

Julie McArthur Regional Recreation Centre: YMCA Impact & Investment

Deputation to Council, City of
Owen Sound

November 10th, 2025

Brandon Downing, Manager of Health,
Fitness & Aquatics

Sarah Cowley, Chief Executive Officer



Impact of the YMCA & City of Owen Sound Partnership Since 2009

- **Major Financial Investment:** The YMCA contributed \$7.39 million to the Capital Campaign for the Julie McArthur Regional Recreation Centre, funded through community donations and proceeds from the sale of its original facility.
- **Sustained Partnership:** In 2024, City Council and the YMCA Board approved a 20-year Operational Agreement and Lease, ensuring a lasting collaboration that will continue to empower individuals, enhance community wellness, and create meaningful opportunities for future growth.
- **Joint Achievement:** Through this partnership, the YMCA has been able to deliver programs and services, made possible by our shared financial commitments and resources for the JMRRC.
- **Community Impact:** Our YMCA provides vital health, recreation, educational, and cultural programs that enrich the lives of more than 10,000 community members each year.

The YMCA Facility at the JMRRC

- In our operational model as a partner of the City of Owen Sound, we take pride in managing our own revenue and expenses and covering the costs of operations and capital for our 55,000 square foot health, fitness and aquatics facility, as well as cost-sharing expenses related to the common areas of the Julie McArthur Regional Recreation Centre building and site.
- Amenities within this fully accessible facility include:
 - ✓ 8 lane, 25-meter swimming pool with accessible ramp
 - ✓ Warm water leisure/therapy pool with water features and an accessible ramp
 - ✓ Spacious Fitness Centre with high-end fitness equipment
 - ✓ Cycle Studio with Keiser spinning bikes
 - ✓ Free-weight room
 - ✓ 2-Lane walking/running track
 - ✓ Multi-sport gymnasium
 - ✓ Women's and Men's adult-only change rooms with steam rooms
 - ✓ Girls' and boys' youth change rooms
 - ✓ Co-ed Family change room
 - ✓ Welcome Desk, always staffed
 - ✓ Two program rooms equipped with kitchenettes
 - ✓ Pool viewing area, lobby seating

YMCA Health, Fitness & Aquatics Programs



FITNESS & RECREATION

- Group Programs: Group Fitness Classes, Recreational Sports, School Fitness Electives
- Specialized Training: Personal Training, Rock Steady Boxing (in partnership with the Parkinson Society), Cardiac Rehabilitation (in partnership with Brightshores Health System), Tai Chi
- Sports: Pickleball, Badminton, Basketball



AQUATICS

- Classes & Swim Options: Aquafit, Swim Lessons, Open Swim, Lane Swim, Swim to Survive
- Certifications: Aquatic/Lifeguard Training, CPR, First Aid Certifications
- Clubs & Partnerships: Swim Club (with the Owen Sound Swim Club), Special Olympics Otters



YOUTH

- Leadership & Development: Youth Awareness Workshops, Youth Leadership Programs
- Activities & Childminding: Drop-in Programs for Children & Youth, Stay 'N' Play, Birthday Parties, Babysitting Courses

YMCA Member Information

- We continue to see strong membership growth and anticipate a return to pre-COVID membership levels (5,600) this fiscal year.

- As of November 3, 2025:

Adult (18+) – 3,605

Teen (13-17) - 531

Youth (3-12) - 988

Under 3 – 212

TOTAL – 5,336

- Historical averages show Owen Sound residents continue to account for approximately 75% of members.



Financial Investment in the JMRRC

- Between opening in June 2012 and March 2024, the YMCA has continued to make strategic investments of **over \$1.5 million** to keep the YMCA facility in “as new” condition, in order to meet the high expectations of members and to contribute to the longevity and sustainability of the building and property owned by the City of Owen Sound.
- Following facility assessment by engineering firm, Ameresco, Asset Planner software is being implemented to track preventative maintenance work, and to keep our capital planning evergreen.
- From April 1, 2024 to March 31, 2025, the YMCA invested **over \$113,000** in capital expenditures and repairs for the YMCA portion of the JMRRC.

