

May 6, 2021

Subject: Greater Toledo Aquatic and Community Center

Dear Chairs Girod and Holvey, and members of the Committee:

My name is Jerry Pryor, and I have been a resident of the City of Toledo for over 50 years. I served on our local city council and have also served as its police chief for nearly 30 years. Over that 50 year period I've watched as the City has been consistently passed over for grants or other financial support for similar projects and we need to fix that.

An indoor recreation center has been identified as a need in our community for decades and has been part of the long-term planning for the City. There is a host of reasons in support of this project. Here are mine.

First, it would enrich the lives of the citizens in our community. Particularly given our local weather, an indoor recreation center would give people across the age spectrum exercise opportunities year round. Access to year round recreational opportunities would also allow our Greater Toledo Pool Recreation District to increase its programming for local children, including summer camps and snow day alternatives. This will have a significant impact on the physical and mental health of our citizens. In addition, it will give people in East Lincoln County an important gathering spot to strengthen the social bonds that make our community vibrant and strong. Think about all the interactions that happen, for example, at the softball fields when the weather is nice. An indoor facility would allow that to happen year round.

Second, it would strengthen the economy of our city. A community recreation center would help our city retain and attract small businesses. Studies have shown that small businesses have identified quality of life as the most important factor in their location decisions, and the number one quality of life issue is recreation (specifically, in order, national/state parks, local parks, community recreation centers). A community recreation center should be a vital component of any future economic development plans.

For all these reasons, I urge your Committee to support this much needed project.

Thank you.

Jerry Pryor