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YMCA Moves to Combine Operations of Brentwood, Maryland Farms Y as Part of 'One Brentwood' Capital Reinvestment Plan

Listing of Maryland Farms YMCA property first step in broader vision to maintain and deepen services in Brentwood community

The YMCA of Middle Tennessee announced today plans to combine the operations of its Maryland Farms and Brentwood YMCA facilities to increase efficiency and better serve the growing needs of families through one updated state-of-the-art regional YMCA at Concord Road. Exploring the sale of its Maryland Farms property is a first step in a broader "One Brentwood" strategy. The nonprofit organization expects to list the 17-acre site on Maryland Way in the coming weeks, with the intent to reinvest sales proceeds in a multi-million-dollar renovation and expansion of the Brentwood Family YMCA on Concord Road. Should the YMCA accept an offer for the property, Chief Executive Officer Dan Dummermuth says the plan is to keep the Maryland Farms facility open until an expansion at the Brentwood facility is complete. The entire process from start to finish could take up to two years, but hinges first on how the market responds to the sales listing.

"We are excited about the potential for greater impact as we combine our two Brentwood facilities, located just four miles apart, creating a dynamic family center to serve the growing needs in Williamson County. Certainly, there are no guarantees in real estate, and we won't know the exact value of the property until we put it on the market," Dummermuth says. "But we believe between the sales proceeds and a targeted capital campaign, we can generate the resources necessary to position our Concord Road facility to meet the needs of the Brentwood community.

Envisioning a 'next-generation' YMCA for Brentwood

When completed, the reinvestment plan will result in a larger, state-of-the-art Brentwood family center at the Concord Road site with:

- Expanded and enhanced wellness and group exercise areas
- Transformed youth spaces including Y-PLAY child watch (infants to 6 years) and a new Youth Activity Center (ages 7-11)
- Enhanced teen center to accommodate educational programs including STEM, arts and music and to support outreach programs like Y-CAP in collaboration with the juvenile courts and other youth-serving agencies
- Improved accessibility for families, seniors and people with diverse abilities who come to the Y from throughout Middle Tennessee

- Enhanced outdoor aquatics facility
- Multi-purpose spaces to conduct regional programs like After Breast Cancer, Full Circle, Weight Loss and small support groups which operate in collaboration with more than 50 community partners
- Enhanced youth skate park
- Additional parking

“Our Brentwood and Maryland Farms locations have served and enriched the community for nearly 35 years and we look forward to continuing to do so for years to come,” Dummermuth says, “but the time has come to envision and develop a ‘next generation’ YMCA for Brentwood. By combining our operations and focusing our capital reinvestment on one state of the art facility, we will deepen our impact, serve the community through a higher quality facility and be good stewards of our resources by gaining efficiencies that will come when we operate under one Brentwood roof.”

A vision for ‘One Brentwood’

The decision to combine operations comes after several years of work by YMCA staff and volunteer leaders to assess and plan for capital improvements at the Brentwood and Maryland Farms locations, both of which are among the YMCA of Middle Tennessee’s oldest facilities.

“It’s never an easy decision to say goodbye to a treasured asset that’s beloved by its patrons,” Dummermuth says of the Maryland Farms Y. “And as much as we’d like to maintain both YMCAs, we have a responsibility to steward our resources as effectively and efficiently as we can.”

Before arriving at the decision to combine operations, the Y of Middle Tennessee considered a range of options including renovating both facilities at their existing sites and building a new Maryland Farms facility at its existing site or another location. The estimated cost to build a new Maryland Farms facility alone is approximately \$30 million. Cost estimates approached the \$40 million mark to do the level of renovations necessary to prepare both facilities to meet the needs of a future generation of YMCA members. That’s a figure that exceeds the organization’s capacity for capital investment. Dummermuth adds that while the decision to combine operations was made prior to COVID-19, “the pandemic and its economic impact—which we may not fully understand for some time—has only reinforced the importance of operating as efficiently as we possibly can and making the most of our resources.”

Chief Strategy Officer Jessica Fain adds that the overlap in the geography served by both locations suggested an opportunity to develop a single flagship YMCA to serve the Brentwood community.

