



Fremont Area Recreation Authority

Feasibility Study

A study prepared for the Fremont Area Park & Recreation Advisory Committee as guidance for establishing an area-wide Recreation Authority.

March 23, 2012

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Fremont Recreation Authority Feasibility Study

Background

The Fremont Area Parks & Recreation Advisory Committee, consisting of representatives from the City of Fremont, Sherman Township, Sheridan Charter Township, Dayton Township, and Bridgton Township actively pursues collaborative recreation plans, programs, funding, properties and resources, helping to create and preserve substantial recreational opportunities. Evidence of the abundant recreational facilities can be seen simply by driving through the various communities, observing parks, campgrounds, Town and Country Path, the skate park, boat launches, and many other facilities.

Partnerships with Fremont Public Schools and local sports clubs have led to significant recreation program opportunities for area residents through the School-led Community Education Programs and club sports groups. Recreation programs target every ability level and age from toddlers to the elderly. The combination of recreation programs and facilities available in the Fremont area has a definitive positive impact on the quality of life.

Funding cuts by the State of Michigan have forced Fremont Public Schools to cut staff administering Community Recreation Programs. As a result of staff cuts, Community Recreation Programs have been scaled back. In many cases, program administration has shifted to other community groups causing a variety of duplicative recreation programs to be formed.

Additionally, the building of the new Fremont High School is creating the availability of the old Fremont High School in June, 2012. The opportunities to administer community recreation programs and acquire a vital recreational facility have triggered the Recreation Advisory Committee to carefully evaluate the feasibility of creating a Recreation Authority.

The Fremont Area Parks & Recreation Advisory Committee held several informational meetings throughout the summer of 2011 with local residents to discuss the possibility of creating a Recreation Authority focusing on the possibility of administering recreation programs and acquiring the old high school for use as a community recreation center. In addition, Fremont Parks & Recreation Committee members met to review how the creation of a Recreation Authority fits within the existing 5-Year Fremont Area Recreation Plan being updated in 2012.

The result of the Park & Recreation Committee's public meetings was to recommend that a Feasibility Study be completed to gather more details pertaining to the formation, operation, and funding of the proposed Fremont Area Recreation Authority. The City of Fremont received funding from the Fremont

Area Community Foundation on behalf of the Park & Recreation Committee to retain Hager Consulting, LLC to complete this Feasibility Study.

I. Recreation Plan

A 5-Year Recreation Master Plan was completed by the Fremont Area Recreation Advisory Committee made up of representatives from the City of Fremont, Dayton Township, Sheridan Charter Township, Sherman Township and Fremont Public Schools. Each jurisdiction represented on the Committee adopted the Fremont Area Recreation Master Plan by resolution in the spring of 2002 & again in 2007. The Committee is now in the process of updating the plan in 2012 by reviewing and updating the Recreation Inventory, Capital Improvements Schedule and 5-Year Plan document.

II. Programming

Recreation enrichment programs are mainly operated through the Fremont Public School District Community Recreation Office and offer many programs utilizing several facilities and properties. Programs available target children, seniors, adults, team sports, group classes and individual lessons. A complete listing of current programs is available through the school. Participation in Community Education programs offered through the school has varied over the years based on several variables including school staffing, available funding, availability of instructors, and facilities.

In addition, several organizations have been created to offer recreation programs including:

- Fremont Area Little League Baseball
- Fremont Junior Packer Football/Cheerleading
- Fremont Youth Soccer
- Fremont Tennis Association
- Fremont Wrestling Club
- Fremont YES Tennis Association
- District Health #10 Girls on the Run
- Boys and Girls Club
- Quad City Mustangs (Home School Basketball Teams)

In many ways, there are duplicative programs available for many activities, particularly youth team sport activities such as soccer, baseball, and football. Most of the duplication is due to new programs being created when existing programs lacked capacity, funding, and/or efficiency. Fremont Public School programming has lost capacity over the last 10 years, primarily due to staff turnover and funding cuts to positions formerly responsible for administering recreation programs. This led to decreased administrative capacity, lower participant enrollment, and lower user fees.

The chart on the following page summarizes the decline described above.

	2011-12	2010-11	2009-10	2008-09	2007-08	2006-07
REVENUE						
1. Fees	\$57,600	\$59,615	\$69,429	\$101,234	\$103,139	\$126,510
2. Facility Rental	\$15,000	\$15,171	\$14,704	\$15,366	\$15,245	\$15,727
3. Grants	-	-	\$97	-	\$724	-
4. City	-	-	\$10,000	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$20,000
TOTAL	\$72,600	\$74,786	\$94,230	\$136,600	\$139,107	\$162,238
REVENUE						
EXPENDITURE						
1. Salary & Fringe	\$79,481	\$73,929	\$82,194	\$142,647	\$149,888	\$160,472
2. Purchase Services	\$5,900	\$4,815	\$5,736	\$8,241	\$7,114	\$9,618
3. Supplies	\$9,127	\$7,965	\$8,403	\$9,897	\$11,898	\$14,029
TOTAL EXPEND.	\$94,508	\$86,709	\$96,333	\$160,785	\$168,899	\$184,120
VARIANCE	(\$21,908)	(\$11,923)	(\$2,104)	(\$24,185)	(\$29,793)	(\$21,882)

III. Recreation Facilities

The current array of properties and facilities available for area recreation includes those owned by public entities (local, state and federal), private schools, nonprofits, and private entities. Facilities include vacant land available for public use, parks, fields (including baseball, soccer, football, etc.), sand volleyball courts, gymnasiums, skate parks, trails, pool, playgrounds, lakes, boat launches, beaches, amphitheater, war memorial, picnic shelters, golf courses, rivers, sledding hills, campgrounds, fairgrounds, natural areas, wetlands, tennis courts, track, private health center (Tamarac Wellness Center) and observatory.

Voters in the Fremont School District passed a millage vote in 2009 to approve construction of a new high school. Construction for the new structure began in the spring of 2010 on a site south of downtown Fremont with completion of the school expected by the summer of 2012. As part of the millage vote, school officials represented that the old high school building would be re-purposed to meet identified community needs. A Needs Assessment completed by Hager Consulting, LLC under contract with Fremont Public Schools recommended developing the classroom portion of the building as senior housing. Additionally, the report recommended the south portion of the building consisting of the gymnasium, multi-purpose room, pool and locker rooms be preserved as a Community Recreation Center.

The pool facility, including boilers and locker rooms, was built in the early 1960's, privately funded by the Gerber family who donated the pool to Fremont Public Schools. The school has maintained the pool since then, investing significant funds for upgrades to water filtering, boiler, and air handler systems. All mechanical, pumps, filters, boilers and air handlers are modernized and up to date with between 5-10 years of use remaining. Variable Frequency Drive (VFD) equipment has been donated to the school but not yet installed that could improve energy efficiency to the electrical pumps.

The gymnasium with the existing bleacher system, scoreboards, vinyl floor covers, folding chairs, stage, and other equipment are expected to remain with the property once the school moves to the new high school. A full inventory of equipment was not conducted for this study. It is recommended that an inventory be conducted and included as part of the property negotiations between the Recreation Authority and Fremont Public Schools. All equipment is in good working condition with no known mechanical issues. The wood floor requires annual re-surfacing to be maintained as a high-quality playing surface for basketball, volleyball and other sports.

The Multi-purpose room and kitchen is expected to be left as-is when the school moves to the new high school as the new facility will be furnished with all new equipment. This will need to be verified with school. The kitchen facility is licensed and inspected by the Newaygo County Health Department. This would need to be continued if the Recreation Authority wished to use the facility for food preparation.

