Northfield Area Family YMCA Partnership Proposal
To the Northfield Public Schools

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1. Benefits of Building a YMCA in partnership with the School District

33% of all YMCA are built in partnership with a school district and more than half of the nearly 2,700 YMCAs nationally, collaborate with school districts in space and/or programs. Benefits to partnering with school districts can encompass the needs of our entire community. The YMCA and School’s missions align in many areas to include supporting the needs of our kids and families with a focus on the importance of education, character development, safety, physical health, diversity and rely on community involvement. Several other YMCAs and school districts in the Midwest have collaborated to build YMCA facilities with school districts successfully, and the projects have been a profound success for communities like Davenport, Iowa, Des Moines, Iowa, Lincoln Nebraska and St. Paul, Minnesota. Each have tailored their own collaborations to fit the needs of each school district, each community, and each YMCA. We can do the same in Northfield.

The building of a YMCA on school property in Northfield provides the school district with access and use of additional space and facilities, such as an indoor pool, additional gym space and studio or multipurpose space. YMCAs have a long standing tradition of constructing substantial buildings --commensurate with their institutional mission. Similar to schools, the YMCA tradition is to support its long term program commitments to the communities in which YMCA exist, and to do so through the integrity of their design and the materials used in their construction. YMCAs, similar to schools, are built to last, so that they can be expanded based on future community needs.

Importantly, the cost of the building will be paid 100% by funds raised in a private capital campaign conducted by the YMCA. The facility will be maintained and operated by the YMCA, and owned by the School District. A long-term operational use agreement/lease agreement (to be negotiated between the YMCA and the School District) will foster a close collaborative partnership between the YMCA and the district for the life of the building. The school district will not be responsible for the yearly custodial and maintenance upkeep or replacement costs of the facility – that expense will be the responsibility of the YMCA.

Expansion and further collaborative opportunities could include educational programs, extracurricular activities, and community service programs and be developed in partnership so as to meet the needs of the Y, the community and the school’s long-term master plan. The school district would maintain ownership of the land.

Each YMCA is very unique to the needs of their own communities. Actual architectural designs and specifics will be determined in the next steps of the partnership and in the capital campaign conducted by YMCA volunteers and staff. YMCA's, have a long standing tradition of substantive buildings -- commensurate with their institutional mission. Similar to schools, this tradition not only supports the long term program requirements of the communities in which YMCA's are established, but do so through the integrity of their design and the materials used in their construction. YMCA, similar to schools, are built to last and be expanded based on community needs.

As stated, there are a variety of existing and new YMCA and school district facility partnerships to include the following:

- **East YMCA**, a branch of the YMCA of Greater St. Paul, MN built 10 years ago. The YMCA raised capital dollars to build the facility and ‘gifted’ the building to the school district. There is a very successful shared-use agreement in place.
- **CW Avery YMCA (IL)** built in 2006 and located next to the middle school. The school district primarily uses the pool. The YMCA provides afterschool programs and has use of school field space. The school did not provide any capital dollars towards the building of the Y.
- **YMCA of Greater Des Moines (IA) (Waukee Branch)**, built 2009. The school district contributed dollars for an atrium and pool. The YMCA raised the balance. The school uses the pool. The Y uses field space and provides an afterschool program at the school.
- **Scott County Family YMCA (IA)**, built 2003, located next to a high school. The school provided all capital dollars and the facility is sustainably operated by the YMCA. The school planned to build a pool and decided to partner with the YMCA to operate the pool without public money.
- **YMCA of Lincoln (NE)**, built 2009. The school uses the gym, pool, game room and studio space and the YMCA uses the school’s gym, health classrooms, FCS lab and art studio spaces. No public monies were used in the building of the facility nor are they used for the upkeep, maintenance and sustainability of the YMCA.
- **YMCA of Akeny (IA)**, built 1989, located next to the high school. The school uses YMCA space for extra curriculum and educational activities to include gym and pool space. Money was raised by both school and YMCA organizations in the original building of the facility.
2. The Northfield Area Family YMCA – Components of the Facility

