



**FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY**

THE VALUE OF COLLABORATION YMCA PROJECT UPDATE

Dear YMCA Members and Stakeholders:

August will mark two years when we announced our plans to expand programs and services through the development of a new YMCA. The proposed state of the art facility would include enhanced wellness services, aquatics, expanded childcare and youth services as well as a teaching kitchen and community spaces. We are excited about the progress that has been made to date – the vision you and fellow members created is closer to becoming a reality.

In 2013, recognizing the condition of aging facilities, the Y set forth on a strategic planning process that pointed towards expanding programs and services to more individuals in the South Wood County area. Community feedback was clear – there is an increased demand for our services and only the Y is capable of being the catalyst for promoting and enabling healthy living in children, adults, families and our community. We agree.

This feedback was strikingly similar to the comments of John E. Alexander 60 years ago. At the time, he said “To be successful, any community program must reach ALL the people, all denominations and ages, and must offer something worthwhile to all groups regardless of position, wealth or social level. These feelings have guided my efforts and those of many others who have devoted their untiring efforts in making a community center a reality.”

This project is more than a building. It represents a vision for our community that was founded on a promise nearly 60 years ago. It is a place that is welcoming, inclusive and accessible to all. It is a place of personal transformation for individuals to discover their best self. The state of the art facility would be equipped to support the health and well-being of individuals through traditional and new, innovative programming. It will be a place for all ages to come together, feel supported, and improve health.

Last summer we sought your feedback again to identify what a new facility may entail. We learned:

- That support for the project is overwhelmingly positive – thank you!
- Accessibility and location is important, and that locating in Wisconsin Rapids would provide the greatest convenience and accessibility for all throughout the region.
- The Y is both a health hub and convener of all people.
- Authentic partnerships are key for community development.

As planning for the project continues, these findings serve as the foundation for our decisions. We have also learned that there is meaningful and measurable value in collaborating with the City of Wisconsin Rapids on an aquatic partnership that would represent a shared solution to creating a year-round facility that will add value and be available to YMCA members, City of Wisconsin Rapids residents, schools and other organizations in the area.

Today we are pursuing the possibility of a project partnership with the City of Wisconsin Rapids that is a win for everyone. Such a partnership would be a fiscally and socially responsible solution for both the near- and long-term future of our organization and the people we serve in the community. We believe the benefits of a strong partnership will be outstanding for both members and community residents:

- Development and construction costs are shared rather than doubled. So too are annual operating costs. Together, this could save in excess of \$10 million over the next 25 years.
- Community residents could have year-round pool access to a zero-depth entry family recreation pool with slides and splash pads for similar entry fees as today.
- Larger, higher quality facilities can't be built alone. A strong partnership could lead to the construction of a pool capable of supporting other area organizations, schools, and state competitive swim meets.
- Economic development benefits come through the Y's track record of convening people, improving quality of life and business attraction, and tourism through potential competitive events.

We are learning from the success of others. This collaborative approach represents an opportunity to follow the lead of nearly 500 other YMCA/Municipality aquatic partnerships across the U.S.

The City of Wisconsin Rapids is now in the thoughtful process of understanding all of its aquatic options, and we look forward to engaging with Wisconsin Rapids leaders in the very near future to take the next steps of planning for the project. We encourage you to voice your support for the YMCA with the leaders in our community. Your voice, your passion and your support is an important part of this process.

Thank you for your continued support and involvement with the YMCA. We are extremely excited about the opportunities coming down the road and hope you will join us in this excitement. Should you have any questions, please contact the Y at 715-887-3240.

Sincerely,



Todd Duellman
Chair of the Board of Directors



Bret Salscheider
Chief Executive Officer



The Y is the nation's leading nonprofit committed to STRENGTHENING COMMUNITY through Youth Development, Healthy Living and Social Responsibility.