



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

DIGGING THE PORTAGE POOL: Frequently Asked Questions

If city money will go toward the pool project, will residents be able to use the facility for free?

Running a pool is expensive! We, of course, have fixed costs for staff, supplies, and maintenance. While there will not be free access, we will still be able to offer financial assistance as with all membership and programming at the Y. This is the benefit to having a community pool run by a nonprofit.

As a comparison though, the community pool in Lake Station charges \$3-\$7 per day depending on age and residency. Hobart's Community Pool is similar with rates ranging from \$3-\$10 depending on age and residency. Munster's Community Pool has rates between \$8-\$15. Deep River Waterpark which is a county owned and operated park charges \$37.95-\$39.95 per day.

We also have several FREE community outreach programs, such as Safety Around the Water (SAW). This program teaches basic swim skills, like floating, blowing bubbles, the freestyle stroke and the front crawl. It also focuses on safety skills, like CPR, identifying a safe place to swim and water rescue techniques ("Reach or Throw, Don't Go"). The program also focuses on survival skills, like pushing off the bottom of the pool to resurface ("Jump, Push, Turn, Grab") and a method of swimming on your front and back ("Swim, Float, Swim"). This portion is so important given our proximity to the dangerous waters of Lake Michigan.

We are fortunate to be the recipient of annual grant funding which helps us provide approximately 100 free swim lessons. In addition, we are partnering with the Portage Township Trustee's office to provide 100 free swim lessons to children with autism.

Why does the pool cost so much?

It is hard to reconcile the cost of a commercial pool when most people can put a swimming pool in their backyards for a few thousand dollars. We get it! The price has kept a pool out of reach for us since the initial concept in 2005. Recreation Management creates a report each year which breaks down the aquatic trends. This report helped us to understand all of the hidden costs that go into a commercial pool. That report can be found at the following link. <https://bit.ly/3tYcGLJ>



The total anticipated cost of our project is broken down in our pool brochure which can be found on our website. <https://bit.ly/3q6Vu5E>

As a comparison, PHS completed a renovation project on their pool and that total cost was approximately \$4.3 million.

Hobart's Aquatic Center was \$18 million.

OVER →

When will it be built?

As soon as we raise the funds! We are having conversations with donors now, but we need all the support we can get.

Will anyone be allowed to use the pool or do you have to be a member?

It is certainly more cost effective to be a member if you plan on using the pool or facility frequently, but you do not have to have a membership. Daily rates are available now and will continue to be available with the addition of this amenity. As with guests who use the facility now, you will still have to be entered into our customer management software.

We do this for multiple reasons, but most importantly, YMCA of the USA is very serious about child abuse prevention. Every person in our database is cleared through the national sex offender registry.

Isn't the Y a private organization?

The Y is a nonprofit community service organization. The entire purpose of a Y in a community is to serve and fill needs. Our focus is typically in three areas: youth development, healthy living, and social responsibility.

Why can't the Y just get funding for the pool from their corporate office?

While we are able to apply for some grant funding, the Y is structured as a federated organization. That means that our Y is its own entity. Each Y branch or association is owned by a volunteer, unpaid, board of directors. Each Y is responsible for the entire operation of their own branch.

Why does the Y need funding for projects like this?

The Portage Township YMCA is a charitable organization. While we do have programs and memberships which help fund the operations (building and staff costs), we typically do not make a profit. We invest back into our community by providing financial assistance for membership and/or programs, and free community programs, such as supper to school age children five days a week, cooking classes with groceries to take home, and SOAR - middle/high school program teaching life skills after school. Any large capital projects require full community support in the form of private donations, grants, and public