

Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services

Recreation Center Considerations

April 2025

Mayor and Council –

At the June 22nd Council meeting, a request was made to provide a comprehensive list of all materials gathered regarding a Recreation/Community Center. We believe this summarizes the information developed in the last 6 years.

- Victor



Challenges in providing itemized operational cost

Itemized projections require significant assumptions and may not reflect actual operational realities

- **Shared staffing and services** across amenities make it hard to attribute costs to an individual amenity. Aquatic centers especially vary on staffing depending on usage rate, size, layout, features, standards and regulations, and insurance requirements. Expect 5-8 FTEs for a mid-sized center.
- **Utilities, maintenance, cleaning** are almost always shared across multiple spaces in a building, making it difficult to itemize. Utilities can vary \$1.50-4.00 per square foot and can vary by energy rates, building efficiency, usage patterns, amenities, etc.
- **Technology** is dependent on the specific needs and complexity of the community center's operations and the level of integration with building systems and patron services.
- **Common areas** (lobbies, locker rooms, etc.) are used by all patrons, blurring cost attribution.
- **Misc fixed costs** (admin, depreciation) span the entire facility, and are not itemized. Insurance, for example, reflects the facility's size, use/amenities, risk profile, safety practices, and history. Higher-risk activities or less robust safety protocols typically lead to higher premiums.

Feasibility study and design are needed to develop actual costs for staffing and operations and to develop membership/cost recovery options.

A Menu of Select Amenities

General

Café/concessions	Makerspace/innovation lab
Catering kitchen	Multi-sport gymnasium
Child watch/babysitting	Office space for staff
Climbing wall	Reception/membership desk
Computer lab	Sauna
Conference rooms	Small group training room
Co-working space	Specialty craft rooms (woodworking, etc.)
Crafts room	Steam room
Dance/fitness studios	Storage rooms
Fitness center (weights/cardio)	Teen center/lounge
Game room/e-sports	Theatre/auditorium
Indoor turf space/field	Walking track
Lobby with gathering space	Many more...
Locker rooms	

Aquatics

Diving well
Hot tub
Lap pool
Lazy river
Leisure pool
Spray features
Therapy pool
Warm water pool
Water slides
Wave pool
Zero-depth entry pool

Current Needs and Community Requests

PRCS Identified Needs

- Gymnasium
Multi-purpose athletic space for basketball, volleyball, pickleball, etc.
- Multi-purpose activity space
Gathering space for seniors, dance classes, fitness classes, rentals, etc.
- Theatre expansion
- Storage space

This information is based on current trends PRCS is experiencing with space constraints and increasing community demand for programming and rentals.

Community Requests

- Indoor walking track
- Warm water pool
- Leisure & lap pool
- Dedicated space for older adults
- Indoor pickleball courts
- Single location community center

This community-sourced information was generated by Older Adults Focus Groups and PRCS Master Plan community surveys in 2023 and 2024, respectively.

Amenity Cost-Impact Matrix (examples)

High Cost-High Impact

Pools
Miscellaneous Aquatic Amenities
Fitness Center
Gymnasium
Locker Rooms
Babysitting/Child Watch
Café/Concessions

High Cost-Low Impact

Sauna
Steam Room
Climbing Wall
Indoor Playground
Game Room/E-sports
Teen Lounge

Low Cost-High Impact

Multi-purpose Spaces
Fitness & Dance Studios
Theatre Auditorium/Community Room
Indoor Walking Track
Lobby/Membership Desk/Lounge
Storage Rooms
Office Space For Staff

Low Cost-Low Impact

Specialty Craft Rooms
Catering Kitchen
Conference Rooms

These items have been categorized based on trends within PRCS, research of other facilities, and focus group and survey responses in the last 2-3 years. Actual impact could vary.

Operational Cost Considerations



Wages & Benefits: Depending on amenities in a community center, wages can account for **30-65%** of operational expenses. Program diversity and volume also play a role.



Occupancy: This includes monthly utilities, maintenance (including in-house and contractors), custodial needs, IT and security infrastructure, and insurance. All items depend heavily on amenities included, facility square footage, and age and efficiency of the facility. This can account for **10-20%** of operational expenses.



Programming: All programming supplies, including marketing and promotions, are in this category. Ranges **10-30%** of operational expenses and will reflect volume and diversity of programming.



