

“Make A Splash!”

Whitewater Aquatic and Fitness Center

CONFIDENTIAL
Fund Raising Feasibility Study

Final Report

Presented

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Thank you to everyone connected with this study to assess raising the funds needed to renovate the Whitewater Aquatic and Fitness Center (WAFC) with emphasis on the pool, and to build an endowment fund for on-going support, programming and long-term maintenance. Everyone's assistance was invaluable. Thank you to all of the people throughout Whitewater and the surrounding area who participated in this study. Interviewees were thoughtful and frank with their comments; the surveys were as thoughtfully and completely prepared as in any other study conducted by The Sweeney Group. Several members of the community declined to be interviewed or did not return repeated attempts to contact them. This is typical in any study but should be noted.

Those who participated in the study were very open with their comments and shared many ideas on how to move this project and the campaign forward. People really seemed to enjoy discussing Whitewater and the great importance that the facility had in both their own lives and as an asset to the community. WAFC is very important to individuals of every age and is seen as a community asset. Study participants gave several excellent ideas on how to strengthen the case for support. There were also many people who expressed interest in discussing a gift.

There was a marked difference between WAFC members, who love the facility and are strongly committed to keeping it open, and the general community. For members, it is an integral part of their lives. However, there is a lack of general awareness about WAFC and the role it plays throughout the Whitewater area. As discussed in detail later in the report, there is a need for general community education.

The report has been delayed while a decision was made on whether to apply for the recently announced \$50 million State of Wisconsin Local Community Development Projects funding pool. After discussion with the City, School District and Parks and Recreation Department, it was determined that the project does not have the specific information needed for a successful application, especially in terms of being 'shovel ready'. Getting this information will be an integral part of campaign planning.

The Sweeney Group is proud to be a part of this study and looks forward to working with you on planning, then implementing, the campaign.

Jodi Sweeney
The Sweeney Group

THE FUND RAISING FEASIBILITY STUDY PROCESS

In general, a fund raising feasibility study is designed to evaluate the readiness of a not-for-profit organization to conduct a major fund raising campaign. It is also used as the method for developing recommendations regarding strategies for successful implementation of the fund raising plan.

This study has been conducted under the auspices of the City of Whitewater Park and Recreation's Department in collaboration with the Whitewater Area School District. The City and the School District jointly own and manage the facility under a revised agreement. Study participants are impressed with how this agreement is currently working.

The study tested the ability to raise in the range of \$3,000,000 through a public/private partnership for both facility renovations and an endowment for programming and long-term maintenance.

As detailed later, study participants are very excited about the renovations to the facility, especially the pool. They are equally supportive of raising additional permanent funds to sustain the future of the facility. The specifics are detailed in this report. The Sweeney Group believes that the campaign should begin immediately but that it should start with careful planning and community education. A participant made an initial offer to fund community education to run concurrently with campaign planning.

During the study, the opinions of more than 50 people were assessed through personal interviews, zoom interviews, and surveys.

The following elements were specifically addressed:

- the **need** for renovations and updates in the **pool**;
- the **need** for updates in the **gym facility**;
- the total **cost** of these plans;
- WAFC's impact on **economic development** in Whitewater;
- the need for an **endowment** fund to help sustain operations, add programming and prepare for long-term maintenance;
- the **details of ownership and management** including the recently updated agreement between the City and the School District;
- the ability to apply for the new state grant funding;
- the importance of the **public private partnership** in this project;
- elements necessary for a **compelling case statement**, which will be integral to the success of the campaign;
- the **private goal amount - how much can be raised - for both renovation and endowment**;
- **strategies to reach the private goal** including how to secure visionary gifts and how to develop a community campaign so that people throughout Whitewater and the surrounding area can become part of the effort;
- **potential volunteer leadership** needed for a successful campaign at many levels;
- the potential of conducting **100 Extraordinary Women** as part of the campaign, now that this segment for the library is nearing the end of the pledge period;
- Ways to seek smaller gifts including something like **100 Amazing Families**,

- potential **financial support**, including visionary, challenge, and major gifts, and various **individuals and constituencies** that would support this campaign;
- the **timing of the campaign**;
- **campaign structure** and organization.

This final report should be used as a starting point for discussion and crucial decisions by the City, the Parks and Recreation Department, and the School District. Campaign planning should begin as soon as possible. The study began momentum. However, one of the most important issues for discussion is the need to identify strong volunteer leadership for the campaign. This is detailed later. A small number of community leaders have agreed to serve on a short - term Campaign Planning Committee. They should be recruited as soon as possible.

The report includes an outline of the Action Plan and Timeline including immediate action steps.

The Sweeney Group is looking forward to working with the Parks and Recreation Director and community volunteers through each step of the campaign, beginning with campaign planning, so there is a feeling of excitement, momentum, and potential success to move this project forward.

SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS OF INTERVIEWS

The following is a summary of the interviews and survey responses:

The WAFC facility - Community perspectives

- There was unanimous strong support for WAFC throughout the study, which can be summed up in one comment "This is an unbelievable treasure in this region." It is important to note that this sentiment was consistently expressed by members. Non-members throughout the area need much more education about the specifics of the facility and its value, thought conceptually they think of it as a community asset.
- The majority of those who participated felt strongly that WAFC was a 'differentiator' in the entire Whitewater area and that it "added tremendously to the quality of life".
- Many participants use the facility, some on a very regular basis; everyone knows people who use it.
- It is considered to be a huge benefit to the school district.
- It is seen as a benefit to the entire area, not just the City of Whitewater. People come from many surrounding towns to use the facility and spend money on food, gas, etc. while in town. This is an economic development factor that few are aware of. The impact on people moving to Whitewater is far less pronounced.
- There was a question about having two bodies of indoor water in a town the size of Whitewater - WAFC and the pool at UWW. Not everyone realizes that the UWW pool is available only to students and the swim team. This was not seen as a concern, but a fact that needed to be explained.
- Study participants generally feel that WAFC is a 'hidden gem' that the community does not know enough about.
- There is a general, and very strong, feeling that there needs to be a well-done community education campaign that should be done concurrent with campaign planning.
- Several study participants commented that it seems as if the City and the School District are cooperating very well now. This fact needs to be an important part of the community education and all publicity throughout the campaign.
- The benefits to seniors should also be emphasized. WAFC offers a place for exercise and also socialization. The campaign should have one segment that emphasizing reaching out to seniors for gifts at all levels.
- WAFC offers a tremendous value as a rehabilitation facility, which should be emphasized.
- Information on the facility's finances needs to be developed and presented. This includes the fact that no facility like this is ever self-sufficient, the amount of current usage and how that could grow if with additional marketing, the amount that the City and School District each contribute, and the specifics of what an endowment fund would cover
- The staff were unanimously praised as doing a great job in running the facility. Kevin was mentioned specifically. However, there is a general concern that the facility can be short staffed at times, especially peak. The need for additional maintenance was also mentioned, though this was attributed to the age of the facility.
- WAFC offers exceptional value across all demographics
- The facility, and its programming, are excellent ways to build generational bridges between students and the community, especially seniors.
- A small number of participants asked about a potential splash pad and its potential location.

The following quotes give details on participants' perspectives

- "Every child in our community should have the opportunity to learn to swim. This is only possible at WAFC."
- "This is the only pool open to the community."
- "It is a gem."
- "WAFC is one of the reasons we still live here."
- "This is my facility. I want it to succeed."

- "Without this pool many would not recover from injury and illness."
- "The pool keeps Whitewater healthy and adds years to our lives."
- "The pool is critical to my well-being."
- "This is incredibly important to our community's seniors - for exercise and socialization."
- "We need a bigger emphasis on general nutrition and overall health. WAFC is the logical place to take the lead."
- "There needs to be the same emphasis on life long fitness as there is on team sports."

Economic development

- It is apparent that WAFC is an economic development tool but this is hard to quantify. This is seen in two ways - short-term as people come into town from surrounding areas, and longer - term as a way to attract people to live in town. Several years ago, it was easy to make the case for both factors, but over the last several years as facilities have been developed in neighboring communities, it is harder to make both aspects of this case.
- WAFC draws from many surrounding communities but this is not publicized. This can be an ancillary part of the case for support and should be part of the community education program.
- One aspect that was mentioned several times is the growth that is taking place throughout Jefferson and Walworth Counties with many new businesses that will all need to recruit qualified employees. This is especially true of businesses coming to the new Food and Beverage Innovation Campus. Several suggested partnerships with businesses to offer short-term discounted memberships to attract campaign contributions from the businesses and increased memberships.
- Campaign planning should be meeting with downtown businesses and THRIVE to discuss potential partnerships and how to market them. There could be specialized partnerships with businesses like hotels that could offer one day passes to guests.
- Even with a university, Whitewater is a small community next to bigger towns; WAFC is seen by many as a differentiator. As one said, "There is little entertainment in Whitewater; this is for socialization in addition to exercise. But not everyone is aware of this."
- It will be important for the Chamber of commerce and the City's Economic Development staff to be involved."

Specifics and cost of the renovations

- Many participants felt that the need for repairs are apparent to anyone who walks into the facility. This is true in the gym area but much more so in the pool.
- Study participants were not all aware of the severity of the issues. The potential of having the facility close was seen as 'overwhelming'. But again, there was a disparity of opinions among members v. non-members.
- People have little awareness of the specifics of facility costs and how those costs are covered. There is a general understanding that the city and the School District share costs. There is also a general understanding that there have been tensions between the two entities in the past. There is little awareness of the specifics of the new agreement other than that it has been signed and that it is working well.

