

# A PENNY IS ALL IT TAKES

An architectural rendering of a new fire station and community center. The top half shows the exterior of a brick building with a fire truck parked in front and a car in the parking lot. The bottom half shows the interior of a large community center with many round tables and chairs, where people are gathered. The text "A PENNY IS ALL IT TAKES" is at the top, and "NEW FIRE STATION COMMUNITY CENTER" is in the middle.

## NEW FIRE STATION

## COMMUNITY CENTER

# **10+ Years of Public Input**

- ❑ Parks & Recreation Commission Public Input Meetings**
- ❑ Thousands Respond to 2015 & 2025 Online Surveys  
(Inserted into Water/Sewer Bills)**
- ❑ Community Group Presentations**
- ❑ Community Center w/ Pool #1 Project Requested**
- ❑ City Council Approved 2025 Parks Master Plan June 2025**
- ❑ Parks & Recreation Commission Unanimously Voted  
October 2025 Recommending Community Center to be Built  
at City Park (Former Cedars Golf Course) & City Council  
Unanimously Approved October 2025**



*The City of*  
**VAN BUREN**  
*Progress Is Our Project*

Parks and Recreation  
Master Plan | January 2015



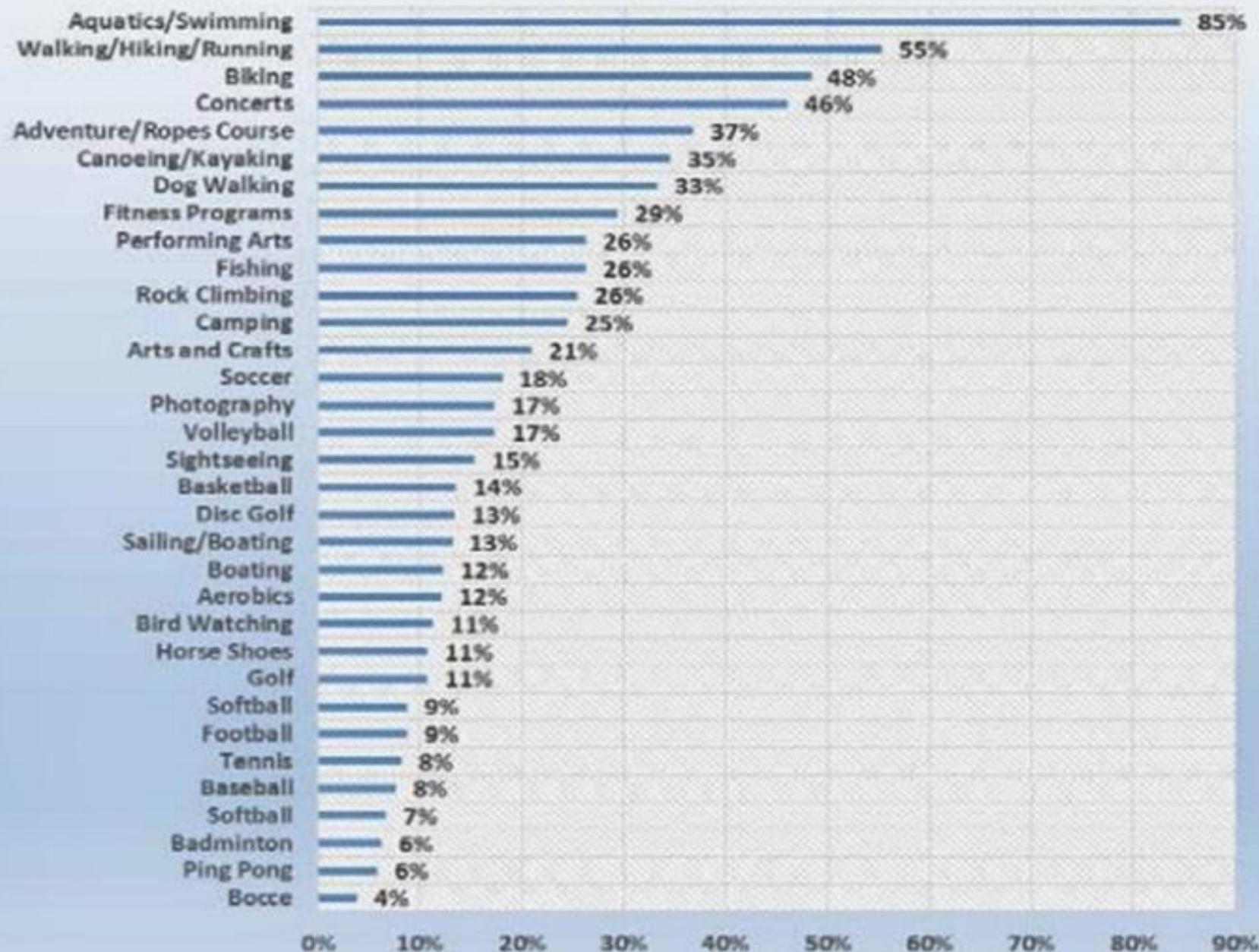


Figure 4.9: Desired programs and activities

# VAN BUREN PARKS & RECREATION MASTER PLAN | 2025



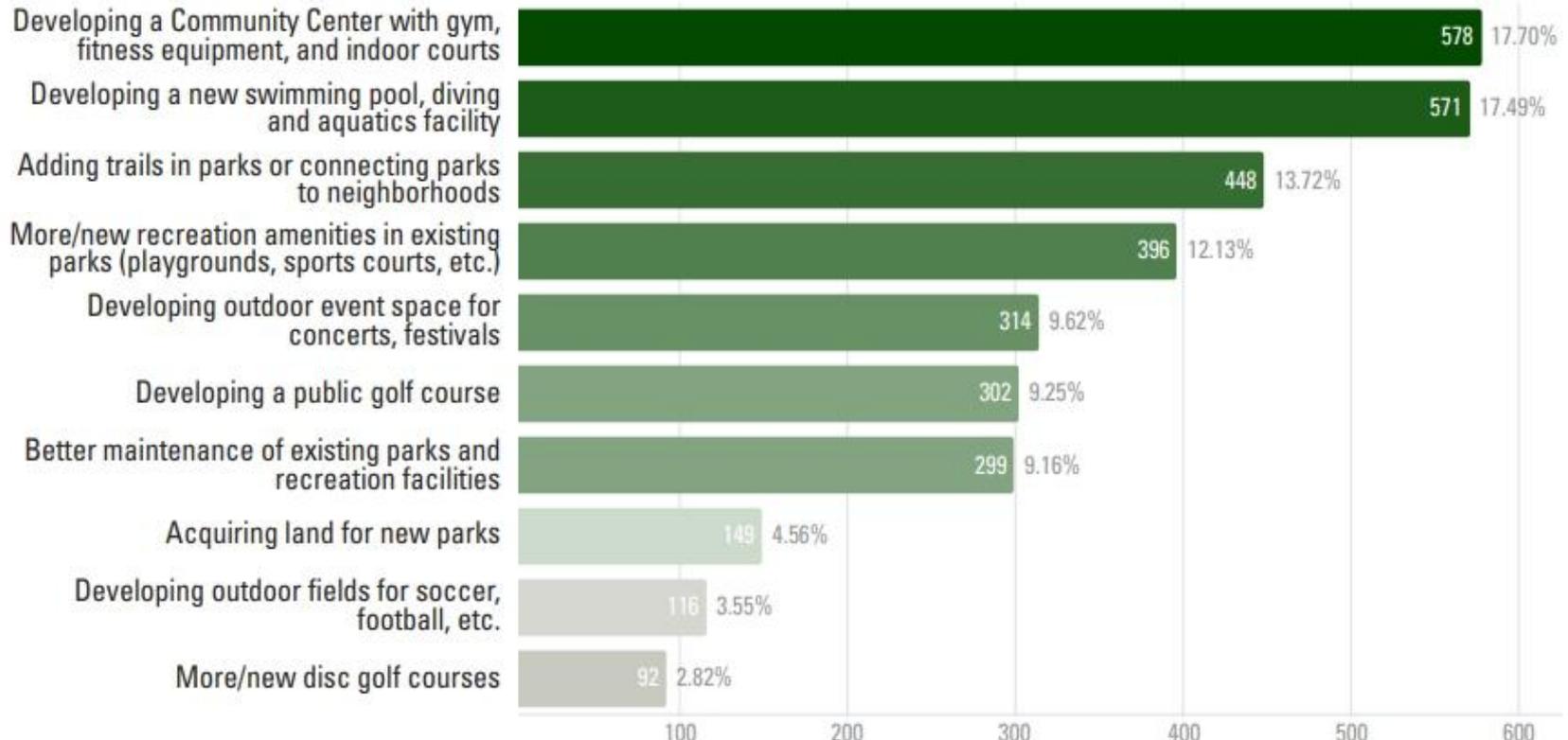
**mahg**  
architecture

## PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITY PRIORITIZATION

While gathering information about what the Van Buren community desired in their parks is vital, it is also important to understand what the priorities of the community are to help determine what projects should be addressed first. So, respondents were asked:

- Over the next 5 to 10 years, what are the most important needs for parks and recreation facilities? (Pick no more than three)

Although a majority of respondents said trails were desired and most likely to be utilized in the previous questions (Figure 2-11 and Figure 2-15), their responses to the question addressing the issue of priority made it apparent the community views developing a community center/aquatics facility as the most important improvement for the community to achieve in the next 5 to 10 years. Trails came in third and improving existing parks was forth (Figure 2-16).



# Van Buren Forward

- ❑ Community Center, New Fire Station, & Ladder Truck
- ❑ In 2023, City Council Approved Land Purchase for New Fire Station (North 30<sup>th</sup> Street, Between Bryan Road & Kibler Road)



# Van Buren Forward

- New Fire Station Site - North 30<sup>th</sup> St. between Bryan & Kibler Roads



# Van Buren Forward

- ❑ Replacing Fire Station #3 (Bryan Road) that was built in 1972
- ❑ Ladder Truck Helps Maintain ISO Rating of 2



# Van Buren Forward

## PARKS & RECREATION MASTER PLAN | 2025

### COMMUNITY CENTER

The Van Buren community appears to have outlined, through discussions at in-person meetings/workshops and responses to the online survey, a community center as their primary priority and an aquatic facility as an almost equal priority. Programs of both facilities could be implemented in one building to broaden the scope of activities and increase community utilization. The amenities of the community center should include a gym, indoor pickleball courts, and a swimming/diving aquatics facility. A series of diagrams were developed to provide the basis for the each amenity's required space and programs.

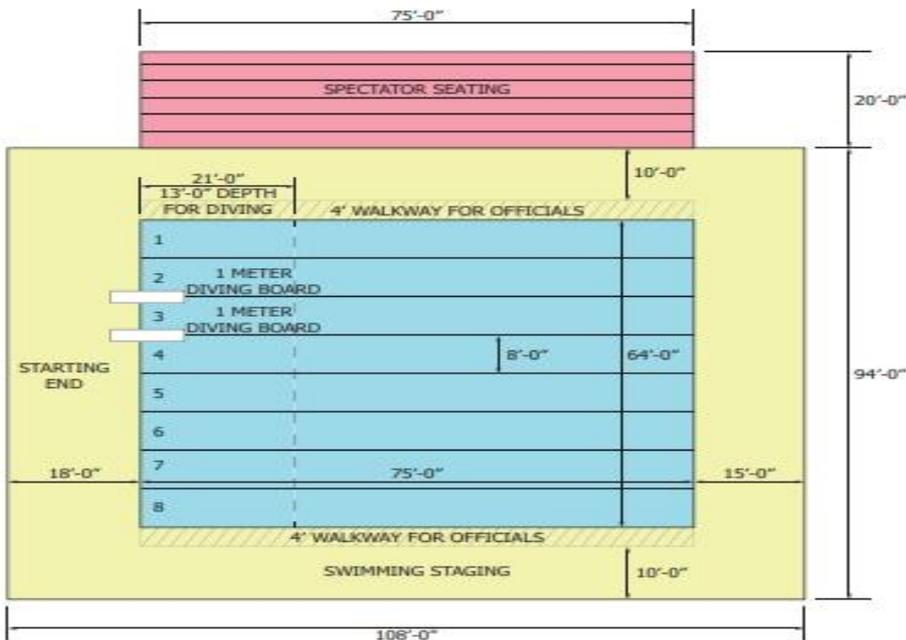


Figure 3-18. Indoor Aquatic Program Diagram.

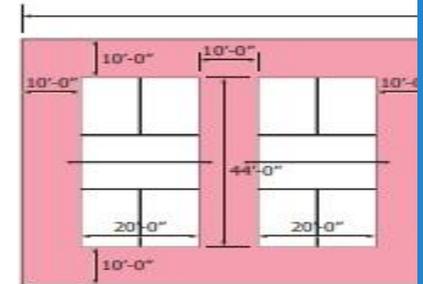


Figure 3-17. 5 Pickleball Court Diagram.

