

Theory of Success

Examining lessons learned and the implicit theory of success
from the Mayor's Community Center Initiative:
Project for Portland Parks and Recreation

Prepared by:

Center for Public Service
Mark O. Hatfield School of Government
Portland State University

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Masami Nishishiba, Ph.D.
Associate Director
Center for Public Service

Jane Carr, MS
Project Coordinator
Center for Public Service

Stephanie Hawke
Senior Research Assistant
Center for Public Service

Megan George
Research Assistant
Center for Public Service

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Executive Summary

Portland Parks and Recreation (PP&R) has expanded its teen services programming since 2015 as part of the Mayor's Community Center Initiative. This emphasis on youth is an important component of PP&R's Bureau-wide mission to increase the wellness of Portlanders, especially young people, and create opportunities for people to be "outside, active, and connected to the community."

Under the Mayor's Community Center Initiative PP&R accomplished the following:

1. provide youth free access to community centers,
2. expand its youth-focused staff,
3. increase programming tailored to youth, and
4. partner with community youth organizations to host additional culturally-relevant and inclusive events at community centers.

These expanded services were grounded in best practices for youth development, such as emphasis on the 40 developmental assets, the growth mindset, belongingness, and identity development. PP&R also focused on relationship building following the current literature on youth development.

Portland State University's Center for Public Service (CPS) conducted a series of facilitated discussions with PP&R stakeholders to identify lessons learned from the Mayor's Community Center Initiative, and to identify the underlying model of success for its youth programs.

Six programmatic positive outcomes identified were:

1. increase in teen attendance,
2. value of providing free passes,
3. value of providing transportation,
4. increase in flexibility,
5. benefit of partnering with Nonprofit organizations, and
6. relationship building.

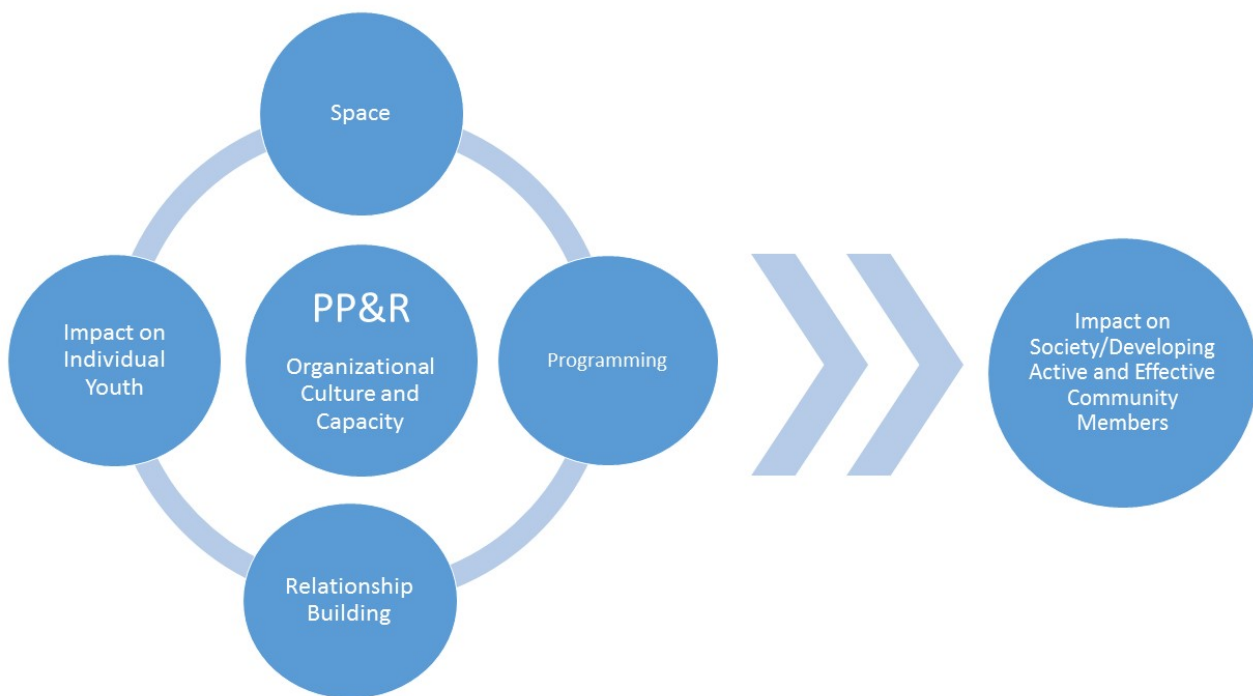
Six areas of improvement identified were:

1. need for more training,
2. need for more considerations in programming,
3. need for further relationships building with teens,
4. need for strengthening community partnerships,
5. need for minimizing politicization of the Initiative, and
6. need to increase access to programming.

An implicit theory of success with six key components was identified. The six components are:

1. Space,
2. Programming,
3. Relationships,
4. Impact on individual youth,
5. Organizational culture and capacity, and
6. Impact on society/developing active and effective community members.

Schematic depiction of the implicit theory of success is:



Core to this model of success is PP&R’s ongoing commitment to creating and maintaining healthy relationships between youth and staff, as well as among youth. The welcoming and inclusive space of the centers themselves, along with engaging and youth-specific programming form the core of the model of success. These components are supported by, and in turn feed, an adaptive and positive organizational culture, growth and development of individual youth, and large-scale impacts on society in the form of strengthened community.

Using the six key components of success as indicators for measurement, the CPS team developed suggested assessment and evaluation approaches as strategies that can help PP&R build on its strong work with youth and contribute even more to the Portland community.

Summary Assessment Approaches by Data Collection Methods

Six Key Components of Success	Assessment approaches			
	Youth survey and/or interview	Past patron survey and/or interview	Staff survey and/or interview	Other
1) Space	x		x	Usage data
2) Programming	x			Community partners program review
3) Relationships	x		x	
4) Impact on Individual Youth	x	x		
5) Organizational Culture and Capacity			x	Financial data analysis
6) Impact on Society		x		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● City-wide survey ● Performance audit ● Collaboration with gang-related services. ● Interview a "at-risk " youth ● Usage data

1. Project Background

Portland Parks and Recreation (PP&R) is a bureau within the City of Portland that serves Portlanders by providing safe places, facilities, and programs that promote physical, mental, and social activity¹. Since 2015, PP&R has expanded its programming for teens through the Mayor's Community Center Initiative. Expansion has included hiring additional staff, and expanding on current programming.

During the time this project was conducted in 2016, the PP&R Teen Force Program had five Teen Services Coordinators located at different community centers throughout Portland. These centers are: Charles Jordan Community Center, East Portland Community Center, Matt Dishman Community Center, Montavilla Community Center, and Mt. Scott Community Center. Teen Force programming routinely offers trips, classes, drop-in activities, events, and volunteer/service learning outings².

In addition, as part of the Mayor's Community Center Initiative, PP&R provided grants to seven community based organizations to expand the network of teen services. The seven organizations are: Latino Network, Native American Youth and Family Center (NAYA), Self Enhancement, Inc. (SEI), Portland Opportunities Industrialization Center (POIC), Immigrant and Refugee Community Organization (IRCO), Rosewood Initiative, and the Boys and Girls Club of Portland.

Early in 2016, as PP&R moved into the second year of the Mayor's Community Center Initiative, it commissioned the Center for Public Service (CPS) at Portland State University to conduct a study. The purpose of the study was to reflect on the activities taken under the Initiative, clarify what key stakeholders identify as success in teen programming, and assess those successes to inform areas of improvement in future programming. The objectives of this study are:

- To identify the *lessons learned* from the projects undertaken in 2015.
- To identify the *implicit theory of success* key stakeholders apply in assessing youth programs.
- To identify *promising practices* from other organizations based on the review of literature.
- To provide *recommendations* for how PP&R can assess its work informed by the theory of success and promising practices identified in the study.

¹ <https://www.portlandoregon.gov/parks/57733>

² <https://www.portlandoregon.gov/parks/44322>

2. Project Process

In collaboration with PP&R, CPS project team members developed the project design. The project consisted of six key tasks.

They are:

1. Identification of the research design
2. Facilitated discussion session I with stakeholders. Analysis and summary of the session.
3. Information sharing/facilitated discussion session II with Mayor's office/Commissioner's office, PP&R Leadership Team, and PP&R All-Recreation staff. Analysis and summary of the session.
4. Co-creation of the criteria for success and assessment plan with PP&R Core Team.
5. Literature review for promising practice.
6. Final report and recommendation.

In the following, each one of the tasks is described.