Quotes from study participants detail the specifics:

- "It is imperative that this work happens and that the pool remains open. If given the facts, people will understand this and support it."
- "The lap pool definitely needs a facelift."
- "The kids area looks sad."
- "There are broken tiles which can lead to bacteria."
- If it is possible, look into geothermal solar heating for long term sustainability."
- It is imperative that the work happen and that the pool remain open to the community
- Before any capital campaign can begin it is important to have hard numbers, plans, and renderings. These can be developed concurrently with campaign planning."

- The long-term costs need to be carefully analyzed. SWIM did an outstanding job but there now needs to be a bigger emphasis on long-term sustainability.”
- “What is most important is to build education marketing and programming into the plan and allocate funds for it. It is not enough to just repair the pool.”
- “It is time to build in more details on how the entire facility will be used by the entire community.”
- “Building sustainability into these plans through an endowment is very wise.”
- Please provide more information on how WAFC Friends will be part of this effort. They are an important component.”
- “This could be a good way for the Community Foundation to play a strong role and build their presence.”
- “The pool is really showing its age; the need for maintenance continues to grow and repairs will only be more expensive in the future.”
- “I do not understand the past power struggles but they were very apparent. It seems like things are better and working well but this is only anecdotal.”
- “I am not sure that property taxes are allocated fairly to the pool. I would like to see specifics.”
- “WWHS swim team is very valuable but their practice time reduces the open swim availability.”
- “The new Superintendent seems wonderful. I would like to know his perspective on the facility and plans for the future.”

Campaign Goal - How much can be raised

- A total potential campaign goal of \$3,000,000 was tested.
- This included \$1,500,000 for renovations of both the aquatic facility and the gym at approximately \$1.5 million, and an endowment of an additional \$1.5 million. The specifics of both need to be detailed and transparent. People generally understand that the facility is old (though many were surprised that it is almost 25 years old) and understand the need for renovation.
- The City, and potentially the School District, must play a major role in this funding and in the campaign.
- Any campaign of this size will need to offer the opportunity for donors to make pledges; 3-5 years is ideal. There will need to be a way to cover these pledges so work can begin before the last funds are received.
- There was very preliminary discussion as part of the study of the possibility of a \$1,500,000 from the City as a challenge to the community. This was generally well-received, thought it is important to note that details are needed, especially any impact on taxes.
- Several participants discussed the success of the recent library campaign. Many felt that the pool has many more users than the library but that the library did an excellent job of telling its story. This should be a model for the WAFC campaign.
- People understand that these facilities have a typical life and that this is nearing the end.
- People also understand need for operational endowment, and applaud this planning.
- The case statement used for the study was considered to be very well done and can be used as the basis for campaign materials.
- Extensive details on the plans and costs are needed, including visuals to get potential donors excited about the project.
- Details on how previous donors to the SWIM campaign will continue to be recognized are needed before recognition opportunities can be developed; this should be an early part of campaign planning.
- While the study was being conducted, the opportunity of the \$50 million State of Wisconsin grant was discussed. After careful analysis, it was determined that the project did not have sufficient detailed plans to apply.
- The timing for a campaign seems to be good - Bethel House is considering a campaign for the transitional housing program, and Starin Park / water tower is also planning to raise funds.
- There is some fatigue around fund-raising but several study participants are willing to consider a gift. There needs to be an effort to reach out to people in addition to the families that are typically

generous to all Whitewater projects. A special emphasis should be placed on reaching out to seniors.

- A challenge grant to reach out to the broader community would be very important.
- Campaign planning should include developing three options for costs:
 - Bare minimum replacements to meet code
 - More significant renovations
 - Dream facility
- The endowment is considered essential. Participants believe that donors will invest in updating the entire facility only with a clear vision of a designated permanent maintenance fund.
- There was mixed reaction to using the 100 Extraordinary Women idea that was used for the library. Its success would be dependent on getting a core committee of volunteers excited.
- The campaign should be more dependent on major gifts than is typical but there needs to be outreach to members, using smaller level naming opportunities. The Campaign Planning Committee will need to confirm existing policies on how long existing naming rights are in effect.
- Messaging will be very important. This could include Terry Fair's very active Whitewater facebook page.
- The campaign theme needs to be short and very catchy - "Make A Splash" or something similar.
- By far, the most essential element of campaign success will be recruiting volunteers for planning then implementing all phases of the campaign. It is also crucial to ensure that Kevin has sufficient time to devote to the campaign in addition to a very full plate of current job responsibilities.
- Several study participants agreed to *consider* serving on a 3-4 month Campaign Planning Committee to strategize the campaign. This is very important because they were well-respected individuals who are known to accomplish what they attempt. Others agreed to assist 'behind the scenes'.
- A few additional individuals were identified for an Honorary Committee who would endorse the campaign and give it credibility and momentum. This list needs to be expanded. The City Council and the School Board need to endorse the campaign effort.
- There was a strong consensus that there is some momentum building now so people want to move forward. This must be factored into the need for firm plans and numbers.
- A campaign of this scope should take 3-4 months of campaign planning, then 8-12 months to implement the campaign, based on the goal.
- The Sweeney Group believes that a minimum of \$1.5 million can be raised. It also recommends that donors be allowed to donate to either renovation or the endowment fund. This will take careful planning and messaging in terms of the public / private partnership that will be required. Raising \$3 million privately is not possible at this time.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR A SUCCESSFUL CAMPAIGN

