Green Acres

Feasibility Study

Final Report

June 22, 2016

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GREEN
ACRES
IS THE PLACE
TO BE

Green Acres Feasibility Study Committee

On April 8, 2015, the Fairfax City Council agreed to form a committee to recommend near-term and long-term action regarding the future of the Green Acres property. The committee, known as the Green Acres Feasibility Study Committee, was formed shortly afterwards and began meeting in the late spring of 2015.

Throughout the summer and fall of 2015, the Committee discussed various issues related to the site itself, the site's current uses, and the City's future expectations regarding both community amenities and school facilities.

The central issues to assessing potential actions for Green Acres' future include the community center (the current building's main public tenant) and consideration of the School Board's deed of covenant on the property. This report focuses heavily on these two topics because they need to be understood and resolved before any other action is taken regarding the Green Acres property.

The Green Acres Feasibility Study Committee consists of members representing the City's elected leadership. boards and commissions, George Mason University, as well as citizen representatives and City staff. Committee members, and their affiliation, are as follows:

City Council	Michael DeMarco Janice Miller
School Board	Toby Sorensen Carolyn Pitches (alt.)
Citizen Representatives	Deb Mullan Dan Phillips Sarah Ross
Senior Center	Jane Woods Jane Albro (alt.)
Fairfax Police Youth Club (FPYC)	Mike Cosgrove
Planning Commission	Tom Armstrong Ross Landis
Parks and Recreation Advisory Board (PRAB)	Jon Stehle
George Mason University	Cathy Wolfe-Pinskey Tom Calhoun (alt.)
City Staff	Brooke Hardin Cathy Salgado Peter Noonan Eric Forman

Mission Statement

The Committee adopted the following mission statement in order to guide its work and assist Committee members in the preparation of this report and its recommendations:

The Committee's mission has been to:

> *Recommend next steps for both near-term and long-term action regarding the future of the Green Acres property, and to ensure that the community's needs are fulfilled to the greatest extent possible.*

> *The committee is to take into account the City's current and future needs including, but not limited to, education, recreation and services, and will consider ideas to satisfy those needs by renovating, rebuilding or relocating the facility, or by combining these options to achieve the best result for City residents.*

1) Executive Summary

The current Green Acres property encompasses many features that are highly valued by the City's residents. The former school building located on the site contains a community center featuring the City's senior center, exercise facility and gymnasium, as well as multipurpose rooms used for classes and rentals. Part of the building is leased to a child care facility focused on serving the needs of lower-income families. Outside, the property contains athletic fields, a playground, playing courts and a bocce court. In short, these are all uses from which the City derives a great deal of benefit.

However, the building itself needs significant renovations, both for efficient operation and to provide features and amenities that are desired by City residents. The City must decide within the next few years what should be done with the current building – whether to renovate or raze it – and decide on the future location and form of the community center.

After examining numerous issues pertaining to the Green Acres site and its various current uses, the Committee recommends the following:

- **Relocate the Community Center:** The City should build a new community center at a location other than Green Acres. The current building's physical layout is not compatible with the City's community center needs – the Committee has found a need for larger, open interior spaces, such as a full-size gymnasium, exercise facilities and gathering spaces – and renovating the existing building to these standards is considered to be unfeasible. Furthermore, the current community center's location at the edge of the City is sub-optimal. The Committee believes that a more centralized location, and one that is accessible to public transportation, would better serve the City's residents.

→ **Potential Locations:** Three sites have emerged as recommended locations for a new community center. All three of these sites would make a robust community center location, but their varying qualities and attributes mean that a direct comparison of these sites would be difficult and inexact. To provide guidance for the City Council, the Committee has identified these finalist sites and judged their attributes in the context of a potential community center location. The recommended sites are: **City Hall Campus, George Mason University Townhouse Complex, and Old Fairfax Elementary School Site.**

→ **Create a New Community Center to Match the City's Needs:** The Committee solicited input from residents, and researched current trends in municipal community centers. Based on the information gathered, the Committee recommends a community center to include a senior center, full-size gymnasium, fitness facility, kitchen, some multipurpose space, a lobby/social area, and storage/ support/administrative space. The center must have sufficient parking capacity.

→ **Preserve Athletic Field Capacity and Open Space:** Given the high demand and usage for athletic fields, the Committee recommends that the City plan for no net loss of field space as a result of relocating the community center. Additionally, Green Acres serves as one of the only significant open spaces for the southeastern portion of the City, so the community's greater need for open space is also an important factor regarding the future use of the site.

→ **Consider Potential Collaborating Partners:** There are some non-City organizations that may benefit from locating in a new City community center, both in terms of upgraded facilities and in terms of interactions with civic functions and activities. Such partnerships should be explored, however the Committee considers it critical that any such partner be able to contribute financially to both the construction and the maintenance/ operational costs of space occupied as a result of such collaboration.

- **Consider Potential School Board Needs:** The City's School Board holds a Deed of Covenant on the Green Acres property, essentially reserving the site for a future elementary school, should a third elementary school become necessary. The School Board has discussed this issue in depth over the course of the Committee's work, and has decided to maintain its Deed of Covenant at Green Acres, but would consider transferring this Deed to Providence Park if the City uses Green Acres in such a way that would preclude the construction of a new school on the site. This consideration needs to be taken into account and the School Board consulted, when planning any future use for both the Green Acres and/or Providence Park sites.

- **Consider the Future of the Green Acres Property:** Although several years in the future, the City will face a decision regarding how to best use the site after the community center relocates elsewhere. It is prudent to begin considering these options now, in order to best weigh the available alternatives and consider how to achieve the best possible outcome for the City's residents. The Committee feels that it is too early in the process to make a concrete recommendation on Green Acres' final disposition, however this report details the benefits and drawbacks of three such options: **Retaining the entire property for future City use, selling the entire property, or retaining just a portion of the property.**

Front of Green Acres building

2) Site History – From School to Community Center

Constructed as a School in 1961;
Used as Community Center since 2002

Green Acres was used as an elementary school from the time of its construction until 2001. Since that time, the building has served various municipal purposes, and has been used exclusively as a community center / child care center for nearly a decade.

The Green Acres School was constructed in 1961 on approximately 10 acres of land immediately south of the Green Acres residential subdivision. Built prior to the City's independence, the property was transferred from Fairfax County Public Schools to the City of Fairfax School Board in 1979, and the School Board continued to operate Green Acres as an elementary school until 1999. In 2001, the property was transferred to the City of Fairfax.

Green Acres served as an elementary school for almost 40 years. Following the City's independence, Green Acres was one of four relatively small elementary schools in the City. In the late 1990s, the School Board chose to consolidate its four existing elementary schools into two new, larger schools, which ended up being the current Daniels Run and Providence Elementary Schools. Following consolidation, the Green Acres and Westmore schools were no longer used as active public school properties.

Shortly after the City Schools vacated the site, Green Acres was temporarily leased to Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) to provide a home for Dogwood Elementary, which was damaged by fire. FCPS occupied the site from late 2000 through late 2001.

Starting in 2002, the City commenced the building's current use of a community center/ senior center and preschool. At the time, a senior center and some community center functions resided at the John C. Wood Center

(another former school), and needed to be relocated due to that building's repurposing as City administrative offices. Concurrently, Main Street Child Development Center, a child care provider founded in 1973, also needed new space, and the City concluded a lease with Main Street for a portion of the Green Acres building in May 2002. At the time, all of these uses were considered to be temporary; there was no long-term plan for the Green Acres building or site.

Since that time, Green Acres has been continually used for various municipal purposes, and is now known as the Green Acres Center. For several years, the City's Parks and Recreation and Public Works offices were located in the building as well. After those offices moved to the expanded City Hall in 2007, many of the building's former classrooms began to be used as multipurpose rooms for classes or meetings, as well as storage rooms for City supplies.

Today, Green Acres contains the City's senior center, fitness facility, several multipurpose rooms (available to the public for rentals, as well as for classes), and the Main Street Child Development Center. The building's two specialty rooms (cafeteria and gymnasium) are used daily by both the senior center and the child development center, as well as for other rentals. Surrounding the building are three playing fields (two rectangular and one diamond), a horseshoes/bocce court, a picnic area, blacktop play area, and a playground.

Senior Center

Main Street Child Development Center Library

Field 1

3) Description of Current Green Acres Uses

Various Community Uses

Green Acres' 40,000 square feet and 10 acres are used for a variety of community-serving uses, such as a senior center, fitness facility, multi-use space, athletic fields and outdoor recreation. The Center's largest current tenant is the Main Street Child Development Center.

Physical Facility and Site Characteristics

The Green Acres site contains a one-story, 40,000-square foot brick building on a ten-acre parcel of land at the southern end of the City. The site's northern property line adjoins the City's Green Acres subdivision, while the east, west and south boundaries adjoin George Mason University.

Oblique aerial of Green Acres property looking east, circa 2015

The Green Acres site is approximately 970' long by 500' feet wide, with a semi-circular notch at the northeast corner. Sideburn Road extends onto the site for about 370'; the roadway itself is a public right-of-way, and is not considered part of the Green Acres site. In topography, the site generally slopes from northwest to southeast. Elevations range from about 450' above sea level at the parking lot to about 410' at the property's southeast corner.

Parking capacity for Green Acres is provided by 111 spaces, including 40 spaces in the main parking lot, 17 spaces in a gravel lot at the south side of the building, 8 spaces in and around the semi-circular turnaround, and 46 unlined on-street parallel spaces on both sides of Sideburn Road. Nine spaces are designated as handicapped spaces. On-street spaces north of Green Acres are located within a residential parking permit area and are unavailable for nonresidents for certain times Monday through Saturday.

Parking Lot

The building itself is typical of mid-20th century school construction, being a single-story brick building with a flat roof. Approximately 475' long, the building is served by a single interior corridor, a main entrance in the center of the building's west side, and additional entrances at either end of the corridor. The building's center core contains a gymnasium, cafeteria/kitchen, restrooms and a small lobby. Both the north and south wings contain the former classrooms and office space.

On the interior, the building is characterized by terrazzo floors, tiled and cinderblock walls, and period public facility fixtures. Most of the building is unaltered from its original school use and appearance.

Specific Current Uses

Main Street Child Development Center

The Main Street Child Development Center was founded in 1973 at Fairfax Baptist Church, and remained at the church until 2002, when it relocated to the Green Acres Center. Occupying approximately 7,400 square feet of exclusive space (among both classroom and administrative space), Main Street is the largest tenant at Green Acres.

Main Street's mission is to provide high-quality early childhood education and care primarily to lower-income working families in the City of Fairfax and surrounding areas. Accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), the Center holds a 4-star rating from the Virginia Star Quality Initiative. Serving children aged 2 to 5, about three-quarters of Main Street's clientele consists of low-income families. As of 2015, Main Street enrolled 90 preschool students as well as 22 School Age Child Care (SACC) students from Daniels Run Elementary School (these students attend Main Street full-time during the summer months). Main Street added a new pre-kindergarten class in September 2015 due to a Virginia Preschool Initiative (VPI+) grant in cooperation with Fairfax County Public Schools.

Main Street's facilities at Green Acres include five preschool/early childhood classrooms, a SACC room, library and indoor playroom, as well as administrative offices. The Center

Main Street Child Development Center playroom

also uses Green Acres' indoor and outdoor recreational facilities on a shared-use basis, including the gymnasium and cafeteria, as well as the outdoor playground (a public facility). There are currently 25 employees on Main Street's staff.

Senior Center

The City's Senior Center is operated and staffed by the Parks and Recreation Department and is guided by a volunteer Senior Center Advisory Council. Occupying a 1,680-sq. ft. senior lounge, the Center is open Mondays through Fridays from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., and offers activities for adults 55 years and older. Senior Center membership is offered free of charge to both Fairfax City and County residents; other seniors must pay a $50 annual registration fee. Once registered, seniors may participate in numerous indoor and outdoor activities.

In addition to the lounge, which serves as a gathering and meeting place, the Senior Center reserves space elsewhere at Green Acres for lectures (on topics such as military history, current events, etc.), games (chess, bridge), and physical activities (pickleball, seniorcise). The Senior Center also utilizes the outdoor area for bocce and horseshoes.

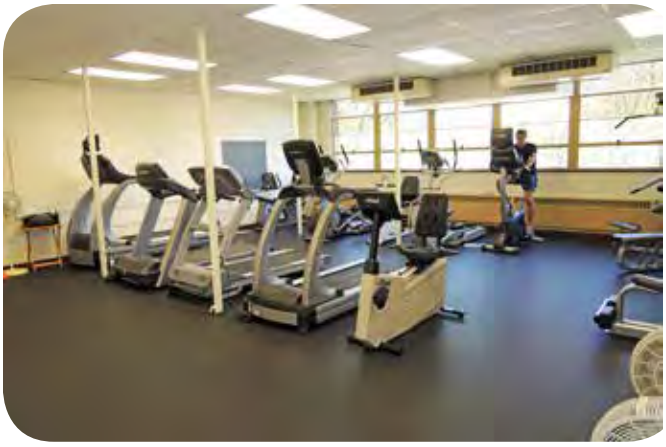
Similar to the child care facility, the Senior Center shares certain spaces with the public and with other users. Green Acres' 1,120-sq. ft. fitness facility is made available for the exclusive use of Senior Center members during Center hours, and is available for general public use at other times. Special events such as holiday luncheons occur in Green Acres' cafeteria; some Senior Center-sponsored activities, such as pickleball, take place in both the gymnasium and the cafeteria.