Task 1: Identification of the Project Design (February 2016)

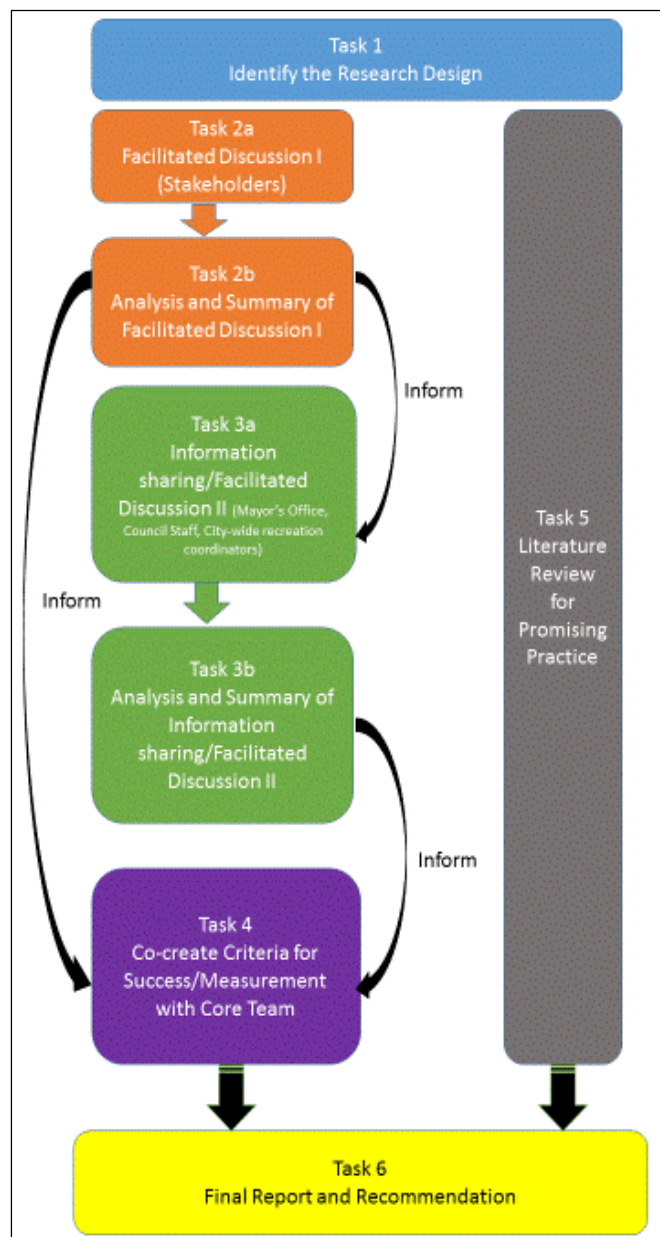
CPS project team members facilitated a discussion with PP&R Core Team staff and identified the project design. Based on the discussion PP&R and CPS team identified the type of stakeholders to be included in the data collection and the number of facilitated discussions. General timeline of the project and the role of project members were also clarified at this stage.

The final meeting took place on February 16, 2016. At this discussion, parties involved reached a general agreement on the overall project design, which is illustrated in this proposal.

Task 2a: Phase I Facilitated Discussions (April 2016)

During the month of April 2016, six facilitated discussions were held with stakeholder groups:

- Teen program participants (Two sessions) – 24 participants



- Teen Coordinators, “New Portlander” Coordinator, Environmental Education Coordinator – 6 participants
- Community Partner Organizations – 8 participants
- Center Directors (Two sessions) – 17 participants

Discussions were scheduled by PP&R Core Team staff (Cynthia Castro) and CPS Project Coordinator (Jane Carr). Prior to discussions, general protocols were created and distributed to PP&R Core Team staff for review (see Appendix I for Facilitated Discussion Plans). Detailed notes were taken by a CPS project team member during each session (see Appendix II for Facilitated Discussion Notes).

Facilitated discussions took place in the following order:

1. Introduction

As an ice-breaker, participants were asked to select an image that they identified with and share their reasoning and image with the group. This allowed facilitated discussion participants the opportunity to reflect on their own recreation experiences, and how that factored into their current personal identity.

2. Purpose of the Study

CPS project team members described the purpose of the study and the intention behind speaking with discussion participants.

3. Individual Written Responses

Working on individual pieces of paper, participants were instructed to answer to the following four questions (see Appendix II for Facilitated Discussion Notes):

What went well during the first year of programming?

What created those conditions for success?

What was challenging?

What changes would you suggest?

4. Compilation of Individual Written Responses

After participants had sufficient time to answer each question individually, they were asked to share with the group their most important answer for each question (see Appendix I for Facilitated Discussion Notes).

5. Group Written Responses

After a brief break, participants were asked to leave their seats and provide written answers to questions on chart paper throughout the room. Participants were instructed to indicate with a check mark or star if they agreed with an answer already provided.

6. Compilation of Group Written Responses

Once participants had finished writing and returned to their seats, they were asked to share back with the group the most important answers for each question. This series of activity-based-discussion generated input from participants on: 1) what went well; and 2) what kinds of improvement could be incorporated in the future.

Task 2b: Analysis and Summary of Facilitated Discussions I (April – May 2016)

Following each discussion, CPS project team members transcribed all written material (see Appendix II for Facilitated Discussion Notes) and then reviewed and analyzed the notes. Key themes were identified using thematic analysis. Findings were summarized.

Task 3a: Phase II Facilitated Discussions (May 2016)

During May 2016, three facilitated discussions were held:

- Mayor's Office and Commissioner's Office staff – 3 participants
- PP&R Leadership Team – 9 participants
- PP&R All-Recreation staff – unknown number of participants

As was the case in Phase I, discussions were scheduled by PP&R Core Team staff (Cynthia Castro) and CPS project coordinator (Jane Carr). Prior to discussions, general protocols were created and distributed to PP&R Core Team staff for review (see Appendix I for the Facilitated Discussion Plans). Detailed notes were taken by a CPS project team member during the session (see Appendix II for the Facilitated Discussion Notes).

These sessions were broken into the following two parts:

1. Introduction

During the first half, CPS project team members prepared a PowerPoint presentation that identified initial themes that had emerged from Phase I facilitated discussions.

2. Facilitated Discussion

Following the PowerPoint presentation, participants were asked to respond to a set of open-ended questions. Participants were also encouraged to address any questions they had about the project thus far. CPS project team staff encouraged conversation amongst each other as much as possible.

For the PP&R All-Recreation staff meeting the general protocol was slightly altered. In this meeting, participants were asked to break into small groups to discuss questions during the second half of the discussion. Participants then regrouped and shared most important observations from small groups.

Task 3b: Analysis and Summary of Facilitated Discussions II (June – July 2016)

Following each discussion, CPS project team members transcribed all written material (see Appendix II for Facilitated Discussion Notes) and then reviewed and analyzed the notes. This analysis sought to synthesize input from Phase II to the initial findings from Phase I facilitated discussions.

Task 4: Coproduction of Criteria for Success and Measurement Plan (July – November 2016)

Between July and November 2016, CPS project team members met with the PP&R Core Team three times to review the findings from Phase I and Phase II and discuss both criteria for success and a measurement plan for future projects. Discussions were scheduled by PP&R Core Team staff (Cynthia Castro) and CPS project coordinator (Jane Carr). Prior to discussions, general protocols were created and distributed to PP&R Core Team staff for review (see Appendix I for Facilitated Discussion Plans). Detailed notes were taken by a CPS project team member during the session (see Appendix II for Facilitated Discussion Notes).

The general protocol for each session is summarized below:

1. Meeting 1 (July 20, 2016)

First, CPS project team members presented themes that had emerged thus far during Phase I and Phase II facilitated discussions. Next, CPS project team members led participants in an activity to identify and group emergent themes. Finally, CPS project team members briefly presented the implicit theory of success derived from Phase I and Phase II themes in the form of a logic model.

2. Meeting 2 (August 17, 2016)

First, CPS project team members presented the logic model for PP&Rs implicit theory of success that emerged during Phase I and Phase II and the first Core Team meeting. Next, CPS project team members facilitated a discussion with PP&R Core Team about first the proposed logic model and next possible criteria for assessment.

3. Meeting 3 (November 18, 2016)

The CPS team shared a draft of the report ahead of the meeting for Core Team review. In the session, the CPS team first laid out the new version of the logic model that had been revised based on feedback. Then, Core Team members met in small groups with copies of the draft report to discuss input. Finally, in a full-group discussion, the Core Team's feedback was shared and the group discussed priorities and steps forward.