Overview

The specifics of campaign planning should include the following:

- 1.) Accept the findings of this report and commit to move forward.
- 2) Confirm the commitments of the City and the School District in terms of their contributions to the project, financing and endorsements.
- 3) Confirm the renovation plans and costs including a potential splash pad. These should include details, visuals, renderings, and costs. There also needs to be specifics on long term costs and that the proposed endowment will cover them.
- 4) Determine all campaign policies including pledge term, recognition opportunities, the entity to give a tax deduction and track gifts, escrow account specifically for campaign donations, etc.
- 5) Refine the Case for Support to reflect the elements included in this study. As soon as the language is confirmed, it will be developed into campaign materials. These will include a logo, elevator pitch, and naming opportunities.
- 6) Organize a Campaign Planning Committee that will meet for 3 (possibly 4) months. It will be important to have representation from WAFC Friends, and possibly the Community Foundation, on this committee. In addition, several of those interviewed in the study have offered to *consider* serving on this committee. Some agreed to work only behind the scenes, so their roles must be confirmed. Their roles and responsibilities are detailed in the Volunteers section of this report.
- 7) As part of campaign planning, seek 2-5 visionary gifts. These will be large gifts to show support for the plans and to give the campaign momentum. They will be requested as 3 to 5-year pledges; the requests will include potential recognition opportunities.
- 8) Develop a community education campaign, including
 - meetings with community partners including economic development organizations, such as THRIVE, downtown businesses etc.
 - information at WAFC, the City, the School District and other locations personal contacts
 - information sessions including small cultivation events in people's homes
 - information sent through the schools
 - information sent through the civic clubs,
 - information on the City, School District and Parks and Recreation websites
 - if possible, preparing a 3- or 4-minute video that 'tells the story'.
- 9) Research a *100 Extraordinary Women* (100EW) segment of the campaign, asking a minimum of 100 women to each pledge \$1,000 (\$200 per year; \$18.00 per month).

10) Initiate research on any potential grants and additional sources of public funding or grants from private foundations.

Volunteer Leadership for the Campaign

To be successful, a capital campaign needs many types of volunteers and various levels of commitment. This will all be determined during the initial campaign planning segment. All volunteer positions are included on the Organization Chart in the Appendices.

This is the most important issue facing this campaign. Very few people were interested in volunteering for the entire campaign, especially in a leadership capacity.

The following committees will be needed:

Campaign Planning Committee

The first level of campaign organization is the Campaign Planning Committee.

This is a group of individuals who:

- help to strategize the campaign,
- review drafts of campaign materials,
- identify, cultivate and potentially solicit visionary donors; and
- identify and recruit volunteers, beginning with the Honorary Committee.

It would be ideal to begin meeting with them as soon as possible in December.

Honorary Committee

The Honorary Committee is a group of people recruited to endorse the campaign and give the project credibility. They typically do not meet but can be asked to do one or two things to advance the campaign, such as host an event or 'open the door' to a prospective donor. It will be important to have representatives from Fairhaven and other senior facilities, downtown businesses and different generations of Whitewater and area residents.

One of the first responsibilities of the Campaign Planning Committee is to identify and recruit the members of the Honorary Committee. Several potential members were identified in the study; their names are included in the list of potential volunteers, presented as a separate document.

Communications Committee

A small number of individuals with writing skills and/or a professional background in communications and design should be assembled to serve as a resource for development of campaign materials, including editing the case revisions based on the study.

The initial campaign materials will be drafted by The Sweeney Group as part of campaign planning. It will focus on the opportunities offered by a renovated facility and the impact on the area. It will be based on the

initial case statement used in the study but will be revised to reflect the refined design and all of the elements learned in the study. Ideally representatives of companies that can provide in-kind services, such as design and printing, and a representative from the local newspaper and radio station should be members of this committee. After the materials have been developed and printed the committee will focus on strategies for public relations and publicity that initially tie to the project then to the campaign. It is important to not publicize the campaign during the “quiet phase” when major gifts are sought, though we will want to recognize visionary gifts.