The availability of the south portion of the high school building as a community recreation center presents both opportunities and challenges that are identified in this feasibility study. Plans for converting the north portion of the building into senior rental housing are progressing under a proposal from Housing Renewal Systems, LLC, a private, residential developer from southeast Michigan. Marketing research, local zoning and site plan approval, engineering, architecture, property split and funding applications are underway now with an expected feasibility completed in the late spring, 2012.

Combining the opportunity for a Community Recreation Center with senior rental housing on the same property provides complimentary amenities for both uses. Residents of the senior housing could potentially utilize the pool, gymnasium, and multi-purpose room for a variety of exercise and social programs. Creating recreation programs targeting the elderly provides an immediate supply of participants for the Community Recreation Center.

In addition, pursuing partnerships with private therapy providers, healthcare providers (e.g. Spectrum, Tamarac, etc.), and social service agencies (e.g. Commission on Aging, Family Health Care, etc.) are logical partnerships that connect local agencies, the Community Recreation Center and senior rental apartments.

IV. Proposed Operating Pro Forma

1. Projected Program & Staffing Costs (Excluding Property Ownership & Management)

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
EXPENDITURES			
1. Salary & Fringe (1.5 Full Time Equivalent)	\$85,000	\$87,500	\$90,000
2. Purchased Services (Lifeguards, Umpires, Referees, etc.)	\$7,500	\$8,000	\$8,500
3. Recreation Equipment & Supplies	\$10,000	\$12,500	\$15,000
4. Computer, Printer, TVs, Phone Equipment, Software, & Support	\$5,000	\$1,000	\$1,000
5. Internet & Phone Service	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000
6. Insurance (General Liability, Workers Comp, Board Indemnity, Employee Bond, etc.)	\$2,000	\$2,500	\$3,000
7. Office Supplies	\$500	\$600	\$700
8. Grant Writing Services	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000
9. Accounting & Audit	\$5,000	\$6,000	\$7,000
10. Staff Trainings, Conferences, Board Meetings	\$2,500	\$3,500	\$4,500
11. Staff Travel	\$1,000	\$1,500	\$2,000
12. Other & Miscellaneous	\$500	\$500	\$500
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	\$126,000	\$130,600	\$139,200

2. Projected Facility Costs – Recreation Center Costs (approximately 35,000 square feet)

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
EXPENDITURES			
1. Utilities (Gas, electric, water & sewer)	\$45,000	\$48,000	\$52,000
2. Pool maintenance labor	\$8,000	\$8,500	\$9,000
3. Pool chemicals, testing, fees, parts, inspections, etc.	\$12,000	\$14,000	\$16,000
4. Out-source contracts – Specialty repairs	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000
5. Building cleaning & custodial contract	\$20,000	\$22,000	\$25,000
6. Building & custodial supplies	\$6,000	\$7,000	\$8,000
7. Trash removal service & dumpsters	\$3,000	\$4,000	\$5,000
8. Gym floor refinishing	\$6,500	\$7,000	\$7,500
9. Landscaping, lawn mowing & snow removal	\$4,000	\$5,000	\$6,000
10. Capital improvements	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000
11. Other & Miscellaneous	\$2,500	\$2,500	\$2,500
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	\$117,000	\$127,500	\$141,000
Square foot costs @ 35,000 square feet	\$3.34	\$3.64	\$4.02
Pool operating (items 1-4) @ 100,000 gallon pool	\$.70	\$.76	\$.82

3. Projected Costs - Combined Programs, Staffing & Community Recreation Center

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	TOTAL
1. Programming & Staffing	\$126,000	\$130,600	\$139,200	\$395,800
2. Recreation Center	\$117,000	\$127,500	\$141,000	\$385,500
TOTAL	\$243,000	\$258,100	\$280,200	\$781,300

V. Building Improvements

1. DEQ and County Health Department Required Improvements for Pool

A. Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) - Paul Sissan, Director, Public Pool Division (phone 517. 241.1350) was contacted regarding state regulatory issues applicable to the pool as it currently stands or if ownership changed to a Recreation Authority. Paul indicated that the current pool meets all state public swimming pool code requirements. If ownership changed in 2012, a transfer of the Operational Certificate would need to be filed with state by the new owner, costing \$50.

Paul indicated that it is NOT the intent of DEQ to shut down community pools but to work with the community to ensure proper safety and equipment requirements are met in the most reasonable way.

If the pool owner were to initiate a major renovation, DEQ would need to be contacted for approval of all improvements. In this case, it is likely that new code requirements would need to be met, depending on the extent of the proposed improvements.

If the pool were to be drained or shut down for an extended period of time, when it re-opens, new code requirements would be triggered which could become costly.

Monthly DEQ water quality forms will continue to be required. High school maintenance staff currently completes these forms along with the water quality samples being sent to the lab for testing.

B. Newaygo County Health Department

There are currently no County Health Code violations as Newaygo County follows state code requirements. Health Department inspections will continue twice per year along with water quality monitoring.

2. Separation from North Portion of Building

Home Renewal Systems, LLC is currently (January, 2012) in the process of dividing the property in order to create separate legal properties as part of their due diligence to develop the north portion of the property as senior housing. This is required for the housing developer to receive local approvals (zoning, site plan, etc.), funding approvals, and legal control for the pursuit of their development. The remaining property will be available for the Recreation Authority to negotiate with Fremont Public Schools. Provisions will need to be made with Home Renewal Services, LLC in regards to access by both properties to gas, electric, water, sewer, road access, parking and other potentially shared property amenities. In some cases, these are easily split for separate access while others will likely need to be shared.

3. Plan & Zoning Approval

Currently, the high school property is zoned Residential by the City of Fremont. Schools are a permitted use in the Residential District; however, Recreation Centers are more appropriate for the Mixed Use District. Home Renewal Systems, LLC is currently in the process of requesting the entire property be re-zoned to Mixed Use on behalf of the school. This will allow both senior rental housing, recreation center, and other future uses.

4. Long-term Capital Improvement Plan & 5-Year Recreation Plan

If significant upgrades to the pool area were needed, it will trigger compliance with DEQ Public Pool code and local building codes. Plans will need to be submitted to DEQ for review and approval prior to construction. While the pool area is currently in compliance with all codes, major changes would require approval from DEQ.

Improvements to other portions of the old high school building would require local building code review. Some improvements may be required depending on what administrative and programming activities are proposed as well as improvements related to separating the building from the proposed senior housing portion of the building.

The Recreation Authority would also have the opportunity to incorporate other capital improvements, property ownership, and facilities management identified in the Capital Improvement Plan and 5-Year Recreation Plan.

VI. Real Estate Issues Related to High School Building

- 1. Cost of acquisition and closing costs (e.g. survey, title, etc.)** Nothing has been formally discussed to date with Fremont Public Schools in regards to transfer of ownership of the old high school building. If the Fremont Recreation Authority were to acquire the property, all acquisition costs and closing costs would need to be negotiated as part of the purchase agreement. Some of the legal documents needed for the transaction might already be addressed if the classroom (north) portion of the school building were transferred to a real

estate developer for conversion into senior housing as is currently being considered. For example, a survey splitting the building and the parcel of land would need to be completed for the senior development and the cost of this would be borne by the developer.

2. **Contingencies of school** (e.g. hours for potential swim team pool usage, elementary grade week swim usage, gymnasium use, etc.) It is unclear what specific expectations Fremont Public Schools will have in terms of future building usage in exchange for transfer of property. In a memo to Todd Blake, Fremont Area Park and Rec Committee Chair dated December 22, 2011 by Fremont Public Schools Superintendent Jim Hieftje, he indicates the following desires for use of the pool and gymnasium once the students move into the new high school:

“The swimming pool. Fremont High School and Middle School has had competitive swim teams as part of a comprehensive athletic program. Although the size of the existing swimming pool basically prohibits hosting home swimming events, it still remains a viable practice facility. It is the wish of the Board to have continued access to the pool to support competitive swimming. In addition, the pool has also been utilized for the swimming component of the physical education curriculum. For this reason, it would be desirable to continue to have access to the pool.”