Task 5: Literature Review (March – October 2016)

Throughout the duration of the project, CPS Project Team members reviewed existing literature to investigate examples of “promising practice” and “measures of success” related to youth development. Literature was drawn from both academic and practitioner-based sources in order to have a broad understanding of the topic. Special effort was made to collect information relevant to Parks and Recreation operations at the local level, including directly gathering resources, models, and experiences of local educational organizations such as Education Northwest.

Task 6: Final Report and Recommendation (December 2016 – February 2017)

Based on the facilitated discussions, the literature review, and the Core Team feedback, the CPS team created this report. It shares all findings and analysis, and includes original data, such as facilitated discussion notes and materials, in the appendices. The report also provides a set of assessment criteria, based directly on the co-produced Theory of Success. It gives suggestions for ways to gather assessment data so that the PP&R can effectively track its progress in the areas in which stakeholders have determined to be most important.

3. Project Approach

Coproduction Model

This project used a coproduction model approach emphasizing the partnership between CPS Project Team and PP&R Core Team. PP&R Core Team staff were involved in all project processes including the project conception, design, project management and identifying the lessons learned and the implicit theory of success.

The coproduction model approach allows the project to build on the professional practice-based expertise of PP&R Core Team members and the CPS Project Team's expertise in project design, facilitation, data collection and analysis. The process of co-production facilitated the identification of the lessons learned, the implicit theory of success and assessment plan.

Data Collection and Analysis Methods

In this project, key data were collected through the facilitated discussion. The data were then analyzed using thematic analysis – one of the common forms of analysis in qualitative research. Thematic analysis involves a process where the analysis team familiarize themselves with the data, code the data based on common patterns, develop an overarching theme and identify the implications of the theme. In this project, CPS Project Team members coded notes from Phase I and Phase II facilitated discussions to identify initial patterns and themes. The themes were reviewed jointly with the PP&R Core Team members, and revisions were made based on the discussions.

4. Findings I: Programmatic Lessons Learned

In all facilitated discussions variations of the following two questions were asked.

- What went well?
- What could be improved?

The following section describes the patterns that emerged from feedback solicited while asking those two questions. Complete notes from all facilitated discussions are available in Appendix II.

What Went Well

Participants in the facilitated discussions in Phase I and Phase II identified six things that went well with the Initiative. They are:

1. increase in teen attendance,
2. value of providing free passes,
3. value of providing transportation,
4. increase in flexibility,
5. benefit of partnering with Nonprofit organizations, and
6. relationship building.

1. Increase in teen attendance.

The discussion participants noted that they observed increase in teen attendance at Community Centers and Community Partner Friday Night events. During Phase I of the facilitated discussions, attendance rates were mentioned more than ten times by Center Directors, Teen Coordinators, and Community Partners.

2. Value of providing free passes.

The discussion participants pointed out that providing free passes for youth during the summer was an effective method to reduce barriers to participation. While youth mentioned access indirectly during the facilitated discussions, Center Directors, Teen Coordinators, Mayor/Commissioner staff, and the PP&R Leadership Team directly named the value and success of providing a free pass so as to increase access for teens to community center programming.

3. Value of providing transportation options.

The discussion participants observed that providing transportation options to youth, including transit passes was an effective method to reduce barriers to participation. The Community Partners discussed the importance of providing not only transportation passes, but also rides home for

youth that did not feel comfortable riding public transportation. The Teen Coordinators discussed the value of providing transportation passes as an incentive for youth attendance at activities.

4. Increase in flexibility.

The discussion participants noted the increase in flexibility for Teen Coordinators and teen programming in general as a result of the increase in funding. Center Directors and Teen Coordinators mentioned the ability to hire Independent Contractors (IC's) to provide a variety of different programming opportunities that were more responsive to teen's interests and needs.

5. Benefit of partnering with Nonprofit organizations.

The discussion participants pointed out that they benefitted from partnering with the seven nonprofit organizations. Center Directors, Community Partners, Mayor/Commissioner staff, and PP&R Leadership Team all indicated that there were positive outcomes associated with the partnerships. The Community Partners said that access to space and support from PP&R was important to their Friday Night Programs. Center Directors, Mayor/Commissioner staff and PP&R Leadership Team all discussed the additional teens reached because of the Community Partner's networks.

6. Relationship building.

The discussion participants identified that as a result of this initiative, PPR Teen Services and the Community Partners developed higher ability to create and expand relationships with teens and the larger community. Teen Coordinators and Center Directors indicated the increase in funding allowed additional staff to be hired, which led to decreased workload for existent staff and therefore more time to form relationships with youth.

What Could Be Improved Moving Forward

Participants in the facilitated discussions in Phase I and Phase II identified six things that could be improved moving forward. Many of the things that were indicated as being successful during the first year of the Initiative, also included some areas of improvements that are needed for the future. They are:

1. need for more training,
2. need for more considerations in programming,
3. need for further relationships building with teens,
4. need for strengthening community partnerships,
5. need for minimizing politicization of the Initiative, and
6. need to increase access to programming.

1. Need for more training.

The discussion participants highlighted the need for more training. Teen Coordinators and Center Directors said that training was important for all staff at Community Centers, not only those that work specifically with teens. Teen Coordinators, Center Directors, and Youth all indicated that communication with youth could be improved. Center Directors indicated that training was needed to engage with gender nonconforming youth. Teen Coordinators and Youth indicated that training was needed for staff on how to provide programming specific to girls.

2. Need for more considerations in programming.

The discussion participants noted several points about youth programming. Programming, in this case, refers to several different things. The Community Partners and Teen Coordinators indicated that programming needs to meet youth's stated needs and that they should be directly involved in designing programming opportunities. Teen Coordinators and Youth also indicated that there should be more options available and that the options currently available should be more widespread – meaning increased hours, but also available at additional community centers. Finally, Center Directors, Teen Coordinators, and the All-Recreation staff indicated that marketing for teen-specific programming should be improved.

3. Need for further relationship building with teens.

The discussion participants emphasized the importance of continuing to build relationships with teens. This was the most prevalent pattern that emerged from the data. Teen Coordinators and Center Directors indicated that relationship building needed to continue and spread. Teen Coordinators should not be the only ones responsible for building relationships with the teens. While the free summer pass provided additional information about youth which improved staff's ability to pursue relationships, more information about youth would be helpful. In addition, the Youth and Center Directors both indicated that transparency of rules and the enforcement of rules was a major issue to building relationships between youth and adults at the community centers.

4. Need for strengthening community partnerships.

The discussion participants acknowledge the need for increased exchange between community partners and PP&R, and strengthen their partnerships. The Teen Coordinators and Center Directors indicated that exchange with the community partners should be a two-way street. Each have valuable information and resources that the other could benefit from. The Mayor/Commissioner staff indicated that building relationships with the community itself is important because it builds trust in government and increases civic engagement, which is a positive thing for the city as a whole.

5. Need for minimizing politicization of the Initiative.

The discussion partners pointed out the need to make an effort to minimize the politicization of the Initiative. The Center Directors and Teen Coordinators both indicated the political nature of the increase in funding and the resultant confusion regarding priorities and stakeholders.

6. Need to increase access to programming.

The discussion partners emphasized the need to continue to diminish barriers to access. This was an important indicator during all of the facilitated discussions during Phase I and Phase II. Center Directors, Mayor/Commissioner staff, Youth, and Teen Coordinators all indicated the availability of programming, space, and options. The Youth, Mayor/Commissioner staff, and Center Directors all said that cost was a major factor for many participants, as was hours of operation, and availability of space specifically for teens.

5. Findings II: Implicit Theory of Success

Why a Theory of Success?

One of the core aims of this project is to identify the theories of success used by members and stakeholders of PP&R in thinking, assessing and prioritizing their work. Clarifying a shared theory of success has the following three key benefits:

1. It allows PP&R stakeholders to work together more effectively, basing their efforts on the common ground of shared values and priorities.
2. Articulating commonly held aims helps PP&R better identify key organizational priorities. It allows the organization to focus on “leverage points,” that fuels positive organizational outcomes that leads to success.
3. A clearly articulated theory of success help PP&R stakeholders “tell the story” to the community. It provides a framework in sharing what community centers do and *why*.

Given the high importance of PP&R’s youth development work, shared purpose and clear directions for moving forward are useful not only for those within the Bureau, but also for the wider community.

