

[City column – May 2019]  
By Mayor Bill Droste

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One of the exciting challenges of a growing community is to provide the facilities and services that citizens want and need. One of the benefits is that we can work from a clean sheet of paper and we have more people to provide ideas and help cover the costs. At the City of Rosemount, we are working hard to address these opportunities in the planning for an indoor recreation center, which we continue to hear is something residents desire.

Last week we had an open house to show the public the work so far of consultants at the 292 Design Group. They have been talking with interested stakeholders and the public through the winter. They've drawn on their experience with what's worked for other cities, having completed many projects in Minnesota and nationwide.

Their work confirms there is a need for more indoor recreation space in a community that has grown as much as ours has, with a young population and median incomes above the national average. At the same time, they recognize the obvious: the budget for a project must be reasonable, and not every desired feature can be built immediately.

They showed their early concepts at the open house (and you can see it, on the City's website [www.ci.rosemount.mn.us](http://www.ci.rosemount.mn.us)). It's not a finished plan—it's not even what you'd call a "proposal" at this stage. But it gives us ideas for further choices.

The concept goes beyond a rec center, to include not just sports venues but facilities for health and wellness. It's not limited to sports teams. In fact, it offers features ranging from a play area for young kids to a walking and running track for older residents. There would be activities for all ages and income levels.

It would have two full basketball courts that could also be used for other activities like pickle ball, volleyball, and the like. An aquatic center would include a six-lane lap pool and a leisure pool. While kids are having a pool party watched by lifeguards, their parents could use the fitness center.

The consultants estimate the first phase would cost \$28.9 million, plus the cost of land. And in later phases of development, there would be space that could hold more courts, swimming features, and an ice sheet.

All that is a first run at what a rec center might include. There are still questions to be researched on fees for users and the timeline to build. And the concept is likely to change as we move forward. The City Council expects to discuss it during the summer to decide what the next steps will be.

And that's where we need your help. Please contact us at [comment@ci.rosemount.mn.us](mailto:comment@ci.rosemount.mn.us) to share your opinions about how the project should move forward. The consultants will continue to work on details, and we will be looking for options like partnerships to help finance and potentially operate the project. Already, we have some ideas to pursue thanks to the comments of the people who attended the open house.

Our goal is to meet the needs and desires of our growing community in a way that we can afford. Please help us make the choices that will keep Rosemount healthy and attractive for current and future families alike.

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