

for
our

a penny
future



VOTE

MARCH 3rd

A Penny For Our Future

For decades, Van Buren citizens and community leaders have discussed the possibility of building a community center. As plans throughout the years never came to fruition, the community center idea has just remained a dream. But I'm hopeful now, more than ever, that this is our best chance yet to make that community center dream a reality. Based on public input from years of community meetings, thousands of survey responses, and citizen feedback after numerous presentations given to groups around the city, a community center is on the March 3 ballot. Now is the time to invest in VB and provide a much-needed space for citizens of all ages to swim, play basketball, volleyball, pickleball, and so much more.

In addition, public safety and the safety of those who protect us must remain a top priority. To that end, the time is also now to build a new fire station to replace station #3 (2821 Bryan Rd). Our firemen are second to none, and they need a modern station to help support public safety efforts. The March 3 ballot addresses this need as well.

The question for VB is will we invest in our community to provide essential facilities and support public safety and parks. Ultimately, it's one penny for our future. On March 3, voters have the opportunity to invest in VB by approving a temporary 1/2 cent sales tax that will end after the community center/fire station projects are completed and bonds paid off. We also have the opportunity to invest in VB by approving a permanent 1/2 cent sales tax that will fund operations and maintenance for the new community center and fire station, and support our police & fire departments, and parks and recreation. If approved, Van Buren's permanent city sales tax will be 2 cents, the same amount as nearly every city in our area. It's one penny for our future, and the time to invest in our future is now. –Mayor Joe Hurst

A Penny For Our Future

- ☐ 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

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 Unanimously Approved 2025 Parks Master Plan June 2025
- ❑ Parks & Recreation Commission Unanimously Recommended Community Center to be Built at City Park
(Former Cedars Golf Course)



