



New Brighton Parks, Recreation, and Environmental Commission

Agenda

Upper Level | Conference Room

New Brighton City Hall 803 Old Hwy 8 NW, New Brighton , MN

6:30 PM September 2, 2026

Members of the Parks, Recreation, and Environmental Commission will attend the meeting in person unless eligible to attend remotely per MN Stat. 13D.02.

To participate in this meeting, members of the public may:

- **Attend the meeting in person.**
- **Watch the meeting electronically.** Tune into CTV Channel 8023 (CenturyLink) or Channel 16 (Comcast). To observe the meeting as a livestream or a webcast, visit NBMN.info/View-A-Meeting

I. Call to Order

II. Roll Call

Chair Julia O'Rourke

Vice-Chair Abe McEathron

Commissioner Pauline Alfors

Commissioner Dawn Mikkelsen

Commissioner Irie Haig

Commissioner Kristin Hicks

Commissioner Becky Slabiak

Commissioner Laura Sokol-Kraft

III. Approval of Agenda

IV. Approval of Past Minutes

A. August 5, 2026

V. Business Items

A. City Campus Visioning Process

VI. Informational Items

VII. Announcements

VIII. Adjournment



MINUTES
Parks, Recreation and Environmental Commission
August 5, 2026 City Hall
6:30 p.m.

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m.

II. Roll Call:

Members Present: Commissioners Pauline Alfors, Irie Haig, Kristin Hicks, Abe McEathron and Laura Sokol-Kraft.

Members Absent: Commissioners Dawn Mikkelsen, Julia O'Rourke (Chair) and Becky Slabiak.

Also Present: Director Jennifer Fink, Director Craig Schlichting and Councilmember Graeme Allen.

III. Approval of Agenda

Motion by Alfors, seconded by Haig to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried 5-0.

IV. Approval of Minutes

Motion by Hicks, seconded by Alfors to approve the June 3, 2026 minutes as presented.
Motion carried 3-0-2 (Commissioners McEathron and Sokol-Kraft abstained).

V. Business Items

A. Annual Presentation from Community Assets and Development Department on Projects

Director Fink stated as a part of the PREC Commission's annual work plan, the Director of Community Assets and Development attends to share project updates as well as updates on the Climate Action Plan.

Director Schlichting provided the Commission with an update from the Community Assets and Development Department. He reported this was his second appearance before the PREC Commission, noting his previous presentation was on the redevelopment of the golf course property. He stated staff continues to work with a developer, The Beard Group, on this project. It was noted the putting green would remain in place, as well as the driving range and juniors program. He reviewed the roadway projects that were completed in 2026, noting the City completes roughly two miles of roadways each year. He commented on the Well 16 project, discussed the Gardenvue culvert replacement and noted the

roadway projects that were being completed by Ramsey County. He then described the projects and streets that would be addressed in 2027.

Discussion included:

- The Commission suggested the City pursue food offerings at the golf course. Staff noted light food options and strong beer were being pursued for the clubhouse.
- Staff provided further information to the Commission regarding the City's living streets plan.
- Staff commented on the homes that were purchased by the City adjacent to Vermont park, noting these homes were being surveyed for hazardous materials this week and the homes would be removed in the near future.
- It was noted staff was working on Phase 2 of the Downtown Vision Plan.

VI. Informational Items

Councilmember Allen explained he attended the Hansen Park ribbon cutting ceremony. He thanked staff for all of their efforts on this event. He thanked all of the residents who participated in National Night Out, which was held on Tuesday, August 4. He reported Stockyard Days would be held Friday, August 7 through Sunday, August 9. He indicated the Council has begun working on the 2027 budget and tax levy, noting Phase 2 of the park improvement plan was not included in the budget at this time.

Director Fink shared photos from the Hansen Park ribbon cutting ceremony. She was pleased to report the City received four best practices awards for this park. She noted a video was created by NineNorth for this event, which will be available for the State of the City event. She discussed the Park Discovery Day that was held at Totem Pole Park noting 450 people attended. She indicated staff would be working with the Lions to combine Park Discovery Days and the City's summer concert series for next year. She explained the City's last summer concert for 2026 would be held next Thursday, August 13 at Veterans Park and the last Park Discovery Day would be held on Tuesday, August 11 at Innsbruck Park from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. She reported the third annual Chris Walla Memorial Golf Tournament would be held on Thursday, August 6. She noted the tournament fee was \$25 and walk ups were welcome.

