

COUNCIL ACTION FORM

SUBJECT: HEALTHY LIFE CENTER – CONTINUED SUPPORT FOR THE PROJECT

BACKGROUND:

Representatives from six entities (Mary Greeley Medical Center, Heartland Senior Services, Iowa State University, Des Moines Area Community College, Story County, and City of Ames) have been meeting for over two years to develop the Healthy Life Center concept. On February 5, the governing bodies and/or representatives from these entities were presented with conceptual drawings, estimated capital costs, and estimated operational expenses and revenues for this facility. This information came from the Planning Study developed by RDG Planning and Design.

SUPPORT FOR THE HEALTHY LIFE CENTER:

Staff from each entity was asked to discuss with their respective governing body regarding its continued support for this project. That said, staff is seeking direction from Council regarding its support or non-support for continued involvement with the Healthy Life Center. The following items are things for Council to consider when determining its continued support.

1. Does Council continue to support the concept?

This concept entails providing a one of a kind center that makes the life-long goal of healthy living accessible and enjoyable to people of all ages and socio-economic status.

2. Does Council agree that the City should own and manage the facility?

It has been proposed the City own and manage this public facility for several reasons. These include the City having experience operating facilities, it will be a public facility, recreational opportunities are included in the plan, the City currently has the technology (i.e. registration/reservation software), and the City makes the most sense of the six entities involved in the project.

3. Does Council support the project scope as presented on February 5?

This is a \$48.7 million dollar project which includes a 125,000 square foot building with parking, outdoor playground, and community gardens.

4. Does Council support the proposed funding for a bond referendum and ongoing operational expenses?

Council previously approved the use of the Geitel Winakor bequest (currently at \$1.85 million) to help offset the cost of a new indoor aquatic center. In addition, it is proposed an additional \$15 million in bond revenue will be

utilized for the project. Realizing the City Council cannot commit these bond revenues unless a referendum is passed, the Council is being asked if it is willing to place this bond referendum on a ballot sometime in the future (assuming all partners commit to their share of funding and the philanthropic funds being raised)

According to BallardKing, it is estimated the annual subsidy for the City may be approximately \$450,000 - \$500,000 per year and will most likely increase with each year of operations.

5. Does Council have concerns regarding recent comments from the private sector as to how the Healthy Life Center will negatively affect their business?

This facility contains multiple areas (e.g., teaching/participation kitchen, community gardens, gymnasiums, public meeting rooms, Mary Greeley Medical Center and Heartland Senior Services presence, etc.) that are not included in private facilities. The demographic of users will also be different for this facility.

ALTERNATIVES:

1. If Council approves of the five items above, direct staff to continue to move the Healthy Life Center concept forward.
2. Direct staff to discontinue involvement with the Healthy Life Center concept.
3. Refer back to staff for more information.

CITY MANAGER RECOMMENDED ACTION:

The Healthy Life Center concept is unprecedented given that six entities have been working together for over two years to develop and promote this holistic approach to living well. Multiple presentations have been given throughout the community and the feedback has been very positive. Although there is some resistance from the private sector, staff maintains this facility is will serve a different demographic than what is being served by private sector facilities. To encourage individuals to live a healthy life style, this facility will include amenities such as community gardens, a teaching/participation kitchen, warm water aquatic facilities, therapy options provided through Mary Greeley Medical Center, Heartland Senior Services Adult Day Center, and many opportunities for intergenerational interaction.

Therefore, it is the City Manager's recommendation to approve Alternative #1 as stated above.