Six Key Components of Success

The facilitated discussions allowed different approaches and values guiding PP&R’s work to surface. Based on the Phase I and II discussions with various stakeholders and the subsequent conversations with the Core Team, CPS team identified the following key components of success of PP&R’s youth-related work. They are:

1. **Space:** It is important for the Community Center to be perceived by community members as welcoming space.
2. **Programming:** Youth-focused programs need to have an array of engaging options, be tailored to the needs and interests of the youth, and need to be a context for building positive relationships with adults and peers.
3. **Relationships:** PP&R needs to develop meaningful, supportive, sustained relationships between staff and teens.
4. **Impact on Individual Youth:** Youth who participate in PP&R programs and use the space developing a sense of belonging, confidence, ownership, and safety.
5. **Organizational Culture and Capacity:** It is important to develop the capacity of PP&R and purposefully creating an organization-wide culture that supports the youth. PP&R’s organizational culture should be adaptive, supportive, and open.
6. **Impact on Society/Developing Active and Effective Community Members:** It is important to focus on PP&R’s vision on making positive impact on society. Conceptualize youth as future adults who both contribute to and benefit from the best our society has to offer.

In the following, we provide more detailed descriptions on what the stakeholders shared in relation to each of the above six components of success.

1) Space

Throughout the facilitated discussions, stakeholders emphasized the importance of both the physical space of the community centers, and the subtle but significant feelings that the physical spaces tend to impart to community members. Space is felt by many to be a root cause factor that allows other aspects of PP&R's teen development work to succeed. By imparting a positive sense upon first arrival, a welcoming physical space opens the way for youth to feel belonging and inclusion, which then feeds the success of youth programs and the likelihood that programs will have long-term positive impacts. The key aspects of space that are required for successful outcome are: safety, access, and capacity.

In the discussions, the topic of space appeared more consistently than any other components. The analysis indicates that the emphasis on physical/felt space results from stakeholders' common sense that it is fundamental—a root cause factor—that sets other elements into motion. Community partner leaders tied community center space to “safety and security,” and even to “self-expression.” Teen Coordinators noted that the important aspects of a community center are its “openness,” its space for a wide array of group activities, as well as having space for introverts and women, and having free access for all. It was noted that “the environment that is fostered is what makes the community center a special part of the community.” Center Directors echoed these views, specifying that a feeling of belonging stems from the space, and emphasizing the importance of “how you feel the second you walk in.” Mayor's Office staff also cited space as fundamental component for the success of teen-focused programs; emphasizing again, that safety and access are the key elements. For teens, space was discussed in more concrete terms referring to its capacity to offer programs they need. Space needs to have capacity to hold a gym, a game room, basketball courts, a weight room, and a pool. Also space is a container for activities they value such as teen nights and other socialization opportunities.

The emphasis that discussion participants placed on the quality of the space as being welcoming cannot be understated. Space is seen as a foundation for success by a significant number of stakeholders. The wide acknowledgment of the importance of space is an organizational strength—a common value that can be a starting point for further conversations about how to develop the community centers' quality of space even more, and how to set goals, assess, and measure progress together.

2) Programming

Programs offered to teens are seen as a key tool in creating positive outcomes and meeting organizational goals. Two aspects of effective programming that discussion participants emphasized in particular are: 1) that the program make good use of partner relationships; and 2) that it is important to develop mechanisms for programming to respond to youth interest.

As stakeholders discussed programming, they emphasized the importance of having good relationships with the partners. There is a shared sense that partner organizations have valuable experience and community relationships, and PP&R can further develop mutually beneficial relationships with its partners. By providing physical space and other resources, and facilitating connections between youth development organizations, PP&R has much to offer to local programs. Building on the relationships that the local nonprofit organizations established with youth, PP&R can expand its community impact. In several facilitated discussions, youth noted that they first access programs organized by community partners held at a PP&R site. This led to youth frequenting community centers after developing this familiarity. Several discussion participants mentioned an interest in sharing training resources with community partners — i.e. PP&R and partner organization staff can train each other and also share outside training opportunities. Suggestion was made to explicitly catalogue the work being achieved by various organizations and share the information broadly. This would allow PP&R to draw on partner assets more effectively and step more fully into the important roles of convener and connector. Suggestions around partnerships reveal a widely held value of the importance of these connections for PP&R's work.

A second aspect of successful programs that the discussion participants identified was to be responsive to teens' interests and needs. One of the center directors summed this up aptly, sharing a vision of the community center as having "diverse and varied programs and spaces that meet the real needs and desires of the teens served." This desire, widely shared in the discussions, is supported by knowledge of best practices in youth development. As the literature also asserts, PP&R stakeholders voiced their value of bringing youth choice, leadership, and impetus to the center of decisions about programming. Facilitating open time for socializing, and developing opportunities for mentorships emerged as practices that support youth taking ownership. Another related aspect of successful programs is an interest in connecting individual youth to relevant opportunities and resources, such as support for securing college financial aid or finding engaging employment. A final component of providing relevant and tailored programming is simply offering a diversity of activities. Center directors and teen coordinators emphasized their interest in providing a wide array of activities that could draw more youth and engage them more directly in discovering their passions. Discussions with youth revealed that they value highly the programs that help them develop skills; they mentioned both concrete skills such as cooking, dance, music and writing, but also broader skills such as "speaking up," leadership skills, and social skills.

The facilitated discussions revealed that programming is central to how PP&R stakeholders believe success is achieved. Programming allows PP&R to make use of its space and creates a venue not only for skill building, but for perhaps the more core component of stakeholder's model of success: positive relationships.

3) Relationships

The development of positive relationships, both between youth and adults and among youth themselves, is core to participants in the facilitated discussions and to the broader PP&R theory of success. Positive relationships are seen as the most challenging, but most important, aspect of youth development work. The sub-themes we identified are the consistency of relating throughout

the Center environment and quality relationships that inspire youth to see themselves as competent and invested.

Participants in the discussions emphasize that positive relationships should consistently play out throughout the community center, from front desk staff to teen coordinators, to all others who interface with teens. The challenge of developing this organization-wide consistency was discussed in depth in many of the conversations. Participants noted that they feel not all center staff are prepared to interact positively with teens. It was observed that even one negative interaction with a teen can sour the teen's view of the center and make him or her less likely to return. Others noted that when funds are limited, relationships can be the first thing to suffer as staff are stretched thin. We discussed at length the importance of measures such as training that help create an "all hands on deck situation" when it comes to interacting positively with youth.

Successful relationships are seen as those that offer youth a predictable, trustworthy context for connection. Participants commonly used phrases such as "consistent and safe adults who really care," "mentors," and "helpful adults." Relationships are widely seen, as key to supporting youth in developing a positive self-concept, investment in theirs' and others' wellbeing, and key to helping youth be willing to take risks and grow. As one stakeholder said, positive relationships result in a belief among youth that "teens can contribute—their work is needed in the community." Cultural competence in particular, was named as a major factor in staff's ability to do this challenging work. Well-trained staff are able to impart in youth the sense that they can, and will have help in, "getting to the next step [in their lives], always." These values are strongly supported by current literature. Relationship building in youth development is indeed crucial, and indeed challenging, as understood by scholars in the field. In sum, participants in the discussions view the space and programming of the center as opportunities to engage—activities pull in youth but consistent relationships are what does the "work" of making impact. Trusting relationships allow adults to work with youth on socio-emotional issues and support their decision-making processes.

4) Impact on Individual Youth

Successful relationships feed another key process in the theory of success. Stakeholders consistently emphasized the impacts on individual youth; in particular, many of them shared about the importance of developing in youth a sense of self-efficacy, ownership, and belongingness. As with other themes that form part of the theory of success, the importance of this component is strongly supported by academic work in youth development.

Stakeholders widely value supporting youth in developing a strong sense of self-efficacy, ownership, and belongingness. Self-efficacy was discussed as a sense on the part of youth that they are capable, their efforts and work are valued by the world, and that youth are resilient enough to navigate through various challenges, including failure, without stopping their effort and expression. Ownership was discussed as a quality youth develop of taking responsibility for themselves and their surroundings—particularly the environment of the community center—with a positive sense that their input is important. Building ownership allows youth to feel truly "a part of the community." Belongingness is a key component in developing ownership and self-efficacy—stakeholders believe that feeling that they matter to and fit into a larger community gives youth the

confidence to see themselves as capable and invest in their community. Belonging means youth are “accepted for who they are, respected.” Youth themselves cited belonging as something valued about the community center. Many participants shared that fun is a key value they hold and necessary in their model of success. We see fun as going hand in hand with belonging—youth have fun as a result of positive engagement with others, and this belongingness is in turn facilitated by fun.

5) Organizational Culture and Capacity

As the model in Figure II shows, having the organizational culture and capacity for youth programs affects other key components of success including space, programming, relationship building and impact on individual youths. This theme was raised throughout the discussions, and stakeholders tended to discuss it in terms of one of two sub-themes: 1) values; and 2) sustainability.