VII. Announcements

Director Fink commented on the shared civic campus survey that was sent out to those who hosted National Night Out parties. She encouraged the Commission members to complete this survey and pass the survey along to those in their network.

Director Fink noted the Community Center would be closed Tuesday, September 8 through Friday, September 11. She explained the Eagle's Nest would be replaced in 2027 because the equipment has reached the end of its useful life. She anticipated this would take place in July and August of 2027.

Director Fink discussed the community art that had begun at Hansen Park.

Vice Chair McEathron reported he attended the Hansen Park ribbon cutting ceremony as did Chair O'Rourke. He thanked staff for all of their efforts on this event.

VII. Adjournment

Motion by McEathron, seconded by Alfors to adjourn the meeting at 7:35 p.m. Motion carried 5-0.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jennifer Fink". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Jennifer Fink
Director of Parks and Recreation



Agenda Section:	Business Items
Meeting Date:	September 2, 2026

REQUEST FOR COUNCIL CONSIDERATION – EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

ITEM DESCRIPTION: City Campus Visioning Process
Action Requested: <u>Discussion</u>
Form of Action: <u>N/A or Other</u>
Votes Needed: <u>N/A</u>

Summary Statement:	The City of New Brighton has been engaged in a visioning process to explore the long-term future of City facilities, including City Hall and the New Brighton Community Center (NBCC). This work builds upon the Strategic Facilities Assessment completed in 2024, which evaluated existing facility conditions, long-term needs, and potential options for addressing aging City facilities. Rather than moving directly into facility design, the City initiated a broader visioning and community engagement process to better understand what residents value in their civic spaces and what they would like a future City Campus to provide for the community. Throughout the visioning process, the City has sought input from residents, staff, community organizations, and other stakeholders. Engagement opportunities have included community events, an online survey, outreach at existing City events, and conversations with staff and community partners. The engagement focused not only on the physical buildings, but also on how a City Campus can serve the community.
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	Feedback received through the process will help inform the ongoing efforts. NBCC currently welcomes more than 500,000 visits annually and provides recreation programs, fitness opportunities, indoor play, community meeting and gathering spaces, and other services. The visioning process provides an opportunity to consider how these services may evolve and how future facilities can support recreation, community connection, accessibility, and changing community needs for decades to come.
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Recommendations:	Participate in an engagement process around the City Campus process
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Applicable Deadlines:	
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Community Impact:	The City Campus Visioning Process provides an opportunity to thoughtfully consider how City facilities can best serve New Brighton residents now and into the future. City Hall and the New Brighton Community Center are important public spaces where residents access City services, participate in recreation and enrichment programs, gather with others, and connect with their community. Community engagement is an important component of the visioning process to help ensure that future decisions reflect a broad range of needs, experiences, and perspectives. Particular consideration is being given to accessibility, welcoming and inclusive spaces, opportunities for community gathering, recreation and wellness, transportation and parking, and the ability for residents of different ages, abilities, backgrounds, and economic circumstances to access and benefit from City facilities. Feedback gathered through this process will help the City identify opportunities to reduce barriers, strengthen community connections, and create a City Campus that is welcoming, functional, accessible, and responsive to the needs of the community.
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Legislative	
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History:	
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Strategic Priority:	<u>Economic Development</u> <u>City Assets</u> <u>Community Engagement & Belonging</u>
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Fiscal Impact:	Financial Consideration?	<u>No</u>
	Revenue/Expenditure Amount:	\$
	Financing Source:	<u>N/A</u>
	Notes:	

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Civic Campus Visioning

Please complete the sheet provided – there are no wrong answers!





Our Goal Today

The City of New Brighton is exploring opportunities to improve its buildings that provide services and amenities for residents – and we want your input!

Today we'll cover:

- Why the city is exploring improvements
- Challenges with our current spaces
- Feedback we have received so far from the community
- Your suggestions



Planning For The Future

In Fall 2025 the City began a “Downtown Visioning” initiative to explore strategies for future growth and development in New Brighton.

