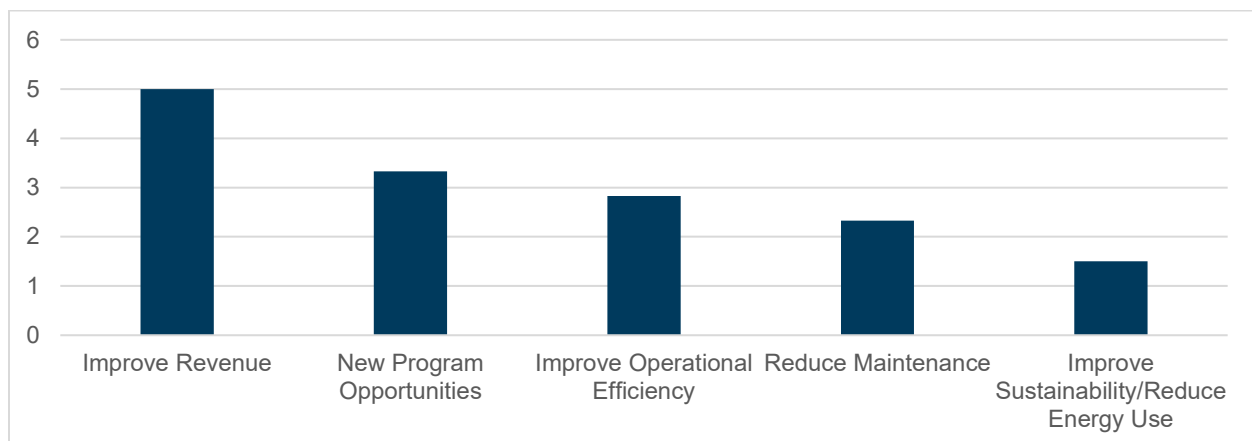
### 3.1 Value Analysis Survey

Upon concluding the Community Needs Assessment, various programming options and architectural concepts were identified as potential inclusions for a future renovation. To establish the priorities and objectives for the Rec Center, BRS conducted a Value Analysis Survey with Rec Center staff. To begin, BRS requested input from the staff to prioritize five key values:

- 1 Improve Revenue
- 2 Reduce Maintenance
- 3 Create New Program Opportunities
- 4 Enhance Sustainability/Reduce Energy Use
- 5 Improve Operational Efficiency

Figure 15 presents the ranking of these values.

Figure 15: Key Values Ranking



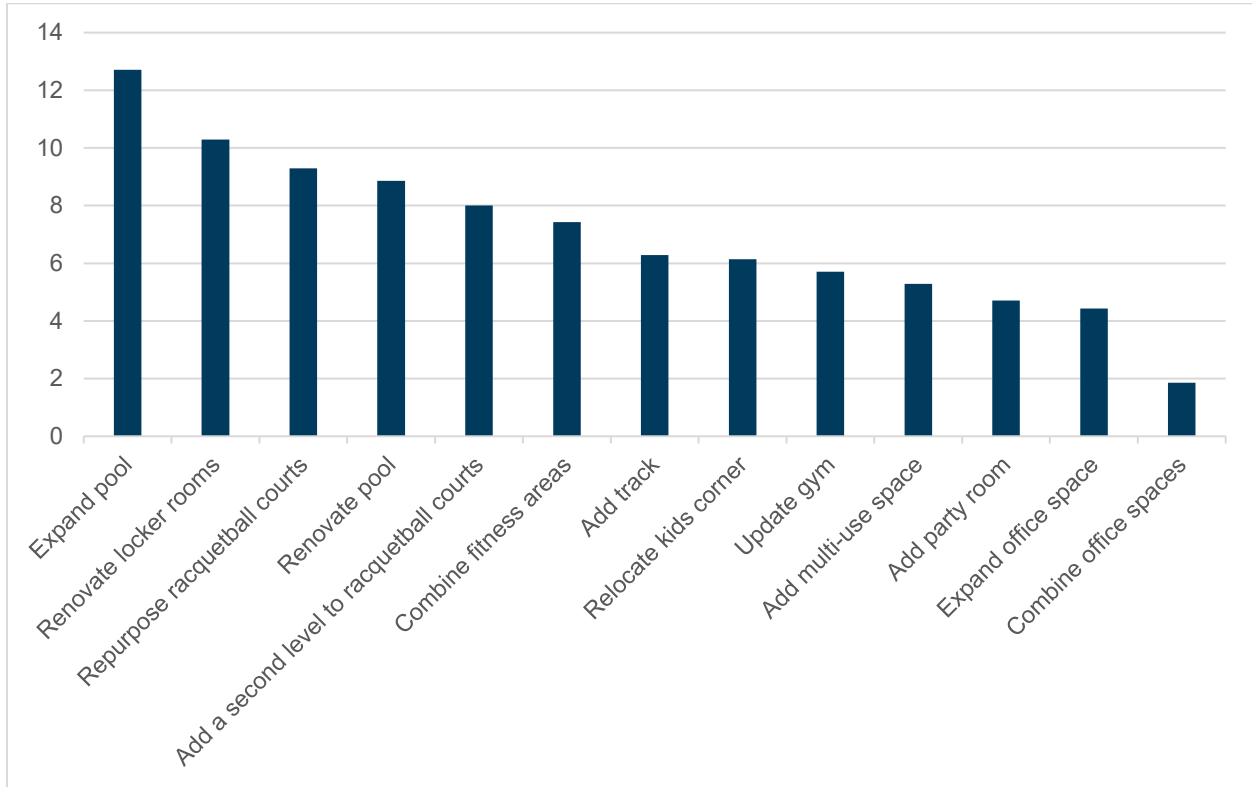
Next, BRS asked staff to prioritize the following architectural concepts based on findings from the Needs Assessment:

- Add a second level to racquetball courts.
- Add multi-use space
- Add party room
- Add track
- Combine fitness areas
- Expand office space
- Expand pool
- Relocate kids corner
- Renovate locker rooms
- Renovate pool
- Repurpose racquetball courts

- Update gym
- Combine office spaces

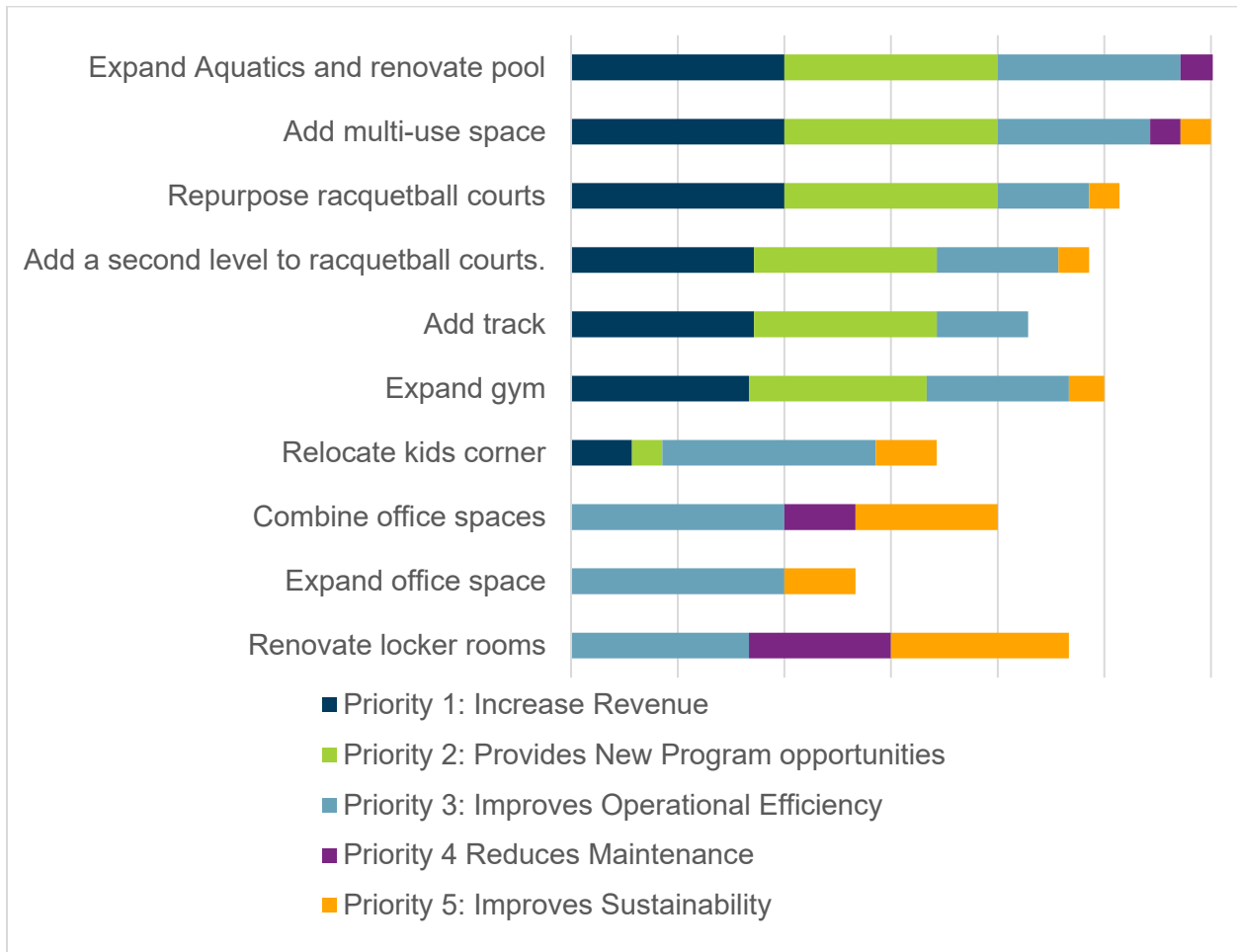
Figure 16 represents the ranking of architectural concepts.