Organizational culture, though a broad theme, and one that often does not reveal clear avenues for change, is quite important to the shared theory of success. Many stakeholders emphasized that they felt an investment in culture as they recognized it as a major factor in PPR’s ability to serve teens in the way they desire.

The importance of shared values was reiterated across the discussions. In particular, the core importance of teen services, and organization-wide attentiveness and sensitivity to teens were brought up often. Participants mentioned that the importance of working with teens needs to be “a consistent message across the system.” Several people gave examples of individuals who work very effectively with teens, responding to needs as they arise, and building strong relationships, but noted that this kind of approach was not taken by everyone. In order to create an environment in which youth have consistent and tailored support, many felt that a cultural shift is needed. Many participants drew a connection between a responsive culture around teen input and interests and a responsive culture across the organization. In order to have a true “bottom up process,” that gives teens leadership and autonomy, teen coordinators and center directors also need to feel their input matters and they have substantial latitude in performing their jobs. The importance of intentionally using shared values to develop organizational practices was also raised.

Second, sustainability was emphasized as a significant component of success. Stakeholders want to see the teen programs funded through sustainable streams and to make long term use of the investment going into improving work with teens. A key point made about sustainability is that quantitative and qualitative assessment of program outcomes is a significant component of sustainability—without insight into outcomes it is more difficult to continuously improve and more challenging for community stakeholders to see value in and contribute to PPR’s work. We saw these questions and goals about sustainability raised in terms of organizational culture—many stakeholders would like to be part of a culture that consistently asks how to assess, measure, improve and communicate successes to a wider audience of stakeholders.

6) Impact on Society/Developing Active and Effective Community Members

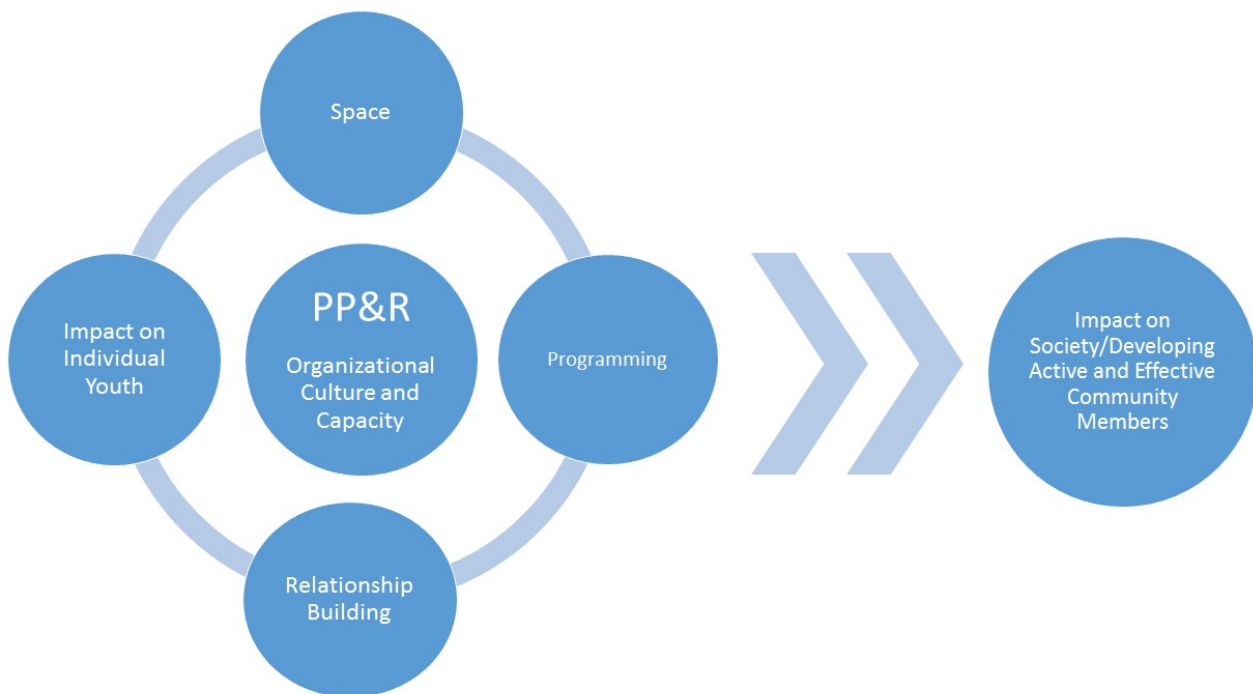
The stakeholders place emphasized that the work with teens is one of the pathway to create a more just and equitable society. Helping teens find their passions and share them in the

wider community help achieve the larger mission of PP&R. This was seen as the ultimate end and the most important indicator of success. In each session, participants reiterate that strong teen programs in the context of a community center can help create adults who see themselves as engaged citizens—those who contribute to deciding public issues, who take responsibility for the common good, and who benefit from society’s shared resources. The connection was made throughout the discussions between youth finding their talents and gifts, having space to express themselves, and growing into a strong sense of belonging in the wider society. This sense of the ultimate aim of PP&R’s teen programs was very widely held. All of the discussions revealed beliefs that if youth have the opportunity for expression, developing new skills, space to dream, and inspiration, this can yield broad social benefits and help create engaged and fulfilled adults capable of transformative leadership.

Schematic Model of the *Theory of Success*

Review of the interview data and the themes suggests that key stakeholders of PP&R have implicit mental model on how the six components of success relate to each other. The six components of success, and their relationship to one another that lead to successful teen development are shown in the following schematic.

Figure 2: Theory of Success



6. Assessment of Success

The theory of success provides a basis for PP&R's program assessments and evaluation. By conceptualizing the six components of the theory of success model as indicators of success, PP&R should identify what to measure and how to measure them and develop an assessment plan. Then PP&R can implement, either by drawing on its internal resources or connecting with partner organizations experienced in assessment.

Though implementing new assessment practices will take time and effort, the benefits are numerous. In particular:

- PP&R staff will have more tools for engaging with their work and improving in areas they value. Given the investment and care we observed in staff, tools for improvement will be appreciated and increase satisfaction. When integrated skillfully into existing staff tasks, collecting data can support and focus work with teens.
- Teen programs can be more easily refined and adjusted based on what is working best across the Centers and through community partnerships.
- Collecting more qualitative and quantitative data will allow PP&R to communicate clearly with community-wide stakeholders about the value of its programming.
- Quantitative data that results in numeric information is accompanied by qualitative data that can provide useful description of staff and teen experiences. Together, quantitative and qualitative data can paint a rich picture.
- Teens who are asked to share their experience with PPR programs and staff as part of assessment may benefit from being prompted to reflect on their learning, goals, and challenges. This reflection can lead to more conscious goal-setting and problem solving.

Table 1 on the following page shows the possible approaches to assessing and evaluating PP&R's success based on the six components identified in the theory of success. Table 2 summarizes the approaches by data collection methods. More detailed and narrative explanation of the approaches in the table 1 is provided in Appendix III.

Table 1: Indicators and Assessment Approaches for the six key components in the theory of success

1) Space	
Indicators	Assessment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Welcoming (inclusive, sense of belonging) ● Accessibility ● Open to a wide range of users ● Safe ● Sufficient Capacity ● Seen as part of the community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Create a checklist for self-assessment (refer to indicators) ● Survey youth and assess for these indicators (refer to indicators) ● Interview youth for these indicators ● Accessibility, openness, and capacity can be measured by the usage data (how widely spaces are being used for example)

2) Programming	
Indicators	Assessment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Provide diverse and varied options ● Tailor to teen needs and interests ● Create context for building positive relationships with adults (opportunity for socializing and mentoring) ● Actively engage community partners in programming ● Respond to youth needs and interests ● Help youth develop skills (cooking, dance, music, writing, advocacy, leadership, social relationship building) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Create a checklist for self-assessment ● Survey youth and assess for these indicators ● Interview youth for these indicators ● Options and skill programming can be assessed by the program list ● Community partners can be assessed by the list of community partners

3) Positive relationships between staff and teens and among teens

Indicators	Assessment
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Teens perceive the relationship with staff as meaningful• Teens perceive PP&R as being supportive• Relationships developed at the centers and programs being sustained• Teens experience positive relationships with PP&R staff consistently across all levels of the organization who interact with teens• Teens feel safe interacting with PP&R staff• Teens see PP&R staff as their mentors• Teens perceive PP&R staff as helpful• Teens perceive that PP&R staff care about them and invest in their future• Teens perceive PP&R staff willing to help them take risks and grow• PP&R staff interact with teen with cultural sensitivity• PP&R staff understand how to interact with teens that lead to a positive and meaningful relationship	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Survey teens and assess for these indicators• Interview youth for these indicators• Assess the opportunities for training• Survey staff for these indicators• Include these indicators on performance evaluations