YMCA's are known for their 'swim and gym' facilities. Each YMCA is very unique to the needs of their own communities. Below is a brief list of the components the YMCA is working towards building. Actual architectural designs and specifics will be determined in the next steps of the partnership and in the capital campaign conducted by YMCA volunteers and staff. YMCA's, as opposed to many "for profit" recreation facilities, have a long standing tradition of substantive buildings -- commensurate with their institutional mission. Similar to schools, this tradition not only supports the long term program requirements of the communities in which YMCA's are established, but do so through the integrity of their design and the materials used in their construction. The proposed Northfield Family YMCA would be designed to meet YMCA standards of best practices, which are based on the institutional knowledge gathered through over a century of experience designing and operating YMCA facilities.

- Year-round indoor swimming pool
  - Year-round swimming lessons and open swim
    - Teach water safety
    - Increase children’s (and adult) confidence in water
    - Encourage regular exercise for both adults and kids
    - Promote family togetherness
  - Warm-water exercise, lap swimming and water walking
    - Build muscle strength, endurance and cardio-vascular fitness
    - Total body fitness to maintain healthy weight

- Full-sized gymnasium and multi-purpose or second gym space
  - Space for physical activity
    - Provide all youth with adequate opportunities for physical activity regardless of physical or financial ability
    - Opportunities for youth mentoring, adult role modeling and youth character development
    - Improve health and reduce risk of chronic disease.
  - Family programs and other community use
    - Promote family togetherness in family-focused programs
    - Expanded space for growing association and other community sport programs.

- Child Care & Camp Space
  - School’s Out Day and Kids Night at the Y programs
    - Social and physical activities promoting individual youth values
    - Physical activity needed to address national obesity concerns (1 in 5 youth are considered obese)
  - Child Watch program
    - Drop-off childcare while adults address their own physical fitness needs at the Y
    - Promoting designed to support age-appropriate character development
    - Healthy activities to include physical fitness opportunities
  - Camp program before/after care
    - Exposure to nature and our environment
    - Fostering an interest in environmental stewardship
    - Providing quality time away from ‘screen time’ (kids average 6-8 hours a day in ‘screen time’)
    - Youth mentoring and strong adult role modeling as well as values development opportunities

- Health & Wellness Fitness Center
  - Indoor walking track, group exercise, strength training and personal training
    - Addressing alarming increase in adult and teen obesity
    - Network of support for long-term lifestyle changes
    - Year-round fitness opportunities

- Male, female and family locker rooms
  - Access ensured for all people to include families with opposite sex children, those with disabilities as well as youth and adults.
3. Location Identification and Assessment

The Northfield Area Family YMCA Site & Facilities Committee volunteers have been evaluating possible locations since 2008. Members of this committee are community volunteers with a wide range of backgrounds with professional ties to local businesses, schools, colleges, and other not-for-profits. One of the responsibilities of this committee was to identify a variety of possible sites on which a YMCA could be built, and then to evaluate which locations would best meet the YMCA’s mission, community demographics and program and service goals. The committee’s work included:

- Identification of possible locations through meetings with a large number of local business owners, elected officials, long-time and new Northfield residents, school district leadership and college representatives to identify possible location sites. Over 15 locations were identified.
- Development of best location criteria. With support from the YMCA of the USA (who has supported local communities in nearly 2700 YMCA nationwide), the following criteria was identified for where to build a YMCA:
  - Community centrality
  - Logistical access
  - Ease of accessibility for all community members
  - Land evaluation/Site prep costs
  - Collaborative partners
  - Assessed value
  - City acceptance
  - Probability of success
  - YMCA's ability to successfully fund facility
  - Ability to develop a successful business model
- Identification of preferred sites. Community preferred locations were tested in the professional Fundraising Feasibility Study conducted by American City Bureau in March 2010.
- By a significant percentage, building a YMCA on or near the Middle/High School area was the top choice of community members.

