

White Paper 2001:

Feasibility Study: Construction and Building for Baker Youth Clubs'

April 24, 2001

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This paper is the investigation of the feasibility of Baker Youth Clubs moving ahead with a plan to build their own facility. The initial section is broken down in to the key sections that discuss why there is a need, what is the club history, and what does the research currently suggest. The second section of this study looks at fundraising and the important factors of fundraising and to report on the initial findings of the study including the results of a survey of the Club's board of directors. Finally, this paper will make recommendations as to the feasibility of Baker Youth Clubs' moving forward with a project of this magnitude.

### **Reason for the Study**

Baker Youth Clubs' yearly attendance for the year 2000 was **23,833**. This is the primary reason for the need to investigate the potential for this youth service to build a new building. Our community will continue to need this service that has been provided since 1926. There are several reasons that the club would like to consider building it's own facility.

1. Currently the Baker Youth Club is one of many tenants that rent the Pete Thorn Youth Center from the City of Warsaw. This limits the Club in many ways from providing the services that they wish to provide.
2. Currently the Club is limited to only 21 hours per week in the Pete Thorn Youth Center. This does not allow the Club to commit to any long-term goals to change as the community changes. The club would like to provide many more services for the community including (but not limited to):

- Day Care Center or School during the daytime hours during the school year
  - Clubs for boys and girls in the evenings Monday through Friday in the evenings and all day on Saturday and Sunday
  - Midnight recreation leagues for all of the people in the community that work 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> shifts. This would meet the needs of many people that do not have recreational choices due to the shift that they work.
  - The goal is to have a facility and an organization that is for the entire community and to be open as many hours per day as the club is currently open per week.
3. The current building is too small and does not meet the needs of the current services that are provided. Currently the "Upwards" basketball league averaged an approximate attendance of 700 kids and parents per night. The current gym is too small to accommodate this type of demand. The courts are too small and there is no room for families to support their children.
  4. The condition of the gym is poor. The floor is in bad shape and needs to be replaced.
  5. There are difficulties that are innate for a renter. Any type of craft project or remodeling, game or activity must be limited to the current facility and with concern for the next renters who will be in the building. This detracts from the positive family atmosphere that the club wishes to create for kids.

6. Current research supports the value of after school programming as a proven crime deterrent in other communities. (Please see research and statistics review)

The Baker Youth Clubs have survived and thrived for the past 75 years of renting facilities. Considering last years attendance figures it seems that if the club had it's own facility, it could serve many more people and expand it's effectiveness.

### **Baker Youth Club History**

Understanding where the Club has come from is important in consideration of future direction of the Club.

Baker Youth Clubs originated in the mind of Bramwell Baker in the summer of 1926. Mr. Baker, of Boston, Mass., but whose boyhood home was Warsaw, influenced a group of community minded citizens to organize a Boys' Club here. He offered to give \$1000 per year if the community raised the balance of funds necessary. Baker Youth Clubs are rich in tradition and very unique in having only 3 executive directors since it's inception. Pete Thorn was the director of Baker Boys' Club for 37 years. He was a standout athlete at Wabash College and was employed by the Warsaw school system and coached for many years. The first club was housed above the old Sharp's Hardware store on the south side of the Courthouse from 1926 to 1939. In 1939 the Baker Boys' Club moved to the high school on West Main Street. (Now the site of the retired tigers home)

During the late 30's and early 40's a girls' club was organized through arrangements with the Federated Clubs of Warsaw. An instructor was paid two dollars and fifty cents for one meeting per week, plus expenses. During the fifties, Club was the place to be.

In 1963 Robert Lichtenwalter was hired as the club's 2<sup>nd</sup> executive director and served for the next 29 years. "Litch" was a schoolteacher and coach for many years in the Warsaw school system. He is still very active in Baker Youth Clubs today serving as a Program Director as well as Director of fund raising.

In 1971 with the help of the Business and Professional Women's Club, Baker Boys' Club founded the Warsaw Girls' Club. Baker Boys' Club met the director's salary and all budget needs. Even today the Boy's club shares it's resources with the Warsaw Girls' Club (now known as Boys and Girls Club of Kosciusko County) by allowing them to use the equipment of Baker Youth Clubs at no charge, even though they are a separate organization. Also in 1971 Baker Boys' Club became a United Way agency, which it still is today.