YMCA FY2025 Capital Investments



Enhancing Facilities and Accessibility

Through a \$17,300 Capital grant from the Ontario Trillium Foundation, the YMCA upgraded the heating system in its aquatic centre, ensuring consistent pool temperatures, improved energy efficiency, and uninterrupted programming. The new system not only reduces operating costs but also enhances the comfort for swim lessons, therapy programs, and fitness classes.

By improving the conditions for participants and instructors, this upgrade strengthens the effectiveness of our aquatic programs, helping everyone feel supported, safe and motivated to stay active.

- \$17,300 – Leisure Pool Heat Exchanger
- \$59,663 – Fitness Equipment
- \$3,289 – Water Fountain/Refill Station for Pool Deck
- \$16,900 – Domestic Water Heaters
- \$6,081 – Staff Furniture & Fixtures
- \$10,338 – Member Lounge Furniture

YMCA Financial Assistance Program

- **Enhanced Community Access:** Through the partnership between the City of Owen Sound and the YMCA of Owen Sound Grey Bruce, more people in our community can benefit from vital programs and supports that promote inclusion, empowerment, and a stronger sense of belonging for everyone.
- **Meaningful Support for All:** Our Financial Assistance program offers more than just entry to fitness facilities—it provides the resources individuals and families need to stay active, healthy, and engaged in their community.
- **Equitable Opportunities at No Extra Cost:** This partnership ensures that all community members can enjoy full access to YMCA programs and services without creating additional financial burden for the City.



418 Donors

helped us make a greater impact



1210 People

received financial assistance to access the YMCA's programs and services.



\$76,449

was generously donated by our community.



\$187,700

from the YMCA's Strong Communities Fund provided financial assistance to individuals and families, helping them access essential YMCA programs and services.



\$10,040

from Grants and Foundation allowed us to sustain existing and start new programs, so that we can continue to evolve and meet our communities' needs.



YMCA Charitable Community Impact



YMCA Economic & Community Impact

- Employ over 300 staff, strengthening local capacity and delivering high quality programs
- Support working parents through licensed child care and school age programs, helping maintain workforce participation and driving the economy forward
- Offer employment services that prepare job seekers and connect employers with skilled residents to fill job vacancies
- Provide health, fitness and aquatics programs that promote wellness, social interaction, and safe community spaces outside of home and work
- Remove financial barriers through the Strong Communities Fund, ensuring everyone can participate and belong



YMCA Investment in The River District

- Over 75 staff now work in the YMCA ACES+ Building located in the historic Sun Times Building, home to our Association Services, Community Initiatives, Employment Services, and Settlement & Language Services.
- This fully accessible, newly renovated site provides Owen Sound residents with vital supports, from employment and settlement services, to youth programs, and justice/diversion initiatives – helping individuals build stability, connection and a stronger future in our community.

What's Shining on the Horizon (2025-26 and Beyond)

- A collaborative committee of City of Owen Sound and YMCA partners will be struck to focus on completion of the Health, Fitness & Aquatics Green Space project, which will include an accessible playscape and shelter; additional donors are required to fulfill this vision.
- \$60,000 in capital improvements this year:
 - ✓ \$5,000 Computer Server
 - ✓ \$11,400 Computer Equipment
 - ✓ \$42,000 Fitness Equipment
- Planning for FY2027 and FY2028 is already underway, as capital improvements will require significant funds and potentially longer closures:
 - ✓ \$250,000 Gym floor replacement
 - ✓ \$275,000 Second floor (rubber) and changeroom floor (carpet) replacement
 - ✓ \$204,000 Pool filters and accessories
 - ✓ \$TBD Men's changeroom shower rebuild

Thank You

The YMCA of Owen Sound Grey Bruce sincerely values the partnership with the City of Owen Sound, and is excited to provide our programs and services in Owen Sound for another 148 years!

