



# ORLEANS COMMUNITY CENTER FEASIBILITY TASK FORCE REPORT

Prepared for **2022**  
Orleans Community Center Feasibility Task Force 10/21/2022

## TASK FORCE

Fritz Luft, Chair - Member At Large

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Old Fire Station Community Center

Orleans Elementary School (OES)

Nauset Regional Middle School (NRMS)

Department of Public Works (DPW)

Recreation Department

Orleans Historical Society/  
Centers for Culture and History (CHO)

The Task Force and Consultants would like to acknowledge and thank the many citizens and employees of Orleans who participated in the feasibility study process, offering their best ideas, comments, critiques, and time. The input of the Orleans Community has been critical to the development of this feasibility study and will be essential for further progress on this study's goals.

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This Study is intended to summarize the findings of the Community Center Feasibility Task Force and the study Consultants, Abacus Architects + Planners. The Task Force, Consultants, and many citizens, employees and Town institutions engaged in a substantive dialog on how a community center might contribute to the well being of Orleans citizens. All work was conducted within the requirements of Massachusetts Public Meeting Laws and the Charge approved by the Town's Select Board July 21, 2021. All documentation is available on the Town's website along with supporting material.

## BACKGROUND AND STUDY PROCESS **01**

## BACKGROUND FOR THIS REPORT

Orleans is a town of 6,300 registered residents. As a coastal resort town, the population swells to over 20,000 in the summer. The economy is driven by tourism and out of towners' purchasing, improving and maintaining property, fishing, lobstering, clamming, oystering, and a range of typical small town commercial, office and retail activities.

There are great income and wealth disparities to be considered, but they are complex: wealthy retirees in beautiful homes; working people who are barely scraping by; and retirees with large homes but low incomes. There are many "snowbirds" who are here from the end of April into November. It is hard to know how many of those are included in the 6,300 registered residents vs. how many are residents in other places. There are also many weekenders who don't figure heavily in the community center but are part of the social and economic picture. They usually don't vote but have a voice.

A significant percentage of the population is retired (35% over age



With its miles of shoreline waterfront activities like swimming and boating are central to Orleans' identity. But these don't necessarily provide the sense of community or services that many municipalities offer through their community centers.



65) and the school aged population is shrinking. Housing scarcity and cost is seen as a likely factor. Orleans is pushing aggressively to expand affordable housing, some of it suitable for families, with several projects in the works.

There have been discussions over the years about the need for a community center that might welcome citizens of all ages, backgrounds and socio-economic situations. Although there are a range of cultural, educational and recreational facilities in Orleans, there isn't a focus for the town's civic life. This Feasibility Study is intended to explore whether such a focus is needed, how it could complement other Town facilities, and what programmatic elements it might include.

## FEASIBILITY STUDY PROCESS

**The Charge:** In response to an article at Spring 2021 Town Meeting the Select Board approved a Charge and

funding on July 21, 2021 to hire a consultant to complete a feasibility study. The Charge included the appointing of a Task Force, described the composition of the Task Force, and a description of the work to be completed by the Task Force and the Consultant to be presented to the Select Board.

### The Task Force:

Fritz Luft, *Chair, Member at Large*  
Jamie Balliett, *Vice-Chair, Member at Large*  
Kyle Wibby, *Clerk and Rec. Advisory Committee*  
Tracy Murphy, *Elementary School Parent*  
Steve Kaser, *NRMS Parent*  
Andrea Reed, *Select Board*  
Alice Van Oot, *Planning Board*  
Keith Campbell, *Council on Aging*  
Bonny Campbell Runyon, *Cultural District Committee*

The Task Force prepared a Request for Qualifications for an experienced consultant to prepare the feasibility

study.

### The RFQ and Consultant Selection:

The Charge formed the basis for a Request for Qualifications that was published in the Massachusetts Central Register and other publications requesting submissions from Architects and Engineers to prepare a study in line with the RFQ and the Charge. Applications were submitted on or before January 21, 2022. All submissions were reviewed by the Task Force and Abacus Architects + Planners was hired based on their experience with very similar feasibility studies and community center projects.

### Questionnaires and Facility Visits:

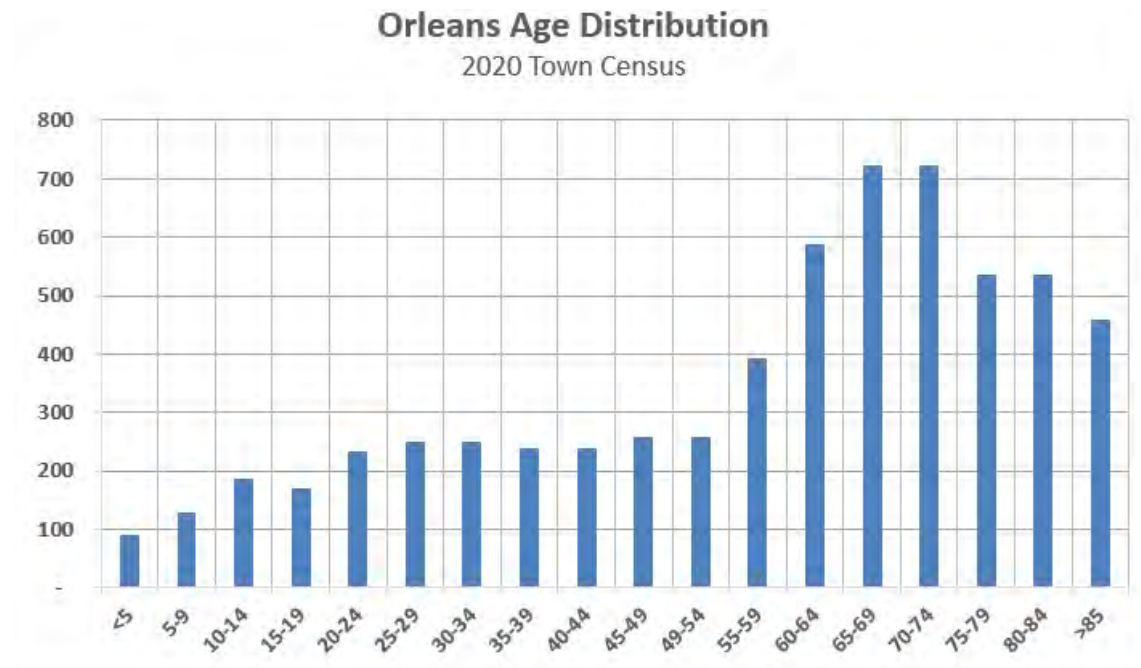
Using their knowledge of the town, its existing facilities, programs and managers the Task Force put together a list of current facilities that were then considered to ensure that a proposed community center would not duplicate an existing facility, and that the Task Force and Consultant would have background information needed to

further the goals of the study. The Task Force also prepared draft questionnaires that were finalized with the Consultant and distributed to facility managers in Town.

At the initial meeting of the Task Force and Consultant the importance of public engagement was discussed, and the need for both quantitative and qualitative information about Town needs, along with the information on existing facilities that meet some of those needs.

As a first task the group focused on surveying existing spaces that support public programs. On March 16th, 2022, Task Force Members and Abacus Principal and Project Manager David Eisen visited facilities, documented conditions, and interviewed leadership. The Age Distribution chart was used as background for understanding Town demographics and needs.

The questionnaires distributed are on the next page. Responses are on the Study website.



# Sample Questionnaire

## ORLEANS COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION AND PROGRAM QUESTIONNAIRE

The Community Center Feasibility Task Force is charged by the Orleans Select Board to develop recommendations on the needs, scale, design concepts, and possible locations for a community center in Orleans.

The first step in meeting our charge is to consider existing facilities; what programming they provide and want to provide, and what space they have available to meet current and future needs. Toward this end, members of the task force are meeting with leaders of the various facilities and organizations to obtain their input.

We are interested in a historical perspective, recent developments, and current status of each organization.

In parallel with this effort Abacus Architects + Planners, retained by Orleans to prepare a Community Center Feasibility Study, will investigate existing facilities and space needs. They may contact you for follow up information. Working with the Task Force they are planning a broad based outreach to the town to insure that a diverse range of voices are heard. Please let us know your thoughts on other critical people and organizations to contact.

Organization: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Interviewer: \_\_\_\_\_ Interviewee: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

What, in general terms, is the mission / purpose of your organization and what demographic do you serve?

What programs do you offer, and for each program, who is the target audience and how many people do you serve? What building(s) does your organization use?

What spaces within those buildings, approximately how big are they, and what activities do you conduct? And approximately how many hours per day, week or month?

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

If you have a detailed activity table or schedule of activities please pass on to us with as much information as you have available.

For each program, could attendance be expanded if you had additional space or a different location? Do you have plans to grow – and what is limiting that growth.?

Do the facilities you use meet your needs, and if not, how would you improved them? This might mean improving the spaces you use, or having a different site in a different kind of building.

Have you seen buildings or facilities in other towns that have features that you like?

Would a new Orleans Community Center, with spaces that you share with other organizations, and with support spaces like a front office, lobby, lounge, café, etc. be better for you and your mission?

If so, would you need dedicated space – storage, offices etc. – or would it be enough to have a space that you utilize on a scheduled basis? What kind of spaces would you need for what programs?

What are the key things you would like to see in a Community Center?

Other Observations or Comments?

LEFT: Sample questionnaire distributed to program managers and staff to understand current and projected space and activity needs.

RIGHT: Flyer for online survey available to all residents to gather information on activity and space preferences. Access to the survey was distributed widely through a variety of media to get input from a representative demographic.



We want to hear your thoughts on a community center in Orleans.



## Orleans Community Center Task Force

# ONLINE SURVEY

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/OrleansCommunityCenter>

To learn more about the Task Force:  
[tinyurl.com/OrleansCommunityCenter](https://tinyurl.com/OrleansCommunityCenter)

Survey  
QR Code



A community center in Orleans would be part of a network of civic resources that provide social services, and educational, recreational and social opportunities. It is important that a new facility supplement rather than duplicate resources that are currently available.

In order to ensure that this happens, David Eisen, Principal at Abacus Architects, and members of the Task Force visited a series of facilities, documented community spaces and interviewed those in leadership positions.

Photographs and findings are noted on the pages that follow.

Some facilities, like the Library, have plans to expand but do not have funding in place. Further development of Community Center plans should be done in coordination with the Library should plans be implemented. Other facilities may have their ability to serve the public impacted by climate or other kinds of changes. Again, any development of community center plans should be done with an understanding of up to date and projected conditions.

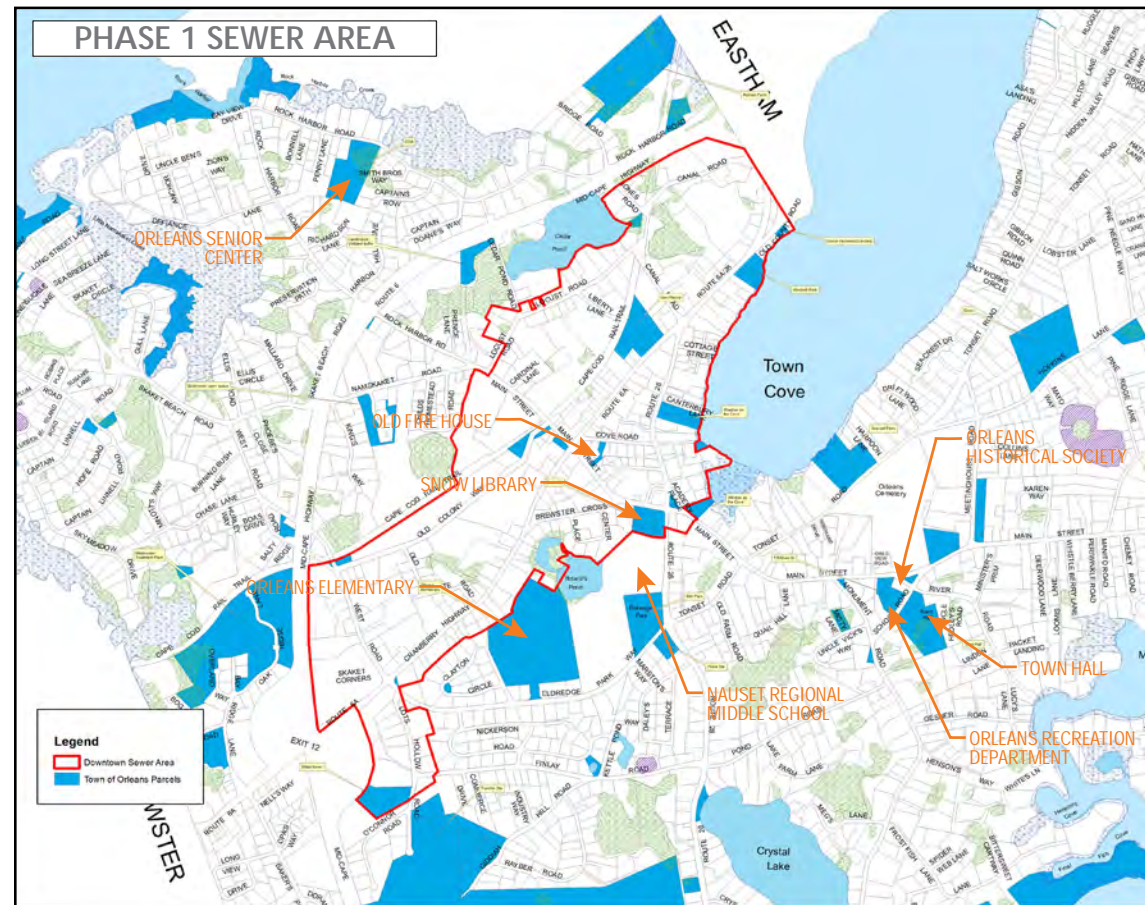
## EXISTING FACILITIES 02

## EXISTING TOWN RESOURCES

The lack of a town wide sewer system has had a significant impact on the kind and cost of development that takes place in Orleans. A sewer system will be installed within the area outlined in red on the map to the right by 2023 - and can be considered one of the resources to take into account as community center site selection and planning move forward. This area includes the central business district, the library, Old Fire House, and the adjacent Orleans Elementary School. A community center located in this area would be easily accessible to other community facilities as well as from the completed sewer service.

Another cluster of community facilities is to the southeast and includes Town Hall and the CHO buildings. A community center located in this area could have a campus or civic center character. The Senior Center is located to the northwest, a significant distance from most other community facilities and near Rock Harbor Creek and Cape Cod Bay.

BELOW: Map of downtown Orleans and vicinity, noting the Phase 1 sewer area boundary and existing community facilities.

