

**SELZER & COMPANY
CITY OF URBANDALE
POLL ON COMMUNITY RECREATION COMPLEX**

In April of 2022, SELZER & COMPANY conducted a poll to assess voter reaction to a proposed community recreation complex. The proposal calls for a vote to be held as part of the 2022 general election. The goals of this poll were:

- To learn about voter knowledge of and interest in a community recreation complex;
- To determine the likelihood of voting in the election;
- To quantify views of the implications for property taxes; and
- To assess the attitudes toward the features and programming the new complex could offer.

Using the state's voter list, 501 active registered voters were interviewed, with calls lasting approximately 13 minutes. Comparison data included in this report and in the tabulated questionnaire are based on a Selzer & Company study conducted January 13-18, 2022, for the City of Urbandale of 502 active registered voters in Urbandale. The earlier study used the same methodology.

The following discussion summarizes the key findings. The appendix includes a technical appendix describing the methodology and a tabulated questionnaire.

OVERVIEW

A new community recreation complex tests well. Majorities of active Urbandale registered voters like the idea, say they would vote yes, and are comfortable with a property tax increase of \$115 for every \$200,000 in home value. Small minorities think this is a bad idea and are not comfortable with any increase in property tax.

This strong support exists in the context of scant knowledge of the complex. While almost half (46%) are aware of the proposed location, fewer than one in three were already knowledgeable of six other key facts about the complex, including that there would be a vote. A majority of 56% say they know nothing much at all about the project plans.

For two physical features of the complex, majorities say they would use them often or occasionally: an indoor walking track and gymnasiums for basketball, volleyball, pickleball, and fitness. None of the nine physical features tested draws fewer than one in four saying they would make use of the element at least occasionally. In all, 7% of Urbandale voters indicate they would not use any of the elements.

Reactions to programming show strong interest. For each of the 11 activities tested, majorities indicate their household would either plan to participate or the activities are good options to have, even if they might not participate. No more than one in four indicate any of the tested elements is not needed; the highest is the 25% who say that for learning and playing pickleball. The highest interest in participation is for outdoor leisure spaces, recreation classes and general interest programs, and the indoor track.

In short, the complex draws wide favorable reaction from Urbandale active registered voters.

KEY FINDINGS

Here is more detail to explain the findings in depth.

Fully 78% of Urbandale voters say a new community recreation complex is a good idea (Q.2). This is a cold test of the idea, asked before respondents have heard any details, and is consistent with findings from the poll conducted in January 2022 when 76% said the same. Fifteen percent either don't know enough about the project to say (10%) or are not sure (5%). After hearing more about what features and services the complex would offer, positive reaction to a similar question asked late in the interview rises to 84% (Q.7), up six points from the cold test. Negative reaction also rises four points from the beginning of the interview (8%) to the end (12%) as those who were not sure or didn't know enough to say form their opinions. It's still an improvement over the 16% who said it was a bad idea at the end of the January study.

A majority of 60% of those who say initially the idea is a bad one are aged 55 and over, which is above their representation in the registration list at 40% of active voters overall.

Half of Urbandale voters say they would definitely vote in a city election to approve a bond issue for the complex (Q.8), and three in four of those (75%) say they would vote yes (Q.9). Intent to vote is not a key factor as an almost identical proportion of all Urbandale active registered voters (74%) say they would vote yes. Given this, the size of turnout is unlikely to affect the result of the bond referendum.

The same proportion (52%) of registered Republicans and Democrats report that they will definitely vote. Similarly, the yes-no vote itself doesn't seem particularly partisan (Q.9).

74% Overall saying they would vote Yes

79% Registered Democrats
77% No party registration
65% Registered Republican

82% Under age 45
66% Age 55 and over

79% Women
69% Men

80% West of Interstate 35/80
71% East of Interstate 35/80

A majority of Urbandale voters are good with the projected increase in property taxes the project will require (Q.6). The findings mirror what we saw in the January poll, with 61% saying an increase of \$115 per \$200,000 in home value would be about right and another 2% saying it seems, if anything, too little. The language in January gave a range from \$80 to \$120 for every \$200,000 of home value, with 60% saying it sounded about right and 3% saying it seemed too little, if anything.

