Citizens 4 A Strong Fairmont ™

Position Paper #1

A Community Center Was Never the #1 Idea

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Citizens 4 A Strong Fairmont™

In 2014 a group of people got together and started Project 1590. One of their earliest efforts was to ask the citizens of Fairmont and surrounding Martin County to submit ideas for what they would like to see brought to Fairmont. That seems like a very reasonable and positive question for a civic-minded group to ask the citizens. One of their objectives was to conduct a survey to determine the top ten (10) ideas for improving Fairmont.

Project 1590 had good intentions. No one, including myself, is questioning the sincerity of the people involved in Project 1590 and their work to improve Fairmont. They have already accomplished some great things for the City, and they should be commended for those efforts. This particular effort, with its finding of the "#1 Idea" for improving Fairmont is continually quoted. Therefore it is worth taking a deeper look at the ideas survey process.

Process Overview

The process that Project 1590 launched to find which improvements the citizens of Fairmont wanted most was unusually complicated. A sketch of what we know about the process is shown below.

- **Original survey** – Citizen were asked to send in ideas for improvements to the town.

    ○ 1,327 submissions were sent in by citizens, some with multiple ideas.[1]

    ○ The Sentinel stated that 1,686 total ideas were submitted.[2]

    ○ 94% of the ideas were eliminated or combined into the "Top 80 Ideas".

- **2nd survey** – The "Top 80 Ideas" were sent out to the citizens.

    ○ Citizens were asked to choose their 15 favorites.

    ○ 1,700 responses were received.[3]

    ○ 62.5% were eliminated or combined into the "Top 30 Ideas".

- **3rd survey** – the "Top 30 Ideas" were sent out to the citizens.

    ○ Citizens were asked to choose their 7 favorites.

    ○ 2,300+ number of responses were received.[4]

    ○ 66.6% were eliminated or combined into the "Top 10 Ideas" with a Community Center being placed as number 1.

Subjective Nature of Survey

 The major problem with this type of survey is its subjectivity. This three-phase survey process injected a very high degree of subjectivity into the evaluation process. At many points in the process, judgement calls were made by those who reviewed the data to eliminate or combine ideas. We know very little

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[1] Project 1590 posted on their website the original Excel database, which contained 1,327 submissions of ideas about things that people wanted to see for improving Fairmont. You can access this database at: https://project1590.com/ideas/.

[2]*Top Local Ideas List Grows Shorter*, Fairmont Sentinel, Fairmont MN March 14, 2015 stated that the number of ideas collected in the original survey was 1,686.

[3] Sentinel, "*Top Local Ideas List Grows Shorter*", Fairmont Sentinel, April 14, 2015.

[4] Ibid., "*Panel Aims for New Use of Buildings*" November 9, 2015.

about the criteria that was used to determine which ideas were, and were not, moved forward to the next step of the survey, especially in the process of culling ideas down to the second survey of 80 ideas.

A quick example will help illustrate how judgement calls can impact the outcome. The original list of 1,327 citizen submissions included only 28 (2.1%)[5] submissions that stated a "Community Center". There were also submissions that mentioned a community center plus one or more amenities such as: swimming pool, indoor walking track, basketball courts, handball courts, a sheet of ice, fitness center, tennis court, daycare, classrooms, meeting rooms, baseball/softball pitching area, rock climbing wall, kitchen, etc. When you add these to the 28 (2.1%) mentioned earlier the number of idea submissions for a community center jumps to 78 (5.9%).

We also need to consider those submissions that specifically mention a YMCA, which were 24 (1.7%). Further complicating this issue are the submissions that mention a recreation center or teen/youth center or a senior center, which were a total of 43 (3.2%). These are age-specific facilities that could be either stand-alone facilities or part of a larger multi-purpose community center.

Submissions for these types of facilities included qualifying and explanatory comments for amenities such as laser-tag, bowling alley, food/snack shop, tennis court, a place to have seasonal parties, chess/checkers tables, and a kitchen for a teen/youth/senior center. There were also idea submissions for individual sporting activities without any mention of a community center. These included: Hockey/Ice 47 (3.5%), Pool 27 (2.0%), and Fitness Center 4 (0.3%).

None of these ideas have significant numbers by themselves. Their low numbers would tend to indicate a low level of interest amount the citizens. This would be especially true for things like a fitness center, mini-golf, paint ball, and general sports that included a few references to archery, roller skating, rock climbing, chess/checkers, bingo, etc. However, in the case of a fitness center or ice hockey the low number of idea submissions could also be that participants in the ideas survey already had knowledge about those existing amenities and saw no need to suggest them.