As of 2016, the Senior Center counted 2,390 members – about 46% of those members (1,094) are City residents. For the seven-week period from January 1 to February 22, 2016, the Senior Center counted 505 unique patrons (i.e., not double-counted), 46% of whom (234) were City residents.

Fitness Facility

One former classroom in the Green Acres Center serves as a dedicated fitness facility. This facility adjoins the Senior Center and consists of a 840-sq. ft. main room, plus a smaller 280-sq. ft. room. Equipment includes 4 treadmills, 2 stationary bicycles, 3 recumbent bicycles, 2 upright bikes, a rower, free weights, and other equipment.

The fitness facility is accessible from both the building's main corridor, and directly from the Senior Center. During the Senior Center's operating hours (M-F 8:00-5:00), the fitness room is reserved for Senior Center patrons; at



Fitness Center

all other times, the facility is open to all City residents. Senior Center members may use the fitness facility at no charge, while others pay for a fitness pass ($15/month, $96/year or $5 drop-in).

Parks and Recreation Classes

The City's Parks and Recreation Department offers numerous classes at Green Acres. Classes include activities such as dancing, yoga, aerobics, musical classes, early childhood activities (Baby & Me and Toddler Time), and adult enrichment classes (clock repair, iPad photo class).

Most of the Parks and Recreation-affiliated classes are fee-based and take place in one of the nine multipurpose rooms, which are all former classrooms, most of which measure 840 square feet. Some classes, such as dog obedience, are offered in the gym or in the cafeteria.

Not all City-sponsored classes are located at Green Acres; some classes, particularly music, dance and preschool classes, are held at the Sherwood Center, which also features multipurpose and specialty rooms. Despite the numerous classes held at the Green Acres Center, usage statistics for the individual multipurpose rooms are quite low. Overall, 9 percent of the total available multipurpose room time was reserved for the month of June 2015 – a figure that rises to just 22 percent when looking at only the core times of 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. on weekdays. The multipurpose rooms have the lowest total usage rates of all of Green Acres reservable facilities.

The Center's multipurpose rooms are generally unmodified from their original classroom set-up, with the original flooring, lighting, chalkboards and bulletin boards. Some rooms meant to accommodate certain athletic uses have specialty padded flooring, and one room is equipped with mirrors and a barre for dance classes.

Shared Spaces

Two spaces in the Green Acres center are shared among multiple uses – the cafeteria and the gymnasium. Both are among the most heavily utilized rooms at Green Acres, and are regularly used by the Child Development Center, the Senior Center and for Parks and Recreation classes.

Cafeteria

The cafeteria measures 3,564 sq. ft. (54'×66'), has an epoxy floor, a 13' drop-tile ceiling, and no permanent fixtures. Directly adjoining the cafeteria is the 800-sq. ft. kitchen, currently consisting of warming, preparation and refrigeration equipment (but no oven), and the original school lunch tray line.

Kitchen

On most weekdays, the cafeteria is reserved by the Main Street Child Development Center for several hours (7:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. and 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.), both for meals and for recreation. Low-height, movable tables and chairs are used for students' meals.

Other frequent cafeteria uses include pickleball (which can be played in the cafeteria as well as in the gym) and tai chi classes. On weekends, the room is utilized occasionally by churches, and is rented for groups, such as private parties, needing a large space.

Gymnasium

Green Acres' gymnasium was added to the building in the early 1980s (the cafeteria doubled as a gym before then), and measures 2,430 sq. ft. (54'×45'). The gym has a vinyl tile floor, windowless cinderblock walls, and a 16.5' exposed-rafter ceiling.

Similar to the cafeteria, the Green Acres Center's core users make use of the gym's space on a near-daily basis. During weekdays, the Child Development Center reserves the gym for several afternoon hours for recreation, while other weekday uses include pickleball and physical-activity classes such as dancing, aerobics, Zumba and Pilates. Occasionally, non-exercise classes such as dog obedience are scheduled for the gymnasium as well.

By modern recreation standards, Green Acres' gym is considered undersized. Typical modern gyms contain about 8,000 square feet of space, which can fit two ¾ basketball courts that can be partitioned and used separately for different events, effectively doubling the scheduling capacity of the gym. The Green Acres gym is too small for even one ¾ basketball court.

Pickleball game in the gymnasium

Athletic Field

Athletic Fields and Outdoor Recreation

The Green Acres Center's property contains three athletic fields, which are used by the Fairfax Police Youth Club (FPYC) and Fairfax Little League, and occasionally by other groups. The three fields consist of one diamond and two rectangular fields – all three fields are small-sized fields, used primarily for youth T-ball and soccer games. Of all Green Acres' reservable facilities, the outdoor fields are the most used, with the fields being reserved nearly continuously during their sports' playing seasons.

Green Acres' topography presents a challenge for field use. The property's sloping contour means that the fields are not completely flat. This situation was improved by a regrading project about 8 years ago, however some of the areas, particularly those closest to the

building and to the playground, are still slightly sloped, and there remain noticeable drop-offs just beyond the out-of-bounds lines.

In addition to the athletic fields, Green Acres also features two bocce and horseshoes courts, located on the Center's front lawn adjacent to a picnic area. Bocce and horseshoes events are coordinated with the Senior Center.

A 7,000-sq. ft. mulched playground at the rear of Green Acres is utilized by the Child Development Center, and also available to the public. The playground features a play structure, overhead bars, tot swings, belt swings, a sandbox, and other apparatus.

Next to the playground is a 16,000-sq. ft. paved court area that is striped for basketball, hopscotch, and other pavement games. The paved area is open to the public at all times.

Storage

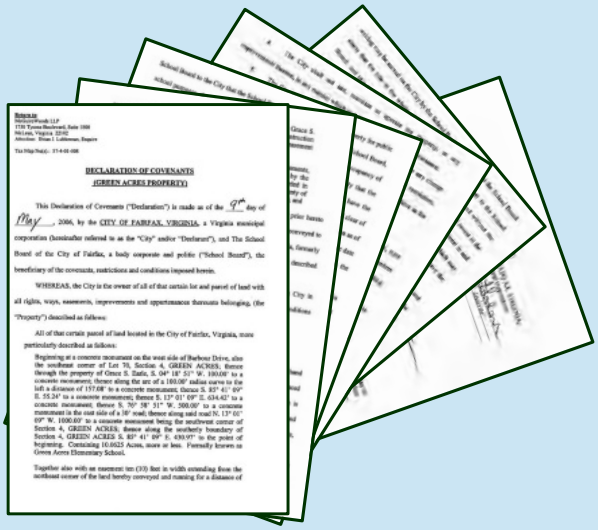
The Parks and Recreation Department uses three of the former classrooms at the southern edge of the building for storage. The storage rooms contain items used for Green Acres' operation, storage for other Parks and Recreation activities such as special events and camps, as well as other City equipment storage needs, such as voting machines.

Paved and striped court with adjacent mulched playground

4) School Board Covenant on Green Acres

The School Board holds a "Deed of Covenant" on the Green Acres property so that the property can be used for a school again, if necessary.

After examining both enrollment/capacity trends and other City properties, the Board decided to maintain its Deed of Covenant at Green Acres, but would consider transferring this Deed to Providence Park if the City uses Green Acres in such a way that would preclude the construction of a new school on the site.


DECLARATION OF COVENANTS
(GREEN ACRES PROPERTY)

The City of Fairfax School Board owned all four of the City's elementary school sites through the 1990s. Following the elementary school consolidation, two of the former sites (Green Acres and Westmore) were no longer being used as school facilities and were subsequently deeded to the City government.

However, when the Westmore School site was conveyed to the City in 2006, the School Board instated a Deed of Covenant on the Green Acres site, including a "right of reverter" in case the School Board requires the site once again for school purposes. In simple terms, Green Acres can be considered a "reserve site" for the School Board, which would enable a future school to be constructed without the time and expense of acquiring a new site.

The most likely purpose for which the School Board would need to use Green Acres again is for a new elementary school, should enrollments at Daniels Run and Providence Elementary Schools climb to the point where those two facilities could not practicably be enlarged to accommodate additional growth. The covenant ensures that should the City need a third elementary school, the School Board would already have land reserved for that purpose.

The Deed of Covenant is unobtrusive to the Center's current operation. Unless the School Board exercises its right to use the site again for a school, the operations and uses of the Green Acres Center would continue to remain unaffected by the Deed of Covenant.

The value of this covenant for the School Board is for the potential use of the Green Acres *land,* not necessarily the existing building. Although the building was originally built for school use, it is inadequately sized and configured for a modern school building. The 10-acre parcel, however, would be physically (though minimally) appropriate for an elementary school site.

Due to this, school enrollment and capacity issues come to the forefront when considering future uses for the Green Acres site, and the covenant factors heavily into any discussion about Green Acres' future use. Since the School Board can obtain free and clear use of the property (with a two-year notice) at any time, extensive non-school renovations or new construction may be unfeasible.

In order to reconcile this potential impediment, the Committee examined the likelihood of the City needing a new elementary school, as well as the potential suitability of the current Green Acres building and site. Furthermore, the School Board agreed as part of this study to re-examine its covenant and determine whether Green Acres is still a sensible location for a potential new school.

City School Demographics

The City of Fairfax School Board operates two elementary schools, one middle school and one high school. Both elementary schools, Daniels Run and Providence, have been operating near or above their intended capacities in most recent years, as shown in Figure 1 below for the 2015-16 school year.

While school enrollment figures are fairly straightforward (total number of students enrolled in late September), school capacity can be measured in two discrete ways. Design Capacity measures the enrollment that a given school could support as the school was originally designed. Program Capacity, meanwhile, measures the enrollment that a school can support given the current uses that take place in the school. The Program Capacity figure is typically lower, given the changing and often expanding nature of school programs.

Figure 1 indicates that both elementary schools are at or near their program capacity levels. While that does not suggest an overcrowding crisis, two factors need to be considered when examining the relevance of program capacity to long-term facility needs:

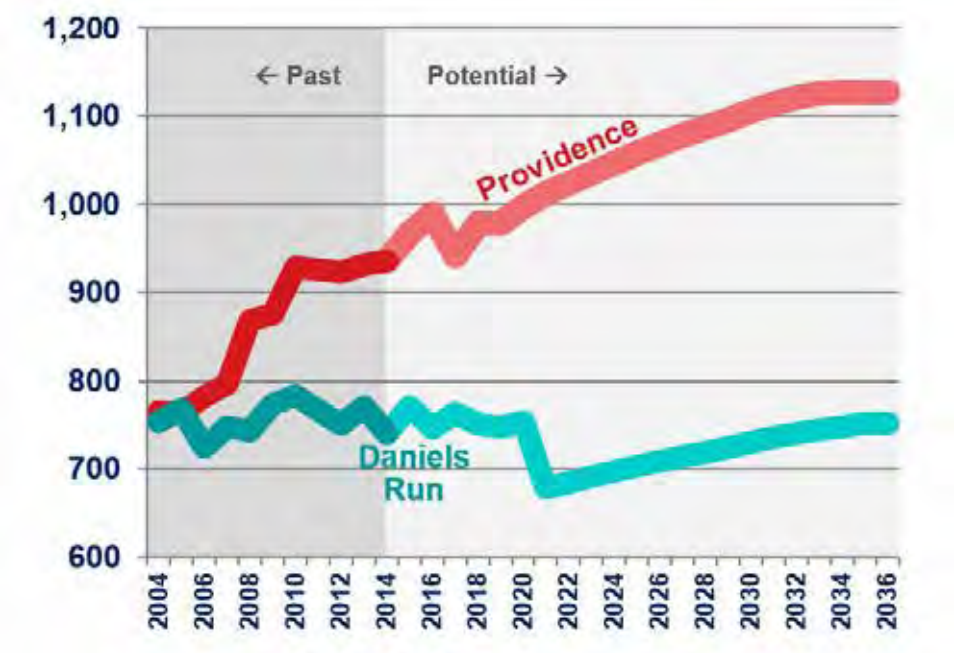
- **Annual Variation:** Program capacity can change significantly year-over-year due to factors beyond the City's control, such as changes to FCPS student-teacher ratios, curriculum requirements or special learning resources. Due to these factors, program capacity can vary by 5% or more over a single year, so it should always be viewed as a fluid measurement rather than a fixed amount.

- **Future Enrollment:** When enrollment meets or exceeds program capacity, attention needs to be paid to future enrollment projections, to ascertain whether additional capacity enhancements would likely be needed in the future. Attention should be paid to demographic considerations that could serve as sentinels to upcoming enrollment challenges.

***FIGURE 1**: City Elementary Schools Capacity and Current Enrollment*

Elementary School	2015-16 Enrollment	Design Capacity	Program Capacity	Over / Under Pgm. Capacity
Daniels Run	725	932	735	**10 under capacity**
Providence	960	1,035	960	**0**

***FIGURE 2**: Potential Future Student Enrollment From New Development*



Predicting future enrollment is always inexact when looking more than a handful of years into the future, as such predictions depend on highly variable trends in demographics and new development. However, given current information, it is possible to judge the relative potential of significant future enrollment growth.

