



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®  
FOR HEALTHY LIVING  
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

March 22, 2018

City of North Port  
Mr. Peter Lear  
4970 City Hall Boulevard  
North Port, FL 34286

Dear Peter,

Thank you for meeting with Christine Robinson and I on March 15<sup>th</sup>. We are excited about the potential of collaborating with the City of North Port to provide services for the families of your community. As a result of our discussions we are putting forth this formal request in regards to the All Goll Center which houses our North Port YMCA Pre-School. Attached is a handout which specifically outlines our current program, issues with the facility, future plans and our Sunshine Education Initiative.

North Port is the largest city in Sarasota County and growing fast. We fully recognize that you have unique challenges and demographics when compared to other areas of Sarasota County. We are a new partner to North Port, having taken over for the Charlotte County YMCA last year, but we have proven to be a reliable and stable YMCA with a long history of serving Venice and Englewood. We want to assure you that we are now dedicated to fulfilling our mission in North Port. We are committed to being a part of enhancing the quality of life of North Port which greatly helps with your economic development. We are excited at the possibilities and concentrating on expanding quality services in North Port.

When we took over the Charlotte YMCA facilities we evaluated the North Port facilities and services with the same standards we have for our other facilities. North Port deserves nothing less. We quickly made some small improvements and doubled the size of enrollment at our pre-school in North Port. We could easily double enrollment again with higher facilities.

As you know the All Goll facility is in very poor condition and is not conducive to a positive learning environment for the children entrusted in our care. The Center is licensed for 68 infant through five year old children and is currently at capacity with 60% of these families qualifying for financial assistance. Although our program is licensed through the Department of Health and passes all required inspections there are many safety issues within and outside of the facility which is of great concern to us and the families that utilize this service.

**The SKY Family YMCA**

**Bonita Springs • Englewood • Fort Myers • North Port • Port Charlotte • Venice • Punta Gorda**

**701 Center Road, Venice, FL 34285**

**941.492.9622**

**[www.swflymca.org](http://www.swflymca.org)**

What we would like you to consider is funding the construction of a new Early Learning Center at an expected cost of approximately \$2.2 million dollars. This is a shift to an early learning academy as opposed to day care, giving the children of North Port an early learning advantage as they enter school. As we discussed we all feel that this new facility should be constructed at the current campus on Sam Shapos Way as there is so many families in that area that need quality and affordable care. Our YMCA would commit to funding the playground area and all interior furniture and supplies. We would also be responsible for funding all of the scholarship assistance needed to ensure all families may enroll regardless of their financial situation. Lastly, our YMCA would be responsible for the entire operation and fund any shortfall that this Center will incur which is likely based on the number of families in need.

Peter, thank you for your commitment to the families in your community and we are passionate about improving the services offered to the residents of the City of North Port. Please let me know if further information is needed at this point and when it would be appropriate to provide a presentation to the City Commission.

Sincerely,



Pat Ryan  
Chief Executive Officer  
Sky Family YMCA



## ABOUT THE Y

The Y is the nation's leading nonprofit committed to strengthening communities through youth development, healthy living and social responsibility.

The SKY Family YMCA has been providing pre-school care for over **35** years.

In North Port we are one of the few centers that care for children as young as 6 weeks. This pre-school serves many North Port families that live at or below the poverty level and serves foster families.

## NEW MODEL AT THE Y

With one of the Y's main focuses being youth development, we are changing our early learning model from traditional "Daycare" to Early Childhood Education Centers and branding them as **"SEA" Sunshine Education Academies**. This model program will include the Waldorf School of Education philosophies. We have hired an Executive Director to lead this effort, once the model is complete it will be implemented in all of our locations.

Our SKY YMCA currently has four Early Learning Centers located in Venice, North Port, Port Charlotte and Punta Gorda. **Three of the four centers are at capacity with 366 infants through five year olds currently enrolled.** A fifth center will open April 2, 2018 in Nokomis through collaboration with PGT. A new center is also under construction on our Venice Y campus with expected completion in August 2018.



## STATEMENT OF NEED

Thy SKY Family YMCA through the acquisition of Charlotte County Family YMCA acquired the North Port Pre-School located on Sam Shapos Way.

**The building is in very poor condition and not conducive to providing a quality experience for the children entrusted in our care.**

Our SKY Family YMCA would like the opportunity to partner with the City of North Port to construct and operate a first rate care and learning environment for the young families of the North Port Community. There are few providers of care in North Port and with the continued growth of the community finding quality and affordable care for young families is very difficult.



## CURRENT OBSTACLES

Although, the North Port facility and program are licensed, the center does not meet all current guidelines and licensing standards for the Department of Children and Families and Department of Health. The facility is currently licensed through "grandfathered" clauses. The following provides some of the deplorable issues with the current building.

### Inappropriate and unsanitary flooring in classrooms.

This doesn't allow for "messy play" which is essential for sensory development. The flooring was left over from the previous use as a fitness center.



### Due to high ceilings

it is required to use a lift machine for cleaning all ceiling tiles, light fixtures and air vents, which is a safety and health hazard. The City of North Port and the Department Health requires quarterly assessments.

High ceilings and noise level, no actual walls. Highly distractive and stressful for children.

### Kitchen

does not meet the needs to prepare and store the necessary food to provide free breakfast, lunch and snack.



### Age 1

playground location requires children to pass the pool.

### Age 2

playground barrier does not meet requirement for Department of Health.

### Age 3-5

playground and basketball court does not have required line of site for all square footage. Playground doesn't meet safety requirement for fall zones as play area is all concrete. Therefore no climbing equipment which is essential for health and growth

### No windows

in any classrooms, no natural light. Highly recommended by the Department of Health for youth development.

### Classroom sizes

do not meet new guidelines nor allow for proper teacher to student ratio.



### No bathroom or sinks in classrooms.

Current bathrooms are not in line of site, students must use bathroom as a group. Current VPK bathroom is not sanitary and is currently in non-working condition due to damaged plumbing underground.

**The major concern is for the safety and well being of the children entrusted in our care.** As stated this environment poses safety concerns and is not conducive to the positive growth of our children.



## COMMUNITY SERVED

**60%** of families enrolled in the North Port center are considered "working poor" living at or below the federal poverty level. More than 20% of our children spend over 57 hours a week in our care.



**67** children enrolled (at capacity) ages 6 weeks to VPK or 5 years.



**64%**

of children served are receiving financial assistance.

The average awarded is

**50%** off the weekly fee.

The Y will provide over this fiscal year in financial assistance.

**\$64,000**



**100%**

free breakfast, lunch and snack daily.

## PROPOSED PROJECT

The existing structure should be demolished with the new center constructed on the same site.

This site could also possibly include the area where the empty portable unit is located and potentially eliminate the pool. Portable units could be leased during construction as to not interrupt the needed care for families.



Licensed capacity should increase to at least **120** infant through five year old children.

This new center would be included within our "SEA" initiative with licensing through the Department of Health, Department of Children and Families, Early Learning Coalition and Voluntary Pre Kindergarten. This would be a mission driven location with scholarship assistance continuing to be provided. The facility should also include much needed space for full day camp programs for school age children as again this is a great need in the community.

Depending on total project scope the expected construction budget will be in the **\$2.2 million dollar range.**

For reference the construction budget at the Venice YMCA Center is \$1.9 million dollars. The PGT center budget is \$2.2 million dollars. We would look to the City of North Port to fund the construction of the facility with the Sky YMCA serving as the operator.





