In 1978 Baker Boys' Club organized the Claypool Youth Activities Club that included a branch of Baker Boys' Club. This was the first satellite club. In 1980 the Club moved to its present location in the building named after its first director Pete Thorn. This serves as their headquarters. In 1992 Scott Wiley became the Club's 3<sup>rd</sup> Executive Director. Baker Boys' Club changed to Baker Youth Clubs under his leadership in 1995. This includes clubs for boys and separate clubs for girls in locations such as Silver Lake, Claypool, Pierceton, North Webster, Atwood, Leesburg, Milford, and Mentone.

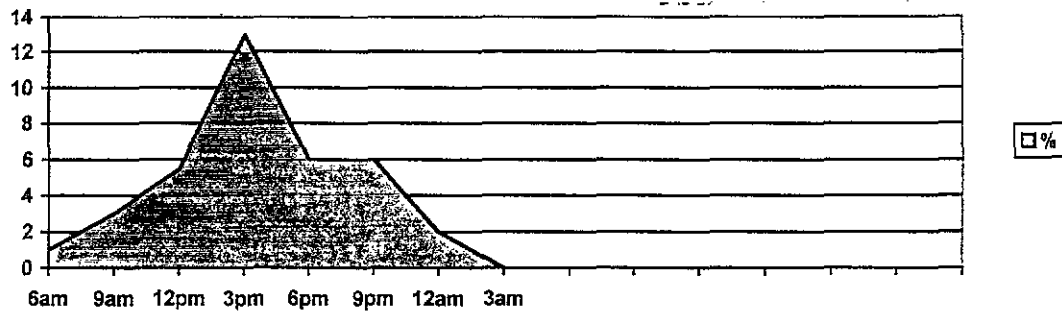
In 1996 Baker Youth Clubs operated a total of 18 clubs around the county with a total attendance of 8, 511.

### **Research and Statistics supporting after school activities**

Fight Crime, Invest in Kids is a national anti-crime organization led by police chiefs, prosecutors, and crime survivors. The following excerpt is from their website. "The most powerful weapons in our anti-crime arsenal are the investments in children and youth that get them off to the right start and help them grow up with the skills and moral values to be good citizens instead of criminals. These investments include quality educational preschool care, the prevention of child abuse and neglect, good schools and after-school programs, and school-to-work and job training programs so all kids can look forward to making an honest living as contributing members of the community. There are two especially powerful crime-prevention strategies: child care and after-school programs."

"When the school bell rings, turning millions of children and teens out on the street with neither constructive activities nor adult supervision, violent juvenile crime suddenly triples and prime time for juvenile crime begins. On school days, the hours from 3-6 PM are the peak hours for:

- ✓ Teens to commit crimes
- ✓ Innocent kids to become crime victims
- ✓ 16 and 17 year olds to be in or cause a car crash
- ✓ Teen sex
- ✓ Kids to smoke, drink, or use drugs



### **Violent Juvenile Crime Triples When the School Bell Rings**

The number of children and teens nationally whose need for after-school programs is unmet likely exceeds eleven million."

There is a vast amount of research and statistics that supports the value of having after-school programming as a positive in any community.

Other programmatic research has concluded:

- Young people who received a Big Brothers/Big Sisters mentor were half as likely to begin illegal drug use or to hit someone as applicants randomly assigned to a waiting list.
- In the 3 years after Baltimore's Police Department opened a PAL after-school program, juvenile crime in the neighborhood dropped nearly 10%. The risk of kids becoming crime victims was cut nearly in half.
- A study of a 32 month after-school and summer skill development program in a Canadian public housing project showed arrests declining by 75% during the course of the program.

## **Leadership Involvement in a Capital Campaign**

As with any major project within an organization leadership is **KEY!** Before the organization begins a project of this magnitude there are several critical questions that must be addressed first by the Board of Directors and then should be addressed by the core donors. Along with the CEO or Director the Board, these individual's must first show their commitment to the campaign. This begins with their willingness to support the project financially, and secondly their willingness to solicit others to partner with the organization.