To do this, the Committee examined future residential development potentials in the City – an estimate of new housing units that could be built in the City in the foreseeable future. Doing so is not an attempt to accurately forecast future student enrollment, but rather to ascertain whether there is a reasonable likelihood that enough new students may enter the City's schools to warrant or require the construction of a third elementary school.

Figure 2 above shows the past decade of enrollment (in darker colors) for both Daniels Run and Providence Elementary Schools, as well as possible future enrollment impacts from new residential developments that are either approved or known potential projects. While this is a rough estimate and is not intended to approximate a full projection, the upward growth trajectory is evident.

Potential Need for Greater Capacity

The City will not likely need a third elementary school within the next fifteen years. Current capacity, short-term enrollment projections, and the relatively long ramp-up to full student generation seen from new multifamily housing complexes mean that existing facilities will most likely be able to serve the City's school-age population throughout the next decade.

A longer-term outlook, however, is far from certain. There is considerable pressure for residential development in the City and regionwide, particularly in mid-priced multifamily housing units. Precise numbers of anticipated housing units or associated enrollment impacts are impossible to quantify because many variables can alter the final outcome, such as:

- Changing regional demand for housing
- Changing housing preferences among families with school-age children

- Approval of each major project is discretionary by City Council
- Development of specialty housing products that do not generate school enrollment (i.e., senior housing or college student housing)
- Changing educational program needs or requirements (for example, a change in the FCPS average class size requirement that would impact square footage needs)

However, there is a strong possibility that the City could add two to four thousand additional multifamily housing units within the next decade, and those units could contribute to increased future enrollment demands. **If such demands do occur, there is a likelihood that additional school capacity will be needed, and a new school facility may be judged the best solution.**

Staff believes that if such enrollment demands do occur, they will not likely occur before approximately 15 years from now (2030 and afterwards). In the nearer term, current school facilities will most likely be able to absorb anticipated enrollment changes.

Given the potential for medium- to long-term capacity increases that may warrant a new school building, the School Board has determined it prudent to retain a property somewhere in the City for potential future school use.

Potentially Transferring the Deed of Covenant Location

A major renovation or rebuilding of the Green Acres facility may present a conflict with the School Board's Deed of Covenant. Such a conflict would occur should the School Board need to exercise its option to use Green Acres for a third elementary school – if the City already invested considerable amounts in a building on the site. This potential scenario renders the current School Board covenant incompatible with efforts to renovate or rebuild on the Green Acres site.

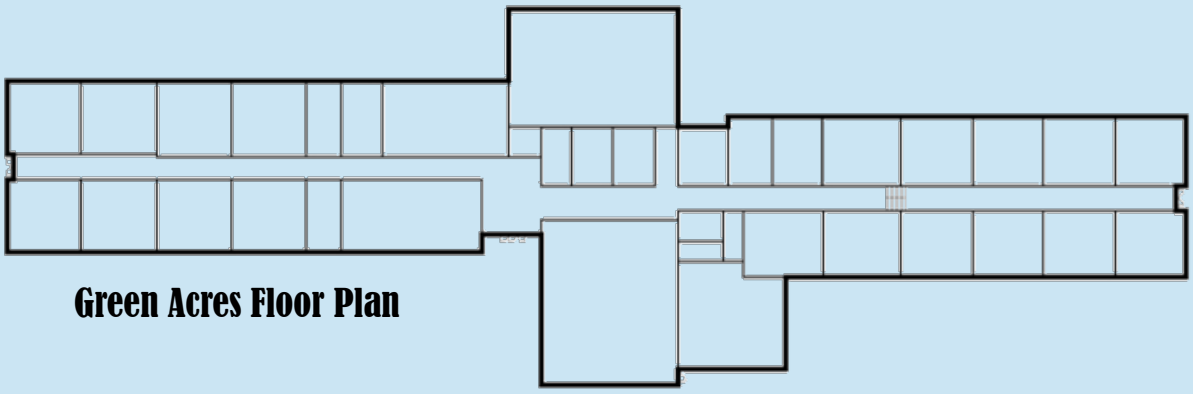
The Deed of Covenant is not required to permanently remain at Green Acres. It could potentially be transferred to another site in the City, which would in turn enable the City to use Green Acres for other purposes. In order to ascertain whether such a transfer would satisfy the School Board's future property needs, the Board examined several other City sites that could contain a future school.

After examining other sites and looking into the Deed of Covenant issue in detail, the School Board concluded that if there is no change in uses at Green Acres, it would retain its existing Deed of Covenant for that property. However, in the event that the City wishes to use the Green Acres site for a new community center, or for another use that would similarly impede new school construction, the Board stated that it would consider transferring its Deed of Covenant to Providence Park, which emerged as the most suitable alternative site.

This flexibility on the part of the School Board removes a potential impediment to the reuse of Green Acres. While the details of transferring the Deed of Covenant to another property are too complex to be resolved here, the willingness of the School Board to consider alternate locations assures that if the City should decide to reuse the Green Acres property in a way that could imperil future school construction, a solution could be found enabling both the City to pursue its strategy, and for the School Board to retain its options for future facility construction.

5) Physical and Operational Shortcomings: The Need for a Complete Overhaul

Although the building is likely structurally sound, the combination of outdated systems, accessibility shortcomings, and an unfavorable space layout suggests the need for a complete building overhaul – or new construction – in order to best serve and balance the City's needs.



Green Acres Floor Plan

The current Green Acres building needs major renovations to bring it up to current standards – for any type of use. No major improvements have been made to the building since it ceased functioning as a school in 2001, and significant upgrades need to be made to both the physical structure and the operating systems. If Green Acres were to continue functioning as a civic building, these shortcomings would need to be addressed, either through a major renovation or through the construction of a new facility.

In its community outreach efforts, the Committee heard significant feedback regarding the current building's inadequacies. Accessibility issues, parking, antiquated restrooms, leaks, and air conditioning troubles topped users' complaints about Green Acres. In addition to these concerns, the building is not physically suited to the uses that take place at the center. In short, the building either needs an extensive renovation, or it needs to be replaced.

Outdated Systems

When Green Acres Elementary School closed in 2000, the building that housed it was 40 years old, and had not undergone a major rehabilitation since construction. Because there was no long-range plan for the facility, few physical investments were made other than what was needed to keep the building habitable and functional.

Restrooms

The most frequent comment on the building's shortcomings as heard from its users regards the restrooms. One men's room and one ladies' room are located off of the lobby, but both are in a poor state of repair. Fixtures (toilets and urinals) are left over from the building's school years, and feature low floor-to-fixture heights, an impediment to comfortable and sanitary use by adults. Furthermore, the restrooms are shared by adults and preschoolers since not all of the preschool classrooms contain their own

Restroom facility

toilet facilities. This restroom interaction is substandard for all involved and compromises the Center's effective functioning.

HVAC

The Green Acres Center utilizes a 2-pipe HVAC system (using the same piping for hot water heating and chilled water cooling) that dates from the building's original construction and consists of a boiler and chiller.

FitzGibbons boiler

The FitzGibbons boiler is original to the building. Despite its age, the boiler still works effectively and has no known critical maintenance problems.

The Trane chiller was installed in the 1980s, when the building was first air conditioned, and is nearing the end of its serviceable life. Some maintenance items, such as insulation replacement, should be considered in the near-term if the building continues to be occupied in the foreseeable future, but it is likely that a major investment in Green Acres' air conditioning system will be necessary within ten years.

While the majority of the building is controlled by the boiler and main chiller, the cafeteria and gymnasium have their own air conditioning units, which were installed within the last two years. These systems are in good condition.

Roof and Windows

Like most school buildings of its era, the Green Acres Center features a flat roof, in this case the roof is foam coated (a type of application called a Puff roof). The building was last re-roofed in approximately 2000, and the building has numerous areas with minor leaks. It is expected that Green Acres will need significant roofing work within the next decade.

The single-pane metal-framed windows are original to the building. These windows are beyond their serviceable life and are not energy-efficient; it is likely that a building-wide window replacement would become necessary within the next ten years.

Accessibility, Parking and Transportation

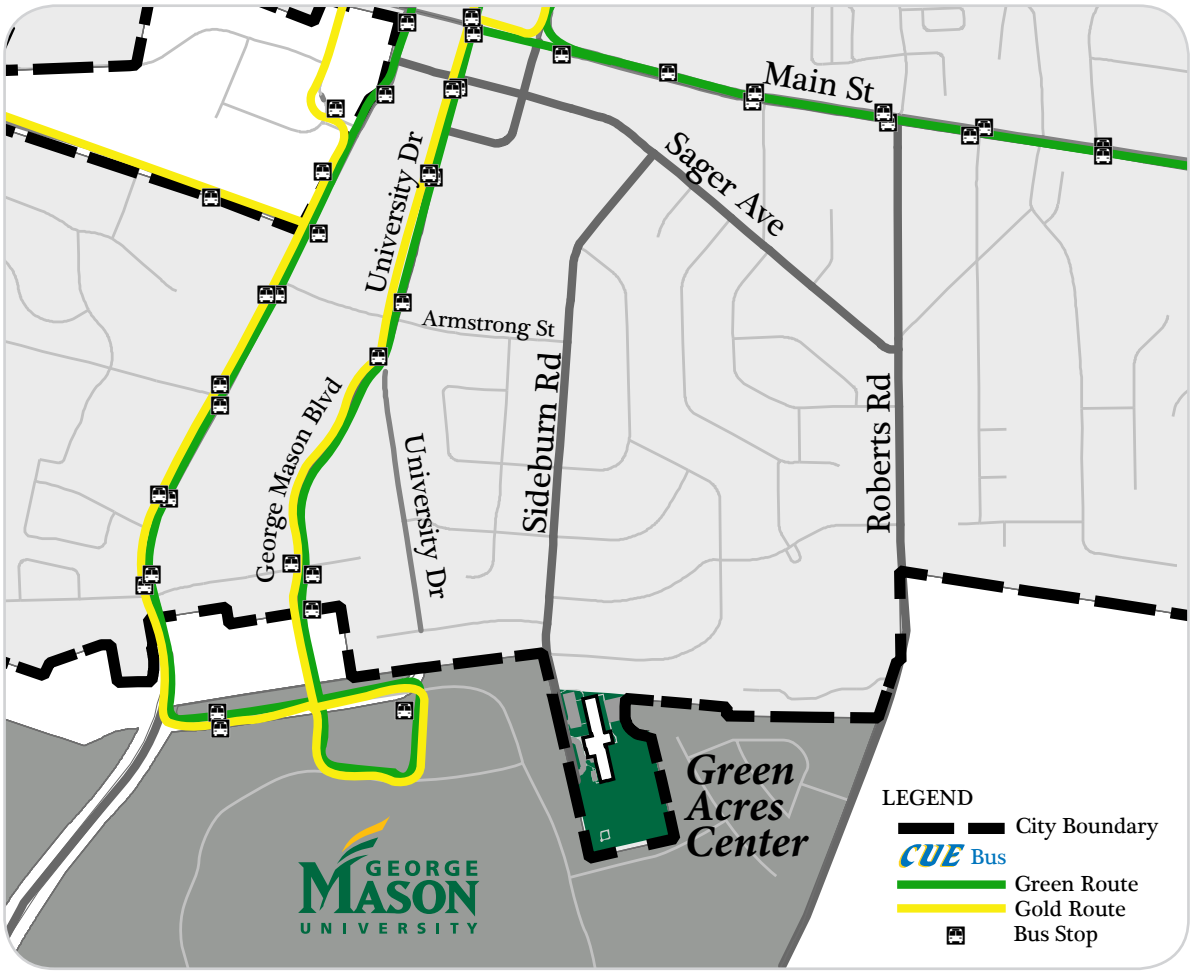
The current Green Acres Center has significant accessibility limitations. This is not unexpected for a building of its age, but its use as a public center, and particularly one that heavily serves both seniors and children, magnifies these issues and hinders the Center's effective use.

At The City's Edge

The Green Acres Center is located at the very edge of the City, surrounded on three sides by George Mason University. All traffic bound for Green Acres must drive through the adjoining residential neighborhood, as Green Acres is more than one-half mile from any arterial or collector street.

This is a sub-optimal situation. Neighborhood-serving uses such as community centers would ideally be located in an area easily accessible from the majority of neighborhoods. However, Green Acres is located over 3 miles from neighborhoods on the City's northern tier, such as Mosby Woods or Cobbdale. Additionally, its location within a residential area means that all inbound and outbound traffic must flow through residential streets, adding traffic to neighborhood streets that are primarily intended to serve local residents.

During the course of its meetings, the Committee explored the potential of adding a second access point from George Mason University's campus as a method of relieving traffic demands on Sideburn Road. Should that concept be explored further, measures should be taken to prevent traffic from cutting through Green Acres as an alternate route into or out of campus. Any access points made from George Mason's campus should not connect vehicular traffic to Sideburn Road.



Parking and Transit

The building's parking is inconvenient and inadequately sized. The parking lots fill up at periods of moderate and heavy use (i.e., when multiple functions occur simultaneously in the building and/or fields), and some of the parking areas are 400 ft. or more from the building's entrance.