“The gymnasium. It would be desirable to use the gymnasium on a limited basis as a practice facility for basketball. Fremont High School presently fields freshmen, junior varsity and varsity basketball teams for both the boys and girls programs. Practice time and gym space for six individual teams is at a premium. Having the opportunity to utilize the existing high school gym for limited use (two hours per day) would help alleviate this issue.”

3. **Property split issues related to senior housing or demolition** of north portion of building. Representatives of the school, city and Recreation Authority should be aware of any plans that impact the split of the building and parcel of land, demolition of part of the building, utility splits, HVAC systems, access to the building, connector/s between the two parts of the building, zoning, parking, and other issues that can impact the viability of the south portion of the building as a recreation center.
4. **Equipment Included in Transfer of Property** – It is unclear what, if any, equipment currently used by the high school will remain with the building if it were to be transferred to the Recreation Authority. A complete inventory of equipment that will stay with the building should be completed for consideration by the Recreation Authority. Examples of equipment that could be left include:
 - Pool training equipment, score board, bleachers, etc.
 - Gymnasium scoreboards, floor maintenance equipment, bleachers, etc.
 - Stage lighting, curtains, and related equipment
 - Gymnasium vinyl floor covers & folding chairs
 - Locker room office equipment, training equipment, lockers, etc.
 - Weight and exercise equipment
 - Kitchen equipment, cafeteria tables & chairs

- Office equipment including desks, chairs, TV monitors, etc.
The Recreation Authority should clarify these as it could have a significant impact on up-front costs to equip the facility for operations and rental opportunities.

VII. Funding Sources

Funding ongoing operations of a Recreation Authority is likely the most critical issue to be examined as part of the feasibility determination. Hager Consulting, LLC contacted several communities with successful Recreation Authorities and Pool Authorities. In almost every case, the dogged determination of the community as a whole is the single factor driving the success of ongoing operating funding.

In some communities, passing a public millage or bond financing provides the majority of operating revenue. In other communities, great effort is made to diversify public and private funding, eliminating the need for a millage. An overview of the various operating funding sources common to Recreation Authorities follows.

1. Public millage levied by Recreation Authority & Timeline

The Recreation Authorities Act 231 of 2000 describes the requirements Recreation Authorities must follow if it chooses to raise funding through tax levy and bonding, described below:

RECREATIONAL AUTHORITIES ACT (EXCERPT) Act 321 of 2000

123.1141 Tax levy; ballot proposal; vote; authorization; number of elections.

Sec. 11.

(1) An authority may levy a tax of not more than 1 mill for a period of not more than 20 years on all of the taxable property within the territory of the authority for the purposes of acquiring, constructing, operating, maintaining, and improving a public swimming pool, public recreation center, public auditorium or conference center, or public park. The authority may levy the tax only upon the approval of a majority of the electors in each of the participating municipalities of the authority voting on the tax on November 6, 2001 or, thereafter, at a statewide general or primary election. The proposal for a tax shall be submitted to a vote of the electors of the authority by resolution of the board.

(2) A ballot proposal for a tax shall state the amount and duration of the millage and the purposes for which the millage may be used. A proposal for a tax shall not be placed on the ballot unless the proposal is adopted by a resolution of the board and certified by the board not later than 60 days before the election to the county clerk of each county in which all or part of the territory of the authority is located for inclusion on the ballot. The proposal shall be certified for inclusion on the ballot at the next eligible election, as specified by the board's resolution.

(3) If a majority of the electors in each of the participating municipalities of the

authority voting on the question of a tax approve the proposal as provided under subsection (1), the tax levy is authorized. Not more than 2 elections may be held in a calendar year on a proposal for a tax authorized under this act.

The chart below calculates the potential amounts a millage at different rates would raise for a Recreation Authority based on 2011 taxable values and the assumption that jurisdictions listed would approve to participate in the Fremont Recreation Authority.

Potential Millage Revenue

Jurisdictions	2011 Taxable Value	0.25 Mil Tax Revenue	0.5 Mil Tax Revenue	0.75 Mil Tax Revenue	1.0 Mil Tax Revenue
City of Fremont	\$123,500,000	\$30,875	\$61,750	\$92,625	\$123,500
Sheridan Charter Township	\$77,642,885	\$19,411	\$38,821	\$58,232	\$77,643
Dayton Township	\$62,228,441	\$15,557	\$31,114	\$46,671	\$62,228
Sherman Township	\$60,475,933	\$15,119	\$30,238	\$45,357	\$60,476
Bridgeton Township	\$46,737,407	\$11,684	\$23,369	\$35,053	\$46,737
TOTAL	\$370,584,666	\$92,646	\$185,292	\$277,939	\$370,585

Timing of 2012 Millage Proposal - The timing of establishing a local millage for public vote is tied to state-mandated deadlines shown below and assumes a Recreation Authority is already legally formed and operational. If a millage proposal were to be put before voters in 2012, the following steps would need to be completed using the timeline below:

- a. Recreation Board approves ballot wording and submits to County Clerk by May1;
- b. County Clerk certifies ballot language by the last Tuesday in May (May 29, 2012);
- c. Submitted to Secretary of State Office for approval by June 15;
- d. Publish ballot language in local newspaper 30 days prior to election;
- e. Public Election held August 7, 2012.

2. USDA, DNR, other federal & state grants

USDA Rural Development, Michigan DNR/DEQ, and other state and federal government agencies often have grant dollars available for specific recreation uses. Typically these grants are directed to one-time capital improvements such as a Skate Park, Trail (e.g. Town and Country Path), Building Improvements, Community Centers, and other specific purposes.

Availability of state and federal recreation grants has decreased over the last 10 years as government entities struggle with other funding priorities. Of the grants available, funding is often tied to grantees ability to leverage other sources, local jobs, or other economic development incentives. It is rare to find state or federal grants available for ongoing operating costs. A specific list of state and federal grants can be researched when it becomes clear what funding needs exist for the proposed Recreation Center. Eligibility criteria, eligible

funding uses, application deadlines, funding availability, timing of funds and other funding requirements of individual grant sources should be examined and approved by the Recreation Authority prior to applying. Several State and Federal grants have been received by various local entities demonstrating a capacity for successful grant applications.

3. FACF & other local grants

The Fremont Area Community Foundation (FACF) has been a very supportive funding source for local recreation programs. In many cases, local foundation dollars have leveraged state and federal funds on specific projects indicating an ability to establish partnerships with local jurisdictions, private and public entities, local, state and federal funding sources.

The City of Fremont has received the following recreation grants from FACF and leveraged sources over the last 10 years (2001 – 2011) amounting to over \$700,000:

Grant Activity	Grant Amount
1. Town & Country Path Phase 1 (FACF)	\$159,450
2. T&C Path Phase 1 (Fremont Public Schools Advised)	\$22,500
3. Town & Country Path Phase 2 (MDNR)	\$130,400
4. T&C Path Phase 2 (FACF)	\$50,000
5. Feasibility Analysis-Recreation Authority (FACF)	\$10,000
6. Skate/Bike Park (FACF)	\$55,000
7. Multi-Purpose Ice Rink/Basketball Court (FACF)	\$48,000
8. Fremont Little League/Jr. Packer Football/Wrestling Club pass-through equipment grants (FACF)	\$4,000
9. Branstrom Park Scoreboard (FACF)	\$4,000
10. Branstrom Disc Golf Course (FACF)	\$5,000
11. NC District Health-T&C Path amenities	\$9,000
12. Fremont Lake Park Playground (FACF)	\$19,220
13. Fremont Lake Park Playground (Gerber Foundation)	\$8,000
14. Citizen Survey: Path & Recreation (FACF)	\$6,500
15. Fremont Lake Park Campground expansion (MDOT)	\$180,000
TOTAL	\$711,070

The amount of recreation grants provided locally demonstrates FACF’s commitment to the health of local residents. Recreation Authority representatives should contact FACF staff to determine the possibility of providing funding for future recreation programs.