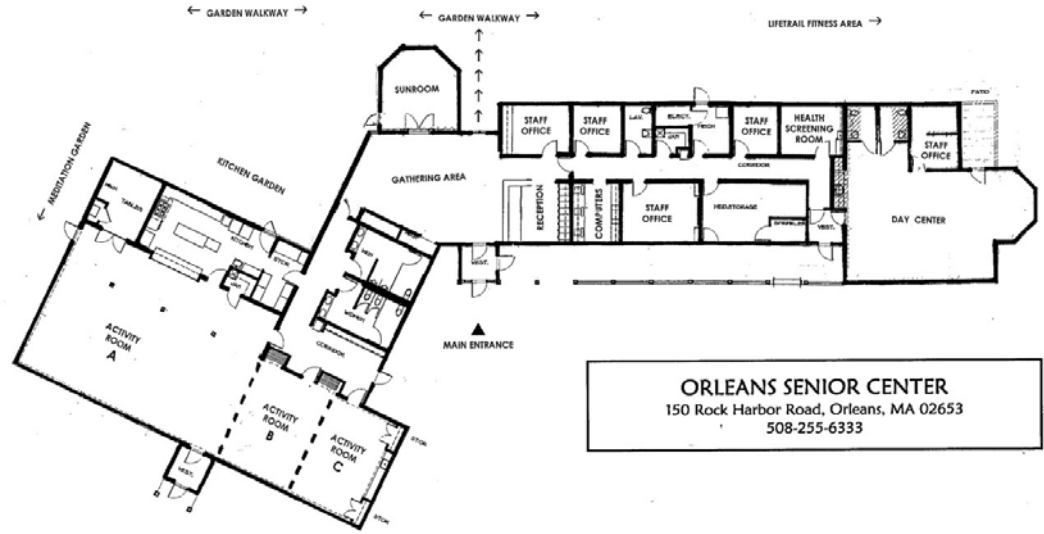


## COUNCIL ON AGING (COA)

- Judi Wilson, Executive Director, 150 Rock Harbor Road
- COA is open M - F until 4:00 and then rarely used after that because current deed restrictions allow only senior uses. Evening utilization could help support Orleans' needs.
- Construction was completed 22 years ago. Maintenance is an ongoing issue.
- Location is not on public transportation or close to the town center - which the E.D. and many users would prefer.
- Outdoor spaces were recently landscaped and are attractive.
- Lobby is cut off from the light. The adjacent enclosed meeting room is too small for many uses. Connections to the outside terraces and garden are limited.
- Adult day care accommodates 18 users 4 days a week and is a dedicated space. It is poorly located in relation to the kitchen and other uses. Space is not considered adequate for current or future needs.
- Meals for others provided 2 days a week. There is more need but not enough space to meet it in current facility.
- Kitchen is too small and has too little storage so food has to be bought retail. Food in and garbage out have to go through public spaces.
- Large multi-purpose space can be divided into three sections. It is awkwardly proportioned and spaces need to be set up and broken down for different activities quite often. Storage space is not adequate to accommodate furniture etc.
- E.D. noted that more spaces are desired to accommodate existing and/or needed programs
- E.D. notes that it would be desirable for the COA to be part of a larger community center that brings the generations together to share finite resources and facilities. Sharing spaces could remedy the COA's deficiencies. The COA could be a later community center phase - but that needs to be planned from the beginning to insure appropriate access, and layout.

### FOLLOW UP QUESTIONS:

- What kinds of programs would be offered if the COA were the size it needed to be to accommodate them – an ideal COA?
- What are the space requirements for an ideal COA?
- Is there a COA in another nearby town of a similar size that can be used as a reference?
- How many of those ideal spaces would be dedicated to COA uses and how many could be used by other programs at different times of day?
- Are there any COA uses that could be accommodated in a new community center while the COA remained at its current location?
- How much parking is required?
- Is additional green space desired?
- Would a Town Center location reduce need for parking, open space or interior space?

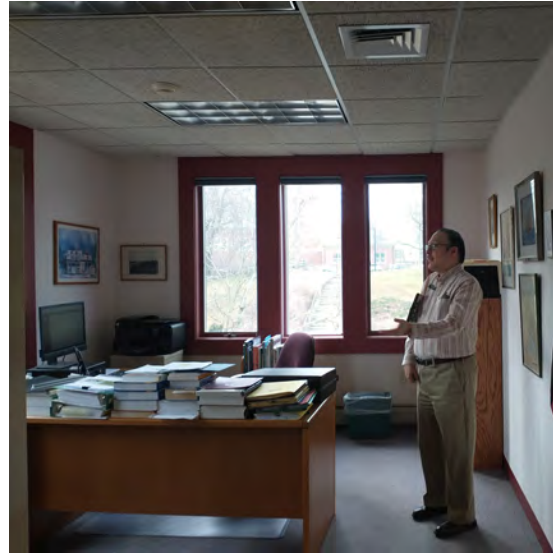


## SNOW PUBLIC LIBRARY

- Tavi Prugno, Library Director, 67 Main St.
- Library is 16,658 SF. The Mass. Board of Library Commissioners recommends 32,000 SF for a town the size of Orleans.
- The unenclosed balcony, stacks and reading areas - resulting in a large open space - is appreciated, but sound transfer is a problem.
- Trustees Room is too small for public meetings and is used mostly for tutoring.
- Currently the only meeting space available for public use is the Cape Cod Room which is highly utilized and fully scheduled so that it generally can't be used by drop-ins. Enclosed spaces and small meeting rooms are needed.
- The Crane Gallery can seat 100 to 120 people and is used multiple times daily often requiring furniture to be rearranged. Sound from music and events is often heard in adjacent rooms.
- Middle School students come over after school. There is too little room to accommodate them – and the energy and conversations they have. Quiet study rooms would be useful.
- Not enough parking and space for parents to pick up kids.
- Lower level does not have adequate egress.
- Leaking roof has been a problem and there are other ongoing maintenance issues.
- Eastham Library is considered a model for what Orleans would like.
- Possible library expansion and the design of a community center should be coordinated. It is advisable that the library provide “sitting down” meeting and study spaces, and a community center provide more active “standing up” arts, recreation and social spaces.

### FOLLOW UP QUESTIONS:

- Can the library be “hybridized” in order to accommodate certain community center needs?
- Could a new community center provide the kinds of spaces that supplement what the library offers to accommodate meetings, events, etc.?
- What would ideal library programs and facility provide and need in terms of space?
- What is the ideal physical relationship between the library and community center when both are ideally located in the town center where space and parking are generally limited.



## OLD FIRE HOUSE COMMUNITY CENTER

- 44 Main Street
- Leadership - Bonnie Runyon and Joanna Keeley,
- Good location right in the center of town
- Open space in front is very inviting and a great urban amenity
- The main space offers a variety of art, meeting and performance events.
- Run by volunteers and paid for by donations.
- After school in back room offers an alternative space for middle school students who may not feel comfortable in other programs.
- Building needs renovation and reorganization; plans have been laid out. Options for expansion are very limited.



### FOLLOW UP QUESTIONS:

- To what extent is the Center an “alternative” type space that can and should be independent of a Town sponsored community center?
- If there were a community center, could it supplement the Old Fire House programs? Or vice versa?
- Does the town center location suggest certain kinds of uses that are different from what a larger community center, perhaps on a less prominent site, might offer.

# ACADEMY OF PERFORMING ARTS

## FOLLOW UP QUESTIONS:

- Can the playhouse space be made available to the Town to accommodate uses that might take place in a community center?
- Can a community center provide supplemental spaces that would support the mission of the Academy and its programs?



- 120 Main Street
- Director Judy Hamer
- Historic building on top of a steep hill with front steps and accessible rear entrance
- Ongoing series of performances, community theater and events.
- Maintenance is an ongoing issue.



## RECREATION DEPARTMENT

- Located in Department of Public Works building, 40 Giddiah Hill Road
- Alan Harrison, Recreation Director
- Recreation Director's office is in the DPW building along with very limited storage space at the top of a flight of stairs. There are no other dedicated Recreation facilities in the DPW building or in Orleans.
- DPW building has a meeting room and large gathering spaces but these are intended for Town employees for Town services during the day.
- Rec. utilizes Middle School full size gym with bleachers 6:00 – 8:00 PM M-F and all day Saturday. No Rec. storage. Used by four towns so Orleans alone can't change policy.
- Rec. utilizes Orleans Elementary School ¾ size gym with no bleachers after 5:30 PM and half day Saturday. No Rec. storage.
- The recreation programs charge fees but they are heavily subsidized by the town budget.
- School use of gyms and lack of other facilities prevents development of more expansive recreational programs. Expanded programs would need more staff.
- Director thinks that a community center could and should, with additional staffing, accommodate a range of recreation programs for a broad range of residents.
  - Full gymnasium that could also support large public gatherings
  - Showers and changing rooms
  - Storage associated with gym and other recreational activities
  - Multi-purpose space for exercise, dance, yoga etc. that could also accommodate meeting, performances, clubs, etc.
  - Dedicated fitness/weight room
  - Dedicated arts and crafts/maker space/wood working shop
  - Swimming pool?
  - Outdoor space that could accommodate sports and fitness
  - Enhanced after school, summer and school vacation programs

### FOLLOW UP QUESTIONS:

- What is the perceived need on the part of Orleans residents for a variety of recreational spaces, programs and uses as suggested by the Director?
- What would a Recreation Department calendar look like in a community center designed to meet a broader range of needs?
- Are there private or public facilities that can meet some of these needs, or take advantage of community center space if one were built? Examples might include:

Cape Cod Sea Camp

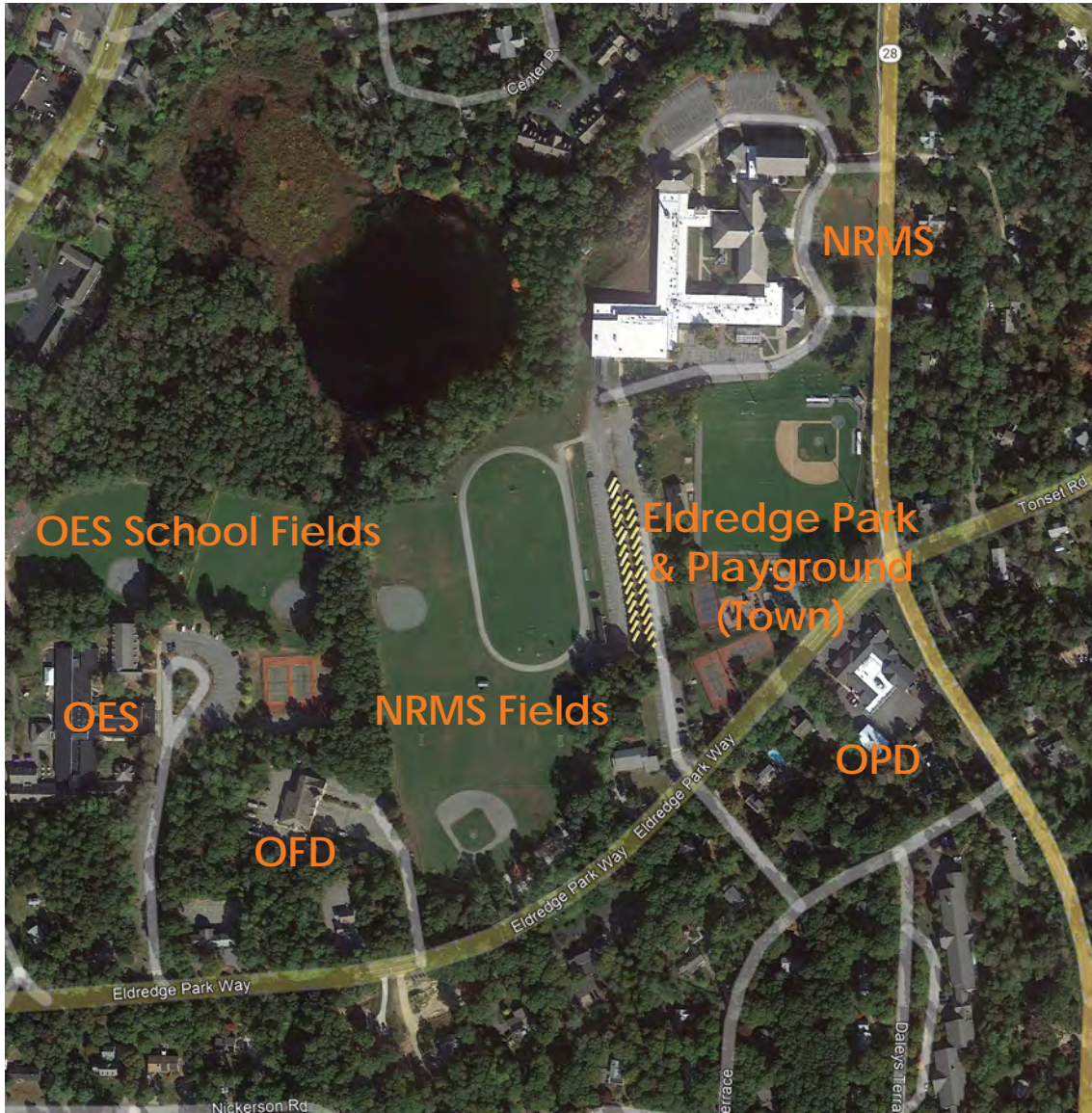
Willy's Gym in Eastham

Other community centers nearby?

Waterfront uses - boat clubs etc.

RIGHT: Outdoor recreation space available to the public.

Office and Storage



## NAUSET REGIONAL MIDDLE SCHOOL (NRMS)

- Monday through Friday during the school year the building is generally open 7 AM to 10 PM.
- The building can be available on weekends but special janitorial staffing arrangements with related costs likely required.
- With proper arrangements, the building is available during the summer.
- There is an application form for requesting school space for non-school uses. It lists the modest usage fees for various spaces depending on profit vs. non-profit users.
- Some security and building access procedures will be required for these uses but this was not seen as a barrier to public use.
- Auditorium has 550 seats in main section plus 185 upstairs.
- Cafeteria is available to be rented for large gatherings.
- There is a meeting room adjacent to the cafeteria with tables on wheels.
- The courtyard is available to be rented out for large gatherings. It is adjacent to the cafeteria and can be used for both indoor and outdoor events.
- Two art rooms are available - approx, 900 sq.ft. each.
- Wood shop is very large with various machines including a CNC. Curriculum was dropped from the school program so room is underutilized.
- Home economics teaching kitchen includes 4 student ranges and 1 instructor range with 4 sinks.
- Numerous standard classroom spaces have been previously used for adult education before Covid-19 and could be used again.