These issues point to the wide variance of opinion about the number of suggestions and what constitutes a Community Center/YMCA/Recreation Center/Athletic Complex. If you add them all together under a single category, such as a "community center' they gain numerical significance.

Deciding which ideas to add together can significantly skew the results for or against a multi-purpose facility such as a Community Center and/or YMCA. As will be shown in the following discussion many of the idea submissions that needed to be added together to pull the idea for a community center/YMCA to a higher position in the rankings could also be constructed individually at a much lower cost than a single multi-purpose facility.

Project 1590 stated a well-meaning, but problematic, methodology from the beginning,

> "The group's goal was to gather ideas from the community, <u>narrow down the list</u>, and then let the community vote on what it would like to see added to Fairmont's current assets."[6]

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[5] The percent in parenthesis represents the percent of the 1,327 submissions.

[6] Sentinel. *Project 1590 Aims for Local Improvements*. Fairmont Sentinel, Fairmont, MN August 22, 2014.

In the discussion that follows several significant issues related to this methodology will be examined. It led to errors that caused Project 1590 to erroneously prioritize a Community Center above other ideas submitted by the citizens of Fairmont.

Survey Control

Let's look at the issue of survey control. In order to meet the standards of a true statistical survey, Project 1590 should have established a certain degree of rigor over the control of how they collected the information to ensure accurate results. For example, no information was provided regarding what, if any, controls were put in place that would keep one person from submitting the same or similar idea multiple times and potentially creating an inaccurate outcome. We do not know whether 50, 100, 1000, or 1,327 people submitted the ideas listed in the original Excel database. In addition, no control was put in place to distinguish submissions from Fairmont or Martin County residents, or residents from outside both localities.

The issue of survey control also addresses the requirement of having an independent, unbiased third-party review when the goal is to utilize the data to lobby for taxpayer-funded projects. Actioning the "Top 10" perceived wants and needs of the community from the results of the 1590 survey creates a situation in which the taxpayers become the largest donors to any project. In a situation like this a third-party review, rather than a review directly funded and under the supervision of an advocacy group such as Project 1590, would have led to more accurate results and more accurate taxpayer spending.

Independent Survey

An independent professional survey firm would have constructed a questionnaire to capture people's interests in specific categories. The questionnaire would have also defined those categories and what they included. For example, the survey company would have set up options for people to select from categories that might have included: Infrastructure, Parks, Lakes, Trails, Community Center, Safety and Security, Education, Government, Business Development, Healthcare, Transportation, Taxes, etc.

Defining a category might include for infrastructure: roads, storm sewers, electrical power transmission lines, transformers, natural gas lines, etc. The survey firm could then sub-divide each category into smaller sub-categories. They could also include information about the costs that the taxpayers were willing to pay for additional amenities. If a three survey configuration was decided upon for the project, there would have been published criteria about the elimination or combination of ideas in subsequent phases of the survey process.

Chain-of-Custody

Finally, the issue of survey control speaks to the chain-of-custody of the information and the integrity of the data. There were no independent checks and balances put in place to ensure that data was not duplicated, lost, or scrubbed from the original database. According to the Sentinel, Project 1590 stated that they received 1,686 ideas, but the FACCF website states the quantity to be 1,600, potentially a

rounding estimate.[7] Yet, the on-line Excel database of original ideas posted on Project 1590's website only contained 1,327 idea submissions.[8]

Project 1590 did not tell the community how it counted the number of ideas from the original submissions. For example, if some submissions contained more than one idea, did the 1,686 ideas include the multiple ideas that were contained in some of the 1,327 submissions or did 359 submissions get lost or scrubbed? No information was provided to explain the discrepancy.[9]

Data Collection and Analysis Assumptions

In the following analysis I assumed that each of the 1,327 submissions that Project 1590 posted in their data base represented idea(s) submitted by a single individual. I also assumed that the submission of ideas was controlled and that no manipulation of the raw data occurred. On the basis of these two assumptions, I proceeded to analyze Project 1590's Excel database.

I first categorized the ideas into the macro-groups shown below. This was necessary because the category of a community center is distinctly different than, for example, an idea for an individual restaurant (e.g. Chipotle or Olive Garden) or business (e.g. Target, JoAnn Fabric, etc.). A community center, by definition can have any combination of various amenities from basketball court(s), to a swimming pool, fitness equipment, handball court(s), meeting rooms, and many other possibilities.

