

Albert Lea Senior Center: Request for Proposals for Facility

July 30, 2025



Introduction

Purpose of Request for Proposals (RFP)

The City of Albert Lea is conducting a holistic evaluation of its Senior Center, including its location at Skyline Plaza, 1739 W. Main St., Albert Lea, MN. The city convened a team of several community partners to conduct the evaluation, following a process set by the National Council On Aging/National Institute of Senior Centers.

A review of the center's physical facility revealed areas for improvement, mainly accessibility at all accesses to the center.

In addition to improved access and compliance with the Minnesota Accessibility Code, the City of Albert Lea seeks to:

- Provide a Senior Center that continues to meet the programming needs of residents age 55 and older.
- Improve natural lighting, access to green spaces and access to services.
- Enhance the curb appeal of the Senior Center through exterior signage and other features.
- Be fiscally responsible to property owners who fund the center through taxes.
- Continue to offer a welcoming, secure and safe space for senior citizens.

The purpose of this RFP is to solicit proposals for the center's long-term physical facility from the current landlord as well as entities interested in hosting the Senior Center. This RFP will close on Sept. 26, 2025, with review of proposals by City of Albert Lea staff, Senior Center Evaluation Team, Senior Center Board and City Council. The goal is to present a proposal for City Council approval in November 2025.

Description of current Senior Center

- **Mission:**
 - To coordinate and provide programs and services to enrich the lives and health of senior citizens through educational, social and recreational activities.
- **Membership:**
 - Membership is open to residents age 55 and older from Freeborn County and surrounding area.
 - The current membership totals 270 with about 170 checking in at least once a week.
 - About 50 members are members of the Senior Center only with remaining being dual members of the Albert Lea YMCA and Senior Center.

- About 14% of members come from outside Albert Lea, including Alden, Blooming Prairie, Bricelyn, Clarks Grove, Conger, Ellendale, Emmons, Glenville, Hartland, Mason City, New Richland, Northwood, Owatonna and Wells.
 - The median age of members is 81.
 - Annual fee: \$30 per person; free for Family Y members in that a Y membership includes the Center.
- **Oversight and operations:**
 - The Albert Lea Recreation Department oversees the Senior Center. The City of Albert Lea contracts with the Albert Lea Family YMCA to operate the Senior Center.
 - Under the current lease, the Albert Lea Recreation Department is currently responsible for maintenance of major items and appliances.
 - A volunteer board of 7 members advises the Recreation Department, Albert Lea YMCA and City Council on operating the Senior Center. In addition, Albert Lea Recreation staff and 1 City Councilor serve as non-voting members.
- **Description of current facility:**
 - 8,000 square feet total.
 - Open 33.5 hours per week: 8:30 a.m. – 4 p.m. Monday through Thursday and 8:30 a.m. – noon on Friday. (These hours are subject to change.)
 - The City of Albert Lea leases the space from Skyline Plaza for \$4,150 a month. This lease will expire on Dec. 31, 2026.
 - Access:
 - Through a door on the south side (Front Street) directly from the parking lot and a door on the north from the Plaza interior. Neither is an automatic door. The south door has an interior ramp.
 - The Plaza has several doors: 2 on the north side, with 1 being automatic, and 2 on the south side, with 1 being automatic. The automatic door on the north side was not working when the Evaluation Team conducted a tour.
 - The SMART bus and Senior Resources use the south door for dropping off and picking up members.
 - Parking:
 - Available on the north and south sides of the Plaza. The portion owned by Bomgaar's was recently resurfaced, greatly improving the safety for Senior Center members. However, the portion owned by Skyline Plaza is in poor condition.
 - Most members drive themselves to the center so parking is important.
 - Restrooms: The Senior Center has 2 restrooms within its facility.
 - Spaces:
 - Front desk and office
 - Billiards and TV room
 - Commercial kitchen
 - Large gathering space
 - Card-playing space
 - Puzzle area