4. Private Donors—The pool facility was built in the early 1960’s, privately funded by the Gerber family then donated to the school for maintenance. The school has since provided all operating funding and capital improvements. The historical significance is an important tie to the Gerber Family, particularly those members currently living in the community.

The Manistee Pool was built using private donor funds, primarily from one Manistee family

who had a desire to provide funding for a community pool. Through the generous donation of one family, the Manistee Pool facility was created.

There may be families, private corporations or other sources of private funding in the Fremont Area who would be interested in donating to the operations or improvements to the existing Fremont Pool. This would not be readily apparent until a formal Capital Campaign was launched.

- 5. User Fees** – User fees generated from recreation program participants could make up a substantial portion of operating revenues, up to 50% of annual operating revenue. Several Recreation Authorities were contacted to determine the level of fees paid for pool activities. This list is provided below. In addition, program fees generated from the operation of other Recreation Programs could generate substantial fees, depending on the number of participants. In almost every case, user fees are reduced or free for residents living in the Recreation Authority District when a Bond or Recreation Millage was approved by District voters.

Facility	Ownership Structure	Development Funding	Operating Funding	Annual Fees (Family)
Holland Aquatic Center	Pool Authority	Bond	Rec. Millage	\$475-\$580
Wyandotte Ice Arena	City	Bond	City Gen. Fund	\$125-\$175
Bridgman Aquatic Center	School	Rec. Millage	Rec. Millage	\$205-\$300
East Lansing Family Center	City	Bond	City Gen. Fund	\$480-\$680
Manistee Community Center	School	Private	Rec. Millage	\$360-\$720
Bayfield Recreation Center	School	Donation	Many	\$333-\$350

- 6. Facility Rentals** – Making the multi-purpose room, gymnasium, and pool facilities available to the public, sports groups, corporations, special events providers (e.g. Chamber of Commerce for concerts, craft fair, home expo, etc.), private therapy providers, camps, families, churches, theatre groups, schools, and other groups. A rental fee schedule can be developed that could include various building options, lifeguards, cleaning, etc. Aggressive marketing would help maximize building rentals to a variety of groups.
- 7. Participating Jurisdiction (City and Townships) Contributions**–In many of the successful models of Recreation Authorities contacted in other communities, most rely on contributions from participating jurisdictions for operating support. This is becoming more difficult as communities lose tax base and most prioritize other services for their residents. The amount of contributions in survey communities listed above varied from 0 – 50% of annual operating

costs.

VIII. Partnership Opportunities

Several positive alliances could result from the creation of the Fremont Area Recreation Authority. These partnerships could improve the efficiency of administration, programming, funding, facility ownership and maintenance. In addition, re-purposing the existing property can have a significant impact on neighboring properties, downtown Fremont, and the entire community.

Examples of partnerships that could have a positive impact on the successful operation of the Recreation Authority and the entire community include the following:

1. Jurisdictions within the Recreation District
2. Newaygo Recreation District
3. Recreation groups – Soccer clubs, Rocket Football, Little League, & Quad City Mustangs
4. Service Agencies – Commission on Aging, Family Health Care, etc.
5. Fitness & Preventative Health – Gerber Hospital & Tamarac Wellness Center
6. Area School Districts – NCRESA, Fremont, White Cloud, Newaygo, Hesperia, etc.
7. Private Companies – Physical therapy providers, Nestle/Gerber, etc.
8. Fremont Area District Library – adjacent property
9. Adjacent Senior Housing, if completed.
10. Local Downtown Merchants
11. Local, State, & Federal Funding Sources
12. Local camps, YMCA, and similar entities

IX. Staffing Plan

Getting a Recreation Authority operational will require a significant amount of labor resources. The City of Fremont has provided most staffing resources for the Fremont Area Recreation Committee over the past years along with volunteers from local jurisdictions. Once operational, program administration will require a more significant staffing effort, depending on the level of programs offered and whether or not recreational properties are being managed. Consideration should be given to the alternatives listed below.

1. **Contractual Management** – Contracting out the management of the Recreation Authority has the potential to save money, employ immediate professional capacity, and build partnerships with existing entities, avoiding duplication of services. Specific services could also be contracted out such as custodial services, pool maintenance, grant writing, life guards, game officials, and other more technical roles.

The Recreation Authority should consider bidding out management services to qualified recreation program entities including, but not limited to, YMCA, local camps, local

nonprofits, Tamarac Wellness Center/ Spectrum, private physical therapy providers, Fremont Public Schools, and the City of Fremont.

2. **Recreation Director/ In-house staffing** – Creating a new position dedicated to the work of the Recreation Authority should be considered if substantial programming, administrative, or facility management responsibilities can be provided. Having qualified, dedicated staff is often preferred to demonstrate long-term capacity and efficiency. Hiring a person with additional specific skills such as certified pool maintenance, grant writing, and other technical skills could help reduce the dependency on outside contractors. A Recreation Director and a part-time Administrative Assistant/Scheduler would likely be needed to start.
3. **City/Township Support**–Utilizing the expertise of existing City and Township paid staff to help offset operational staffing costs should also be considered. This option may be particularly helpful to jurisdictions to offer limited staffing support in lieu of financial contributions to the Recreation Authority. Using staffing with grant-writing and other specific skills would also help the recreation authority with fund-raising capacity. Each jurisdiction would need to determine its ability to contribute staff support to the Recreation Authority.
4. **School Support** – Fremont Public School has managed Community Education recreation programs for many years using school staff. It is unclear what the school’s role will be if a Recreation Authority is created in terms of administering Community Education programs. The Recreation Authority should contact the school to seek clarification on this. Possibly, a partnership could be formed to utilize the expertise and capacity of school staff in the operation of recreation programs. In addition, the school could offer significant technical expertise in pool maintenance as school staff is familiar with the history of the pool and the maintenance of pool equipment.

X. Recreation Authority Creation

1. **Legal Authority** – The creation of a local Recreation Authority in Michigan is governed by the RECREATIONAL AUTHORITIES ACT, Act 321 of 2000. Creating a Fremont Area Recreation Authority would require a vote of all participating jurisdictions. The process, purpose, and other requirements of establishing a Recreation Authority are described below in Act 321:

Recreational Authorities Act 321 of 2000 AN ACT to provide for the establishment of recreational authorities; to provide powers and duties of an authority; to authorize the assessment of a fee, the levy of a property tax, and the issuance of bonds and notes by an authority; and to provide for the powers and duties of certain government officials.

123.1135 Recreational authority; establishment; articles of incorporation; adoption; applicability of subsection (3); publication; filing copy with secretary of state; effect.

Sec. 5.

(1) Two or more municipalities or districts may establish a recreational authority. A recreational authority is an authority under section 6 of article IX of the state constitution of 1963.

(2) To initiate the establishment of an authority, articles of incorporation shall be prepared. The articles of incorporation shall include all of the following:

(a) The name of the authority.

(b) The names of the participating municipalities.

(c) A description of the territory of the authority.

(d) The size of the board of the authority, which shall be comprised of an odd number of members; the qualifications, method of selection, and terms of office of board members; and the filling of vacancies in the office of board member. If board members are elected in at-large elections by the qualified and registered electors of the participating municipalities, voting collectively, the election of board members shall be conducted pursuant to the same procedures that govern an election for a tax under sections 13 to 17.

(e) The purposes for which the authority is established, which shall be the acquisition, construction, operation, maintenance, or improvement of 1 or more of the following:

(i) A public swimming pool.