Major Gifts - Individuals Committee

This will be the core working group for the majority of the funds raised in the campaign. No campaign at this level can be successful without major gifts from the individuals who care most about the community in which they live and who have the ability to give at this level. A small number of leadership gifts, referred to as visionary gifts, will be sought by the Campaign Planning Committee early in the campaign planning process as a way of “setting the bar high” and announcing to the community that this campaign is on track to be a success; major gifts will follow directly after this period of seeking the visionary gifts.

This committee will consist of a group of people who can identify, educate, cultivate and solicit gifts at a high level. Their work will be augmented by a small number of select individuals who are willing to make a limited number of calls but not attend regular committee meetings. This committee will identify prospects, determine if additional cultivation is needed, prepare solicitation strategies, and solicit gifts themselves.

Members of this group could be the hosts of the series of small cultivation gatherings that will be the backbone of the campaign effort. These could be tied to the community education campaign once the plans are finalized. These may be breakfasts, lunches, or information sessions at WAFC.

Business/ Foundations/ Grants Committee(s)

During campaign planning, we will determine if this should be one or two committee, based on workload. The committee(s) will concentrate on the businesses located downtown and throughout the area, and the small number of foundations that provide grants in this area. Leadership in this segment should be able to approach at least two to three peers at representative companies to assist in the effort.

This committee will also be responsible for identifying and researching potential public sources. The Sweeney Group can assist in this research though additional expertise will be needed for the public funding information.

Community Campaign Committee

This committee plans and implements the public phase of the campaign including soliciting smaller gifts, selling pavers or tiles, developing direct mail appeals, events, etc. It is **very** important to not solicit smaller gifts before all major gifts strategies have been implemented.

Each of these segments need to be carefully strategized, especially regarding the timing to initiate them.

In-Kind Committee

This committee will work with the architects and contractors chosen to determine the feasibility of in-kind gifts of material and labor, with approximate values, then determine potential sources for these items. Gifts of this type can often be as valuable as cash if appropriately handled. Local sources will be approached by committee members; additional sources will be identified by the architects and contractors and they will assist in setting up the approach. This is not thought to be a major part of the campaign but should be included in planning

Recognition Opportunities

There was a strong consensus that recognition opportunities will be a very useful, even necessary, tool in the campaign. They encourage potential donors to give at larger amounts and serve as a way for volunteers to ask at these levels. Recognition opportunities and policies will require a thorough analysis of the final costs and the campaign goal, then City, Park and Recreation Department and School District approval.

It is imperative that the donor recognition connected with the past SWIM campaign must stay in effect. New naming will have to be developed for this renovation. This must be done carefully and thoughtfully. It will be an important part of campaign planning.

Pledge Payment Policies

Campaign Planning will need to include a Gifts Acceptance Policy, which determines the specifics of how gifts are accepted, receipted and tracked, for the campaign. The WAFC Friends and/or the Whitewater Community Foundation could be involved.

A minimum of a 3 year (maximum of 5) pledge payment is recommended, but this needs to be confirmed, including how if the City can cover pledges so that renovation work can begin before the final pledge is received.. This should be one of the first areas of campaign planning; it is included on the Action Plan and Timeline in this report.

The Sweeney Group is often asked about pledge defaults. Our experience suggests that if there is responsible policy and practice in booking pledges and managing pledge payment reminders, pledge payment default rates are insignificant - typically less than 1% - 2%. We anticipate that is would be even less in a community like Whitewater, with its history of major gifts.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

STUDY PARTICIPANTS

Kevin Boehm
Connor Brooks
Mike Ciardo
Ginny Coburn
Thayer Coburn
Angeline Doman
Elizabeth Elam
Richard Fassl
Rick Halvorsen
Stephanie Hicks
Candace Jacobs
Rick Johnson
Jon Kachel
Larry Kachel
Mike Kachel
Samuel Karns
Sharon McCullough
James Nelson – for Fort Healthcare
Andi Pearl
Kasey Reed
Steve Ryan
Steve Sahyun
Cathey Sloane
Tom Sloane
Dr. Roberta Wedl
John Weidl
Donna Wilson
Cheri Zimdars

24 anonymous surveys

Total 52

APPENDIX II

STANDARDS OF GIVING CHART

- Total project cost: **\$3,000,000**
 - o This includes \$1,500,000 for renovations and \$1,500,000 for endowment
- Campaign goal of **\$1,500,000** in private support
 - o This presumes \$1,500,000 commitment from the City as a challenge to the Whitewater community