Additionally, the current site is not directly accessible by public transportation. The nearest CUE bus stop is ½-mile away on George Mason Boulevard, not close enough to be of practical benefit for the majority of the Center's users.

Accessibility Within the Building

Within the Green Acres building, a stairway halfway down the south corridor presents a formidable accessibility obstacle. Six of the multipurpose rooms are located beyond the stairwell, and patrons must either navigate the stairs or enter the building through the south entrance. Furthermore, some of the outdoor facilities, such as the playground and blacktop play area, are likewise not ADA accessible.

Stairs in hallway

Space Usability

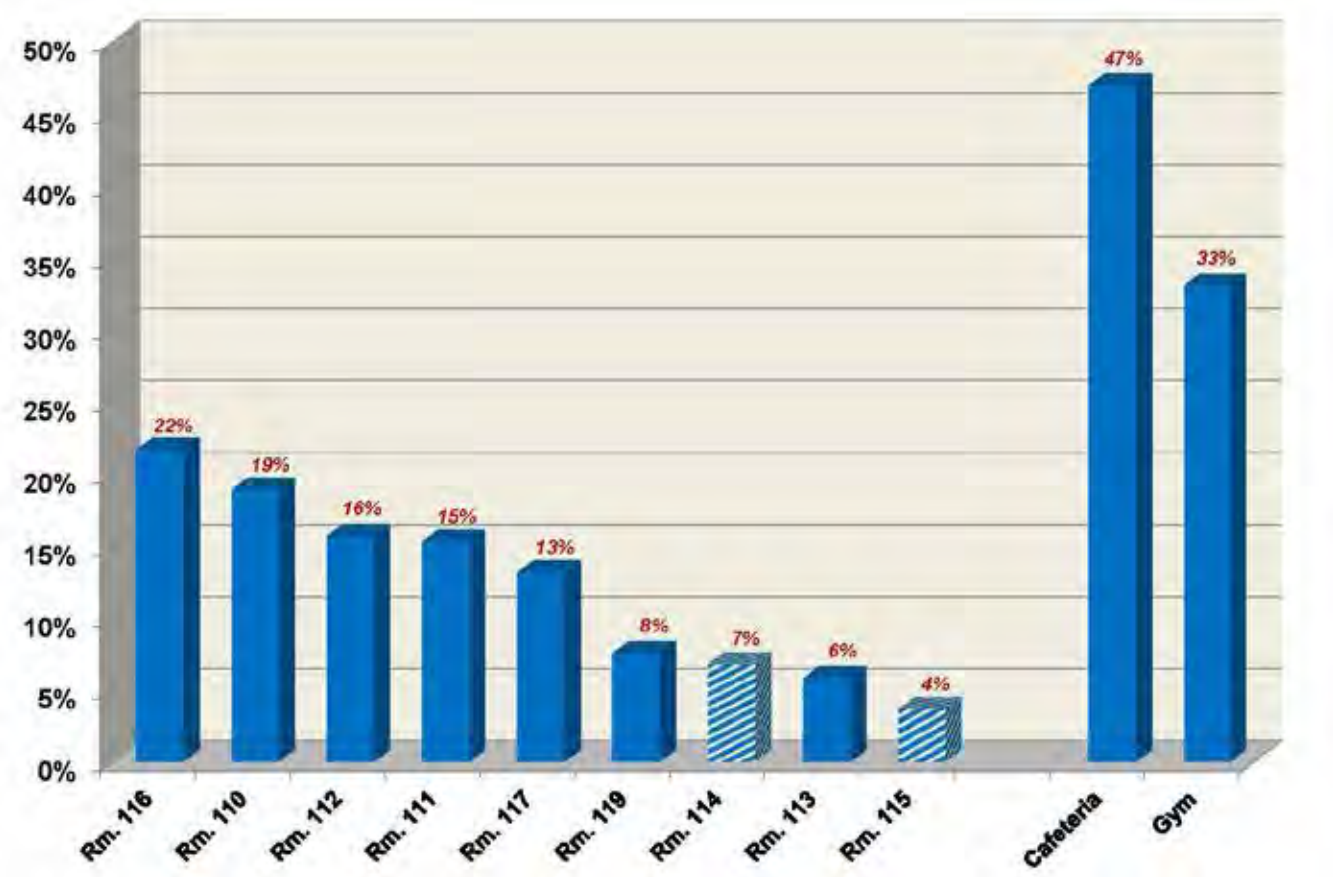
While the Green Acres Center contains over 40,000 sq. ft. of interior space, the space is not conducive to the mix of uses that occurs there. Most of the building is segmented into 840-sq. ft. former classrooms; this is an effective layout for the Child Development Center, but most other functions that occur at Green Acres would ideally use larger contiguous spaces.

Seven of the former classrooms are available as rental facilities, and staff analyzed the use of these multipurpose rooms. During all of Green Acres' operating hours, the multipurpose rooms have a combined usage total of 9 percent (they are rented/used 9 percent of the time). Even during the core usage period of weekdays from 9:00 to 3:00, the multipurpose rooms are rented/used only 22 percent of the time.

Program room

This low usage figure indicates that there is significantly more supply of multipurpose room space than what is demanded by users. This situation is amplified by the abundance of similar types of rooms elsewhere within the City's inventory of public spaces – the Sherwood Center, Blenheim, Old Town Hall, City Hall and the school buildings all offer event spaces available for rentals. Simply put, the City has an excess capacity of multipurpose space – the very type of space that fills most of Green Acres' square footage.

***FIGURE 3**: Green Acres Parks & Recreation Room Usage by Hours*



NOTE: Usage measured during Green Acres operating hours (7am to 11pm) 7 days per week from May 2014 through April 2015. Room 114 (Baby and Me) and Room 115 (padded floor room) reserved for limited types of use.

As shown in Figure 3, usage statistics for Green Acres' larger rentable spaces (cafeteria and gymnasium) are higher than for individual multipurpose rooms. This is in part because of programs offered in conjunction with Green Acres' largest users, the Senior Center and the Child Development Center, both of which share the use of these spaces with each other as well as with other users.

However, these larger spaces are themselves not ideal. The gymnasium is far smaller than a standard-sized gym, meaning that some uses cannot be accommodated, fewer people can utilize the gym at one time (standard gyms are typically dividable), and for uses that do fit, the small size can impede movement because the facility's walls are very close to the out-of-bounds lines.

Furthermore, the current building's configuration leaves little room for the types of non-structured social interactions that can make a public facility feel more welcoming. Many modern community centers have ample lobby and congregation space for this purpose, while Green Acres contains only a minimal public area near the building's entrance.

Need for a Complete Overhaul

The combination of outdated systems, accessibility shortcomings, and an unfavorable space layout suggests the need for a complete building overhaul – or new construction – in order to best serve and balance the City's needs.

The Senior Center's annual holiday luncheon held in the cafeteria

The Senior Center's St. Patrick's Day party

6) Analysis of Future Community Center Features

A new community center for Fairfax should incorporate elements identified by the Committee as being desired and/or important for a modern community center. Additionally, regardless of the community center's ultimate location, the City should ensure that athletic fields and open space continue to be accessible to City residents.

Gym at Providence Community Center

When considering facility needs for a community center, the first questions must address what types of uses are foreseen. To plan for the most usable and useful community center for Fairfax, uses should include both those that are desired by residents and those that fulfill otherwise unmet needs.

To ascertain residents' preferences, the Committee hosted two community meetings in October 2015, and also undertook a survey of residents at an October Rock the Block event.

When asked to describe important physical characteristics of an ideal community center, attendees at the meetings responded with a variety of desired elements, spanning a wide range of potential offerings. The most commonly mentioned characteristics, were:

- Senior Center
- Fitness Facility
- Full-size Gymnasium
- Kitchen
- Sufficient Parking

The Committee recommends including these above features in a new community center, due to their desirability among residents and their ability to satisfy important needs. Additionally, the Committee recommends other features that would enhance the community center's

operation, or complement other functions. These features include:

- Multipurpose room(s)
- Lobby / Social Area
- Storage / Support Space
- Administrative Space

Preliminary Analysis of Space Needs

The precise amount of building space needed for a community center depends on many factors that are not possible to predict until a much later stage in the planning process. However, given the features and characteristics listed above, a preliminary analysis can be made to estimate a rough order of magnitude for a new community center's size. Figure 4 below estimates square footages for various program spaces, based on other community center experiences and common industry standards.

***FIGURE 4**: Preliminary Space Needs*

Program Space	Estimated Sq. Ft.
Gymnasium	8,000
Senior Center	4,000
Fitness Facility	4,000
Fitness Room	2,000
Multipurpose Room(s)	4,000
Lobby / Social Area	2,000
Kitchen	400
Storage / Support Space	7,500
Administrative Space	1,200
SUBTOTAL	33,100
Circulation & Mechanical Space (20%)	6,600
TOTAL	39,700

Given these estimated size standards, a building of approximately 40,000 square feet would satisfy these general needs (assuming a community center only, not including co-located facilities).

While the current Green Acres building is of a similar size, the building's configuration does not lend itself to the needs of a modern community center. Instead of large, open spaces such as a gymnasium and a modern lobby area, Green Acres contains mostly smaller, segmented rooms originally designed as classrooms.

Using the preliminary space needs as presented above, the existing building appears to be unsuitable for a modern community center without extensive rebuilding or renovations. This does not mean, however, that the Green Acres site itself should be excluded from consideration for a new community center based on the current building's configuration alone. Under a scenario where the building receives major renovations – or where a new building is constructed, the Green Acres site could theoretically still be utilized for a community center.

Athletic Fields

The current Green Acres property contains three athletic fields – a diamond and two rectangular fields – that utilize approximately 4 to 5 acres of the site's 10 acres. As mentioned previously, all three fields are small-sized fields, used for youth soccer and T-ball games, and of all Green Acres' reservable facilities, the outdoor fields are the most used. In the spring of 2015, all of Green Acres' fields were reserved between 80 and 90 percent of the time during weekends and on weekdays after 4:00 pm (the main periods of demand for team sports).

Given the high demand and usage for athletic fields, the Committee recommends that the City plan for no net loss of field space as a result of relocating the Green Acres Center. Additionally, Green Acres serves as one of the only significant open spaces for the southeastern portion of the City, so the community's collective need for green space is also an important factor regarding the future use of the site.

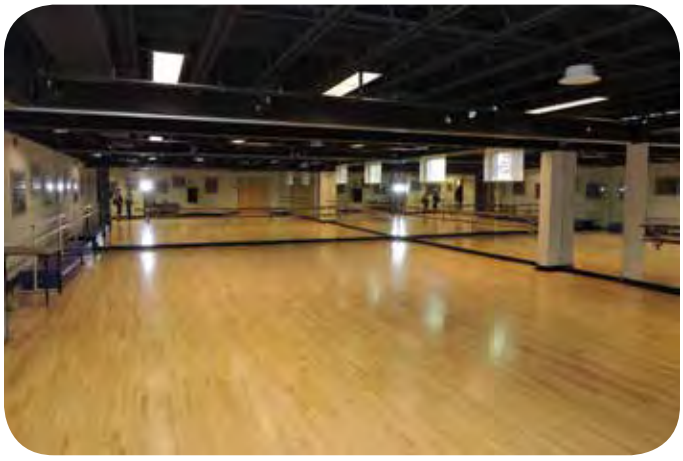
The City should seek to retain the current field capacity, either at the Green Acres site, or elsewhere in the City, to ensure no loss of field capacity.

Should the community center be relocated to another site, there may not be sufficient space at the new site to continue to co-locate athletic fields with a community center building. However, this would not necessitate the discontinuation of athletic field amenities; the existing, or an enhanced, level of athletic amenities could still be provided on all or part of the Green Acres site, or potentially on another site in the City that could accommodate several acres of recreation uses.

