

SAMPLE COMMUNITY USE BUDGET: EVERETT COMMUNITY USE PILOT PROJECT

A community use team from the city of Everett decided to pilot a community use initiative at one of the school district's junior high schools. The chosen school had a gymnasium with a separate, street-level entrance. This meant that community users would not have to walk through the rest of the school to get to the gym, alleviating some of the school's concerns about security. Staff from the Department of Parks and Recreation agreed to provide a staff member to supervise open gym hours one night per week. Everyone in the community would be able to access the space during those hours, with sports equipment like basketballs provided by the Department. The six-month pilot was planned to begin in the late fall when the weather would become too cold for families to exercise outside. A school custodian would also be present to open the space and secure it at the end of the evening. The community use team submitted a municipal budget request to the Mayor's Office for the amount necessary to complete the six-month pilot. Below is the preliminary draft budget for Everett's community use pilot project:

PROJECT EXPENSE	AMOUNT
Use of the elementary school gymnasium	Provided by the school free of charge
Staff from the Department of Recreation at \$35/hr for 2 hours once per week for 24 weeks	\$1,680.00
2 hours of the school custodian's time at \$45/hr once per week for 24 weeks	\$2,160.00
Sports and field equipment	Provided by the Department of Recreation
Flyers and publicity for the initiative	Provided by the Energize Everett Initiative and the Department of Parks and Recreation
TOTAL	\$3,840.00

Funding Community Use

In an era of budget cuts and economizing, finding extra funds for new initiatives can seem like an impossible task. Investing in community use of existing facilities is a cost-effective choice that makes sense in the current economic climate. At once, it spares communities the expense of building new recreational facilities, capitalizes on resources that are well-established and for which maintenance expenses are already built into the municipal budget, keeps residents healthy, and provides community members with more opportunities to engage in safe, productive activities. Every community wants healthier residents, and community use is one of the cheapest health promotion options for any municipality.

Funds for community use might come from municipal budget requests, municipal revolving funds, voluntary contributions from intended users, private donors or foundations, formal grants, or a combination of multiple sources. Including all of the key players in your budget and funding discussions is extremely important because each will possess different information about the cost and availability of funds for various elements of the community use initiative.

Excerpt from *The Massachusetts Community Use Toolkit*,
published by the Center for Health Law and Policy Innovation at Harvard Law School.

Find the toolkit at <http://www.chlpi.org/projects-and-publications/health-library/>