

HAMPTON VA

NEWS RELEASE

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Hampton planning 2 neighborhood centers; temporary building set for Old Hampton

June 10, 2015 – The City of Hampton is making plans for two new neighborhood centers that will offer recreation, meeting and classroom space, as well as commercial kitchens. One will replace the aging Old Hampton Community Center and one will be located in the Fox Hill area, Parks and Recreation Director Jim Wilson told City Council today.

The neighborhood centers are estimated to cost less than a third of a full-scale community center.

Old Hampton Community Center has been in need of replacement for years. The 1973 building has mechanical, electrical, plumbing and roof issues. It contains the oldest of the city's three pools. When the city began looking to build a 25-meter replacement pool, community demand surfaced for a larger regional aquatics facility. That idea is being studied, but no decision has been made. If built, the larger facility would need a larger site, and areas in Coliseum Central are under study.

The current building won't last until its replacement is built, Wilson told Council, and needs to be closed at the end of the summer. Wilson said that swim teams, open swims and water aerobics would be relocated to the pools at the Hampton Aquatic Center and Fort Monroe Community Center, which would expand pool hours. The city's therapeutic recreation program for disabled students would also be relocated to a different center.

For neighborhood community meetings, the city will place temporary units on the Old Hampton site. Two modular classrooms will allow separate space for adults and children while the old facility is torn down and the new one constructed.

Hampton has been looking to build a center in the northeast quadrant of the city for years, but the need intensified when a tornado leveled a city-owned building at Grundland Creek Park. The new center could be built adjacent to a school, and talks are under way with Hampton City Schools.

The city operates two neighborhood centers: Y.H. Thomas and Little England Cultural Center. In the neighborhood center model, the city provides some staffing but community organizations help manage and program the facilities. City officials will work with neighborhood groups on the design of each of the two new facilities over the next 12-24 months.

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