# Gifts	Amount	Total in Range	Cumulative Total	# Prospects Needed
1	\$500,000	\$500,000	\$500,000	5
1	\$250,000	\$250,000	\$750,000	5
2**	\$100,000	\$200,000	\$950,000	10
4	\$50,000	\$200,000	\$1,150,000	12
4	\$25,000	\$100,000	\$1,250,000	20
10	\$10,000	\$100,000	\$1,350,000	30
20	\$5,000	\$100,000	\$1,450,000	40
MANY	<\$1,000	\$100,000	\$1,550,000	
40 plus	Total Number of Gifts/Prospects			200 plus

** One of these gifts could potentially be the 100 Extraordinary Women collective giving

APPENDIX III

ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

Recommended Campaign Structure (in sequential order)
for focus during campaign planning

City of Whitewater Parks and Recreation Dept

Campaign Planning Committee(CPC)

Responsible for advice and strategies to launch the campaign - 3-4 months

This Committee will confirm public funding available, then the private goal, develop strategies, recruit volunteers, and solicit visionary gifts to give the campaign momentum

Communications Committee	Honorary Committee	Leadership Team	Staff and Consultants
Responsible for campaign materials during campaign planning phase then carefully strategized publicity. Community education will be an essential first stage.	These are community leaders who will not actively work on the campaign, but endorse it. The use of their name will give the campaign credibility and they will be asked to assist in specific ways.	This is the active working group that will undertake all campaign activities. Ideally many members of the CPC will join this Team	Kevin Boehm The Sweeney Group
Visionary Gifts	Municipal Funding Public Grants Committee	100 Extraordinary Women	Local Corporations and Businesses Professionals
This are the initial gifts that give the campaign momentum This will include individuals, corporations and foundations. Coordinating these with the public funding commitment is essential to campaign success	It will be essential to confirm public funding at the same time as launching the campaign	This segment asks 100 women to each pledge \$1000 over 5 years (\$200 per year; \$17.00 per month). It builds awareness and momentum and raises funds for planning. It should be conducted early in the campaign	This committee will approach local corporations then smaller businesses. There are several new businesses coming to the area (broadly defined) that may be potential donors
Major Gifts - Individuals	Individuals and Families	Public segments	In-kind
Gifts in the \$5,000 - \$25,000 range to correspond to naming opportunities.	This will involve the entire community - events, mailing, etc.	Smaller giving such as work through the schools, pavers, etc.	The architect and construction company should be able to assist with this segment

APPENDIX IV

WAFC ACTION PLAN AND TIMELINE

NOTE: This document takes the recommendations for the campaign and presents them as action steps for the initial phase of the campaign. This will serve as the 'blueprint' for the all campaign activities. It is a working document that will be revised throughout the campaign. The timeline will change depending on the success of the initial activities. The following is a draft for review and discussion.

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION AND DETERMINATION

- Determine the staff point person to assist with the campaign details
- Determine the pledge period and whether the City will cover pledges
- Determine the volunteers for the Campaign Planning Committee
- Hold a meeting or meetings to discuss and determine the following:
 - ✓ Accept Campaign Planning Study Report recommendations
 - ✓ Develop a gift acceptance policy
 - ✓ Confirm which entity will manage accepting, tracking and acknowledging gifts and give the tax deduction pledges, including software and if Parks and Rec will act as a double check for all gifts
 - ✓ Confirm which entity will hold the endowment fund
 - ✓ Confirm a pledge policy, including the maximum years for pledging (3-5 recommended)
 - ✓ Determine if a splash pad should be added to the plans (this was noted by several study participants)

CAMPAIGN PREPARATION

- Recruit the Campaign Planning Committee, based on those who have been involved to date, who expressed interest during the study, and others
- Confirm the specifics of the community education plan and secure funding for it
- Prepare the campaign work plan by month with responsibilities and timeline, specific steps; assignment of responsibilities, and timeline
- Add names and contact information identified in the study and at the brainstorming session to the database
- Finalize all facility plans, costs, renderings, etc.
- Meetings with potential community partners
- Confirm the funding that can be provided by the City with timing and specific terms
- Determine if any renovation or endowment funding is available through the school district

CASE FOR SUPPORT/ PUBLIC RELATIONS

- Refine the Case for Support based on initial materials used for the study and suggestions in this report
- Update Park and Rec, the City and School District websites with current information on need, planning, costs, endowment funds, the campaign
- Confirm if any of these websites should also take funds

- Determine the specifics of a community education campaign on WAFC's importance and impact, and usage statistics
- Determine potential partnership programs, such as a free month for employees, to take to potential corporate donors
- Confirm the theme and logo for campaign
- Develop the 'elevator pitch'
- Prepare short 3-4 minute campaign video on the vision and need
- Develop plan for recognition of all gifts including where donor recognition will be located in the renovated space and that costs have been included in the budget; it is imperative that this is thoughtfully coordinated with current donor recognition
- Finalize recognition opportunities
- Obtain endorsements for case statement
- Prepare initial campaign materials in a way that can be modified for campaign segments, using donated services if possible
- Get list of in-kind items, with approximate values, from architects - at the appropriate time