The City of
VAN BUREN
Progress Is Our Project

Parks and Recreation
Master Plan | January 2015



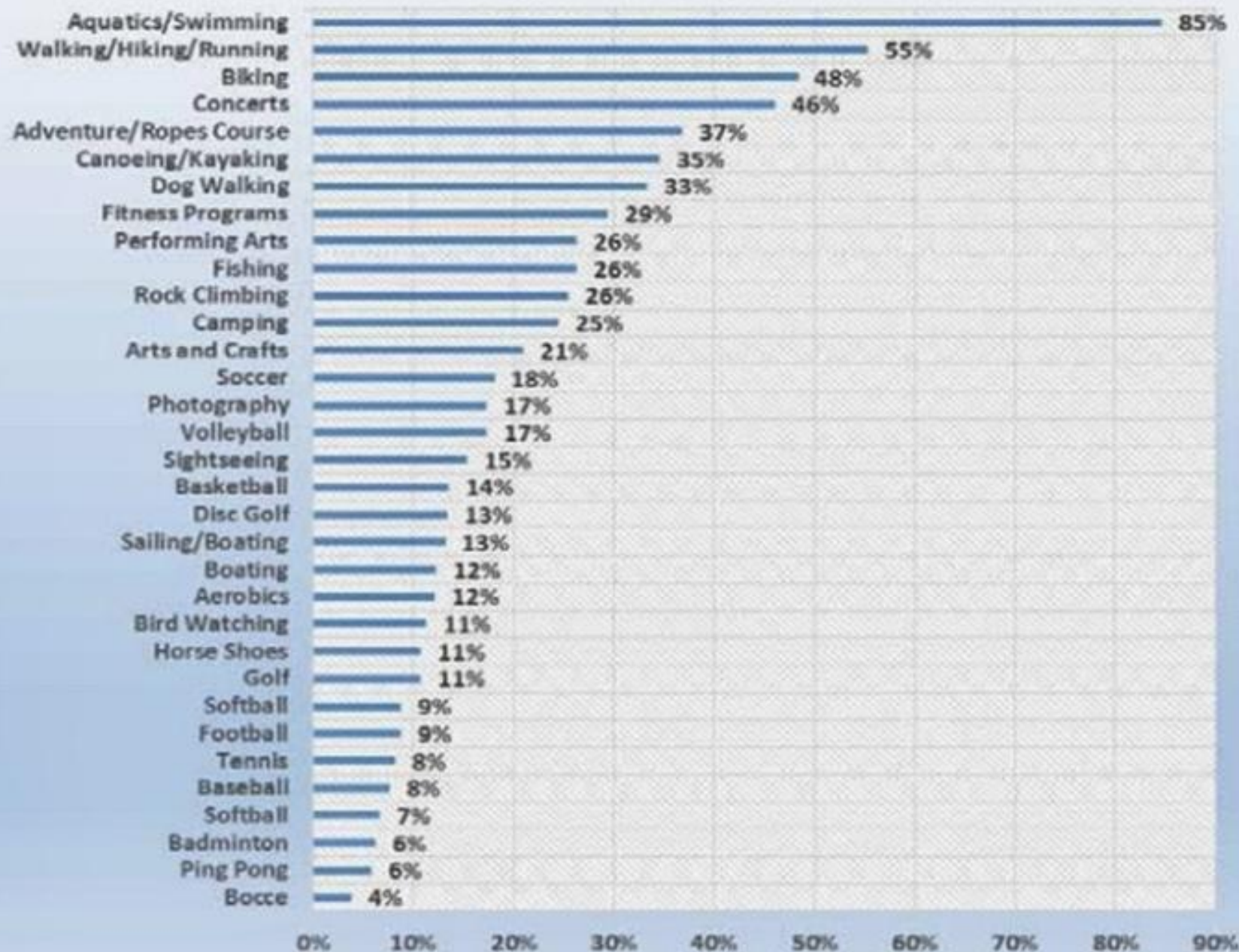


Figure 4.9: Desired programs and activities

VAN BUREN PARKS & RECREATION MASTER PLAN | 2025



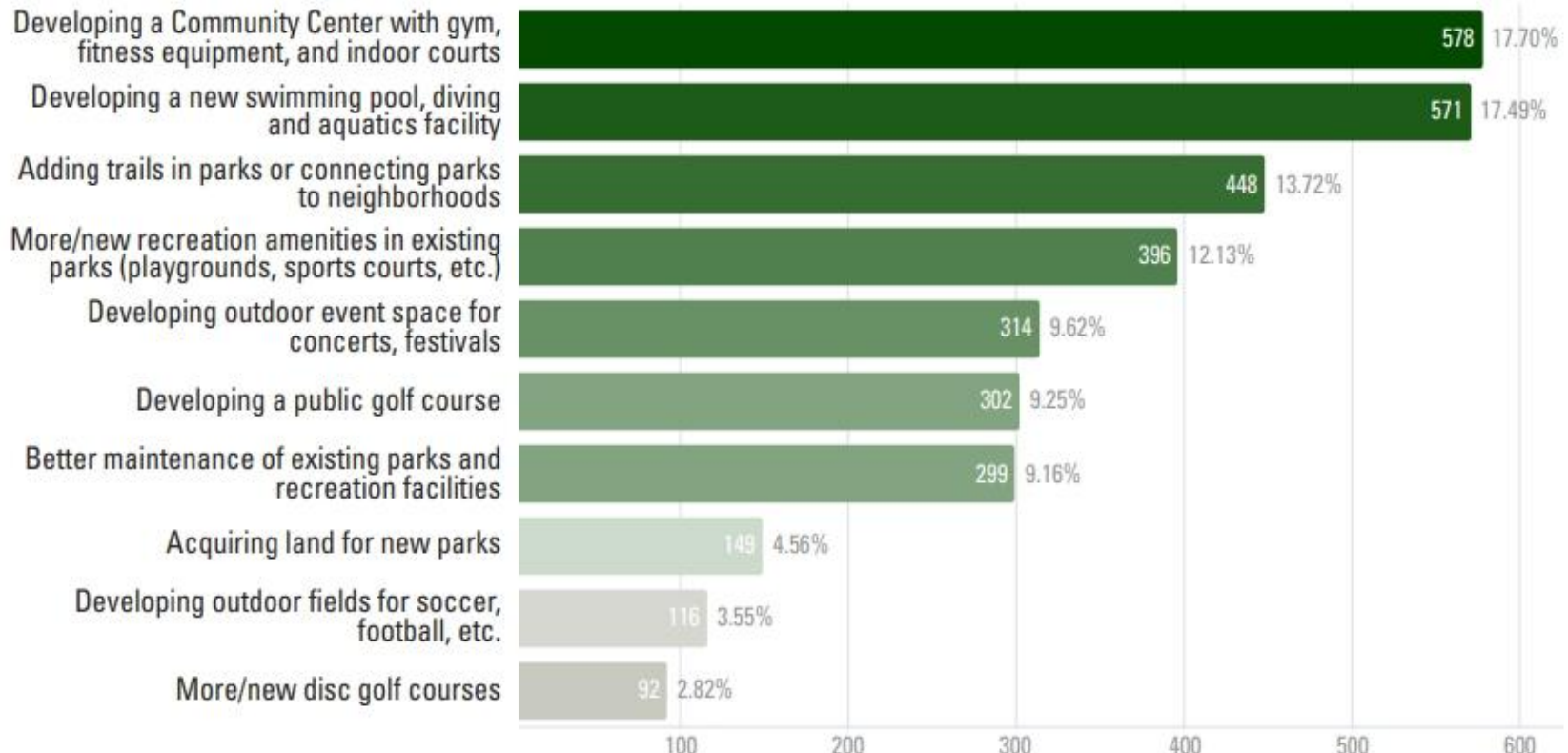
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PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITY PRIORITIZATION