(ii) A public recreation center.

(iii) A public auditorium.

(iv) A public conference center.

(v) A public park.

(vi) A public museum.

(vii) A public historic farm.

(f) The procedure and requirements for a municipality or district to become a participating municipality in, and for a participating municipality to withdraw from, an existing authority or to join in the original formation of an authority. For a municipality or district to become a participating municipality in an existing authority or to join in the original formation of an authority, a majority of the electors of the municipality or district proposed to be included in the territory of the authority and voting on the question shall approve a tax that the authority has been authorized to levy by a vote of the electors of the authority under section 11. A municipality or district shall not withdraw from an authority during the period for which the authority has been authorized to levy a tax by the electors of the authority.

(g) Any other matters considered advisable.

(3) The articles shall be adopted and may be amended by an affirmative vote of a majority of the members serving on the legislative body of each participating municipality. If a participating municipality is a district, the articles shall be adopted and may be amended by an affirmative vote of a majority of the members serving on the legislative body of the entire municipality. Unless the articles provide otherwise, the requirements of this subsection do not apply to an amendment to the articles to allow a municipality or district to become a participating municipality in, or to allow a participating municipality to

withdraw from, an existing authority.

(4) Before the articles or amendments to the articles are adopted, the articles or amendments to the articles shall be published not less than once in a newspaper generally circulated within the participating municipalities. The adoption of articles or amendments to the articles by a municipality or district shall be evidenced by an endorsement on the articles or amendments by the clerk of the municipality.

(5) Upon adoption of the articles or amendments to the articles by each of the participating municipalities, a printed copy of the articles or the amended articles shall be filed with the secretary of state by the clerk of the last participating municipality to adopt the articles or amendments.

(6) The authority's articles of incorporation, or amendments to the articles, take effect upon filing with the secretary of state.

123.1139 Powers of authority.

Sec. 9.

An authority may do 1 or more of the following:

(a) Acquire and hold, by purchase, lease with or without option to purchase, grant, gift, devise, land contract, installment purchase contract, bequest, or other legal means, real and personal property inside or outside the territory of the authority. The property may include franchises, easements, or rights of way on, under, or above any property. The authority may pay for the property from, or pledge for the payment of the property, revenue of the authority.

(b) Apply for and accept grants or contributions from individuals, the federal government or any of its agencies, this state, a municipality, or other public or private agencies to be used for any of the purposes of the authority.

(c) Hire full-time or part-time employees and retain professional services.

(d) Provide for the maintenance of all of the real and personal property of the authority.

(e) Assess and collect fees for services provided by and expenses incurred by the authority.

(f) Receive revenue as appropriated by the legislature of this state or a participating municipality.

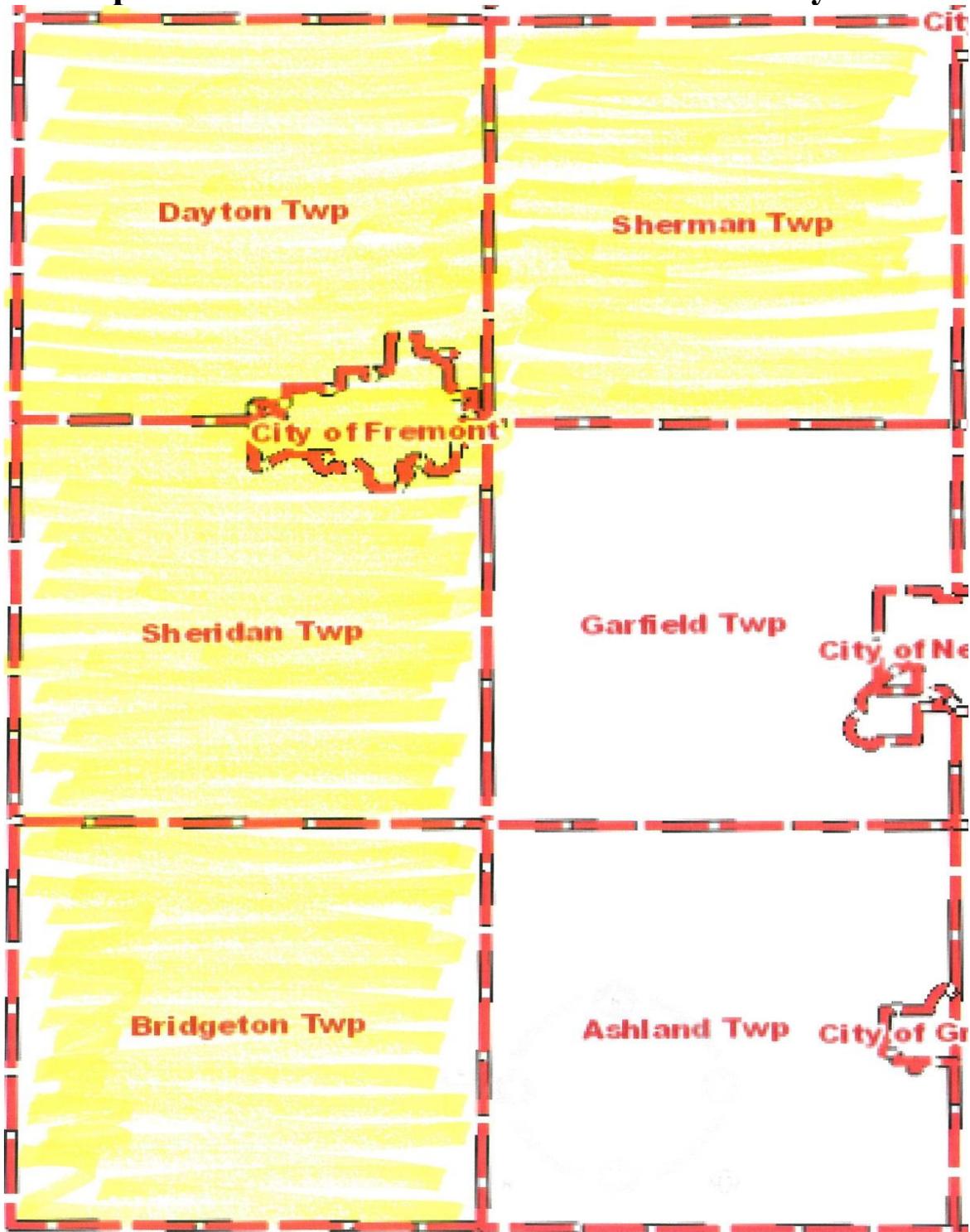
(g) Enter into contracts incidental to or necessary for the accomplishment of the purposes of the authority.

The jurisdictions involved in the creation of the Recreation Authority should carefully consider any up-front costs such as legal fees, staff time, or other costs that will be incurred. Determining who will take the lead in providing legal services and administrative efforts is important as there will be a significant amount of time required to prepare documents, inform voting members prior to holding a vote on creating the Recreation Authority.

3. Proposed Fremont Area Recreation Authority District

The map on the following page delineates the jurisdictions that are currently represented by the Fremont Area Recreation Committee. These jurisdictions do not currently belong to other Recreation Authorities (e.g. Newaygo Recreation Authority District) but have had a significant role in local recreation programs. This map on the following page is a draft for discussion purposes only. Individual jurisdictions represented on this map must each approve participation with the Fremont Area Recreation Authority.

Proposed Fremont Area Recreation Authority District



XI. Survey Results

A short survey was distributed to the 10 members of the Fremont Area Recreation Committee. The survey questions with responses received are provided below.

Survey Questions

Recreation Authority Feasibility Study

January, 2012

Your input is desired regarding the feasibility of creating a Recreation Authority in the Fremont Area as well as the scope of program management, funding, and recreation facilities. Please take a few minutes to answer the following questions.

