

# Survey Report

## Limited Assessment of Community Support for the Development of a Mountain Home Community Recreation Center

Provided by Jack Walborn and Jeff Johnson, Co - chairs  
of the Communications and Community Ownership Sub Committee  
March 2010

### Note:

The information contained in this report is one small part of an overall process to determine the need and support for a community recreational center. This is not intended to be a stand alone report. It will be combined with information from community leadership interviews, site visits, additional interviews and a third party market and feasibility study. All information will be processed and discussed by a volunteer community member committee representing diverse perspectives.



YMCA

We build strong kids,  
strong families, strong communities.

## Introduction

The citizens of Elmore County and the City of Mountain Home have long desired an increase in the amount of available recreational opportunities. Central to these desires has been the possibility of building or acquiring a facility from which these recreational opportunities would be delivered. The Western Elmore County Recreation District (WECRD) was formed to provide a funding mechanism and oversight of the development of programs and a possible facility. WECRD contracted with the Treasure Valley Family YMCA in September of 2009 to provide guidance and leadership to a community ownership development process. This process is intended to build broad based community ownership and will result in a recommendation that provides a sustainable, affordable option to meet the recreational needs of Western Elmore County. The process is inclusive, transparent and will engage a broad and diverse group of residents.

A Community Leadership Development Committee (CLDC) was formed to govern the process and ensure that the goals of inclusion, transparency and effectiveness are met. Alan Bermensolo and Mark Hiddleston were identified as top leaders within the community and were recruited to lead the CLDC. Members were identified and recruited and two of three subcommittee were formed – the Programs and Facilities subcommittee chaired by Judy Mayne and Laura Foreman and the Communications sub-committee chaired by Jack Walborn and Jeff Johnson. The third sub-committee, Budget and Finance will be formed later in the process.

Each of these sub-committees has a specific role to play, and no one report or group will solely determine the end recommendation. The Programs and Facilities Subcommittee completed Community Leadership Interviews in January. Based on these interviews, the Communications and Community Ownership Subcommittee prepared and distributed a broad-based survey to the community to identify unmet needs and gain awareness of successful programs that already exist. Results from both the survey and community leadership interviews will be reported back to the public at a Town Hall meeting on April 20th. The public will be given an opportunity to give input to the information presented.

Having validated the learning at the town hall meeting, a recommended plan will be tested through a third party market survey. The results from that survey will be statistically sound. At this point, the committee will be able to confidently recommend a course of action which may include developing programs and/or facilities to meet the identified community needs. The entirety of the process is meant to involve a broad section of the community and to be open and transparent to the general public. Participation by interested community members is always welcomed.

Surveys were made available in the newspaper and in the city water bill. Several signs were placed throughout the city to increase awareness of the survey process. In addition, more than eight local web sites had links to an on-line survey, surveys were accepted by fax, and hard copies of the survey were available – and a drop box was provided for complete surveys -- at the following eight locations:

- Albertson's, 528 N Main St
- City of Mountain Home, 160 S 3rd E
- D&B Farm Supply, 655 W 6th S
- Mountain Home High School, 300 S 11th E
- Mountain Home Library, 790 N 10th E
- Mountain Home Senior Center, 1000 N 3rd E
- Moxie Java, 390 American Legion Blvd
- Paul's Market, 215 E Jackson St

Surveys were gathered between March 1 – 12, 2010. 832 surveys were returned. 687 of the respondents were adults.

The following pages enumerate the objectives of the study, summary of survey responses, observations and closing comments.

We would like to extend thanks to Greg Berry for building the secure survey boxes.

## Objectives

The specific objectives to be achieved through this survey process were as follows:

1. To provide broad-based information from the community that can augment the Programs and Facility Sub-Committee's community leadership interviews and sub-committee members' insights as they make the important decisions regarding the types of programs and services that should be offered in the community.
2. To gauge the need for a community recreation center and relative importance in the opinion of the community at-large.
3. To identify the gap between the programs and recreational opportunities that currently exist and those desired by the community.
4. To identify possible collaborations and partners in the community
5. To identify challenges for the purpose of the sub-committees and CLDC determining the best way to overcome these barriers.
6. To gather opinions on the desirability of the location of the land currently owned by the WECRD.

## Observations

Based on these surveys and our YMCA knowledge and experience, we are making the following observations. We ask you to consider the following:

### Observations

1. There is strong support that the community would benefit from a Family Rec Center.
2. The community is growing impatient and clear communication of a vision and course of action that leads to results is crucial.
3. The top programs that the community identified as priorities include teen programs, youth sports, health and wellness, aquatic activities, and after-school care/activities. There were many specific types of health and wellness programs listed in the narrative and further exploration will be needed to prioritize those individual programs.
4. Based on the community leadership interviews, two programs were added to the survey: additional Equine programs and additional Motocross programs. These two areas were identified as the lowest in priority by the community and there were numerous comments made in the narrative portions that suggest these activities would not be seen as priorities for this project.
5. Themes that emerged from the question regarding who would benefit from a family rec/YMCA program include an emphasis on families, exploring medical partnerships, and ensuring a pricing structure that is affordable for the community.
6. Overall, the location of the WECRD land is seen as desirable, with more than 69% of respondents stating that the land is either a great or good location.
7. Sustainability is, by far, seen as the largest challenge by the community and providing community understanding and education in this area will be vital to success.
8. There are some strong existing providers of services in the community. There was some concern expressed about competition. This project should take care to work with these providers to create mutually beneficial partnerships.