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).



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



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- ❑ New Fire Station Site - North 30th St. between Bryan & Kibler Roads



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



NEW COMMUNITY CENTER



- BASKETBALL
- VOLLEYBALL
- PICKLEBALL
- INDOOR POOL
- MEETING ROOMS
- CHILDREN'S PLAY AREA
- CONCESSION/ LOUNGE AREA



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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.

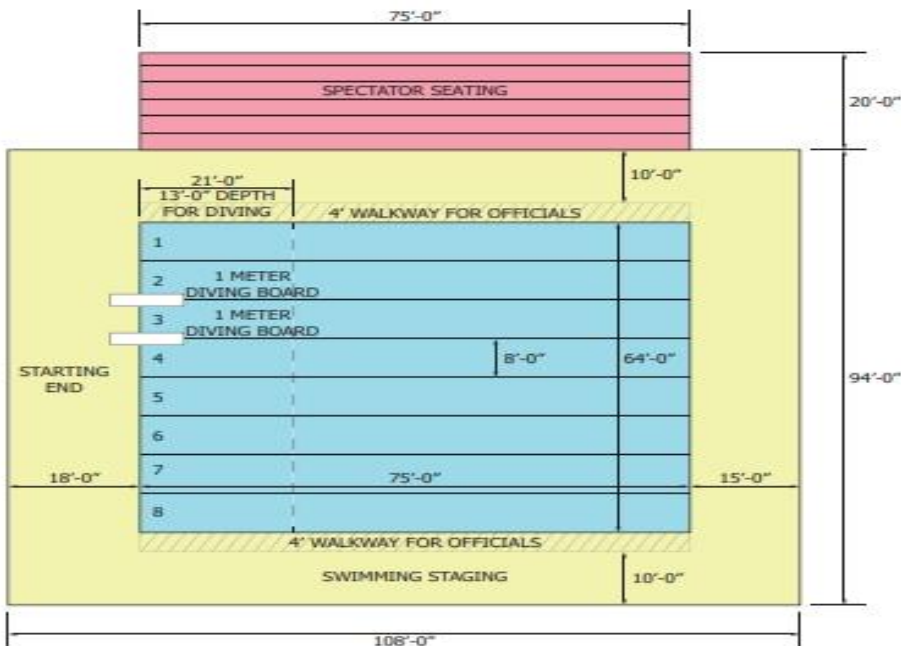


Figure 3-18. Indoor Aquatic Program Diagram.

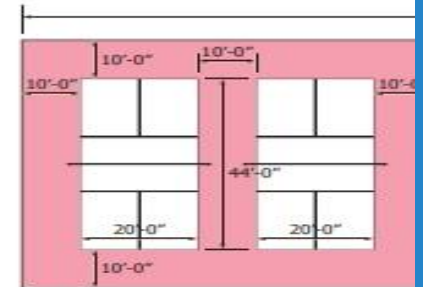


Figure 3-17. 5 Pickleball Court Diagram.