### FOLLOW UP QUESTIONS:

- Could a change in school administration, programming or procedures change the availability of school spaces to the public?
- If the Middle School spaces were seen as a public resource available for programs offered by the town, what share of those programs could or couldn't use the Middle School given that school activities will always be prioritized?

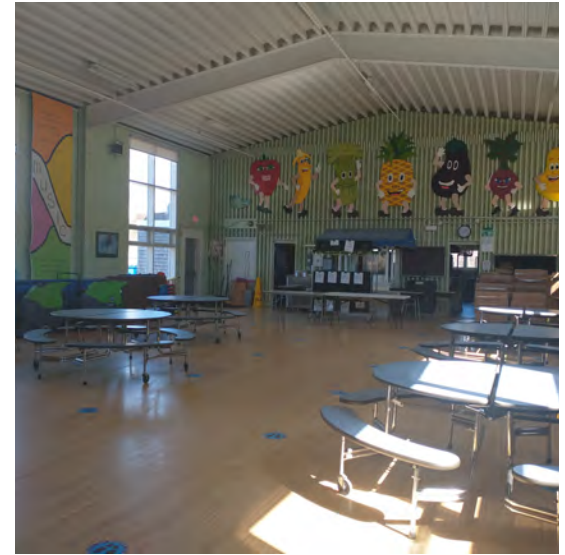


## AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAM, ORLEANS ELEMENTARY (OES)

- 46 Eldridge Park Way
- An after school program utilizes the building for its programs. It is a non-profit and charges parents.
- Serena Kilawee, Program Director
- The location works well for students, parents and staff.
- It accommodates 52 children from kindergarten to 12 years of age with 7 staff members.
- After school utilizes a variety of school spaces but mostly the gym, library and art room and large circulation and social spaces in between.
- The school building is considered attractive – light and open with access to outside that supports the after-school program.
- After school programs need to set up and break down every day to accommodate public school program. The storage is inadequate.

### FOLLOW UP QUESTIONS:

- Clarify the spaces being used by how many people at what times of day.
- Does space available limit programs that can be offered – given that the school seems to have a lot of rooms?
- Overall, what are the after school needs of Orleans, for what ages and when?
- Are middle schoolers lacking in available programs as they are in many towns?
- Would a community center offer benefits to this and/or to other after school programs in terms of more space, different/better facilities?
- If there was a community center offering a range of programs, how would this impact existing after-school programs or unmet after school program needs?



## CENTERS FOR CULTURE AND HISTORY IN ORLEANS (CHO)

- 3 River Road
- The CHO is associated with the Orleans Historical Society.
- Jay Stradal, Chair,
- It is a private non-profit prominently located across from Town Hall and away from the Town Center.
- Spaces can be rented. The CHO relies on the income for its programs.
- There are three buildings whose location, site and historic character contribute to the overall character of Orleans.
- There has been a recent \$1,200,000 renovation.
- The three buildings are: a small office; small performance building; large performance building/museum.
- Small performance building accommodates 20 people.
- It has limited storage and one non accessible bathroom. It is has heat and AC
- Large performance building accommodates 80 people. It has accessible bathrooms, lift to balcony, heat and AC. Exhibits surround the main performance space which has flexible seating that can be opened up depending on the event.
- The space is rented for summer camp, weddings, theater performances and other uses.
- An outdoor landscaped terrace provides places for activities and functions as an outdoor room connecting the buildings to each other and the surrounding neighborhood.
- A parking lot is shared with the adjacent town owned property and building.

### FOLLOW UP QUESTIONS:

- Can the Center's spaces be made available to the Town to accommodate uses that might take place in a community center?
- Can a community center provide supplemental spaces that would support the mission of the Center?



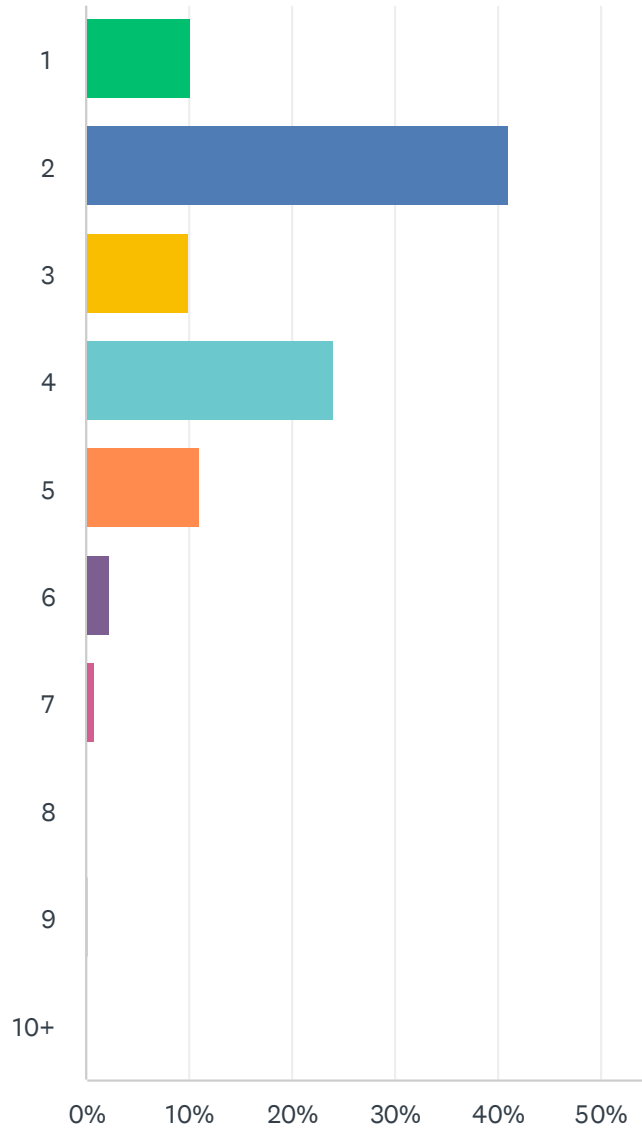
Surveys distributed to those running programs and facilities provided important background information on services being offered, and challenges arising out of the shortcomings of existing buildings and the lack of resources. The survey results that follow address a different issue: the need for additional community facilities as perceived by Orleans Citizens.

The Consultant and Task Force worked together to define

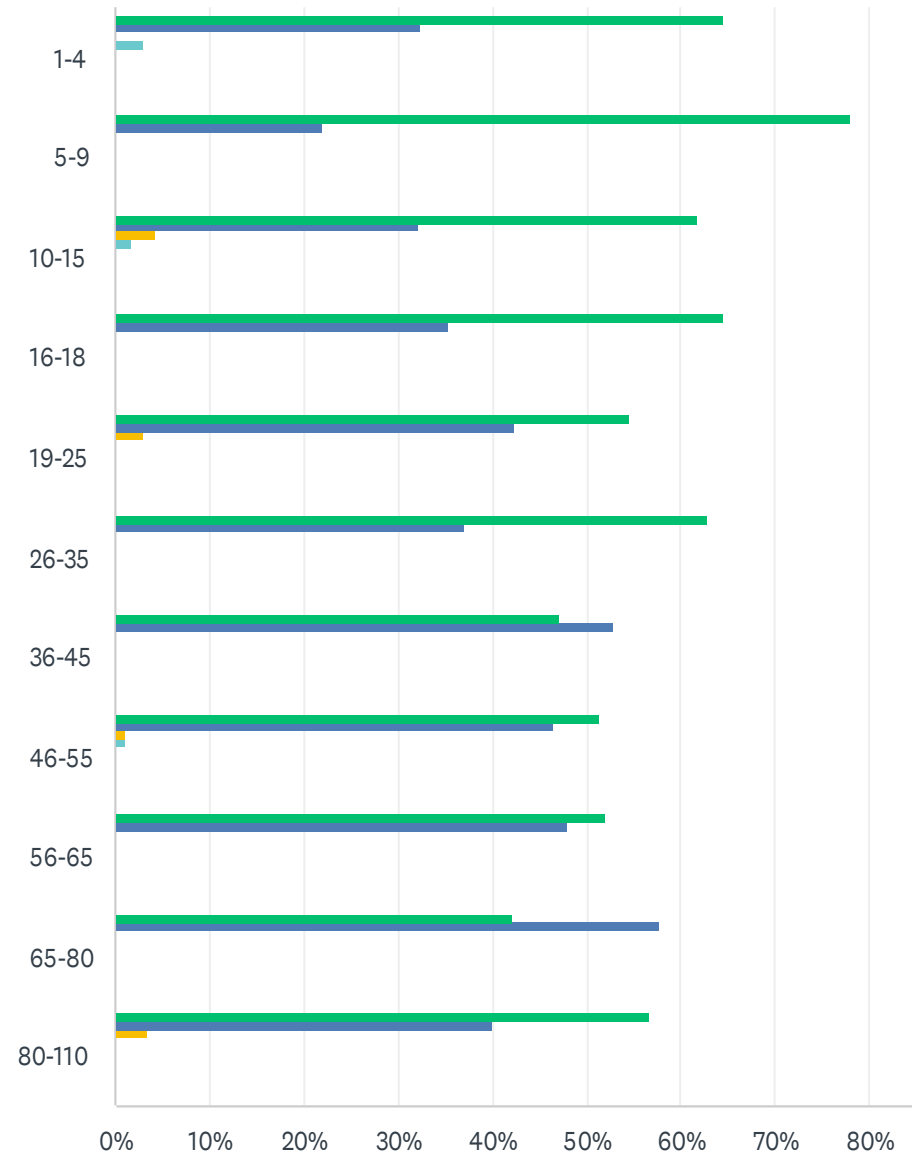
the kinds of questions that would elucidate the needs of kids, teens, adults and seniors, and structured the survey to provide information that would inform the development of a community center program. SurveyMonkey's digital format allowed easy distribution to residents and easily understood graphics that illustrate responses. The survey was publicized and distributed through a variety of media to reach a broad demographic.

## SURVEY RESULTS 03

**Q1: How many people are in your household?**



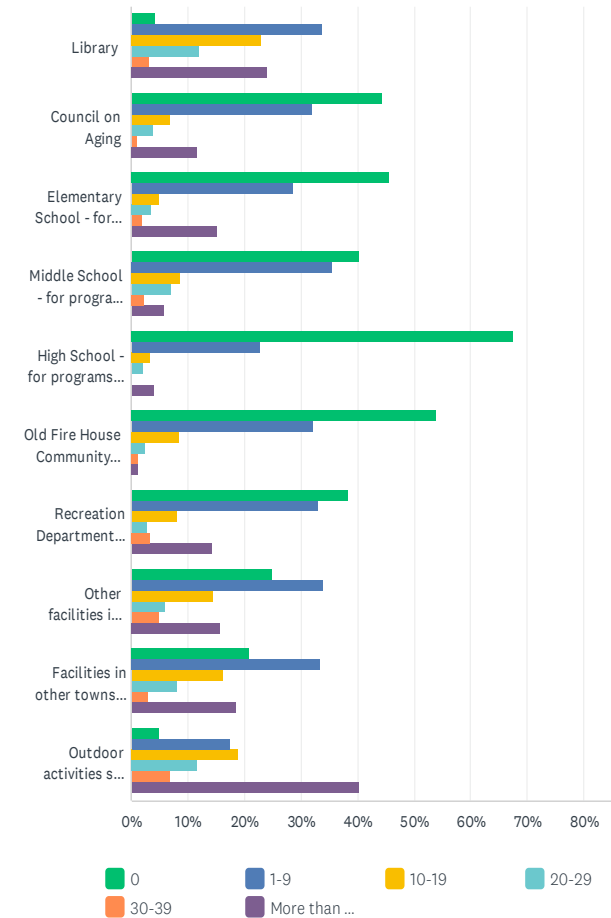
**Q2: How many members of your household are between the ages:**



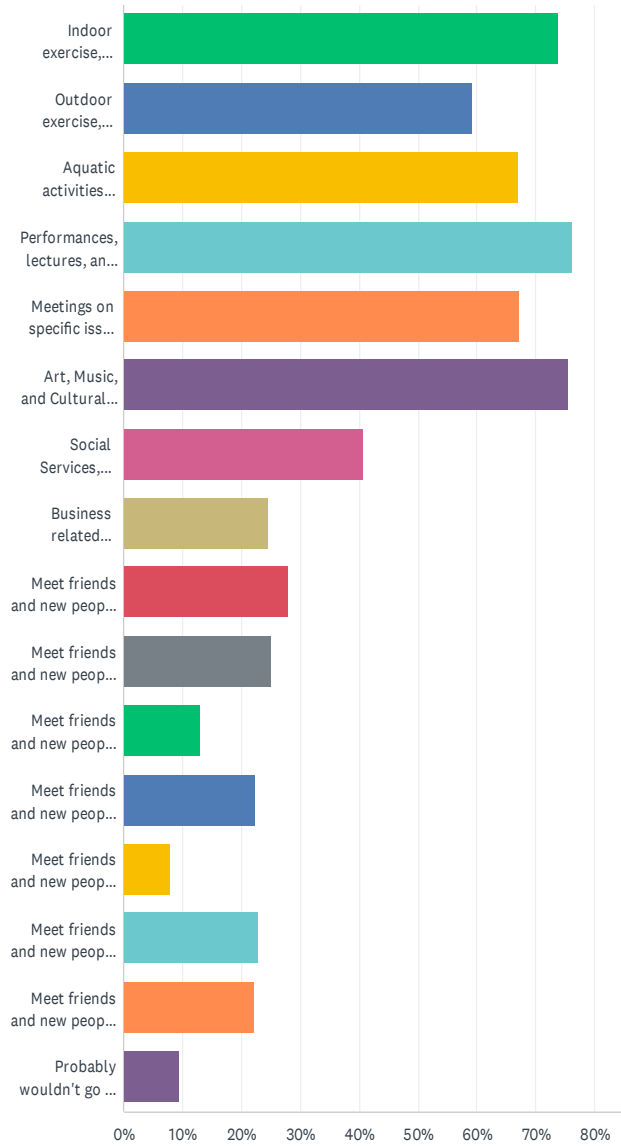
**Q3: Fill in the blank with what activities you or your family members attend at the following programs and facilities:**