Figure 16: Architectural Concept Rankings



To complete the Values Analysis Survey, the Rec Center staff were asked to assess how effectively each architectural item aligned with the prioritized values. Table 17 offers an overview of the value each architectural item delivers, with the longest bar indicating the item that best aligns with the most values.

Figure 17: Values Analysis Survey



### 3.3 Design Options

Using the outcomes of the Value Analysis Survey, BRS crafted a range of design options. Multiple meetings were held with Rec Center staff to fine-tune the scope of work across various construction phases, ensuring alignment with the conceptual budget. The study yielded the following design recommendations.



#### Option I - Phase I

It is recommended that the initial phase of construction include renovation of the aquatic center, and a renovation of the locker rooms.

#### Pool Area Changes:

- Renovate the 6-lane x 25-yard lap pool while maintaining a similar configuration
- Construct a 1,200-square-foot addition to accommodate a larger leisure pool with the following features:
  - Zero-depth entry
  - Deeper program/learn-to-swim area
  - Lazy river for play and physical rehabilitation
- Replacing the existing spa
- Implement new water filtration and treatment systems for all pools.

#### **Locker Room Reconfiguration:**

- Exchange the locations of the women’s and men’s locker rooms
- Reduce the size of the new men’s locker room to create space for additional family changing rooms
- Enhance the locker rooms with fresh paint, new flooring, and updated plumbing fixtures

The estimated cost of this project ranges from \$6.8 million to \$7.3 million, excluding soft costs. This option effectively addresses all identified values and aligns with two of the architectural priorities identified in the Value Analysis Survey. Additionally, it falls within the constraints of the potential project budget.

With a working budget of \$7 million, Option I, Phase I fully utilizes these funds. Options I, Phase Two through Option V are included in Appendix C if additional funding becomes available.

For a more comprehensive locker room renovation, which includes new lighting, lockers, and vanities, the additional cost would range from \$400,000 to \$600,000, excluding soft costs. This option effectively addresses all five priorities identified in the Value Analysis Survey.

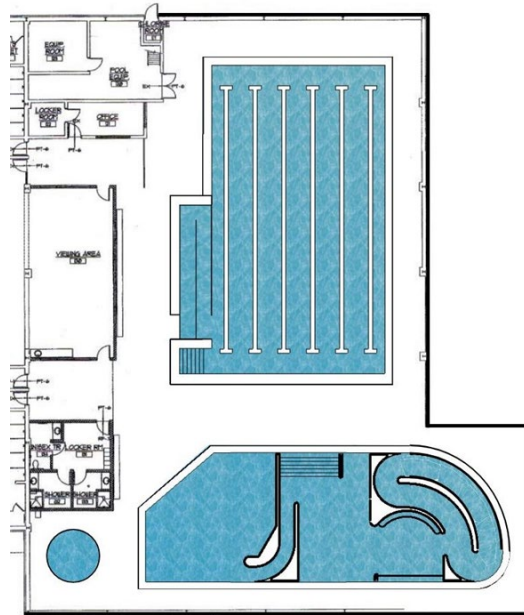
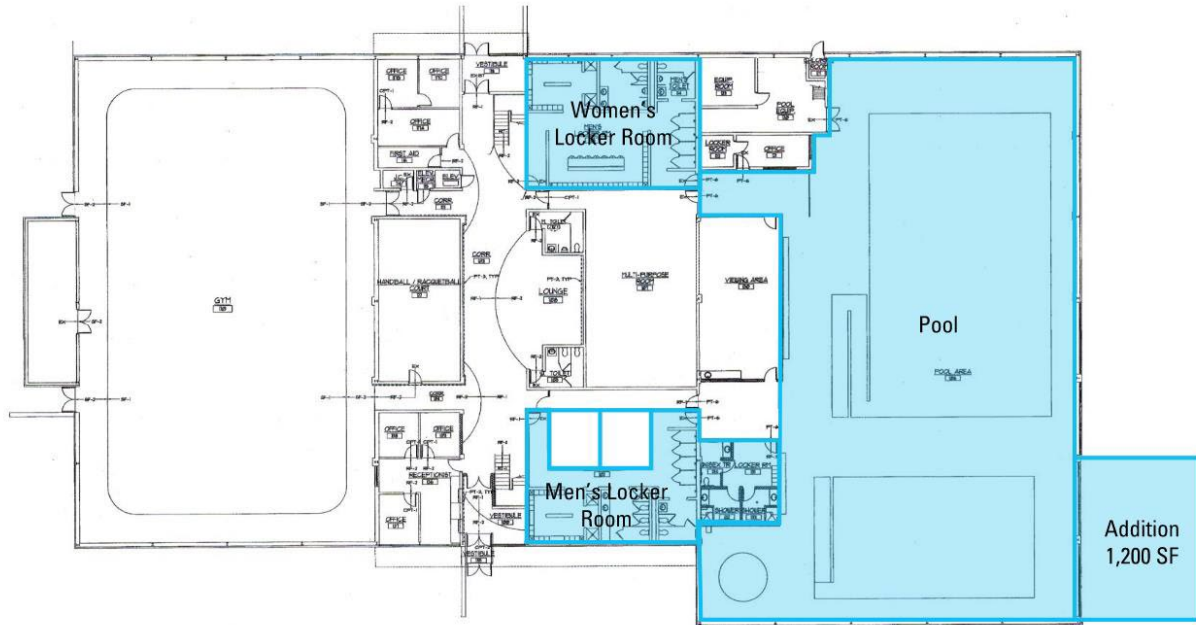
Construction costs are based on BRS understanding of costs as of Q2, 2023 and escalated to an anticipated construction mid-point. Design is assumed to start in Q3 of 2024 and take one year. Construction is planned to begin in Q2 of 2026—allowing for permitting and bidding—and is projected to be complete a year later with a construction midpoint of Q4 2026. Using annualized inflation of 6% costs have been escalated 123% over contemporary prices.

Aquatic updates, such as adding new features like a lazy river, zero-depth entry, and a deeper program/learn-to-swim area, can significantly enhance the recreational offerings of the facility, making it more attractive to potential members. These updates create a unique and appealing aquatic environment that caters to a wider range of interests and age groups. Families, in particular, are likely to be drawn to facilities with these types of amenities, as they provide opportunities for both fun and skill development. The enhanced aquatic features can serve as a strong selling point, driving membership growth as individuals and families seek access to a modern and engaging aquatic experience.



Option I, Phase I facility enhancements are anticipated to boost membership by approximately 700 memberships, with the bulk of additional expenses primarily related to lifeguarding costs. The expected increase in membership is estimated to generate approximately \$280,000 in additional revenue.

Figure 18: Design Option 1 – Phase I



## 4.0 Recommendations

The following recommendations provide actionable guidance and solutions based on the Study's findings. These recommendations are essential for creating a clear plan to boost membership and enhance cost recovery at the Rec Center. This study serves as a crucial tool for the city to make informed decisions regarding Rec Center investments. The goal is to allocate resources effectively and ensure that the facility aligns with the community's needs and expectations. Since the city aims for full cost recovery from Rec Center operations, it's crucial to maintain a desirable facility that appeals to a broad user base.



## Recommendation 1: Plan for Capital Improvements

Given the Rec Center's age and the necessity of upgrading to ensure future use and revenue, capital investment is needed. At a minimum, minor improvements should be made to the building's appearance and finishes. To sustain a robust market presence and revenue, more significant capital improvements are called for.

If the City selects Design Option 1, Phase 1, the projected cost is between \$6.8 million and \$7.3 million. This phase is anticipated to yield 700 additional memberships, with the primary extra expenses being related to lifeguarding costs. This membership increase is projected to generate approximately \$280,000 in additional annual revenue. The first true benchmark year of operation typically does not occur until the third full year of operation. With effective marketing, it is anticipated that by the third year, membership numbers should fall within the range of 2,500 to 3,200. Next steps include:



### Project Planning and Design Development:

- Engage architects, engineers, and designers to translate the feasibility study's recommendations into detailed plans and designs
- Create architectural drawings, schematics, and construction documents that align with the project's scope and objectives
- Develop conceptual level building floor plans, elevations, primary building sections
- Continue community outreach efforts to confirm program components and project support

### Explore Funding Sources:

- Consider proposing a bond referendum, giving residents the chance to vote on funding the Rec Center renovations through increased taxes or bonds. Create a public awareness campaign to inform voters about the center's advantages and the financial aspects of the referendum. A bond referendum could also encompass objectives outlined in the 2023 – 2027 Parks and Recreation Master Plan.



## Recommendation 2: Prioritize Membership Sales Growth

To reach pre-pandemic cost recovery levels revenue must increase by approximately \$200,000. To achieve this through membership sales approximately 500 additional new memberships are needed. Consider the following strategy to support membership growth:

- Offer trial memberships or guest passes to allow potential members to experience the center's offerings before committing
- Provide additional benefits like access to personal trainers, nutrition counseling, or wellness assessments
- Partner with local businesses to offer member discounts at restaurants, shops, or other services
- Engage with the local community through outreach events, health fairs, or partnerships with schools and community organizations
- Run seasonal promotions, such as New Year's fitness challenges or summer fitness boot camps, to attract new members
- Participate in local community events and sponsorships to raise awareness and visibility within the community



Marketing will play a crucial role in boosting membership sales, to achieve marketing objectives, it will be necessary to utilize the Public Relations Generalist more extensively. Here are some strategies to raise awareness of the Rec Center programs and services:

### 1. Social Media:

- Maintain an active presence on social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram) to share updates, photos, and engage with the community
- Invest in paid advertising on social media platforms to reach a wider audience
- Target ads based on demographics, interests, and location to reach potential visitors
- Promote events, classes, and special promotions through sponsored posts

### 2. Community Partnerships:

- Collaborate with local schools, businesses, nonprofits, and government agencies to promote the center
- Share resources and cross-promote events to reach a broader audience

### 3. Print Materials:



- Design and distribute flyers, brochures, and posters in the local community
- Advertise in local newspapers, magazines, and community newsletters
- Utilize direct mail campaigns to target specific neighborhoods or demographics

#### 4. Open Houses and Tours:

- Host open houses or community tours to showcase the center's facilities and programs
- Offer special promotions or discounts to attendees who sign up for memberships or classes during the event

#### 5. Community Events:

- Participate in local community events, fairs, and festivals to raise awareness of the center
- Set up booths or interactive displays to engage with potential visitors

#### 6. Referral Programs:

- Create referral programs that reward current members or participants for referring friends and family
- Offer incentives like discounts or free classes for successful referrals

#### 7. Online Reviews and Testimonials:

- Encourage satisfied members and participants to leave positive reviews on websites like Yelp, Google, or Facebook.
- Share testimonials on your website and promotional materials

#### 8. Loyalty Programs:

- Implement loyalty programs that reward frequent visitors or members with exclusive benefits or discounts.

