



**2019-2020
UPPER ARLINGTON
COMMUNITY CENTER
FEASIBILITY STUDY
REPORT
TO THE
COMMUNITY**





January 11, 2021

President King and Members of the Upper Arlington City Council:

It is with great pleasure that we submit to you a Final Report of the Community Center Feasibility Task Force (CCFTF), reflecting the 18 months of work we pursued, and a set of recommendations presented for your consideration.

You will note from this detailed document that the Task Force took City Council's eight-point charge seriously, revisiting at the beginning of each meeting the clear direction you provided to ensure we remained "true" to this meaningful undertaking. We worked diligently to address each of the expected outcomes, while conducting an open and transparent study process that sought and successfully secured extensive feedback from our fellow residents and other crucial community stakeholders.

It has been an honor and privilege to serve as CCFTF's Co-Chairs with this exceptional 16-member task force. They reflect a broad base of our community's citizens and embraced their respective assignments with the energy and expertise necessary to successfully conduct a complex study of this nature.

We thank you for empowering us to be independent in our efforts, and for equipping us with the necessary financial resources to secure a team of knowledgeable consultants to help guide our study process by gathering and analyzing data on our behalf. We also wish to thank City Manager Steve Schoeny and the exceedingly capable members of his management team for their support and responsiveness at all stages of the study process.

We firmly believe that this is the right time and the right opportunity for Upper Arlington to pursue a Community Center, and we look forward to providing our ongoing support, as City Council deliberates on next steps in taking this issue to a vote of the residents.

We thank you and remain at your service.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Margie Pizzuti.

Margie Pizzuti, Co-Chair

Handwritten signature of Nick Lashutka.

Nick Lashutka, Co-Chair

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



COMMUNITY CENTER FEASIBILITY TASK FORCE (CCFTF)

Nick Lashutka – Co-Chair Margie Pizzuti – Co-Chair

Dianne Albrecht	Kelly Boggs-Lape	Yanitza Brongers-Marrero
Supen Bowe	Greg Comfort	Wendy Gomez
Merry Hamilton	Chuck Manofsky	Linda Mauger
Linda Moulakis	Brian Perera	Matthew Rule
Todd Walter	Bill Westbrook	



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Jeff Anderson, Park Development and Arts Superintendent
Emma Speight, Community Affairs Director
Brent Lewis, Finance Director
Jonathan Lindow, Assistant Finance Director
Joe Henderson, Economic Development Director
Chad Gibson, Community Development Director



CONSULTING TEAM

William Architects/Aquatics

Architecture / Community Engagement
Tom C. Poulos, Vice President / Principal-in-Charge
Anna Szybowski, Project Designer
Nancy Thomas Weir, Managing Architect



PROS Consulting

Business Planning / Community Engagement
Leon Younger, President / Project Manager
Philip Parnin, Senior Project Manager / Recreation Needs Analyst



OHM Advisors

Site Planning / Landscape Architecture / Community Engagement
Aaron Domini, Principal
Rick Fay, Project Manager / Landscape Architect



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uacommunitycenter.com

01

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2018, the Parks & Recreation Department completed a comprehensive plan. One of the key pieces of resident feedback to come from that process was a desire to revisit the issue of inadequate indoor community recreation and gathering space. At all stages of the planning process, the City received feedback that the amount and type of available indoor space was limiting the range of activities that could be provided. Most notably, in a statistically valid survey conducted for the plan, 81% of respondents supported a feasibility study on a multi-generational indoor recreation facility.

In response to this feedback, in July of 2019 the Upper Arlington City Council formed the Community Center Feasibility Task Force (CCFTF), comprised of 16 residents, to determine if the community wants and needs a community center. If the answers were “yes,” they should then identify what facilities and programming should be included, explore possible locations and develop appropriate funding strategies.

Community Center Feasibility Task Force Members

Nick Lashutka – Co-Chair

Margie Pizzuti – Co-Chair

Dianne Albrecht

Kelly Boggs-Lape

Yanitza Brongers-Marrero

Supen Bowe

Greg Comfort

Wendy Gomez

Merry Hamilton

Chuck Manofsky

Linda Mauger

Linda Moulakis

Brian Perera

Matthew Rule

Todd Walter

Bill Westbrook



FRONT (from left): Chuck Manofsky, Matt Rule, Bill Westbrook, Greg Comfort, Nick Lashutka | BACK: Todd Walter, Kelly Boggs-Lape, Supen Bowe, Margie Pizzuti, Linda Mauger, Merry Hamilton, Linda Moulakis, Wendy Gomez, Brian Perera | NOT PICTURED: Dianne Albrecht, Yanitza Brongers-Marrero

THE CHARGE

Council charged the CCFTF with presenting a complete and comprehensive report of their study process, findings and recommendations to include, but not be limited to:

-
- 1. A review of the history of previous efforts to develop a community center in Upper Arlington.*
 - 2. A review of the findings of the Parks & Recreation Comprehensive Plan.*
 - 3. A review of existing facilities and programs, including options for replacement of the existing Senior Center.*
 - 4. A review of possible locations for a community center.*
 - 5. A review of indoor recreation/community gathering centers in other communities.*
 - 6. An examination of prospective cost scenarios, including possible amenities and associated costs, as well as funding strategies for both capital and operating costs, including an examination of options for public/private partnerships.*
 - 7. An extensive community engagement and participation process.*
 - 8. Based on the findings of the feasibility study, to provide a recommendation to City Council on whether and how the City might proceed in its consideration of a community center for Upper Arlington.*
-

THE PROCESS

The CCFTF undertook a process that focused on community engagement, transparency and rigorous analysis. To accomplish much of its work, the Task Force organized into three subcommittees:

- **Community Engagement** – Led by Supen Bowe, the Community Engagement Subcommittee was charged with ensuring that all residents were afforded the opportunity to learn about the study and give their input. Their focus was to “meet residents where they are” to reach a broader audience beyond residents that typically engage in civic projects and discussions.
- **Facilities** – Led by Greg Comfort, the Facilities Subcommittee was charged with taking the input gathered through engaging with the community and translating that into a site, a building concept and a construction budget.
- **Finance** – Led by Matt Rule, the Finance Subcommittee was charged with overseeing the development and analysis of a financial pro forma for the construction and operation of a community center.

At the outset, the CCFTF determined this work would benefit from the professional assistance of a consultant team experienced in conducting studies of this nature. The CCFTF collaborated with the City to conduct a Request for Qualifications process to solicit proposals and established a Selection Subcommittee to review submissions and recommend the best qualified firm. Upon recommendation from the CCFTF, City Council authorized a contract with the consultant team led by Williams Architects, with subconsultants OHM Advisors and PROS Consulting.