“More than 75% of Maryland Farms Y members will have no more than three minutes of additional drive time to reach the Brentwood location, and half of the members actually live closer to Brentwood than to Maryland Farms. In addition, scan-in records show that many Maryland Farms members are already utilizing other Ys, primarily Brentwood and Green Hills. When we put those geographic and utilization pieces together with the potential costs of renovating both Brentwood and Maryland Farms, and considered the results of a quiet

fundraising feasibility study that suggests both projects aren't likely to be funded in total by a capital campaign, the vision for One Brentwood began to take shape."

Dummermuth says, "As we examined all of our options, it became clear that concentrating resources on one expanded Brentwood facility was the best and most fiscally responsible approach to meeting our ultimate goal of preparing the Y to improve service to members now and for years to come."

Condition of Maryland Farms facility undergirded decision to pursue sale

The YMCA of Middle Tennessee opened the Maryland Farms location when the nonprofit purchased the former Athletic Club of Maryland Farms in 1998. The facility was originally built in 1978 as the private Maryland Farms Racquet and Country Club. Bob Knestrick, who now serves as the Y of Middle Tennessee's Chief Operating Officer, was one of the first employees hired when the facility became a YMCA.

"When we bought the club 22 years ago, we accepted that the building had a number of known shortcomings. We worked to address those early on to help it function more like a YMCA. But over the years, we uncovered many more challenges with the structure, so we always knew there would come a time when we'd face a tough decision about how much to spend on temporary fixes and whether or not it's possible and financially feasible to make more permanent and lasting improvements."

Although the Y has invested millions in renovations and major maintenance since purchasing the facility, estimates for needed near-term improvements and major infrastructure repairs gave Y leaders pause in considering whether or not it would be wise to invest millions more in an aging facility that was never designed to be a YMCA or to accommodate the kind of member traffic it routinely experiences.

Knestrick adds, "I've been part of the conversation about a massive renovation both as the local leader at Maryland Farms and now as Chief Operating Officer. I don't know if anyone could want a renovation or rebuild to work more than I do. But the infrastructure work that would be required just to get the facility to a place where it could withstand another 20 or 30 years would do little to improve the members' experience or accessibility inside the facility, and it still wouldn't be enough to position the facility for future growth. Membership growth plateaued at Maryland Farms in 2008, and the building's shortcomings are at the root of that. We don't have the capacity to fund all the work that's needed, and it wouldn't be good stewardship to take on debt to do it when we have the opportunity to leverage the value of the property to reinvest in a bigger and better Brentwood YMCA four miles up the road."

The Brentwood Family YMCA, which originally opened as the Harpeth YMCA in 1986, was deemed more structurally sound and has a more expandable footprint that will allow crews to more easily demo and rebuild portions of the facility while renovating other sections and expanding the aquatic offerings and parking capacity.

Sales process expected to take several months

As a first step in its One Brentwood reinvestment plan, the Y has engaged Charlie Gibson and Crews Johnston, real estate brokers with Cushman & Wakefield, to market the Maryland Farms property. "At 16.36 acres, the YMCA's Maryland Farms property is one of the last remaining development opportunities that offers the potential for future development of size and scale", Gibson stated. "The opportunity is positioned to benefit from the increased and constant demand seen for new tenants and businesses that wish to be located in this highly sought after county and submarket."

Once the property goes on the market, the Y doesn't expect the sale of this property to happen overnight. The disposition process is expected to take several months starting with Cushman & Wakefield's marketing efforts, consideration of highest and best offers, and the expected closing timelines necessary in the event the YMCA decides to accept an offer.

About the YMCA of Middle Tennessee

The **YMCA of Middle Tennessee** is the region's leading nonprofit dedicated to strengthening community through youth development, healthy living and social responsibility. Inspired by its mission as a worldwide charitable fellowship united by a common loyalty to Jesus Christ for the purpose of helping people grow in spirit, mind and body, for more than 140 years, the YMCA of Middle Tennessee has been giving people of all ages the tools they need to belong and be well. Last year, the Y reached **251,847** people, improving the nation's health and well-being and providing opportunities to serve others and support our neighbors.

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