#### 9. Incentives and Promotions:

- Offer special promotions, discounts, or incentives for new members or those who sign up for specific programs
- Create urgency with limited-time offers



## Recommendation 3: Pursue Partnerships Opportunities

Partnerships may encompass the shared allocation of funds or operational resources among separate entities, which can include two government agencies, a non-profit organization in conjunction with a government agency, or a private business collaborating with a government agency. Cooperative agreements can be instrumental in the development of public recreation facilities and services. Potential partners for the Rec Center may include:

- Health care providers (Trinity Health/Michigan Medicine)
- Saline Area Schools
- Pittsfield Charter Township
- University of Michigan
- Sports organizations
- Business and corporate community

Facility partnerships typically occur on three levels:

### **Primary or Equity Project Partners:**

These are key partners with a significant interest, funding capacity, and willingness to anticipate in facility development and operation.

### **Secondary Project Partners:**

Organizations with a direct interest in the facility, though not to the same extent as primary partners. Capital funding may be unlikely, but they can assist with program and service delivery.

### **Support Partners:**

Organizations that support facility development but have limited to no direct involvement in the facility's development or operation.

## Recommendation 4: Implement Operational Improvements

Critical to the long term financial stability of the Rec Center will be the continued growth in membership/pass over the next five years.

### Programs

The most successful programs at the Rec Center have been camps and swimming lessons, and there's still room for them to grow further. As programs have rebounded to their pre-pandemic levels, cost should be evaluated to ensure all operational expenses are accounted for and fees provide adequate cost recovery.

The Department invests significant time and resources in organizing special events. It's worth considering whether focusing on two to three large, high-quality events is more cost-effective than hosting numerous smaller-scale events throughout the year. These smaller events generate minimal revenue but require substantial staff time and resources.



### Cross Promotion

Cross-promote related activities to encourage participation in multiple programs. For example, if someone signs up for a fitness class, offer them a discount on swim lessons. Cross-promotion is a strategy that encourages individuals to participate in multiple programs or activities within a recreation center. Start by identifying programs or activities that naturally complement each other. For example, a fitness class, can be complemented by nutrition workshops, personal

training sessions, or group challenges. Provide a 10% discount or incentives for individuals who participate in multiple programs.

### **Maximize Scheduling**

Maximizing scheduling at a recreation center involves efficient planning and utilization of facility resources. Here are some key strategies:

- Encourage group bookings for parties, team events, or corporate outings. These events can fill gaps in the schedule
- Collect feedback from participants to continuously improve the scheduling of programs and services based on their preferences and needs
- Adjust schedules seasonally to accommodate changes in weather or community interests
- Implement a dynamic scheduling system that allows for last-minute changes and updates based on real-time demand. This flexibility can help maximize space utilization
- Provide members with self-service options for booking activities and checking availability. Self-service kiosks or mobile apps can empower members to manage their own schedules

### **Staffing**

Fifty percent of the Director and Deputy Director positions are funded by the City of Saline's general fund. As retirements approach, it's advisable to assess the necessity of the Deputy Director role. Repurposing it into a Recreation Manager position dedicated to expanding revenue-generating programs is recommended. Consequently, funding 50% the Deputy Director position will no longer be required, and it's suggested that the City fully fund the Parks and Recreation Director role.

### **Streamline Operations**

Implementing a member self-service scan-in system and transitioning to electronic forms will streamline operations. The self-service scan-in system simplifies entry for members, reduces wait times, and supports convenient access through various methods like membership cards, key fobs and mobile app QR codes. It also automates attendance tracking, enhances facility monitoring, and improves membership management. This automation allows staff to focus on other tasks, contributing to a more efficient operation. Additionally, electronic forms simplify data collection and management, reducing paperwork and errors, while promoting convenience and environmental sustainability.



## Appendix A: Fitness Trends

Each year, the American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM) conducts a survey of worldwide fitness trends. Launched in 2006 and designed to help sector stakeholders make informed business decisions, this year's survey was sent to 125,940 people, including more than 32,000 ACSM-certified professionals, with 3,735 (58 per cent women and 41 per cent men) responding from almost every continent. The list below includes the top 10 fitness trends for 2023.

### Wearable Technology

Wearable technology, which includes activity trackers, smartwatches, heart rate monitors, GPS tracking devices, and smart eyeglasses (designed to show maps and track activity), has been one of the top three trends since 2016. Examples include fitness and activity trackers such as those from Misfit, Garmin, Pebble Time, Samsung, Basis, Jawbone, Fitbit, and Apple. These devices can track heart rate, calories, sitting time, and much more. It is estimated that wearable technology is a \$95 billion industry.

### Home Exercise Gyms

The trend in home exercise gyms has risen because of the COVID-19 pandemic and it is expected for this trend to continue. Home gyms allows participants to choose what equipment they invest in at various price points and can be used by individuals or as a family. However, for this trend to continue it is noted that home gym businesses will need to lower equipment costs to keep participants working out at home instead of a gym outside the home.

### Outdoor Activities

Likely because of the COVID-19 pandemic, outdoor activities such as group walks, group rides, or organized hiking groups are gaining in popularity. These can be short events, daylong events, or planned weeklong excursions. Typically, people meet at a local park, hiking area, or bike trail with a designated leader. This trend for health and fitness professionals to offer outdoor activities to clients began in 2010 and has been in the top 20 ever since 2012. This has become much more popular the past several months as agencies work to offer fitness programs outdoors that help to ensure physical distancing.

### Strength Training with Free Weights

Strength training remains popular in all sectors of the health and fitness industry and for many kinds of clients. Free weights, barbells, kettlebells, dumbbells, and medicine ball classes do not just incorporate equipment into another functional class or activity. Instructors begin by teaching the proper form and technique for each exercise and then progressively increase the resistance. New exercises are added periodically, starting with proper form and technique. Many younger clients of both community-based programs and commercial clubs train almost exclusively using weights. In today's gyms, however, there are many others (men and women, young and old, children, and patients with stable chronic diseases) whose focus is using weight training to improve or maintain strength.

## Exercise for Weight Loss

Another trend that has increased because of the COVID-19 pandemic is exercising for weight loss. This trend has been top 20 since the beginning of the survey, but peaked at number five in 2022, a rise from number sixteen in 2021. Participants are moving towards this trend because the pandemic caused perceived or real weight gain and diet programs generally recommend supplementing with exercise.

## Personal Training

Personal training is a one-on-one workout with a trainer that begins with fitness testing and goal setting. The trainer then works with the client and prescribes workouts specific to their needs. The profession of personal training is becoming more accessible online, in clubs, in the home, and in worksites that have fitness facilities. Many fitness centers continued to offer personal training during the COVID-19 outbreak. Since this survey was first published in 2006, personal training has been ranked in the top 10.

## High-Intensity Interval Training (HIIT)

HIIT involves short bursts of high-intensity exercise followed by a short period of rest or recovery and typically takes fewer than 30 minutes to perform (although it is not uncommon for these programs to be much longer in duration). HIIT has been a top five trend since 2014. Despite warnings by some fitness experts of the potential for increased injury using HIIT, this form of exercise is popular in fitness centers all over the world.

## Body Weight Training

Body weight training uses minimal equipment, which makes it an inexpensive way to exercise effectively. Although most people think of body weight training as being limited to push-ups and pull-ups, it can be much more than that. This type of training first appears in the trends survey in 2013 at number three.

## Online Live and On-Demand Exercise Classes

Previously this trend has been to “virtual online training” or “online training”, however this was changed in 2022 to specify what type of online classes are trending. COVID-19 forced closures of exercise programming in many spaces which resulted in an increase in online training for at-home exercise classes. This trend can be offered live or prerecorded to groups and individuals. Prerecorded sessions offer client’s the chance to partake in these classes no matter what their schedule may be.

## Health and Wellness Coaching

Health and wellness coaching bridges behavioral science by promoting a healthy lifestyle and programs to support that lifestyle. Typically, this coaching is one-on-one, and coaching consists of goal setting and providing support, guidance, and encouragement. The coach focuses on the specific needs and wants of the client’s lifestyle and values.