The CCFTF and consultant team established a two-phase process so that if initial findings indicated there was not a need or support for a community center, the process could be stopped. Phase I was designed to focus on community outreach and defining a community center in the Upper Arlington context, and Phase II was designed to focus on site selection and development of the financial models.

The process was impacted in several ways by COVID-19. The pandemic struck Ohio as the Phase I community engagement activities were nearing their end. Fortunately, the CCFTF had concluded most of its initial in-person outreach, however, all Phase II community outreach activities had to be moved to virtual meetings. A statistically valid survey was fielded in mid-March 2020 just as COVID shutdowns were beginning. As a result, a second statistically valid survey was added in November 2020, in order to gauge community sentiment further into the pandemic.

It should also be noted that the Task Force did discuss suspending the feasibility study at the end of Phase I due to the pandemic. However, on considering the high levels of support shown in all of the Phase I engagement activities, including feedback received after the closure of schools and businesses, the Task Force determined that it was right and appropriate to move forward.

The CCFTF provided reports to City Council at the conclusion of Phase I and at the conclusion of Phase II.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SUBCOMMITTEE

Supen Bowe – Chair, Diane Albrecht, Kelly Boggs-Lape, Merry Hamilton, Linda Moulakis

The Community Engagement Subcommittee was charged with developing an extensive, open and transparent resident feedback process that encouraged multiple opportunities for citizen participation and input.



COMMUNITY CENTER FEASIBILITY TASK FORCE

It's Time to Let Us Know What You Think!

COMMUNITY MEETING
6-8 pm, Thursday, February 27 | UA Senior Center, 1945 Ridgeview Road
Join with CCFTF members and the consultant team to learn more about the study and to provide feedback on key questions, such as "What does a Community Center mean for UA?" and "Do we want and need a Community Center?"

SURVEYS
Watch for news of a statistically valid survey AND online version open to everyone, coming this February/March!

YOUTH ACTIVITIES
Middle & high school students will participate in focus groups, with elementary students provided a youth workbook to complete.

LEARN MORE AT: uacommunitycenter.com

City of Upper Arlington
614-533-5030
uacommunitycenter.com

The work of the subcommittee was supported by a robust communications effort that included a dedicated CCFTF website, regular updates in the bi-monthly UA Insight resident newsletter which is mailed to all UA households, frequent e-news updates to a database of more than 14,000 community members, extensive activity on the City's social media platforms, as well as advertisements, postcards and posters.

Working with OHM Advisors, the subcommittee developed and oversaw a community engagement process that in Phase I included community pop up events reaching more than 460 residents, stakeholder interviews and focus groups with more than 100 participants representing various recreation user groups, and a community meeting. A statistically valid survey mailed to randomly selected households across the community was conducted in March, achieving 632 responses.



February 2020 eNews from the City of Upper Arlington

CityINSIGHT eNews

Feasibility

The first round of community engagement has begun. Read on for a summary of when and where you can get involved!

Community Pop-Ups – The task force is heading out to find residents at various events and activities through early March. These pop ups will feature quick, idea generating activities, per the following dates and locations:

- UA High School boys basketball home game – 6 pm on, Friday, January 31
- UA High School girls basketball home game – 8 pm on, Friday, February 7
- Volunteer UA Expo – 10 am-1 pm, Saturday, February 8, Tremont Library
- Elementary Schools Concourse Gallery Reception – 2-4 pm, Sunday, February 9, 3600 Tremont Road
- Tremont Library – 2-4 pm, Sunday, February 16
- UA Stage Dinner – 6:30 pm on, Thursday, February 19, UA High School Cafeteria
- Giant Eagle Market District (Kingsdale) – 6-8 pm, Friday, February 21
- UA High School Production of Cinderella – 6:30 pm on, Saturday, February 22
- UA Senior Center – 10 am-noon, Thursday, February 27, 1945 Ridgeview Road
- Hastings Middle School Production of Frozen – 6:30 pm on, Friday, March 6
- Middle Schools Concourse Gallery Reception – 2-4 pm, Sunday, March 8, 3600 Tremont Road

Phase 1 Community Engagement

- 27 Interviews of 41 Stakeholders
- 12 Community Pop-Up Events Engaging ~460 Residents
- Community meeting 11.12.19
- Needs assessment survey: 632 completed surveys

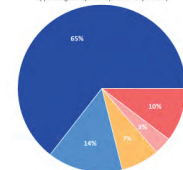


In Phase II, the subcommittee's virtual activities included three additional focus groups and two community meetings. The second statistically valid survey was conducted by telephone, reaching its target response goal of 300 participants. Once that survey was complete, an online version was made available to all residents, achieving an impressive 1,609 responses.

Support of a Community Center if Funded Without a Tax Increase

1. Supportive (79%)
2. Unsupportive (13%)
3. Neutral (07%)

Q7. How strongly would you support the construction of a community center that included the features most important to your household, if it could be accomplished without increasing taxes on residents?
by percentage of respondents (n=608, "not provided")



PHASE I SURVEY

Thanks to the efforts of the Community Engagement Subcommittee, awareness of the process was high with 70.5% of respondents in the second statistically valid survey indicating familiarity with the study. Among the key findings uncovered by the Community Engagement Subcommittee was consistent resident support for a community center if it could be funded without a tax increase (79% in the March survey, 74.8% in the November survey).