## Summary of Responses to Survey Questions

**Each question is stated in bold. A summary of the responses follows. This report is not intended to provide statistical information. When appropriate, a sampling of specific comments has been included. Duplicate comments were combined in order to make the report shorter and more readable.**

- 1. Do you feel that your community would benefit from a Family Rec Program, such as a YMCA? Yes or No?**

An overwhelming majority of community respondents stated that a Family Rec program would benefit the community. 88% said yes. 12% said no.

Of adults answering the survey, 86.9% said yes. 13.1% said no.

- 2. In which of the following programs have you participated in the last 12 months (circle all that apply)?**

<i>After-school Care/Activities</i>	23.6%
<i>Child Care (infant, pre-school)</i>	17%
<i>Day Camp (Summer School-age)</i>	13.1%
Equine Programs	6.2%
<i>Health and Wellness</i>	40.9%
<i>Motocross</i>	9.6%
<i>Resident Camp</i>	3%
<i>Teen Programs</i>	20.5%
<i>Youth Sports</i>	48%

**3. For the above programs, with which organization(s)/business did you participate?**

Organizations with three or more responses:

Park and Rec	119
AFB	65
School	60
Parks and Rec City Pool	35
YMCA	28
Optimist Programs/Park	26
Anytime Fitness	17
City of Mountain Home Soccer	14
Church	13
Fitness First	13
4 - H	10
Senior Center	9

Boy Scouts	7
Curves	7
Elmore County Youth Baseball	5
LDS Church	5
Girl Scouts	4
Learning Center	4
White Knuckle Racing	4
A Bright Beginning Daycare	3
Grace Montessori School	3
Kids World Too	3
Mother's Day Out	3

**4. Please number, in priority order, which programs in your opinion are most important to add/augment in this community, with 1 being - most important and 13 being least important. (Adults only rankings follow the program name.)**

- 1 Teen Programs (1)
- 2 Youth Sports (4)
- 3 Health and Wellness (2)
- Swimming/Rec Swim/Lessons (2)
- After-school Care/Activities (5)
- 6 Values-based Family Programs (6)
- 7 Day Camp (Summer School-age) (7)
- 8 Child Care (infant, pre-school) (8)
- 9 Resident Camp (9)
- 10 Equine programs to enhance current activities (10)
- 11 Motocross programs to enhance current activities (11)

*Specific health and wellbeing areas listed:*

*aerobics, archery, basketball courts, boxing, cardio room, group exercise, gymnastics, handball, ice hockey, indoor track, martial arts, nutrition, outdoor fields, outdoor recreation, paintball range, Pilates, racquetball courts, rock climbing, skateboarding, tennis, volleyball courts, weight room, yoga*

5. Who do you think will benefit from Family Rec/YMCA programs (circle all that apply)?

		Adults Only Answers
<i>Children</i>	<i>85.7% of respondents</i>	<i>86.5%</i>
<i>Youth</i>	<i>88.4% of respondents</i>	<i>88.6%</i>
<i>Adults</i>	<i>76% of respondents</i>	<i>77.5%</i>
<i>Seniors</i>	<i>66.8% of respondents</i>	<i>71.3%</i>
<i>Special Needs</i>	<i>62.4% of respondents</i>	<i>66%</i>

Other:

Families	20
Wealthy/those who can afford it	8
Community as a whole	7
No one/not many	6
Military	5
Politicians	3
Limited Income Households	3
Physical Therapy patients	3
Post-op Patients	2
Those running it	2
Young Adults	1
Teen mothers	1
People who don't pay taxes	1
Grandparents	1
Troubled Youth	1
Cardiac Rehab Patients	1
People who can't drive to Boise	1
Overweight people	1
Only those who participate	1
City	1
Visitors	1
Private Day Care Centers for field trips	1
Non-military	1

**6. What challenges do you think a Family Rec Program or YMCA in this community would face?**

By far, the biggest challenge seen to a Family Rec Program or YMCA is sustainability. A large portion of respondents stated that they didn't see any challenges. Several remarks included that they didn't see it as a challenge, but they hoped that this project would include/partner with Parks and Rec.

- Sustainability – tax, member fees, participation (50%)
- Groups or specific people against it – conflicting interests/agendas, opposed to change, those without children, inability of community to agree, religious conflicts (7%)
- Operations -- staffing, hours, transportation, gangs, theft (5%)
- WECRD – reputation, trust (3%)
- Capital Dollars (3%)
- AFB (3%)
- Other organizations/businesses that it may impact (2%)
- Politicians/City Council (<1%)

**7. The Western Elmore County Rec District currently owns land on the east side of South 18<sup>th</sup> East, across from the Junior High (site of the future High School), High School football field and track, and a 20 acre outdoor sports park. What do you think of this location for a Family Rec Center or YMCA?**

**Adults only answers:**

Great	43.2%	44.1%
Good	26.7%	25.2%
Neutral	15.8%	15%
Fair	5.9%	6.2%
Unsatisfactory	8.4%	9.4%

**8. Demographic Information (check all that apply):**

Under 18	25.4%
19 – 29	16.5%
30 – 65	61.2%
over 65	10.6%
Active duty	11.7%
Retired military	18.2%
Civilian, but have access to the base	18.4%
Live on the base	3%
Live in Mountain Home	84.2%

**Closing Comments and Next Steps**

We would like to express our thanks to the Communication and Community Ownership Subcommittee for your involvement, patience and cooperation in this developmental process. The Community Leadership Interview report, along with this report and other information gathered by the Programs and Facilities Sub-committee, will be used by the Programs and Facilities Sub-committee to determine recommendations to be given to the CLDC. These recommendations will be part of a third party Market Study that will be conducted this summer.