Therefore, to better evaluate the wishes expressed by the people who submitted ideas it was necessary to group ideas by categories. The categories are listed from the greatest number of submissions and percentages to the least number of submissions and percentages.

- Business/Economic Development/Jobs: 368 Idea Submissions (27.5%)
- Entertainment/Recreation: 244 Idea Submissions (18.4%)
- Recreational Amenities (Lakes/Parks): 169 Idea Submissions (12.7%)
- City Improvements/Marketing: 121 Idea Submissions (9.1%)
- Community Center/YMCA: 102 Idea Submissions (7.7%)
- Infrastructure: 75 Idea Submissions (5.7%)
- Trails: 64 Idea Submissions (4.8%)
- Housing: 26 Idea Submissions (2.0%)
- Public/Social Services: 26 Idea Submissions (2.0%)

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[7] *Top Local Ideas List Grows Shorter*, Fairmont Sentinel, Fairmont MN March 14, 2015.

[8] *Top Local Ideas List Grows Shorter*, Fairmont Sentinel, Fairmont MN March 14, 2015 stated that the number of ideas collected in the original survey was 1,686. In a subsequent issue of the Sentinel, "*Project 1590 List Offers Possibilities, Pure Wishes*". Fairmont Sentinel, Fairmont, MN March 19, 2015 the list of ideas is stated to be 1,600. Although there is no problem with modifying a list of ideas and scrubbing some of those submissions from that list, if they are not pertinent (e.g. crude, fanciful, etc.). Project 1590 needed to explain their reasons, with examples, for modifying the list. The list modifications should then be verified by a 3rd-party if that data was going to be used in an attempt to influence a governing body (e.g. the City Council) to lobby for a tax-subsidy.

[9] There may be perfectly valid reasons for scrubbing or revising information provided by citizens. The issue is that no information has been provided why that occurred — if it occurred at all.

- Education: 22 Idea Submissions (1.7%)

- Political/Government: 17 Idea Submissions (1.3%)

- All Other: 76 Idea Submissions (5.7%)

I broke down these macro-groups into specific idea sub-categories that had the greatest number of occurrences. For example, under Business / Economic Development I sub-divided that category into Restaurants/Food, Retail Shops, Building Re-Use, Downtown Revitalization, etc. I include those breakdowns for each of the macro-categories and the results at the end of this document.

Narrowing Down the List of Ideas

The second issue of methodology speaks to how ideas were eliminated from the original list of 1,327 submissions to "narrow down" to only include 80 ideas in the 2nd survey. Project 1590 hired a consultant or intern to do this work.[10] Narrowing the 1,327 submissions down to just 80 ideas represents a 94% reduction in the number of submissions that comprised the main database. These became the list of ideas put into the 2nd survey of 80 ideas.[11]

The problem with this methodology is that the citizens and City Council do not know what criteria was used to eliminate or combine 1,247 ideas from the original database to bring the number down to 80. All we know is that it reduced the original list by 94%, a statistically significant change. This methodology produced a flattening effect that eliminated the diversity of ideas submitted by the citizens.