FACILITIES SUBCOMMITTEE

Greg Comfort – Chair, Yanitza Brongers-Marrero, Wendy Gomez, Chuck Manofsky, Bill Westbrook

The Facilities Subcommittee was charged with developing the parameters for a prospective community center that would best fulfill residents’ needs and desires. In Phase I, the subcommittee reviewed resident input on the potential programming of community center spaces. A primary driver for determining space allocation was guided by feedback from the March survey, which provided insight on how residents would use a community center:

Top activities households would use:

1. Exercise & Fitness (80%)
2. Classes (67%)
3. Aquatics (62%)
4. Drop-in Activities (50%)
5. Lifelong Learning Classes (48%)
6. Senior Activities (37%)

Top features households would use:

1. Weight Room/Cardio
2. Walking/Running Track
3. Aerobics/Dance
4. Aquatic Programming
5. Senior Programming

The subcommittee then worked with Williams Architects to translate these findings into proposed space allocations, as follows:

Athletics (<i>Gyms, walking track, storage</i>)	± 33,800 sf
Aquatics (<i>Plunge pool, lap pool, activity pool, lockers</i>)	± 12,000 sf
Fitness	± 12,500 sf
Seniors, Multi Use	± 15,500 sf
Child Watch, Indoor play, Teen	± 4,000 sf
Facility, Common Space, Circulation	± 17,500 sf
Total	± 95,300 sf

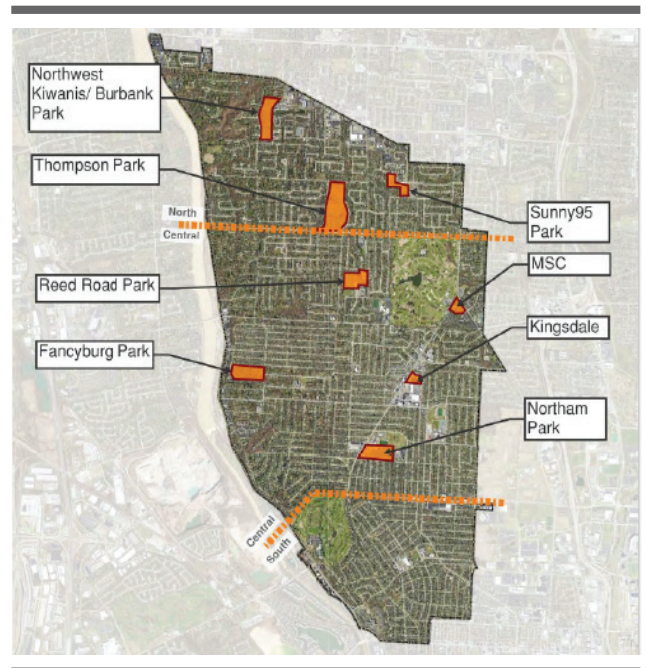
Other important considerations identified through the Phase I study process include:

- 69% of respondents on the March survey agree the community needs more fitness, recreation and social opportunities for seniors. This was further affirmed in the November survey, with 69.6% of respondents expressing support for including Senior Center programming and facilities within a community center.
- 70% of respondents on the March survey agree a community center should include social gathering spaces.
- 70.1% of respondents on the March survey believe a community center should be centrally located.
- The 2018 Parks & Recreation Comprehensive Plan documents that the City currently only offers 5.10 acres per 1,000 residents, below local and regional benchmark communities.

A series of data points guided the subcommittee on the programming of space within the building, along with several other key factors for site selection and building design, including:

- The community center should include program space for seniors, both replacing and supplementing what has traditionally been provided by the current Senior Center on Ridgeview Road (the existing Senior Center would be demolished upon completion of a community center).
- The site should support multiple means of access, including pedestrians, bikes and mass transit.
- The facility should be more than a recreational facility and should serve as a central gathering place for the whole community.
- Existing parks and greenspace should be preserved.

The Facilities Subcommittee began Phase II by evaluating potential sites for a community center. They initially considered 14 options, but soon focused on eight sites either owned by the City or with the potential for a private/public cooperative effort. With the assistance of OHM, these sites underwent a rigorous scoring and qualitative evaluation process that considered factors such as site control, preservation of green space, centrality of location, access to alternate means of transportation and the ability to provide for creative financing. From this analysis, the former Macy's site at Kingsdale was rated as the top site, with the Municipal Services Center (MSC) site at 3600 Tremont Road rated as the second-best option. The committee decided that it would be prudent to proceed with initial conceptual planning for both sites, with the goal of ultimately selecting a single preferred site.



In coordination with the subcommittee, Williams Architects and OHM began to develop several iterations of site plans, looking at parking, site access, green space, pedestrian activation and building orientation. Simple building diagrams of area and volumes, simulating the function of the facility, were also developed for both sites.

The MSC building concept was four stories in height, wrapped around a four-level parking garage. The concept included a community center, at approximately 87,300 square feet, and a new municipal services center, at approximately 41,400 square feet, for a total of approximately 128,700 square feet (through this process, it was determined it would not be advisable to keep and add on to the existing MSC building).

A conceptual design for the Kingsdale site consisted of a five-story community center at approximately 95,300 square feet, with an additional 10,000 square feet of potential partner space (possible future expansion) and two stories of office (50,000 square feet) on floors six and seven, with access to surface and structured parking. The emerging community center configuration would be as follows:

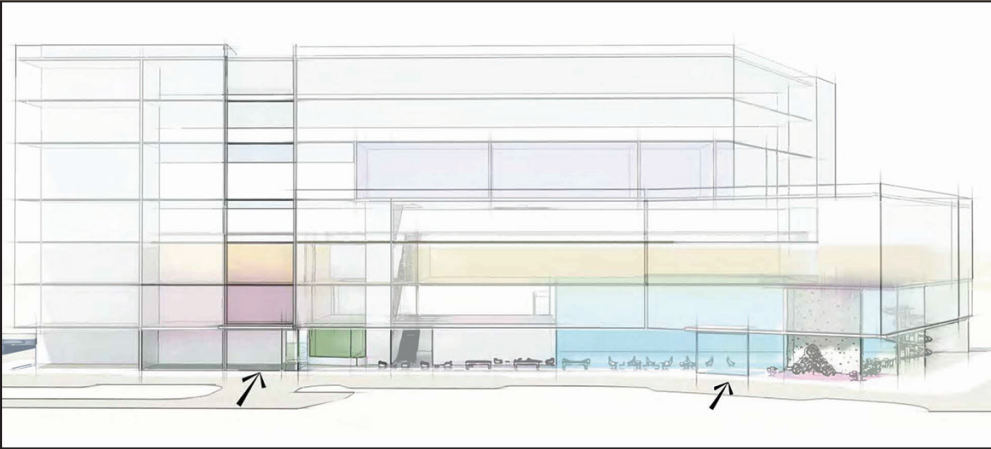
- **First Floor** – entry/lobby, pool, and some ground-level parking.
- **Second Floor** – fitness (weights and machines) and group exercise (fitness classes), etc.
- **Third and Fourth Floors** – child watch area, three gyms, locker rooms, e-sports game room, adventure play, a stretch area, and a running track.
- **Fifth Floor** – dedicated senior space, event space, multi-purpose meeting rooms, arts/crafts/ceramics, demonstration kitchen, a large outdoor terrace used for multiple programming opportunities, and potential partner space.