It is recommended that they address five specific questions that will allow them to effectively make a well-educated decision to proceed or delay a given project.

These five questions were taken to the board in the form of an anonymous questionnaire. (appendix 2)

- 1. How strong is the case for the proposed program?** Does leadership feel that the programs meet valid needs? Is there sufficient dramatic, emotional appeal to merit and win financial support?
- 2. What is the overall economic climate among your constituents and in the United States generally.** What is the attitude among leadership regarding the economy? Are there any campaigns ongoing or planned that would have a negative impact on your plans? Are there local churches or other non-profits in campaigns?
- 3. Is leadership willing to accept a major role in the campaign effort?** Does your volunteer board, individually and collectively, possess the influence to bring

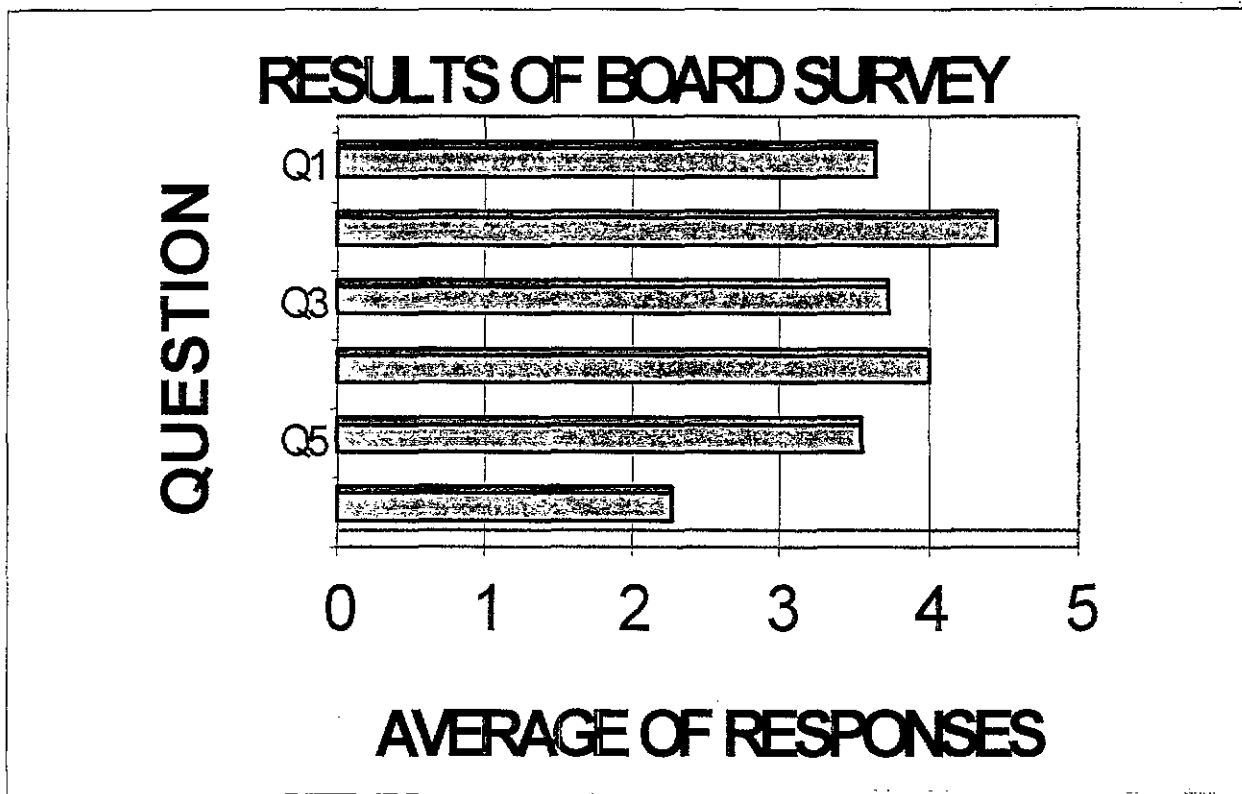


about success? Will your constituents follow your present leadership into a program of this magnitude?