This is significant because the category of a community center is undefined as to what is included in its amenities — It is simply a community center. Whereas, all of the other categories were comprised of numerous individual and different ideas that can be readily identified, as shown in the data analysis at the end of this document. Also, see the chart on the next page that illustrates the effect of eliminating 94% of the ideas.
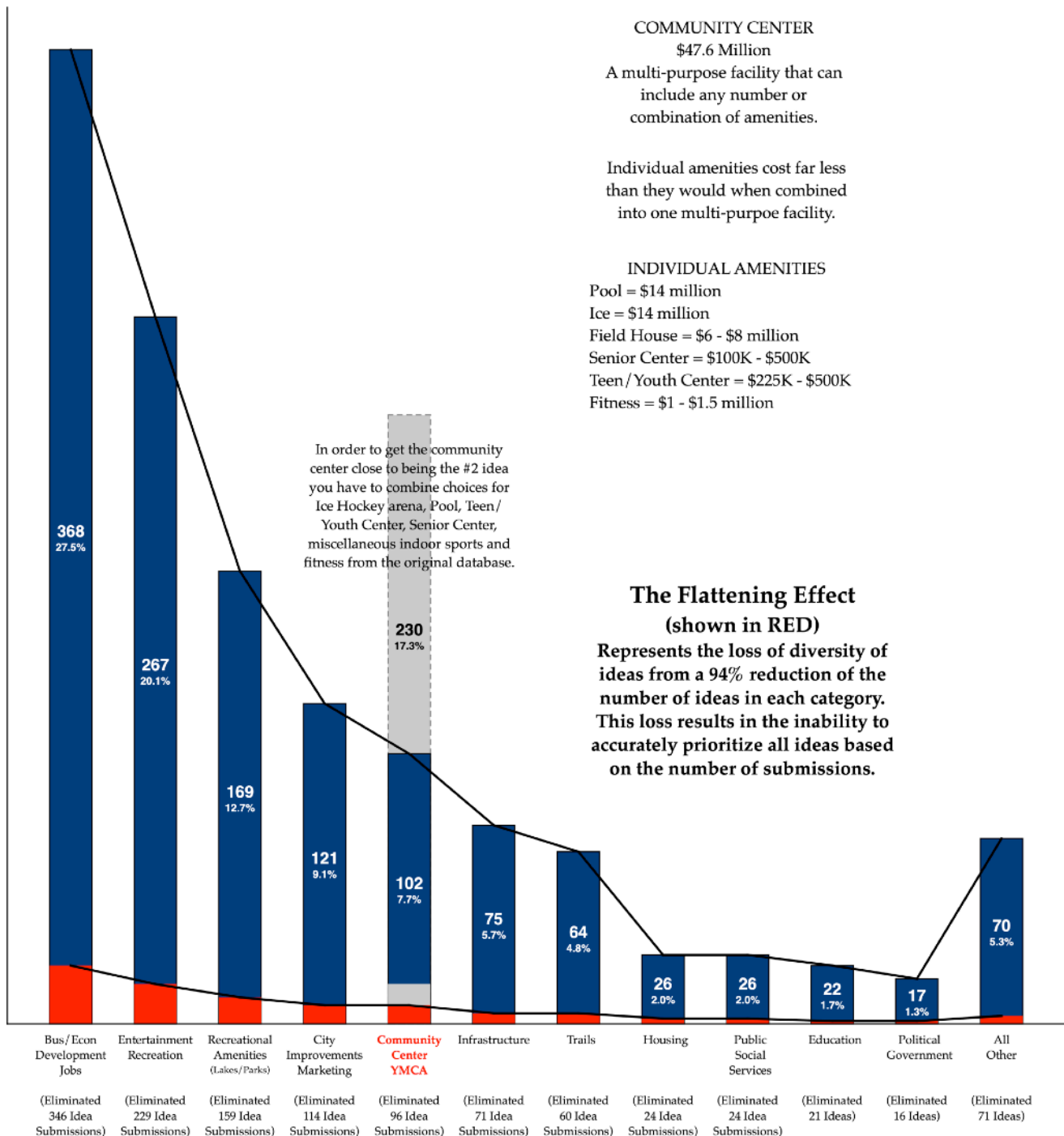
The 2nd Survey - 80 Ideas

The next step in Project 1590's process was to publish the surviving 80 ideas and ask responding citizens to select up to 15 of their favorites. Project 1590 received 1,700 ballots from citizens responding to the 80 ideas survey.[12]

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[10] Sentinel. *Project 1590 Hires Some Help*. Fairmont Sentinel, Fairmont, MN December 20, 2014. Project 1590 hired Hannah Rybak, a student at Minnesota State University - Mankato, with a Masters Degree in Urban Planning. According to Steve Hawkins, her stated responsibilities included focusing, "…on categorizing and organizing the collected ideas into various categories for public voting." It is unknown whether the determination and selection of categories would be left to her decision-making alone, and subject to her biases, or whether members of Project 1590 had any input into that decision-making.

[11] Community Enhancement Survey. "Please review the list of ideas and select up to 15 ideas that you wish to support bringing into the City of Fairmont." — Project 1590. No date provided. See also: Sentinel. "*Top Local Ideas List Grows Shorter*", Sentinel, Fairmont, MN April 14, 2015.

[12] Sentinel, Ibid., April 14, 2015.

COMMUNITY CENTER
$47.6 Million
A multi-purpose facility that can
include any number or
combination of amenities.

Individual amenities cost far less
than they would when combined
into one multi-purpoe facility.

INDIVIDUAL AMENITIES
Pool = $14 million
Ice = $14 million
Field House = $6 - $8 million
Senior Center = $100K - $500K
Teen/Youth Center = $225K - $500K
Fitness = $1 - $1.5 million

In order to get the community
center close to being the #2 idea
you have to combine choices for
Ice Hockey arena, Pool, Teen/
Youth Center, Senior Center,
miscellaneous indoor sports and
fitness from the original database.