The former Lazarus/Macy's site at the Kingsdale Shopping Center has been purchased by Continental Real Estate, Inc., with plans for a mixed-use redevelopment project. Continental has agreed to set aside the southwest quadrant of the site as the prospective location for a Community Center, pending the outcome of the CCFTF study and City Council's concurrence that the issue should go before a vote of the people on May 4, 2021.

KINGSDALE PROPOSAL

The “massing and stacking” diagrams shown on pages 8 & 9 demonstrate how the various desired programming elements could be incorporated into a Community Center building at Kingsdale, with five floors dedicated to the Community Center, topped by two floors of office space.

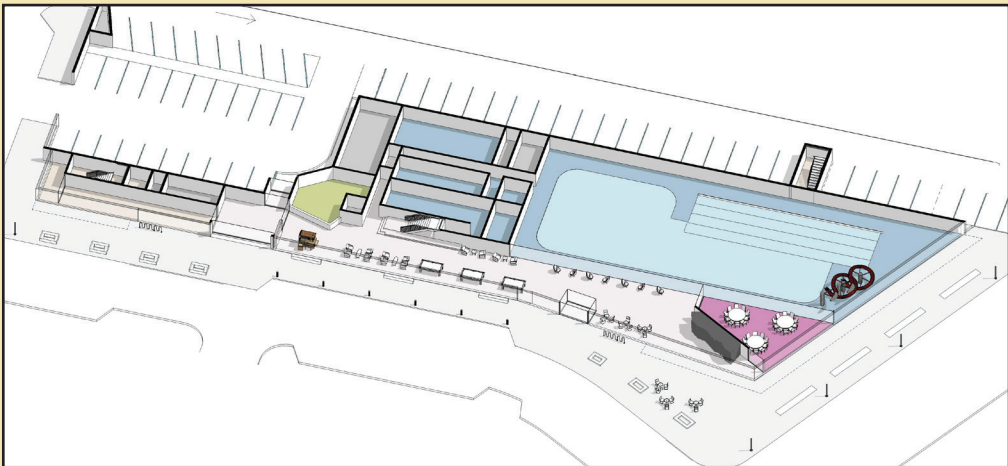


LEGEND

- ATHLETICS** (GYMS, WALKING TRACK, EQUIP. STORAGE)
- AQUATICS** (ACTIVITY/PLUNGE/LAP POOL, LOCKERS)
- FITNESS & WELLNESS** (WEIGHTS, MACHINES, GROUP EXERCISE)
- SENIORS/MULTI-USE** (LOUNGE, BILLIARDS, ARTS/CRAFTS, MULTI-USE)
- CHILD WATCH, INDOOR PLAY, TEEN**
- FACILITY ADMINISTRATION**
- COMMON SPACE, CIRCULATION**

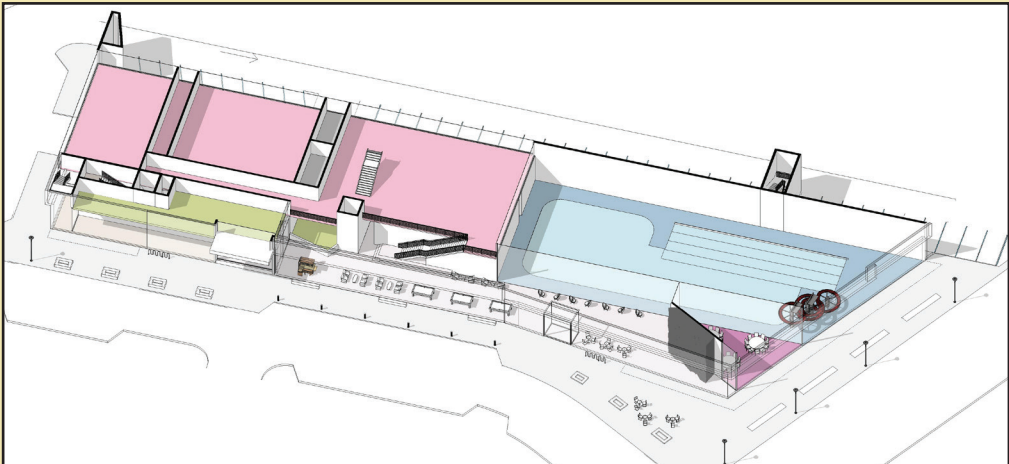
LEVEL 1

- Reception / Entry
- Aquatics
- Locker Rooms
- Café/Kiosk
- Administration
- Ground level parking
- Office Lobby



LEVEL 2

- Fitness
- Group X Fitness



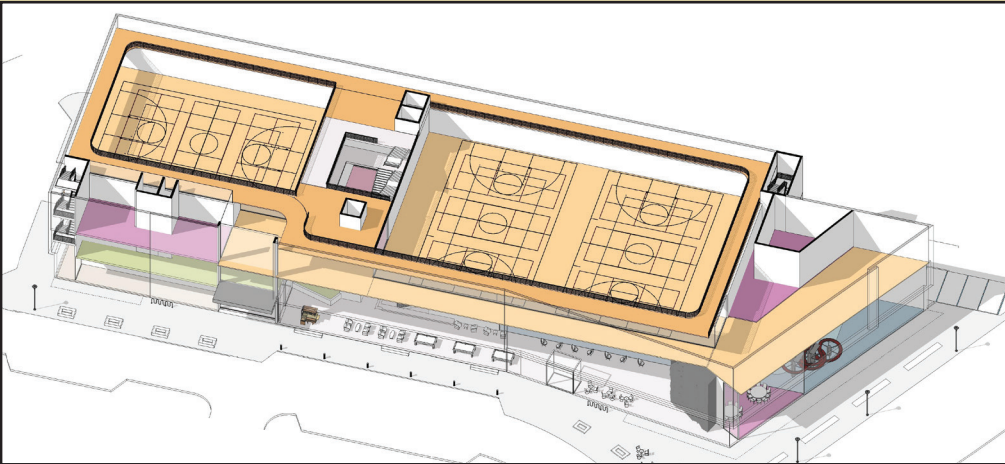
LEVEL 3

- MAC Gymnasium
- 2 Regular Gymsnasiums
- Game Room
- Adventure Play & Analytic Fitness
- Child Watch



