YMCA-YWCA
Winnipeg

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Dear Members of Council,

We are writing to provide you with background information to assist you in considering the City Budget proposal concerning funding of YMCA-YWCA recreation facilities.

The YMCA-YWCA of Winnipeg is one of Winnipeg's longest-serving charities. We have been a part of the Winnipeg community – delivering our Mission of developing individuals and communities in spirit, mind and body – since 1879 (YMCA) and 1897 (YWCA). For generations we have been pursuing our Vision for Winnipeg to be a thriving city where people have an opportunity to be healthy in all aspects of their lives.

We are governed by a volunteer Board of Directors, who are drawn from the community at large; and, as members of two national federations and two world alliances, we have a demonstrated history of successful collaborations.

All of the YMCA-YWCA of Winnipeg's activities are charitable by definition, being for the benefit of the community. Our actions are guided by our core values of respect, responsibility, honesty, caring, health, inclusiveness and equality.

Our charitable activities are deeply entrenched in Winnipegger's lives. Our values-based operations include:

- Keeping kids off the streets and engaged with their community through our youth activity centre in North Winnipeg, (over 2,600 youth annually)
- Providing young people with leadership opportunities through our outdoor adventure camps (Camp Stephens and Camp Douglas), (4,600 youth annually)
- Delivering community and employment programs to teens and adults so they can develop life skills and professional success, (over 2,000 people annually)
- Providing families with much-needed, quality child care services, (over 2,700 children annually)
- Giving people a place to connect and engage in healthy activities via our four recreation centres, (over 62,300 people participate in YMCA-YWCA membership annually)

Everyone is welcome – regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, creed or means. We know that regular participation in YMCA-YWCA membership activities supports a balanced approach to personal growth, health and wellness. However, some men, women and children who come to us may be unable to pay the full fee. We strive to do everything we can to eliminate financial barriers to participation and membership. Our Membership Access program annually serves over 12,500 individuals and families who have the greatest need in our community, ensuring their ability to participate.

We have extensive expertise in program delivery and facility operations. We have been operating our Vaughan Street location for a century, the South Y on Fermor has been a part of St. Vital since 1954, the Elmwood-Kildonan centre first opened its doors 50 years ago, and our West Portage facility is in its tenth year of operation. We are the largest child care provider in Manitoba with 33 centres located in Winnipeg and surrounding communities.

Our reason for wanting to expand our operations is simple: we want to give more people, in more parts of Winnipeg, an opportunity to be healthy.

Municipal government support for the development of YMCA recreation facilities is not unique to Winnipeg. Across Canada, we can point to more than 20 communities where YMCA facilities have been developed with direct capital support from municipal government. Examples of similar arrangements can be found in Calgary, Edmonton, Kelowna, London, Markham, Niagara Falls and Montreal and, closer to home, in Brandon.

We firmly believe the proposed funding arrangement will bring significant benefits to the Winnipeg community. Not only will we greatly enhance the quality of recreation options available to citizens, we will also significantly increase our capacity to deliver much-needed child care services. These projects will create jobs, both in the course of construction and upon commencement of operations. And, in accordance with our charitable mission, any and all surpluses generated through the operation of these facilities will be reinvested in the community, for the benefit of the community.

We hope you will support this proposal and we look forward to working toward a confirmed funding agreement.

Please feel free to contact me if you would like to talk about our charitable work or the impact this investment could bring to the City of Winnipeg. My direct number is 204.831.2972.

Sincerely,



Kent Paterson
President and Chief Executive Officer
YMCA-YWCA of Winnipeg