The Flattening Effect
(shown in RED)
**Represents the loss of diversity of
ideas from a 94% reduction of the
number of ideas in each category.
This loss results in the inability to
accurately prioritize all ideas based
on the number of submissions.**

Category	Value	Percent	Eliminated
Bus/Econ Development Jobs	368	27.5%	(Eliminated 346 Idea Submissions)
Entertainment Recreation	267	20.1%	(Eliminated 229 Idea Submissions)
Recreational Amenities (Lakes/Parks)	169	12.7%	(Eliminated 159 Idea Submissions)
City Improvements Marketing	121	9.1%	(Eliminated 114 Idea Submissions)
Community Center YMCA	102 / 230	7.7% / 17.3%	(Eliminated 96 Idea Submissions)
Infrastructure	75	5.7%	(Eliminated 71 Idea Submissions)
Trails	64	4.8%	(Eliminated 60 Idea Submissions)
Housing	26	2.0%	(Eliminated 24 Idea Submissions)
Public Social Services	26	2.0%	(Eliminated 24 Idea Submissions)
Education	22	1.7%	(Eliminated 21 Ideas)
Political Government	17	1.3%	(Eliminated 16 Ideas)
All Other	70	5.3%	(Eliminated 71 Ideas)

What criteria were used to determine which ideas got eliminated from the original Excel database for use in the 80-question survey?

Those ballots were submitted by cell phone, mail, or online at www.project1590.com.[13] We don't know what controls, if any, were put in place to prevent multiple submissions by a single person, or whether submissions from outside Martin County were rejected from the survey. The results from that survey were winnowed down to the top 30 ideas, which became the 3rd survey.[14] Project 1590 published those 30 ideas and ask the citizens to select up to 7 ideas. The same process was used and Project 1590 published its "Top 10" list from the results of the 3rd survey.

This lengthy process was well-meaning but not necessary. Project 1590 only needed to categorize the 1,327 ideas that were submitted to the original survey and submit their findings to the City Council and the public with an explanation of how they categorized ideas without introducing bias and ensuring accurate results.

Methodologies — Rigorous and Validated?

It is hoped that the prior discussion explains why the use of surveys must require a certain minimum degree of rigor to eliminate the potential for bias, and that the accuracy of the results can be validated. This was never accomplished with the Project 1590 Ideas Survey, at any point in the survey process — beginning with the collection of ideas for the original database, through each of their subsequent questionnaires that reduced the ideas down to the top 10 most preferred by the survey participants.

Recent court decisions related to the use of surveys impacting Trademark infringement point to the need and requirement for public taxing entities considering the use of survey results. They should only accept surveys conducted by independent organizations trained in conducting surveys using transparent processes that minimize bias, while at the same time ensuring accurate results.[15]

The fact that the members of the City Council did not even ask the necessary questions related to challenging how 1,247 ideas were eliminated from the original database of ideas to arrive at the 1st questionnaire of 80 ideas, in regard to how bias was eliminated from entering into that process, as well as how the accuracy of the results was confirmed, is either due to ignorance on the part of the City Council

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[13] Ibid.

[14] Community Center Survey 2. "Please review the list of ideas and SELECT UP TO 7 IDEAS that you wish to support bringing into the City of Fairmont." — Project 1590. No date provided.

[15] In a 2013 unanimous opinion authored by Judge Posner, the Seventh Circuit upheld the district judge's granting of plaintiff Kraft Foods Group Brands LLC's motion to preliminarily enjoin defendant Cracker Barrel Old Country Store, Inc.'s sale of food products to grocery stores under the CRACKER BARREL trademark. Notably, in upholding the injunction, the Court did not accord any weight to the survey evidence presented by Kraft and relied on by the trial court. On the contrary and "for future reference," Judge Posner penned a missive against consumer surveys which, he opined, "are prone to bias."

Relying on recent academic literature, Judge Posner identified the following perennial problems with consumer surveys: surveys rarely emulate the environment in which a customer normally encounters trademarks; parties may suppress surveys with results unsupportive of their interests; and experts tend to advocate for "the side that hired them." As applied to the instant case, Judge Posner termed Kraft's expert witness a "professional expert witness" and noted that his survey methodology – emailing customers photographs of products – did not emulate the context in which customers are likely to encounter the marks, i.e., in grocery stores and with actual dollars on the line.