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Library	77.37% 212
Council on Aging	40.51% 111
Elementary School - for programs besides elementary school education	36.13% 99
Middle School - for programs besides middle school education	41.24% 113
High School - for programs besides high school education	25.18% 69
Old Fire House Community Center	29.93% 82
Recreation Department Programs	47.81% 131
Other facilities in Orleans used for cultural, social and physical activities (if yes, which facilities?)	44.53% 122
Facilities in other towns used for cultural, social and physical activities (if yes, which facilities?)	49.64% 136
Outdoor activities such as the community gardens, skateboard park, access to nature (if yes, what activities and where?)	72.63% 199

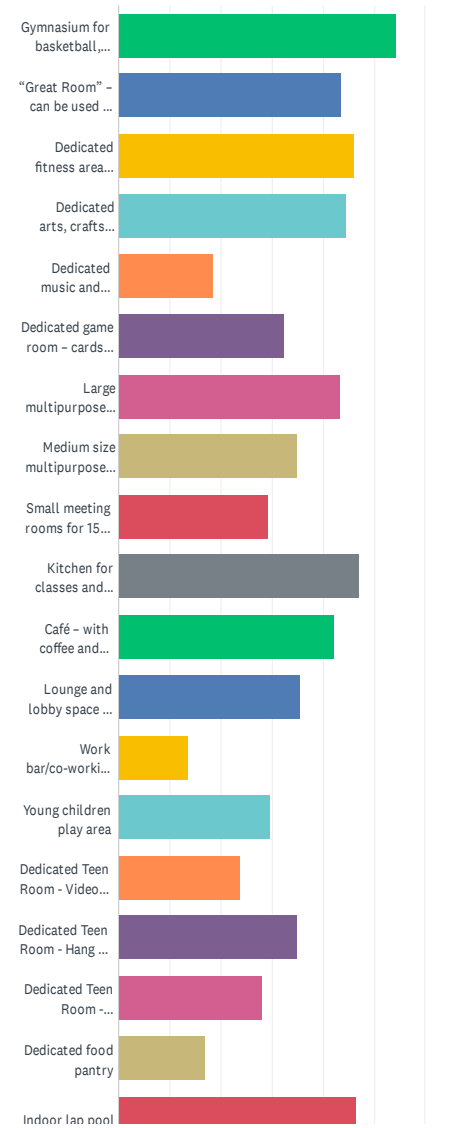
**Q4: How many times per year do you or your family utilize these programs and facilities? Do they meet your needs?**



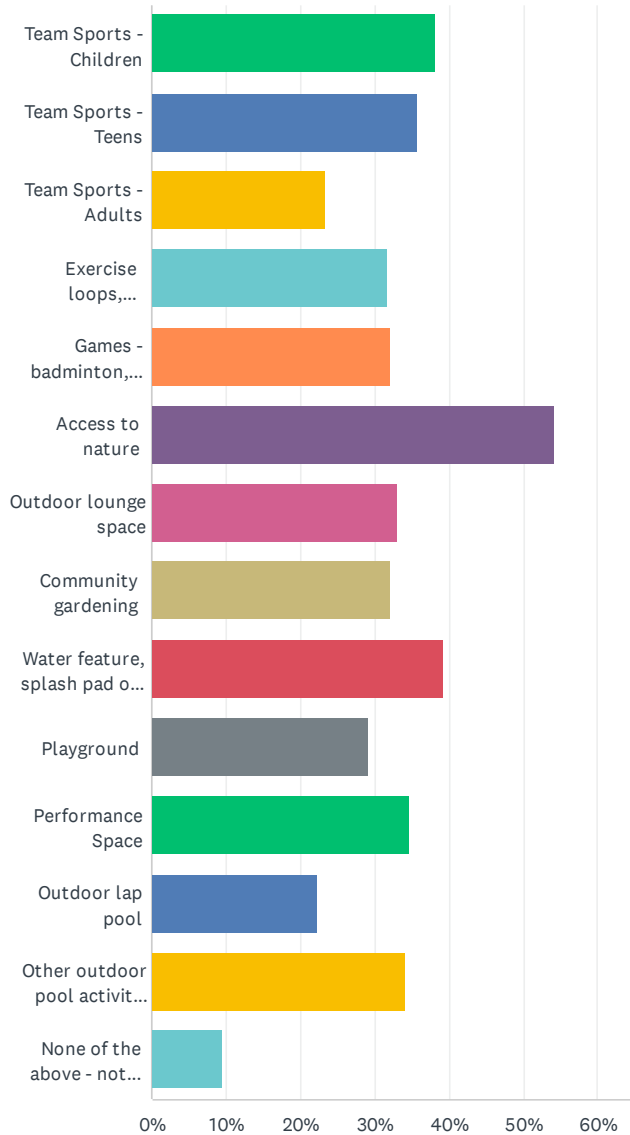
**Q5: If there were a community center in Orleans, you or your family members would go for:**



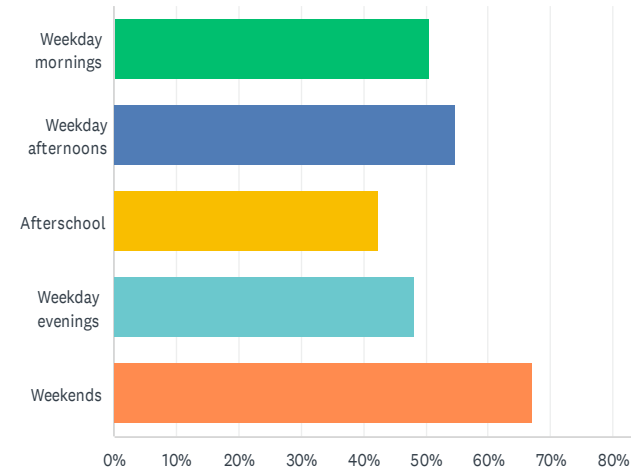
**Q6: Check off the following options that are the most important to you:**



**Q7: Check off the following options that are the most important to you:**

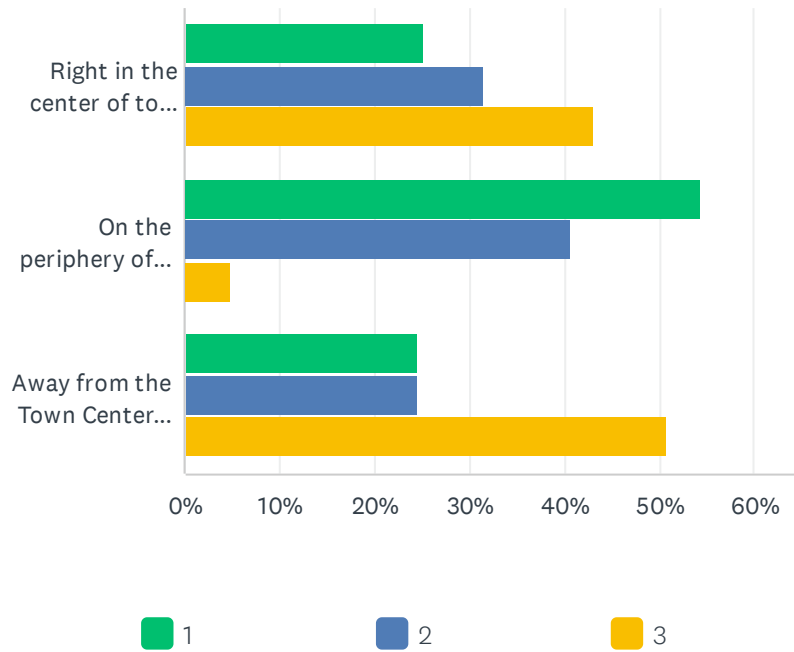


**Q8: Check which times you or your family members would be most likely to use a community center:**

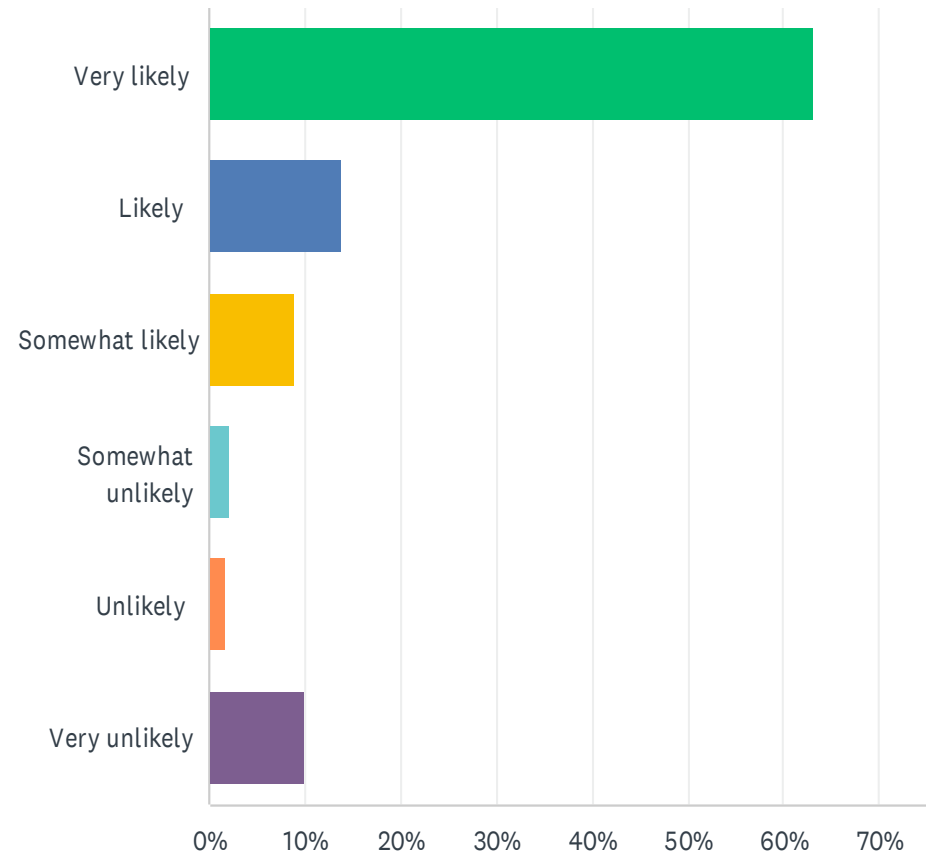


Site Location Preference Rankings	High to Low Preference			Total # of Respondents
	1	2	3	
Right in the center of Town - near other activities although there might be less parking and more traffic.	24.60%	31.75%	43.65%	252
	62	80	110	
On the periphery of the Town Center - still walkable from other activities but where there might be more parking and open space.	54.58%	40.46%	4.96%	262
	143	106	13	
Away from the Town Center where there is likely to be less traffic, more parking and open space.	24.52%	24.52%	50.96%	261
	64	64	133	

**Q9: Rank your priorities for a community center location, with 1 being the highest priority and 3 being the lowest priority.**



**Q10: If the Town of Orleans were able to identify sufficient resources through some combination of public funding, private fundraising, and user fees, how likely would you be to support moving forward with a community center design and construction?**



## CONCLUSIONS FROM SURVEY

As is often the case with programmatic surveys the results did not reveal a consensus on exactly what kinds of spaces, programs and activities should be accommodated in a new community center. Rather the results suggested that a wide variety of different kinds of activities should be supported by a new facility to meet a broad variety of needs from a diverse constituency.

Nor was there a consensus on the optimal time for facility use; results indicated it would be used day and night, weekdays and weekends. Overwhelmingly respondents supported the idea of a new community center, although some voiced concern about potential costs.

### **Findings from the survey and discussions at Task Force meetings suggest:**

- The expansion of the library will likely include new meeting rooms of different sizes that accommodate less active “sitting down” activities such as presentations and discussions.

Therefore it is recommended that the community center should focus on more active “standing up” programs - arts, fitness, recreation and social events.

- Lounges and other spaces should provide comfortable places for informal gatherings or individual activities.
- Rooms should be flexible spatially – with broad openings that allow activities to open up to common areas and circulation space – which can then be closed to provide acoustical and visual privacy.
- Operable walls and sliding partitions can be used to open up activity rooms to each other for large programs and closed for more smaller programs.
- Some spaces should be flexible in their uses – weights can be pulled in and out of closets in the morning, easels in the evening. Other spaces should be dedicated, with cardio or maker space equipment occupying

the room all the time – with longer terms options for changes of use.

- Social activities are important – and unprogrammed social spaces should be provided throughout as an extension of circulation spaces, near the entry, and near green space outside..
- A Council on Aging could share many of the same spaces with the Recreation or other departments before or after their scheduled programs. Design and planning efforts should include the COA if their relocation to a community center is considered likely or possible.
- Interior and exterior spaces can be tied together to reinforce flexibility and offer more opportunities for different uses, social engagement and a focus on wellness.

**NAUSET PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
78 Eldredge Park Way, Orleans, MA 02653  
Tel: 508-255-8800 Fax: 508-240-2351

**Application for the Use of School Facilities**

Date of Application \_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Organization \_\_\_\_\_  
Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Contact Person \_\_\_\_\_ Phone# \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

The use of school buildings and other facilities by an organization operated for private gain or any purpose involving private gain shall be permitted only when such use is sponsored by some other local organization which is not operated for private gain, and a worthy, educational, civic, or charitable purpose will be served, and the people in the community will be benefited. A fee for building use or equipment rental will be charged to all non-school groups to defray the costs of cleaning, maintenance, utilities, supplies, and heating as applicable. Request use of the following facility:

<u>School:</u>	<u>Area:</u>	<u>Profit</u>	<u>Pricing:</u>	<u>Non-Profit</u>
____ Nauset High School	____ Athletic Field (up to 4 hrs.)	\$100/day		\$50/day
	____ Auditorium	\$100/hr.		\$50/hr.
____ Nauset Middle School	____ Classroom	\$ 35/hr.		\$15/hr.
	____ Cafeteria (Nauset employee req.)*	\$75/hr.*		\$50/hr.*
	____ Caf w/kitchen (Nauset emp. req.)*	\$100/hr.*		\$75/hr.*
____ Eddy Elementary	____ Front Lawn (NMS only)	\$700/12 hrs.		\$350/12 hrs.
	____ Grove (lawn right of NMS)	\$100/12 hrs.		\$50/12 hrs.
____ Stony Brook Elementary	____ Parking Lot	\$100/day		\$50/day
	____ Technology Lab	\$50/hr.		\$25/hr.
____ Eastham Elementary	____ Gymnasium	\$100/hr.		\$50/hr.
____ Orleans Elementary	(Custodial assistance / kitchen worker if required at est. overtime rate of \$35.00 / hr.)			
____ Wellfleet Elementary				

The above fee schedule may be adjusted to accommodate extenuating circumstances via the authority of the School Committee.  
\*See attached Food Requirements.  
We require full payment ten (10) days in advance of required date of use.