**4. What type of financial support can you expect for this project?** Who are the potential sources for major gifts and at what level can you anticipate participation?

**5. What is the proper timing and strategy for the campaign?** What must be done to assure success for the campaign? What should be the action-plan and schedule for the campaign?

Addressing these areas first will insure the board's ability to complete a project and will also give insights into the timing and scope of the project. To prepare means to not to finish a campaign before it begins.



Q1	3.64
Q2	4.45
Q3	3.73
Q4	4
Q5	3.55
Q6	2.27

The survey was done anonymously through the written form that is on the previous page. 11 of 13 board members responded to the survey. 3 of the board members who could not come to the survey meeting gave their information over the phone.

The results seem to suggest that the board is above average in their belief that there is a need for this project in our community. This is shown by the above average response to question #2 as 4.45 out of a possible 5.

Question 4 responses indicate that the board feels that our local economy is in above average (4.00) condition at this time. This is important in a capital campaign of this nature. The board indicated that they had above average (3.55) interest in participating in a major role and 10 of the 11 respondents indicated that they would participate in developing strategies and action plans for the fund raising campaign. 8 of the 11 board members indicated that the current board has the influence necessary to bring about success in a campaign of this type.

One thing that the board must consider in deciding to move ahead with a project of this type is the Board's below average (2.27) willingness to make a financial commitment to this project. It should be noted that this was a poorly worded question on the survey and this may have impacted the results. However, it is likely not a positive sign that this item was the lowest of all scaled scores. Another area of concern is the Board members current attendance at board meetings. Current attendance statistics indicate that more than half of the board members have a poor attendance record over the past year. This is identified by attendance at less than half of the meetings.

Obviously a project of this magnitude is not to be undertaken lightly. It would seem that this study was able to identify many positive traits and beliefs of the Baker Youth Clubs Board of Directors. The following recommendations are made to assist the board in considering the feasibility of moving forward with this project.

### Recommendations:

It would seem that the next step for the Baker Youth Clubs' board is to evaluate how their current enthusiasm for this project can be translated into actual fund raising by developing a strategy and action plan that realistically looks at their ability to get others to participate financially to this project.

The board may want to consider recruiting individuals who can make a strong financial commitment to this campaign. It is likely that others will not make a commitment to a project that the board is not also making a strong financial commitment to.

The current Club is organized and run by a part time director. It is likely that the board will have to make creating a full time position to lead this type of project. The board will have to create a financial package and a means of creating this revenue.

To fulfill the set needs that have been set aside, it is likely that the club will have to identify more clearly programs to be utilized to attract kids to this facility. The current "open gym" format is good at times, but will likely be difficult to "sell" to potential donors.

Appendix 1: loan options

Feasibility Study:

Construction for Baker Youth Club

*Financing Options*

Option #1

\$750,000 @ 8.50% for 180 Months

\$7,385.55 Monthly Payment

Option #2

\$500,000 @ 8.50% for 180 Months

\$4,923.70 Monthly Payment

Option #3

\$250,000 @ 8.50% for 180 Months

\$2,461.85 Monthly Payment

## Appendix 2: Board questionnaire

### Board Questionnaire

Please answer all questions honestly. This is an anonymous questionnaire designed to gather information for the feasibility study. Please scale your answers with 1 being low agreement or feeling and 5 meaning high agreement or feeling.

1. How strong do you feel that the case is for the new building? 1 2 3 4 5
  2. Do you feel the programs meet valid needs? 1 2 3 4 5
  3. Is there sufficient emotional appeal to merit and win financial support for this project? 1 2 3 4 5
  4. How would you rate our local economy? 1 2 3 4 5
  5. How willing are you as a board member to accept a major role in this fund raising project?  
1 2 3 4 5
  6. What level are you willing to participate financially in this project ? 1 2 3  
4 5
  7. Would you be willing to serve on a fund raising committee to develop strategies and action plans for the fund raising campaign? Y N
  8. Do you know of any other financial campaigns going on right now? Y N
  9. Do you feel that this board posses the influence necessary to bring about success in this campaign? Y N
  10. Who are the potential sources for major gifts?
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