Also refer to, *3 Questions To Ask When Using Surveys In Litigation* by Lara O'Laughlin and Rebecca Kirk Fair, Analysis Group, Law360, New York (May 15, 2015) and, *Ensuring Validity and Admissibility of Consumer Surveys,* Authors (Ibid.), American Bar Association, March 31, 2017.

members concerning these issues, or an indication of possible bias in favor of the community center by a majority of the members of the City Council.

Rejection of Survey Results

This type of uncontrolled study would have been perfectly fine if Project 1590 was only going to use the information to help guide their group resources and efforts to help improve Fairmont. It became an entirely different issue when they began to use their findings to lobby city government for public tax dollars to achieve a certain objective. In other words, the data, however it was sorted, combined, filtered, and eliminated was used by Project 1590 to try to influence public-policy and public spending.

Information compiled through an uncontrolled study with a significant portion (94%) of the original data eliminated or combined according to unknown criteria should have been rejected by the City Council. With no way of validating or invalidating the conclusions drawn from those surveys they were not useful for tax-funded spending decisions. The City Council had a responsibility to reject the outcome of such surveys when the data and documentation for how those surveys were collected, tabulated, cross-checked and verified was not available.

Results of Analysis of Excel Database

It seems odd that Project 1590 would conduct multiple surveys because, as previously stated, they already had a complete list of ideas from the citizens in their original Excel database of 1,327 ideas.[16] They even took the step to publish that list of ideas in an Excel spreadsheet and post it on their website for those curious souls, such as myself, to download, study and analyze.

Mr. Tom Hawkins made the claim that more than one half of the voters expressed support for a community center, and that a community center was "…the #1 idea from start to finish."[17] This same claim was made by Randy Lubenow in 2015.[18]   It has been repeated on the Fairmont Area Community Center Foundation website where, in answer to the question, "Do people living in Fairmont want a community center?" the website states:

> "Project 1590 first met in 2015. Within four months, residents from all demographics submitted over 1600 ideas focusing on what they would like to see developed in our community. An intern from the urban studies program at Minnesota State University in Mankato was hired to narrow these ideas down to the top 80. A follow up survey narrowed this down to 30 ideas. An additional round of voting brought it down to 10 main ideas. The top survey result was a community center. Click to view survey results."

See the screen shot from the Fairmont Area Community Center Foundation website on the next page.

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[16] If the 1,327 idea submissions represent submissions by an equal number of individuals then this is a statistically significant number. It is actually greater than 10% of the entire population. This would provide a degree of confidence that exceeds 99.9%!

[17] Sentinel. "*Community Center Idea Gets Hearing"*, Ibid., March 29, 2016.

[18] Sentinel. "*Community Center Envisioned*", Ibid., October 24, 2015.

These claims may have been true based on the data they received from their 3rd survey of 30 ideas. However, it is far from being correct when you look at the original Excel database of 1,327 ideas, before it was filtered by Project 1590's consultant. Based on the original list of ideas collected by the Project 1590 group a community center was <u>never</u> the #1 idea submitted by the citizens. Business / Economic Development was #1 by a significant margin.
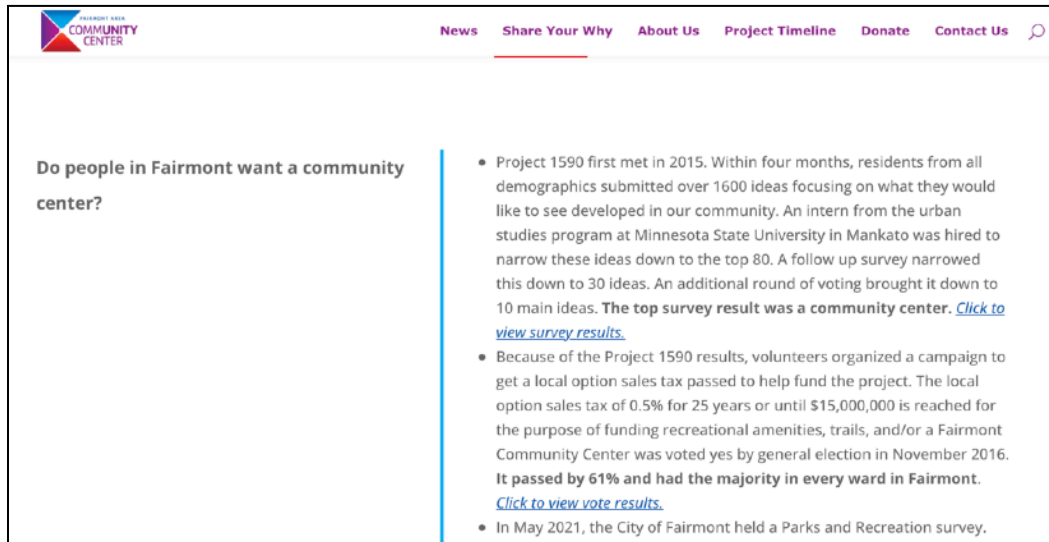
In the original survey, only 102 submissions specifically stated "community center" or "YMCA", which amounted to only 7.7% of all idea submissions. This is a huge difference from Mr. Hawkins' claim that more than 50% of the voters expressed support for a community center.[19]