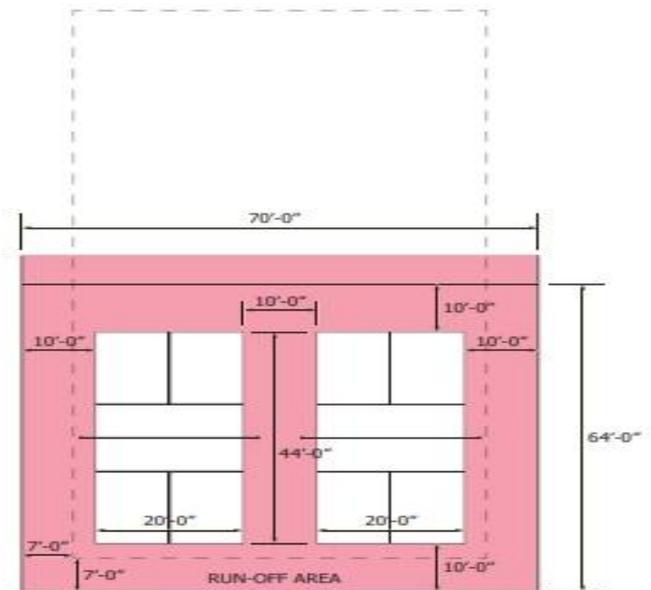


Figure 3-19. Pickleball Court Diagram.

# Van Buren Forward

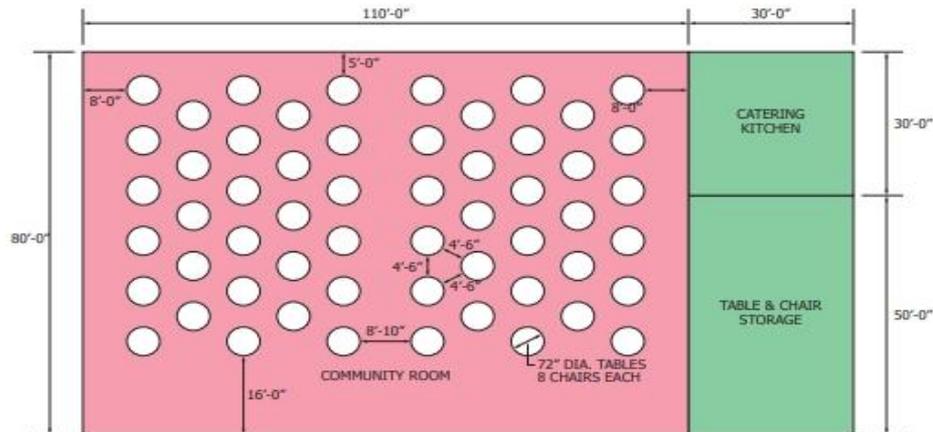


Figure 3-21. Community Room Program Diagram.

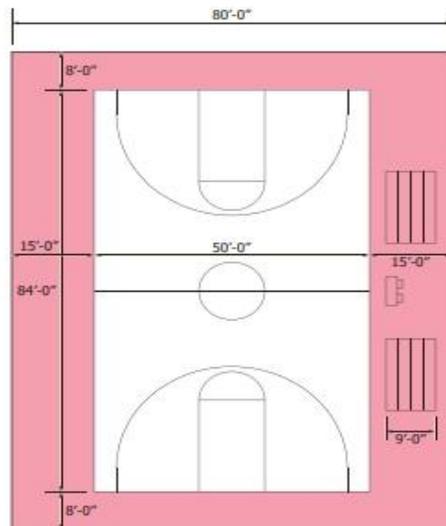


Figure 3-22. Basketball Court Program Diagram.

