



REQUEST FOR INTEREST

Programming for Families and Youth at Stephen Leonard Youth Center



640 T Street, Stephen Leonard Park – Merced

Issued by: City of Merced Parks & Community
Services

Opening Date: January 23, 2026

Closing Date: February 20, 2026

BACKGROUND ON REQUEST FOR INTEREST

1. Purpose of Request for Interest

The City of Merced Parks & Community Services Department invites qualified organizations, service providers, and community-focused partners to submit a Request for Interest (RFI) to lease and operate programs and services at the Stephen Leonard Youth Center for youth and their families.

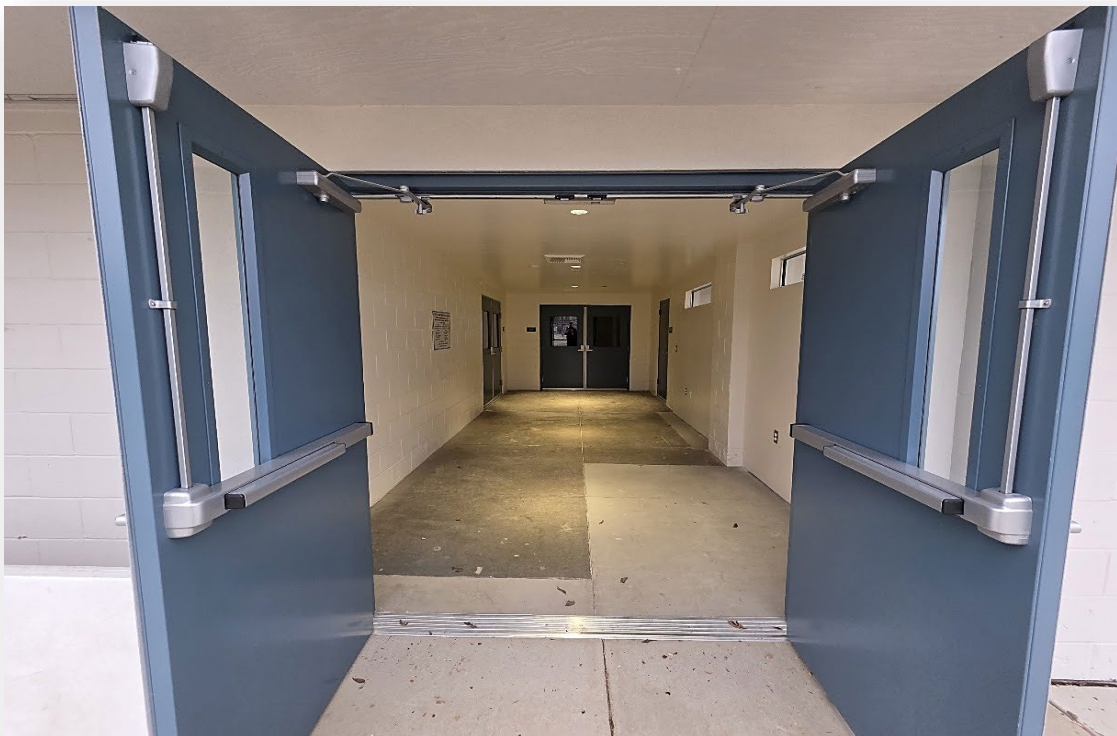
2. Facility Overview

The Stephen Leonard Youth Center is a recently improved community facility offering flexible indoor space including a conference room, potential for two small offices, restroom facilities, a serving kitchen (non-commercial), and a large multi-purpose room with a new room divider. Recent upgrades include the addition of a foyer, a new HVAC system, new window coverings, updated restroom amenities, fresh paint and new lighting.

The facility is a longstanding feature of Stephen Leonard Park and is accompanied by a splash pad, basketball court, small skate park, playground and open green space. The Center is directly across from Sheehy Elementary School.