4) Impact on Individual Teen

Indicators	Assessment
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Teens develop a sense of belonging (being part of the community)• Teens develop confidence• Teens develop sense of ownership• Teens feel safe• Teens develop sense of efficacy (see themselves as capable)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Survey teens and assess for these indicators• Interview teens for these indicators• Identify past patrons and survey/interview for these indicators

5) Organizational Culture and Capacity that embraces the importance of teens

Indicators	Assessment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is PP&R-wide attentiveness and sensitivity to teens • PP&R is willing to respond to teen input and interests • PP&R is willing to give teens leadership and autonomy • PP&R teen coordinators and center director’s input matters • Teen programs funded through sustainable funding streams • Teen programs have long-term investment by PP&R 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a PP&R-wide campaign to gain more understanding and support for teen programming • Survey staff for these indicators • Interview staff for these indicators • Assess financial resources • Provide outcome information to decision makers

6) Impact on society/Developing active and effective community members

Indicators	Assessment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teen program contributes to creating more just and equitable society • Teens who find passion and share with wider community become contributing members of the community • Teen program develops adults who see themselves as engaged members of the community (i.e. contribute to public decision making, take responsibility for the common good) • Teen program develops adults who benefit from society’s shared resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify past patrons and survey/interview for these indicators • Include questions on the perception of PP&R teens program contribution in the city-wide survey (collaborate with other city agencies) • Include teen program contribution in the performance audit from the Auditors Office • Collect data from those who are affiliated with gang activities and assess if they have had the opportunity to use PP&R services • Interview “at risk” youth and assess their engagement with PP&R services • Usage data can be tracked and inform the assessment for this impact (are they collecting what they need? If they need more, how can they collect it?)

Table 2: Summary Assessment Approaches by Data Collection Methods

Six Key Components of Success	Assessment approaches			
	Youth survey and/or interview	Past patron survey and/or interview	Staff survey and/or interview	Other
1) Space	X		X	Usage data
2) Programming	X			Community partners program review
3) Relationships	X		X	
4) Impact on Individual Youth	X	X		
5) Organizational Culture and Capacity			X	Financial data analysis
6) Impact on Society		X		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● City-wide survey ● Performance audit ● Collaboration with gang-related services. ● Interview a "at-risk " youth ● Usage data

It is important to note that conducting an assessment and evaluation is a major investment of resources. Realistic planning and expectation setting prior to the implementation of the assessment and evaluation plan is required, and the organization needs to provide support for the staff in time and training.

7. Conclusion: Theory of Success

The theory of success presented here is a synthesis of the values and the mental model we heard emerging through the facilitated discussions and Core Team meetings. It “surfaces” stakeholders’ implicit view about what creates success, and attempts to coalesce the mental model as a framework to define success. Safe welcoming space facilitates strong programs, which serve as a venue for positive relationships. This is a context for impacting individuals and the wider society. This process is facilitated by a strong organizational context of support. These patterns and the progression that we observed can be helpful for developing organizational cohesion, discerning next steps, particularly regarding assessment, and communicating with the wider community.

Additionally, PP&R’s work with youth is very important to society. As with most work of this nature, it is inherently difficult to assess the outcomes that matter most. For instance, stakeholders reiterated in discussions that they see the success of programs as tied to youth sense of being fulfilled and giving their gifts in society as adults. We suggest several ways of measuring this. Nonetheless, most assessments are taken at earlier points in the process with the assumption that if indicators of safe space, strong programs and positive relationships are in place, the ultimate goals will be reached.

Appendices

Appendix I: Facilitated Discussion Plans

Phase I

1) Introductions (10 minutes)

- Welcome, appreciation, orientation to any snacks, bathrooms, etc.
- Brief explanation of the project and why we are here, share agenda for the session.
- Group introductions – first name and programming in which each person has participated. Each person selects a photo print out of a recreational activity and shares why they chose that image.
- Norms for the session. Begin by saying that our time is their time and ask for the suggestions for norms, or code of conduct. Establish confidentiality of what is discussed in the session, goal of “step up, step back” in terms of monitoring one’s own participation during the session.

2) Considering Lessons Learned (40 minutes)

Say, “We’re now going to talk about the Parks and Recreation programs you all have been part of. Your experiences matter and the goal here is to learn from them. Please be honest and constructive. It’s important to be open about anything that was challenging because the whole reason we’re here is to improve. We ask you to be thinking about moving forward to make programs even better for you or for others who participate. Are there any questions about this?”

2a) Getting experiences and ideas flowing and coalescing

Ask group members to please fold a blank sheet of paper (provided) into four squares. Refer to the chart paper with these prompts, going over them verbally first, two at a time. (This could also be done using four colors of post-it notes, with one note for each idea.)

- In the top left, write (or sketch) as many things as you can think of that you got out of or learned from your participation. Don’t worry about how important each one is, just list out what you feel you got or learned. These could be things you enjoyed, helped you feel more connected to friends or make new ones, skills, ways of thinking, habits, any learning that is important to you.
- In the top right, write or draw what helped you learn those things. This could be a certain relationship with a staff member or friend, an activity, a trip, anything.
- In the bottom left, write out what you remember being challenging for you. What moments did you have of feeling that things weren’t working, that you were not engaged, you were stuck, etc.?
- In the bottom right, write out what you would add or take away from the program that would make you very excited to participate again.

2b) Discussion to identify common themes

Say "Let's talk these over a bit. There's no pressure to share something you don't want to share. At the same time, the more open you can be, the more we'll all get a full picture." Note taker takes notes on chart paper or, ideally, on computer with projector.

Prompts:

- What did you get from or learn from your participation? Clarify and expand this question as needed. What was learned in terms of skills, habits of mind, values, etc.? What was gained in terms of community and relationship building? Assure relatively even participation of members. Ask participants to circle on their paper the one thing they learned or gained that they think is most important.
- What about the programming helped these positive things to happen? Clarify and expand as needed with probing questions. What features of the programming were powerful or effective? Allow a conversation to take place in order to deepen the responses to this question. Assure relatively even participation of members. Ask participants to circle on their paper the one thing they think helped them learn or gain what they most valued gaining.
- What was challenging or maybe didn't work so well? What did you feel, see, or think, relating to this experience? Prompt further to sort out actual events from the feelings and thoughts that resulted. Direct away from any "ruts" the group may get into. Ask participants to circle on their pages the single biggest challenge that affected them.
- Finally, what would you add to the program to make you excited to return? What would you take away? Prompt and direct questions to get at the root of what participant's feel was missing, and what they would like to see added. Ask them to circle the top thing to add and top thing to take away.
- Ask them to take a moment to rewrite anything not readable. Collect papers if permission is given.

*Break if needed (5 minutes)

3) Identifying Theories of Success (30 minutes)

Say, "For the next part of the discussion, we're going to be "zooming out." We're going to talk about what we think it is that really makes a successful program."

3a) Reflecting on theory of success

Prepare sheets of chart paper with sentence beginnings and hang them around the room. Take 10 minutes or so for participants to move around the room and add their answers.

Possible Prompts:

- The programming that I would be very enthusiastic and interested in participating would...

- What I think is most important about the community center is...
- Etc.

For “The programming that I would be very enthusiastic and interested in participating would...”, give some examples such as “The programming that I would be very enthusiastic and interested in participating would...help me get in better shape physically and help me stay healthy...help me have more confidence...help us work together to help our community.” Base the examples on the previous discussion. Collect these at the end if they are willing.

3b) Discussing and identifying key themes

Say, “Let’s talk about what you came up with.”

Possible Prompts:

- What are some of the most important components or pieces of a successful program? Continue prompting until everyone has shared, if possible. Take notes on chart paper or projected lap top.
- What are you looking for in a program?
- What would you like to see?
- In a best of all possible worlds, what would the program look like? Probe underneath: what is really the desire under a particular request...?
- Is anything missing?
- Prioritize (hold a “vote” on) the list. Ask participants to vote two or three times (depending on the length of the list). Give them a moment to consider, then ask participants to place dot stickers next to the most important three patterns.
- Discuss the results of the “vote.” How do folks feel about these top three? Note any issues or additional comments. Clarify any questions. Ask people to explain why certain aspects are important.

4) Closing (5 minutes)

Thank participants, ask for questions, share contact information for researchers.

Phase II

1) Introductions (7 minutes)

- Express appreciation for the time taken for the session
- Introduce self; team introduces selves
- Introduction to CPS

- Our role in the project – your feedback on lessons learned to develop shared knowledge, your sense of what success looks like to develop shared understanding of success and what to measure.
- Agenda for the session (Note that their input will inform the report)
- Who is in the room?