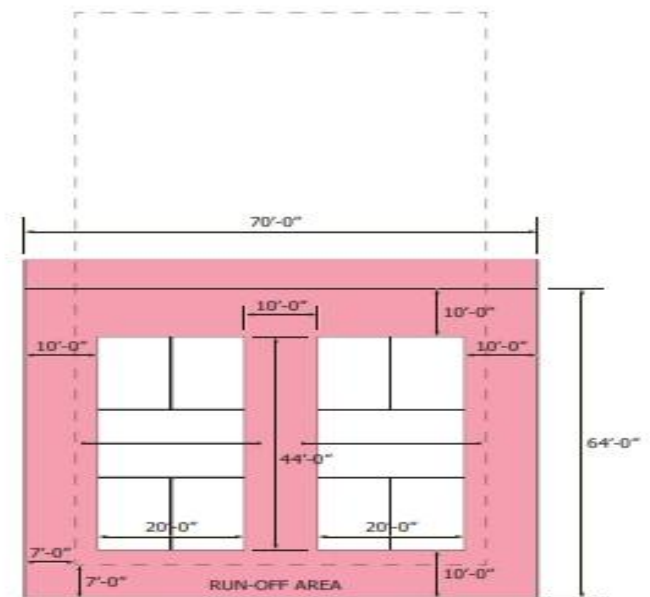


Figure 3-19. Pickleball Court Diagram.

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PARKS & RECREATION MASTER PLAN | 2025

The Master Plan

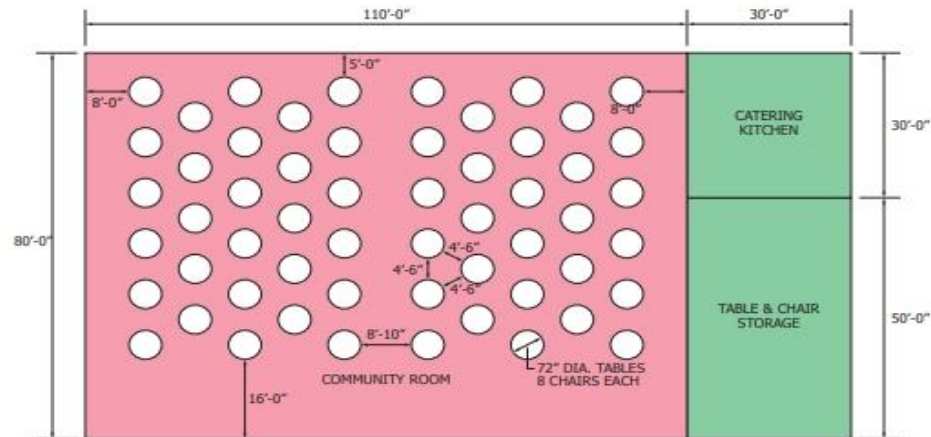


Figure 3-21. Community Room Program Diagram.

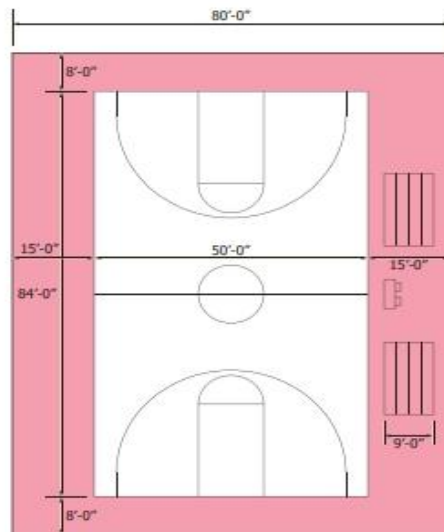


Figure 3-22. Basketball Court Program Diagram.