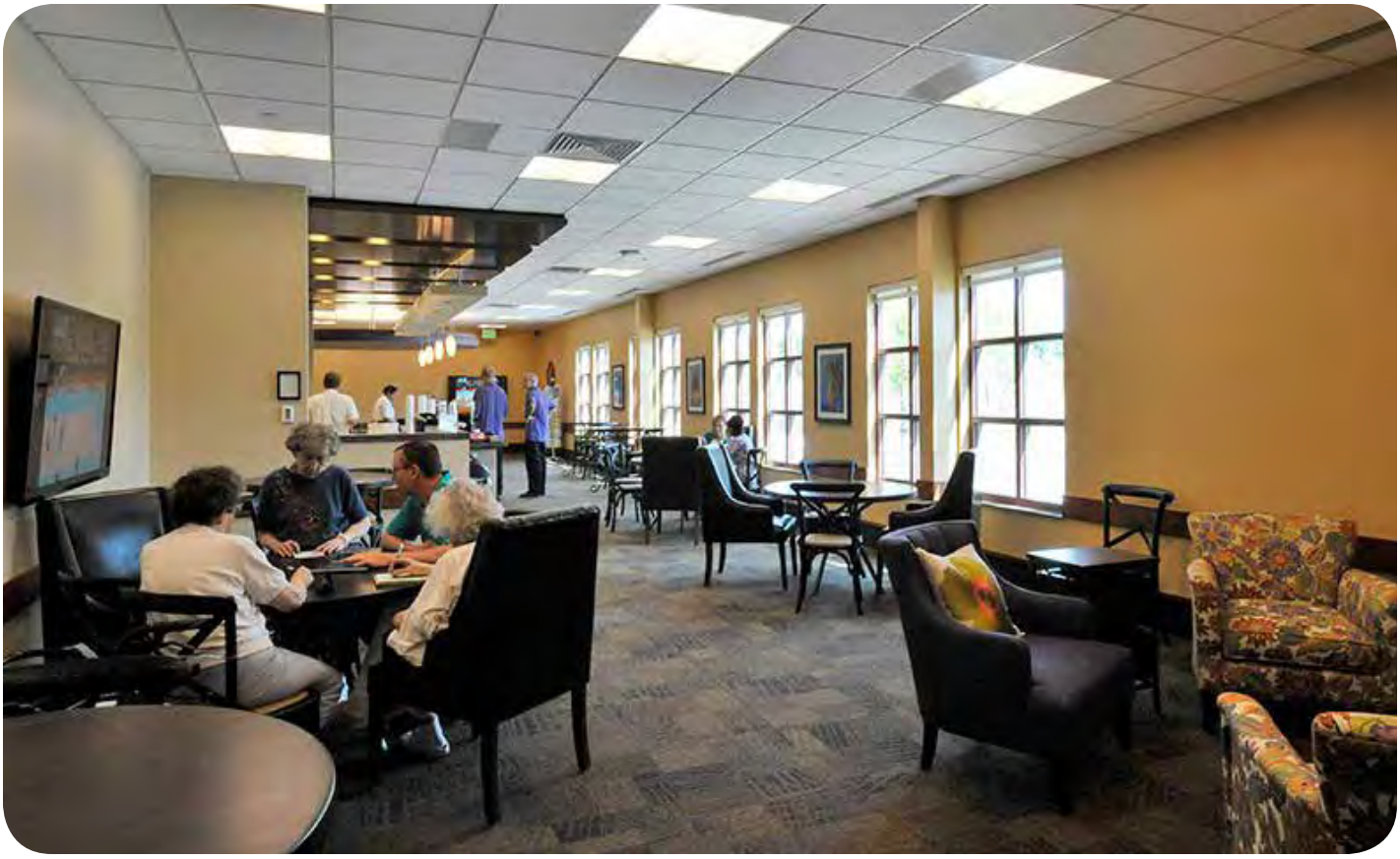
Example Fitness Studio

Example Indoor Track

Example Lobby



Dance Room at Falls Church Community Center



Example Senior Lounge

Example Fitness Center

7) Potential Collaborating Partners

Certain other organizations could have a potentially beneficial relationship with a new community center in the City, in terms of either their mission or ability to fulfill a need in the community. A partnership with such organizations should be considered if the groups can make significant financial contributions toward offsetting the cost of construction, operations and maintenance for the needed amounts of space.

Potential Additional Uses / Collaboration

In addition to city-operated functions, opportunities exist for partnering with other organizations whose missions complement that of a community center. Three such organizations are profiled here – the Main Street Child Development Center, Osher Lifelong Learning Institute and Potomac Arts Academy. All three groups currently have facilities in the City.

All three of these organizations would complement a new community center and would be in addition to the core features as described in Section 6, as well as with the programming that would likely be offered. The Main Street Child Development Center is currently Green Acres' largest tenant, while both other organizations have been identified previously in the 2014 VisionFairfaxMason charrette as potential organizations with which to explore enhanced city-university partnerships.

There are possibly other organizations besides these three that may benefit from a community center co-location as well – both in terms of upgraded facilities and in terms of interactions with other civic functions and activities. However, the Committee considers it critical that any such collaborating partner be able to contribute financially to both the construction and maintenance of any space occupied as a result of such collaboration. As beneficial as a collaborating organization may be, the space required to incorporate these uses, along with the costs of construction and maintenance, would place a high burden on City taxpayers without the inclusion of significant financial contributions.

Main Street Child Development Center

The Main Street Child Development Center is the largest tenant in the current Green Acres building, occupying 7,364 square feet of exclusive space (among both classroom and administrative space). Main Street pays below-market rent for the space, at approximately

$35,000 per year. Major systems maintenance (such as HVAC) and utilities are included in the lease, although Main Street undertakes maintenance and improvements to its own space, such as fixtures, flooring and the like. In addition to the exclusive-use leased space, Main Street also uses Green Acres' multi-use rooms (cafeteria and gymnasium) and outdoor facilities. A full description of Main Street is provided in Section 3.

In examining future uses for a City community center, it was important for the Committee to consider whether such a center would include a child care operation. If a child care center is desired for a new community center, any new building should be designed from the outset with that in mind, both due to the amount of space required (7,500 sq. ft. or above) and the specialized facility requirements, such as in-class restrooms, that typically define modern child care operations. Therefore, it is important to resolve at an early stage whether or not to plan for such a facility in a new building.

Given its mission and its history of providing high-quality early childhood education to lower-income families, Main Street is an extremely valuable asset to the City. This is part of the reason why Main Street would be a valuable collaboration partner with a new community center. However, if it is determined that the community center will be built without a child care tenant, the City should start working to assist Main Street in finding a suitable location to which the school can move. Even though there would likely be several years' advance notice before such a move would be required, planning for such a move should begin as soon as possible in order to ensure that uninterrupted service is provided to Fairfax area families.

If Main Street Relocates

Due to the importance of this issue, it is worthwhile for the City to begin considering Main Street's future as soon as possible; one of the tasks identified in Section 10 is to identify potential collaboration and partnering with other organizations, including Main Street. If it transpires that Main Street will relocate, any new location for Main Street Child Development Center would need to be within, or very close to, the City of Fairfax in order to maintain continuity with its current service mission and area. Due to Main Street's importance within the City of Fairfax, the Committee considers it crucial for the City to assist Main Street is looking for a new location that satisfies its physical and financial considerations – and that this process should begin several years in advance of any potential move. This process should begin as soon as possible, so as to provide a smooth transition, with the maximum amount of advance notice, for the Center's families, staff and directors.

Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI)

George Mason University partners with the Bernard Osher Foundation to provide Fairfax area residents with a lifelong learning organization that offers classes on a variety of subjects taught on a volunteer basis by Mason faculty, OLLI members and local experts in their particular fields. An independent non-profit organization, OLLI is located on the 7-acre Mason-owned "Tallwood" property at 4210 Roberts Road.

OLLI's mission is to offer "learning opportunities in a stimulating environment in which adults can share their talents, experiences and skills, explore new interests, discover and develop latent abilities, engage in intellectual and cultural pursuits and socialize with others of similar interest." Membership is open to any interested person – members pay an annual fee and then may register for as many classes as they wish over four terms. Courses are

Activites at Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (photo credit: olli.mu.edu)

non-graded and are not offered for university credit; they are aimed at people who wish to continue to learn and share their talents in their retirement years.

Class topics cover a full range of subject matter, including history, art, religion, languages, economics and music. In addition to regular classes, OLLI also offers special events such as one-time lectures and celebrations, club meetings (literature clubs, photography clubs, etc.) as well as organizing tours to notable local points of interest. Of the nearly 500 classes and events offered each year, most meet for one hour and twenty-five minutes once per week over the course of a one- to two-month term. Classes typically are held in mid-mornings and early afternoons on Mondays through Thursdays. Special events and club meetings occur on Fridays and Saturdays. OLLI offers unique leadership opportunities for seniors, functioning as an intellectual cooperative in which members volunteer as planners, instructors and organizational officers.

Most classes and events are held at the Roberts Road site, although OLLI offers many classes at sites in Reston and Sterling, as well as at some off-site facilities near Fairfax. The Tallwood facility contains three main classrooms (with 85, 65 and 45-seat capacities), three smaller classrooms, a social room, and administrative space. Altogether, OLLI contains about 7,000 square feet of interior space, within three separate buildings and two trailer modules.

The site is served by approximately 50 parking spaces, and OLLI rents additional spaces from the adjoining Fairfax Swimming Pool. Even so, OLLI experiences frequent parking shortages, and managers have had to reduce the Fairfax campus's course load due to a lack of accessible parking.

OLLI is closely linked to George Mason University, which provides and maintains the Tallwood property at minimal expense to OLLI. (Membership dues support the part-time administrative positions and other operational costs; instructors teach for free.)

Tallwood, as a facility, is serviceable, but not ideal. The buildings are old and disconnected, requiring members to walk outside and often up steps or ramps to go from one room to another. Parking is inadequate, and at times inconvenient, and egress from the site onto Roberts Road is hazardous due to poor visibility. The organization is limited as to the amount of classes and services it can provide due to these facility issues.

OLLI counts over 1,200 active members. Membership is expanding at 3-5 percent per year and, with a surge of baby boomer retirements, OLLI is outgrowing its Fairfax facility. A more ideal setup would entail having all of OLLI's functions in a single building with sufficient space to accommodate all of the classroom and administrative uses.

A community center partnership with OLLI would offer numerous advantages. It would allow OLLI to accommodate and meet the social, cultural, and intellectual needs of the region's growing senior demographic. Its services would complement a community center and senior center atmosphere. As such, collaboration with OLLI in terms of potentially sharing space at a community center is worthwhile exploring from the City's perspective.

Potomac Arts Academy

The Potomac Arts Academy is a community arts program operated by George Mason University, and is a part of Mason's College of Visual and Performing Arts. Offering group classes, private lessons and summer programs, Potomac Arts' focus areas include music, dance, theater, visual arts, film & video and game design technology.

Potomac Arts rents approximately 7,800 square feet of space (in four separate units) within Mason's townhouse complex on Chain Bridge Road. The space contains nine small private music instruction rooms, three larger teaching classrooms, a piano lab, as well as administrative and storage space.

Although the Potomac Arts Academy is administratively a part of Mason, it is largely financially distinct, with Mason providing some administrative salaries (for the director and half of the associate directors), space for some classes that take place on Mason's campus, and access to the university's instructional talent (many of the Academy's instructors are Mason-affiliated). Most of the Academy's expenses, such as rent, instructional costs and most administrative salaries, are paid for through tuition charges, grants and fundraising.

Potomac Arts offers year-round classes, summer programs, and private lessons, most taking place at the Chain Bridge Road location. A variety of summer programs and year-round Saturday classes occur on Mason's campus. For year-round classes, the majority of activity transpires on weekdays in the late afternoon and early evening hours, mostly after 5:00 p.m. At these peak times, the amount of parking available at this current site is deficient; Potomac Arts has about 30 dedicated spaces, which is insufficient for the amount of activity occurring at the Academy at peak times.

The Academy's classes span all age ranges. While the largest concentration of classes are directed at school-age students, Potomac Arts also offers pre-school instruction, lessons and classes for adults, as well as choral and piano instruction for seniors.

Similar to OLLI, Potomac Arts functions in its current space, but the facility is not optimal from a number of aspects: The rooms were not built for the specialized instruction that takes place there; various components of the Academy's spaces are not connected to each other; and parking is inadequate.

Potomac Arts Academy's community-focused arts mission would complement a community center in Fairfax, as would the Academy's typical operating hours – the busy period of early evenings is one that is typically a less active time for most community center functions. This staggered busy period could partially mitigate parking-related impacts due to varied peak parking demand times. As the community center process moves forward, the City should examine ways to potentially collaborate with Potomac Arts to ascertain whether such a collaboration could benefit both organizations.

8) Analysis of Future Potential Community Center Locations

The Committee considered many options when discussing recommendations for potential community center locations. Twenty-one separate sites were examined in the process, from the existing Green Acres location to various other public and private sites around the City. Seven of the sites are City-owned, six are owned by Fairfax County, three by George Mason University, and five are privately held. Non-City-owned sites were included if there was a reasonable expectation of potential future redevelopment or reuse.

The sites included the following:

City-Owned Sites	Fairfax County-Owned Sites	George Mason Univ.-Owned Sites	Privately Owned Sites
Green Acres Center	Willard & Jorgenson sites	University Townhouse Complex (*GMU Foundation*)	Paul VI High School
Westmore School Park	West Dr. Property Yard	Commerce Building *(GMU Foundation)*	INOVA/Sunrise site
Providence Park	Jermantown Rd. Property Yard	Tallwood (OLLI) site	Old Fairfax Elementary School site
Van Dyck Park	Burke Station Rd. Property Yard		Davies Property (4131 Chain Bridge Rd.)
Sherwood/Police site	Burkholder Center		Barker Property (9999 Main St.)
Stafford Drive Park	Massey Complex (part)		
City Hall Campus			

Each site was studied and then ranked based on four major criteria, being:

- Location/proximity to other amenities: Is the site a good location within the City?
- Feasibility and complexity of acquiring the site
- Size, configuration and topography of the site
- Access and parking: Potential for the site to be accessible to users

The Committee pursued recommendations gathered through the public input process and the Committee's own meetings regarding creating an ideal setting for a community center. Specifically, the Committee prioritized the notion of having a community center on a site that is easily accessible to residents from throughout the City, that is reachable via public transportation, and that is in or near the City's centrally-located downtown area.