Work with teens regularly?

Work with teens on occasion?

Somehow been directly involved with the implementation of the Initiative?

Involved in planning the Initiative?

(Optional) You might say you don't have much background with the Initiative or haven't had reason to learn about it.

2) Research Design (3 minutes)

PowerPoint to show the scope and process of the research project. Name the groups we have held discussions with.

3) Present Patterns Identified (7 minutes)

Share initial patterns, following slides.

4a) Discussion (7-10 minutes)

Possible Prompts:

- What stands out to you here? Why? What is missing? What do you have to add?
- Pick one thing to add and then share out with the whole group.

4b) Discussion (15 minutes)

Possible Prompts:

- What does success look like, given your background and role?
- How could you measure those indicators of success?
- Gallery stroll to share

5) Closing (2 minutes)

- Any patterns you noticed from the gallery stroll?
- Any additional thoughts or input?
- Thank you for your participation

Appendix II: Facilitated Discussion Notes

Community Partner Organizations (April 4, 2016)

1) Facilitated Discussion Notes

A completely successful teen program would...

- Provide a safe space where students can express themselves, build positive peer relationships and ultimately serve as a foot stool to helping them find their gifts and talents.
- Helping kids reach full potential
- Youth-driven
- Activities for all youth
- Boys drive the programming, girls sit back
- High level of safety, security
- Familiar adults
- Consistent and safe adults who really care
- Mentoring and jobs training
- Kids have space to dream and be unique, explore who they want to be
- Engage, empower and inspire every single teen in Metor to reach their full potential

What makes a successful partnership?

- Open communication and flexibility to make changes if something isn't working
- Meet the kids where they're at
- Flexibility has been appreciated because of the short turnaround for the proposal process
- There is a lot of trust placed in community organizations, which has allowed them to do what they know
- Reaching out to other organizations, new partnerships across the city
- Building off of each other's strengths
- But maybe this isn't a real partnership – it is funding, which is great, but Parks isn't bringing a lot of structural support to the table
- Using this grant to augment current programming is good, but building a whole new program with this set up is very difficult
- Meeting with the other partners is good

For ideas, for referrals, for learning about similar organizations in the city

Additional support to ask for...

- Bus passes/tickets
- Portland Parks staff for teen night (other than front desk) and/or for planning
- Bigger spaces (many courts are too small to run multiple games)

2) Individual Written Responses

	What worked?
1	The ability to move kids and get them to show up The ability to add additional transportation to students living in the numbers
2	Great fun First touchpoint for teens Skating/pool big hit for all teens Cynthia Family support conversations Mentoring
3	Providing a part time job opportunity for two young adults. One moved on to a full time job so we were able to hire another Being able to have food and get good supplies for the youth Groups we provide

	What factors contributed to that success?
1	The right who. The right person who can develop positive relationships with kids and has the knowledge to teach Swim lessons at Community Centers in outer east
2	Safe space/adults to reach out
3	Having the support and fund to back it up Support of the organization Willingness of PPR to allow youth and us to access the Centers to engage in youth in pro-social activities

What challenges?	
1	We have not received funding yet so this is a pre-pilot. Once we do we will launch a much more extensive program. Gentrification—finding out east opportunities
2	Transportation Communication Identifying passthrough partners
3	Having a limited time to prepare/organize activities Misscommunication in the beginning and funding was slow Transportation

What changes would you recommend?	
1	How funding comes down Bues passes & tickets
2	Partnership with trimet List of contacts (Cynthia sent out already) Email out list of passthrough parnters
3	Have access to grant fund before summer to plan and implement activities right when school gets out

3) Compilation of Individual Written Responses

Quadrant 1: What worked

- The ability to move kids and get them to show up
- The ability to add additional transportation to students living in the numbers
- Great fun
- First touch point for teens
- Skating/pool big hit for all teens
- Cynthia
- Family support conversations
- Mentoring
- Providing a part time job opportunity for two young adults. One moved on to a full time job so we were able to hire another
- Being able to have food and get good supplies for the youth
- Groups we provide

Quadrant 2: Factors

- The right who. The right person who can develop positive relationships with kids and has the knowledge to teach
- Swim lessons at Community Centers in outer east
- Safe space/adults to reach out
- Having the support and fund to back it up
- Support of the organization
- Willingness of PPR to allow youth and us to access the Centers to engage in youth in pro-social activities

Quadrant 3: Challenges

- We have not received funding yet so this is a pre-pilot. Once we do we will launch a much more extensive program.
- Gentrification—finding out east opportunities
- Transportation
- Communication
- Identifying pass-through partners
- Having a limited time to prepare/organize activities
- Miscommunication in the beginning and funding was slow
- Transportation

Quadrant 4: Changes

- How funding comes down
- Bus passes & tickets
- Partnership with TriMet
- List of contacts (Cynthia sent out already)
- Email out list of pass-through partners
- Have access to grant funds before summer to plan and implement activities right when school gets out

4) Group Written Responses

Not available.

Teen Program Participants I (April 12, 2016)

1) Facilitated Discussion Notes

Not available.

2) Individual Written Responses

	What did you learn?
1	Rules; SEI
2	I can't draw well
3	The rules of the Community Center; How to swim; Common sense; How to get along with other people that come to the Community Center; How to find other people to participate with other activities; Social skills*
4	Swim*; Manners; Common sense; Integrity
5	How to swim; To not be shy
6	Learn how to swim
7	Standards*; Rules; Expectation; We're all family*; Social skills; Teamwork
8	Learning how to kayak
9	How to work on my people skills*; To make friends
10	How to swim; Social skills
11	I learned to be more open to new people
12	How to swim*; How to tie my shoe laces; Social skills; Courage*

	How did you learn it?
1	We are family
2	I've practiced for years but still can't draw
3	Friends*; People who work here*; People who volunteer here
4	Perseverance; Help; Intelligence; Doing the right thing
5	The staff and volunteers
6	I practice a lot
7	The adults around us; Practicing; Reminders; The structure*
8	Lessons; Steps; Practice; People=Staff
9	The people who work here (staff)
10	

11	My friends and mentors
12	Swimming lessons; Volunteers; Steps

What was tough?	
1	
2	Drawing is very hard
3	Being shy
4	Integrity—because it was very hard to do the right thing especially when there's no reward and you aren't setting an example like a leader
5	To talk out loud
6	
7	Remembering the standards; Talking/getting to know people*
8	My cousin would row right and I would row left and we didn't do it at the same time
9	Talking to people; Trying not to be rude
10	
11	Getting to know the other members of my Community Center
12	Not being able to brave and going to the deep side; To go on ski lift*

What would you add/takeaway?	
1	Add more programs for the kids
2	I wish I could draw better
3	More activities to do
4	
5	I would add more things to do
6	
7	More activities*
8	How we worked together
9	I'm not sure I've been here before
10	
11	I would add more leadership and involvement with teenagers, but then again there's already a lot of activities for teens
12	Try learning earlier

3) Compilation of Individual Written Responses

Not available.

4) Group Written Responses

If I ran the Community Center I would...

- Start a cooking class (4x)
- More options for dance classes (2x)
- Start music classes and bring the kids together
- Have writing classes

I come back to the Community Center because...

- I wanted to get out the house more (2x)
- My mom works here
- They're supportive and its fun (2x)
- My auntie works here and if I invite my friends over they don't where I live
- Place to do homework and activities
- Friend time

I think there should be more...

- Activities
- Options for the girls (1x)
- Sports activities for kids
- Sports
- Homework support
- Class
- Peace

I think there should be less...

- Adults (2x)
- Rules/Adults
- Drama

When I talk about the Community Center I say...

- I'm having fun with my friends at the Community Center (1x)
- I like coming to the Center and coming back

- I like to be with my friends/learn more dance moves
- That it's a place to chill out and do homework with friends and maybe eat
- Hangout with my friends
- It's a place I exercise and have fun at

The most important place/part of the Community Center is...

- Mentally ill people are welcome
- The gym (3x)
- The classrooms
- The Game Room
- Basketball Court
- The Pool (1x)

To me the most important thing a Community Center could do is...

