
Northfield Splash Pad: October 2019 Update

The below update is meant to answer previous questions posed at the Northfield Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Meeting in August 2019, as well as outline the continued efforts that have been made in the pursuit of the Northfield Splash Pad.

Question: *What is the lifespan of this equipment/structure? What are maintenance requirements?*

“All equipment (water features and water manifold) are stainless steel. They are municipal grade and designed to last for 30+ years. My oldest splash pad in MN was installed in 2007 (St. Cloud, MN - Lake George Splash pad). After 12 years, it still looks like new. Splash pads in general have not been around long enough to show one that is over 20 years old, but they are designed to last this long...at least.” - Jeff Corniea, local Vortex representative

Question: *Are there expenses for shutting it down for winter and bringing it up in spring?*

“Winterizing a flow-through (freshwater) splashpad takes a 2-person maintenance crew about 2 hours in the fall and about 1 hour to startup in the spring. The manufacturer provides the tools and winter nozzles for achieving this. The city just needs to provide an air compressor and labor to blow out the lines in the fall. In the spring, you simply turn on the water and set the hours of operation. There are no special chemicals or expensive procedures to winterize.” - Jeff Corniea, local Vortex representative

Question: *Have you ever put a Splash Pad at a preexisting pool? Our board is looking for ways to make the pool more interesting. (We're not excited about this idea as we think it would limit who comes to the pool cause there's a cost to get in). Who uses them when it's paid versus free?*

“I have three locations. I have a splashpad in New Richmond, WI at the New Richmond Area Centre. See attached photos. I also have a new splashpad that is being installed now next to the Wabasha outdoor pool. Wabasha removed the wading pool and replaced it with a small splashpad. See images and render. Lastly, I have a new splashpad and playground going in next to the Regional Wellness Center in Estherville, IA. See render attached.” - Jeff Corniea, local Vortex representative



New Richmond Area Centre (New Richmond, WI)



Wabasha Outdoor Pool rendering



Regional Wellness Center (Estherville, IA)

In a conversation with Scott Baker (Executive Director of Northern Wasco County Park District) we were informed that the Northern Wasco County Park District municipal splash pad was built at the same time as their pool. The splash pad is located outside of the pool gate and does not appear to discourage paid users of the pool. Mr. Baker noted that he instead feels like it makes “going to the pool” more of a habit for people from a young age and if anything increases attendance over time. He also mentioned that a fee to enter the pool is a deterring factor for some and that the splash pad increases accessibility for the community.

Continued Efforts

We met with Mike Krance, (former) Executive Director of Northfield Shares (NFS) on Aug 8th. Mr. Krance expressed interest in Northfield Shares being the fiscal sponsor for the Northfield Splash Pad. The process would include applying for grants from NFS in the fall of 2020, and he seemed pretty optimistic about the Splash Pad’s fundraising possibilities.

A conversation with Rotarian Barry Carlson on Sept 6th gave us insight on the process Northfield Rotary typically uses to sponsor community projects (rarely is Northfield Rotary a “passive” fiscal sponsor). Mr. Carlson thought NFS would be a good fiscal sponsor and recommended meeting with Northfield’s Healthy Community Initiative (HCI) to get their backing, support and credibility. He also offered to help facilitate a meeting with community members and potential donors to get the Northfield Splash Pad project off the ground.

An informal poll of community members on the Northfield Splash Pad Facebook page resulted in two clear locations being favored: Memorial Park and Everyone’s Park. Both locations feature sun, parking, electricity, water and flat ground. Supporters liked the idea of using the existing shade structures located at Everyone’s Park but also expressed parking concerns during soccer season.