## Appendix B: Survey Report



### Rec Center Needs Assessment and Feasibility Study

Survey Results: April 2023

#### Key Findings



124  
Respondents

- ▲ 73% users, 27% non-users
- ▲ 68% of respondents are satisfied or very satisfied
- ▲ 43% of respondents feel the Rec Center meets their needs
- ▲ 40% of respondents feel the aquatic center is the most valuable part of their membership
- ▲ 73% of respondents feel the Rec Center should be renovated
- ▲ 40% of respondents maintain a membership at another facility

### Key Findings



- ▶ Respondents ranked the aquatic center, locker rooms and lobby as the 3 top areas for improvements
- ▶ Respondents ranked group fitness classes, cardio exercise and an indoor walking / jogging track as the most desired fitness activities
- ▶ 25% of respondents ranked aquatic family play as the most desired indoor aquatic activities
- ▶ 29% of respondents ranked an outdoor splash pad as the most desired outdoor amenity



3

### Key Findings



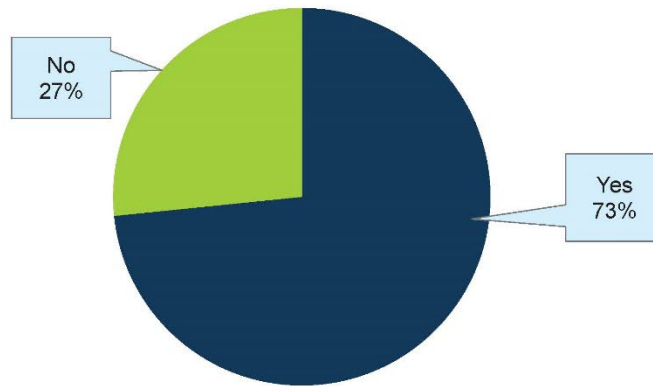
- ▶ Respondents ranked an indoor playground, adult enrichment and court sports as the most desired recreation program or activity need
- ▶ Respondents ranked health/wellness and nutrition classes, classic games and cooking classes as the most desired community or educational activity need
- ▶ Respondents ranked a teen center, gymnasium space, and a place for private events and meetings as the top rental facility needs in the community



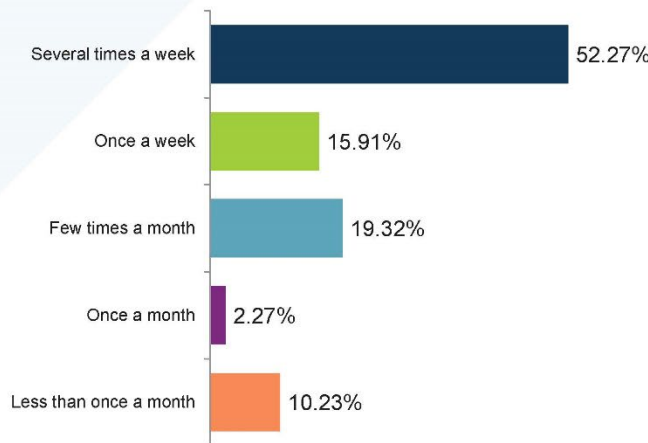
4



### Do you currently use the Rec Center?



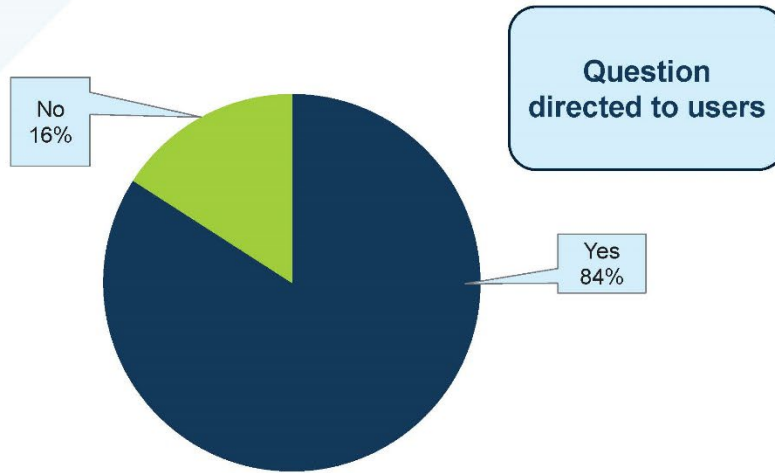
### How often do you or the members of your household currently use the Rec Center?



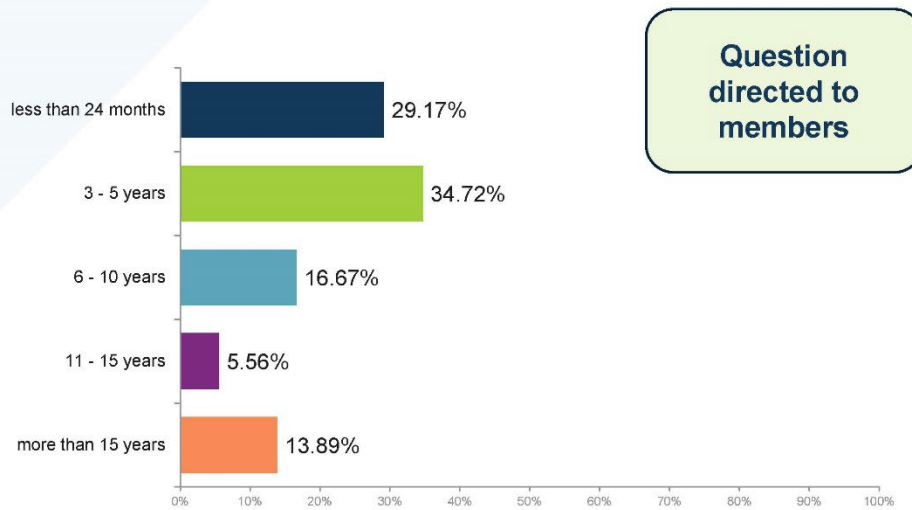
Question directed to users



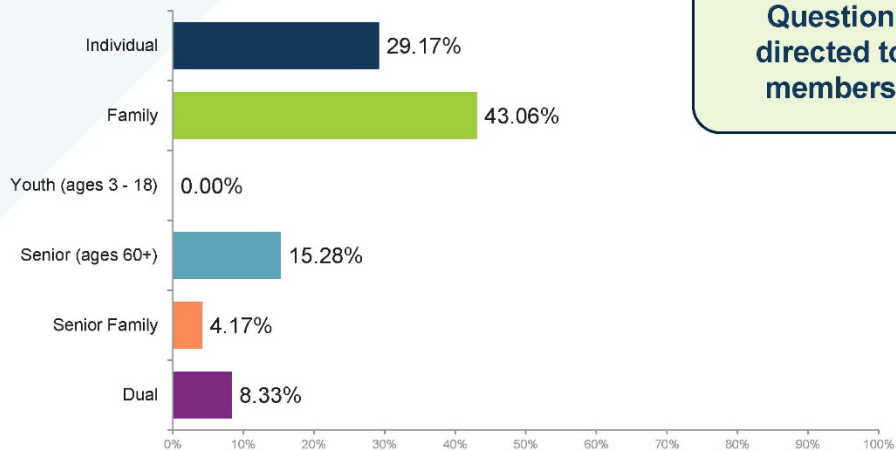
### Do you have a membership at the Saline Rec Center?



### How long have you been a member of the Saline Rec Center?



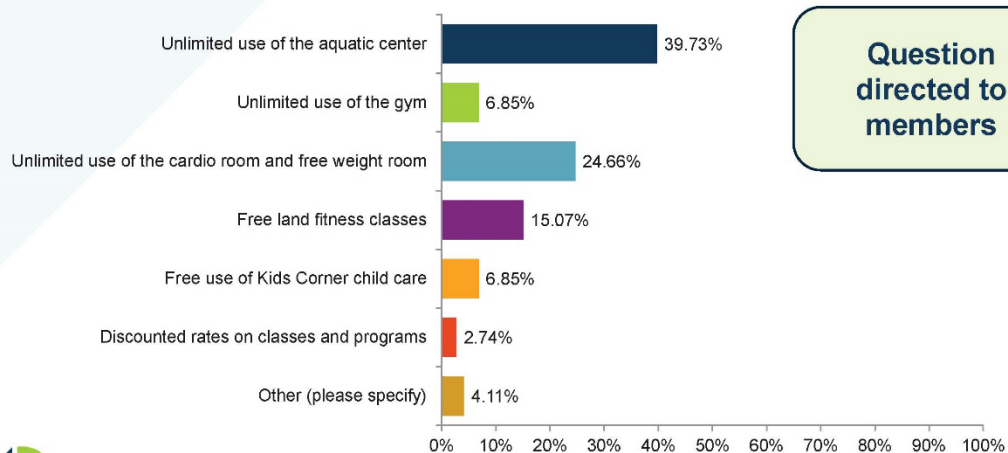
### What type of membership do you have?



**Question directed to members**



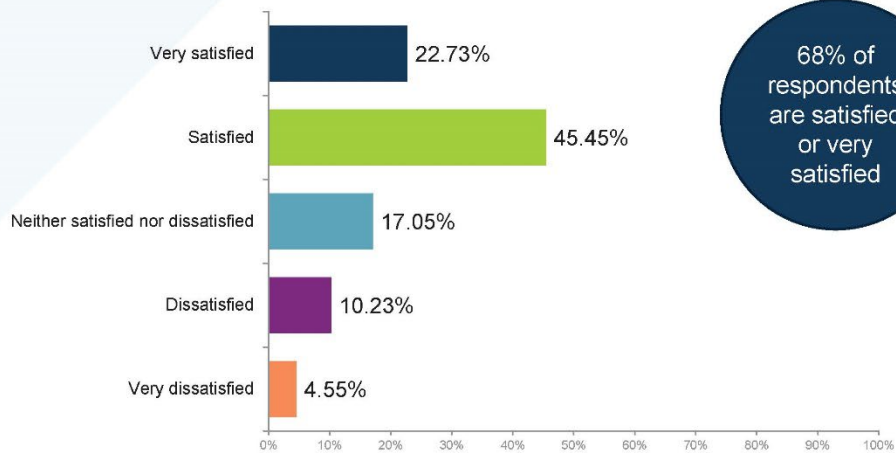
### The most valuable part of my Rec Center membership is:



**Question directed to members**

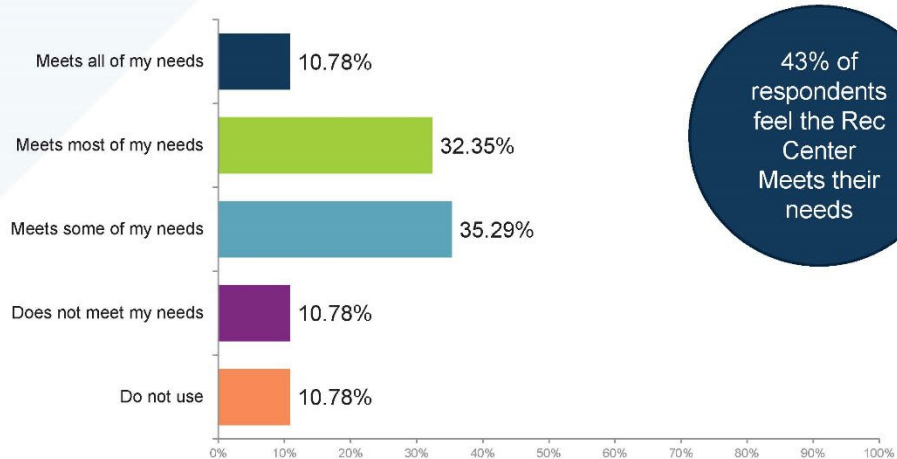


### How satisfied are you with the Rec Center?



11

### Which statement best represents how the Rec Center currently meets your needs?



12



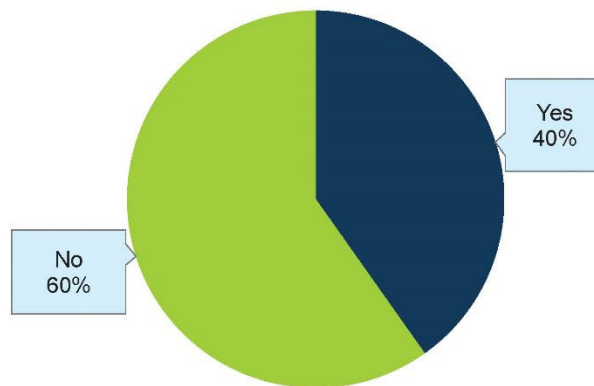
What are the primary reasons that you or your household use the Rec Center? You may choose more than one answer.

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Proximity to home	26.07%
Proximity to work	5.56%
Cost	16.34%
Facility has the amenities that I desire	20.94%
Facility has the programs that I desire	10.68%
Friendly staff	14.96%
Other (please specify)	5.56%
TOTAL	



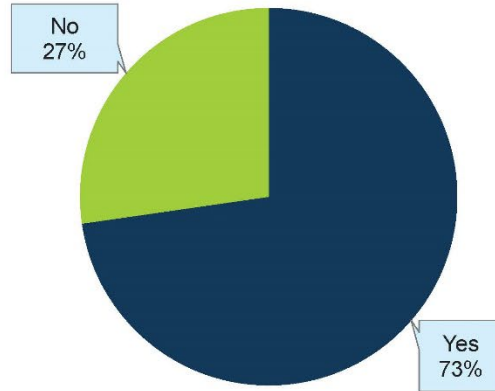
13

Do you or other household members maintain a membership at another recreation or fitness facility?



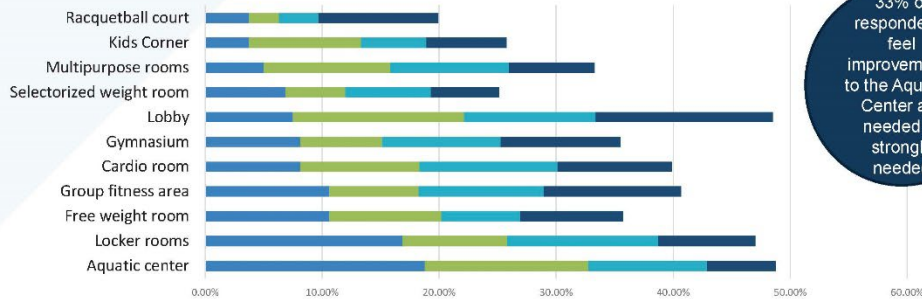
14

### Do you believe Rec Center should be renovated?



15

### Please rank the degree to which improvements are needed.



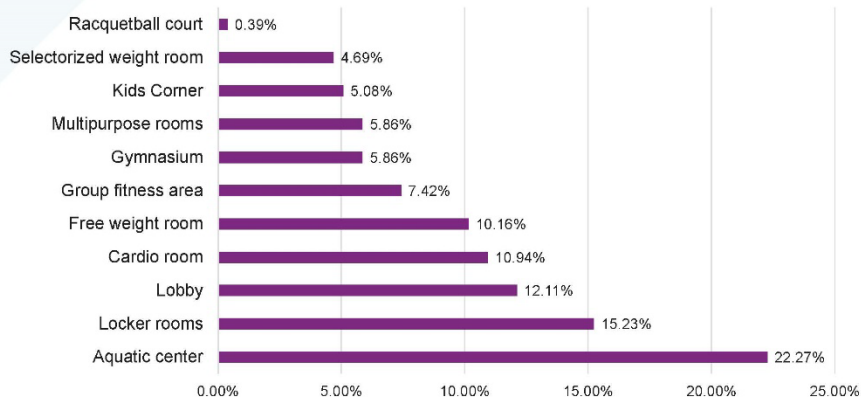
	Aquatic center	Locker rooms	Free weight room	Group fitness area	Cardio room	Gymnasium	Lobby	SelectORIZED weight room	Multipurpose rooms	Kids Corner	Racquetball court
Strongly Needed	18.75%	16.88%	10.63%	10.63%	8.13%	8.13%	7.50%	6.88%	5.00%	3.75%	3.75%
Needed	14.01%	8.92%	9.55%	7.64%	10.19%	7.01%	14.65%	5.10%	10.83%	9.55%	2.55%
Somewhat Needed	10.11%	12.92%	6.74%	10.67%	11.80%	10.11%	11.24%	7.30%	10.11%	5.62%	3.37%
Not Needed	5.85%	8.29%	8.78%	11.71%	9.76%	10.24%	15.12%	5.85%	7.32%	6.83%	10.24%

Strongly Needed Needed Somewhat Needed Not Needed



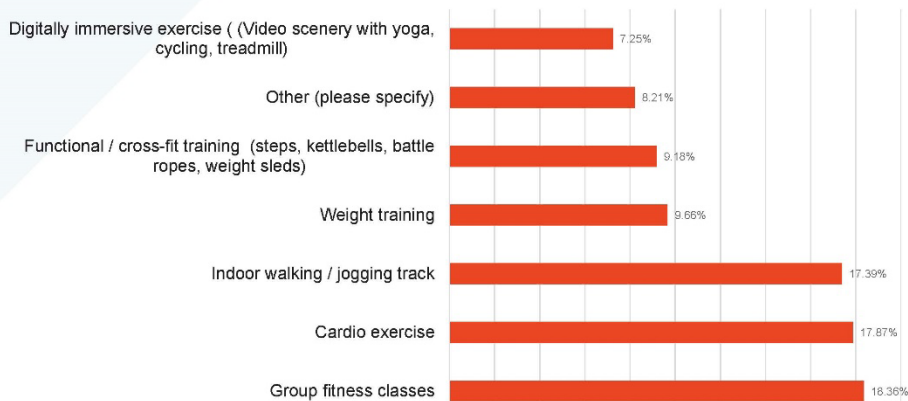
16

### Which three facility areas do you feel MOST NEED improvements? (Select your top 3)



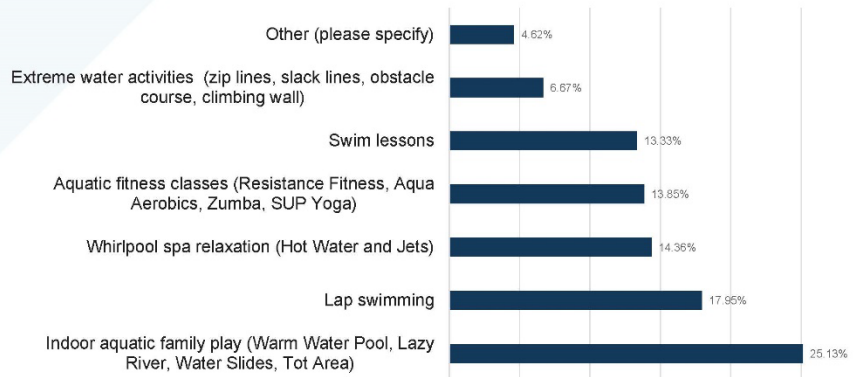
17

### Please choose the fitness activities most desired by your household. (Select your top 2)



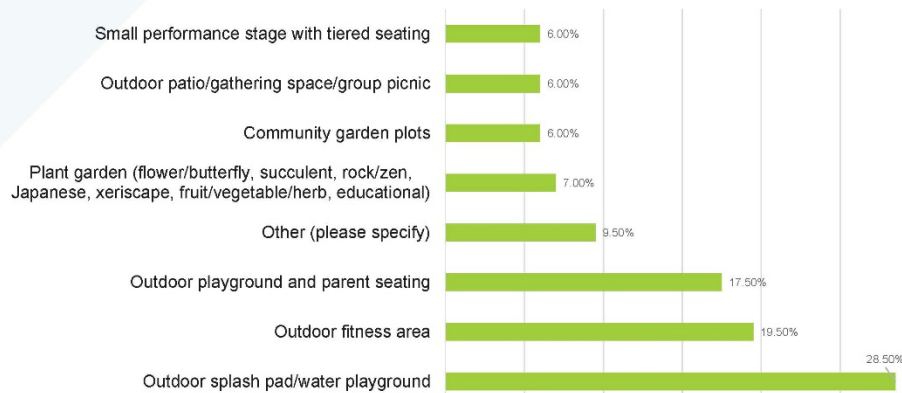
18

Please choose the indoor aquatic activities most desired by your household. (Select your top 2)