This effort sought to establish goals for:

- Transit and pedestrian infrastructure
- Parks and green space
- Housing and business development

Downtown Visioning – Items With Broad Support

- **Public realm improvements**
- **Downtown as a community hub**
- Walkability/pedestrian safety
- Maintaining a “small-town” feel rather than big-city/urban



How Do City Buildings Fit In?

The Community Center and City Hall are vibrant parts of downtown and the City's top public gathering spaces. They must adapt to changing needs based on:

- Population growth
- Changing demographics (age, families, housing)
- Demand for youth and adult programming
- Repairs and maintenance

Options that could be considered:



A city campus to bring the Community Center and City Hall under one roof.



Renovations and/or expansion of the existing facilities



No changes at all

Studying Our Spaces

Before engaging with residents, the City took time to assess the current strengths, weaknesses and needs of the Community Center and City Hall buildings.

- Condition of key infrastructure like HVAC, plumbing, electrical, and the building envelope
- Parking adequacy
- Accessibility (ADA compliance, transit access)



Assessment Findings – Community Center

- Built 34 years ago in 1994.
- 72,050 sq. ft. of space assessed.
- Key ongoing infrastructure needs include roofs, windows, doors, HVAC, boilers, Eagles Nest equipment, parking lot, etc.

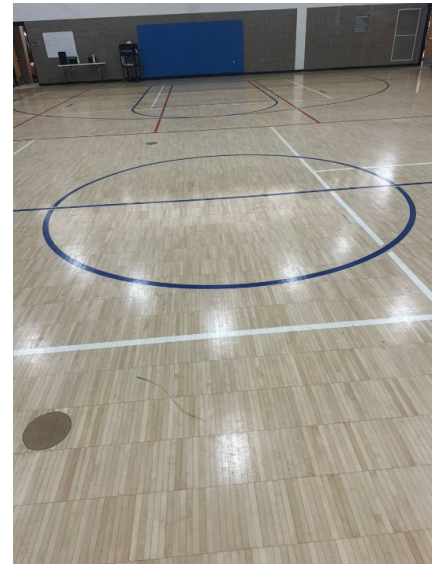
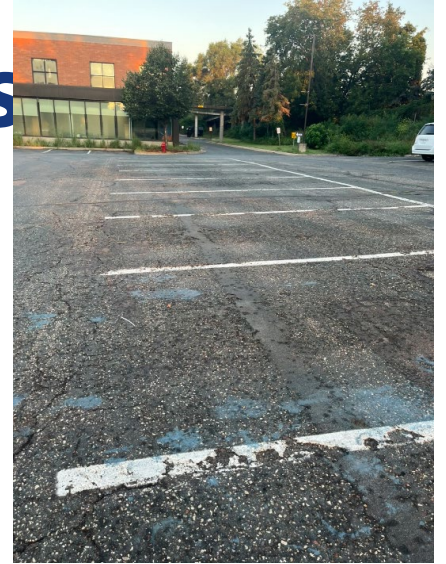


10-year projected maintenance costs:

\$5,581,179

Community Center – Key Deficiencies

- Roof leaks
- Drainage issues
- Sidewalk/asphalt heaving
- Gym floor needs replacement
- Furniture/casework is worn down
- Many HVAC systems (boiler, water heaters, exhaust fans, etc) are at the end of their lifespan.



Community Center – Space Deficiencies

- Unable to accommodate demand for court space. This includes things like open gym, pickleball, fitness classes, and tournament/competition space.
- Few “third space” or informal gathering areas for residents to work or socialize.

Assessment Findings – City Hall

- Built 39 years ago in 1987.
- 18,900 SF of space assessed.
- Many key features are still original to the building, but in good repair overall.

10-year projected maintenance

\$609,738



City Hall – Key Deficiencies

- Drainage issues
- Windows need replacement to limit water intrusion and improve energy efficiency
- Tuckpointing/exterior wall damage



Next: Your Feedback!

The City is working to understand what services and amenities are most popular.