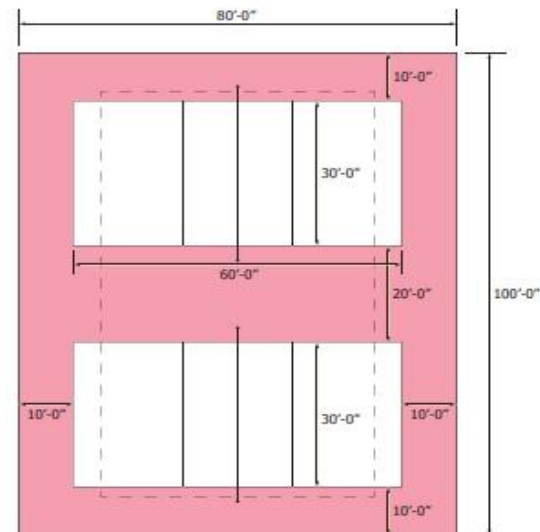
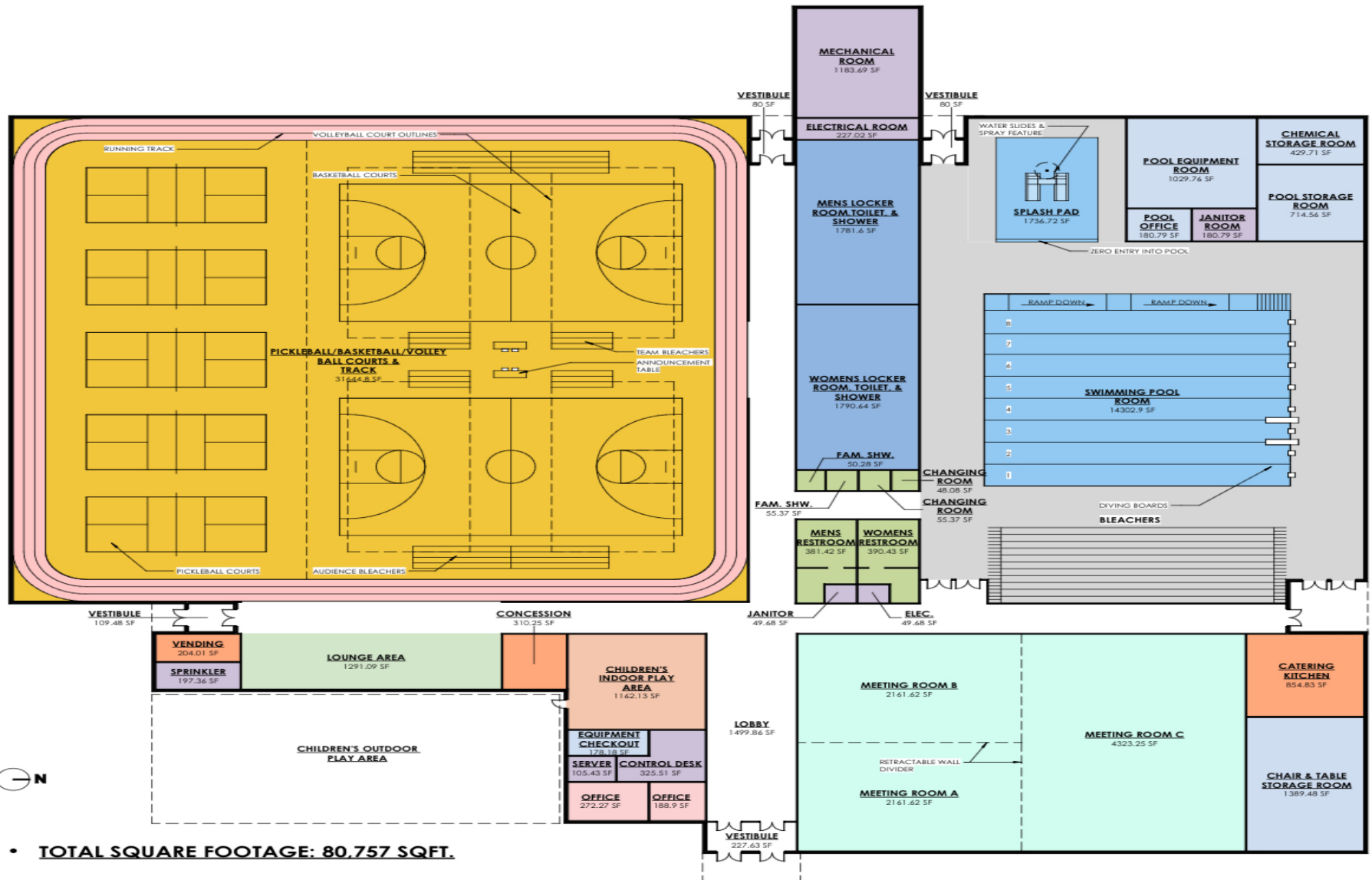


Figure 3-23. Volleyball Court Program Diagram.

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PERMANENT

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..... ☐

This portion of the ballot is for a permanent half-cent increase of the city sales tax to fund the operations/maintenance of the community center, fire and police departments, and parks.

This section of the ballot is for a temporary half-cent increase of the city sales tax to fund the construction of the community center and fire station. Votes here decide if the proposed facilities will be built.

TEMPORARY

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..... ☐

The total of this ballot section is a half-cent regardless of whether one or both items are voted for.

PERMANENT HALF-CENT SALES TAX



SUPPORTS POLICE, FIRE & PARKS DEPARTMENTS

Election Day is March 3

Early Voting Begins

February 17



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