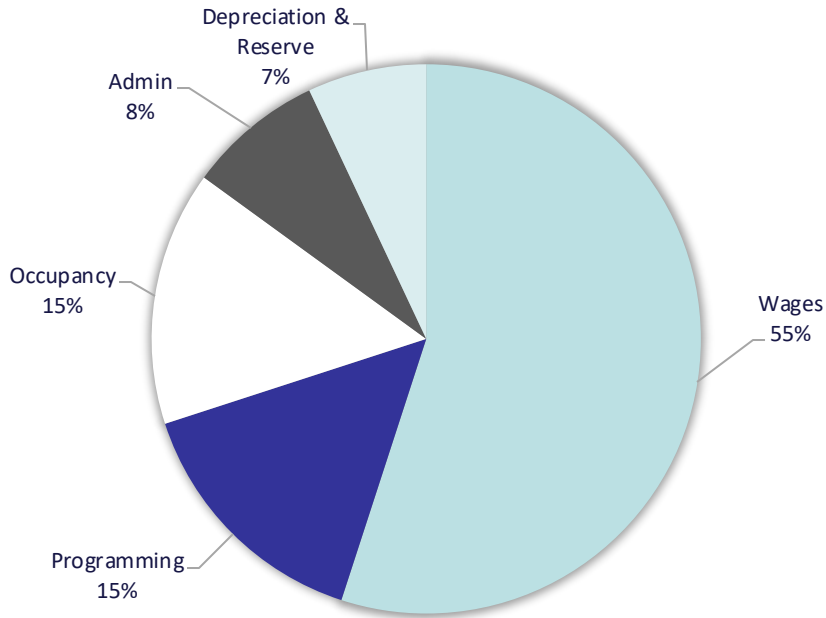
Depreciation, Reserve, Investment: This ranges from **5-15%** and is dependent on the age of the facility, desired capital replacement reserve, and strategic investment allocations.



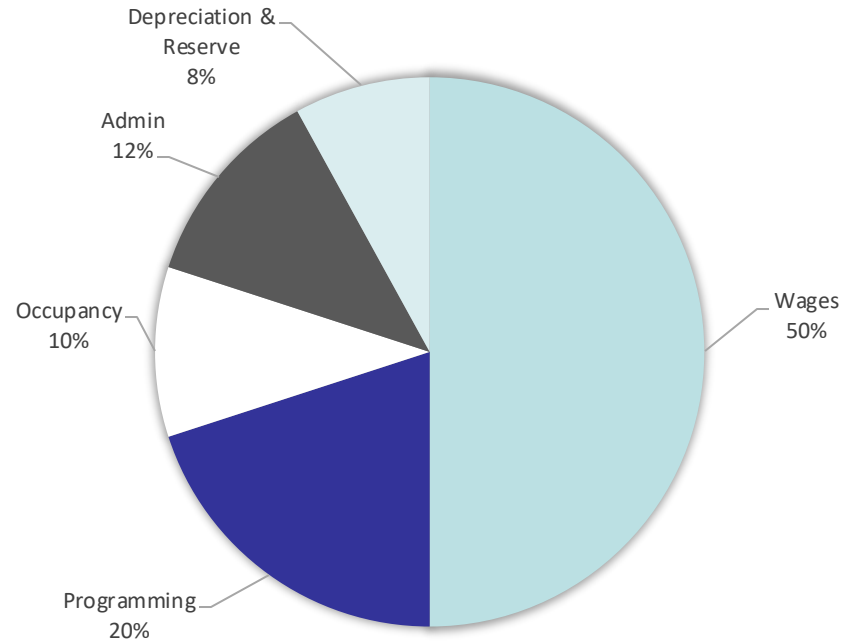
Admin: Includes office expenses, accreditation expenses, professional services/contracts, staff development, volunteer support, etc. Tends to be a catch-all for miscellaneous and incidental expenses. Ranges **5-15%**.

Average Allocation of Cost

With Aquatics

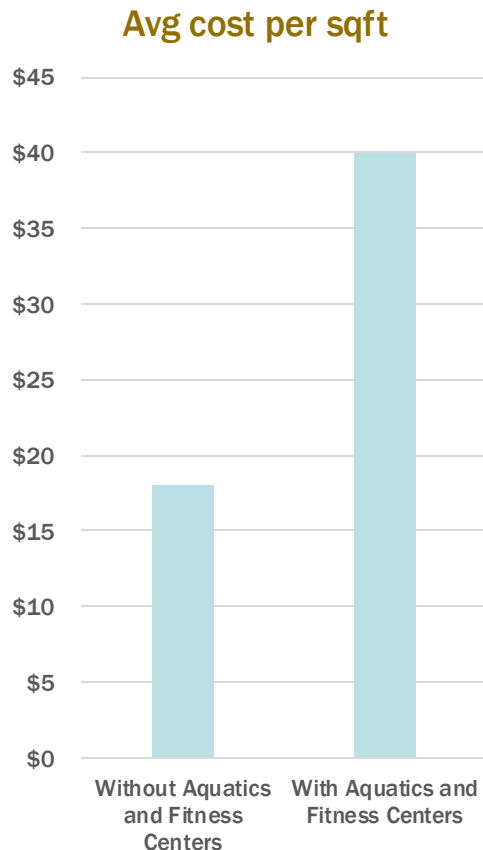


Without Aquatics



Aquatic amenities influence the overall allocation of operational costs, with a larger portion directed toward specialized staffing, utilities, and maintenance.