What has been done so far:

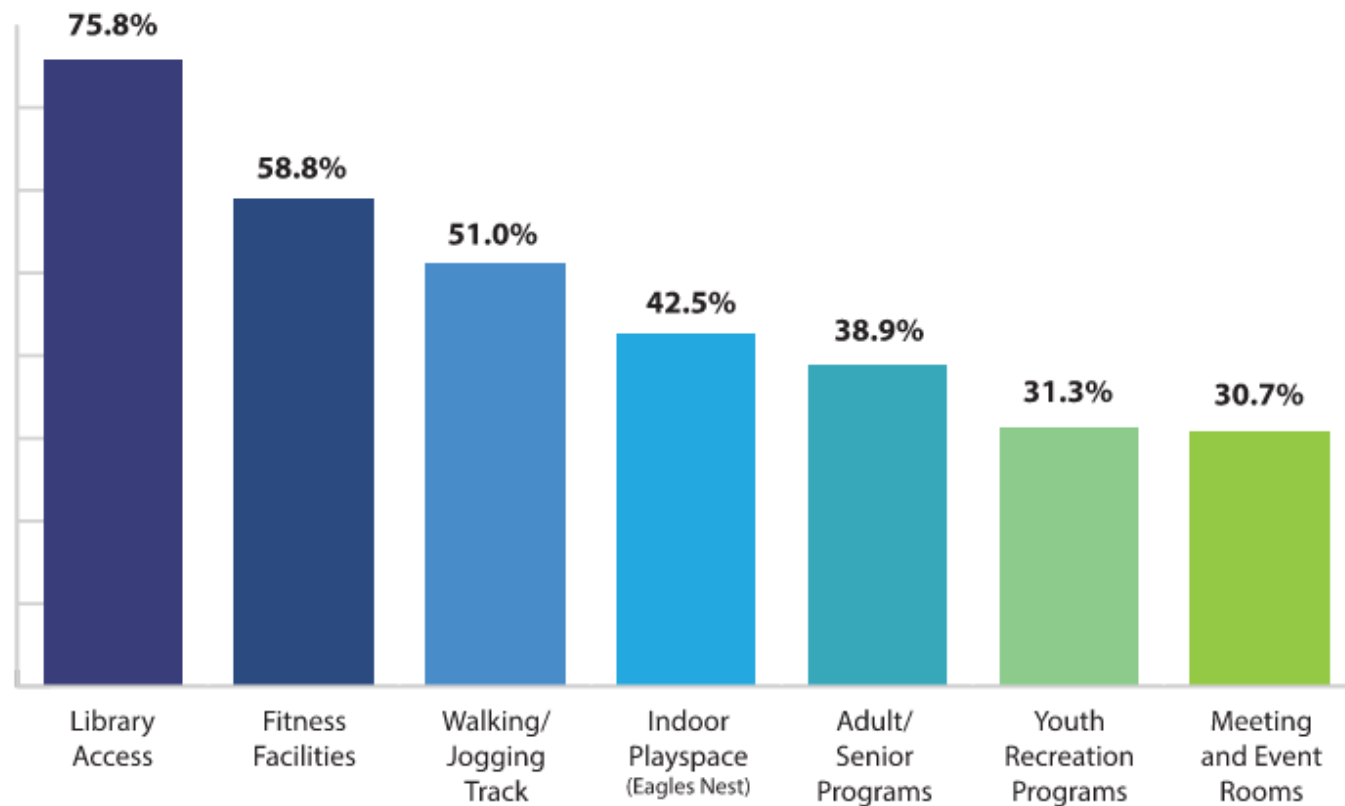
- Community survey – 567 responses
 - Shared via website, email, city newsletter,
- Open house – 120+ visitors
- Community meetings – like this one!