**Note: Nauset Public Schools' student groups, school-sanctioned organizations, official town groups and boards will not be charged.**

No tobacco products or alcoholic beverages are allowed in or on any school property.

Purpose: \_\_\_\_\_

Dates and Times Requested: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Please include times that first person will arrive and last person will leave.)

Estimated attendance \_\_\_\_\_

Will the event require a police detail? \_\_\_\_ yes \_\_\_\_ no

Will admission be charged? \_\_\_\_ yes \_\_\_\_ no

Does your organization charge a fee to participants? \_\_\_\_ yes \_\_\_\_ no

Is your organization affiliated with the Nauset Public Schools? \_\_\_\_ yes \_\_\_\_ no  
If yes, how? \_\_\_\_\_

Any dance (profit or non-profit) must be supervised by a minimum of five responsible adults, at least one of whom belongs to the sponsoring organization. Names and addresses of said chaperones must be submitted to the Principal at least two days prior to the dance. Chaperones are required to have a Cori Check on file with the school.

The Police Chief of the town will be contacted by the person in charge of the sponsoring organization to determine the need for adequate police supervision. Needed supervision will be paid for by the organization using the facilities. The Nauset Schools reserves the right to require police supervision.

Insurance coverage may be required in the minimum amounts of \$1,000,000 per person and \$3,000,000 per occurrence for all private organizations. Proof of insurance must be submitted along with payment prior to use of facilities, and shall include a provision naming the "Nauset Public Schools" as an additional insured.

I've agree to abide by all the rules and regulations of the Nauset Public Schools and to pay all custodial, cafeteria and facility fees that may be required for my/our use of the school facilities.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**HOLD HARMLESS AGREEMENT**

It is agreed by \_\_\_\_\_, hereinafter referred to as the Organization, that the Nauset Public Schools and the Town of \_\_\_\_\_ be absolved of any and all liability brought about by the actions of the participants and/or patrons of the Organization while using the facilities of the Nauset Public Schools for the purpose originally stated. It is further agreed that the Organization accepts responsibility for any and all damages caused by the participants and/or patrons of the Organization that are determined to be above and beyond what is considered normal wear and tear of the facilities.

I attest that the above named organization is in compliance with the Town of \_\_\_\_\_ CORI Regulations and has successfully completed background CORI checks on all coaches and volunteers within the organization and that all volunteers and coaches have been approved in accordance with all appropriate state and local laws and policies. A copy of the organization's certification letter with Criminal History Systems Board as well as a list of all approved volunteers and coaches must accompany this request. Changes in the CORI must be updated and on file at the Nauset Public Schools Administration Office.

Signature of Organization \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name \_\_\_\_\_ Position/Title \_\_\_\_\_

**FOR SCHOOL DEPARTMENT USE ONLY**

Building Availability: Available \_\_\_\_ Unavailable \_\_\_\_ Administrator Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Estimated Costs: Custodian \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Kitchen worker \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Other \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Estimated Facility Cost \$ \_\_\_\_\_

TOTAL COST TO BE INVOICED \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_ APPROVED \_\_\_\_ NOT APPROVED

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Dated \_\_\_\_\_

*Approval is contingent upon your acceptance of the total cost as listed above.  
If for any reason you no longer wish to use our facilities, please contact us immediately.  
Equal Opportunity Employer*

ABOVE: NRMS application form for building use.

Based on discussions with local leaders running other community facilities, discussions with the Task Force, the SurveyMonkey public input, and utilizing their experience developing community center programs in other cities and towns in the region, the Consultants developed a series of program options for Orleans.

These alternatives lay out possible building sizes, types of spaces to be accommodated,

and demographics to be included. The opportunity to include a new Council on Aging in the community center, should there be a need to move from its current, is recognized as well.

Options include a basic description of program components and approximate square footages. The possible programs represent a bridge between the range of needs that the study to date has identified, and preliminary

floor plans that follow that show conceptually how the spaces might relate to one another.

Uncertainties on what program components may be required and affordable as this project moves into later development stages are likely to continue, so this study will not ultimately recommend a final size or uses to include. Keeping options on the table will provide the most flexibility for meeting the needs of an unknown future.

## PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The work of the Task Force has addressed a number of complex issues:

**1.** Given the limitations on the recreation department's current space and program offerings it is difficult at the current time to anticipate what spaces they might ultimately need for a fully developed recreation program.

The surveys only reveal basic information about actual demand. Additional data provided by the town is needed to make more detailed recommendations. How many parents would play basketball if a court were available all year round? How many 55+ or younger residents would play indoor pickleball if they could? And how many young adults would lift weights if they didn't have to get to the next town to access them?

It is anticipated that there would be clearer answers to these kinds of questions when a community center is moving toward design and construction; for now understanding options is useful to keeping the discussion going.

Small, medium and large programs are outlined on the pages that follow.

**2.** The Council on Aging facility was built over 20 years ago. Although it doesn't meet current needs or current standards, it comes closer than the COAs in many similar towns. But its location is far from ideal in relation to both the town center and to Rock Harbor Creek and Rock Harbor Road - that may be increasingly impacted by rising sea levels and climate change. It remains to be seen whether relocating the COA to a new community center will be cost effective, and needed for long term viability, but including a COA in alternative versions of the small, medium and large options acknowledges the possibilities and will help facilitate a constructive dialog in the future.

**3.** A site has not been identified and will not be as part of this feasibility study. A small community center needs a minimum of 1.5 acres of developable land, more or less. A large community recreation facility will need at minimum

3 - 4 acres.

Given the limited number of parcels that are and will likely be available in the town, the size of the parcel may limit the size of the building. A two story community center, or a one story community center over parking may allow an undersized site to accommodate a larger program, but will limit the kind of flexibility for future expansion that will be advantageous.

**4.** Public construction is very expensive and will become increasingly more so. The size of a community center may be limited by funds available. The town may decide to build the smallest building possible, perhaps with options for expansion, or may decide to build a building to meet long terms needs to attract support now, and not have major expansions costs needed in the future.

The options noted allow for consideration of these kinds of economic and political realities now and in the future.



RELOCATED COUNCIL ON AGING



PRE-SCHOOL/CHILDREN'S PLAY



TEEN ROOM



CAFE / LOUNGE / SOCIAL SPACE



GYMNASIUM



FLEXIBLE MULTIPURPOSE ROOMS



CARDIO & WEIGHT MACHINE



SWIMMING POOL



PICKLE BALL



ARTS AND CRAFTS



GAME ROOM



OPEN KITCHEN - CLASSES ETC.

**SMALL MULTI-GEN COMMUNITY CENTER**

REC Offices	600
Warming Kitchen	250
Lobby/Lounge	700
Game Room	650
Teen Room	700
Small Fitness/Multipurpose Room	650
Medium Fitness/Multipurpose Room	1,000
Medium Fitness/Multipurpose Room	1,000
Small Gymnasium	1,800
Art Room and Craft Room	1,000
Bathrooms	300
Storage	500
Mechanical/Maintenance	300
Circulation	800
Net to Gross	1,200
<b>Total</b>	<b>11,450 SF</b>

Note that program elements in gray in the COA options, and the Medium and Large options, duplicate those in the program options that proceed them. Added elements are in black.

LEFT: Illustrations of the kinds of activities, and spaces to support them, that were discussed for inclusion in the program.

**SMALL MULTI-GEN COMMUNITY CENTER / COA**

REC Offices	600
Warming Kitchen	250
Lobby/Lounge	700
Game Room	650
Teen Room	700
Small Fitness/Multipurpose Room	650
Medium Fitness/Multipurpose Room	1,000
Medium Fitness/Multipurpose Room	1,000
Small Gymnasium	1,800
Art Room and Craft Room	1,000
Bathrooms	300
Storage	500
Mechanical/Maintenance	300
Circulation	800
Net to gross	1,200
COA Offices	800
Wellness	150
Conference	200
Bathrooms	100
Storage	300
Med Storage	400
Kitchen Storage	200
Full kitchen	250
Day Center	1,000
Circulation	400
Senior Lounge	600
Activity Area	650
Net to Gross	500
<b>Total</b>	<b>17,000 SF</b>

**MEDIUM MULTI-GEN COMMUNITY CENTER**

REC Offices	600
Warming Kitchen	250
Lobby/Lounge	700
Game Room	650
Teen Room	700
Small Fitness/Multipurpose Room	650
Medium Fitness/Multipurpose Room	1,000
Medium Fitness/Multipurpose Room	1,000
<b>Medium Gymnasium</b>	<b>4,400</b>
Art Room and Craft Room	1,000
Bathrooms	300
Storage	500
Mechanical/Maintenance	300
Circulation	800
Net to Gross	1,200
Off, Stor, Mech, Bathrooms add	1,000
Medium Fitness/Multipurpose Room	1,000
Arts Room	1,000
Weight Room	1,000
Children's Play Area	400
Circulation, Lobby add	600
Net to Gross add	1,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>20,050 SF</b>

**MEDIUM MULTI-GEN COMMUNITY CENTER / COA**

REC Offices	600
Warming Kitchen	250
Lobby/Lounge	700
Game Room	650
Teen Room	700
Small Fitness/Multipurpose Room	650
Medium Fitness/Multipurpose Room	1,000
Medium Fitness/Multipurpose Room	1,000
Medium Gymnasium	4,400
Art Room and Craft Room	1,000
Bathrooms	300
Storage	500
Mechanical/Maintenance	300
Circulation	800
Net to Gross	1,200
Off, Stor, Mech, Bathrooms add	1,000
Medium Fitness/Multipurpose Room	1,000
Arts Room	1,000
Weight Room	1,000
Children's Play Area	400
Circulation, Lobby add	600
Net to Gross add	1,000
COA Add	5,550
<b>Total</b>	<b>25,600 SF</b>

## LARGE MULTI-GEN COMMUNITY CENTER

REC Offices	600
Warming Kitchen	250
Lobby/Lounge	700
Game Room	650
Teen Room	700
Small Fitness/Multipurpose Room	650
Medium Fitness/Multipurpose Room	1,000
Medium Fitness/Multipurpose Room	1,000
Full Gymnasium/Basketball	7,200
Art Room and Craft Room	1,000
Bathrooms	300
Storage	500
Mechanical/Maintenance	300
Circulation	800
Net to Gross	1,200
Off, Stor, Mech, Bathrooms add	1,000
Medium Fitness/Multipurpose Room	1,000
Arts Room	1,000
Weight Room	1,000
Children's Play Area	400
Circulation, Lobby add	600
Net to Gross add	1,000
Lobby/Lounge add	400
Locker Rooms/Shower	800
Off, Stor, Mech, Bathroom	500
Circulation add	500
Net to Gross add	1,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>26,050 SF</b>

## LARGE MULTI- GEN COMMUNITY CENTER / COA

REC Offices	600
Warming Kitchen	250
Lobby/Lounge	700
Game Room	650
Teen Room	700
Small Fitness/Multipurpose Room	650
Medium Fitness/Multipurpose Room	1,000
Medium Fitness/Multipurpose Room	1,000
Full Gymnasium/Basketball	7,200
Art Room and Craft Room	1,000
Bathrooms	300
Storage	500
Mechanical/Maintenance	300
Circulation	800
Net to Gross	1,200
Off, Stor, Mech, Bathrooms add	1,000
Medium Fitness/Multipurpose Room	1,000
Arts Room	1,000
Weight Room	1,000
Children's Play Area	400
Circulation, Lobby add	600
Net to Gross add	1,000
Lobby/Lounge add	400
Locker Rooms/Shower	800
Off, Stor, Mech, Bathroom	500
Circulation add	500
Net to Gross add	1,000
COA Add	5,550
<b>Total</b>	<b>31,600 SF</b>

The six plan studies that follow suggest how the six program options developed previously can take on an architectural form. But aside from the size of the elements, and common sense functional arrangements of spaces in relation to each other, plans can be developed in an infinite number of ways. “Form follows function” is more of a metaphorical than a prescriptive statement.

Buildings are developed from the inside out, and the

outside in. Because a site for a community center has not been found, these plans are created completely from the inside. The size, proportions, location of access drives, streets, the sun, forested and clear areas, and sloping and flat land will impact the development of a community center once a site or site options have been proposed. The consultant drawings that follow are based on a series of design principles that should be kept in mind as conceptual plans are adapted to real sites.

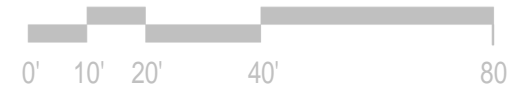
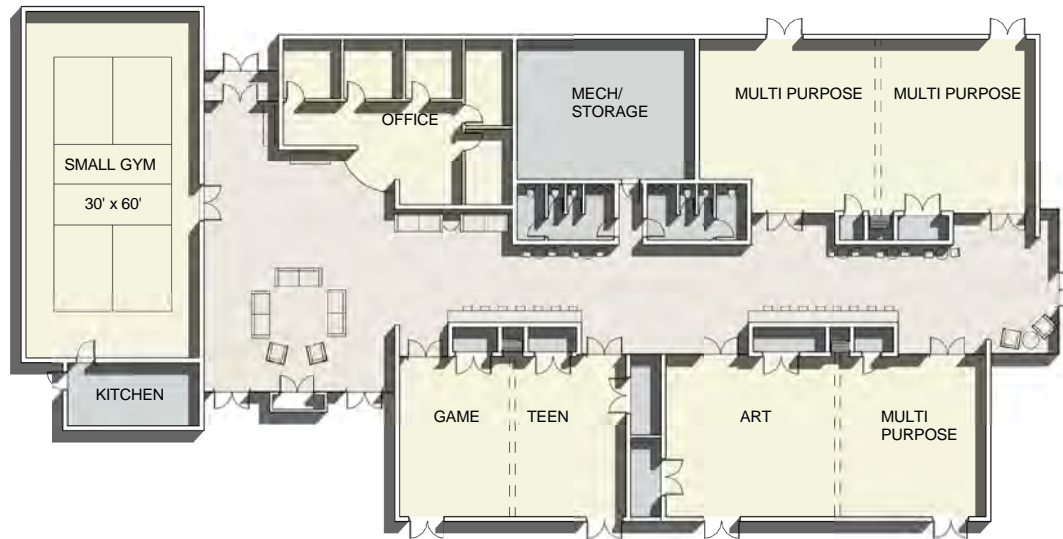
## DESIGN PRINCIPLES

- **Common Spaces are Critical:** Circulation spaces - the places where people move, sit and gather in informal ways - are just as important as the actual program spaces where planned activities takes place. They allow for the kind of informal meet-ups and individual activities that support a sense of community.
- **Village Center Model:** A good community center is kind of like a village center where enclosed spaces - “buildings” – cluster around an open commons or market square at its center. This offers a kind of fluidity and compelling spatial arrangement that rooms along a corridor generally can’t.
- **Connections to the outside:** The “village center” model suggests multiple entries and connections between inside and outside to tie common spaces, and the more enclosed activity rooms, to their context. This kind of permeability welcomes people in, can connect them to terraces which become exterior rooms, and bring light and nature into the building.
- **Provide organizational clarity:** Program elements should be arranged in an intuitively understandable way. Offices and reception desk should be near the front entry and visible from other entries. Most or all of the circulation space should be open and visible to avoid narrow dead end corridors. And program areas should be aligned along the common spaces so it is easy to see what is going on everywhere.
- **Plan for flexibility:** Activity spaces can offer flexibility with sliding partitions allowing subdividing, and oversized doors that allow them to open to common spaces and outside.
- **Integrate Services and Storage:** Bathrooms should be located where they are easy to find but not “in your face”. Storage should be distributed throughout to support flexible use of spaces. Mechanical rooms location will need to be optimized in relation to site utilities and interior layout.
- **COA/Recreation Integration:** A COA will need to have its own dedicated facilities - offices, counseling, day room and perhaps activity and eating spaces. Recreation will have offices and be in charge of dedicated physical activity spaces like a gymnasium. Some rooms like the kitchen may be used primarily by the COA, and others, like an exercise room, by Recreation.

