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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Research Indicates Platte County Community Centers are
Serving More People; Meeting Community Needs**

(Platte County, MO) Since their opening in October of 2004 and February of 2005, the Platte County Community Center North (PCCCN, 3101 Running Horse Road in Platte City) and the Platte County Community Center South (PCCCS, 8875 Clark Ave in Parkville) have become local gathering places for all ages, all interests and all walks of life for Platte County residents.

In fact, according to recent 2009 primary market research, 15.40% of citizens in the Parkville area are members at the south location and 14.40% of the citizens in the Platte City/Weston area are members at the north location.

Built with funds from the County's dedicated parks and recreation half-cent sales tax, the community centers are operated through a unique partnership with the YMCA of Greater Kansas City. Of the 19 YMCA of Greater Kansas City membership locations, PCCCS has the most number of members at 3,696 and PCCCN is moving up on the list to the 6th largest with 1,440 members. Because of this success, both centers are self-sustaining for annual operating costs.

2009 research from NetPromoter indicates that members join the centers because of the neighborhood feel, the welcoming atmosphere, the quality of programs and the expertise of staff. The majority of members indicated they would suggest a membership to friends and family.

"What stands out to me is how many people said they recommend the facilities to their friends and neighbors" noted Jim Plunkett, Second District Commissioner. "You can't get better marketing than positive word of mouth."

The community centers have been impacted by the recession with an increase in financial assistance requests; over \$200,000 was awarded in membership and program scholarships. However, even with the economic struggles, memberships grew at both centers from 2008 to 2009 and the generosity of charitable dollars made those financial scholarships a reality.

"These are very impressive results for usage of our community centers," commented Platte County Presiding Commissioner Betty Knight, "I believe it shows how important health and wellness are to our residents. It also indicates that citizens believe our centers are a great value".

In addition to membership growth, both centers realized an increase this past year in program participants. Many people take advantage of the swim lessons, youth sports, and fee-based health fitness programs such as personal training, kid's night outs and martial arts. These programs are available to the community members regardless if they have a membership to the centers or not. Platte County and The YMCA of Greater Kansas City strive to offer programs and services that meet community needs.

*Platte County
South in Parkville
received only the
second ever 100%
Secret Shopper
report in the past 5
years by an outside
consultant hired by
the YMCA of
Greater KC*

Driven by their charitable mission and four core values of Caring, Honesty, Respect and Responsibility, the YMCA of Greater Kansas City is committed to turning no one away due to inability to pay. Moreover, the vision of Platte County Parks and Recreation is to enhance the quality of life for all of its citizens by providing one of the premier county parks systems in the region. A combination of the two makes for a vibrant and healthy community.

“The report shows we are on the right track by investing the parks sales tax in building and expanding the centers and I look forward to working with the YMCA to continue to improve the programs there,” added First District Commissioner Kathy Dusenbery,

For more information about membership to the Platte County Community Centers go to www.KansasCityYMCA.org. For more information about the Platte County Parks and Recreation go to www.platteparks.com.

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Highlights of Platte County Community Centers Member Survey (conducted September 09)

Platte County Community Center North

- 143 total responses
- 94% of members said they would recommend the community center to their friends and neighbors
- North members indicated that the top five things they enjoyed most about the community center were:
 1. *Staff friendliness and helpfulness*
 2. Convenience of location
 3. Facility amenities
 4. Facility Cleanliness and organization
 5. Quality of Classes and Programs
- Sample member comments:
“Add more programs, kick aerobics and yoga classes”; “the pool needs to be expanded”; “love the friendly staff”; “steam room is great”

Platte County Community Center South

- 209 total responses from South Facility in Parkville
- 95% of members said they would *recommend* the community center to their *friends and neighbors*
- South members indicated that the top five things they enjoyed most about the community center were:
 1. Facility cleanliness and organization
 2. Staff friendliness and helpfulness
 3. Facility amenities
 4. Fitness Equipment available and
 5. Convenience of location
- *Sample Comments:*
“more classes at more varied times”; “more space for exercise machines”
“clean, friendly, great classes, very well organized”; “great variety of equipment, it’s like a new facility”