VOLUNTEER IDENTIFICATION AND RECRUITMENT

- Identify and recruit Campaign Planning Committee. They will develop policy recommendations, prepare the case statement, recruit additional volunteers and identify leadership gifts. Because the Committee will only meet for 3 or 4 months, we must have succinct initial strategies and potential donors to present
- Identify leadership volunteers for each campaign segment identified on the Organization Chart included in the Appendices.
- Identify and recruit Honorary Committee members
- Identify leadership for 100 Extraordinary Women, after research
- Determine individuals who represent the Business community for a meeting to discuss potential specific areas in the renovated facility that may be of interest and to cultivate their involvement

VISIONARY GIFTS

- Identify donors for the visionary gifts that will be solicited at the beginning of the campaign
- Hold individual meetings with Honorary Committee members to assist in the identification of prospective donors with cultivation and solicitation strategies for each, as well as request amounts
- Identify lead and challenge gifts, using Standards of Giving Chart and naming opportunities; develop specific strategies for each
- Develop plans for cultivation events for donors; a volunteer has offered to help with this
- Hold solicitation training session for all leadership volunteers
- Determine timeline for *100 Extraordinary Women*; begin to organize the committee

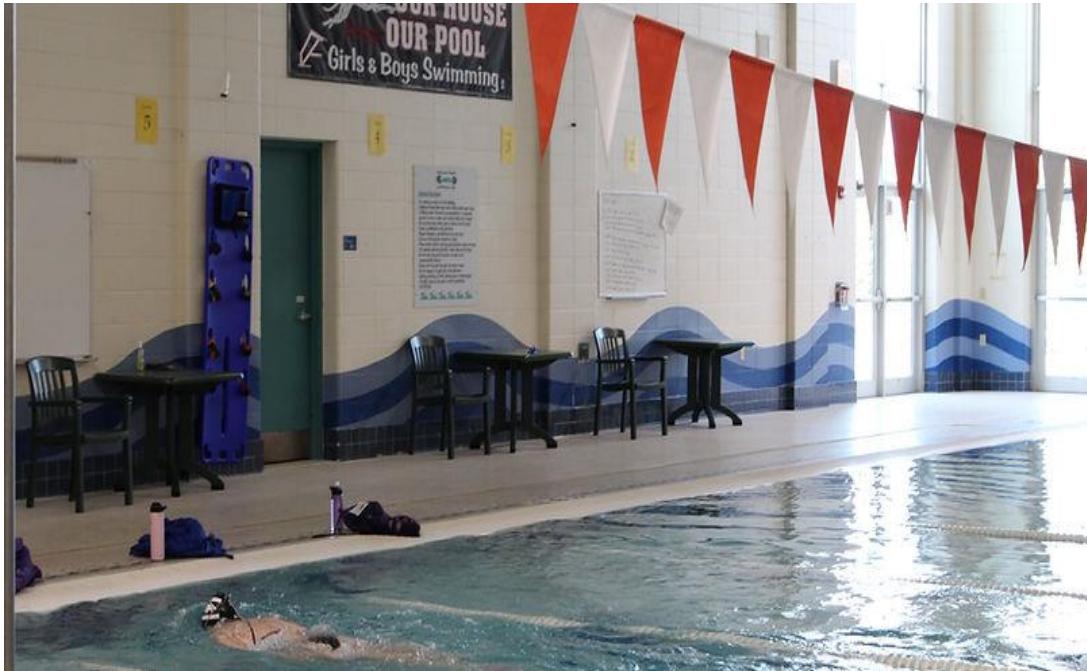
APPENDIX V

CAMPAIGN BUDGET - WORKING DRAFT

*This is a budget format; completion of the budget requires additional discussion and decisions
Covering pledges may be an additional expense, possibly covered by the City of Whitewater.*

	2025	2026	TOTAL	NOTES
Personnel				
Staff				It needs to be determined how much of Kevin's (and possible Megan's) time can be allocated
Benefits @				This allocation may also cover a % of his benefits
Clerical/ Software				This can be managed by a volunteer but there needs to be an administrative point person. It may be possible for the Friends or the WWCF to handle admin
Consultant - fund raising				For campaign planning and implementation
Collateral Materials				
Community Education				A local donor will consider covering these costs
Campaign print materials design				An in-kind contribution should be sought
Campaign case printing				In-kind contribution
Web page				This should be an addition to Park and Rec's, the School District's and the City's sites
Logo				
Video				
Events				
Cultivation events				
Benefit events				
Community phase events				
Recognition				
Determination re: how gifts at all levels will be recognized				This could include a traditional Donor Wall, names in each area, and an electronic screen to list all donors; coordination wth current donor recognition is imperative
TOTAL				

**INITIAL CASE STATEMENT
USED TO
CONDUCT THE STUDY**



“Continuing the Legacy of a Whitewater Community Treasure”

Whitewater Aquatic and Fitness Center

Initial Case for Your Support

There is something special about every town—a sense of community. It's why we put down roots, take pride in our hometown, and work together to make it even better. Whitewater is a community with a long history and strong traditions. It's also a place full of potential, with exceptional assets like the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater, a thriving parks system, and soon, a remodeled 21st-century public library.