Estimated Cost per Sqft (of benchmark communities)

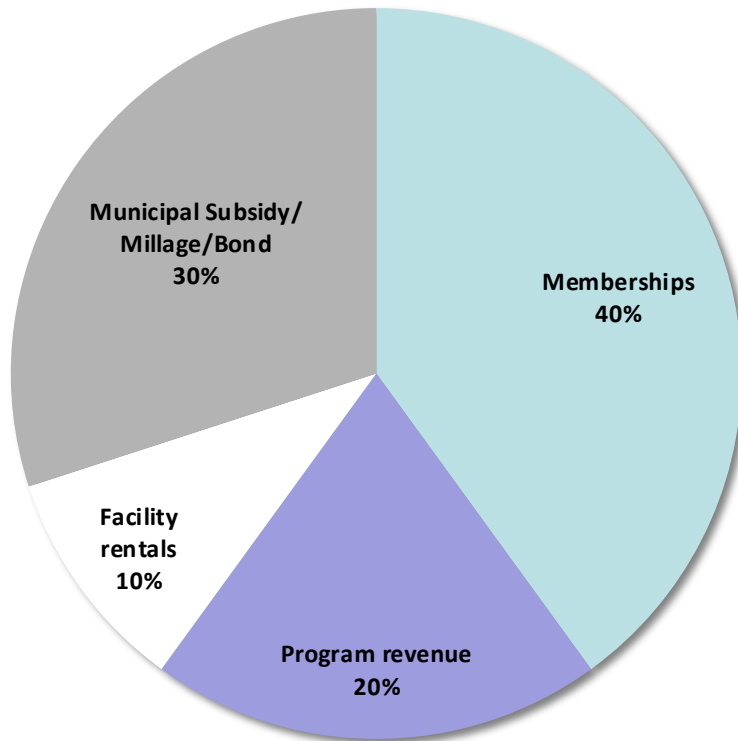


	Annual Ops Cost	Sqft	Cost per Sqft	Membership
Sterling Heights	\$1,720,650	98,000	\$17.56	0.3 mils operating millage
Troy	\$2,795,571	127,000	\$22.01	\$275/yr
Canton	\$5,939,735	95,000	\$62.52	\$382/yr
Livonia	\$4,800,000	135,000	\$35.56	\$265/yr

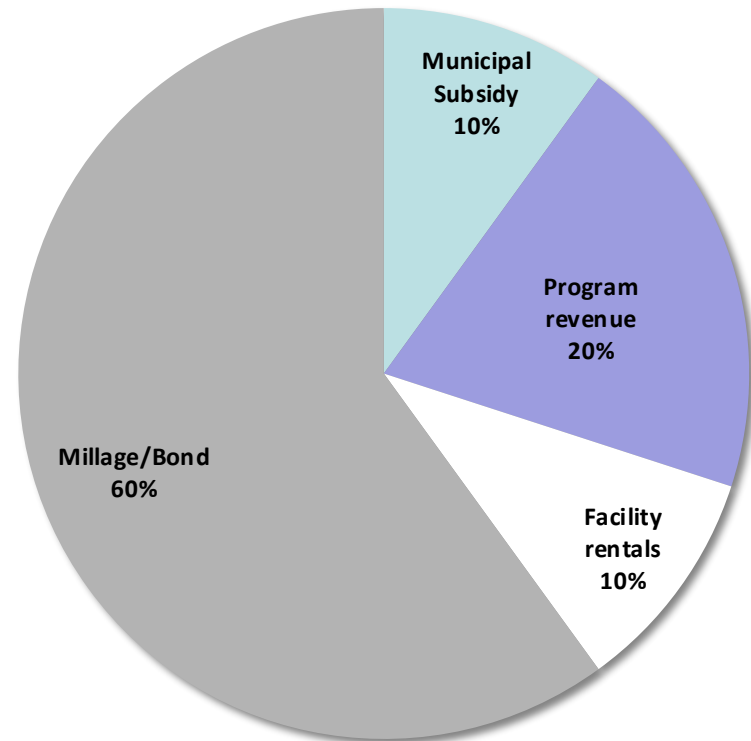
Line items not available for these centers.

