

Milwaukee Ald. Rainey: Parklawn YMCA must reconsider facility cuts

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With the Parklawn YMCA announcing it will reduce offerings, my office is deeply concerned with this development. As the first YMCA in the country to be built within public housing, this facility is an asset to Parklawn residents and the greater community.

Quite simply, the proposed changes equate to a lack of recreational and health related opportunities for that area. The results are too many young men with not enough to do, leading to increased bad behavior and even worse public health outcomes. When I say even worse, I'm referring to the fact that Parklawn is located in a zip code, 53216, where more than 52 percent of its residents are obese which is among the highest obesity rates in the city of Milwaukee.

<https://www.wihealthatlas.org/obesity/place>

The activities and facility currently available to youth at the Parklawn YMCA have been a refuge for me, my neighbors, and the community as a whole. And with so many young people and families not having the means to travel to other YMCA branches as the organization has suggested, I request it changes course on the planned cuts. At the very least, the YMCA should hold off on its decision until it does additional community engagement and gets community input.