



BUILDING COMMUNITY

THE MERRIAM WAY



MAIL-IN VOTE

Merriam voters will determine the future of recreation in our community. Voters will decide if the City should replace the current 100+ year-old Irene B. French Community Center and 30+ year-old Merriam Aquatic Center with a new community center at Vavra Park.

NEW COMMUNITY CENTER

The City asked the community what recreation amenities they wanted. The top items are incorporated into the proposed 66,000 square foot community center at Vavra Park.

Proposed amenities include:

- » Indoor walking and jogging track
- » Fitness center and aerobics room
- » Indoor pool with lap lanes, leisure pool, and therapeutic water
- » Outdoor pool with spray pad, lap lanes, and leisure pool (lazy river, slides, etc.)
- » Full size gymnasium
- » Art gallery and senior lounge
- » Classrooms
- » Party room
- » Meeting and event space
- » Catering kitchen
- » Child watch
- » Free social gathering space with WiFi

CONCEPTUAL RENDERING



PROPOSED AMENITIES



INDOOR POOL



INDOOR TRACK



FITNESS CENTER



MULTI-USE GYM



COMMUNITY ROOM

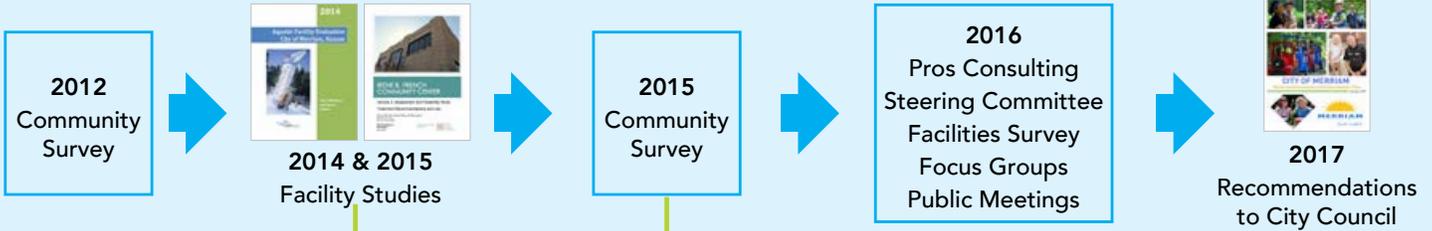
IT'S MORE THAN JUST A BUILDING...

The community center houses Merriam's Parks and Recreation staff. Parks and Rec is an important part of our community – hosting the Farmers' Market, Turkey Creek Festival, Party in Your Park events, and many more. It's the Merriam way to invest in our community's future and support our recreation needs.

LEARN MORE AT MERRIAM.ORG/BUILDINGCOMMUNITY

How can we best offer recreation amenities in Merriam today and tomorrow?

The City took many steps to answer this question:



FACILITIES



Irene B. French Community Center
1911
 Merriam School built
1938
 Addition: Jenks Gym

1951
 Addition: South of main entrance

1989
 Building becomes Merriam Community Center



Merriam Aquatic Center
1961
 Bathhouse built

1985
 Pool/filter house built

1999
 Pool expansion: zero depth pool and slides added

The lifespan of a pool basin in the midwest is 30-40 years. The Merriam Aquatic Center basin is 33 years old.

FACILITIES ISSUES:

- » Not ADA compliant
- » Flooding
- » Rusting support joists
- » Cracks in walls
- » Crumbling concrete
- » Falling ceiling tiles
- » HVAC upgrade needed
- » Plumbing issues
- » Life-safety issues

Have you used the pool or the Community Center in the last two years?

31% YES: COMMUNITY CENTER

27% YES: POOL

From the 2015 Community Survey

Is it important for Merriam to continue supporting a community center?

91% SAID YES

Is it important for Merriam to continue supporting a municipal pool?

88% SAID YES

IRENE B. FRENCH COMMUNITY CENTER



MERRIAM AQUATIC CENTER



The pool holds 600,000 gallons of water. In 2016, the pool lost **900,000** gallons.

"We work hard so that when people walk into the facility it gives them a nice, pleasant appearance. Unfortunately, it's behind those walls where all of our problems occur. Each year, we're given a budget for facilities maintenance, and this year in June that budget was completely depleted."