Two Possible Cost Recovery Models

WITH MEMBERSHIP FEES



NO MEMBERSHIP FEES



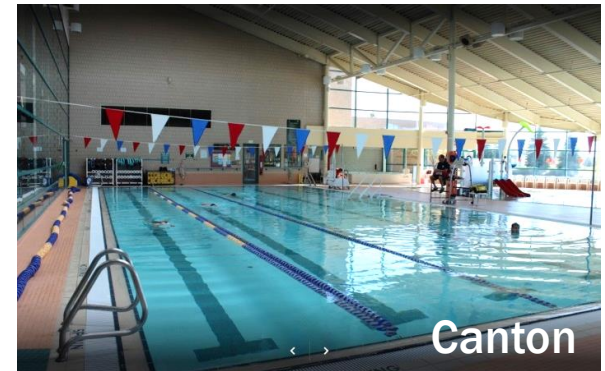
Competition/Lap Pool

Programming – often the primary source of cost recovery for pools. Varies widely depending on frequency, volume, etc. Storage space needed.

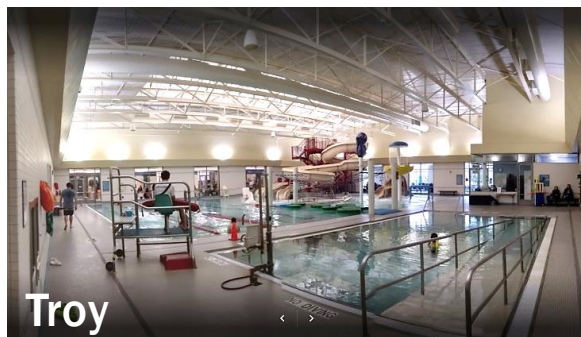
Utilities – water, heat, electricity, HVAC (ventilation), sewer all dependent on volume of use, amenities, and are intertwined with entire community center facility.

Staffing – requires skilled/experience facilities and program staff; lifeguards required recurring training.

Maintenance – daily cleaning, chemical monitoring, inspections, PMs, specialized pump/filter equipment, chemical monitoring. Dedicated storage needed.



Leisure Pools



Water playground features – largest diversity of amenities in this area. Most common and in-demand is warm water and zero-depth entry. Large impact on cost variability.

Programming – often the primary source of cost recovery for pools. Varies widely depending on frequency, volume, etc. Storage space needed.

Utilities – water, heat, electricity, HVAC (ventilation), sewer all dependent on volume of use, amenities, and are intertwined with entire community center facility.

Staffing – requires skilled/experience facilities and program staff; lifeguards required recurring training.

Maintenance – daily cleaning, chemical monitoring, inspections, PMs, specialized pump/filter equipment, chemical monitoring. Dedicated storage needed.

Example Facility – Aquatics/Natatorium Only



Lap pool – 82F, 75ft x 48ft, 6 lap lanes, 25 yards, competition-ready

Leisure pool – warm water (90F), zero-depth entry, spa jets, splash features



Example facility – aquatics/natatorium only

	Annual Ops Cost
Utilities	\$89,000*
Chemicals	\$11,000
Maintenance	\$35,000
License/permits	\$2,000
Est Staffing	\$250,000
Est Total Ops	\$387,000
Natatorium Sqft	6,000
Cost per Nat Sqft	\$64.50

*estimated

Lap pool – 82F, 75ft x 48ft, 6 lap lanes, 25 yards, competition-ready

Leisure pool – warm water (90F), zero-depth entry, spa jets, splash features

- Does not include any other square footage in building.
- Staffing includes recreation supervisor for aquatics (with a pool operator's certification), lifeguards for all hours (97 hours/week + in-services),
- Cost recovery/revenue earnings for this facility meet majority operations costs.



Fitness Center

Equipment and Maintenance –

- An entire buildout can vary widely. A **6,000 sqft** fitness center can range from **\$300,000-\$600,000**. (includes equipment, flooring, AV equipment, storage, etc.)
- **PMs** are typically contracted with the manufacturer or local vendor. Cost varies widely. Estimated **5,000-\$10,000/yr** with parts and labor covered for first 3 years of the life of the equipment.
- **Cardio equipment** can last **3-7 years**, depending on use volume and PMs. Avg cost of high-end commercial treadmill is **\$3,000-\$8,000 per item**.
- **Machine weight** equipment can last **10-20 years** of heavy use, with regular replacement of wear components. Avg cost of high-end commercial is **\$4,000-\$8,000**.
- **Free weight** equipment can last **20+ years**, depending on use volume and care. Avg cost of high-end commercial is **\$300-\$6,000**.