While those who say \$115 for every \$200,000 in home value is too much are about as likely to vote as the overall average, just over a third (37%) of those who say too much also say they would vote yes. For them, the property tax increase is not a barrier to a yes vote.

The 32% who say \$115 is too much include disproportionate numbers of those age 55 and over (55%, compared to 40% overall), registered Republicans (40%, compared to 30% overall), and those without children ages 12 and under (79%, compared to 70% overall).

Those who deem the \$115 tax increase too much were later asked a follow-up question offering smaller increases (Q.10). All in all, 13% of voters are not comfortable with any increase in property tax; 9% were not comfortable with \$115, but comfortable at \$100; and 6% were not comfortable at \$115 or \$100 but okay with \$75 per \$200,000 in home value. Of those who say they are uncomfortable with any increase, 86% say they would vote no, yet 8% say they would vote yes.

Few know much about the concept (Q.1), but the proportion who do has grown since January. A majority (56%, compared to 81% in January) say they know nothing much at all, with most of the rest, 32%, saying they know just a little bit. That proportion, however, has doubled since January, when it was 16% who said they know just a little bit. While still a small number, the proportion saying they know a great deal or a fair amount has increased to 12% in April, up from 2% in January.

While there is a bit more familiarity with the general concept, relatively few Urbandale voters know details (Q.3). Respondents were asked whether they already knew seven facts about the community recreation complex or whether each item was new information. In every case, majorities say the fact is new information. The most widely-known fact, with 46% saying they already know it, is the proposed location at Meredith Drive and 152nd Street. Lesser-known facts include the property tax impact on homeowners and how the building of the community recreation center will not replace programming at the senior center and planned upgrades at Lions Park.

	Already Knew	New Information	Not Sure
The Community Recreation Complex will be located at Meredith Drive & 152 nd Street, in Walnut Creek Regional Park near the new fire station	46	54	-
To pass, at least 60% of Urbandale residents must vote yes to issue the bond	32	68	-
The new recreation complex will have fees associated with program offerings, just like other city recreation programs now	27	73	1
There will be a vote of Urbandale city residents next year on a bond borrowing to pay for the center	25	74	-
Programming will continue at the current senior recreation center located next to Urbandale High School	24	75	1
This recreation complex will be built in addition to upgrades planned at Lions Park, located across the street from Urbandale High School	19	81	-
The property tax impact would be between \$75 and \$115 per year for every \$200,000 in home value	12	87	1

The anticipated use of physical elements draws a mix of demographics (Q.4). Asked how often they think they or someone in their household would use some of the physical elements of the recreation complex, majorities say they foresee using the gymnasiums or the walking track at least occasionally. Here is how the elements break by key subgroups answering they would use often or occasionally:

63% Indoor walking track: Use often or occasionally

71% Age 55 or older in household

53% Gymnasiums: Use often or occasionally

74% Parents of children ages 12 or under

69% Under age 45

61% Less than college degree
61% Income \$150K or more

44% Large outdoor playground: Use often or occasionally

83% Parents of children ages 12 or under
59% Under age 45
57% Lived here less than 10 years

44% Outdoor sprayground: Use often or occasionally

80% Parent of child ages 12 or under
60% Under age 45
57% Lived here less than 10 years

40% Outdoor pickleball courts: Use often or occasionally

55% Income \$150K or more
52% West of Interstate 35/80
50% North of Meredith Drive
48% Ages 35 to 54

37% Large indoor playground: Use often or occasionally

72% Parents of children ages 12 or under
51% Under age 45
49% Lived here less than 10 years

32% Indoor artificial turf field: Use often or occasionally

71% Parents of children ages 12 or under
50% Under age 45
41% Lived here less than 10 years