- Arts and Craft room
 - In addition, members use the commons area of the plaza to play bags. The doors and lighting for the Senior Center in the mall hallway resemble a city street.
 - Notes: The current center has no green space and natural lighting with little access to walking paths.
- Staffing levels:
 - The YMCA provides the staff with 1 full-time employee and 2 part-time employees for an FTE of 1.5.
- Minimum capacity needed:
 - 5,000 square feet for activity space, office and restrooms plus a commercial kitchen or access to a commercial kitchen.
- Description of programs:
 - Card games including cribbage, bridge and 500
 - Exercise classes including “Building Bones” and aerobics
 - Crafts, quilting, knitting and art classes
 - Coffee and snacks, including coffee with police officers and firefighters
 - Bingo is the most popular program
 - Events including Memory Café and a monthly birthday party
 - Outings such as trips to musicals and casinos
- Brief history:
 - 1969: The City of Albert Lea used a grant to establish the Senior Center at the Carnegie Library building on College Street. It opened with 200 members and was staffed by the Albert Lea Parks and Recreation Department.
 - 1998: Moved to new facility at Skyline Plaza, 1739 W. Main St. with the City of Albert Lea leasing the space. The City paid for the renovations while the Senior Center raised the money for furnishings and kitchen equipment. Membership exceeded 1,000.
 - 2023: The City of Albert Lea contracted with Albert Lea Family Y to operate the Senior Center.
- Funding:
 - The City of Albert Lea funds the Senior Center.
 - The YMCA retains membership fees.
 - The YMCA retains rental fees up to \$4,000 and uses the funds for furnishings at the Center. Any rental revenue over \$4,000 is paid to the City of Albert Lea.

Submission requirements

Please provide a written proposal following this outline. The evaluation team will review the proposals using a scoring system with the points listed for each section.

- **Description of proposer:** **10 points**
 - Full name of entity.
 - Names of owners, board members and/or top management.
 - Address if different than the proposed site.
 - Contact person with phone and email.
 - Description of entity, including year founded, services provided, experience related to providing facilities and/or serving senior citizens, examples of other facilities that entity manages or projects led by entity.
 - Describe why you are interested in this proposal.
 - List the lease or purchase terms, including rent or price.
 - Please provide additional information that you believe will help the evaluation team make a decision.

Minimum requirements: **50 points**

- Square footage for activities:
 - Minimum of 5,000 square feet
 - Space for large group activities, including space for 4 billiard tables and a room divider or other noise barrier between the billiard tables and large group activities
 - Separate space for small group activities, including exercise programs
 - Office space for 1 person
- Square footage for office:
 - Minimum of 200 square feet for office space
- Minimum number of parking spots:
 - 70
- Structure: List the following
 - Date the site was constructed
 - Type of construction
 - History of building uses
 - Date of the last roof replacement
 - Any modifications since the construction date
 - Any repairs within the last 2 years
- Patron access:
 - Describe how the interior and exterior of the facility is barrier free, especially for those with disabilities. This description should encompass restrooms, accesses and parking area.
 - Include photos showing accessibility.

- Are the HVAC, electrical and plumbing systems in good working order? List the following for each system:
 - Date of installation
 - Anticipated repairs and replacement dates
 - Repairs within the last 2 years
- Is there adequate lighting inside, at accesses and in the parking area?
 - Describe the interior lighting system.
 - Describe the exterior lighting system.
- Safety and security:
 - Describe the site's safety, fire and security system(s).

Preferred elements

20 points

- Access to a commercial kitchen:
 - Describe the kitchen, including appliances included.
 - Is the kitchen proposed to be the exclusive use of the Senior Center? If not, describe how the center will access the kitchen space.
- Access to outdoor space:
 - Describe the outdoor space, including the area's size and access to it.
- Interior natural light:
 - Describe the natural light features inside.
- Energy-efficiency:
 - Describe any energy efficiencies.
 - Include all utility bills for the last 2 years.
- Capacity to rent the large group space to the public:
 - Will the Senior Center be able to rent the large space to members of the public for private events such as open houses and parties?
- Within walking distance of amenities: How far is the site from the following?
 - Senior living
 - Agencies that serve senior citizens
 - Medical providers
 - Grocery stores
 - Pharmacies
 - Other amenities
- Easy-to-find location:
 - Describe the location and its access to major streets and highways.
 - Is it on the SMART bus route?

Site analysis

20 points

- Address of proposed site.
- Describe how the site fits the requirements or describe the work needed to make the site fit the requirements.
- Include photos, schematics and/or drawings of site or of planned site.
- Include cost estimates if remodeling is required.
- Describe breakdown of remodeling costs if needed.
 - What portion will the building owner provide?
 - What portion is the City of Albert Lea expected to provide?
- Is there capacity to expand the Senior Center in the future?
- Include any other information that you think will help the evaluation team make a recommendation.

Submittal and more information

Deadline: 4:30 p.m. on Sept. 26, 2025

- How to submit: Send the proposal by mail or email to

Cathy Malakowsky
Engagement and Enrichment Director for the City of Albert Lea
221 E. Clark St., Albert Lea, MN 56007
cmalakowsky@ci.albertlea.mn.us

- Contact person for questions and tour of current site:

Bob Furland
Recreation Manager for City of Albert Lea
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