A community center or YMCA is a multi-purpose facility. which is entirely different from individual elements that may have been submitted as separate ideas. In order to arrive even close to the claim that a community center was the #1 idea, Project 1590 had to combine various other ideas submitted by people into a single category that they then labelled "community center/YMCA".

> "The study identified additional components to be included in the property, based on other requests mentioned in the 1590 survey".[20]

Mr. Hawkins, who was on the City Council at the time, admitted this when he said that the results for a community center included the ideas people submitted for a "community center or <u>related elements</u>."

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[19] Mr. Hawkins' claim of 50% should be treated as hyperbole. When you look at the results of the analysis of the 1,327 ideas, even adding into the category, "Community Center / YMCA" additional ideas categories it still does not rise above #3 (behind Business / Economic Development and Jobs, and Entertainment / Recreation) in the overall results.

[20] Sentinel. "*Study: Price Tag Near $40 Million*", Ibid., October 11, 2016.

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Since a community center can have many different components to serve a multitude of community functions, let's do a quick exercise to try and combine enough of the original ideas into a multi-element Community Center to make it come out as the #1 Idea.

Supposing we add together the submissions which named an indoor pool, youth meeting place, senior meeting place, ice hockey/skate arena, indoor play area for kids, indoor rec center, walking path, fitness, indoor tennis, with the submissions for a community center/ YMCA it only increases the count to 230 ideas. This would still have put the category of a community center/YMCA second behind Business/ Economic Development and Jobs which received 368 submissions, and Entertainment/Recreation which received 244 idea submission.

Included below is a table that shows the individual ideas that had to be added to the category "Community Center/YMCA" to increase the number of occurrences for that category to illustrate this concept. Even adding the Ice Hockey/Skate, Pool, Rec Center, Teen/Youth meeting place, Senior meeting place and fitness elements, a Community Center/YMCA still can't achieve the #1 or #2 position. Unfortunately, we do not know which ideas were combined by Project 1590 to boost this category into the top position.

Community Center / YMCA – 102 Plus the additions below = 230 (17.3%)			
Sub-category	*# Ideas*	*Sub-category*	*# Ideas*
Ice Hockey / Skate	47	Teen/Youth Mtg Place	22
Pool	27	Misc indoor sports and Fitness	11
Rec Center	16	Senior Mtg Place	5
	TOTAL (102 + sub-categories)		**230**

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RESULTS OF ANALYZING PROJECT 1590 IDEAS DATABASE

A more accurate analysis of the ideas data contained in the Excel database collected by the 1590 Project group survey is shown on the following pages.

#1 - Business / Economic Development and Jobs = 368 (27.7%)

This was by far the largest category of ideas submitted by people to Project 1590. Ideas in this category were primarily comprised of suggestions for food restaurants and retail stores. These were followed by various suggestions to increase jobs in Fairmont. It should be noted that the addition of retail stores and restaurants would provide additional job opportunities. Other suggestions included re-using of existing buildings that were either empty, abandoned, or only partially in use along with downtown revitalization, tax breaks, and development of empty properties.

Business / Economic Development and Jobs = 368 (27.7%)			
Food — 147 (11.1%)			
Sub-category	*# Ideas*	*Sub-category*	*# Ideas*
Kentucky Fried Chicken	18	Olive Garden	6
Buffalo Wild Wings	15	Culver's	6
Chipotle	15	Coffee Shop	6
Ice Cream	12	Taco Bell	5
Frozen Yogurt	8	All Other (Less than 3 idea submissions)	49
Applebees	7	**TOTAL**	**147**

Retail — 148 (11.2%)			
Sub-category	*# Ideas*	*Sub-category*	*# Ideas*
Target	29	JoAnn Fabrics	6
Clothing Stores	14	Menards	5
Wow! Zone	13	Scheels	5
Sky Zone	10	All Other (Less than 3 idea submissions)	60
Cabela's	6	**TOTAL**	**148**

Other — 73 (5.5%)			
Sub-category	*# Ideas*	*Sub-category*	*# Ideas*
Jobs	36	Taxes	4
Building Re-Use	21	Property Development	3
Revitalize Downtown	9	**TOTAL**	**73**

#2 - Entertainment / Recreation = 267 (20.1%)

This was the second largest category. Hockey/Ice was the top suggestion, followed by a pool, and then disk golf.

