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History

In the early 1990's Nampa citizens envisioned solutions for several problems: the crowded Senior Center had accessibility problems, teenagers lacked a community gathering place, many recreational opportunities for children were limited to the summer months and people of all ages needed a healthy family-centered place to exercise.

The local people dreamed of a large facility that would meet the community's recreational, educational and fitness needs. City leaders wanted a facility that would inspire pride and become the focal point of Nampa. However, this vision presented many challenges for a city Nampa's size.

Mercy Medical Center surmounted one difficulty by donating a 13-acre site for the building. After the land was secured an innovative method for financing the Center was developed. Revenue came from annual memberships, facility use fees, cash donations, donated property, **cable television franchise revenue** and **revenue from Nampa's municipal golf course.**

When Nampa's citizens were presented with the concept of a new recreation center support was very strong. By the time the building was finished more than 13,000 people had purchased memberships. Not only did private citizens support the Nampa Recreation Center project; several local businesses made large donations to make the facility a reality. With these dedicated revenue sources, and without a need to raise property tax rates, the **city was able to issue Certificates of Participation and budget an inner-fund loan** to complete Nampa's dream.

In April 1994, the 140,000 square foot Recreation Center opened, featuring a six-pool aquatics center, three gymnasiums, six racquetball courts, a walking/running track, a weight room and exercise equipment, a climbing wall, aerobic and gymnastic centers, dance and ballet rooms, art and craft facilities, snack area and a play center. In September of 1994, the Senior Citizen Center wing opened.

In addition to improving the community's health, the Nampa Recreation Center has contributed to the City of Nampa's economic development as businesses have flocked to be close in proximity. Businesses want to locate in a healthy community that offers supreme recreational opportunities.

From Plan to Reality

City leaders, businessmen and private citizens from communities in Idaho, Kansas, Wyoming, Colorado, Utah, Arizona, California, Washington, Oregon and Nevada have traveled to the Nampa area to tour the Nampa Recreation Center facility to gain a better understanding of how it became a reality for the Nampa community. "How did you do it?" is often the first question posed by these visitors. Although it is difficult for our visitors to capture the true spirit of Nampa and the community support that made the Nampa Recreation Center a reality, it is possible to identify the financial plan and philosophy behind the project. Revenue sources were identified early during the planning stage of this project.

These revenue sources would be used to pay for the building cost, equipment, maintenance and operation of the facility. The Recreation Center's financial plan included issuing Certificates of Participation. Investors had confidence in the project and purchased \$6,500,000 in Certificates. The balance of the debt was paid in full November of 2003. Today, membership sales and program fees support operation costs of the Nampa Recreation Center.

The following are brief description of the revenue sources that made the Nampa Recreation Center possible.

- **Recreation Center fees** cover 100 percent of the operation costs of the Nampa Recreation Center.
- The development of the **Centennial Golf Course** was a massive community effort during the mid-80's and many members of the local community donated time, money, equipment and labor to build the 18-hole course. **When Centennial Golf Course was leased, the City of Nampa received a percentage of gross revenue. The City used those funds to assist the Recreation Center** with the philosophy that original golf course donations could be leveraged into another area that benefits local people. Today, those funds have gone back to supporting golf operations.

- **Donated property** played a part in the overall financial picture of the Nampa Recreation Center. Donated property included a commercial building lot, industrial plant, the Mangum Building and property in a charitable remainder trust. All donations were used to pay off the debt balance of the construction costs.
- **A franchise fee** of two percent was added to TCI Cable Television. The revenues from these fees were pledged to the Nampa Recreation Center until 2003.
- Many individuals within the Nampa community extended their support for the Nampa Recreation Center with numerous **cash donations**. These donations helped pay down the debt of the construction costs.

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