Preliminary conversations with the Superintendent and other school district leaders have further explored the benefits of a possible partnership and evaluated site locations on school property. The High School site rose to the top quickly as a location that could meet the needs of the Y, the school and the community at-large. The review of this location included the following considerations:

- School District current and future space needs
- YMCA current and future space needs (based on communities of similar size and Northfield trends)
- Accessibility and Safety
- Central location in Northfield, close to the downtown, convenient for the majority of the community
- Proximity of Sibley and Bridgewater Elementary Schools, Northfield Middle School and Northfield High School
- School district’s need for additional facilities to serve Northfield High School
- YMCA peak use periods not competitive with surrounding traffic patterns
- Strongest potential to attract financial support
- Opportunity to develop a successful partnership business model
5. Northfield Area Family YMCA’s Mission

The Northfield Area Family YMCA is dedicated to providing opportunities for all individuals, families, and the community to achieve their fullest potential. Guided by our core values of caring, honesty, respect and responsibility, the YMCA provides services, activities and a supportive community that strengthens the spirit, mind and body for all.

YMCAs build the foundation of the community by supporting healthy lifestyles, youth development and social responsibility.

Thanks to the generosity of our community and donors, the YMCA will not turn anyone away from its membership or programs because of an inability to pay. We raise funds annual to provide direct scholarships and subsidize programs so anyone and everyone can participate in a wide range of activities and programs.

6. The Impact of the YMCA

YMCAs worldwide strengthen the foundation of the communities they serve by promoting healthy living, youth development and social responsibility. They provide a safe and active place for children and youth to play and grow, and they serve as community centers that are the catalyst for healthier communities. The Northfield Area Family YMCA will be an integral hub providing activities and programs that supports everyone in the community.

YMCAs respond to critical social needs by drawing on the collective strength of a network of locally based organizations that form one of the largest not-for-profit community service organizations in the United States. Today’s YMCAs serve thousands of U.S. communities, uniting 21 million children and adults of all ages, races, faiths, backgrounds, abilities and income levels. Our reach and impact can be seen in the millions of lives we touch every year. Across the nation, YMCAs are committed to helping:

- Children and youth deepen positive values, their commitment to service and sustain their motivation to learn
- Families build stronger bonds, spend time together and become more engaged with their communities
- Individuals strengthen their social, mental and physical well-being

At every stage of life, YMCAs are there to help children, families and individuals reach their full potential. Our YMCA has already strongly and positively influenced many lives in Northfield by coming up with creative solutions to address needs. Our more than 25 partnerships and collaborations range from supporting youth in physical education programs at Artech Charter School or with our local licensed daycare providers to partnering with Carleton College in the Prairie & Wood day camp program or with the Northfield Senior Center in providing more opportunities for adults to use their swimming pool. Our YMCA is also receiving funding from the Statewide Health Initiative Program (SHIP) in a worksite wellness partnership with Blue Cross, Blue Shield of Minnesota and Rice County Public Health for businesses in Northfield and Faribault.
The Northfield Area Family YMCA is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, public charity, locally governed and supported by a volunteer board and volunteer committee members. Every YMCA is a self-sustaining organization which annually raises funds to ensure that no one is turned away from its programs or membership due to financial inability. The Northfield Area Family YMCA receives funding from the Northfield United Way and from hundreds of individual donors.

7. YMCA Programs & Services

YMCA program activities focus in three key areas

A. **Healthy Living** to include physical health (youth, family and adult), youth recreation and family time

B. **Youth Development** to include day camps, outdoor programs, youth-in-government, and nonphysical programs and

C. **Social Responsibility** to include community collaborations and partnerships in programs such as Healthy Champs (offering physical activity for in-home license daycare providers) or providing physical education programs for the students at Artech Charter School.

Membership is not required to participate in YMCA programs.

8. YMCA History (nationally and locally)

The Young Men’s Christian Association organization was founded in London, England in 1844, as a safe place for young men to be during the Industrial Revolution. The original Northfield YMCA was established around 1883, and is reported to have been the first “outstate” YMCA in Minnesota. Over time, the YMCA developed into a nondenominational organization providing nonreligious programs and services to all men, women and children, regardless of race, religion or nationality.

A group of Northfield citizens joined together in the spring of 2005 to form the Northfield Area Family YMCA. Initially known as the Y Northfield Committee, this enthusiastic group drew on a well-established YMCA of the USA formula for launching a new local YMCA, and led a community-wide effort to launch the YMCA you see today. In a few short years, the YMCA has grown from being a mere idea to complete reality. In 2009, the YMCA had over 70 employees, provided programs in over 30 different locations around our community to include a Health & Wellness Fitness Center and summer day camps.

