



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **FRANKFORT PARK DISTRICT – Non-Binding Referendum Question on the Ballot for April 6**

### **Non-Binding Referendum Question - Acquire Borg Warner Plant**

With the announcement of the closing of the Borg Warner facility at the end of 2021, the Frankfort Park District Board of Commissioners saw a unique opportunity to provide improved programs and amenities designed to enrich the lives of Frankfort residents for generations.

The Park District Board held a special meeting on January 19, 2021 to discuss the benefits of exploring the acquisition of this property and voted unanimously to ask the residents to weigh-in on the issue at the April 6 election.

“The board decided to place an advisory, or non-binding referendum question on the ballot for the April 6 Consolidated election regarding the property so our community can help plan what is best for the future,” said Gina Hassett, Executive Director for the Frankfort Park District.

The question residents will see on the ballot is as follows:

Non-Binding (advisory) Referendum to gauge community support. Should the Frankfort Park District, acquire and improve the site of the Borg Warner Plant, located at 300 Maple Street in Frankfort and consisting of approximately 26 acres, for the purpose of developing, improving, and operating an indoor recreational space and outdoor athletic facilities and finance the purchase and renovation of the project by issuing bonds that will result in a property tax increase?

The Borg Warner facility is located adjacent to the Park District’s Main Park and the District’s maintenance facility. The park district currently has an agreement with Borg Warner to utilize the baseball field on their property. The Village of Frankfort reached out to the park district administration after Borg Warner announced it would be closing its Frankfort Plant. The Park District and Village of Frankfort had both recently completed updates to their comprehensive master plans and the Village was aware that community input had indicated that Frankfort residents wanted improved indoor and outdoor recreational opportunities and access to a community pool.

The acquisition of the Borg Warner site would allow the park district to evaluate insufficient facilities that are in need of significant capital investment and provide a community-centric location for indoor and outdoor recreational activities like swimming, fitness, turf fields, sports, preschool, and more.

Should residents show they support the acquisition in April and the referendum passes, the Frankfort Park District would initiate a community engagement program for the design and build of the new campus. The park district will then consider a binding referendum for the 2022 election. The Borg Warner facility is currently priced at \$7.5 million.

According to Hassett, this is just the first vote in the process. Residents would still have to approve the total price tag for the project. “If residents vote yes in April, the District will move forward with evaluating costs and developing plans for the recreational amenities the community wants. They would vote to approve the project in 2022.”

Should the April referendum fail, the park district would lose access to the existing ball field, and the property will remain vacant until it’s sold as an industrial operating plant or the area is rezoned for development. The April referendum will not impact the residents’ tax bill but it will provide the park district staff and board with a clear direction for the future.

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Please contact the Park District at 815-469-4000 or [ghassett@frankfortparks.org](mailto:ghassett@frankfortparks.org) to answer any other questions you have.