Survey Results

MOST IMPORTANT AMENITIES (COMMUNITY CENTER)

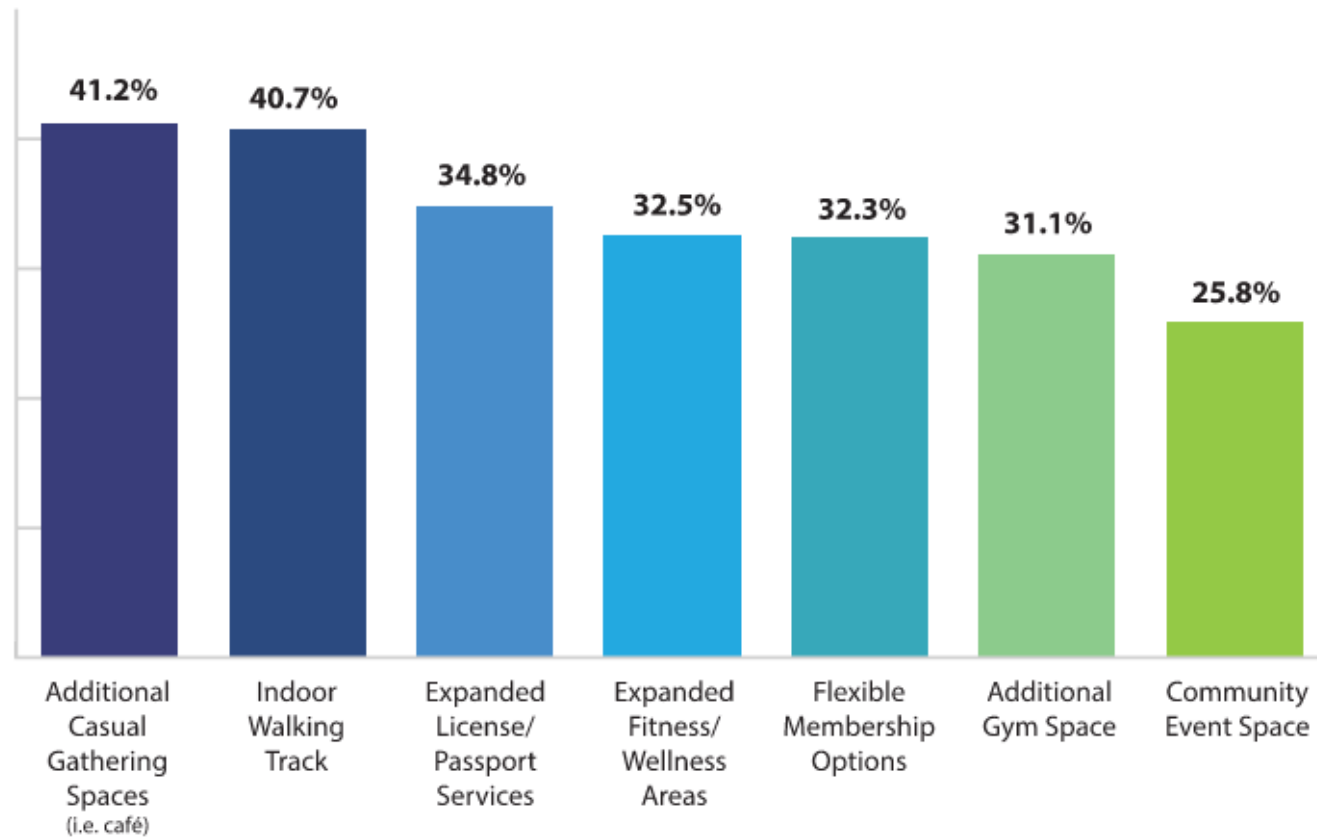
WHAT AMENITIES ARE MOST IMPORTANT TO YOU? (RESPONDENTS COULD CHOOSE UP TO 4)