9. The “C” in YMCA

Although YMCA stands for Young Men’s Christian Association, the YMCA is not a religious organization or a church but rather an organization with roots in Christian values. These values (caring, honesty, responsibility and respect) are those in which people from all backgrounds can find valuable and can be found in the Bible, Koran or Torah. The YMCA is a public charity with a history of welcoming all without regard for religious affiliation. We ensure all programs and services are provided and available for all people regardless of their religious background or affiliation.

10. Northfield’s Initial Community Request for a YMCA

Parents, business leaders, educators and a wide variety of other Northfield community members gathered in 2005 to talk about the possibility of bringing a YMCA and eventually led a community-wide effort to launch a YMCA in Northfield. Guided by the YMCA of the USA and supported by literally hundreds of Northfield volunteers, and financial donors, our YMCA raised over $430,000 as “Founders money” which is seed money to begin providing programs and services to a community.
11. YMCA – Community Benefits

In 2009, nearly 1,000 individual adults and kids participated in YMCA programs. Our basic philosophy is to seek out collaborating partners and together provide the necessary programs to meet the needs of our community. In the summer of 2009 alone, 341 individuals participated in YMCA summer programs, an increase of 138 individuals over the summer of 2008. We currently collaborate with over 25 different organizations in Northfield in a wide variety of programs and activities ranging from afterschool programs (with Community Services and the Northfield public schools), physical education programs (with in-home licensed daycare providers and Artech Charter School), camp programs (with Laura Baker Services and Carleton College) and worksite wellness programs with the Northfield Hospital, Rice County Public Health and Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota, to name just a few.

Our success has been in three major areas of community need:

A. Providing healthy physical opportunities away from ‘screen time’ (time behind a computer, TV or video screen)
B. Create opportunities for adults, youth and families to spend quality time together; and
C. Supporting the Search Institute’s 40 Developmental Assets in youth development to include youth empowerment, constructive use of time, family support and communication, commitment to learning, positive values and positive identity.

At the YMCA we ensure that ability to pay is not a barrier to membership or participation in programs or services by proactively serving those who are unable to afford programs and activities. Many of our partnerships are designed to address the underserved in Northfield. Annually, YMCA’s raise dollars in support of scholarships and subsidized programs. In 2008, our YMCA raised nearly $20,000 and in 2009 we raised over $22,000 for this purpose.

12. 2009 Northfield Area Family YMCA Community Benefits At-A-Glance

- Our YMCA served nearly 1,000 people in programs within the Northfield area. We bring together young and old, men and women, people of all faiths, backgrounds and incomes.
- We provided over $22,000 in financial assistance and subsidies for children, youth and families to ensure that no one is turned away because of financial inability.
- In 2009, over 70% of people serviced by the Northfield Area Family YMCA were children and youth. The YMCA provides a wide range of activities to foster healthy, productive children including summer camps, physical activity programs, family events, teen adventure programs and community service collaborations.
- Our YMCA recognizes the need for targeted programs for the following vulnerable populations such as those served by Laura Bakers Services and Parents Meeting Parents. We are proud to offer programs tailored for them, such as our summer day camps, school release days and family nights.
- Over 1,000 individuals from our community attend YMCA Healthy Kids Day annual in April. This year we celebrated our fourth year by again partnering with other organizations in bringing together a wide spectrum of supporters of healthy kids to include the Northfield police and fire departments, Rice County Sherriff and Public Health departments, Northfield and Faribault Hospital and Northfield Urgent Care and Allina Clinics, Northfield School District’s Community Services to name just a few.
- Our YMCA is driven by an ongoing assessment of community needs and controlled by a local board of community volunteers. In 2009, over 95 volunteers contributed time in policy and program areas.
- Our YMCA employed over 90 individual people in 2009. All but one are part-time and 16 are work study students from St. Olaf and Carleton. The YMCA in the largest community employer of work site students from both colleges in Northfield.
- Recognizing the importance of collaborations, our YMCA had key partnerships with the following organizations: Northfield School District Community Services, Artech Charter School, Rice County Public Health, Northfield Senior Center, Northfield Retirement Community, Just Food Co-op, the National Guard, Blue-Cross Blue-Shield of MN as well as the Northfield Soccer and Basketball Associations and Northfield Volleyball Club.
- Provided intern opportunities for students at Artech Charter School and St. Olaf College.
  o Jennell McKenna is the YMCA’s first high school senior from Artech Charter School working on an internship and senior project which focused on curriculum for our Young Scientist & camp programs.
  o The Northfield Area Family YMCA worked with Amy Kasch, St. Olaf student who worked as an Intern in January 2010. Amy’s role will be “Summer Camp Curriculum Research & Designer“. 
13. Northfield Area Family YMCA – Our Growth

