

## *Washington Township reaches deal to buy Total Sports Park 65665 Powell Rd, Washington, MI 48095*

- *By Jameson Cook [jcook@medianewsgroup.com](mailto:jcook@medianewsgroup.com); @JamesonCook on Twitter Aug 4, 2019*

[https://www.macombdaily.com/news/local/washington-township-reaches-deal-to-buy-total-sports-park/article\\_b80586ae-b57b-11e9-a32c-770daa62f527.html](https://www.macombdaily.com/news/local/washington-township-reaches-deal-to-buy-total-sports-park/article_b80586ae-b57b-11e9-a32c-770daa62f527.html)



*Total Sports Park partners Chris McNally, from left, Brian Tinnion and Kevin Kelly inside the facility in 2018.*

*Washington Township has reached a deal to purchase the massive soccer complex in its town in an effort to develop a community center and recreational district. The township has agreed to buy Total Sports Park near M-53 and 30 Mile Road for \$11.5 million, pending township-voter approval to increase its current recreational millage of .75 mill planned for this November's ballot, according to Washington Supervisor Dan O'Leary.*

*He said the transaction will provide a rare opportunity for a small town to bring big-town recreational offerings to its residents.*

*“This is a huge deal, I couldn’t be more excited,” O’Leary said Friday after announcing the deal. “The township has wanted a community center for a number of years. This will allow us to have one that would cost double or triple to build new. This is the most fiscally responsible way a community could do this.”*

*The deal would include the 117,000-square-foot indoor facility and 80 acres of land and equipment. The township already owns an additional 142 acres of land connected to the property.*

*Total Sports’ owners purchased the land and opened the open-air facility four years ago with 24 soccer fields and less than two years ago completed construction of the facility that Total Sports said cost \$8.5 million.*

*The township’s collection of more than 200 acres of land east of M-53, west of Powell Road between 30 and 31 mile roads will allow it to gradually add various fields and facilities to the area, O’Leary said.*

*O’Leary said he approached Total Sports officials some time ago about working out a deal.*

*Chris McNally of Total Sports in a news release called the proposed sale a “challenging choice for us to make but allows our organization to focus on other future strategic investments while still having access to an excellent facility when mutually beneficial.”*

*“When faced with the offer from Washington Township, we understood how the seed we planted fits best into the township’s future lifestyle center plans.”*

*The facility will continue to operate its soccer and volleyball leagues under the new proposed deal. It also has two exercise rooms and batting cages that the township also will use.*

*O’Leary said the township would gradually add amenities over the next several years, such as ball diamonds, tennis and pickle ball courts, outdoor volley courts, basketball courts, a splash pad and eventually a swimming pool.*

*“Once we take it over, there will be several phases of changes,” he said.*

O'Leary declined to provide a figure for the proposed millage increase, but it will be determined soon. The board must approve the language and amount by Aug. 13 for it to appear on the ballot.

He said he has strong support on the board for the proposal and to place it on the ballot, and is confident voters will pass it by a comfortable margin.

The new millage would be for 20 years pay off bonds to be sold to pay for the facility. It would start after the current recreation millage expires next year.

O'Leary's announcement of the deal on Facebook produced mostly positive responses.

Karen Johnson wrote: "Sounds wonderful, I love the idea of having a new community/lifestyle center so close to us!"

Michael Kaminska posted, "Dan, so is this a public facility now and will residents get preferred rates when looking to rent out the facility?"

O'Leary said half of the township's approximately 27,000 residents have moved there in the past 15 years. Most of them lived in larger communities with full-scale recreational facilities and expect them.

He said the township has been working on upgrading that part of the township for years via paving roads and constructing a water-and-sewer plant that should be completed this fall.

"We have been slowly bringing civilization to that area in anticipation of bringing a health-and-lifestyle community to that area," he said. "You have to do a lot of the little things first before you can do the sexy things."

He envisions some private businesses locating in the area, too, perhaps a **gymnastics or miniature-golf facility**.

Washington Township intends to use the Total Parks facility both for local community center purposes and regional sports club activities. O'Leary said the leagues and

tournaments staged by the current operators will be crucial to maintaining sufficient income to also allow township residents to use the facility.

"Our business model will offer both local community center activities to residents while continuing with sports-club services on into the future," he said. "Washington and Total will work together to ensure that great opportunities will be available to clubs going forward."

The facility was site of a [rally by President Trump](#) in April 2018 to drum up support for Republicans for that year's congressional mid-term elections.