30% Rentable rooms for meetings, programs, parties, etc.: Use often or occasionally

No groups are more likely than average to use often/occasionally

25% Multi-purpose meeting/event room: Use often or occasionally

No groups are more likely than average to use often/occasionally

Parents with children ages 12 and under make up more than one in four voter households (29%). They show outsized interest in five of the nine elements: the playgrounds, both indoor and outdoor; the outdoor sprayground; the gymnasiums; and the indoor artificial turf field. Voters under age 45 overlap somewhat with parents of children ages 12 and under, as 54% of those in this age group are parents of younger children.

Just 7% say they would not use any of the physical features—a small group who finds nothing of potential value to themselves or their households in the project.

The most popular programming elements include both indoor and outdoor activities (Q.5).

Respondents were asked about programming and events people may be able to do at the new community recreation complex and whether they thought they or someone in their household would do the activity at least occasionally, whether their household wouldn't do it but think it's good to have as an option, or whether it's not needed. Only one rises to the level of 25% saying it's not needed: Pickleball. For each of the others, no more than one in six say it's not needed. Strong pluralities and even some majorities say they won't necessarily do the activity but see it as a good option. Note the popularity of both indoor and

outdoor activities in this summary of key subgroups answering they would do the activity at least occasionally:

46% Host or attend a gathering in outdoor leisure spaces: Do at least occasionally

57% Under age 35

40% Attend recreation classes, educational programs: Do at least occasionally

49% Women

48% Under age 35

48% Parents of children ages 12 or under

37% Use the indoor track for walking, running, competitions: Do at least occasionally

No groups are more likely than average to do at least occasionally

34% Bring children to the outdoor spray park: Do at least occasionally

66% Parents of children ages 12 or under

47% Lived here less than 10 years

45% Under age 45

33% Use the indoor playground: Do at least occasionally

63% Parents of children ages 12 or under

49% Under age 45

44% Lived here less than 10 years

42% North of Meredith Drive

33% Use the large outdoor playground: Do at least occasionally

55% Parents of children ages 12 or under

47% Under age 45

41% Lived here less than 10 years

32% Participate in community events such as movie nights, etc.: Do at least occasionally

45% Parents of children ages 12 or under

40% Under age 35

28% Play or watch youth and adult athletic games: Do at least occasionally

48% Parents of children ages 12 or under

37% Lived here less than 10 years

36% Ages 35 to 54

36% Income \$150K or more

36% North of Meredith Drive

27% Learn and play pickleball: Do at least occasionally

40% Income \$150K or more

25% Play indoor sports: Do at least occasionally

52% Parents of children ages 12 or under

38% Under age 45

22% Rent community rooms with a commercial kitchen: Do at least occasionally

30% Income under \$100K

About three in four voters (72%) say they would likely do at least one of these things. Seniors age 65 and over are more likely than average to say one or more of the activities in the list are not needed (60%, compared to 45% overall).

In summary. This follow-up test of the idea of a city-built and -managed recreation complex continues to win strong support, with three in four saying they will vote for the complex and more saying it's a good idea. A majority (63%) say the potential property tax increase—testing \$115 per year for a home valued at \$200,000—seems about right (61%) or even too little (2%), consistent with what voters said in January.

Use of the indoor walking track and the gymnasiums demonstrate the highest potential. Even the use of community rooms for personal events, which rates lowest in expected frequency of use, still generates positive feelings among those who say the rooms are good as options (59%, in addition to the 22% who expect someone in their household would use them at least occasionally).

In short, the idea is well-received, and a significant proportion of Urbandale registered voters intend to use the physical elements and take advantage of programming. A small group does not plan to engage with the structure's physical elements tested in this survey—just 7%. For programs, it's 28% who see nothing of interest they or their households would do at least occasionally.

Knowing the project gets an anticipated yes vote from three in four voters is a great finding. Knowing Urbandale voters are interested in the facility and anticipated programs is just as good news.