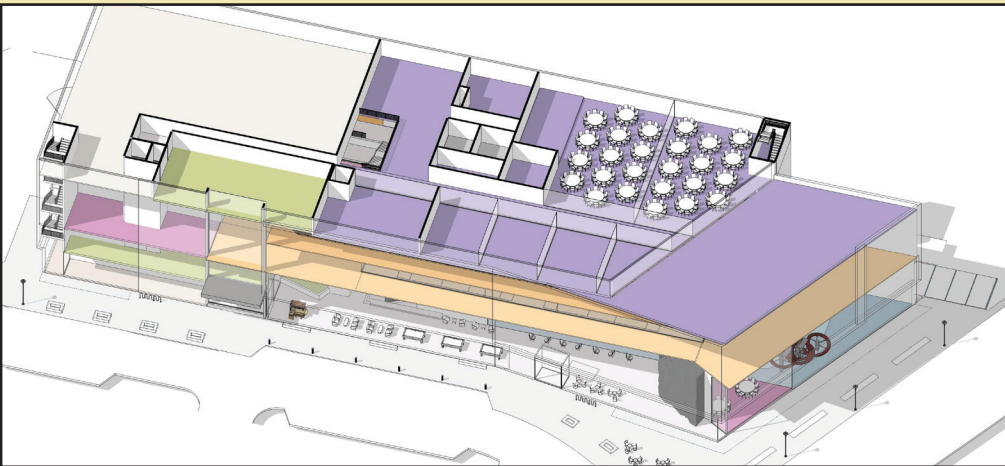
LEVEL 4

- Running/Walking Track
- Stretch Area



LEVEL 5

- Senior Lounge
- Billiards
- Demonstration Kitchen
- Coffee Counter
- Senior Resource Area
- Multi-Use Spaces
- Outdoor Patio
- Administration
- Partner Space







**RUNNING/WALKING TRACK
OVERLOOKING GYMNASIUMS**



GYM, TRACK & ADVENTURE PLAY



COMBINATION POOL

Once conceptual plans had been developed, the consultant team spent considerable effort to develop preliminary cost estimates for each site. Their estimates were based on two iterations: 1) utilizing historical square footage costs from actual built projects; 2) undertaking a more detailed analysis, with a review and corroboration from the Gilbane Building Company and Messer Construction. The estimates include the base construction cost, overhead, profit and general conditions, a generous design and construction contingency, a factor for inflation and a budget for furniture, fixtures and equipment. In other words, the estimates are “all in” estimates, including significant contingencies.

The estimate for the MSC site is approximately \$82 million. It includes costs for a community center and new municipal space for the City’s Administration and Police, since the existing building would be demolished. This site also includes costs for structured parking since a shared parking arrangement would not be applicable.

The Kingsdale estimate is approximately \$54 million. Costs for the 50,000 square feet of office space and the 10,000 square feet of partner space are not part of this estimate, since the subcommittee believed that, in order to obtain an “apples to apples” comparison of the two sites, these two spaces should not be included since they would be self-funded through their own revenue stream. The outlined total project costs for the Kingsdale site also do not include all the costs for structured parking or surface parking, since these are part of a separate City agreement with Continental and Giant Eagle.

Estimates for both sites include an inflation factor. The committee believes that the estimates are conservative due to the inclusion of contingencies and escalation totaling 23% of the estimate.

Based on their study, the Facilities Subcommittee recommends the Kingsdale site as the preferred option for a community center for the following reasons:

- It is centrally located with easy access for pedestrians, bikes or mass transit, and the roadway network is conducive for vehicular access.
- Development of a community center as part of the Kingsdale Mixed-Use Project would create an unparalleled level of synergy between and among the adjacent shops and restaurants, office and professional medical uses and residences.
- A community center building at Kingsdale would cost approximately \$28,000,000 less to construct than an alternate option at the Municipal Services Center.
- This was the preferred location in the November statistically valid survey (75%).
- The adjacent development of the Kingsdale site by the Continental Real Estate Co. provides additional community amenities and a significant financial contribution to facilitate the development, as well as parking facilities that are not part of the costs for a community center.

FINANCE SUBCOMMITTEE

Matt Rule – Chair, Linda Mauger, Brian Perera, Todd Walter

The Finance Subcommittee was charged with exploring all financial considerations associated with a prospective community center.

Capital Funding

The subcommittee's work began early in Phase II by identifying possible sources of capital funding to support construction of a community center, based on the preliminary cost estimates developed by the consultants and the Facilities Subcommittee. As it became clear that the Facilities Subcommittee was favoring the Kingsdale site, the Finance Subcommittee was able to narrow its focus accordingly.

One of the first sources of capital funding considered by the subcommittee was the use of Tax Increment Financing (TIF) funds generated from a combination of Continental's mixed-use redevelopment plans for the Kingsdale site (estimated to total approximately \$17 million), and other TIFs in the community. Combined, they could fund approximately 70% of the estimated annual debt payments associated with constructing a community center.

Recognizing Upper Arlington's rich philanthropic history, the subcommittee determined that private donations should be pursued, and that a goal of raising not less than 10% of total capital costs for a community center was achievable.

On reviewing the City's financial standing, the subcommittee identified excess City reserves as another funding source for a community center. These are reserves in excess of the required set aside of 30% of annual General Fund budgeted operating expenses. The subcommittee felt that utilizing these extra reserves for capital funding was appropriate, as long as it did not negatively impact other City services and capital improvement projects.

Finally, the subcommittee discussed the use of net lease revenues generated by office space within a community center building, as well as use of the City's hotel/motel tax revenues to pay off the debt for a community center. The subcommittee concluded that both appear to be appropriate sources of funding for capital expenses related to a community center.

It was recognized that issuing debt for a community center may increase the City's overall cost of borrowing. However, the subcommittee concluded that this increased cost should not preclude moving forward unless it is determined by City Council, City staff and their financial advisors that this would be materially detrimental to the City.

In light of current and projected availability of alternate funding sources, the subcommittee concludes that the City would not need to pursue an increase in property taxes to fund construction of a community center and recommends that the City should instead utilize a combination of the alternate funding options, as outlined above. The subcommittee also recommends that the operations and maintenance of the current Senior Center should discontinue as soon as a community center has been constructed, with funding for this facility redirected to the community center.

Operations

After reviewing the capital funding, the Finance Subcommittee turned its attention to identifying possible sources of funding for ongoing operations, programming and maintenance. It was determined that a business model should be pursued that is based on competitive and market rate membership fees and programming of spaces in order to meet cost recovery goals. The subcommittee worked with PROS Consulting and City staff to develop an operating pro forma depicting anticipated revenues and expenditures and that is reflective of the following policies:

- Include significant annual contributions to a fund for future capital expenditures, such as maintenance and equipment replacement.
- Establish tiered membership/participation levels, with a particular emphasis on options to accommodate senior residents.
- Include a scholarship fund using a dedicated annual line item of not less than 2% of membership revenue to assist residents facing financial barriers to participation.