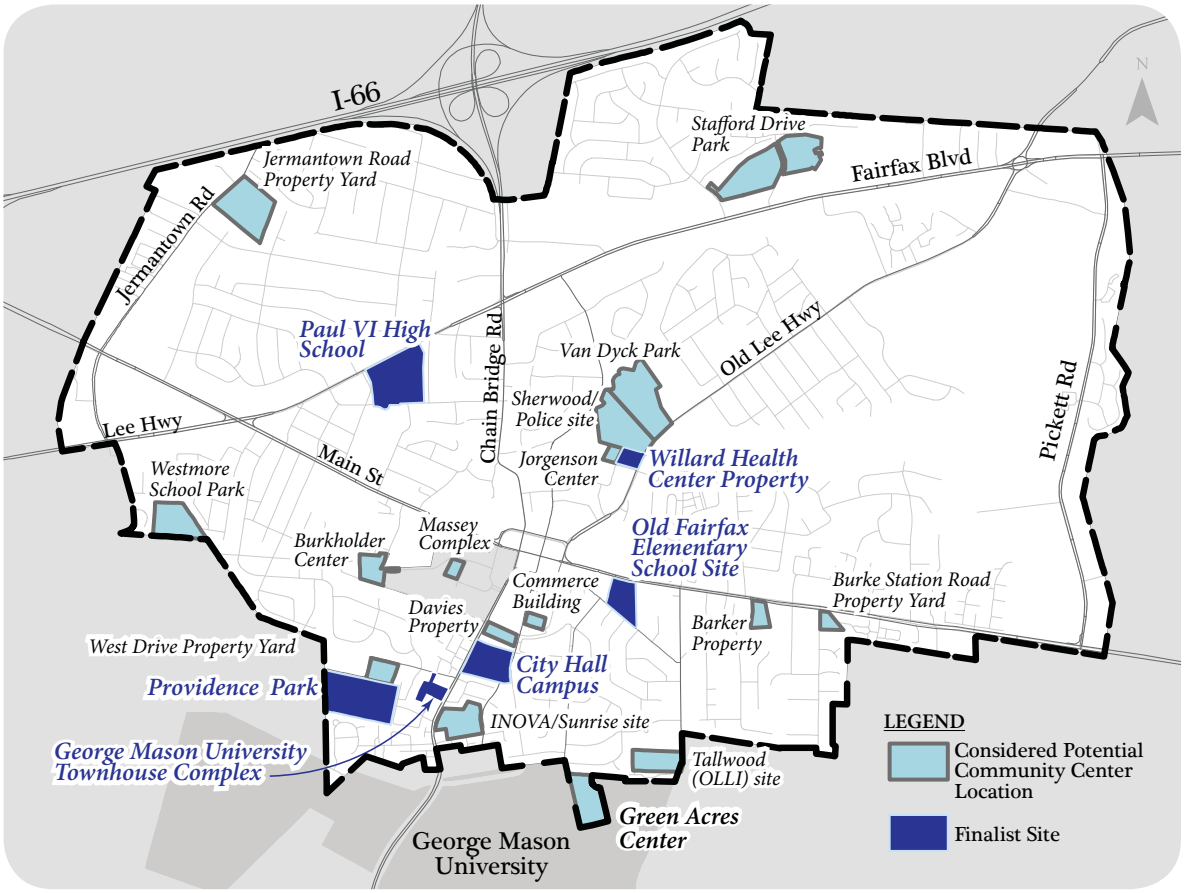
In fact, Committee members viewed achieving an optimal setting to be important enough as to trump other considerations, such as potential construction timing, or the complexity of building on a particular site.

Finalist Sites

Of the 21 sites, six ranked sufficiently positive to be considered a "finalist" site – i.e., one that the Committee felt comfortable recommending for City Council consideration for a new community center location. The six finalist sites are as follows:

- City Hall Campus
- Providence Park
- George Mason University Townhouse Complex
- Paul VI High School
- Willard Health Center Property
- Old Fairfax Elementary School Site

Each of these finalist sites is described in detail below, in addition to an explanation of why the Green Acres site itself was **not** chosen as a finalist site.



City Hall Campus

Benefits:

- → City-owned land; no additional acquisition necessary.
- → Near downtown; central location.
- → Good accessibility and is served by public transportation.

Drawbacks:

- → Small available footprint if current structures and outdoor amenities are preserved.
- → Structured parking would be necessary to ensure adequate accessibility for both community center and City Hall uses.

City Hall's campus covers approximately 8 acres on Armstrong Street between Chain Bridge Road and George Mason Boulevard, and currently encompasses the 53,000-sq. ft. City Hall building (original structure plus annex) and the circa-1840 Sisson House. Also on the property is the Veterans Amphitheater (24,000 sq. ft. including stage and lawn area), a 3,300-sq. ft. community garden, and ample open space.

City Hall itself contains city governmental functions plus the General District Court, and parking is provided through 177 parking spaces. Eighty of these spaces are located on what is commonly known as the "upper lot," closest to Chain Bridge Road.

The property is sloped, with the area along Chain Bridge Road averaging about 20 feet higher in elevation than the area along George Mason Boulevard.

Ample room exists to construct an additional building on City Hall's campus, particularly in the upper parking lot area along Chain Bridge Road. Prior to the 2007 construction of the City Hall annex, plans were drawn to include the City's police station on the City Hall grounds as well. These plans featured a 30,000-sq. ft., two-story building served by an adjoining two-story parking structure containing 125 parking spaces. With the amphitheater and Sisson House remaining intact, the plan aimed to minimize disruptions that would impact the property's existing character.

Although the police station was eventually built elsewhere, these plans illustrate how an additional building could be sited on City Hall's campus while maintaining the civic integrity of the site as a whole. While a community center as recommended by the Committee would have

Plan for police station on City Hall campus, circa 2003.

different spatial and operational characteristics than a police station as envisioned in the illustrations, such conceptual plans demonstrate the potential for using City Hall's campus for additional community uses.

Situated close to downtown, with access to three major streets, the City Hall campus satisfies the Committee's locational requirements for a community center. However, the site is currently heavily used, and in order to maintain the current character and accessibility for City Hall, the footprint of any new facility would need to be relatively compact, particularly if considerable amounts of the site's existing open space is to be preserved. This small available footprint would also necessitate a structured parking arrangement, adding to the cost of building on this site.

Still, the strong locational benefits of the City Hall campus warrant further consideration for a potential community center setting, and this is therefore considered a solid finalist site.

Providence Park

Benefits:

- → City-owned land; no additional acquisition necessary (although acquisition of adjacent Fairfax County Property Yard would enhance a community center at this location).
- → Good accessibility; located approximately ¼-mile from existing CUE bus line.
- → Outdoor amenities of Providence Park can complement community center functions.

Drawbacks:

- → Site is currently used for a public park – efforts to build a community center would need to maintain or enhance park amenities, existing open space and the FPYC clubhouse.
- → Site is near the edge of the City; not centrally located.
- → Acquisition of adjacent Fairfax County Property Yard, while not necessary, would enhance a community center at this location; this would add expense.

Providence Park is located on 20 acres of land at the southwest portion of the City, with vehicular access from West Drive, and pedestrian access from both West Drive and Canfield Street. The park contains a soccer field, two tennis courts, a playground and a clubhouse. Additionally, about 13 acres of the park consists of undeveloped woodlands, with trails traversing the site. A 70-space parking lot serves the facility.

The topography of Providence Park is moderately sloping, with the soccer field and tennis court being located on slight ridges. A branch of Popes Head Creek creates a depression on the eastern edge of the property, forming a 70-foot wide area of floodplain that covers about one acre of the park's land.

Providence Park's land is buildable, but the challenge of siting a new facility at the park would be doing so while maintaining the recreational assets that are valued by the community. When considering only the existing 20-acre park, any new construction (and supporting parking lots) would necessarily use existing wooded or recreational areas. Additionally, the US Department of Housing and Urban Development holds a covenant on the property requiring its use as community open space – if the City wishes to build a non-open space improvement on the land, the details would first need to be approved by HUD. This could potentially add further complexities or delays to the community center process.

One option for mitigating impacts on existing park amenities would be the potential City acquisition of the Fairfax County-owned property yard that lies directly north of Providence Park. The yard encompasses 4.2 acres and is used for vehicle storage and maintenance. Fairfax County officials have indicated that the County may consolidate operations and may seek to dispose of this particular yard several years in the future. If the City is able to acquire the property yard, that acquisition would enable a community center building and parking to be accommodated with minimal disruptions to park features.

Providence Park has good vehicular access via West Drive. Additionally, it could be possible to extend Canfield Street (which currently dead-ends at the park's eastern boundary) to provide access to the site as well, if that is deemed to be desirable.

This location – particularly with a potential acquisition of the adjoining property yard – offers the benefit of a flexible site with good access to major roads. Its position at the edge of the City and the potential displacement of recreational and/or open space uses would complicate the planning process, but not rule it out of consideration.

George Mason University Townhouse Complex

Benefits:

- → Near downtown; central location.
- → Good accessibility and is served by public transportation.
- → Owned by the George Mason University Foundation, which may consider transferring the site to the City under certain conditions, including but not limited to land swap, direct purchase and others.

Drawbacks:

- → Relatively small size of property and irregular shape.
- → Cost of property acquisition.

The George Mason University Foundation (GMUF) owns two parcels of land on Chain Bridge Road between West Drive and Canfield Street that are collectively known as the University Townhouse Complex. These parcels, totaling 3.1 acres, contain several structures built in the mid-1980s. Currently, the site comprises a 13,272-square foot, two-story office building at the front of the property, and 36 townhouse-style student housing units at the site's rear. Although the site is fully occupied, Mason/GMUF has indicated a willingness to consider further discussions related to a potential City acquisition of this site. Further, Mason/GMUF may consider various methods of acquisition including but not limited to land swap, direct purchase, and others. For that reason, and because the site satisfies many locational criteria, the Townhouse Complex became one of the Committee's finalist sites.

The Mason property consists of approximately 235 feet of frontage along Chain Bridge Road. From the frontage, the property slopes gradually downward to the rear. Wider at the rear than at the front, the property wraps around the adjoining One God Ministry site, and is about 365' wide at the rear lot line. An additional appendage to the site is a 75' wide piece of land that provides direct access to West Drive.

Topographically, the site has only a moderate slope (about 10' difference in elevation from front to rear), with the only exception being a drainage ditch that consumes about 8,500 square feet at the rear lot line.

One challenge of potentially developing this site for a community center is its relative small size and irregular shape. The overall area of 3.1 acres could theoretically fit a community center and supporting parking facilities, however there would be little room for outdoor recreation amenities. Furthermore, the irregular shape of the lot and its adjacency to residential uses limits the site's design flexibility.

Located one-half mile from downtown, the Mason townhouse complex is not centrally located, but it is reasonably accessible to both City facilities and Mason's campus and features direct access to Chain Bridge Road. Although not a large site, its suitable and accessible location, as well as Mason's potential willingness to consider this site's future, warrant inclusion on the list of finalist sites.


George Mason Univ. Chain Bridge Rd. Property
2015 aerial
North
Eaves Apartments
Canfield St
Canfield Vlg.
2.30 acres
One God Ministry
Total Site 3.1 acres
0.75 acres
Chain Bridge Rd
West Dr
Chancery Sq.
Crestmont

Paul VI High School

Benefits:

- → Large property with a long history of public use. A portion of this site could be suitable for a community center use.
- → Good accessibility and is served by public transportation.
- → Community center could be a part of a larger, coordinated development with other complementary uses.

Drawbacks:

- → Property status currently uncertain, as the current owner has engaged with a developer for the entire 16-acre site.
- → Inclusion of a community center on a redeveloped Paul VI site would be a complex and lengthy process.

In May 2015, the Catholic Diocese of Arlington announced plans to vacate the current Paul VI High School site. On 16 acres, containing a 190,000-square foot school building, 6.5 acres of outdoor athletic features, and supporting parking facilities, the Paul VI site is one of the largest buildable sites in the City. The original portion of the school building, opened in the 1930s as Fairfax High School, has long been a community landmark, and the property's location with 1,000 feet of Fairfax Boulevard frontage makes this a high visibility site for a potential community center.

Until the Diocese announced its intent to vacate the site, the City had not contemplated a future use for the property (the Comprehensive Plan identifies the future use as "Institutional"). While the site currently has a potential master developer planning for a full-site redevelopment, the City is concurrently evaluating what types and intensity of uses would most benefit the City and the school's surrounding neighborhoods.