1. What do you feel are the benefits of creating a Recreation Authority?

Responses in green italics:

“To put all matters related to recreation under one umbrella and to be able to raise funds for recreational purposes. It would also be beneficial to have the different governmental units work together to establish and fund recreation programs for the people living in this community.”

“Ability to help coordinate and enhance recreational opportunities for the public in the Fremont area.”

“Establish “ONE” place of coordination for “All” recreation programs in the Fremont area...simplify!”

“A group to over look the recreation activities of the community.A place to go to for help with financing or ways to finance recreation facilities in the community.”

- *“More recreational opportunities*
- *More affordable recreational opportunities*
- *Better management of recreational entities*
- *Make Fremont an even more desirable place to reside”*

2. How does the creation of a Recreation Authority help fulfill the goals of the current Fremont Area 5-Year Recreation Master Plan?

“I think that a Recreation Authority could help in raising more funds to do these projects by being able to pass millages. In this way, the Authority would be able to add extra money into the pot if outside funding is not there.”

“Investigating, and potentially establishing a rec authority has long been on the 5-yr Plan’s goals and capital project schedule.”

“A rec authority could potentially raise funds in a way the committee has not been able to in the past (i.e....millage, operation/programming grants...) to own, construct & operate recreation facilities.”

“Helps to bring goals together and someone to oversee in a more organized way what the community wants to see happen in the community.”

“I don’t have the plan in front of me (and can’t get), but the authority could potentially provide additional funds that would help enable us to further fulfill stated goals.”

3. What are your greatest concerns of creating a Recreation Authority?

“My greatest concern is that not all of the government entities would be on board. As of now, money is tight and not all entities are willing to pass additional millages to obtain money, especially for recreation purposes. Of course, the Recreation Authority should try to obtain as much outside funding as possible. Another thing would be if groups that are now established, such as Little League, soccer leagues, etc. would be willing to give up some control to come back to having their programs under one umbrella as I believe they were at one time.”

“Creating another governmental jurisdiction.”

“Increasing tax millage for Fremont area property owners, which is never easy for tax payers especially in the existing economy.”

“More taxes, more farm land taken if recreation facilities are created on existing farm ground, i.e. School land on 44th street.”

- *“Getting my township (Sherman) officials on board*
- *Getting voter’s support*
- *Passing a bond to allow the authority to be what it should and could be*
- *Making sure it’s well managed and a successful operation that will be enjoyed by the entire community.”*

4. If a Recreation Authority were to be created through the approval by the City and surrounding Townships, what level of administrative responsibility and program management would you recommend? Please circle one:

- a. Planning only (e.g. approval of 5-year Recreation Plan, etc.)
- b. Planning and Scheduling (coordinate schedules of various entities operating programs)
- c. Planning, Scheduling, and Program Operations (directly manage recreation programs such as those currently operated by Fremont Public Schools Community Education, etc.).
- d. Planning, Scheduling, Program Operations and Facilities Management (own & maintain recreation properties).
- e. Other _____

"I would recommend D. If we're going to establish an Authority, let's put it all under one roof."

"Letter D is my recommended choice."

"Letter C, this is the one I select."

"Letter D - The "own & maintain" portion gives me some hesitation. However, with the potential that our current high school offers I think it's something that needs to be done. A very close look also needs to be given to the omnipresent pool. The idea of having a community pool is wonderful, but is it feasible."

5. Based on your answer to question 4 above, what administrative staffing would you recommend for a Recreation Authority?

"I'm not sure how the school used to do it, but I think for starters, we could start with one full time person. However, after being there for a period of time, he/she would have to evaluate the work load to determine if more people needed to be added."

"A Rec Authority Director at a minimum, and possibly an administrative office assistant with part-time hours. The Admin Assist position would probably be based on programming needs. Along with programming for youth-sports, part-time positions for referees, umpires and lifeguards may be needed."

"A coordinator and administrative assistant."

"I'm not sure I can answer this without a lot more information. Would it include the management of current school recreation facilities also? Is the current high school included in the plan? I envision at least a "director"."

6. What sources of funding do you recommend for staffing and ongoing operating costs of a Recreation Authority?

"Program fees, donations, grants (although Foundations don't like to support staffing and operations) and a millage."

"We could hope for programming fees to cover staffing costs, but a millage will most likely be needed to sustain operating costs for facilities, over a period of time."

"Grants, plus private and public funding."

- *"Bond/Millage*
- *Grants*
- *Citizens*
- *Fundraising events"*

7. If a Recreation Authority were to be created, what facilities/properties should the Recreation Authority consider owning initially? What issues should be considered prior to acquisition of facilities/properties?

“The biggest acquisition now is the existing pool, gymnasium, and multipurpose room at the old high school. The biggest issue to consider before obtaining these properties is how much is this building going to cost to run on an annual basis. Is it going to be a hindrance to the Authority or will it be a positive result? Do we really want and are we willing to do this? Is everybody on board to acquire this property?”

“Fortunately, the Fremont community is in a position to take advantage of an opportunity/partnership with Fremont Public Schools, whereas FPS has/ is considering turning over the southern half of the current high school building facilities to a recreation authority, if established. The participating local governments should consider forming an authority as long as a stable financial mechanism can be put in to place, to cover the facilities operational costs and potential repairs that may be needed in the future.”

“Facilities to be owned should be minimal at best. Financing of facilities/ properties needs to be looked at and needs to be in place before obtaining facilities and properties.”

8. Would the residents in your jurisdiction benefit from the use of the south portion of the existing High School building (containing the pool, multi-purpose room, gymnasium, etc.) if it were to be acquired by the Recreation Authority? What issues should be considered prior to acquisition of this property?

“I think it would be a great asset to this community if this building were acquired. After all, it's the only pool in Newaygo County with maybe the exception being Tamarac. It certainly is the biggest. I think it would great if people could use it from morning till night, once again establishing swimming lessons, continuing with open swim for senior citizens, maintaining a practice facility for swim teams, etc. It could also be connected with Tamarac for their members to use as part of their membership. The multi-purpose room is definitely a plus as far as a meeting facility is concerned and as a backup for inclement weather during the Summer Concert Series. You might even be able to use it for a senior citizen gathering place during the day, where they could come, have a cup of coffee and carry on conversations with others or play cards, etc. The gymnasium would be a useful practice facility for a host of sports teams or it could be used to have church leagues reestablished as they once were. I remember playing volleyball and basketball on a church team and it was very competitive. There are probably many more uses that I haven't mentioned that would add to these uses.

The second question was answered in question #7 above.”

“Yes. This building contains facilities that would not be available to the general public, if they were not reserved for such. If the local governments in the area cannot agree on establishing an authority, I'm not sure FPS will keep the facilities open, for lack of funding.”

“Some will not be happy with group owning any facilities. They are going to want to see how the group is going to pay for the facilities and maintain the facilities. What will be the cost for use of the facilities by the local community.”

9. Are there any other issues that should be considered as part of the Recreation Authority Feasibility Study?

“I’m sure we’re not the first group to establish a Recreation Authority. We need to find out from others what they did to make it successful and learn from what they did to make ours successful.”

“As noted above, if funding cannot be secured for continued use of the facilities, its fate may be demolition. Fremont or the Newaygo County area may never see another opportunity like this for an affordable recreation center and public pool for the public.”

10. Other comments:

“Lindsay, thank you for taking the time and effort to work on this feasibility study. I hope we can establish something here that will be a positive force in this community whereby all or most of the residents will be proud of. My biggest concern is whether or not people are willing to pay for one more thing. We can only hope that what we’re doing will be accepted by all. Thanks again, for your part in this. It is appreciated.”

“I can only hope that representatives from the local government jurisdictions in the Fremont area see this unique opportunity and support and seize the moment!”