PROS developed and shared a pro forma summary based on the community center concept provided by the Facilities Subcommittee and worked with City Staff to determine potential programming of the facility. Based on a 3% market capture for memberships of the 229,000 residents within a 12-minute drive (includes non-Upper Arlington residents), with programs achieving 70% of maximum capacity, the pro forma showed a potential cost recovery in excess of 100%.

While the Facilities Subcommittee was encouraged by the potential demonstrated by this pro forma, they also wanted to know what to anticipate if the facility did not operate at its full potential. PROS developed a second, “stress test” version of the pro forma, assuming a 33% reduction in memberships, 50% reduction in daily admissions, programs operating at 50% of capacity, and a 33-50% reduction in rentals. This resulted in a cost recovery range of about 75%.

The Finance Subcommittee concluded that these pro forma scenarios offer conservative and full-potential ranges, with actual operations likely to achieve a net result somewhere between the two.

Based on this information, the subcommittee recommends that the City should aggressively pursue a cost recovery model of not less than 85% of total community center operating expenditures. At this level, the City’s existing annual subsidy of approximately \$500,000 currently used to support Senior Center and recreation programming, would likely be sufficient to fill the gap between revenues and operations costs. As part of this approach, the subcommittee also recommends the use of partnerships to enhance program offerings and operations funding.

In the November survey, 68.3% of respondents supported the inclusion of office space as part of a community center building, to offset operating and maintenance costs. While the subcommittee did not review financial modeling related to the leasing of City-owned adjacent office space, the site appears to be an attractive, amenity rich location. The subcommittee has concluded that the City should conduct a third-party market study to ensure the revenues generated by an office use would be sufficient to cover construction and operations expenses, with the additional revenues generated to help offset community center operations. Additionally, the subcommittee believes the City should seek to secure office tenants prior to the start of construction.

CONCLUSION

The Task Force as a Whole met regularly throughout the study process to review and discuss the work of each of the subcommittees. The final meeting of the CCFTF was held on December 9, 2020. At that time, each of the subcommittees shared a final report on their findings and recommendations.

The Task Force reviewed the recommendations and unanimously passed a Resolution of Support for the Feasibility of a Community Center for the City of Upper Arlington, with the following key findings:

- *It is feasible for the City to construct, operate and maintain a community center.*
- *The facility should include program space for seniors and replace the current Senior Center.*
- *The community center should be more than just a recreational facility, serving as a central gathering place for the whole community.*
- *The former Macy's site at Kingsdale is the preferred location.*
- *Expected to cost approximately \$54 million to construct, this can be funded without an increase in taxes by using a combination of Tax Increment Financing (TIF) funds, excess City funds, community center office lease revenues and hotel/motel taxes, along with private donations.*
- *A business model should be pursued based on competitive market rate memberships and usage fees, with a goal of achieving a minimum cost recovery level of 85%.*
- *Membership and usage fees should be tiered, with options to accommodate senior residents and the operating budget should include a scholarship fund to assist residents facing financial barriers to participation.*
- *Existing Senior Center and Recreation program funds should be redirected to support the community center.*
- *The community center business model should include significant annual contributions to a fund for future capital expenditures, such as maintenance and equipment replacement.*

Representatives of the CCFTF presented the study findings and recommendations to the Senior Advisory Council and Parks & Recreation Advisory Board as the study reached its conclusion. Both entities unanimously passed motions of support for the feasibility study findings and to endorse the CCFTF's recommendations. In doing so, each made a point of stating their appreciation for the thoroughness of the study process, the vast opportunities for public involvement, and the Task Force's commitment to an open and transparent process.

A presentation on the work of the Task Force and the resulting Resolution of Feasibility was presented to City Council on December 16, 2020 and forms the basis for this final report, along with documentation of the research and work performed by each of the subcommittees throughout the study process, as provided in the attached appendices.

All members of the Task Force are grateful for the opportunity to serve our community by conducting this important feasibility study. The study was extensive, made possible by City Council's willingness to provide the necessary financial, staffing and administrative resources, while empowering the Task Force to be in full control of the process.

The Task Force encourages residents to read beyond this executive summary to gain a full understanding of the opportunity before our community.

UPPER ARLINGTON COMMUNITY CENTER FEASIBILITY TASK FORCE

RESOLUTION OF SUPPORT FOR THE FEASIBILITY OF A COMMUNITY CENTER FOR THE CITY OF UPPER ARLINGTON.

WHEREAS, in July of 2019, Upper Arlington City Council formed the Community Center Feasibility Task Force (CCFTF), which was comprised of 16 residents, to ask if the community wants and needs a community center and, if the answers were “yes,” to determine what facilities and programming should be included, explore possible locations and identify appropriate funding strategies; and

WHEREAS, with the professional guidance of a consultant team led by Williams Architects and support from City Staff, the CCFTF undertook an extensive, 18-month feasibility study process that included the following key elements to fulfill its charge from City Council:

1. A review of the history of previous efforts to develop a community center;
2. A review of the findings and recommendations of the 2018 Parks & Recreation Comprehensive Plan;
3. A review of existing facilities and programs, including options for the replacement of the Senior Center;
4. The identification of possible locations for a community center;
5. A review of the facilities and operations of indoor recreation/community gathering centers in other communities;
6. An examination of prospective cost scenarios, including possible amenities and associated costs; public/private partnerships and funding strategies for capital/operating costs;
7. A robust community engagement process at all stages of the study;
8. Based on the findings of the feasibility study, development of a recommendation to City Council on whether and how to proceed with the consideration of a community center for Upper Arlington; and

WHEREAS, the Community Engagement Subcommittee developed and oversaw an extensive community engagement process that included two statistically valid surveys totaling 932 participants conducted in March and November, 2020, an online survey with 1,609 participants, community pop up events that reached more than 460 residents, stakeholder interviews and focus groups, and multiple public community meetings; and

WHEREAS, Community awareness of the CCFTF study process was very high (70.5% from the November statistically valid survey); and

WHEREAS, support for a community center if funded without a tax increase was 79% and 74.8% respectively in the Phase I and Phase II statistically valid surveys (see Appendix A March and November surveys); and

WHEREAS, the second statistically valid survey demonstrated strong support for including Senior Center programming and facilities as part of a community center (69.6%); and

WHEREAS, in the Phase I statistically valid survey, the top activities households would use are:

1. Exercise & Fitness (80%)
2. Classes (67%)
3. Aquatics (62%)
4. Drop-in Activities (50%)
5. Lifelong Learning Classes (48%)
6. Senior Activities (37%); and

WHEREAS, in the Phase I statistically valid survey, the top features households would use are:

1. Weight Room/Cardio
2. Walking/Running Track
3. Aerobics/Dance
4. Aquatic Programming
5. Senior Programming; and

WHEREAS, in the March survey, 70.1% of residents believed that a community center should be geographically located as close to the middle of our community as possible; and

WHEREAS, the 2018 Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Plan documented that existing park land should be preserved since the City currently only offers 5.10 acres per 1,000 residents; and

WHEREAS, the Task Force, led by the Facilities Subcommittee, evaluated 14 sites across Upper Arlington and narrowed that list to two finalist sites through a rigorous scoring and qualitative evaluation process that considered factors such as site control, preservation of green space, centrality of location, access to alternate means of transportation and the ability to provide for creative financing. The two finalist sites were the Municipal Services Center and the former Macy's site at Kingsdale; and

WHEREAS, the former Macy's site at Kingsdale is centrally located and is accessible via pedestrian, bike or mass transit, and the roadway network is conducive for vehicular access; and

WHEREAS, development of a community center as part of the Kingsdale Mixed-Use Project would create an unparalleled level of synergy between and among the adjacent shops and restaurants, office and professional medical uses and residences; and

WHEREAS, a community center building at Kingsdale would cost approximately \$28,000,000 less to construct than an alternate option at the Municipal Services Center; and

WHEREAS, the former Macy's site at Kingsdale was the preferred location in the Phase II statistically valid survey (75%); and

WHEREAS, in the Phase II survey, respondent support for including office space to offset operating and maintenance costs was 68.3%; and

WHEREAS, the CCFTF will provide City Council with a report documenting all of the data and analysis behind these findings and recommendations in January 2021;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Community Center Feasibility Task Force that it finds and recommends the following:

SECTION 1. It is feasible for the City of Upper Arlington to construct, operate and maintain a community center to serve the residents of Upper Arlington.

SECTION 2. The proposed community center should include program space for seniors, thereby replacing the current Senior Center on Ridgeview Road.

SECTION 3. The proposed facility should be more than just a recreational facility and should serve as a central gathering place for the whole community.

SECTION 4. The Kingsdale site is the preferred location for a community center.

SECTION 5. The total construction budget should be approximately \$54 million.

SECTION 6. In light of the current and projected availability of other funding sources, it is recommended that no increase in property taxes be pursued to fund construction costs, provided that Tax Increment Financing (TIF) funds are available, including but not limited to approximately \$17 million generated by the Kingsdale Mixed-Use Project on the balance of the former Macy's site.

SECTION 7. Leveraging TIF proceeds, community center office lease revenues and hotel/motel tax to pay off the debt for a community center appears to be an appropriate use of these ongoing funding streams.

SECTION 8. Utilizing existing excess City funds (reserves in excess of the 30% operating expenses threshold recommended by City Council) for capital funding would be appropriate, as long as it does not negatively impact other City services, including other capital improvement projects.

SECTION 9. Philanthropic dollars should be pursued to leverage debt proceeds, with a goal of 10% of total capital costs for a community center.

- SECTION 10.** The operations and facility maintenance of the current Senior Center should discontinue as soon as a community center has been constructed, and funding for this facility should be redirected to the community center.
- SECTION 11.** A business model should be pursued that is based on competitive and market rate membership fees and programming of spaces to meet cost recovery goals.
- SECTION 12.** The City should aggressively pursue a cost recovery model of not less than 85% of total community center operating expenditures.
- SECTION 13.** It is appropriate that the City's historical operating funding (approximately \$500,000 per annum) over and above revenue collected for recreation services remain as an investment in community services. Recreation services are components of the Parks & Recreation Department that provide programs in the community center, parks and other community locations. The operations of a community center would not negatively impact City services.
- SECTION 14.** The community center pro forma should include significant annual contributions to a fund for future capital expenditures such as maintenance and equipment replacement.
- SECTION 15.** Participation fee levels should be tiered, with a particular emphasis on options to accommodate senior residents.
- SECTION 16.** The operating budget for a community center should include a scholarship fund utilizing a dedicated annual line item of not less than 2% of membership revenue to assist residents facing financial barriers to participation.
- SECTION 17.** While the Task Force did not review financial modeling related to the leasing of City owned adjacent office space, the site appears to be an attractive amenity rich location and the City should work to ensure that third party market studies support underwritten office lease rates and make best efforts to secure office tenants prior to construction commencement.
- SECTION 18.** Partnerships to enhance program offerings and operations funding are encouraged.

ADOPTED: December 9, 2020

Marjory Pizzuti

Chairperson

Paul Foster

Chairperson

ATTEST: *Ashley Elrod*
City Clerk

Vote Slip

Date Introduced: December 9, 2020

Voting Aye: Albrecht, Boggs-Lape, Bowe, Brongers-Marrero, Comfort, Gomez, Hamilton, Lashutka, Manofsky, Mauger, Moulakis, Perera, Pizzuti, Rule, Walter, and Westbrook

Voting Nay: None

Abstaining: None

Date of Passage: December 9, 2020

APPENDIX

Note: Preliminary Building Program, Building Massing and Stacking, and Preliminary Order of Magnitude Construction Budget Information are shown below to demonstrate the assumptions and initial recommendations of the CCFTF regarding the feasibility of a community center. All areas and cost estimates listed are preliminary and approximate and would be subject to change during the design development process.

Preliminary Building Program:

Athletics (gyms, walking/running track, storage).....	±33,800 sf
Aquatics (plunge pool, lap pool, activity pool, lockers).....	±12,000 sf
Fitness.....	±12,500 sf
Seniors, Multi Use.....	±15,500 sf
Child Care, Indoor Play, Teen.....	±4,000 sf
Facility, Common Space, Circulation.....	±17,500 sf
Total Building Area.....	±95,300 sf

Building Massing and Stacking:

5-story building at 95,000+/- sf with an additional 10,000+/- sf of potential partner space (possible future expansion) and an additional 2 stories of office space (50,000+/- sf) comprising the 6th and 7th floor of the building.