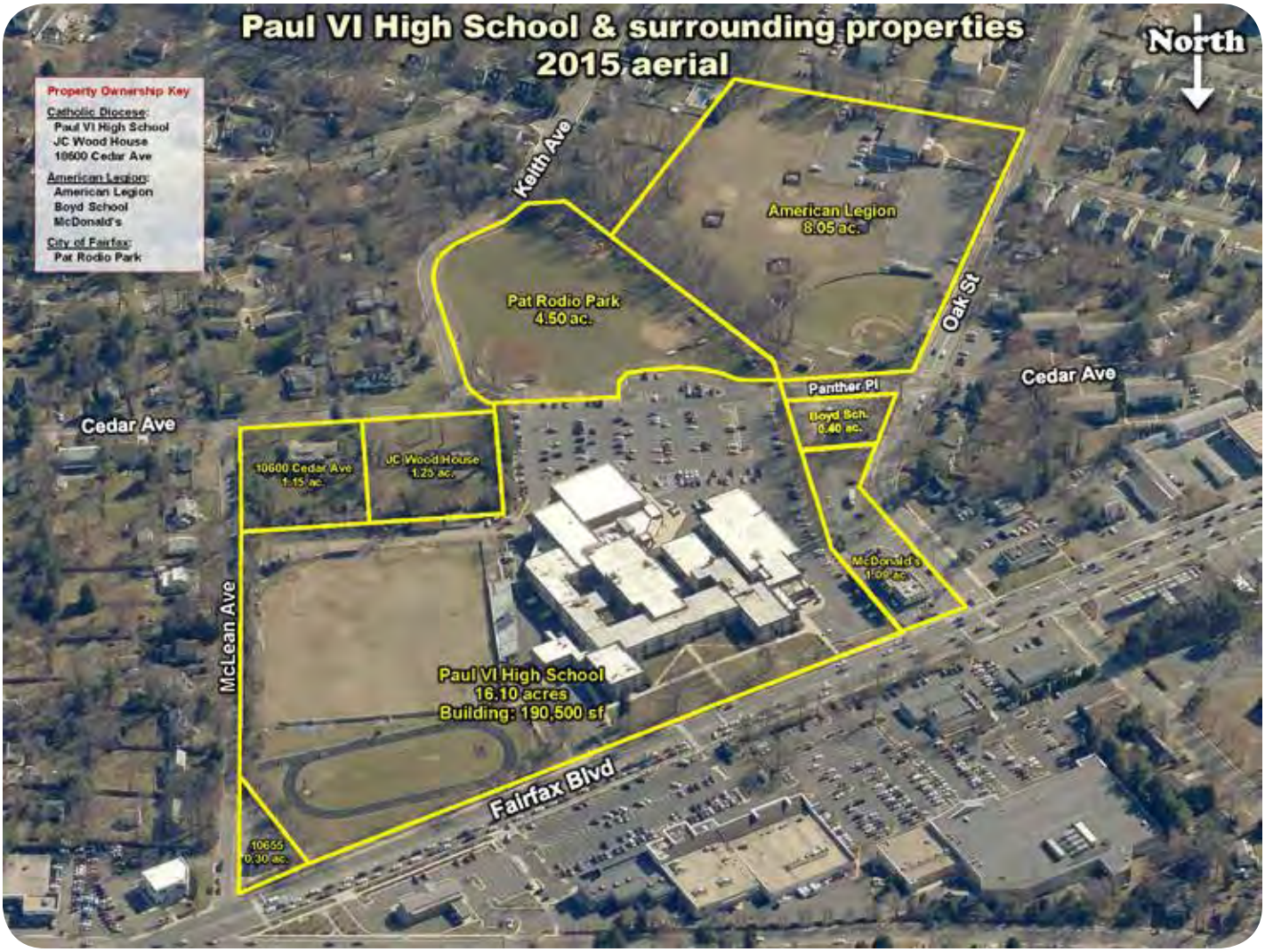
The Paul VI site is large, flat, and generally buildable (though 2.5 acres at the western edge of the site is located within a floodplain). The original part of the school building faces Fairfax Boulevard, with excellent visibility, and the site has access to Oak Street as well, thereby providing good Citywide accessibility. Currently, there is no CUE bus service directly to the Paul VI site (though there is a Metrobus stop at the school), but the CUE Gold Route runs nearby, with stops 1/3-mile away, and it is not unreasonable for CUE to consider modifying its existing route to serve a large new development. Directly to Paul VI's south is the 4.5-acre Pat Rodio Park, featuring two diamond and one rectangular athletic fields.

With redevelopment plans in their very early conceptual stages, it is difficult to postulate how or where a community center could potentially fit into a larger development scheme. However, with such a large site, several options could potentially be available. If a portion of the existing building is retained, there could be sufficient space available to fulfill community center needs. Alternatively, a location near Pat Rodio Park would provide compatibility with the athletic amenities currently available at the park.

But while the Paul VI site offers many potential advantages in terms of location and flexibility, a major disadvantage of this site is the time and uncertainty inherent in major development projects. Because Paul VI High School is scheduled to remain open at this location through at least 2020, no development can occur on the site before that time. Even after that time, there is little certainty about what might be redeveloped, or when. Large-scale

redevelopment of this site is not a foregone conclusion, as additional input from the community is needed and the City Council would need to approve any proposal. The details of any such redevelopment could vary greatly in terms of scale, content, and orientation.

Regardless, the potential advantages of this site are significant, and the Paul VI property offers a unique opportunity to possibly integrate a community center within a landmark property and a new development.



Willard Health Center Property

Benefits:

- → Adjacent to other City facilities (Sherwood Center & Van Dyck Park), offering the possibility of a campus-like setting for complementary community-oriented uses.
- → Near downtown; central location.
- → Good accessibility and is served by public transportation.

Drawbacks:

- → Site is currently owned by Fairfax County and used as a health center. Fairfax County government is considering studying the long-term feasibility of the site, but any change in status would still be several years in the future.
- → Relatively small size of property.

The area around Fairfax's downtown would be an ideal location for a community center. With many civic facilities (Sherwood Center, Van Dyck Park, Old Town Square, Daniels Run School, St. Leo the Great, etc.) and commercial centers, the downtown vicinity is often considered the City's center of activity. Therefore, it is natural to consider a location proximate to downtown for a community center – particularly a location that is adjacent to other civic resources.

The 2.5-acre Willard Health Center property at Old Lee Highway and Layton Hall Drive satisfies these criteria. The site is immediately south of the City's Sherwood Center, 1,000 feet from Van Dyck Park, 1/3-mile from the library, and less than half a mile from the center of downtown. In that regard, this could be considered the optimum potential site, as the civic connectivity would enable the City to build a campus-type atmosphere convenient to many other City amenities.

However, the property is currently in active use by Fairfax County. The 24,510- square foot building contained on the site is occupied by the Joseph Willard Health Center, a public medical clinic that serves a predominantly lower-income clientele by providing services such as medical testing, pharmacy services and immunizations. The building also houses the County's Infant & Toddler Connection program and Office of Vital Records.

Fairfax County may begin a feasibility study in the coming years to assess whether this site is the ideal long-term location for these uses. Such a study, though, is still not scheduled, and it is unlikely that Fairfax County would consider any kind of property transfer regarding the Willard site within the next five years.

This site itself is small – only 2.5 acres, and generally slopes from Old Lee Highway up about 15 feet to the west property line. Most of the property slopes gently, however there is a significant slope that separates the Willard site from the Sherwood Center property. Another feature that could impact future development on this site is the existence of a 37'-wide ingress/egress easement for the adjoining Jorgenson Laboratory building, which does not have its own direct access to Layton Hall Drive.

While the Willard Center is an ideal location for a City community center, there are significant challenges to using the site for that purpose – the site is not being marketed for sale, it is small, and has some design impediments. Still, it has been included in the finalist list due to the superior location and proximity to other City amenities.


Willard Health Center & surrounding properties
2015 aerial
North
Layton Hall
University Dr
St. Leo the Great Church
St. Leo the Great School
Van Dyck Park Properties
20.1 acres
Police/Sherwood Property
14.0 acres
Daniels Run Elementary School
Christian Science Church
Mennonite Church
Old Lee Hwy
Layton Hall Apartments
Jorgenson Center
1/5 acres
Building: 12,315 sf
Willard Center
2.5 acres
Building: 24,510 sf
Layton Hall Dr
Farrcroft

Old Fairfax Elementary School Site

Benefits:

- → Civic amenities of adjacent Ratcliffe Park and Fairfax Museum can complement community center functions.
- → Near downtown; central location.
- → Good accessibility and is served by public transportation.
- → Possibility of negotiation for purchase of the site.

Drawbacks:

- → Site is privately owned and is not currently being marketed for sale.
- → Relatively small size of property.
- → Cost of property acquisition and of taking income-producing property off of the tax rolls.

Located on 2 acres at the corner of Main and Locust Streets, the original part of the current "Fairfax School Office Building" was constructed in 1925 as Fairfax Elementary School, and served that function until 1974. Since that time, the building has served various office functions, and in the late 1980s a parking deck was constructed to the building's rear (extending onto the adjacent Fairfax Museum's site). Currently, the 46,000-square foot building is fully occupied, with tenants including a private school (St. Anthony Academy), World Gym, Fairfax County Office for Children, and others.

The structure on this site consists of the original 1920s school building and annexes that were built later. Vehicular access is provided from Locust Street, and parking is provided by both surface spaces and a 2-story garage for a total of 142 spaces. The garage is partially built on the city-owned museum property, and is leased to the current property owners.

The site is bordered on two sides by city-owned property. To the west lies the 1-acre Fairfax Museum and Visitor Center property, and to the south is the 3.2-acre Ratcliffe Park. The park consists of a diamond athletic field, basketball court, playground and picnic area. Though the office building and park properties are relatively flat, an 8-foot rise separates both properties, with the park being lower in elevation than the office building.

At 2 acres, the office building site by itself would be of insufficient size to accommodate a community center along with supporting parking requirements. However, if viewed in a larger context of all three properties combined (office building, museum and park), the 6.2-acre collective site would be able to incorporate satisfactory amounts of interior and exterior amenities, plus suitable amounts of parking.

Similar to other sites under consideration, such as City Hall, this site is proximate to downtown, has a relatively central and accessible location, and is served by public transportation. If the property were to become available, the current site could make a suitable location for a community center, particularly when paired with the adjoining publicly-owned park and museum properties.

Front of Old Fairfax Elementary School

Assessing the Finalist Sites

The six finalist sites all have different characteristics as well as varying assets and weaknesses regarding suitability for a community center. To provide guidance for City Council, the Committee has narrowed down the finalists to three preferred sites. All three of these sites would make a robust community center location, but their varying qualities and attributes mean that a direct comparison of these sites would be difficult and imprecise.

The Committee assessed the six finalist sites both by location-specific physical criteria and by the estimated time and effort necessary to build a community center at each given location. From there, the Committee agreed on three sites that would best satisfy the community's needs as determined through the public input process and by the Committee's own research. These sites are the most recommended locations for a new community center in the City of Fairfax:

Option A

City Hall Campus

Option B

George Mason University Townhouse Complex

Option C

Old Fairfax Elementary School Site

Recommended Site Option A

City Hall Campus

- Planning work could begin within a year.
- Construction could be completed within 3 years.
- Site could accommodate a 40,000-sq. ft. community center.
- Parking would likely be provided by a combination of structured parking and increased surface parking throughout the existing campus.
- Site is probably not large enough to incorporate potential collaborating partners and still maintain substantial open space on the City Hall campus.

Fairfax's City Hall Campus is owned by the City, and would be able to accommodate a community center without the necessity of displacing park uses, or without the cost and complexity of acquiring additional property. As such, the City could potentially begin construction of a facility in a relatively short amount of time.

As detailed above, the City Hall Campus would be a fairly complex site for a new building, with other existing uses and buildings on the site, as well as the need to maintain both adequate parking for City Hall and sufficient open space for the community's use of City Hall's grounds. However, both of those criteria can likely be met with a format similar to the formerly proposed police station.

Complexities of building at City Hall include the need to maintain usable and attractive open space on the site, possibly relocating uses such as the amphitheater and/or community garden, and ensuring sufficient parking for both the community center and City Hall's existing uses. Given those parameters, it is questionable whether additional complementary uses (such as a child care center, OLLI or Potomac Arts Academy) would be feasible for this site.

However, if the addition of other tenants is not a critical factor in the selection of a community center location, then City Hall would be the most reasonable choice.

Recommended Site Option B

George Mason University Townhouse Complex

- Planning work could begin in 2-3 years. Mason/GMUF has indicated a willingness to consider a potential City acquisition or exchange regarding this property, but the details would need to be worked out before planning begins. Further, Mason would need to find suitable locations for the residential units and other space currently located at the site.
- Construction could be completed within 3-5 years.
- Site could accommodate a 40,000-sq. ft. community center and possibly potential collaborating partners, however an increased square footage might result in a greater need for structured parking, thereby increasing costs.
- Irregular site configuration may present challenges for design and parking.

The townhouse complex site would be appropriate for a community center location in that it has good access, has no significant impediments to development, is of an adequate size, and is owned by an entity that may consider selling or exchanging the site with the City.

Because this site is currently owned by the George Mason University Foundation, and used as offices and student housing, the process of building a community center would first start with negotiating a purchase or exchange agreement with the foundation. This process, along with the task of relocating the existing uses, would likely take 2 to 3 years.

The Committee viewed the townhouse complex as a good site for a community center, owing to its location on a major artery and its relatively close proximity to downtown. While not adjacent to another community facility, its location ¼-mile from Providence Park means that some interaction could take place involving both sites. The existing site is large enough for the type of center that the Committee recommends, and could possibly include other uses as well. While not necessary, additional acquisition of adjoining properties would provide greater flexibility in an eventual community center design and layout.

Given the site's potential flexibility and the relative willingness of the current owner to consider selling or exchanging the property, the George Mason University Townhouse Complex is considered to be a sensible choice for a community center location.