Revenue does not include grants, outreach programs, donations, special events or United Way funding.

Individual counts are actual participants who signed up for programs and services and does not include employees in the worksite wellness program (which includes 26 businesses in Northfield and Faribault with over 7000 employees) or special events (community or family events such as Healthy Kids Day (1,000-1,500 people from Northfield participate each year in this event alone)). 75% of individuals participate in more than one program each year. 60% participate in more than 5 programs each per year).

14. What Makes a YMCA Different

- **No one is turned away because of inability to pay.** Wealthy to Poor – all play, work and participate in all programs together
- **Noncompetitive.** YMCA programs allow all kids of all abilities to participate and enjoy outdoor activities and sport-type programs. There are no ‘cuts’ at the YMCA
- **Core values.** All YMCA youth programs incorporate core values of caring, honesty, responsibility and respect
- **Programs and services support the entire family**
- **National movement.** YMCAs are helping families make lifestyle changes (to live healthier more connected lives)
- **Community needs based.** YMCAs are different in each community – based on community needs and resources
- **Collaborative Impact.** Working together with other organizations to provide more quality services for more people in Northfield – partnership and collaboration is key
- **High Functioning Volunteer Board.** 14 full board members and 24 committee members, all actively involved in the YMCA
The YMCA’s Relationship with Other Organizations

The YMCA is a community partner with other organizations and works diligently to share resources and talents that provide more services and programs to more people at a lower cost to youth, adults and families in our community. To that end, we are collaborating already with a vast (and growing) number of organizations. Current Community Collaborations:

- Provided Early Release afterschool programming in partnership with the Northfield Public Schools and the Community Services Division each Wednesday throughout the 2009-10 school year for K-5th grade.
- Largest employer of community work study students from Carleton and St. Olaf College with nearly 20 students.
- Continuing the tradition in partnership with Carleton College in collaboration in the offering the Prairie & Wood 1/2 day camp program (we averaged 26 kids per day in 2009!).
- Provide 12 opportunities per week for adults and one opportunity per week for families to participate in open swim in partnership with the Northfield Senior Center.
- Just Food Co-op and the YMCA collaborate to manage the Ron Griffith Young Leaders Scholarship Fund and to provide healthy snacks to camp participants.
- Provide sports instruction as a feeder program for youth with the Northfield Basketball Association, the Northfield Soccer Association and the Northfield Volleyball Club.
- Ensure quality childcare and safety training is provided for volunteers in the Parents Meeting Parents program, which is a support group for families who have children with disabilities.
- Over 110 Artech Charter School middle and high school students participated in physical education programs provided the YMCA.
- Northfield Public Schools Community Services Division, Emmaus Church and the YMCA collaborated to provide the Youth PLUS program in August 2008.
- Partnership with Rice County Public Health and Blue Cross Blue Shield of MN in worksite wellness for 26 businesses in Faribault and Northfield, providing healthy nutrition, physical and tobacco cessation support to over 7,700 employees and their employees.
- Providing new opportunities for families supported by Laura Baker Family Support Services to include “Y School’s Out Days”, “Kids Night at the Y” and “Y Family Nights” and summer Camps are now accessible for families raising kids with developmental disabilities.
- Provided over 70 preschool children physical fitness opportunities in partnership with Rice County Public Health and the United Providers Association (licensed in-home daycare centers) in 2009-2010.