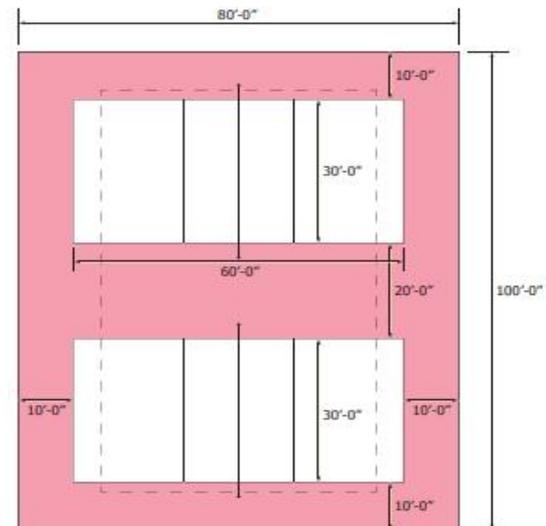
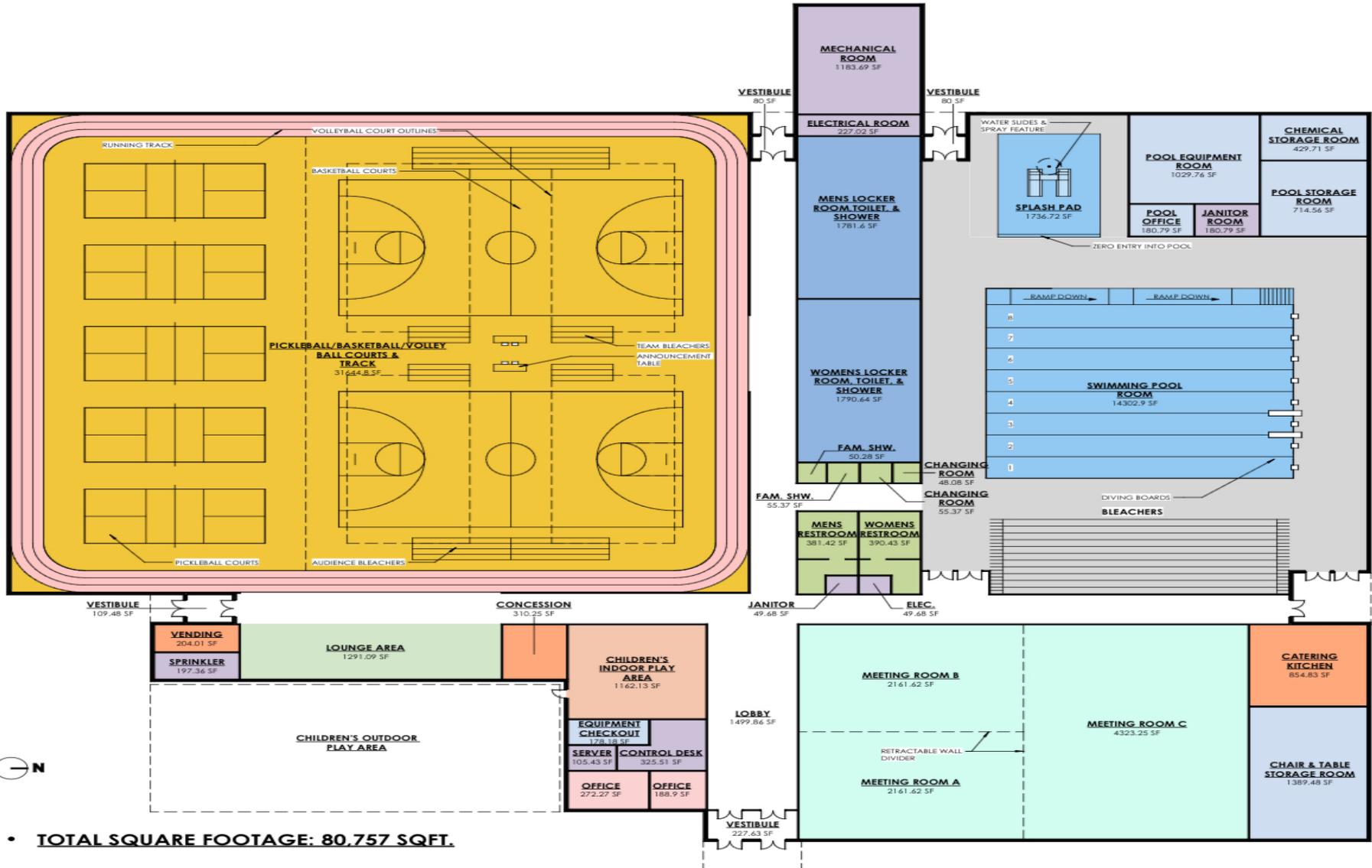


Figure 3-23. Volleyball Court Program Diagram.