But many of the activity rooms can support activities for seniors and for everyone else. Increasingly we hear a desire for multi-- generational spaces that bring people of all ages together. A combined facility should be designed so that everyone feels safe, while providing both the efficiencies and social benefits of shared spaces.
- **Phasing:** A COA or other facilities could be built in a second phase; a site should accommodate that growth.

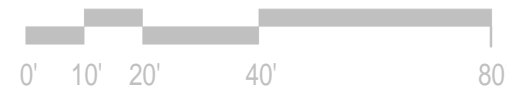
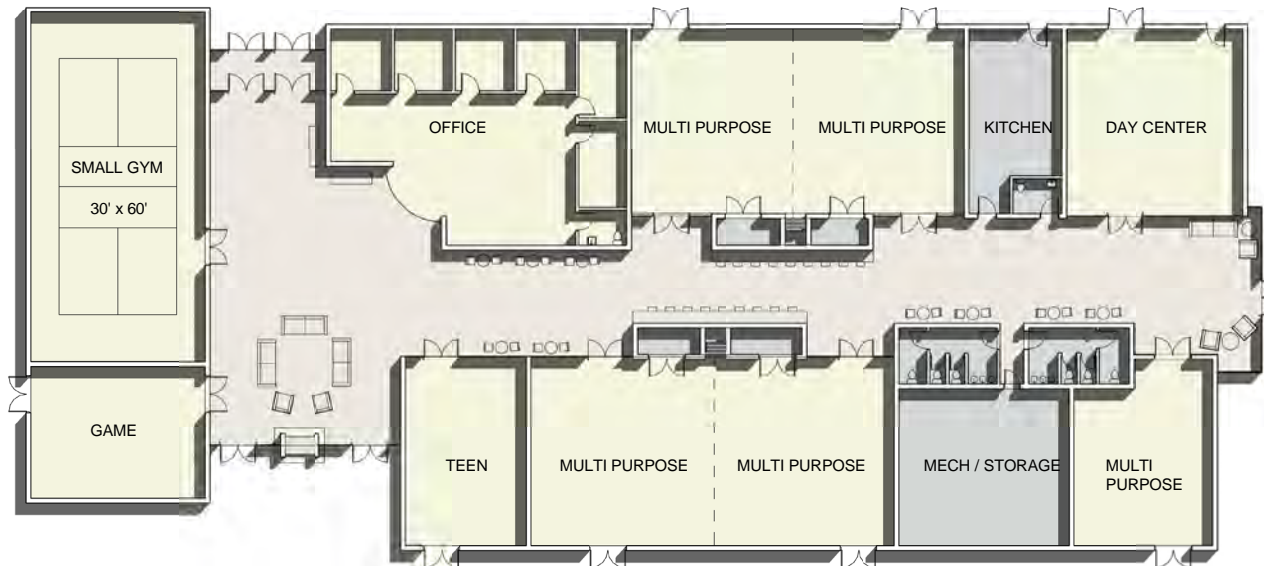
# Small Community Center

11,450 SF



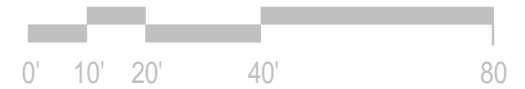
# Small Community Center + COA

17,000 SF



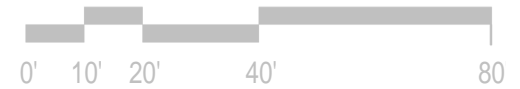
# Medium Community Center

20,050 SF



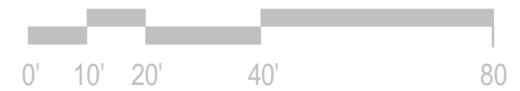
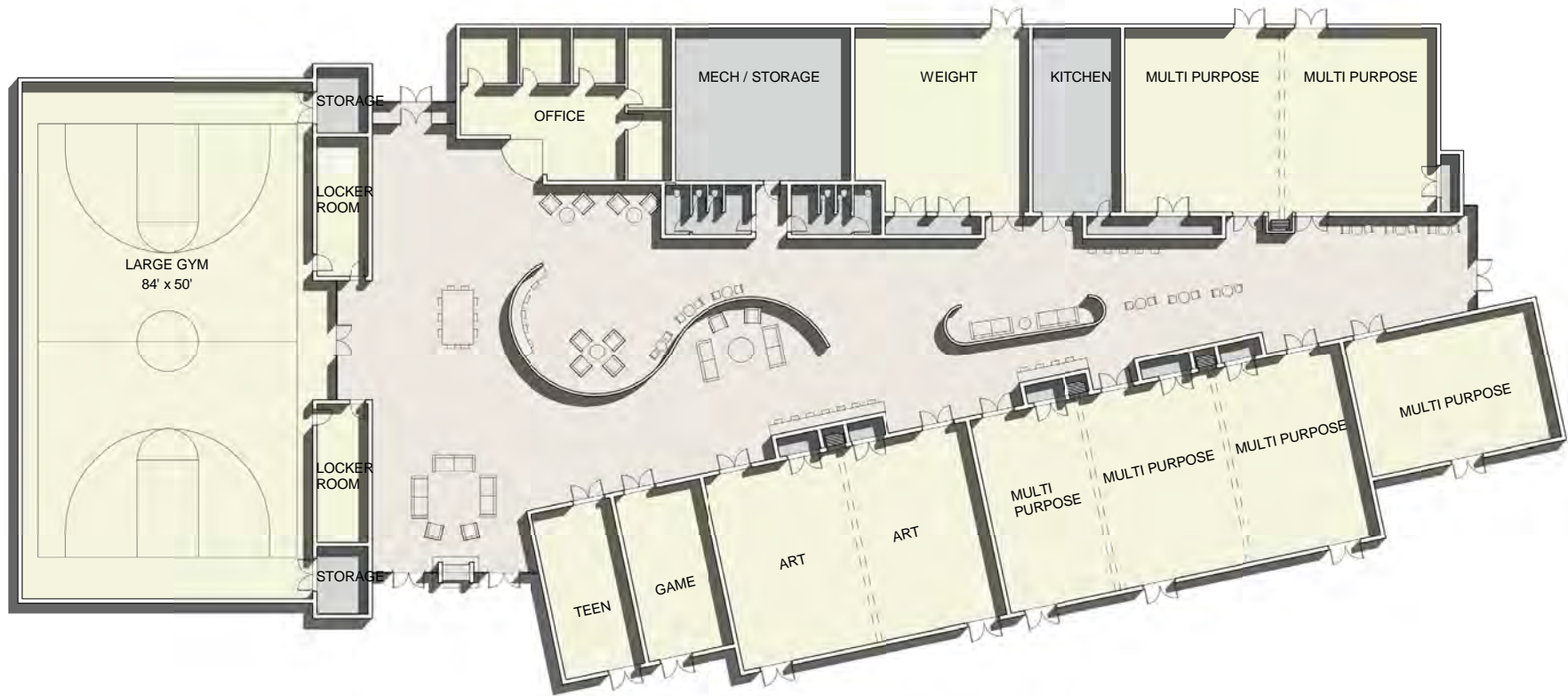
# Medium Community Center + COA

25,600 SF



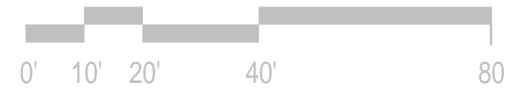
# Large Community Center

26,050 SF



# Large Community Center + COA

31,600 SF



Producing a list of site options and then studying how the building program or programs can be developed within associated constraints and opportunities is not part of this study. But to understand how the selection of a site can impact the development of an idealized plan the Consultant and Town Planner looked at a series of town owned properties on which a hypothetical layout might work.

The idea was not to suggest that a property was under consideration as a community

center location, but to outline the kinds of relationships between program and site that should be considered as building planning progresses. And to suggest the approximate size of a facility in relation to real streets, buildings and site features that everyone is familiar with. This will facilitate an understanding of how a community center would impact its context.

Many of the proposed sites were too small to accommodate a community center. The approximately 2 acres of land at 139 Main Street, opposite

Town Hall, was chosen as a way to explore how building planning and site development could work together.

The conceptual development shown on the pages that follow is not meant to suggest that the Main property could or should be the site for the community center – it is currently being used by the Town for other purposes. It does suggest that the choice of site is critical in the community center design process, and that building and site should be thought of in a comprehensive way.

## HYPOTHETICAL SITE OPTIONS 06

## SITE CHALLENGES

Every site has challenges and opportunities which will impact its usefulness for a community center build-out and associated costs. The development scenario laid out at 139 Main Street exemplifies some of the issues that may be faced with any site.

The challenges are unique to this site, but typical of what might be encountered on others. It also offers opportunities that make it worth considering when the search for an actual site begins in earnest. Issues include:

**Size:** The site, at 2.11 acres, is smaller than the 2.5 acres that is really needed for a medium size facility. The plan that follows suggests the additional purchase of land from the American Legion. These small triangles of land have minimal value to the American Legion, but add just enough land to make the town owned parcel workable for the program shown developed.

**Slope:** There are fairly steep slopes on the site. It appears to have been substantially regraded when it was

developed for town use, and could likely be regraded again if the use changes again. Early in the site selection process this, or any site, should be evaluated for sub surface conditions, the presence of contamination, and the presence of flood zones or wetlands.

**Abutters:** There are neighbors on adjacent properties who would be impacted by major construction on the site. Early outreach is always advisable to understand concerns.

**Traffic:** The impact of traffic on use, and use on traffic, should be evaluated early in the site selection process. Safety is critical and the appropriate experts may need to be consulted.

**Parking:** The closer the site is to the town center, or to other developed areas, the more of a challenge it may be to provide sufficient parking while providing green space for use and buffering. Parking generally takes up as much space or more, when combined with access drives, than the building itself.

*BELOW: Google Earth Image of hypothetical site at 139 Main Street.*



## COMMUNITY CENTER TEST FIT ON HYPOTHETICAL SITE

The conceptual plan that follows is based on a series of design principals that pick up on those articulated for the conceptual program plans, but modified for the particulars of the site. This plan may appear to be very different from the previous 6 plans, but it uses different means to achieve similar goals.

**Civic Center Siting** - This site is adjacent to the Orleans Historical Society: The Centers for Culture and History in Orleans (CHO), and across School Road from Town Hall. This or a similar location reinforces the centrality of these civic spaces in the life of Orleans, and would encourage use of all of these facilities without having to drive from one to another. A site in Orleans' commercial center could play a similar role with the library and elementary school.

**Shared Parking** - A community center in an already developed area allows parking to be shared with other facilities. In the plan that follows parking is laid out along a new street running

between School Road and Main Street – convenient for both the community center and CHO while avoiding a “sea of asphalt” feeling often associated with typical parking lots. Parking is also shared with the American Legion building to the southwest.

**“Street” interior organization** - The previous plans organized activity spaces around a central common space. The size and shape of this site makes that difficult to achieve. In this plan the activity space are organized along an interior “street” off of which there are a series of larger and smaller sitting areas and lounges that look out onto green spaces on both sides. The COA is shown at one end, dedicated recreation spaces like the gym at the other end with multi-generational spaces in between. Glass walls open activity spaces to the interior “street” and the street outside, and then through to the courtyard.

**Courtyard and Green Space** - Connections to the outside reinforce the sense of community and connect

buildings to their contexts. Although the space between the building and parking is fairly narrow it includes porches, sitting areas, gardens and a covered entry at the drop-off near the COA reception area and lounge. Nestled within the U-shape of the building wings is a courtyard space, partially a terrace and partially green, for recreation and gardens.

**Scaled to the context** - Although the building as shown is relatively large, 27,000 square feet, the building composition reveals only small portions at a time. From School Road all that is seen is a small scale COA and the entry. From Main Street it is the narrow end of the gym partially buried in the hillside. And from the new street lined with parking it is the glazed wall of the interior spaces. Different sites allow buildings to be configured and seen in different ways. The through-block nature of this site supports a breakdown into smaller scale elements that work around site and neighborhood features.