US Secretary of Education Partnership Endorsement

US Secretary of Education Arne Duncan visited Orlando’s Lake Nona development and declared the public-private partnership that built an elementary school joined at the hip with a YMCA a “model of what a 21st-century school should be,” according to the Orlando Sentinel (July 29, 2009). Duncan toured the School and the YMCA – which share a building and said it was amazing to see the additional facilities made available to the school in partnership with the YMCA.

Gym and Pools Space Needs in Northfield

Few parents, coaches, local sport associations and the school district staff believe Northfield has enough gym and pool space in Northfield. We are a community with wonderful fitness facilities and pools, however, there are restrictions on use of these facilities by everyone in Northfield. Further facility use is limited for families with children or youth participation. Examples include:

- Northfield Senior Center: fitness center and pool. The Northfield Senior Center is a locally owned and self-sustaining nonprofit targeting adults ages 50 and older. Primarily use and programming is designed for members of the community 50 years or older.
- Carleton College: fitness center and pool. Carleton College is a private college. Primary use and programming is designed for students, faculty and staff of the college. Space is not conducive for family or youth use (under the age of 18).
- St. Olaf College: fitness center and pool. St. Olaf is a private college. Primary use and programming is designed for students, faculty and staff of the college. Space in not conducive for family or youth use (under the age of 18).

The School district also has gym and pool space, however Northfield Middle School and Northfield High School programs utilize all of the gym and pool space available for the majority of the calendar year. Youth athletic teams who lease the gym space for practice, in some cases, practice until 10:00 p.m. and/or they are limited to one night of practice per week because of the competing groups.
18. How We Determined the Components of the Facility

YMCA are a product of the needs in a community. Feedback on the needs of Northfield area has come from families, businesses, schools, worksites, faith-based organizations, health departments, colleges, and other not-for-profits. The Northfield Area Family YMCA conducted two professional studies to substantiate those findings. The first was a market study conducted by the market research firm, Anderson, Niebuhr & Associates, Inc., during the summer of 2007. The second was a fundraising feasibility study conducted by American City Bureau in March of 2010. Further, since early 2009, the YMCA and Northfield School District have worked together to determine the needs of both organizations and vetted the benefits of a partnership.

- Indoor swim pool
  - Strong need for increased year-round swim lessons (all ages to include the preschool).
  - There is no other zero depth entry pool in Northfield, except for the city’s outdoor pool.
  - Limited lap swimming opportunities, pool availability for youth and adults, particularly when youth and adults can be in the same location.
  - Limited access for all people in the Northfield area, to an indoor pool, year round

- Gymnasium & multi-purpose space
  - Limited access and opportunity for all children to have access to physical activities.
  - Limited access and opportunity regardless of financial ability.

- Child Care & Camp Space
  - Children can be brought with parents while they exercise.
  - Opportunities to expose children to nature and the outdoors
  - Opportunities to give kids healthy activities other than ‘screen time’
  - Summer and school’s out day opportunities

- Health & Wellness Fitness Center
  - National health crisis, 40-60% of all people do not get enough physical fitness for their health
  - Limited access and opportunity for year-round walking track
  - Family fitness center focused

19. YMCA Facility – Code Requirements

Buildings constructed in the State of Minnesota are required to build per code. In this case, the code is the 2007 Minnesota State Building Code which adopts, with amendments specific to the State of Minnesota, the 2006 International Building Code.

This document "codifies" the requirements for the occupancy group most nearly resembling the intended use (according to fire safety and relative hazard) as well as determining the type of construction (in terms of materials and fire-resistance) required to meet the needs of that occupancy group. Most notably, the code determines the requirements for number of, width of, and distance to exits and whether or not fully automated sprinkler systems need to be installed, etc.

School buildings in the State of Minnesota are classified as an Educational Group E Occupancy. YMCA's would fall under Assembly Group A-3 as its intended use if "for the gathering together of persons for the purposes of recreation".

Each part of the whole for a school or a YMCA has its own specific requirements (like the swimming pool and the gymnasium (which are Assembly Group A-3 Occupancies) or a daycare (which is an Education Group E Occupancy). Therefore, the swimming pool or the gymnasium in the YMCA would likely have similar if not the exact same requirements as the school.