Programming – Fitness centers are primarily use for self-directed recreation. They are considered a major driver for membership fees. Personal training is the most common method of cost recovery via programming. Current fee for personal training averages \$60-80/hr. Storage space needed.

Utilities – Cable, internet, heat, electricity, HVAC are intertwined with entire community center facility. Dependent on facility specifications.

Staffing – shared use staff for custodial and maintenance; PT staff can be used during high volume times to monitor for safety, cleanliness, etc.



Gymnasium



Typical gym is 110ft x 70ft; includes 2 end baskets, 4 side baskets, and 1 divider curtain.

Maintenance –

- Recoat every 1-2 years at ~\$10,000.
- Refinish/repaint every 5-10 years at ~\$30,000
- Full replacement approx. every 30 years at ~\$90,000
- Daily cleaning shared across staffing and contract.
- Curtains, baskets/backboards, and corresponding mechanics replaced as needed.

Programming – provides cost recovery across multiple programs, sports, membership types. Can be lined for multitude of sports, including basketball, volleyball, pickleball, badminton, etc.

Utilities – heat, electricity, HVAC are intertwined with entire community center facility. Dependent on facility specifications.

Staffing – shared use staff for programming, custodial, maintenance

Studio Space



Maintenance –

- Similar to gymnasium but depends on type of flooring.
- 2,500 sqft hardwood needs recoat every 1-2 years, refinish every 5-10. \$1000-\$4000
- 2,500 sqft Rubber flooring needs replaced every 10-15 years at \$10,000-\$20,000
- 2,500 sqft Vinyl flooring needs replaced every 7-10 years at \$15,000-\$30,000

Programming – Studios are frequently multi-use and primarily used for instructor-led, group-based programming. The most common method of cost recovery is through class fees and membership fees (when present). Depending on flooring, classes range from Cardio Drumming to Ballet.

Utilities – Heat, electricity, HVAC are intertwined with entire community center facility. Dependent on facility specifications.

Staffing – shared use staff for custodial and maintenance. Program instructors are typically the primary or only staff in the space.

Lobby and Common Areas

Amenities –

- **Reception desk and check-in; serves as the control center for the entire facility.** Amenities vary widely:

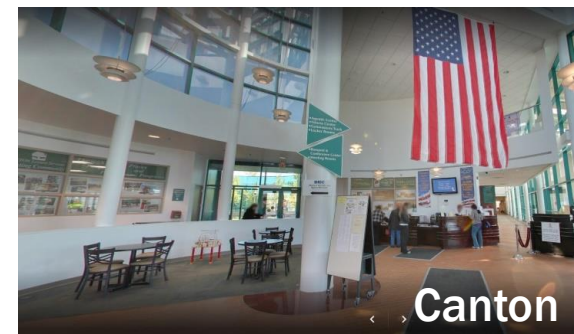
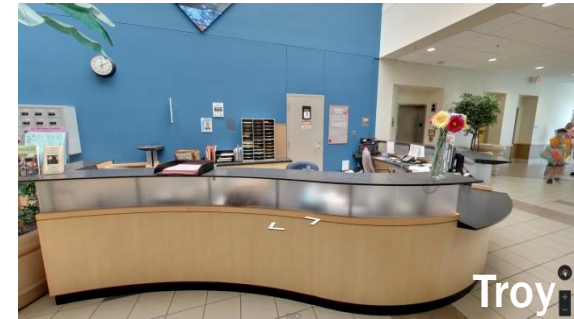
Wayfinding signage
Locker rooms (traditional & universal)
Café
Restrooms
Retail/merchandise

Display cases
Child watch/babysitting
Art gallery
Water fountain/bottle filling
Public computers
Party room (rental)

Staffing – Serves as a homebase for frontline clerical staff. Shared use staff for custodial and maintenance.

Programming – Typically unprogrammed, but can be used for promotional gathering, and general social space.

Utilities/Maintenance – Cable, internet, heat, electricity, HVAC are intertwined with entire community center facility. Dependent on facility specifications. Maintenance is dependent on usage volume and amenities.



Theatre / Auditorium/ Community Room



Maintenance –

- Dependent upon amenities: flooring type, tables and chairs, movable walls.
- Sound and lighting equipment for stage programs.

Staffing – Program staff here as needed.

Programming – Large multipurpose room. Programming can include larger community events, theatre and music performances, larger fitness classes, etc. Popular for rental space. Storage space needed.

Utilities/Maintenance – heat, electricity, HVAC are intertwined with entire community center facility. Dependent on facility specifications. Maintenance is dependent on usage volume and amenities.



Questions?

