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## **YMCA Exploring New Downtown Location**

### **YMCA Leaders Seek Input on Facility Plans**

**Springfield, IL** – Jason Knoedler, YMCA of Springfield Board President, confirmed today that the YMCA is actively exploring options to replace the 56-year old facility at Fourth and Cook in downtown Springfield.

In making the announcement, YMCA board volunteer Knoedler noted the YMCA's strategic plan of 2015 identified eventual replacement of the downtown facility as one of its priorities. "We are committed to our continued service to the downtown community," said Knoedler. "We know it is vital to our mission to assure we can provide the very best in programming experiences to all of our members. Right now our well-used downtown location doesn't adequately reflect our unwavering commitment to every segment of the community. The development of our Kerasotes facility in 2011 demonstrates the community will respond to a well-planned initiative like this one."

The YMCA has outlined key areas of focus including youth development, healthy living and social responsibility. In developing the strategic plan, YMCA officials met with many in the community who identified the importance of developing collaborations, focusing on the health and wellness of the community, creating a positive influence on young people, and equalizing services throughout the community. As a new facility is planned, the YMCA will keep these priorities in mind as it develops next steps for downtown.

"This is a once in a generation opportunity," said YMCA CEO Angie Sowle. "We have a great group of volunteers and have secured the assistance of experts to help us make sure that we follow all of the right steps to create a facility that meets community needs. We will be conducting market studies, reaching out to current and former members, talking with the community and benchmarking best practices so we can create a project the community can embrace and celebrate."

**YMCA of Springfield**  
701 South 4th Street  
Springfield, IL 62703

In February of this year, it was reported a new YMCA was being planned on Carpenter Street, a few blocks east of Memorial Medical Center. In mid-March a community forum was held outlining this plan in collaboration with the Enos Park Neighborhood Association.

“We’re excited about the potential of these partnerships,” said Sowle. “We will continue to seek collaborative opportunities to assure success. That really is the key focus of our work over the next several months that will help make this dream a reality. We have many details to work out to assure our plan keeps the needs of the community at the center.”

The facility plans have not yet been finalized and funding options are being explored to help assure the resources in the community are used in the best way possible. Experts from a variety of disciplines are helping in the planning process that will lead to active fundraising efforts later this year. After key partnership opportunities are fully explored, the YMCA will release plans for the facility and a timetable for action.

“We’ve placed this project into high gear,” said Knoedler. “Our partners expect results soon and we are committed to taking all of the right steps to assure success for the long haul. I know everyone is anxious to learn about the details of funding, final facility plans, and partnerships, but many of these details are dependent on the due diligence of our process. We hope that by mid-summer we can have these pieces in place.”

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### ***About the YMCA of Springfield***

Since 1874 the YMCA of Springfield has worked to provide opportunities for individuals of all walks of life. The Y serves men and women of all ages, religions and economic backgrounds through programs focused on youth development, healthy living and social responsibility. The YMCA has two main facilities – Downtown and Kerasotes – with over 11,000 members. In 2017, nearly 45,000 individuals were served in a variety of programs and services. A volunteer board of directors provides leadership to the association, a member of the national organization – the YMCA of the USA. The Y is one of the nation’s leading nonprofits strengthening communities through youth development, healthy living and social responsibility. Across the U.S., 2,700 Ys engage 22 million men, women and children – regardless of age, income or background – to nurture the potential of children and teens, improve the nation’s health and well-being, and provide opportunities to give back and support neighbors. Anchored in more than 10,000 communities, the Y has the long-standing relationships and physical presence not just to promise, but also to deliver lasting personal and social change. [www.springfieldymca.org](http://www.springfieldymca.org) and [www.ymca.net](http://www.ymca.net)