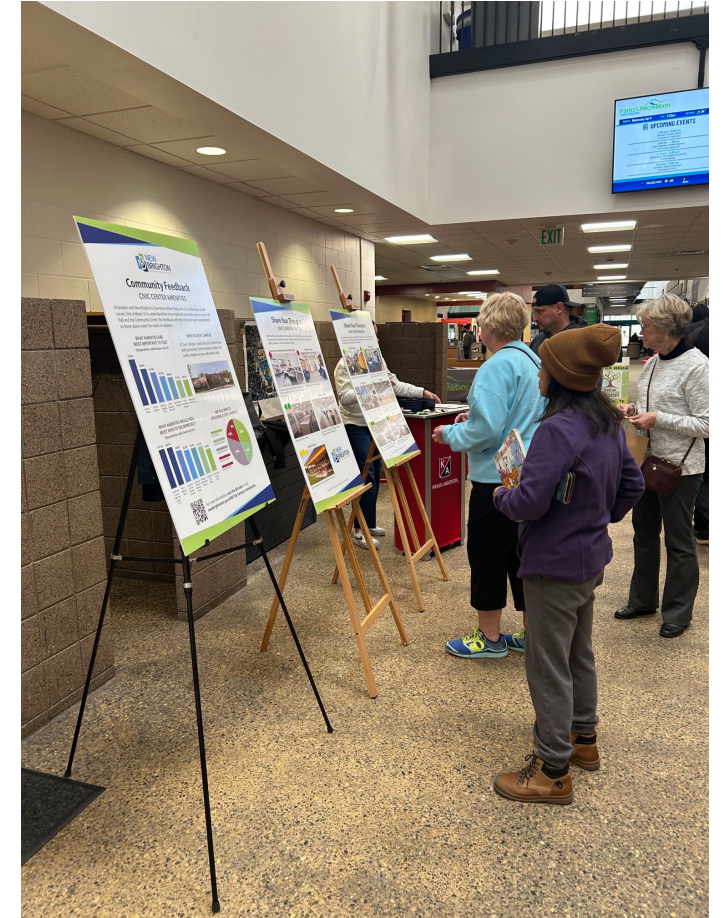
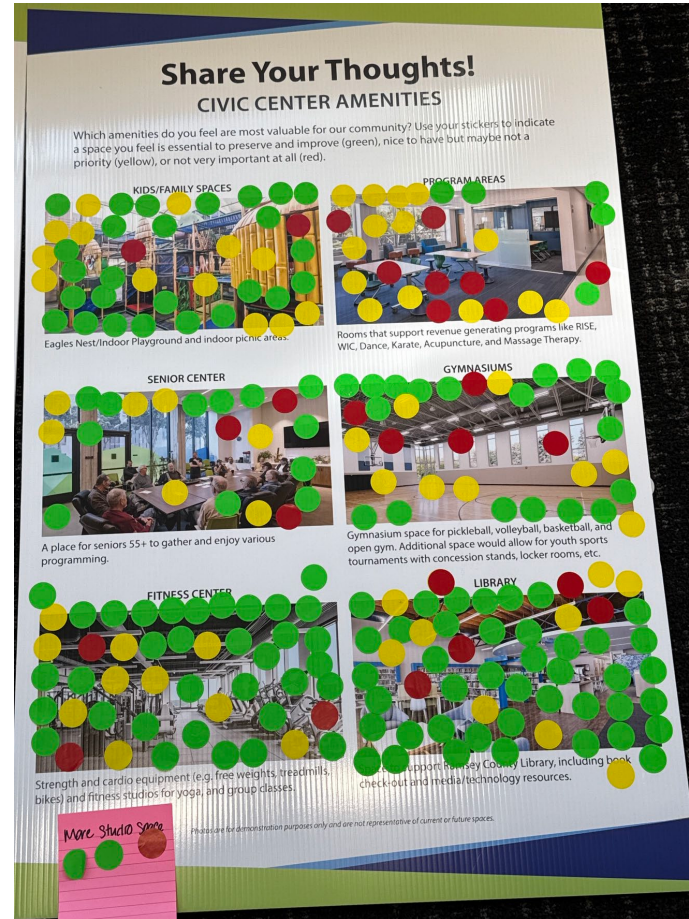
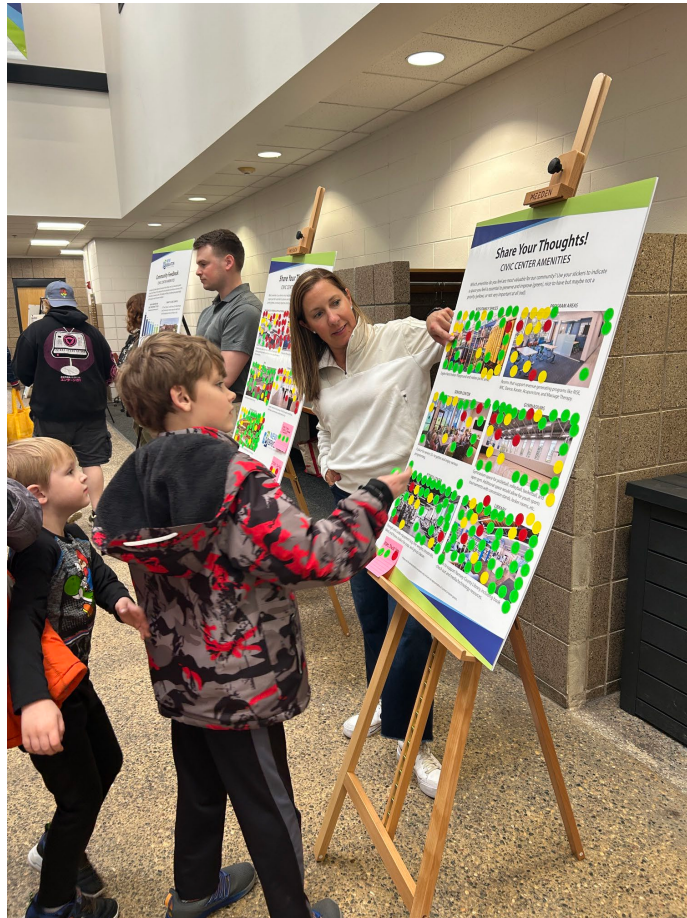
Survey Results