Recommended Site Option C

Old Fairfax Elementary School Site

- Planning work could begin in 2-3 years. The site is currently fully occupied with commercial tenants and the property is not being marketed for sale. Any negotiation for a purchase of this site would need to be mindful of pre-existing lease expirations.
- Construction could be completed within 3-5 years.
- Although the parcel in question is itself small (at 2 acres), it is surrounded by an additional 4 acres of civic uses. Viewed in total, the combined 6 acres would be sufficient to contain a community center, and could take advantage of the proximity to Ratcliffe Park and the Fairfax Museum.
- A combined site could offer the space and flexibility to potentially include collaborating partners with the community center.
- The historic 1920s-era school structure could be reused and incorporated into a community center design.
- A community center at this site could combine parking resources with the adjacent park and museum sites.

The Old Fairfax Elementary School site offers numerous potential advantages, including a flexible site arrangement, a possibility of using the existing historic building, and a location with good accessibility and access to downtown. However, the site is not currently being marketed for sale, meaning that the City would first need to negotiate for a land purchase – a process that could ultimately be time-consuming and costly. Due to these factors, it is important to recognize that further consideration of this site should be made with the acknowledgement that the site may not end up ultimately being feasible.

Still, there are considerable benefits to this site. No other site under consideration offers the combination of flexibility and location that the Old Fairfax Elementary site could potentially offer. If the City Council prefers this location, City officials should begin a dialogue as soon as possible with the site's owner, and set parameters for the type of facility that would be desired.

This site's potential benefits are balanced by the uncertainties and potential cost of constructing a community center at this location. Due to the compelling benefits, the Old Fairfax Elementary site is considered to a desirable site for a community center and remains one of the three recommended sites.

Why is Green Acres Not Recommended for a Future Community Center Site?

When the Committee examined potential community center sites throughout the City, the current Green Acres site was one of those under consideration – either in the context of renovating the existing structure, or building a completely new facility. However, Green Acres was not judged to be one of the most suitable six sites, and is not listed as a finalist site. Because Green Acres is the current community center's location, it is worth explaining this decision in detail.

The City's community center is located at Green Acres solely because that site was available, and the former school building was vacant. The community center functions effectively at Green Acres, though the site has some inherent drawbacks – namely being at the edge of the City and not proximate to other City functions or amenities. The Committee assessed the site based on the four major criteria as described previously. The benefits and drawbacks of Green Acres were judged as follows:

Benefits:

- → City-owned land; no additional acquisition necessary.
- → Site of the current community center, so there would be no significant change of use.
- → Possibility of achieving cost savings by a potentially less complicated construction process.

Drawbacks:

- → Site is near the edge of the City, not centrally located, and not served by public transportation.
- → Site is located within a residential neighborhood, and not in an area with other complementary civic or commercial uses.

Green Acres is not without its benefits. The City already owns the land, thereby reducing costs and complexities for a new center – and with 10 acres to work with, there would be relatively few site constraints for constructing a building with a necessary footprint for a community center. Although the site is not in an ideal location, community center patrons have made Green Acres work over the past 15 years, and it is not unreasonable to foresee a community center use continuing at the current site.

However, the current site's drawbacks are significant. Specifically, Green Acres is located at the very edge of the City, far removed from other civic or commercial activity centers. The current center is within a half-mile walking distance of only about 200 homes and no other civic uses, and is not located on a public transportation network.

The Committee judged locational considerations such as these to be of paramount importance in selecting a site for a new community center. Particularly, the Committee felt it crucial to have a community center located close to the City's center, and where it can complement other public amenities and/or commercial areas.

The desire to have a community center located in a harmonious setting outweighed the potential benefits of rebuilding on the current site. Simply put, the Committee found the downsides of the Green Acres Center's current location enough to remove the site from the finalist list. **Resultantly, the Committee recommends locating the City's new community center on another parcel, and not using the current site for a future community center.**

1962 Aerial of Green Acres School site (Source: Historicaerials.com)

9) Options for the Future Use of the Green Acres Property

After the community center relocates to another site, the City will face a decision regarding how to best use the site in the future. Although this occasion would be several years in the future, it is prudent to begin considering these options now, in order to best weigh the available alternatives and consider how to achieve the best possible outcome for the City's residents.

The following section details several options available for both the eventual disposition of the Green Acres property, and of the building itself. Because the ultimate decision on the property's outcome is many years in the future, and could potentially be influenced by several external factors, the Committee is not recommending any one particular course of action at this time. Rather, the Committee identified the three discrete options, and is detailing the advantages and disadvantages of each. These options are intended to represent potential strategic alternatives for the period following the community center's eventual relocation to another site (as recommended in this report).

Three Site Options

When considering the potential future of the Green Acres site after the community center relocates, three main options emerge:

- Retain the entire site as a City-owned property;
- Sell the entire site to another entity; or
- Sell a portion of the site to another entity.

These options are detailed below, with advantages and disadvantages of each:

A) Retain the entire 10-acre Green Acres site as a City-owned property.

The Green Acres site is currently owned by the City, and following an eventual relocation of the community center, the City could choose to retain the site under City ownership. Doing so would offer the greatest future flexibility for the City, however the City would not realize the revenue potential that would be possible from selling all or part of the property.

Advantages:

- School Board would be able to maintain its existing Deed of Covenant for a potential future school use on the Green Acres site.
- City retains 10 acres containing mostly open space, a notable advantage because open space acquisition/retention has long been a City priority.

  → *This is particularly significant for the City's southeast neighborhoods, as many of these neighborhoods are not proximate to other open space amenities of a similar size.*

- Ability to maintain or enhance current athletic field capacity.
- Ability to retain the existing building and reuse it should a suitable and complementary use be identified.

- Site retention would provide the City options for realizing certain development goals (such as senior housing, etc.) that may be considered suitable future uses for the Green Acres property.

Disadvantages:

- City would not be able to realize income or other compensation from selling the all or part of the property to another entity.

B) Sell the entire 10-acre Green Acres site to another entity.

Selling the entire property would result in an immediate fiscal yield for the City, whether in terms of direct payment or a potential exchange for other property. However, the City would surrender a significant asset, and accordingly lose the flexibility of using Green Acres in way that could otherwise serve residents, both Citywide and in the immediate neighborhood.

Advantages:

- City would gain income or other compensation from selling the property to another entity.

- For a property transfer to any entity, the City could place restrictions on the future use of the site to ensure the maximum possible conformity with neighborhood character and quality of life.

- City could partner with a private entity to pursue certain development goals (such as senior housing, etc.) that may be considered suitable future uses for the Green Acres site.

Disadvantages:

- City would lose 10 acres of open space.

- City would lose a certain amount of control of the site's future use, which may be to the detriment of the adjoining neighborhood.

- A property sale would require School Board approval, as the Deed of Covenant would need to be transferred to another parcel in the City of at least 10 acres (i.e., Providence Park).

- City would lose some athletic field capacity. This report recommends no net loss of field capacity due to the high rates of use for the City's existing fields. In the event that fields are lost at Green Acres, the City should first explore options for creating new fields at other City sites.

- The surrounding neighborhoods would lose a large open space/recreational area. This is significant both in terms of recreational opportunities (fields, playground, etc.) and also in terms of neighborhood character. The City's southeast neighborhoods are not proximate to other open space amenities of a similar size.

C) Sell a portion of the Green Acres site to another entity.

A third option for Green Acres' future would be for the City to sell a portion of the site to another entity, while retaining a portion under City ownership. This would likely involve selling the southern half of the property and retaining the northern half (where the current building is located). The advantages and disadvantages of doing so would likely be a combination of the above two options. The City would gain some compensation for selling or exchanging a portion of the site, but would retain some flexibility regarding options for the remaining acreage.

Advantages:

- City would gain income or other compensation from selling a portion of the property to another entity.

- For a property transfer to any entity, the City could place restrictions on the future use of the site to ensure the maximum possible conformity with neighborhood character and quality of life.

- Ability to retain the existing building and reuse it should a suitable and complementary use be identified.

- City could partner with a private entity to pursue certain development goals (such as senior housing, etc.) that may be considered suitable future uses for the portion of Green Acres to be sold, while still pursuing public-use options for the portion to remain under City ownership.

Disadvantages:

- City would lose several acres of open space (not necessarily the entire 10 acres).

- A sale of even a portion of the property would require School Board approval, as the sale would result in a parcel too small for the construction of an elementary school. The Deed of Covenant would need to be transferred to another parcel in the City of at least 10 acres (i.e., Providence Park).

- City would lose some athletic field capacity. The Green Acres Committee recommends no net loss of field capacity due to the high usage rates for the City's existing fields. In the event that fields are lost at Green Acres, the City should first explore options for creating new fields at the remaining portion of the Green Acres site, or at other City sites.

- The surrounding neighborhoods would lose a large open space / recreational area. This is significant both in terms of recreational opportunities (fields, playground, etc.) and also in terms of neighborhood character. The City's southeast neighborhoods are not proximate to other open space amenities of a similar size.

  → *For the open space and fields issue, some of this loss could be mitigated by using the City-retained portion of the site for fields and/or open space. However, there would likely not be enough land to replace all current uses just on the portion of the site that the City would retain.*

Regardless of which option is chosen for the eventual disposition of the Green Acres site and building, the City will need to be cognizant of the many aspects of the Green Acres conversation. Numerous issues converge in any examination of the City's future options regarding this property, from school and recreation needs to open space prioritization, fiscal requirements, development priorities and social goals.

These issues can appear intractable when viewed collectively. However, the Committee believes that the best course of action will come into clearer focus if the City Council considers the above potential strategic alternatives concurrently with the planning effort for the community center's future.

1954

1962

2003

2015

10) Where To Go From Here

Regardless of which site is chosen for the City's future community center, there will be several years before plans are completed. This section of the report recommends short-term actions the City could undertake in anticipation of a community center move.

This Committee could only delve into a finite amount of detail, due to the volunteer nature of the group, its time constraints, and the early stage in this process. Consequently, many topics need to be explored in greater depth so that the entire process of creating a new community center can proceed. Following are actions that should be undertaken in the short term in order to gain a better understanding of the larger tasks, such as construction, that lay ahead.

a) Determine the precise community center uses that the City wishes to include in the new community center.

The Committee has provided recommendations for types of uses found to be most desired or warranted in a new community center (see Section 6). The first step in progressing towards building a new center is to formalize this list and determine with greater detail the types and amount of each use that the City would like to include.

This task would include, for example, determining the dimensions and specifications for a gymnasium (i.e., types of room dividers, suitability for specific sports, presence of an elevated track, etc.), establishing what uses (such as the senior center, for example) would be single-use versus shared use, and what amount of storage space is desired.

This is an important first step because – while this report establishes general guidelines and specifications for a new facility – future planning will hinge on more detailed size and use specifications.

b) Discuss potential collaboration and partnering with other organizations.

Section 7 examines some potential collaborating partners – organizations whose missions would dovetail with that of a City community center, and that could potentially collaborate with the City as tenants in a new center. The Committee realizes that the organizations described in Section 7 would be beneficial additions to a civic gathering space, but is also aware that any such collaboration must be accompanied by significant financial contributions in order to help absorb the costs associated with constructing and maintaining additional space.

As such, there would need to be considerable advance planning involved in bringing any collaborating organization into a new City facility, and discussions between the City and such organizations should begin as soon as possible.

Furthermore, discussions should begin with Main Street Child Development Center to plan for that organization's future, whether at a City facility or elsewhere. In the event

that the Center is to move to a different location, the City should assist Main Street in finding a new location, and ensure that the Center can continue fulfilling its mission to Fairfax-area families.

c) Determine a final, preferred location for a new community center.

Provided with the information and knowledge gathered by the Committee's report, and by the above steps, the City should determine a preferred location for a new community center. This task follows a and b above because the composition and size of the center may influence locational decisions (for example, if the center is large – due to the presence of collaborating partners – some of the sites may be more appropriate than others).

d) Conduct detailed analyses of costs and space requirements for select options.

Once specific size and use parameters are established, the City should engage an expert in construction estimation in order to ascertain with a degree of precision what the expected cost of a community center would be.

e) Assess future options for the Green Acres site.

The Committee has presented three alternatives for the future disposition of the Green Acres site – the City should undertake a detailed effort to assess these options, including soliciting School Board and community input specifically regarding this topic. Once completed, the City must decide whether or not Green Acres should remain a City-owned site, in whole or in part.

The decisions regarding the future of Green Acres – and its current uses – are decisions that will influence City residents for many years to come. These are not simple choices, as many different aspects of City and School Board operations combine to influence potential outcomes.

The Green Acres Feasibility Study Committee hopes that the recommendations and analysis contained in this report will assist the City's leadership in forming a course of action regarding this important property and the essential services that currently take place there.

f) Engage the public in the process going forward.

As the City moves forward in discussing these options and strategies relating to both the community center and the Green Acres site, it is vital to give the public the maximum amount of opportunities to weigh in on future public actions. This Committee's work is intended to start the processes of determining how to act on the major topics discussed in this report, but is not intended to supplant or supersede public input.

The City should – throughout the future actions recommended in this report – actively seek residents' input on the location and features of a new community center, and the eventual use and disposition of the Green Acres site.