19

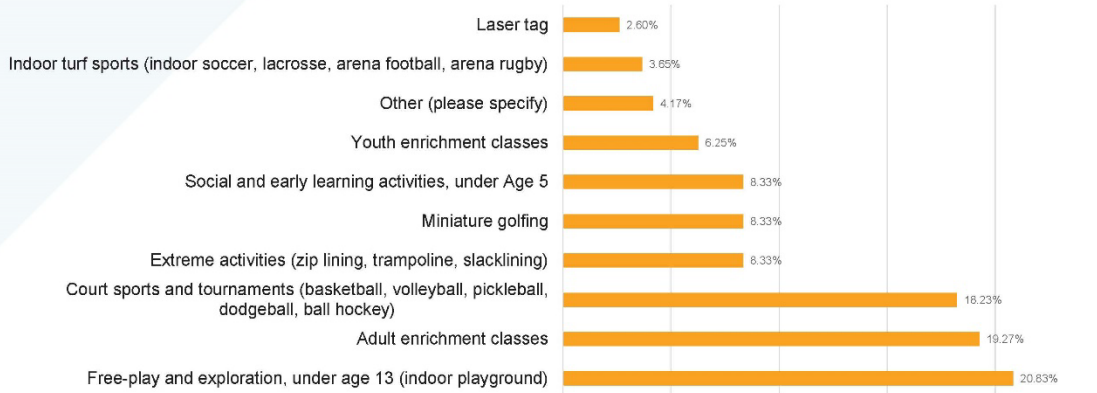
Regarding outdoor gathering spaces, please choose the amenities most desired by your household. (Select your top 2)



20

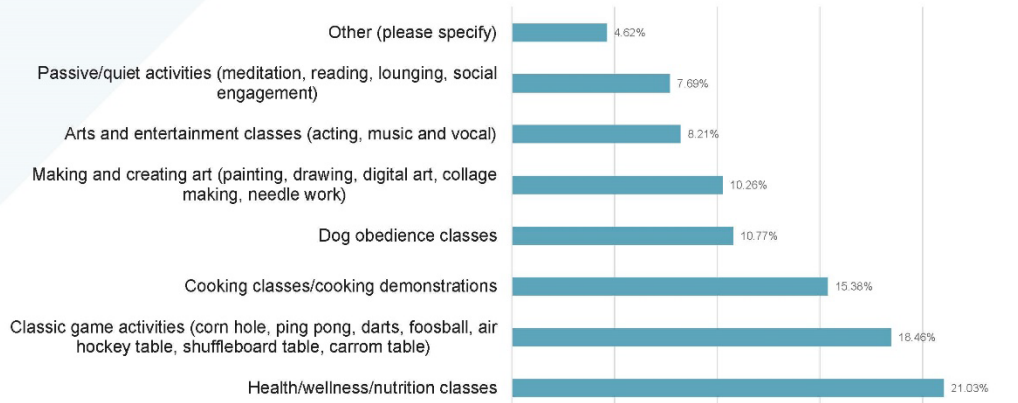


Regarding general recreation programs, please choose the activities most desired by your household. (Select your top 2)



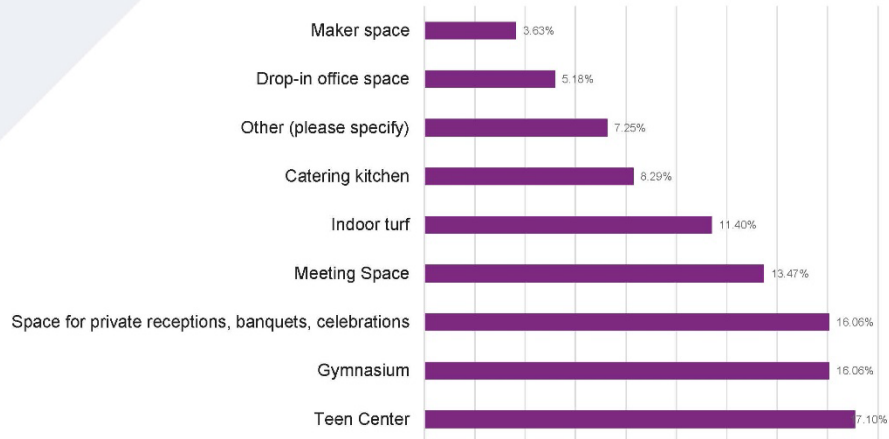
21

Regarding community and education activities, please choose the activities most desired by your household. (Select your top 2)



22

Regarding rental spaces, please choose the facilities most needed in the community. (Select your top 2)



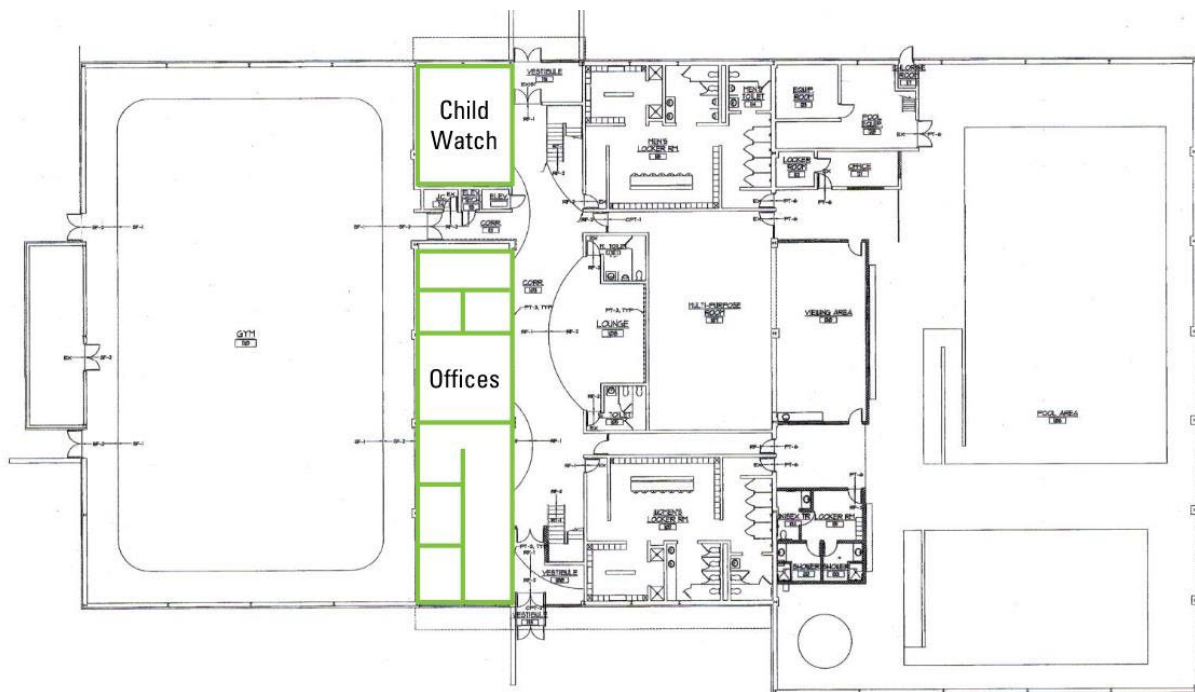
## Appendix C: Long-Range Conceptual Plans

### Option I - Phase II

As future funding is available, the second phase of construction would include repurposing the racquetball courts, combining administrative space for efficiency, and relocating the Kid's Corner to the ground level. Racquetball has been diminishing in popularity for some time and the space would provide more value to the Rec Center as office space. In the existing building, the administration spaces are dispersed throughout the building. Repurposing the racquetball space would improve efficiency by grouping all offices together in the central location of the facility. The relocation of the east office spaces into the existing racquetball room would allow the Kid's Corner to relocate to the first floor, taking the place of the east office spaces. The Kid's Corner on the first floor would provide direct access to the Gym for programming and the potential to expand to an adjacent exterior, fenced play area.

The value of this work is estimated to be \$900,000 - \$1,400,000 without the inclusion of soft costs. This option emphasizes operational efficiency and addresses four of the architectural priorities.

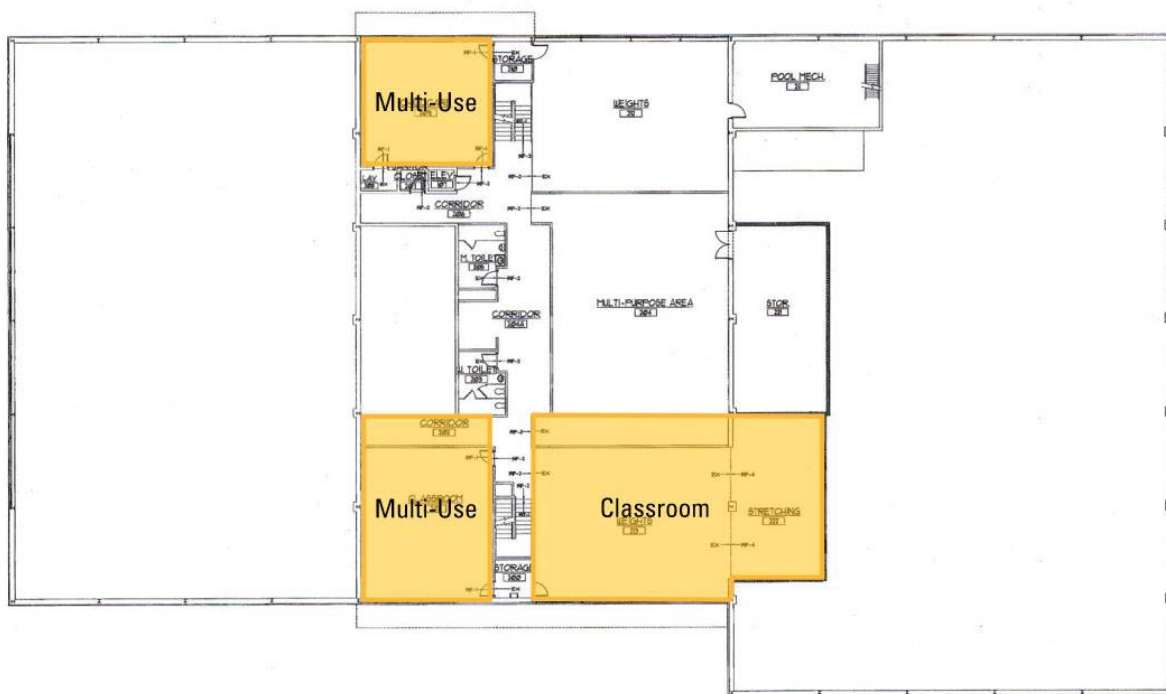
Figure 19: Option 1 – Phase II



## Option II

Option II focuses on the renovation and reconfiguration of space on the upper level. With the Kid's Corner relocated to the first floor, the existing space can be repurposed into a multi-use classroom. Currently, the general fitness areas are split into two areas on the east and west side of the building. Moving the group exercise area to the west side of the building would allow consolidation of the fitness area and provide for more efficiency in a single, larger fitness space. The value of this work is estimated to be \$ 850,000 - \$1,350,000 without the inclusion of soft costs. This option increases revenue and addresses one of the architectural priorities. Note that this option is only viable if Option I – Phase II is accepted.