“No”

XII. Timeline & Action Steps

In general the following action items are recommending if participating jurisdictions wish to move forward:

1. Creation of Recreation Authority, vote by all participating jurisdictions – March 31, 2012
2. Board approves Articles of Incorporation, Bylaws and other legal documents –April 30, 2012
3. Secure Operating Funds (e.g. millage, grants, etc.) – August, 2012
4. Secure South Portion of High School – September 1, 2012
5. Hire Staff or Enter Contract for Operations – September 1, 2012
6. Begin Program Operations – October 1, 2012

Each of the tasks identified above warrant a more thorough timeline with its own set of steps to complete, identified responsible party, and other pertinent information.

XIII. Measurable Outcomes

The following outcomes should drive the analysis of this Feasibility Study to maximize the positive impact the proposed Recreation Authority will have on the community.

- Consolidate multiple community recreation programs under single administration.
- Consolidate funding for multiple recreation entities under single entity.
- Provide continuum of affordable recreation programs for all area residents.
- Reduce obesity in Newaygo County through participation in recreation programs.
- Re-purpose an existing High School Building for community recreation asset.
- Maintain pool as only indoor pool within 30 miles.
- Increase swimming safety for children through swim lessons.
- Increase partnerships in preventative health care programming and recreational opportunities.
- Create positive economic impacts through recreation programs and facilities.

XIV. Recommendations

Based on the information provided above, the following recommendations should be considered:

1. Seek clarification from Fremont Public Schools regarding:
 - a. Future usage of the south portion of the high school, including but not limited to, pool, gymnasium, multi-purpose room, and office space. How many hours? How much will the school pay for usage? How will this be scheduled and prioritized with other programming and rentals?
 - b. Equipment to be left with the building if it were to be transferred to the Recreation Authority, including but not limited to, pool equipment, office equipment, kitchen equipment, gymnasium equipment, tables, chairs, vinyl gym floor covers, stage equipment, scoreboards, bleachers, and locker room equipment.
 - c. The School's role in administering Community Education/Recreation Programs should the Fremont Area Recreation Authority be formed. Will the school provide staffing or funding?
2. Explore a partnership with Tamarac Wellness Center and Spectrum Health Gerber Memorial regarding shared membership opportunities, facility sharing, physical therapy and exercise programming.
3. Provide sample Articles of Incorporation, Bylaws, and millage ballot language for review.
4. Explore applying for a short-term (1-3 years) operating grant from the Fremont Area Community Foundation (FACF). While ongoing operating grants are not typically provided by FACF, this opportunity is fairly unique in that creating a Recreation Authority has significant positive impact on residents' health, and facilitates many possible partnerships; particularly the consolidation of funding requests from multiple local programs into one entity.
5. Request each jurisdictional member of the Fremont Area Recreation Committee seek a vote on the creation of the Fremont Area Recreation Authority before March 31, 2012.

XV. Conclusion

This study provides valuable information for the Fremont Area Park & Recreation Advisory Committee to consider prior to making a decision to form an area-wide Recreation Authority. While the creation of Recreation Authority would fulfill many desirable outcomes identified by Advisory Committee members and listed in the proposed 5-Year Recreation Master plan, there are several critical areas of concern that must be addressed, ongoing operating funding being foremost.

Sources of operating funding recommended to be pursued include a publically-approved millage, a short-term operating grant from the Fremont Area Community Foundation, user fees, private donations, facility rentals, and contributions from participating jurisdictions. Millage funding would likely provide the most stable source of operating dollars (up to 20 years) but would require district voters to approve, a difficult proposition in tough economic times.

Maintaining open communication with Fremont Public Schools representatives regarding the future operations of Community Education programming, funding and staffing will be essential moving forward. Creating partnerships with Tamarac, Spectrum Gerber Hospital, local service agencies, and club sports groups will be vital to the success of the proposed Recreation Authority.

The timing of creating the Authority, securing ongoing operating funding, and becoming fully operational by fall, 2012 could impact the Recreation Authority's ability to acquire the south portion of the old Fremont High School. While the pool is in compliance with all state and local codes and has benefitted from recent upgrades made by the school, long-term capital improvements will be necessary at some later point. Creating a well-managed capital campaign to raise funds for pool improvements is recommended after usage patterns and financial expectations can be established. If the pool is shut down, new construction codes would be triggered resulting in the requirement of costly improvements immediately upon re-use. Open communication with Fremont Public Schools regarding plans for the pool is critical.

Representatives from each participating jurisdiction must carefully consider the information provided in this report to determine how best to evaluate the feasibility of creating the proposed Fremont Area Recreation Authority. The decisions made will impact the recreation program opportunities, local economy, recreation facilities and quality life for Fremont area residents.

XV. Questions and Answers

Several presentations of this study were made to townships surrounding Fremont and the Fremont Parks and Recreation Committee meetings attended by community representatives. Following is a list of questions received from meeting participants and the corresponding answers.

1. When did the city and school start discussing the creation of a recreation authority and re-purposing of the high school as a community recreation center?

Answer: As soon as the millage passed for the construction of the new high school, re-purposing of the old high school went into full speed. Prior to this, then Superintendent John Kingsnorth, convened a committee of community leaders called the “Fremont Gateway Revitalization Collaborative” in 2008. Several alternative uses for re-purposing the old high school were discussed then, including converting the south half of the building into a recreation center.

Creation of a Recreation Authority from the existing Fremont Area Parks & Recreation Committee has been part of the 5-Year Recreation Master Plan in 2002, 2007 and 2012.

2. What is the drop dead date for forming a Recreation Authority?

Answer: There is no defined date for voting to create the Fremont Area Recreation Authority. Fremont Public Schools has indicated a desire to transfer the south portion of the high school to a viable entity as soon as they are moved out of the old high school, likely to be late June. Creating a Recreation Authority in the spring of 2012 will position the organization to evaluate ownership of the high school prior to June, preventing the potential shut-down of the building and pool. Shutting down the pool will trigger costly improvements and start-up costs later.

In addition, having a Recreation Authority in place in the spring of 2012 positions the organization to evaluate the possibility of putting a Recreation Millage on the ballot in August 2012, the soonest that a millage could be put to vote. Subsequent election dates for a millage are always a possibility.

3. Are there any violations to the pool?

Answer: The swimming pool is currently up to Public Pool code according to Paul Sisson, DEQ Director of Public Pools. Fremont High School does not use the pool for competitive meets due to the pool having only five lanes instead of the standard six lanes. In addition, the low ceiling height presents some challenges for competitive diving.

In the event the pool is not registered with State DEQ annually because the pool is shut down for an extended period of time (e.g. at least 6 months) OR if major renovations are planned for the pool, new code standards would be triggered upon re-opening the pool.

4. Has a private donor recently offered Fremont Public Schools to build a new pool?

Answer: Neither the Superintendent nor the Board of Education have been approached by a donor

indicating they would fund the construction of a new pool. There was talk in previous meetings (not attended by the current Superintendent) that a donor would begin an endowment fund for the operational costs of the pool. That conversation may have taken place in a Future of Fremont Committee meeting but cannot be confirmed.

5. What type of improvements would be required to bring the pool up to current code standards and how much would it cost?

Answer: The High School pool is currently up to code for its “community pool” use, therefore no improvements are required. If the pool was to be used for “competition” diving under MHSAA regulations, modifications would be needed. There are no plans for this type of modification, so continued operation of a “community” pool would not require any improvements or changes.

6. What capital improvements have been made to the south portion of the high school over the last few years and what is their projected life?

Answer: Please see attached list.

7. What is the age of the current roof and what is the projected replacement cost?

Answer: All of the roofs on the south-end of the building are currently out of warranty. Typically warranties go for 10 - 15 years from installation. They are all fully adhered EPDM .60 mil. Carlisle is the manufacturer. I have not had any contracted repairs due to failures on the gym roof, pool roof or the old cafeteria section (farthest to the south) for the past 5 years. A new roof was installed over the pool in 1995.