Among these assets, the Whitewater Aquatic and Fitness Center (WAFC) stands out as a cornerstone of health, connection, and community well-being. The WAFC includes an eight-lane competitive lap pool, a leisure pool, slide, and a fitness center. It is jointly operated by the City of Whitewater and the Whitewater School District under a lease and operation agreement finalized in May 2024 and that will continue for another 5 years.

A Well-Loved, Heavily Used Facility

The WAFC is more than just a building—it's a daily part of life for people across Whitewater and the surrounding area. It's where neighbors reconnect and new friendships are formed. It's a place where people come to exercise, heal, and live healthier lives. Each day, hundreds of individuals walk through our doors: children, families, students, working adults, and seniors alike.

- Our seniors use the warm water and fitness equipment to manage arthritis, heart conditions, and other health concerns.
 - Families in need benefit from subsidized memberships and swim lessons, thanks to support from the Friends of the WAFC and county programs such as CLTS.
 - Community programs and camps rely on the facility as a safe, active, and welcoming environment for children.
 - It's where school swim teams push their limits, where families make lasting memories celebrating birthday milestones, and where countless lives are changed through connection, health, and growth.
-

Aging Infrastructure, Growing Need

Despite the tremendous usage and impact, the **WAFC is at a critical juncture**. WAFC was started through the efforts of many community volunteers through Setting Whitewater in Motion (SWIM) more than 24 years ago. The pool itself has outlived its intended 20-year lifespan. During our most recent state inspection, we were advised that if we do not begin to make necessary repairs and updates, **we could face a shutdown ordered by the state within two years**.

Key issues include:

- Pieces of the pool shell falling off, with temporary repairs becoming less effective.
- The pool deck concrete is cracking and buckling, and the same can be said about the pool deck tiling.
- Widespread rust is visible throughout the facility, including on the slide structure, play features, and many of the fixtures.
- Increasing maintenance costs and decreasing reliability.

A Vision for the Future

A thorough needs assessment has been undertaken, taking into account both immediate repairs and long-term sustainability. Cost estimate for **essential repairs and upgrades** total between **\$1.5 and \$2 million**. We are considering raising an **additional \$1.5 million**, which would establish a **permanent endowment** through the Whitewater Community Foundation to support future programming, scholarships, and maintenance needs in perpetuity.

A campaign is under consideration to raise **\$3 to \$3.5 million**, allowing for:

- Completion of essential repairs and upgrades;
 - Creation of a WAFC Endowment through the Whitewater Community Foundation;
 - Expanded programming and scholarship opportunities for low-income families;
 - Enhanced sustainability for future generations.
-

Why This Matters

Whitewater's population continues to evolve. With significant portions of the community living at or below the poverty line, facilities like the WAFC play a crucial social role. This campaign isn't just about maintaining a building—it's about health, inclusion, and providing a space where all residents, regardless of age, income, or background, can thrive.

The WAFC serves a diverse demographic and supports meaningful connections—helping people stay active, manage health conditions, combat isolation, and build a stronger sense of belonging. It is one of the few places in our community where everyone—from toddlers to seniors—comes together under one roof.

Who Is Leading This Effort?

The Whitewater Aquatic and Fitness Center is overseen by the **City of Whitewater Parks and Recreation Department**, which has managed the facility's operations since 2016. The City receives guidance from the **Aquatic Center Committee (ACC)**, an advisory group made up of representatives from the City, the Whitewater Unified School District, and local community leaders who help ensure that decisions reflect the best interests of all users.

Day-to-day operations are managed by the **WAFC Manager**, supported by a dedicated and professionally trained staff committed to providing a safe, welcoming, and high-quality experience for all.

Fundraising efforts are supported by the **Friends of the WAFC**, a volunteer group established in 2010. Their work has helped reduce financial barriers for families and individuals, supported incentive programs for staff, and funded a range of facility improvements.

All funds raised will be held and managed by the **Whitewater Community Foundation**. In addition to private giving, the City is actively researching public funding opportunities to supplement campaign efforts.

Imagine Whitewater without the aquatic facility.

Now imagine what we can achieve together.

Please consider joining us.