1 st Floor.....	Entry, pools and some under-structure parking
2 nd Floor.....	Fitness, group X space, etc.
3 rd & 4 th Floors.....	Three gyms, lockers, game room, adventure play area, running track.
5 th Floor.....	Dedicated senior space, event space, meeting rooms, demonstration kitchen, large outdoor terrace for multiple programming opportunities. The potential partner space is also included on the 5 th floor.

Preliminary Order of Magnitude Construction Budget:

Note: All budget numbers are tentative estimates based preliminary order of magnitude assumptions.

Building Area.....	approximately 95,300 SF
Total Hard Construction Costs.....	\$37,776,700
Professional Service Fees.....	\$4,385,900
Furnishings, Equipment, etc.....	\$1,754,400
Design and Construction Contingency.....	\$6,520,800
Total Project Budget.....	\$50,437,800

Escalation.....	\$3,782,835 (2.5 years at 3% per year)
Total Project Budget with Escalation.....	\$54,220,635

Estimate does not include the cost of the ±50,000 SF office space and the ±10,000 SF of partner space.



December 31, 2020

Upper Arlington City Council and Community Center Feasibility Task Force:

Re: Endorsement of Community Center Feasibility Study

On behalf of the Upper Arlington Parks & Recreation Advisory Board, this letter is submitted as an endorsement for the recommendations resulting from the current community center feasibility study conducted by the Community Center Feasibility Task Force.

Our Board members have all been closely following the study process since it began in the summer of 2019, receiving regular updates from Parks & Recreation Director Debbie McLaughlin and her team as the work has progressed. Task Force Co-Chair, Margie Pizzuti, and City Manager Steve Schoeny joined our December 10 Board meeting and provided a detailed update on the study process, findings and recommendations. Our Board voted unanimously to approve a Motion of Support for the Task Force findings and recommendations, and I would like to share with you the reasons for our support.

We applaud the Task Force for undertaking such a thoughtful, thorough and extensive process. Some items of note that particularly resonated with us include:

- The extent to which the study reached out to the community for input, using techniques that made it easy for residents to learn about and engage in the process.
- Their commitment to due diligence. For example, even when it had already become clear the Kingsdale site was a community favorite, the Facilities Subcommittee undertook a detailed study of multiple sites to make sure all options were appropriately considered.
- Their commitment to considering issues of access and affordability for our residents, to ensure that an Upper Arlington Community Center would serve all members of our community.
- Their detailed analysis of a complex set of financial considerations and their development of an option that enables the City to pursue a community center without increasing taxes.
- Financial recommendations for operations that include the continuation of the City's investment in recreation services, a cost recovery target that allows market driven cost structures and a capital set aside for the longevity of the facility.

In 2018 as the Parks & Recreation Comprehensive Plan was presented to Council, Board Member Mary Duchi spoke to Council on behalf of our Board. At that time, we specifically highlighted our desire for City Council to initiate and support a resident-driven feasibility study of options for a multi-generational indoor recreation facility.



The Board thanks Council for taking the initiative to prioritize this recommendation from the Comprehensive Plan, for empowering an impressive team of residents to conduct the study on our community's behalf, and for giving them the necessary resources to accomplish their work.

This is an unprecedented and exciting opportunity to add recreational, fitness, sporting and social amenities not previously available to our residents, and to provide them all within one convenient location.

We encourage City Council to follow through with the recommendations from the Task Force, by seeking voter support for an Upper Arlington Community Center next May.

Assuming residents vote in favor of this request, we encourage City Council to ensure the following steps are taken in preparation for the design, construction and operation of this incredible new community asset:

- Continue to involve the public in next steps in the design process to make sure the community center best reflects the wants and needs of all residents;
- Place a high priority to design, build, and operate the building and site to meet green building standards such as those outlined by the USGBC (Green Building Council) LEED Certification Program;
- Adopt policies that ensure the Upper Arlington Community Center will be accessible and affordable to everyone who wishes to participate.

All members of the Parks & Recreation Advisory Board are grateful for the opportunity to serve the community in an area that positively impacts so many lives, and we are excited that we are on the cusp of realizing a long-held dream for our community. Through our endorsement, our Board recognizes the contributions of time and talent of each Task Force member throughout this extensive process and support the findings and recommendations. Our Board encourages City Council to take the necessary next steps in seeking approval from our residents for the community center and is willing to assist as necessary to bring this to fruition.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Matthew Petersen
Parks & Recreation Advisory Board Chair



UPPER ARLINGTON SENIOR ASSOCIATION

1945 Ridgeview Road
Upper Arlington, Ohio 43221
Phone: 614-583-5320

December 31, 2020

To the Upper Arlington City Council and Community Center Feasibility Task Force:

Re: Endorsement of Support for the Community Center Feasibility Study

Please accept this letter as an endorsement of support from the Upper Arlington Senior Advisory Council for the Community Center Feasibility Study conducted by the Community Center Feasibility Task Force.

As an advisory board for the Upper Arlington Senior Association, members of the Senior Advisory Council (SAC) have closely followed the study process since it began in the summer of 2019 and participated in various forums. Regular updates have been provided to the SAC and the Senior Center members from Parks & Recreation Director Debbie McLaughlin and her team as the work has progressed. Task Force Member, Linda Mauger, and City Manager Steve Schoeny joined our December 2, 2020 meeting and provided a detailed update on the study process. The SAC subsequently voted unanimously to approve a Motion of Support for the Task Force process, findings and recommendations.

We appreciate the thoroughness of the process and in particular the specific opportunities for senior adults to participate. The SAC and Senior Center members realize the community center is intended to serve as a multi-generational facility that includes some dedicated space for seniors, informal gathering spaces, new indoor recreation opportunities, and a better-quality facility for seniors as well as all community members.

In addition to including facility amenities and program space, the Task Force also took into consideration financial models that provide for construction without increasing taxes, cost recovery goals that continue the City's investment in recreation services, a membership fee structure for seniors, and the need for a financial assistance program. We appreciate these considerations so that older adults will be able to enjoy this community asset.

The Task Force is to be commended for their process and for taking the time necessary to identify the interests and support of all residents and especially seniors for a community center. This is an unprecedented and exciting opportunity to add recreational, fitness, sporting and social amenities not previously available to our residents, and to provide them all within one convenient location. All members of the SAC are grateful for the opportunity to serve the Upper Arlington Senior Center members and we are excited that we are close to realizing a long-held dream for our community.

The SAC encourages City Council to follow through with the recommendations from the Task Force, by seeking voter support for an Upper Arlington Community Center next May. Our Association is willing to offer any assistance necessary to support this initiative.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Joseph Anastasi
Senior Advisory Council President