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YMCA coming to Parker County

Congressman and pastor work to connect the community

Posted Thursday, May 29, 2025 12:02 pm

By Alex Hoben



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Left to right: Mike Brown CEO of Metropolitan Fort Worth YMCA, Mike Prince, Zan Prince, Congressman Roger Williams, Mike Reilly, pastor Clark Boshier, and COO Eddie Dobbins.

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Willow Park Baptist Church and the YMCA are partnering to bring a new dedicated YMCA building to Willow Park and to the greater east Parker County area.

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Williams said how the YMCA have been forward steppers, working with them to realize the potential this facility will have for the future.



May 30, 2025
(/stories/may-30-2025,120364)

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When the YMCA was operating out of the church in 2016 Boshier said up to 1,500 people would be rotating out playing different sports like volleyball and basketball. Dobbins said that when he looked at the numbers, this was the largest indoor sports location.

"This particular location was probably our most active and quite candidly had the most volunteers, the most parent support," Dobbins said. "So, when it went away, we were upset because we felt like we missed something special."

According to Dobbins, as soon as they saw the building and were given a tour, they were on board.

“Everywhere you turned, already your head is just going of all the things you could do, and then you walk into the sanctuary to go, ‘this is going to be the coolest wellness center ever.’” Dobbins said. “It feels like it’s giant. You can feel the energy.”

Bosher said they had seven different groups vying for the space, but after praying with the church, he realized that bringing the YMCA back is the best decision.

"We love these guys. We were YMCA guys when we were little kids growing up, and we know what our community needs," Boshier said.



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Williams said he is the most excited to see the impact that this facility will have on future generations, even if he won't be able to see just how far the YMCA will be able to develop in the future.

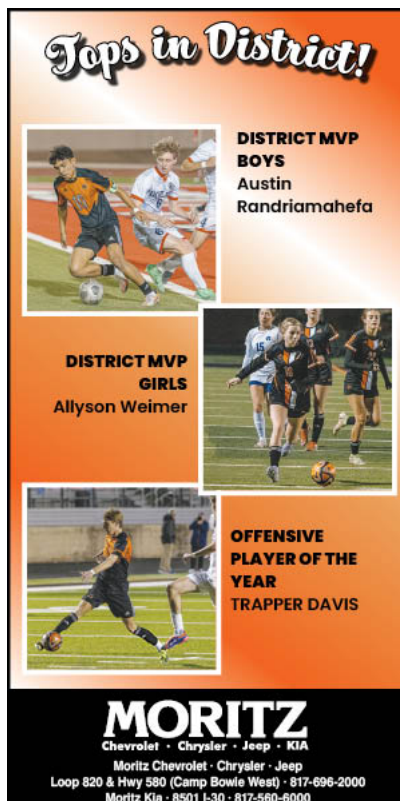
"This is what that moment is," he said. "We're planting a tree that many of us won't stand under, but look what it's going to do to the community."

There is not a set open date for the YMCA yet due to it being in the fundraising stage to bring it to Parker County, and during this phase, they are also reaching out to the residents of the surrounding cities to find out how best to serve the area. This is where the partnership with the church really shines.

"Now we have to raise the money," Brown said. "The date depends on the community that supports the Y. Because for us to make a YMCA happen, it's usually not how we operate it. It's getting the capital to build it."

Brown plans to have facilities like the Impact Center, where there would not only be sports, after-school programs, and day camps, but community events like father-daughter dances and health and wellness fairs. Along with those, it's also possible for there to be more creative facilities and programs offered depending on the need of the community. Some of those programs are video and audio, culinary arts, and even auto mechanical training.

"They're getting fewer and fewer people going to the trades," Dobbins said. "If we can be part of that solution, it's a wonderful thing."



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Bosher said he believes that, with the position of the church right off of I-20 and with the predicted growth of the city of Willow Park and the opening of UTA West, this will become a major hub of activity when the facility is up and running. Williams said he believes that the hub of DFW is moving westward, and this YMCA will be right in the middle of where the metroplex will be in 40 years.

Dobbins and Brown predict that this facility will be able to employ more than 100 people at a time and will have more than 1,000 memberships just from their initial conversations with the church and community alone.

"It will have thousands of members," Williams said. "Think of thousands of members. As you go through that, there's going to be one little kid that you save his life because of this, and that's what's important."

Bosher said after working with the YMCA, he and Williams realized that they are committed to building a facility that is made for the community, not just a place for activities.

"I knew that immediately," Bosher said. "These guys are not about building a building. They're about reaching kids and families, and that's what we're about. Buildings rot. Those people live forever."

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The building the YMCA is planned to be opened in is the old Willow Park Baptist Church at 129 S Ranch House Rd.

ALEX HOBEN/THE COMMUNITY NEWS

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