Entertainment / Recreation — 267 (20.1%)			
Sub-category	*# Ideas*	*Sub-category*	*# Ideas*
Ice Hockey / Skate	47	Go Kart Track	6
Pool	27	Art Festivals, etc.	6
Disk Golf	22	Senior Mtg Place	5
Teen / Youth Mtg Place	22	Mini Golf	4
Sports	18	Fitness	4
Movies	14	Zoo	4
Music Festivals, etc.	12	Wow!Zone	13
Paint Ball	10	Other Entertainment/ Recreation ideas (less than 3 idea submissions)	43
Sky Zone	10	**TOTAL**	**267**

#3 - Recreational Amenities (Lakes / Parks) = 169 (12.7%)

This was the 3rd largest category of ideas. The top concern was getting the lakes cleaned up. This included both water quality and shorelines. Citizens recognize that the lakes are a strategic resource (they provide our drinking water), and have significant potential to provide income to the city. They are in high demand throughout the year for sporting and recreational events and activities.

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There was a general focus to make improvements and expand the existing parks. There were a surprising number of ideas for an amusement park. Other ideas included adding a dog park, more camping, and improving the aquatic park.

Recreational Amenities (Lakes / Parks) = 170 (12.8%)			
Lakes — 106 (7.9%)			
Sub-category	*# Ideas*	*Sub-category*	*# Ideas*
Cleanup	21	Docks / Ramps	7
Rentals	14	Signage	6
Events	12	Resort	5
Camping	8	Stock Fish	3
Promotion	8	All Other	22
		TOTAL	**106**

Parks — 64 (5%)			
Sub-category	*Amount*	*Sub-category*	*Amount*
Amusement Park	14	Camping	6
Aquatic Park	7	All Other	31
Dog Park	6	**TOTAL**	**64**

#4 - City Improvements/Marketing = 121 (9.1%)

The category of City Improvements/Marketing deserves a separate analysis. I will provide that to you soon.

#5 - Community Center/YMCA = 102 (7.7%)

The Community Center and YMCA were submitted separately as shown in the bullet points below. As we know, there are many different types of community centers across Minnesota that do not include YMCAs. Therefore, there is not a direct correlation between the two

- 78 – Community Center (5.9%)
- 24 - YMCA (1.8%)

#6 - Infrastructure = 75 (5.7%)

Improving the condition of our roads was the primary concern expressed in the ideas under infrastructure. This was closely followed by cleaning up the appearance of our community (refer to the chart on the next page).

Infrastructure — 75 (5.7%)			
Sub-category	*# Ideas*	*Sub-category*	*# Ideas*
Roads	22	Trees	5
Cleanup	16	Public Transportation	4
Sidewalks	6	Parking	3
Traffic Control	5	All Other	14
		TOTAL	**75**

#7 - Trails = 64 (4.8%)

Expanding the trail system was on many citizens' minds as shown below.

Trails — 64 (4.8%)			
Sub-category	*# Ideas*	*Sub-category*	*# Ideas*
Biking Expansion	16	Walking Expansion	2
Biking - General	15	Safety / Security	2
Trails Expansion	14	Cleanup	1
Walking - General	7	Bike Rentals	1
Motorized RV	5	Restrooms	1
		TOTAL	**64**

The following categories were not broken down because of the low number of submissions.

#8 - Public/Social Services = 26 (2.0%)

#9 - Housing = 26 (2.0%)

#10 - Education = 22 (1.7%)

#11 - Political/Government = 17 (1.3%)

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#12 - All Other = 70 (5.3%) — From political concerns to utilities, safety, and other issues, this is a catch-all category that encompasses a number of sparsely submitted ideas.

Project 1590 may have had good intentions when it launched the survey project, however once the data was filtered, sorted, combined, and eliminated according to undisclosed criteria, or the possible lack of rigorous control procedures, the results were not useful for informing public policy, and the spending of taxpayer funds.

The city should have hired a professional independent survey firm to prepare and conduct the survey.