# Van Buren Forward



• **TOTAL SQUARE FOOTAGE: 80,757 SQFT.**







VAN BUREN







City of Van Buren, Arkansas

March 3, 2026

BALLOT LANGUAGE

0.5% SALES AND USE TAX

Adoption of a 0.5% local sales and use tax within the City of Van Buren, the net collections of which remaining after deduction of the administrative charges of the State of Arkansas and required rebates will be used for one or more of the following: (a) to pay and secure the repayment of bonds approved by the voters and issued by the City from time to time to finance capital improvements, (b) for park and recreational purposes and (c) for fire, police and other emergency services purposes. The levy of the tax is not dependent on any bonds being approved or issued.

FOR.....

AGAINST.....

If bonds for one or more purposes are approved, there will be levied within the City a new 0.5% sales and use tax, the net collections of which remaining after deduction of the administrative charges of the State of Arkansas and required rebates, shall be used solely to retire the bonds and obligations of the City with respect thereto. The rate of taxation will not exceed 0.5% even if more than one purpose is approved. The 0.5% sales and use tax will expire after the bonds have been paid or provision is made therefore in accordance with Arkansas statutes. The bonds described below may be combined into a single issue or the bonds may be issued in series from time to time.

In order to provide additional funds to pay or to further secure repayment of the bonds, the City may also pledge to the bonds the net collections of a new 0.5% sales and use tax, if such tax is separately approved by the voters.

### PARK AND RECREATIONAL IMPROVEMENT BONDS

Bonds of the City of Van Buren in the maximum aggregate principal amount of \$36,800,000 to finance all or a portion of the costs of new park and recreational facilities, including particularly, without limitation, a community center with swimming facilities, pickleball, basketball and volleyball courts, a walking track and meeting rooms and any furnishings, equipment and parking, landscaping, signage, drainage, lighting, street and utility improvements related thereto and, in order to pay the bonds, the levy and pledge of a 0.5% local sales and use tax within the City.

FOR.....

AGAINST .....

### FIRE IMPROVEMENT BONDS

Bonds of the City of Van Buren in the maximum aggregate principal amount of \$8,200,000 to finance all or a portion of the costs of new facilities and apparatus for the fire department, including particularly, without limitation, a fire station and any furnishings, equipment and parking, landscaping, signage, drainage, lighting, street and utility improvements related thereto and, in order to pay the bonds, the levy and pledge of a 0.5% local sales and use tax within the City.

FOR.....

AGAINST .....

# Van Buren Forward

- Temporary Half-Cent Sales Tax to Fund Construction of Community Center & Fire Station, and Purchase of New Fire Truck**
  
- Permanent Half-Cent Sales Tax to Fund**
  - Operations/Maintenance of Community Center & Fire Station**
  - Police Department, Fire Department, & Future Parks & Recreation Projects**
  
- If all 3 items are approved, Van Buren's permanent sales tax will be 2%, like most cities nearby and of similar population.**
  
- Overall, Van Buren will still be taxed lower than most cities due to lower property tax (2 mills).**

# City Sales Tax Comparison

Arkansas Cities	City Sales Tax Total
Fort Smith	2
Greenwood	2
Ozark	2
Rogers	2
Bentonville	2
Siloam Springs	2
Fayetteville	2
Springdale	2
Searcy	2
Sherwood	2

# City Sales Tax Comparison

Crawford County Cities	City Sales Tax Total
Alma	2
Cedarville	1
Dyer	1
Kibler	1
Mountainburg	2.5
Mulberry	2
Rudy	0.5
Van Buren	1.5

# City Millage (Property Tax) Comparison

\*Millage is the property tax rate, where one mill equals \$1 of tax for every \$1,000 of a property's taxable value

Sebastian County	City Millage Total
Barling	5
Bonanza	5
Central City	5
Ft. Smith	8 (5 General, +1 PD, +1 FD, +1 Library)
Greenwood	5
Hackett	5
Hartford	5
Huntington	5
Lavaca	10 (5 General, +5 FD)
Mansfield	5
Midland	5

# City Millage (Property Tax) Comparison

\*Millage is the property tax rate, where one mill equals \$1 of tax for every \$1,000 of a property's taxable value

Crawford County Cities	City Millage Total
Alma	3.5
Chester	5
Dyer	5
Kibler	5
Mountainburg	3.1
Mulberry	5
Van Buren	2



**ELECTION DAY IS  
MARCH 3**

**EARLY VOTING BEGINS  
FEBRUARY 17**



**FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT:  
[www.cityofvanburenar.gov](http://www.cityofvanburenar.gov)**