20. Long-term Space Needs

YMCA are a community asset and are built to provide services and programs for the long-term. The planning involved in bringing a YMCA to Northfield includes future growth needs which are based on community needs. All future expansions will be done collaboratively to ensure they meet the needs of both organizations and the community.
21. Traffic

Throughout this evaluation process, the YMCA has met with city officials, school district personnel, citizens and representatives from the Safe Routes to School Committee to review any existing traffic concerns near the high school. Short and long-term recommendations have already been identified and the YMCA is committed to supporting the city and school district through this phased approach aimed to reduce safety concerns in order to allow an increase in pedestrian traffic.

YMCA traffic impact will be specifically determined by the final facility components. Typical YMCA vehicle traffic (based on similar size communities, and Y’s located near schools) indicate peak periods that do not compete with school peak period use. Serving youth is one of the integral parts of the mission of the YMCA and most YMCA programs and services supporting youth will not be provided during the school day.

22. Possible Lease and Shared Space Agreements

Multiple lease and shared use agreements were analyzed from current YMCA/School District facility partnerships in the Midwest. The actual lease and shared use agreement between the Northfield Area Family YMCA and the Northfield School District will be finalized and presented to the school board for a final vote at a future date this fall.

Northfield, Minn. October 18, 2007. When asked “Do you think a new YMCA should be built in Northfield?” the answer from a broad sample of Northfield and Dundas residents was a resounding “Yes!” Seventy-six percent of those surveyed by St. Paul-based market research firm, Anderson, Niebuhr & Associates, Inc., supported the idea of a YMCA in the area, while only eleven percent said no. The Board of the Northfield Area Family YMCA commissioned the study to assess the breadth and depth of community interest and likely support.

“We were very pleased with the survey findings, and excited by how much support there appears to be,” said Chris Sorenson, a NAFY board member and the chair of the organization’s communications committee. “One of the reasons we hired Anderson Niebuhr was to get objective data about the level of community interest. There is clearly a sense that this community needs the programs and services a Y can offer.”

The Anderson-Niebuhr study reached a sample of 300 randomly selected households in the Northfield and Dundas zip codes. The survey was taken by telephone between July 31 and September 16, 2007. In a presentation to the NAFY board, Marsha Niebuhr, vice president of the research firm, noted that the survey had an 86% response rate, an unusually strong response.

The survey findings showed that the Y enjoys a positive community identity.

- Nearly 90% believed a YMCA provides healthy, family-oriented programs and services;
- More than 85% see a Y as providing youth and adult fitness programs;
- 81% view a Y as a catalyst for collaborations among organizations interested in creating and sustaining a healthier community.

The survey highlighted many of the recreational needs not being fully met in the Northfield area.

- 76% expressed interest in an indoor track;
- 74% are interested in fitness equipment and programs;
- Approximately two-thirds of respondents (64-69%) are interested in an indoor pool for lap swimming, swimming lessons, water aerobics or recreational swimming.

The survey found that only about one-third of community members have access to recreational facilities at Carleton or St. Olaf Colleges, the Northfield Senior Center, or through membership in one of the local, for-profit fitness centers. There appears to be a particular need for recreational programs and facilities that will serve families with children, with an emphasized need for a teen center and associated programs.

Based on the survey findings, the Northfield Area Family YMCA will continue its efforts to develop programs that serve the community in a variety of locations, while moving forward with the planning process for a long-term facility solution. YMCA USA consultant Jeff Filipek is assisting with a planning process based on the Y’s extensive experience and proven practices for building a Y at the pace a community can support.

“There is no single pattern for how Ys progress from offering programs in a community, to building a facility,” said Filipek. “Each community has to find its own path to identifying needs, planning programs and buildings that meet those needs, and then raising the funds to build. To have objective data like that provided by Anderson Niebuhr is a tremendous resource to improve the Y’s awareness of community needs and dreams and help the organization move forward.”

The Northfield Area Family YMCA has an office at 220 Division Street. A catalog of fall programs and activities is available there, or on the organization’s website at www.northfieldymca.org.