SUPPORT FOR NEW IMPROVEMENTS

WHAT AMENITIES WOULD YOU MOST WISH TO SEE IMPROVED? (RESPONDENTS COULD CHOOSE UP TO 4)



Open House



Open House Engagement Results

Outdoor Spaces



GREEN: 42
YELLOW: 9
RED: 3

Library



GREEN: 41
YELLOW: 9
RED: 5

Fitness Center



GREEN: 34
YELLOW: 10
RED: 3

Kids/Family Spaces



GREEN: 26
YELLOW: 13
RED: 2

Gymnasiums



GREEN: 19
YELLOW: 9
RED: 5

Senior Center



GREEN: 12
YELLOW: 7
RED: 3

Third Space/Co-working/
Open Gathering Areas



GREEN: 6
YELLOW: 11
RED: 28

Community Rooms



GREEN: 5
YELLOW: 21
RED: 9

Program Areas



GREEN: 5
YELLOW: 15
RED: 8

Civic Campus Opportunity

One option being explored is the consolidation of City Hall and the Community Center into a single “civic campus” with the goal of:

- Improving convenience and accessibility for residents
- Strengthening collaboration among city staff
- Improving operational efficiency by managing one building instead of two
- Creating opportunities for redevelopment of more desirable sites.



Build-A-Center Exercise

You've been tasked with creating the ideal community center for New Brighton, but you only have \$15 to spend. What will you prioritize?

- **\$3** – Outdoor Spaces
- **\$3** – Multi-Court Gymnasiums
- **\$2** – Expanded Open Fitness Area
- **\$2** – Youth & Teen Programming Spaces
- **\$2** – Senior Programming Spaces
- **\$2** – Drop-in Childcare Center for Members
- **\$2** – Performing Arts Theater
- **\$2** – Library
- **\$2** – Indoor Playspace
- **\$1** – Additional Group Fitness Studios
- **\$1** – Updated Locker Rooms/Restrooms
- **\$1** – Rentable Commercial Kitchen Space
- **\$1** – Rentable Event/Gathering Spaces
- **\$1** – Café/Social Areas
- **\$1** – Enhanced Safety/Security Measures
- **\$1** – Additional Parking
- **\$1** – Indoor Walking Track

Values are arbitrary and not proportionate to real-world costs. This exercise is only intended to help identify which amenities are most and least important to community members.



What's Next?

- **City leaders will closely consider community feedback** and review current site limitations and/or alternative sites, like Block B.
- Based on the input, the City and construction experts will **create cost estimates** for improvement options.
- **Study of financing options and projected tax impacts** will be completed.
- **Community feedback will be used to develop a recommendation** for the City Council.
- **Council consideration** and possible vote.



Final Feedback

After learning about the steps New Brighton has completed so far:

- What additional thoughts or suggestions do you have as the City completes next steps?
- How would you like to see updates shared going forward?
- Do you feel better-informed about the City's efforts?