Figure 20: Option II

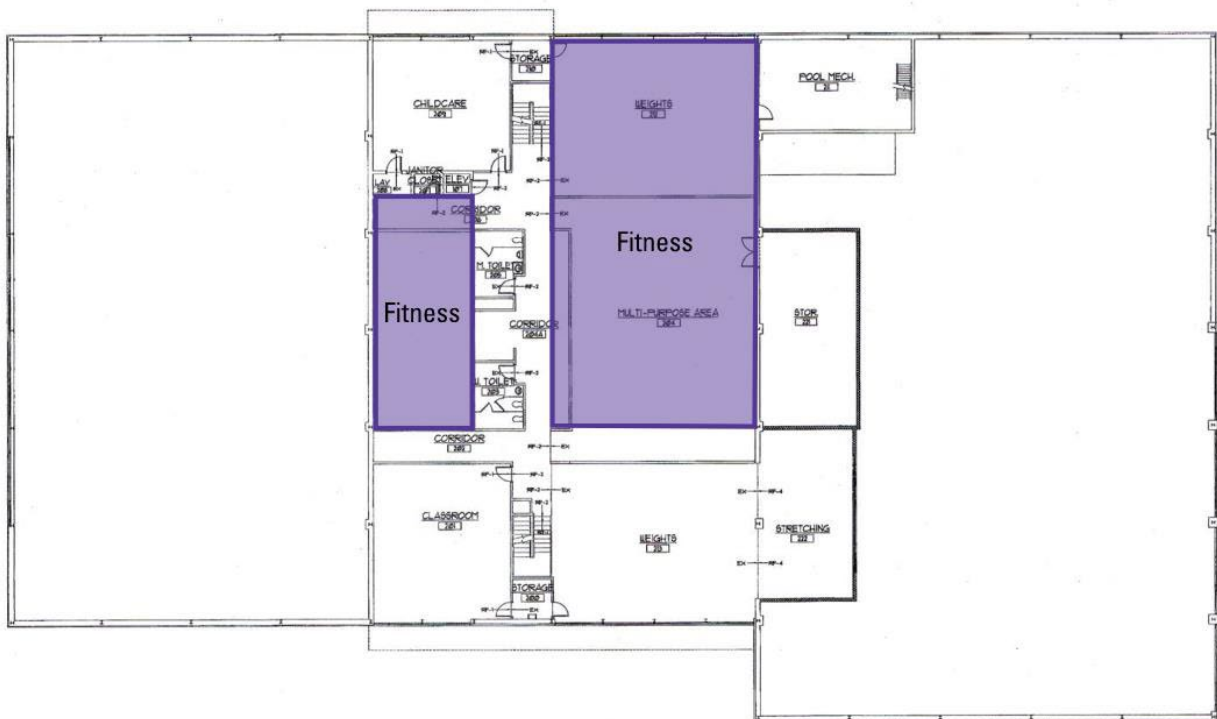




### Option III

Option III adds 800 square feet of fitness area by infilling the existing upper portion of the racquetball court and removing the partition wall between the weight room and the multi-purpose area. The value of this work is estimated to be \$1,200,000 - \$1,700,000 without the inclusion of soft costs. This option increases revenue and addresses two of the architectural priorities. Note that this option is only viable if Option I – Phase II is accepted.

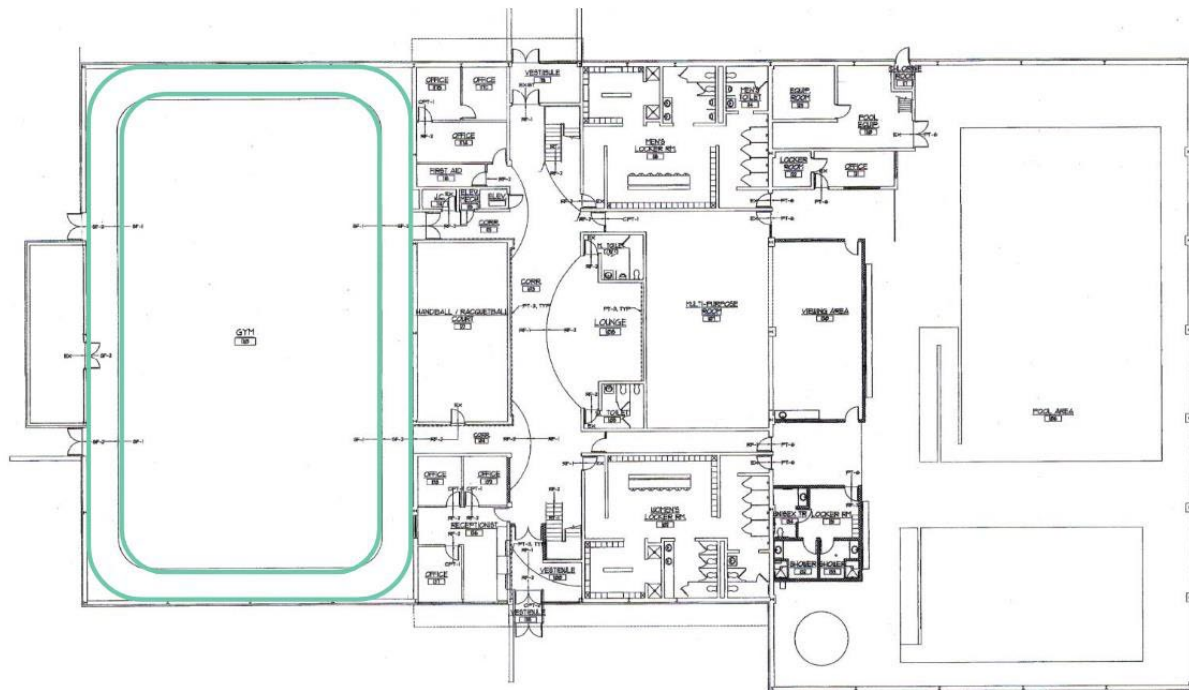
Figure 21: Option III



## Option IV

Option IV adds a track around the upper perimeter of the existing Gymnasium. The original architectural design anticipated this addition and included the required roof structure to suspend the track structure. The building would need to be assessed to determine if additional modifications would be required for the lateral loads. A new, second egress stair would be required at the northeast corner of the building in conjunction with this addition. The value of this work is estimated to be \$1,200,000 - \$1,700,000 without the inclusion of soft costs. This option increases revenue and provides new program opportunities and addresses one architectural priority.

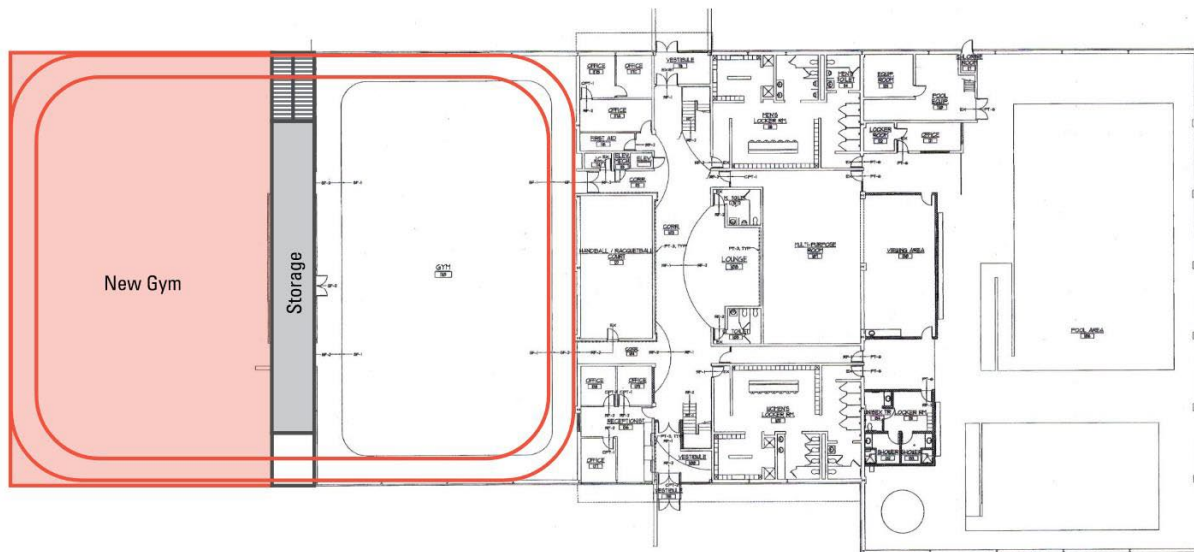
Figure 22: Option IV



## Option V

Option V adds a second Gymnasium, equal in size to the existing gym, and extends the track around both gyms. If this option is accepted, disregard Option IV. A new, second egress stair would be required, and additional storage would be created at the ground level in the space between both gyms. The additional storage space on the ground level would provide functional training space on the upper level, above the storage. The value of this work is estimated to be \$ 7,000,000 - \$ 8,000,000 without the inclusion of soft costs. This option increases revenue and provides new program opportunities and addresses two architectural priorities.

