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EDITOR'S PICK

Frederick Youth Center construction projected to start this fall

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A rendering of what the Frederick Youth Center on Scotty's Bus Lane will look like.

Image courtesy city of Frederick

Construction on the Frederick Youth Center is set to start in September, according to a presentation given during a Frederick City Council committee hearing Thursday.

The facility, which is being built on Scotty's Bus Lane adjacent to the existing Boys & Girls Club of Frederick County, is projected to open in the first quarter of 2028, according to the presentation.

The city Planning Commission unanimously approved the site plan for the Youth Center on Feb. 9, allowing the project to move forward.

The plan included consolidating three parcels of city-owned land into one for the youth center property.

The presentation given Thursday envisions a youth services campus including the youth center, the Boys & Girls Club, and the third parcel of city-owned land between the two, called South End Park.

The land for the youth center, including an around 18,000-square-foot building, was used by the Frederick County government as a warehouse space before being transferred to the city in 2024 to be developed for the center.

The plans call for the redevelopment of the existing building.

The design process, which was done in conjunction with the Ausherman Family Foundation, incorporated feedback and direction from youth in the city.



A rendering of what the interior of the Frederick Youth Center on Scotty's Bus Lane will look like.

Image courtesy city of Frederick

Ericka Rohrbaugh, city manager of opportunity and transformation, said the design included all of the top five asks from youth.

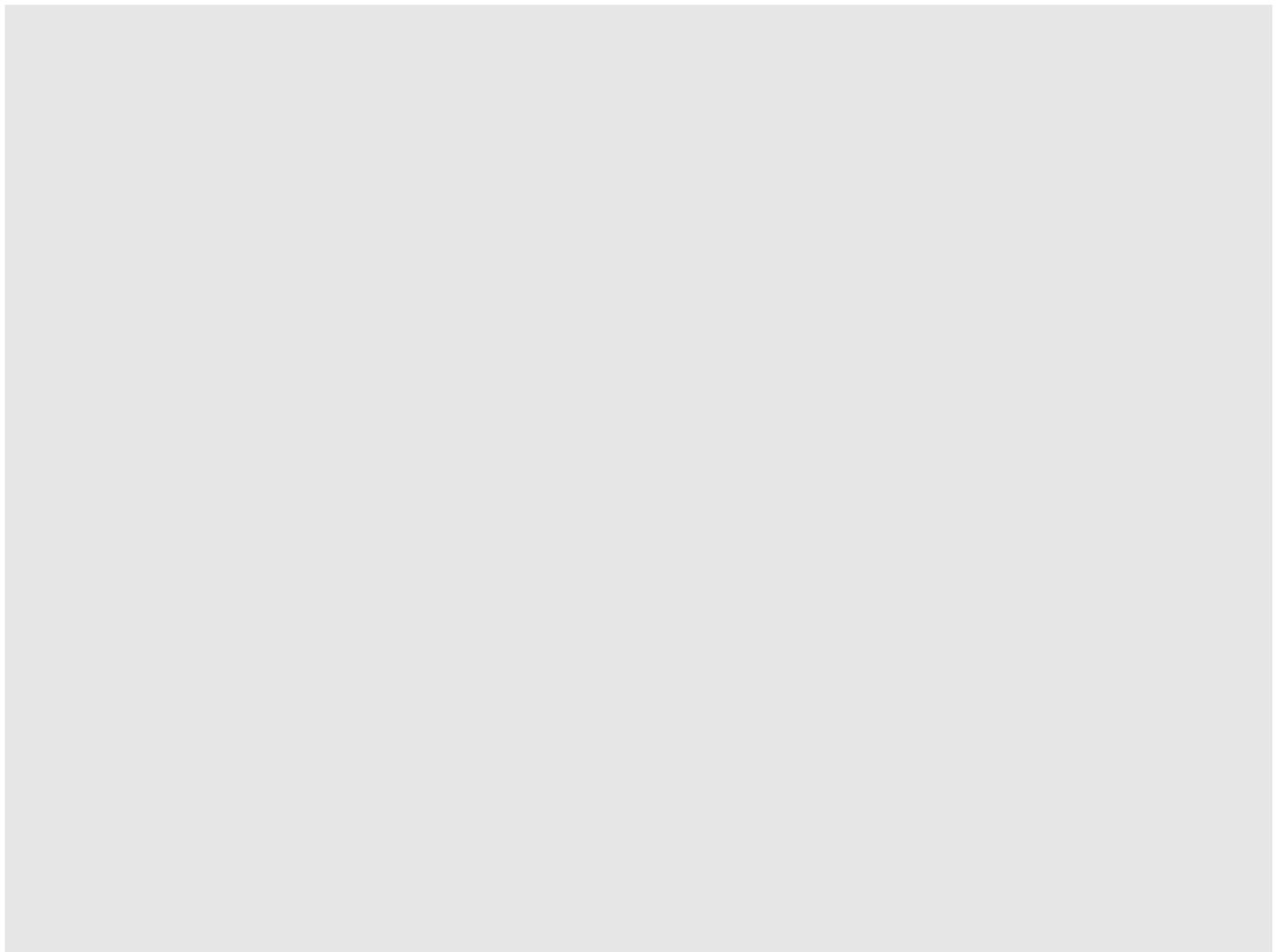
The facility will have a lounge, game room, wellness room, gym and a café area.

The youth center will also have classrooms, conference rooms and office spaces as requested by the city's community partners, Rohrbaugh said.

"It's a bonus that McCurdy Field is directly across the street, so you can really start to see this amazing youth campus that will be developed to help support" Frederick's youth, Rohrbaugh said.

The idea would be for the Boys & Girls Club to service youth ages 6 to 13 and for the youth center to services those 14 to 24.

Rohrbaugh shared renderings of the interior of the building, and said the aim was to make it feel like a place that people 14 to 24 would want to go.



A rendering of what the Frederick Youth Center on Scotty's Bus Lane will look like.

Image courtesy city of Frederick

"The goal was that somebody who was early in their young adulthood — 23, 24; maybe had a family and was just looking to find a fresh place to start over or build connections or find resources — they would feel just as comfortable here as a high school freshman," Rohrbaugh said.

The youth center will also play host to the city's "reengagement" programs for youth.

Jason Francis, who the city hired as its reengagement program manager in October, said reengagement is about aiding youth who are "disconnected" from school, work or mental health supports.

Gayon Sampson, chief of staff in the office of Mayor Michael O'Connor, said the city has received \$3 million in Transportation, Housing and Urban Development funds from the federal government for the center.

The city estimated in September 2024 that the renovation of the building is expected to cost \$6.8 million.

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Nolan Wilkinson