8. Aren't there other pools within a 30-mile radius of Fremont (e.g. Woods N Water, Tamarac)?

Answer: The Fremont Public School pool is the only indoor, 25-yard, heated pool open to the public for a fee year-round (albeit limited hours). The pool at Tamarac is smaller and open to members and for those who purchase a Day Pass to the Fitness Center. The pool at Woods N Water is open to the public for a fee during the open, summer season.

9. Could the Fremont Area Recreation Authority be created with only one jurisdiction?

Answer: No. The Michigan Recreation Authorities Act, Act 321 of 2000, Section 5 (1) states, “Two or more municipalities or districts may establish a recreational authority. A recreational authority is an authority under Section 6 of Article IX of the State Constitution of 1963.”

The Fremont Area Parks & Recreation Committee has frequently expressed a desire to include all jurisdictions currently represented on the Committee (City of Fremont, Sheridan Charter Township, Dayton Township, Sherman Township) and possibly additional townships included in the Fremont School District (Garfield and Bridgeton Townships).

10. Could part of a jurisdiction be included in a Recreation Authority? For example, can the part of Garfield Township falling within the Fremont School District be included in the Fremont Area Recreation Authority while the part of the township falling within Newaygo School District remain a

member of the Newwaygo Recreation Authority?

Answer: Per Mr. Patrick F. McGow | Attorney and Counselor at Law @ Miller Canfield:

The Act allows 2 or more municipalities or districts to establish an authority. It appears the use of the term "district" contemplates that less than all of a municipality can be included in the authority, as it was designed to allow for a portion of a municipality that falls along existing precinct boundaries. So if the school district boundaries are also coterminous with the precinct boundaries for voting purposes (which they should be since they vote for different school board members), an authority can include part of a municipality.

The key definitions in the Act are as follows:

- (d) "District" means a portion of a municipality having boundaries coterminous with those of a precinct used for general elections.
- (e) "Electors of the authority" means the qualified and registered electors of the participating municipalities whose side within the territory of the authority.
- (g) "Municipality" means a city, county, village, or township.

11. Can a Recreation Authority be created to administer programs, complete funding applications, and perform planning functions without owning a recreational facility?

Answer: No. The Michigan Recreation Authorities Act, Act 321 of 2000, Section 5 (2) (e) states, "The purposes for which the authority is established, which shall be the acquisition, construction, operation, maintenance, or improvement of 1 or more of the following:

- (i) A public swimming pool.
- (ii) A public recreation center.
- (iii) A public auditorium.
- (iv) A public conference center.
- (v) A public park.
- (vi) A public museum.
- (vii) A public historic farm."

12. Can the definition of "Recreation" include hunter safety courses, archery events, shuffleboard, river tubing, etc.

Answer: Any activities consistent with Act 321 are eligible. The definition of recreation does include outdoor recreational activities like hunting, fishing, hiking, so if an authority wanted to incorporate the above noted events, it should be permitted.

13. Does each jurisdiction represented on the Recreation Authority have one seat on the Board or is it based on a formula (population, SEV, etc.)?

Answer: The proposed draft of Articles of Incorporation include a Section on the Board: "The Authority shall be directed and governed by a board of directors of nine (9) members known as the "Board", two (2) members to be appointed by the City Council of Fremont, two (2) members to be appointed by Fremont Public School District, one (1) member to be appointed by the Dayton Twp Board, one (1) member from Sheridan Charter Township, one (1) member from Sherman Township, one (1) member from Bridgeton Township and one (1) member to be appointed by the Recreation Authority Board from the residency of the area served."

14. The Recreation Authorities Act 321 of 2000 procedure for creating or withdrawing from a Recreation Authority is voted on by "a majority of electors". Does this mean just the Board or the entire voting population in that jurisdiction?

Answer: A participating jurisdiction's Board can agree to enter in to the Authority, but If the proposed Authority is seeking a millage, then the voting population must approve by election to join the Authority. If the Authority asks for a millage approval later, then an election must be conducted and the electors from each jurisdiction must approve it to enable the millage to be collected from each jurisdiction.

15. What are the procedures for a jurisdiction to withdraw from Recreation Authority at a later date?

Answer: If there is no operating millage being approved, then any jurisdiction's Board can withdraw, but if a millage has already been approved, then a municipality or district shall not withdraw from an authority during the period for which the authority has been authorized to levy a tax by the electors of the authority.

16. What is being done to formalize a relationship with Gerber Spectrum and Tamarac?

Answer: Preliminary discussions have already taken place with regards to potential partnership/membership use of both facilities.

17. What can be done to increase use fees while keeping fees affordable?

Answer: Currently the Fremont Recreation Department is receiving a grant from the Fremont Foundation that allows the Recreation Department to give students without means the opportunity to participate in youth programming. As programming fees increase, the enrollment rate declines. Given this trend increasing fees does not always amount to an increase in profit. The possibility exists to increase the amount of grant funding for adults through the Fremont Foundation and other revenue sources. To increase revenue requires an increase in programming overall.

18. How can user fees be leveraged with other funding sources to generate enough for operating without levying a millage?

Answer: Funding sources such as the Fremont Area Community Foundation, Private Donations and Request for Donation from the School System are possible sources of revenue. To maintain a sustainable long term Recreation Authority without levying a millage would require a secured annual donation or grant process. Without that, research has shown that operation millages are a necessity in any long-term plan to operate recreational facilities.

Recreational programs and facility rentals can typically cover non-building operational costs like salaries, office supplies, sport supplies and referees...

19. Does the school plan to build a new pool at the new high school now or anytime in the future?

Answer: We are not aware of any movement in the community for a bond issue which would be

necessary for construction. The Board of Education does not foresee a bond issue for a new pool in the immediate future.

Capital Improvements made to the Fremont High School as it relates to the proposed Recreation Authority

Pool:

- New Munters De-humidification unit installed on roof of pool
- Supply and return piping for pool below pool, new high rate sand filtration system installed 1998-99
- New chemical feed system installed 1998-99
- New pump installed to increase flow rate 2010
- New tile line installed in bottom of pool for deep line delineation 2010
- Raised gutter in pool 1998-99
- Raise diving board and re-worked ceiling for diving 1998-99
- New required grate covers on 3 main drains 2011
- New boilers for pool water and pool space temperature 2006
- Temperature control system installed for controlling HVAC units and boilers 2006
- New roof was installed in 1995

Multi-Purpose Room:

- Built in 1986-87
- Installed chiller and controls in 2000

Lobby:

- Built in 1986-87

Gym:

- Re-sanded and painted gym floor 2004
- Replaced bleachers 1988
- Replaced motors on north side bleachers 2009
- Replaced glass backboards per MHSAA Ruling not sure of date

Old Cafeteria:

- Created offices and handicap restrooms 2004
- AC installed in offices around 2004
- Installed wheelchair lift 2004
- Replaced all south wall glass, not sure of date
- Packer store remodeled 2010

Weight Room:

- Created weight room 2000
- AC installed in weight room 2004
- Tech dept moved out 2010 and weight room was expanded

Boiler Room:

- New boilers installed 2006
- New gas line was installed to service entire building 2006

- New sinks installed in gym restrooms 2006
- Toilet partitions replaced late 90's
- New parking and drainage installed on east side of building 2006
- New dumpster enclosure installed 2010

Roofs:

- Multipurpose room, Lobby, Old Cafeteria, Hallway, Office were all installed in 1986, and life expectancy is probably another 5–10 years. The Gym roof was installed in the mid 80's, is out of warranty. But its life expectancy is probably another 5 – 10 years.