IMAGES OF NEWLY RENOVATED SPACES

Interior Foyer



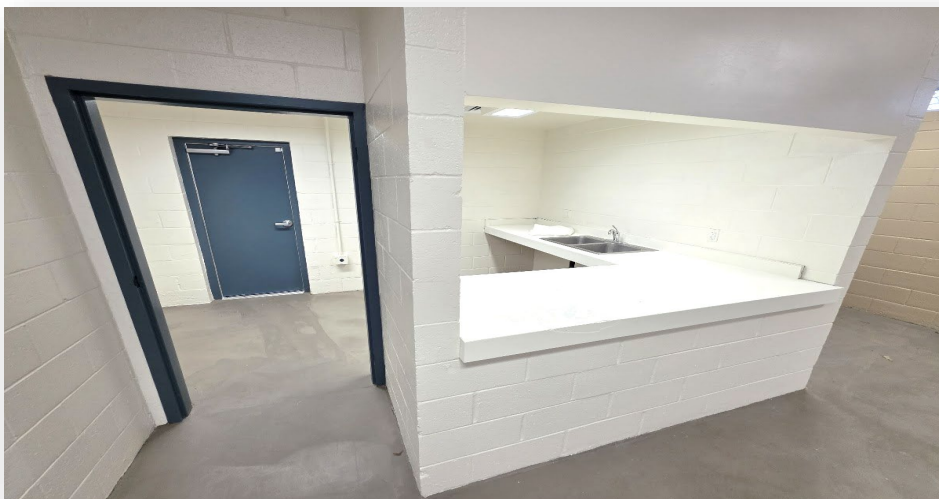
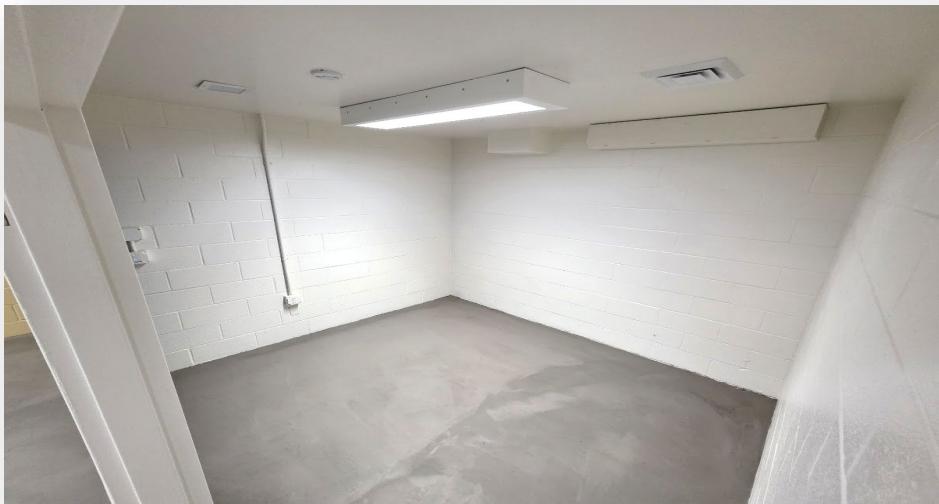
Interior Multi-Purpose Room



Interior Divider to Separate two Multi-Purpose Areas



Conference Room / Office Space/ Serving Kitchen



3. Desired Uses & Programming

The City is particularly interested in youth development, educational support, family services, workforce development, health and wellness programs, cultural programming, and other community-serving uses that enhance access and promote positive outcomes.

4. Lease Framework & Financial Responsibilities

The proposed lease term is five (5) years, with the option to extend one additional five-year term based on performance and alignment with City and community needs.

The City will cover external and major building repairs. The lessee will be responsible for utilities, operational costs, and any tenant improvements subject to City approval. Utility expenses range but run an average of \$300-\$700 per month, depending on usage. The Lessee will have the opportunity to rent the facility for potential revenue. Insurance coverages required would include \$1,000,000 in General Liability and \$2,000,000 for Bodily Injury.

All activities must be approved by City of Merced Parks & Community Services. Lessee will complete quarterly reports for the Recreation & Parks Commission to ensure transparent use of the facility. Facility inspections will be carried out on a quarterly basis by Parks & Community Services to ensure the facility is in good repair and activities are in line with those approved ahead of time. Explicit terms and conditions will be detailed in the Lease Agreement upon selection of an Operator/Service Provider.

5. Submittal Requirements

Proposals should include organizational information, including a list of board members or administration that oversees operations, history of the organization, and a detailed overview of the proposed use and programming of the facility, such as:

- Population(s) to be served
- Days and hours of operation
- Goals and Objectives for program participants
- Experience operating similar facilities
- Description of financial capacity to cover facility-related costs
- Alignment with known or anticipated community needs and interests
- Any anticipated tenant improvements

6. Evaluation & Next Steps

Proposals will be reviewed by City staff to ensure proposals are complete, presented to the Recreation & Parks Commission for review on February 23, 2026, and finally advanced to the City Council in March 2026 for a final decision.

Application Review Process & Timeline:

- Staff Review – February 2026
- Recreation & Parks Commission – February 2026
- City Council – March 2026

7. Submission Instructions

Responses must be received **no later than February 20, 2026 at 12:00pm.**

Submissions will only be accepted in PDF format, via email to

jensenC@cityofmerced.gov.

For additional information, please call Parks & Community Services at (209) 385-6855, Monday through Friday, between 9:00a.m.-5:00p.m.