ANNA SLOCUM, Merriam Parks & Recreation Director



HOW WILL WE PAY FOR IT?

- » **USING SALES TAX:** A quarter-cent tax for 10 years
- » **NO PROPERTY TAX INCREASE**
- » Balance will come from budgeted Capital Improvement Program (CIP) funds



WHO WOULD PAY THE SALES TAX?



- MERRIAM RESIDENTS
- NON-MERRIAM RESIDENTS

82¢
OF EVERY SALES TAX
DOLLAR COLLECTED
COMES FROM
NON-RESIDENTS

HOW DOES A 1/4-CENT SALES TAX AFFECT YOU?



THE CITY SUBSIDY IS LESS BUILDING NEW

Today, the City budgets \$720,000 per year to cover the gap between the amount of revenue brought in by the community center and pool and the costs required to operate these facilities. The business plan and studies done by the steering committee indicate that even with similar membership rates and conservative membership figures, a new facility is projected to decrease that subsidy to about \$650,000.

\$720,000

\$650,000

**RENOVATE/
REPAIR**

BUILD NEW

ANNUAL OPERATIONS SUBSIDY

ESTIMATED COSTS

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Would membership rates for the community center and pool increase if a new facility is built?

It's the City's priority to keep this facility affordable and accessible for all community members. An initial rate structure was proposed with a modest increase for family memberships and a decrease for individual memberships. City Council will approve final membership rates. Proposed membership rates are comparable to surrounding cities. Details are available online.

Will a new quarter-percent sales tax hurt Merriam's businesses?

Merriam's current sales tax rate is 9.225 percent and the additional tax would make the rate 9.475 percent. This is still lower than many neighboring communities. Many retail shopping centers outside of Merriam with lower sales tax rates charge an extra point-of-sales tax, usually the result of a community improvement district or transportation development district. Merriam currently doesn't have any special taxing districts, so an additional sales tax wouldn't put Merriam at a competitive disadvantage with neighboring cities.

What would happen to the Irene B. French Community Center if a new community center is built?

The location of the IBFCC is an important asset to our community, not just because of its historical significance, but also because of its key location in downtown Merriam. If voters approve a new community center, the City plans to go through a process with community input to identify the best use for the current site and determine how to honor its history while making it an asset for future generations.

READ MORE FAQs AT [MERRIAM.ORG/BUILDINGCOMMUNITY](https://www.merriam.org/buildingcommunity)

VOTE

BALLOTS MAILED ON **Aug. 25**
BALLOTS DUE BY **Sept. 15** at noon

A YES VOTE MEANS

- » City will build a new \$30 million community center at Vavra Park with indoor and outdoor pools
- » \$24 million will be paid in bonds; \$6 million is already budgeted
- » A new one-quarter percent sales tax will take effect on Jan. 1, 2018, for 10 years to help cover the bond payment

A NO VOTE MEANS

- » City plans to repair/renovate the Irene B. French Community Center and Merriam Aquatic Center for an estimated \$20 million
- » City will likely use \$10 million in bonds; remaining balance paid with CIP fund
- » Absence of new revenue source (sales tax) means higher annual bond payment for City
- » Still have 100+ year-old building that doesn't meet our community's needs

ENVELOPE THAT WILL ARRIVE IN MAILBOX



BALLOT RETURN ENVELOPE



Be sure to sign and include your address on the return envelope

COMMUNITY VOICES

"Merriam has come a long way in the 40 years that I've lived here. We've really become a city that we can be proud of. I think it's foolish to have our residents go to other cities to use their facilities when there's the possibility of having a really usable and first-class facility in our own city."



JUDY OYER

Merriam resident for 40 years

"Water is creeping into the [IBFCC] in places that are not as well-known and it only makes me wonder. I do know that currently my tax dollars are basically being used to keep 20 sump pumps running at all times."



JOHN WOOD

Merriam resident for 20 years

"We need a community center where our entire family can go at one time and have something to do. It'd be great to have such a resource right here because we'd rather be in our own community."



SUSAN PEACH

Merriam resident for 18 years

FOR MORE COMMUNITY VOICES, WATCH THE VIDEO AT MERRIAM.ORG/BUILDINGCOMMUNITY

The City has prepared this education piece to provide you with information about this initiative and remind you to vote.

