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News Release

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IMAGINE WHAT'S NEXT: COMMUNITY INPUT GUIDES PLANS TO RESHAPE THE YMCAS IN JANESVILLE & MILTON

[Janesville, WI] — [OCTOBER 1, 2025] — The [YMCA of Northern Rock County](#) said today it has completed the formal listening phase of its 135 & Beyond initiative and is moving into concept development and feasibility planning for facility updates, program innovation, financial sustainability, and improvements that advance the mission at the Downtown Janesville YMCA and the Parker YMCA in Milton. The effort coincides with the Y's 135th landmark anniversary in 2026 and will guide how the organization listens, learns and acts to meet changing membership and service needs amid growing demand on facilities.

"We heard impact stories, clear ideas, and an excited readiness for change — guidance the board can champion to enhance our YMCAs and deliver on its mission," said Josh Pearson, board president of the YMCA of Northern Rock County. "Thank you to our staff, members, partners and neighbors for joining us. You're helping strengthen the Y's future and our Northern Rock County community."

The listening phase engaged nearly 300 participants and more than a dozen community groups through in-person sessions in May and June, as well as a public online survey that remained open throughout the summer of 2025. Collective feedback was received from staff, members, and non-members, past Y leaders and board members, donors, and representatives from community organizations and local businesses.

What we heard: Key themes

Across all listening formats, participants emphasized similar priorities: aquatics upgrades and/or additions; accessibility and ADA improvements, childcare and family-friendly scheduling; larger, flexible youth spaces and renewed programming for all ages, including senior wellness, inclusive services with support for mental health and neurodiversity; community food access and nutrition programming; and more usable indoor-outdoor spaces.

"Our Y communities were incredibly generous in this listening phase, and we're ready for next steps. We're working with the Board to translate community input into practical plans with clear costs, measurable impact, and the right partners to expand access, strengthen programs, and modernize our spaces," said Angie Bolson, executive director of the YMCA of Northern Rock County.

A summary of all listening activities and feedback can be accessed at ymcanrc.org/135years.

What happens next: Phase 3

Next, the Y will synthesize community listening input, alongside the board, to develop concept options and produce preliminary capital and operating estimates. It will also review risks and operating impacts, and identify funding and partnership pathways. In addition, community engagement will continue as the Y mobilizes the 135 Community Team to refine concepts and support outreach, helping lead next steps for 2026 and beyond.

Bolson continued, "Together, with our Board and our Y community, we'll soon have options that are responsible, sustainable, and ready to show results as we celebrate 135 years of YMCA facilities in Rock County, and honor the Y's even longer history of service and organization in our community."

Stay involved

There is still time to get involved. Community Y members, and non-members alike, are invited to participate as the 135 Community Team is activated and future concepts are refined. Contact Johanna Adams, membership and engagement director, at jadams@ymcanrc.org or 608-754-9622 ext. 1107 for more information.

Everyone Belongs at the YMCA of Northern Rock County

We're part of a nonprofit organization of over 2,700 Ys located in 10,000 communities across the United States dedicated to strengthening the communities that they serve. With a focus on developing the potential of youth, improving individual health and well-being, and giving back to and supporting communities, your participation brings about meaningful change not just within yourself, but also in your community. The YMCA of Northern Rock County has two branches: the Janesville YMCA and the Parker YMCA. Stop in for a tour today!

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