MAIN STREET

RIVER ROAD

SCHOOL ROAD

TOWN HALL

AL

OHS

OHS

GYM

LR

LR

PICKLEBALL

S/M

MP

MP

MP

MP

MP

MP

GAME

TEEN

COA OFF

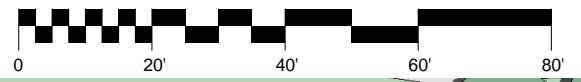
S/M

DAY CENTER

KITCHEN

MP

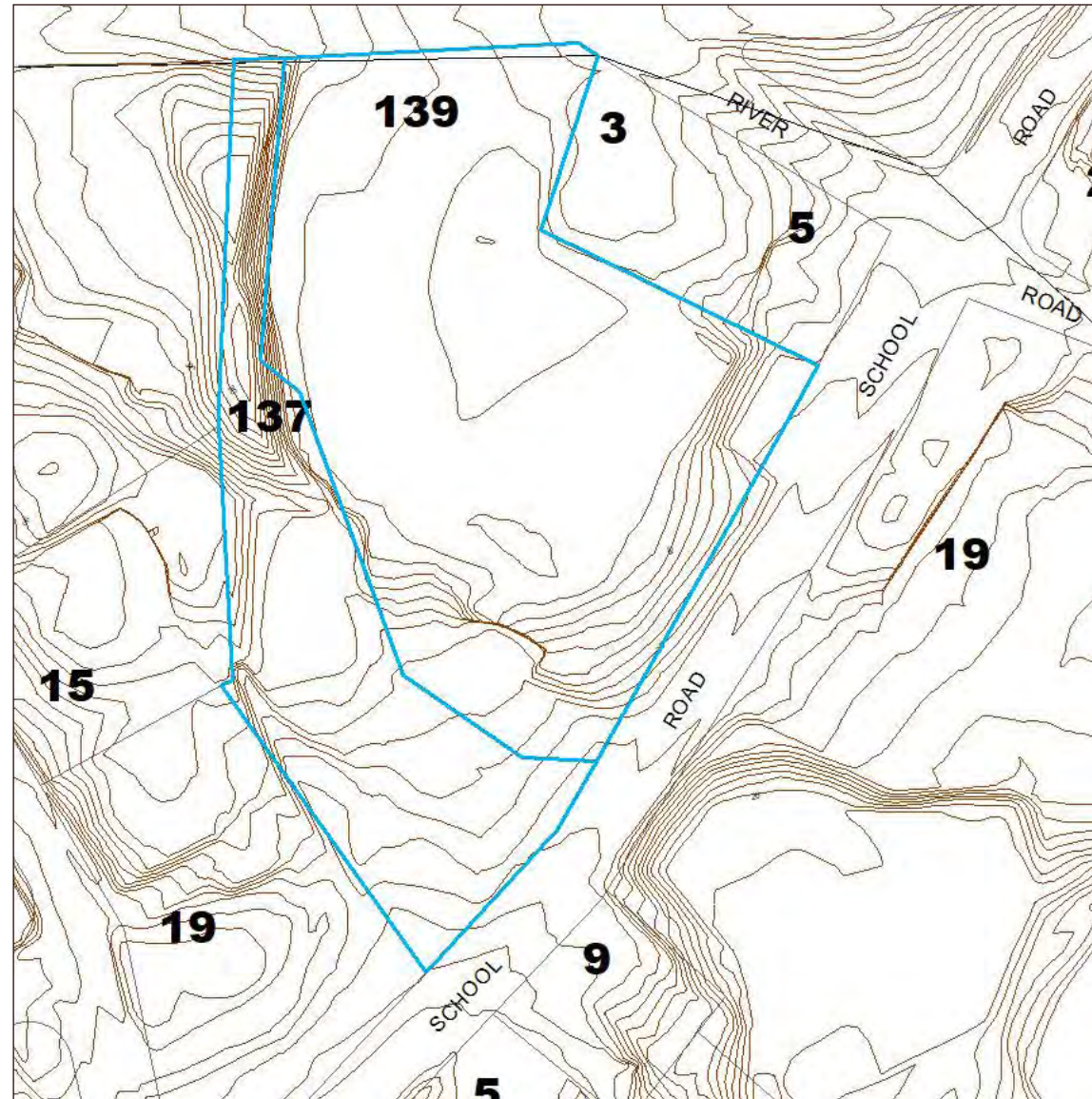
TOTAL SQ FT: 29,213





Often sites that are available have challenging topography – which is why they haven't been developed already. Underlying ledge may drive up construction costs, and low lying areas may be wetlands or subject to flooding.

Steep slopes may make accessibility very difficult to achieve. Due diligence is important. But the kind of slopes at 139 Main Street can probably be dealt with successfully with thoughtful planning and landscape design. And they can provide visual/spatial variety and opportunities or play.



*RIGHT: Topography site plan of 139 Main Street with property lines in blue.*

**B**uilding plans only represent part of what architecture is and can do. Solid walls, expanses of glass, soaring roofs and cozy nooks create the kinds of spaces that bring people together, connect them to the world around them, but allow places for reflection and quiet conversation. Forms, materials, colors and light bring it all to life. Landscape is also integral to the effort.

Buildings facades can send a powerful message about the importance of a community

center in the life of a community. Interior spaces can be shaped to encourage people to gather, to work, to play and to socialize through the use of light, forms and materials. Architectural vitality, inside and out, supports the vitality of a community.

The images that follow – renderings from other community center projects and photos from built work – suggest the range of spatial and architectural opportunities a community center offers.

## EXTERIOR FORMS AND MASSING

Building exteriors express the life within, but also connect structures to their contexts. Low wings can pick up the scale of adjacent buildings. Uplifted roofs can provide a sense of monumentality representing civic importance. Solid walls anchor construction to the earth while glass walls provide a sense of lightness that can allow roofs to float.



# COMMON SPACES

These are the spaces that people enter into and circulate through to get from one place to another. Straight 10' wide corridors tend to be dark and oppressive. More dynamic configurations create places for informal gatherings and places outside home or office to work. The organizational structure should be easy understand, vibrant and welcoming.



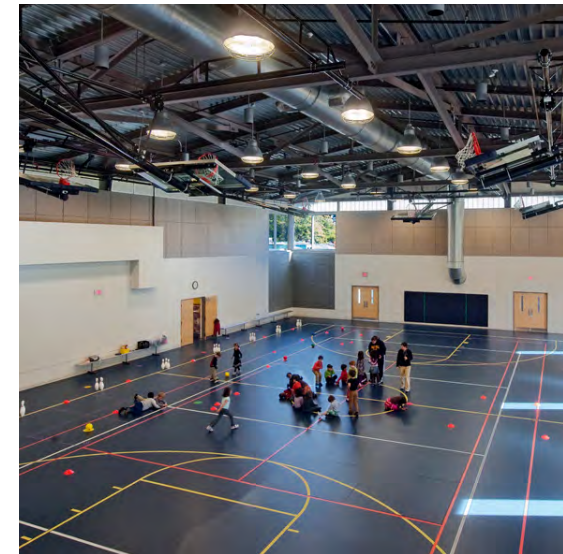
## COZY NOOKS

Smaller scale spaces can be created off of common areas for conversation or work while picking up on the community spirit. Built in benches, a recessed nook, or a change in lighting or materials may be enough to make a comfortable space for one or two. The spatial definition can also be expanded to create a little library or a place for kids to play.



## RECREATIONAL SPACES

Some recreational spaces, like gyms, are designed to support specific activities, like basketball. But they can also be used for large meetings, banquets and performances. Others may be less specialized and serve a range of recreational needs – with equipment that can be moved over the long term, or moved into a closet on a daily basis.



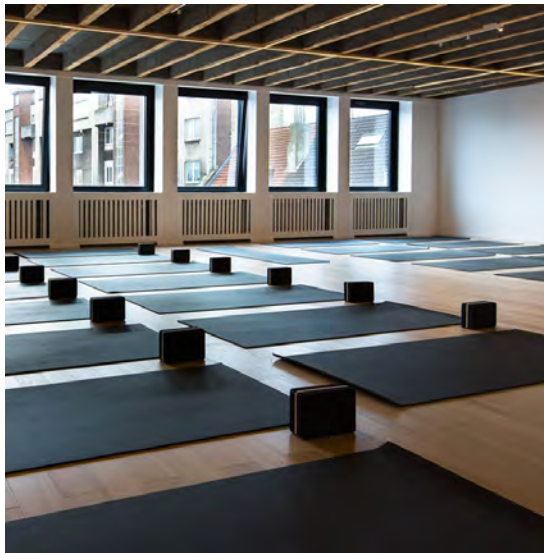
## ART / CRAFT SPACES

Spaces for the arts are not unlike recreational spaces in that they may have specialized equipment focused on specific activities (woodworking, ceramics etc.), Or accommodate a range of different functions. Ample storage, natural light, and proportions that are comfortable for small groups and large help make experiences more rewarding.



## FLEXIBILITY OF SPACES

Operable walls and oversized doors can connect spaces to each other and to the world outside, expanding programming options and enriching building user experience. They can also serve as a means to connect smaller spaces with larger common spaces that may have an outdoor-like quality.



## CONNECTIONS TO THE LANDSCAPE

Multiple entries and visual connections to the landscape and sky are always appreciated. They welcome people in from the sidewalk or parking and then out a terrace or green space. Sliding “barn doors” allow activities to move effortlessly outside or open up to nature on a spring day. Clerestory windows allow views of the sky and bring light deep into buildings.



On August 15, 2022 the Task Force and Consultants organized a 2 hour Community Workshop to engage the public in discussions on the need for a community center, who it should be for, what activities it should accommodate, where it could be located and how to keep the initiative moving forward once the feasibility study is complete. The Department of Public Works meeting room accommodated 50 people on

a first come first serve sign-up basis; the workshop was at capacity.

The workshop began with a 30-minute Consultant presentation on work to date including program and planning options. The following 90 minutes included a paced series of activities designed to promote discussions and thoughtful responses to critical questions. Some activities produced

quantitative information on program preferences, others more nuanced thoughts on what a community center can and should be.

The following pages document the process and the findings from the workshop. They reinforce some of the findings from the earlier SurveyMonkey survey suggesting a community center that met a variety of social, recreational and educational needs for a broad based demographic.

## WORKSHOP EXERCISES

### Attendee Profiles

Attendees were asked to fill out profile forms to understand whether the assembled group represented a cross section, as intended, of residents. Although those present tended to skew older and female, the group was not unrepresentative.

### Exercise #1: Sticky Notes

Participants were given sticky notes in 5 different colors, each to be used for a different question. Questions were projected on a screen one by one, and they had 4 minutes for each to provide succinct answers. While participants were answering the next question the Task Force and Consultant were reviewing and organizing collected notes so that they could report back on the range of answers in “real time”. These were then compiled and responses were sorted into categories based on attendee answers.



Consultants and Task Force members working closely with workshop attendees to elicit as much information as possible on town needs .

**Q1: Why did you decide to come this evening and what did you want to accomplish?**

**Responses: 21** - Information gathering

**Responses: 8** - To get involved in the process

**Responses: 7** - Family/Young population representation

**Responses: 1** - Senior Representation

**Q2: Is your priority a multi-generational facility, or is there a particular group the community center should focus on?**

**Responses: 25** - Multi-generational

**Responses: 9** - Multi-generational with strong emphasis on youth

**Responses: 4** - Particular group - kids, tweens, and teens

**Responses: 2** Multi-generational

including non-Orleans residents

**Responses: 1** - Particular groups - Families

**Q3: We've heard that the community center should focus on arts, fitness, and social activities. What are your priorities?**

**Responses: 12** - Social and family friendly

**Responses: 11** - Fitness and recreation

**Responses: 8** - All three are a priority

**Responses: 5** - Arts and culture

**Responses: 1** - Indoor pool

**Responses: 1** - After school activities for kids

**Q4: What needs to happen to make this project successful?**

**Responses: 9** - More community involvement

**Responses: 8** - Funding/Operating costs/sharing town resources

**Responses: 8** - Pick a site

**Responses: 6** - Ensure inclusivity of resident needs

**Responses: 2** - Complete existing town projects

**Responses: 1** - Focus on children

**Responses: 1** - Permanent Committee

**Q5: What are your short term vs long term goals for a community center?**

**Responses: 20** - Strengthening community bonds/ties to Orleans

**Responses: 9** - Safe place for kids

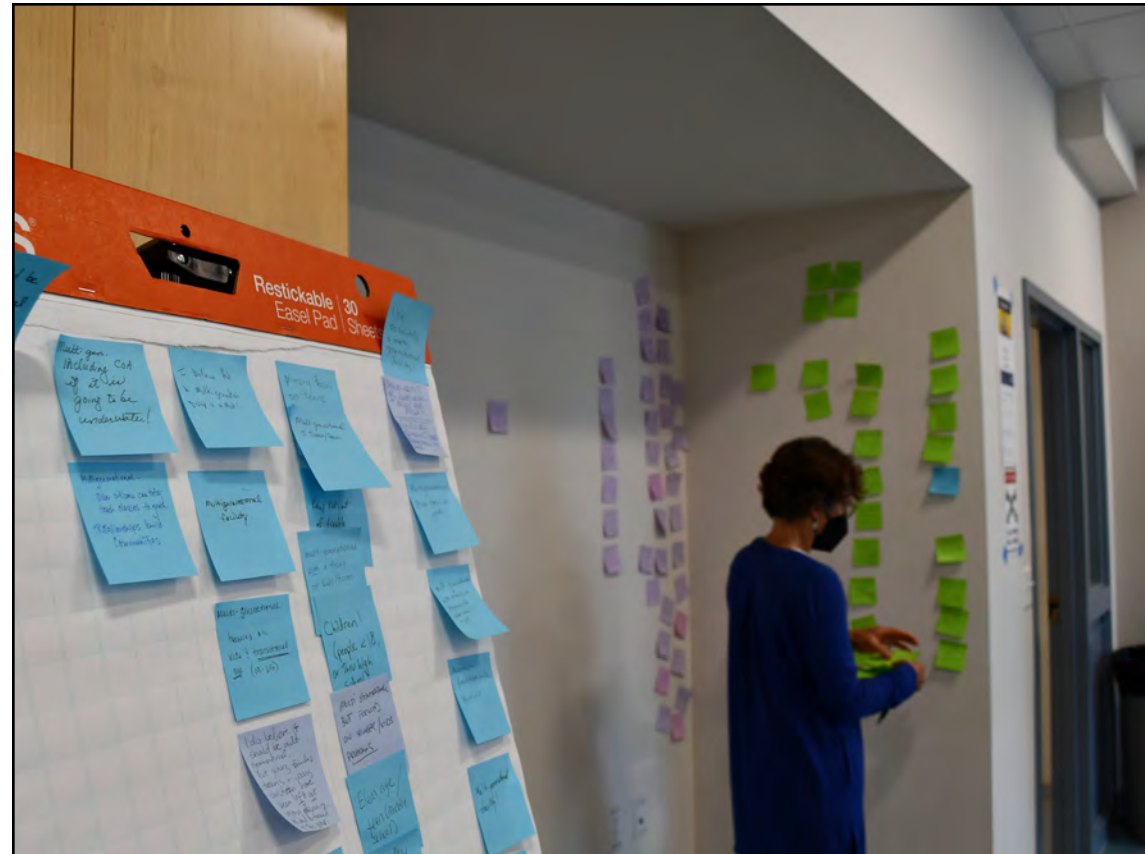
**Responses: 6** - Support local business

*"Family friendly activities are needed to attract families back to Orleans."*

*"Continue community outreach and finding a site."*

*"I came to be involved in the process of developing a space my family and I can use for years to come."*

*"I believe it should be multi-generational but young families, teens, and young children have been left out of town planning."*



Organizing sticky notes based on the type of response by workshop attendees.