Figure 23: Option V



Options I through V address all the identified architectural priorities of staff. The combined cost of all options, calculated with Option IV (a small track), is \$11,350,000 without the inclusion of soft cost. The combined cost of all options, calculated with Option V (a large track & additional gym) is \$17,150,000 without the inclusion of soft cost.

## Appendix D: Financial Strategies

There are a variety of mechanisms that the City of Saline can employ to provide services and to make public improvements to the Rec Center. Parks and recreation operating, and capital development funding typically comes from conventional sources such as taxes, user fees, and property tax referenda voted upon by the community. Operating funds are typically capped by legislation; may fluctuate based on the economy, public spending, or assessed valuation; and may not always keep up with inflationary factors. In the case of capital development, “borrowed funds” sunset with the completion of loan repayment and are not available to carry-over or re-invest without voter approval.

Alternative funding sources include a variety of different or non-conventional public sector strategies for diversifying the funding base beyond traditional tax-based support. We have included known industry funding practices, potential sources, and strategies, as compiled by BerryDunn and the City of Saline staff.

These funding sources are currently being used or could be used to create the existing budgets for capital and operational expenditures.

### Full Faith and Credit Bonds

Bonds that are payable from the general resources of the agency. They are not tied to a specific revenue source, but the payment of principal and interest uses available operating funds.

### General Obligation Bonds

Bonded indebtedness issued with the approval of the electorate for capital improvements and public improvements.

### Corporate Sponsorships

An agency can solicit this revenue-funding source itself or work with agencies that pursue and use this type of funding. Sponsorships are often used for programs and events where there are greater opportunities for sponsor recognition (greater value to the sponsor).

### Naming Rights

Many agencies throughout the country have successfully sold the naming rights for newly constructed facilities or when renovating existing buildings. Additionally, newly developed and renovated parks have been successfully funded through the sale of naming rights. Generally, the cost for naming rights offsets the development costs associated with the improvement. People incorrectly assume that selling the naming rights for facilities is reserved for professional stadiums and other high profile team sport venues. This trend has expanded in recent years to include public recreation centers and facilities as viable naming rights sales opportunities.

Naming rights can be a one-time payment or amortized with a fixed payment schedule over a defined period. During this time, the sponsor retains the “rights” to have the park, facility, or amenity named for them. Also, during this time, all publications, advertisements, events, and



activities could have the sponsoring group's name as the venue. Naming rights negotiations need to be developed by legal professionals to ensure that the contractual obligation is equitable to all agents and provides remedies to change or cancel the arrangements at any time during the agreement period.

## Grants

Grants often supplement or match funds that have already been received. For example, grants can be used for program purposes, information technology infrastructure, planning, design, seed money, and construction. Due to their infrequent nature, grants are often used to fund a specific venture and should not be viewed as a continuous source of funding.

### ***Facilities and Equipment Grants***

These grants help buy long-lasting physical assets, such as a building. The applicant organization must make the case that the new acquisition will help better serve its clients. Fund providers considering these requests will not only be interested in the applicant's current activities and financial health, but they will also inquire as to the financial and program plans for the next several years. Fund providers do not want allocate resources to an organization or program only to see it shut down in a few years because of poor management.

### ***Program or Support Grants***

A program or support grant is given to support a specific or connected set of activities that typically have a beginning and an end, specific objectives, and predetermined costs. Listed below are some of the most common types of program or support grants:

#### ***General Purpose or Operating Grants***

When a grant maker gives an operating grant, it can be used to support the general expenses of operating. An operating grant means the fund provider supports the overall mission and trusts that the money will be put to good use. Operating grants are generally much harder to procure than program or support grants.

#### ***Management or Technical Assistance Grants***

Unlike most project grants, a technical assistance grant does not directly support the mission-related activities of an agency. Instead, they support management or administration and the associated fundraising, marketing, and financial management needs.

#### ***Matching Grants***

Many grant makers will provide funding only on the condition that an amount equal to the size of the grant can be raised from other sources. This type of grant is another means by which foundations can determine the viability of an organization or program.

#### ***Planning Grants***

When planning a major new program, an agency may need to spend a good deal of time and money conducting research. A planning grant supports this initial project development work,

which may include investigating the needs of constituents, consulting with experts in the field, or conducting research and planning activities.

### ***Private Grant and Philanthropic Agencies***

Many resources are available which provide information on private grant and philanthropic agency opportunities. A thorough investigation and research on available grants is necessary to ensure mutually compatible interests and to confirm the current status of available funding. Examples of publicly accessible resources are summarized below.

- Information on current and archived Federal Register Grant Announcements can be accessed from The Grantsmanship Center (TGCI) on the Internet at: <http://www.tgci.com>.
- Another resource is the Foundation Center's RFP Bulletin Grants Page on Health at: <http://foundationcenter.org>.
- Research [www.ecivis.com](http://www.ecivis.com) for a contract provider of a web-based Grants Locator system for government and foundation grants specifically designed for local government.

### ***Seed Money or Start-up Grants***

These grants help a new organization or program in its first few years. The idea is to give the new effort a strong push forward, so it can devote its energy early on to setting up programs without worrying constantly about raising money. Such grants are often for more than one year, and frequently decrease in amount each year.

## **Philanthropic**

Philanthropy can be defined as the concept of voluntary giving by an individual or group to promote the common good and to improve the quality of life. Philanthropy generally takes the form of donor programs, capital campaigns, and volunteers/in-kind services.

The time commitment to initiate a philanthropic campaign can be significant. If an agency decides to implement a capital fundraising campaign and current resources that could be dedicated to such a venture are limited, it may be recommended that the agency outsource some or most of this task to a non-profit or private agency experienced in managing community-based capital fundraising campaigns. Capital campaigns should be limited to large-scale capital projects that are desired by the community, but for which dedicated funding is not readily available.

### ***Friends Associations***

These groups are typically formed to raise money for a single purpose that could include a park facility or program that will benefit a particular special interest population or the community as a whole.

### ***Gift Catalogs***

Gift catalogs provide organizations the opportunity to let the community know what their needs are on a yearly basis. The community purchases items from the gift catalog and donates them to an agency.

## ***Gifts in Perpetuity***

### **Irrevocable Remainder Trusts**

These trusts are set up with individuals who typically have more than a million dollars in wealth. They will leave a portion of their wealth to an agency in a trust fund that allows the fund to grow over a period of time and then is available to use a portion of the interest to support specific park and recreation facilities or programs that are designated by the trustee.

### **Life Estates**

This revenue source is available when someone wants to leave their property to an agency in exchange for their continued residence on the property until their death. An agency can usually use a portion of the property for park and recreational purposes, and then use all of it after the person's death. This revenue source is very popular for individuals who have a lot of wealth, and their estate will be highly taxed at their death. Their benefactors will have to sell their property because of probate costs. Life Estates allow individuals to receive a good yearly tax deduction on their property while leaving property for the community. Agencies benefit because they do not have to pay for the land.

### **Maintenance Endowments**

Maintenance Endowments are set up for organizations and individuals to invest in ongoing maintenance improvements, and infrastructure needs of specific/targeted facilities. Endowments retain money from user fees, individual gifts, impact fees, development rights, partnerships, conservation easements, and for wetland mitigations.

### ***Foundation/Gifts***

These dollars are received from tax-exempt, non-profit organization. The funds are private donations in promotion of specific causes, activities, or issues. They offer a variety of means to fund capital projects, including capital campaigns, gifts catalogs, fundraisers, endowments, etc.

## **Residency Cards**

Non-residents may purchase "residency" on an annual basis for the privilege of receiving the resident discounts on fees, charges, tours, shows, reservations, and other benefits typically afforded to residents only. The resident cards can range in price but are often at least equivalent to what a resident pays in taxes annually to support operations, maintenance, and debt service.

## **Capital Improvement Fees**

These fees are on top of the set user rate for accessing facilities such as sport and tournament venues and are used to support capital improvements that benefit the user of the facility.

## **Advertising Sales**

Advertising sales are a viable opportunity for revenue through the sale of tasteful and appropriate advertising on items such as program guides, scoreboards, dasher boards, and

other visible products or services. This could be a viable strategy in the future if appropriate opportunities present themselves, such as the acquisition of scoreboards, etc. Current sign codes should be reviewed for conflicts or appropriate revisions.

## Franchise Fee on Cable

This would allow an agency to add a franchise fee on cable designated for community services. The normal fee is \$1.00 a month or \$12.00 a year per household. Fees usually go toward land acquisition or capital improvements.

## Utility Roundup Programs

Some park and recreation agencies have worked with local utilities on a round up program whereby a consumer can pay the difference between their bill and the next highest even dollar amount as a donation to the agency. Ideally, these monies would be used to support utility improvements such as sports lighting, irrigation cost, and HVAC costs.

## Cell Towers and Wi-Fi

Cell towers sited in strategic park locations are another potential source of revenue that an agency may consider. Typically, agencies engage in this service as a means of enhancing overall operational cost recovery. Another type of revenue for a facility or complex can come from providing sites for supporting Wi-Fi technology.

## Private Concessionaires

Contracts with private sector concessionaires provide resources to operate desirable recreational activities. These services are typically financed, constructed, and operated by a private business or a non-profit organization with additional compensation paid to an agency.



SALINE



RECCENTER

# NEEDS ASSESSMENT AND FEASIBILITY STUDY