

## Shaler Township Community Center Survey

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A community center can have many definitions and purposes. Shaler Township is surrounded by many neighbors that have community centers that offer a variety of activities and opportunities. Township staff has spoken with many of our neighbors and have obtained accurate financial information regarding the operations of a full-service community center. All of these centers operate at a substantial annual operating loss. One example offers a full-service community center including a weight room, daily activities and rental rooms for events. On an annual basis, the revenues generated by this robust center fall short of expenditures by \$100,000. This loss does not include the debt incurred to build the center.

The Township is completing a survey to gauge the feelings of the community regarding construction of a community events center:

We ask that you consider the following issues while completing the survey:

The Township currently offers a variety of recreational and educational facilities including Fall Run Park, neighborhood parks, Kiwanis Park, Crawford Pool and the Shaler North Hills Library. The annual parks and recreation and library budget for 2022 is \$1,709,939 which equals approximately 1 mill of 3.49 mills of property tax.

Crawford Pool is supported 100% by the Township and has always operated at a loss. The annual operating costs loss for this facility is between \$50,000 to \$150,000 per year. This does not include the capital expenditures that are required to maintain the facility. Maintenance costs of Fall Run Park exceed \$75,000 per year to preserve the stream stabilization efforts. Our newest walking trail venture, Eagle Canyon Trail, will require annual costs to maintain the trail and stream bed. In addition, the Township is a major contributor to the Shaler North Hills Library. The annual contribution to the library is \$500,000. The Township also maintains the library building, and the cost for capital improvements is not included in the above number.

The primary purpose of the purchase of the former Jeffery school was to secure adequate parking for Kiwanis Park. The auxiliary purposes were to add acreage to the Township's premier park as well as provide some type of community facility that is available to all. The purchase of the property also allows us to relocate the Parks and Recreation Department from the Public Works Garage on Little Pine Creek Road. The current Public Works Garage was built in the 1950's with additions in 1995 and modifications throughout the years. The land where the garage is located is bordered by Little Pine Creek and Little Pine Creek Road and the footprint of the current facility maximizes all available space. There is no room for expansion at the garage and the Public Works fleet of trucks and equipment is expanding and outgrowing the facility. Relocating the Parks and Recreation Department will free up 6 garage bays and allow the Township to move equipment, currently stored outside, inside the garage prolonging in the life of the equipment. It will also put the Parks and Recreation Department close to the park which will eliminate the moving of equipment from two different locations to maintain the park.

Construction of a new facility, or two facilities (one for the Parks and Recreation Department and one for community use), is estimated to cost between \$7.5 and \$12 million. Depending on the final design, the Township will have to borrow money for construction costs. Borrowing will require an annual debt service, similar to a mortgage payment. This will have an impact on the annual budget and the higher the construction costs, the higher the annual debt payment. The Township will seek grants for various parts of the project, but grant funding is limited and not guaranteed. In addition to the annual debt payment, there will be operational costs associated with any type of facility. These costs can run upwards of \$800,000 per year based on our discussions with communities that operate full-service centers. We have studied the costs of community centers extensively and in no case do revenues cover the operational costs of any of the facilities.

The Township Commissioners are charged with balancing the wants for community activities with the cost to support such activities. Please consider if you believe the residents of Shaler Township can add an additional tax burden to operate a center that you may or may not utilize. Also, please evaluate if you think a community

center would duplicate many services that are currently offered by existing facilities, including the Shaler North Hills Library, Shaler Area School District, Volunteer Fire Companies, and private businesses.

The Commissioners are aware that there are many needs that the Kiwanis Park Annex can fulfill. The Township also realizes that this property provides us with an opportunity to build a facility that will serve the community for years to come. In order to gain some insight and obtain community input, a public meeting will be held for all interested stakeholders on March 22nd, 2022 at 6:30 p.m. at the Township Municipal Building, 300 Wetzel Road, Glenshaw, PA 15116. We will be asking residents to RSVP with their interest in attending this meeting and may move it to a different location to accommodate the number of responders. In addition, we will likely ask attendees to submit a list of questions so that we can research inquiries, reduce redundancy of questions and have answers to your inquiries. This meeting will be advertised on the Township's website and social media as well as press releases to various media outlets. The following survey has also been created to gather information from residents. The deadline for completion of this survey is February 28, 2022 so that we have adequate time to summarize survey results.

1. Are you a resident of Shaler Township?

- ☐ Resident
- ☐ Non-Resident
- ☐ Owner of a business located in Shaler Township

2. Please provide your street name and zip code. (This information is necessary to assure the voices of those that will be funding the capital project are accurately represented.)

Street Name \_\_\_\_\_

Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

3. Please select all options that best describe your household.

- ☐ Household with no children residing
- ☐ Household with children between 1-4 years
- ☐ Household with children between 5-10 years
- ☐ Household with children between 11-17 years
- ☐ Household with children over 18 years old
- ☐ Household over 65 years

4. Would you be willing to incur a tax increase to **build** a community center?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

5. If you answered yes to Question 4, what would you consider a reasonable annual tax increase for a community center?
- ☐ \$45
  - ☐ \$75
  - ☐ \$110
  - ☐ \$0/I don't want a community center at this time.
  - ☐ Other – Please specify: \_\_\_\_\_
6. Would you want to see a community center with phased construction, to control costs?
- ☐ I do not want a community center built at this time.
  - ☐ I want a community center with phased construction to control costs.
  - ☐ I want a community center all at once and understand that this option would include a tax increase between \$74 and \$100 per year for the average assessed home in Shaler Township (the average assessed value in 2021 is \$130,570).
7. Would you be willing to incur a tax increase for the annual operating costs of a community center?
- ☐ Yes
  - ☐ No
8. What hours would you see yourself using this facility?
- ☐ Before 8AM
  - ☐ Between 8AM – 12PM
  - ☐ Between 12PM – 4PM
  - ☐ Between 4PM – 8PM
  - ☐ After 8PM
9. Would you be willing to pay a membership fee to belong to a community center?
- ☐ Yes
  - ☐ No

10. What membership type would you be most likely to purchase?

- ☐ Individual
- ☐ Couple (2 adults residing together)
- ☐ Family (2 adults and up to 4 children residing in the same household)
- ☐ Senior Citizen (65+)
- ☐ I would pay for use as I go, and would not purchase a membership.
- ☐ I would not pay for a membership; I would not use the facility.

11. What do you feel is a reasonable annual membership fee?

- ☐ Under \$50 per year
- ☐ \$50-\$100 per year
- ☐ \$100-\$200 per year
- ☐ Over \$250 per year
- ☐ \$0/I do not want to see a community center built at this time.
- ☐ Other – Please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

12. What type of programming would you like to see offered at a proposed community center?

- ☐ Senior Programming
- ☐ Walking groups/clubs
- ☐ Volleyball leagues
- ☐ Basketball leagues
- ☐ Pickleball leagues
- ☐ Bingo
- ☐ Educational Classes
- ☐ Activity Classes (painting/candle making, etc)
- ☐ Craft Fairs
- ☐ Community Events
- ☐ Youth Sport Classes
- ☐ Adult Sport Classes
- ☐ Open Gymnasium Time
- ☐ Workout Classes
- ☐ Meeting Space Rental
- ☐ Other – Please Specify: \_\_\_\_\_

13. Additional Comments

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14. Do you plan on attending the meeting on March 22, 2022 at 6:30PM?

☐ Yes

☐ No

15. If you plan on attending, please leave your email address so we can notify you of updated meeting information.

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16. What questions would you like to see answered during this meeting?

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