## Exercise #2: Program Priorities

Those present were shown a series of images of possible program elements and were asked to assign a number noting their highest and lowest priorities (the larger the number the higher the priority). The result parallel those received from the SurveyMonkey survey: flexibility, multi-generational, arts, recreation and socializing were all important. Specialized facilities – swimming, pickleball and weight machines were ranked lower.

*“No cafe, we don’t want to compete with local business.”*

*“Town already has (outdoor) pickleball courts.”*

*“Tweens are more important than teens.”*

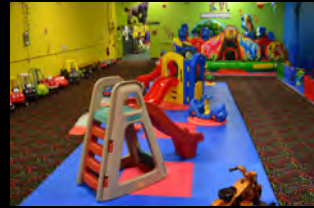
RESULTS	
PROGRAM TYPE	SCORE
FLEXIBLE MULTIPURPOSE ROOMS	308
TEEN ROOM	287
GYMNASIUM	272
CAFE / LOUNGE / SOCIAL SPACE	256
RELOCATED COUNCIL OF AGING	232
ARTS AND CRAFTS	231
GAME ROOM	225
PRE-SCHOOL/CHILDRENS PLAY ROOM	213
OPEN KITCHEN/ CLASSES	195
CARDIO AND WEIGHT MACHINES	183
SWIMMING POOL	173
PICKLEBALL COURTS	129

## PART 3.2: ORLEANS COMMUNITY CENTER PRIORITIES

Using the sheet we have handed, prioritize these options. 12 is your highest priority, 1 is your lowest.



RELOCATED COUNCIL ON AGING



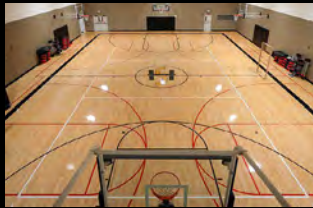
PRE-SCHOOL/CHILDREN'S PLAY



TEEN ROOM



CAFE / LOUNGE / SOCIAL SPACE



GYMNASIUM



FLEXIBLE MULTIPURPOSE ROOMS



CARDIO & WEIGHT MACHINE



SWIMMING POOL



PICKLE BALL



ARTS AND CRAFTS



GAME ROOM



OPEN KITCHEN - CLASSES ETC.

RIGHT: Program types that workshop participants ranked 1 - 12.

ORLEANS COMMUNITY CENTER STUDY 08/15/2022

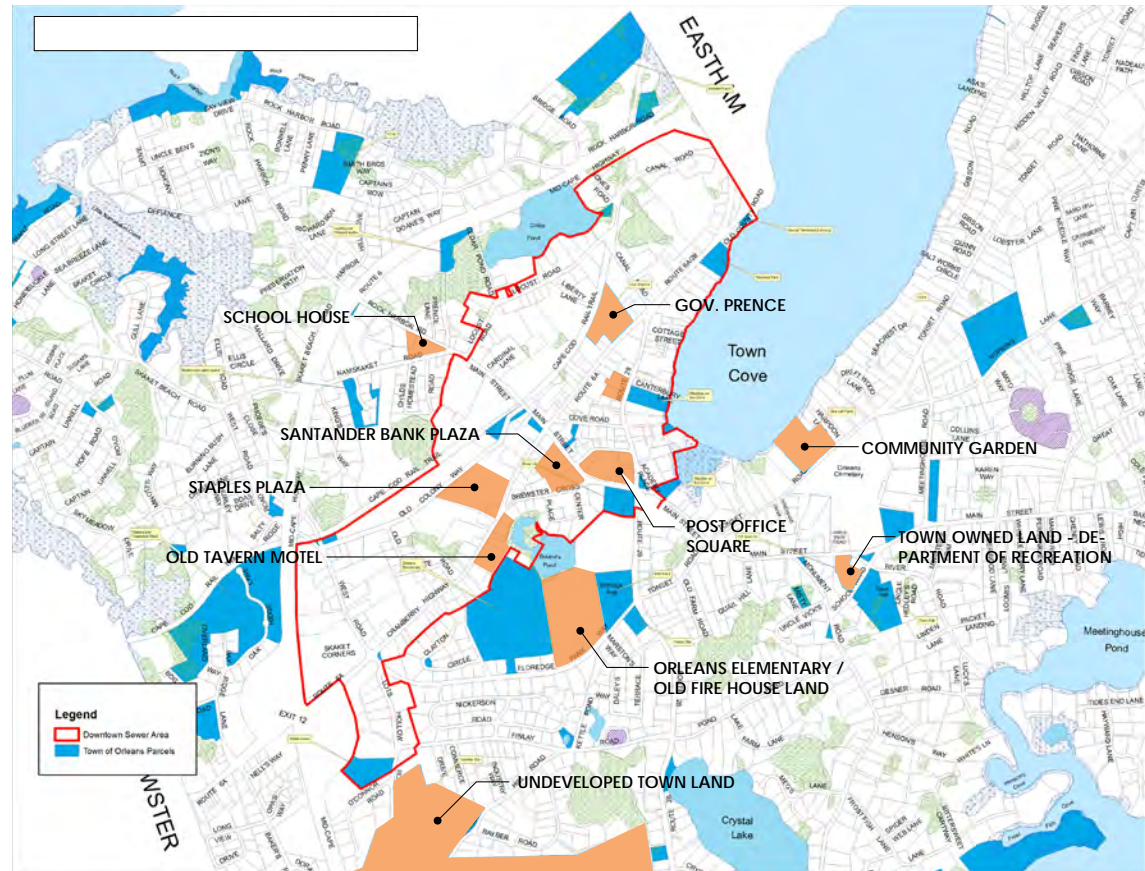
ABACUS [ARCHITECTS + PLANNERS]

### Activity #3: Site Suggestion and Mapping

Participants broke up into 6 person teams and were each given a map of Orleans. Teams discussed where they thought a community center should be located, general areas and specific parcels, and noted them on the maps. Those have been compiled on the map included here. Many or most of these parcels may not, in reality, be options for a community center, but give a sense of the kinds of places those present considered appropriate.

#### Main Comments:

- + Proximity to schools
- + Walkability
- + Should be within sewer area
- + Make the site regional to build relationships with other towns
- + Some willing to purchase private land



ABOVE: Compiled site suggestions from workshop attendees during mapping exercise.



Orleans community members engaging in a site selection exercise during a community workshop on 08/15/2022.

The Charge approved by the Select Board and implemented by the Task Force and the Consultant were meant to confirm whether there is a need for the kinds of facilities that a community center could provide, what those needs are, and at the conceptual level, the form the center could take. The Observations noted below grow out of these investigations and provide an executive summary of project findings.

The Recommendations that follow suggest the kinds of steps that should be taken

if the town wants to follow up on these observations. Establishing an administrative structure for building and operating a community center, finding a site, tying down the program, getting funding in place and implementing design and construction is a challenging undertaking and will take a concerted effort by many Orleans entities.

This study is intended to be the first step on that path. Next steps are noted in the final section - Task Force Recommended Near Term Actions.

## OBSERVATIONS

### Arts, Recreation and Social Space:

A review of existing community spaces and discussions with those who plan their activities suggest a lack of recreation space first and foremost, and secondarily, a lack of space for arts. The SurveyMonkey survey, open to all residents, indicates significant interest in a community center that provides recreation space, arts space and social space to make up for this lack.

### Center of Civic Life:

Numerous conversations throughout the course of the study note that a place that can be the center of civic life for the community is needed and missing. Answers to the Community Meeting question “what are the benefits of having a community center” were very clear and consistent on the need for “a safe place for people of all age to gather, to reinforce the sense of community and make Orleans an attractive place to live”. This appears to go beyond the specifics of the programs offered.



The Orleans Firebirds games attract large crowds and the Cape Cod League is a source of pride. 1 of 7 major league players started out playing on Cape Cod. Game attendance suggests the importance of both recreation and community to Orleans residents and visitors.

### **Multi-generational Center:**

It appears advantageous to allow space for a new COA as part of a community center effort. A combined COA/ Recreation facility would include a series of shared spaces and efficiencies along with areas dedicated to each of these main programs.

Surveys and extended conversations indicate that overwhelmingly people are interested in a multi-generational community center. Community Center efforts in the future should be closely tied to an evaluation of the COA's existing building and site.

### **Coordinate with Library and other Facilities:**

Community Center design and planning efforts should be coordinated with a possible library expansion to avoid duplication. The community center programming to date assumed that the library will provide additional meeting space, much needed by the Town, in

the near future. Attention should also be paid to what other civic, arts and recreation organizations are doing to ensure a comprehensive understanding of Town needs and how they are or are not being fulfilled.

### **Locating a Site:**

Finding a location for a new community center may be a challenge. A buildable area of between 2 and 4 acres is needed – depending on whether it is a small center or a large one, whether it includes the COA, and whether it is two floors or one. Other Town departments are looking for land as well.

At the Community Center Workshop participants proposed a whole series of different locations to consider. There does not seem to be a consensus on location, although most areas proposed were near the town center. The choice of location could help further other Town goals and opening up an exploration of what is available might be advantageous.

### **Ongoing evaluation of Program:**

The size and program for the center have not been tied down as part of this feasibility study. All options can remain on the table until site, budget, and constituent departments that may use it have been determined, and an updated needs assessments has been completed.

### **Community Center Administration:**

Community Centers require municipal personnel to run them and organize programs. The COA provides this, but they have their own facility. The Recreation Department does not appear positioned to take the lead in keeping a community center effort going after the completion of this study.

It is hard to sustain the effort to build a community center without a municipal department to advocate for it, or without a citizens group or task force with the mission of moving it forward.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

### Administration:

The Town should consider establishing a position of Director of Community Life. The Director could keep the idea of a Center on the table to the extent it supports the mission of this position. They could organize and schedule events, maintain a website and calendar, provide an organizational structure for a range of activities, and stay on top of what spaces are available, and what kinds of spaces aren't. They could monitor buildings plans proposed by the library or other organizations, and emerging threats to the COA at its current site.

The Cultural District Committee has made similar suggestions. Given that the work of this Task Force and the Consultant is nearly complete, the Task Force may want to coordinate efforts with this committee to continue to move forward on the Town's goals.

There is currently a Recreation Department study being done. Again, the Task Force should work with those doing the study to coordinate

understandings and recommendations.

North Reading is establishing a similar position in anticipation of a new multi-generational community center. Orleans may want to discuss their efforts to help clarify Orleans' own goals.

### Site:

Over half the survey respondents preferred a location on the periphery of the town center - still walkable from other activities but where there might be more parking and open space than in the commercial core. This should be taken into account when reviewing site options

Finding a site will be a challenge. It is unlikely that one will emerge "organically" – i.e. – that a site for sale will, in and of itself, initiate an effort to purchase it as a site for a community center. There are a series of Town departments that require land, and the Planning Department has established a process for evaluating those needs, and finding Town owned parcels to

meet those needs or procuring land as appropriate. The Task Force should ensure that land for a community center is added to that list

Different municipalities have different ways of prioritizing which needs are the most critical, how to fund procurement, and how to allocate limited time and money resources. Those who would like to see the work of building a community center continue may choose to be part of the priority setting process.

### Regional Coordination:

Other nearby towns have community centers or are planning community centers. The Task Force should reach out to those towns to understand what resources may be available to Orleans residents, what programs they offer, and the size and nature of their facilities. This will both inform the Town on the shape a community center in Orleans could take and help to ensure that Orleans doesn't duplicate facilities that may be easily accessible to its residents. It will also enlarge the sense of what

is missing – not just in Orleans, but in the area as well, suggesting a demand that goes beyond the Orleans town line.

### **Phasing and Flexibility:**

Communities and their needs change. This happens during the planning and design process, and in the decades that follow.

As a community center vision continues to emerge and site options are considered, potential expansion and evolution should be kept in mind. A Council on Aging may not be part of the community center when it is first built, but may become a welcome addition. A site and building layout that can accommodate programmatic expansion should be considered. Changing uses should also be part of the planning process. An existing building may allow program spaces to be fit within a masonry structure, but this may inhibit needed changes.

## **TASK FORCE RECOMMENDED NEAR TERM ACTIONS**

While the desire and need to build a community center in Orleans has been demonstrated during this study, a number of near-term actions have been identified to make more immediate improvements for Orleans residents seeking a comprehensive set of recreational, art, and community offerings.

### **1. Establish a new town position for a Community Life Director**

This would be the connecting person for all recreational, COA, educational (outside of school), environmental, art, cultural, and historic offerings in Orleans. It would be a long-term, full time position that would provide continuity.

- Demonstrate strong administrative, organizational, and communication skills.
- Coordinate schedules across all program providers
- Develop and maintain a coordinated program and event website which

would include up-to-date schedules of all town activities.

- Regularly disseminate information through various social media sites. Also, monitor these sites for resident inquiries, suggestions and issues.
- Arrange access to appropriate building spaces for all programs.
- Obtain and tabulate program attendance data to develop a usage history which will guide definition and planning of a community center.
- As the eventual community center leader, drive development efforts of such a facility. This would include working with the Planning Department on site selection.

### **2. Hire a strong Director of Recreation.**

- Demonstrate strong administrative, organizational, and communication skills and the passion to build programming across all ages,

abilities, and interests.

- Take a hands-on approach to running programs.
- Expand Recreation Dept. responsibilities to include cultural and art programs.
- Aggressively build programming, working closely with the Community Life Director to assure a good balance of offering with other providers (COA, for instance).
- Be responsive to community inputs including those from the Recreation Advisory Committee.

### **3. Increase Recreation Department staffing**

Establish two full time positions; the Director described above and one additional.

- This is in line with the majority of nearby towns.
- Revise existing job descriptions for

greater accountability and improved job performance.

### **4. Increase the Recreation Department's storage facilities**

Add dry containers adjacent to Orleans Elementary School and Nauset Regional Middle School. This would reduce travel/work time for program setup and take down.

### **5. Streamline procedures for Orleans Elementary School and Nauset Regional Middle School community use**

Improve property access - after school and weekends - to enhance use for athletic, artistic, and educational programming for all ages. This would likely require improved/updated agreements with each respective school and an increase of custodial staffing, perhaps paid for by user fees, to allow for expanded access.

- Create a budget for the extra

custodial and security staffing that may be needed.

### **6. Recommendation Review**

Have the Recreation Department Organization review team consider the findings and recommendations of this Community Center Feasibility Study Task Force.

