

Hello YMCA Family!

You may have seen recent news regarding a grant received by a partnership between the City of Park Falls and the YMCA of the Northwoods. We are excited to add Price and Ashland Counties to our YMCA family! Seeing this, we know it must open a lot of questions. Hopefully, we can answer some of those for you now. If you have additional questions or feedback, please reach out. As our plans develop, we will utilize our website and social media to keep everyone in the loop.

Q: Why a Flambeau River YMCA?

A: The YMCA of the Northwoods was approached in early 2021 about providing support to Price and Ashland Counties. Members of these counties have seen the great work we do here in Rhinelander, and in other communities where there are YMCAs. We worked together to have a better understanding of the needs that were faced, options to address those needs, and ultimately how to move forward. It was evident that community support and a member base could support a satellite-type YMCA in the City of Park Falls. Being a smaller rural community, the formation of a new independent YMCA would financially not be sustainable.

Q: What were the early needs identified to look at building a YMCA in Park Falls?

A: First it was childcare. In the early portion of the pandemic, the community lost childcare providers, creating a significant issue for workforce development and building their community. Afterschool programming was absent and out-of-school time support for youth was lacking, creating barriers for nurturing our youth. Also identified was the lack of healthy living opportunities, support for our senior population and community spaces where people can gather and connect.

Q: Will money from our membership or program fees be paying for this YMCA to be built?

A: No. The initial funding for the new YMCA will be coming from a \$5.675 million grant received by the City of Park Falls and the YMCA of the Northwoods. There are also private donors that have pledged early support to ensure that the YMCA is built, and in a position to create an immediate and sustainable impact on the Park Falls community.

Q: Will the YMCA in Rhinelander have to cover the operating costs for the new YMCA?

A: No. In fact, it will help to make us all more efficient. With two locations, services and positions can be shared, offsetting operational and administrative costs to ensure that both the Flambeau River YMCA and the YMCA in Rhinelander are strong. In fact, the addition of the Flambeau River YMCA will help to strengthen our Rhinelander location, and the YMCA of the Northwoods as a whole.

Q: Will we see changes at the YMCA in Rhinelander?

A: No. There should be no changes to what you see and experience today once this is complete. Geographically we are 90 minutes apart and have different community make-ups. While much of what we offer and how we operate will be the same, there may be various aspects that fit for one community and do not fit for the other. Our goal will be to create the strongest YMCA in both locations meeting the needs of the area the best we can.

We know that since 1998 the YMCA of the Northwoods has been a trusted community partner in Rhinelander. We look to take that same opportunity to our friends in Price and Ashland Counties.

Thank you,
Linda May
CEO
YMCA of the Northwoods