

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

My name is Candace Rogers. I write in support of funding the Greater Toledo Aquatic and Community Center project.

I moved to Toledo eleven years ago to retire and have found it to be a nice, family-orientated small town with a strong sense of community. A big contributor to that community spirit is our town pool. Built over 70 years ago it has provided recreation, exercise and swim lessons for decades. Listening to those who grew up here has made me aware of the importance this facility has played in the lives of people of this area. Their support was demonstrated in 2017 when a property tax increase was passed to save the pool from being closed down and to fund its operating expenses.

This pool benefits not only the citizens of Toledo but a large part of Lincoln County as well since it is the only public pool east of the coast. Compared to those coastal communities our part of the county is rural, less affluent, with more limited options for enrichment activities. And we live in a place surrounded by bodies of water which makes being able to swim a vital skill, especially for parents and children.

The pool has already made an appreciated difference in my life since I have used it for general exercise, and have also been able to successfully rehab three injuries just by swimming laps. Rehab that would probably have taken much longer if I did not have convenient access to this facility. In my time spent there I have seen how many different groups use the pool: school groups for swim lessons; special-needs kids to develop skills and confidence; first-responders for training; adults and seniors for exercise and rehab; families for recreation; those taking classes to learn scuba, kayaking, or life-saving.

Sadly, a 70-year old pool is about at the end of its lifespan. This one has developed numerous problems. To name just a few: water leaking from the pool, an inefficient water circulation and heating system, a roof that is not structurally sound and leaks. Major systemic problems that need replacement rather than just repairs, and if not addressed might eventually make closing the pool a necessity. But funding options for this kind of project are very limited and it is beyond the means of our working-class community.

My hope is that you will recognize the positive role this facility has played in our community and support this project so it can continue for future generations.

Thank you for your consideration.

Regards,
Candace Rogers