- Give kids more opportunities and keep kids off the streets (3x)
- Support us! (1x)
- People working with the kids

Teen Program Participants II (April 18, 2016)

1) Facilitated Discussion Notes

Demographics

- 12 Youth total
- 9 male, 3 female
- Ranging from middle school to high school

Opening (4:30 – 4:50 pm)

- Youth began discussion before being prompted about why they like/dislike the center
- "Free swimming on Friday"
- "What are we going to be talking about today"
- "Talk about more things to change the CC or what could make it better?"
- "Something to do with a leadership theme?"
- "Nothing could make it better"

Ice Breaker (4:50 – 5:00 pm)

- Broke group into ½ to grab pictures
- Basketball picture picked (6x) and others were interested (3x)
- All females picked music/art pictures
- All males picked sports pictures
- “I play basketball because it keeps them off the street, almost half of my family is involved in gang violence and I don’t want to be involved”

Received positive affirmation from other group members (semi-verbal, nodding of heads 3x)

Group Norms (5:00 – 5:05 pm)

- Good discussion of respect and taking turns when talking. Group responded positively to this (3x)

4 Quadrants (5:05 – 5:30 pm)

- Several smaller groups formed and worked together to answer the first two questions (looked to be friends before they entered – a few individuals were on their own (3x))
- Some teasing within groups (older youth typically had more power)
- “How do you spell Madalyn?”

“She’s great!”

- Side conversations happened especially during basketball themed responses and seemed to inspire further participation
- Lots of discussion about the “Function” and some people (Africans) being able to use the space more than others (very passionate and angry about this) (4x)
- Really engaged in talking about things that are tough, but little interest in changing things (especially among the older kids) (4x)
- Having to sign in before you get snacks is annoying (2x)
- They don’t give enough snacks (3x)

Chart Paper (5:30 – 5:45 pm)

Impromptu

- Teen Center = Function, everyone has attended
- Middle schoolers don’t like staff because they kick them out, but they’re acting crazy so they should be kicked out
- HS have better food than middle schoolers so they get upset also their food runs out and they try to cheat the system (middle schoolers get here first)
- Middle schoolers have behavioral issues and hs gets mad at them (3x)
- “I come here everyday. I’m a volunteer basketball coach. I just wanted to put my opinion out there and let you know how I feel”

- They don't like Mohammed because he just kicks them out, he doesn't give them chances like Abdul does.

2) Individual Written Responses

	What you Learned?
1	How to float; How to exercise and challenge my body (working out); Meet and be open to new people
2	Basketball; Swimming; Working out
3	Playing basketball; Working out
4	Reverse layup; How to clean
5	How to get better; How to reff bball games; Meet new people; How to work with kids and parents; How to set up for bball games; How to play ping pong
6	How to make new friends; How to cooperate with others; How to ignore people who are bothering you; How to clean
7	How to cooperate with others; Meet new people; How to clean; How to listen
8	How to make friends and bond with people that you don't know; How to show respect when the speaker is talking; How to go down the slide in the pool
9	Play basketball
10	Basketball; Helping on Friday; Meet new people; Videos
11	Crossover; Meet new people; Helping on Friday; How to clean
12	How to work with new people; How to dunk with two hands
13	Volunteering is rewarding; Swimming; Ping pong (kinda); How to watch kids @ the pool; Gardening

	How did you learn?
1	My friends helped me; Weight room coordinator; My friend helped me and showed me how great of a skill it is to be open to new people and experiences
2	How to shoot; Watch and learn; Started light then went heavy; I learned what not to do
3	Just play and try my best; Learning how to life wight you can pick up
4	Practiced; Staff
5	Coming to the CC everyday; Taught by Abdul, Alex and Mo; By playing bball; Taught by Abdul; Taught by Gabe; Taught by Davonte
6	My mom taught me how
7	Just laughing and talking; Just letting them talk to me; In the Function they make you if you don't they say "then get out"; Just imagining into what others say, even if I don't care for it

8	I learned to show respect and not run in the hall ways because I got kicked out for a day and I did not want to get kicked out again by Abdule
9	I learned it by watching other people
10	How I learn basketball is by asking people to help me; How I learn how to help on Fridays is just asking if I can do it; How I learn how to meet people is just to walk up to them
11	Watching Mohamed; Saying hi, hello; Madalyn; Staff
12	By playing on teams with strangers; By practicing at the CC
13	Teen volunteer corps, many volunteer projects; lessons, practice; ping pong games, friends helped; babysitting @ pool, swim instruction, what kids like; Practice in the garden

	Tough?
1	Making new friends; Learning the rules; Working with others; Learning how to float without drowning; How to be mature; Being yourself
2	Not knowing people; Making friends; Knowing the rules; How to be a team player; How to be mature; Being yourself
3	Learning how to make friends; Learning how everything works; How to be a team player
4	
5	Get over nervousness of reffing; Learning to play a different style
6	Peer pressure
7	Peer pressure; Making the wrong decision
8	Peer pressure; Making the wrong decision
9	All the ? That take over
10	Get out of bed
11	Pay everyday to get in open gym; Prestige in on black OPS
12	Playing with new people
13	Loose schedules for group meetings

	Add/Takeaway?
1	Open gym times
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	Just walk away and don't listen to what they are saying
7	Just don't listen or walk away; Regretting things
8	
9	
10	
11	Play on 2x xp; Bring money
12	More basketball
13	Set weekly/monthly schedules

3) Compilation of Individual Written Responses

Quadrant 1: Things I've learned

- I learned to not run in the hallways (2x)
- I learned how to get along with others (4x)
- Work with new people (10x)
- Ref little kid basketball games/work with younger kids (5x)
- Learned how to play ping pong (4x)
- Learned how to float in the pool (slowly learning how to swim) (6x)
- Learned how to play video games/getting better at it (3x)
- Learned how to work out/ lift certain weights (7x)
- Help younger kids on Friday Night (3x)
- "Crossing" in basketball/ball handling skills (7x)
- Maturity

Quadrant 2: How I learned it

- I was kicked out
- Laughing and talking with each other
- Playing on teams with them

- Staff members taught me
- Playing with friends on the table
- Friend and Lifeguard showed me

Quadrant 3: Things That Were Tough

- Paying to use the community center (9x)
- Free pass only works M-F, need it for the weekend (5x)
- Having meetings with the lady and Carlos every day "T Talk" during open gym (5x)
- Knowing the rules of the CC when you're new and being kicked out (8x)
- Gym is too busy and closes too early (everyone)
- Learning to swim/having a hard time learning something (7x)
- Staff/people are mean during snack time "Function or Team Room"
- "Let all the Africans be there" Ron Paul
- Too harsh with swimming
- Hard playing with new people because you didn't know how to play (in basketball)/ new people (4x)
- On Teen Nights, the gym is taken by someone
- Hard learning to play with the really good people because they play at a different speed (4x)
- "Roasting" happening in the Function / arguing in the Function (3x)

Quadrant 4: What I Might Change

- Free swimming should be available on Saturday and Sunday should be reduced rate or family swim
- Open gym on Saturdays should have more time allowed for \$1
- Open gym is crowded on weekends

4) Group Written Responses

When I talk about the Community Center I say...

- I go there to work out and have fun (2x)
- Come hoop (1x)
- It's Lit (2x)
- Come get worked (2x)
- I grow vegetables in the garden (1x)
- I play b.ball every day (2x)

- I like to hang out with my friends (1x)

The most important thing that happens at a Community Center is...

- Swimming (1x)
- Teen Night (8x)
- Swimming (1x)
- Basketball (1x)
- Socialization

The most important part of the community center is...

- The gym (8x)
- Promoting and fostering a sense of belonging
- The weight room
- Playing b.ball all the time (1x)

If I ran the Community Center I would...

- Have more basketball time (2x)
- More b.ball less 2k in the stupid dance room (4x)
- More swimming (4x)
- I would have more gym less game room (4x)
- Provide longer teen nights
- Provide more basketball games to play and have longer swim time
- Be nicer to the kids

The first time I came, I came because...

- I was 6 and my parents signed me up for swim lessons
- I wanted to play basketball (2x)
- My friend wanted me to come swimming (1x)
- My friend wanted me to hoop
- 3 on 3 tournament
- My friend say come play, its free

I think there should be more...

- More open gym time (2x)
- Arts and crafts
- Basketball (1x)

- Gyms
- Gym time and swim time

I think there should be less...

- Talk time in the gym (3x)
- The Function
- Karate lessons
- Function time, teen talks, and Mohamed time

Center Directors I (April 19, 2016)

1) Facilitated Discussion Notes

Opening Comments (2:30 – 2:35 pm)

- All seem to know each other really well

“We serve on a committee together called “Awesome”” (3x)

- “They’re a loud group, you’ve got to be loud”

Icebreaker (2:35 – 2:40 pm)

- “Wine and Art Classes” received positive reviews (7x)

“Can’t have one here”

- Vacations referenced (3x)
- Controlling what can’t be controlled (4x)

Introduction (2:40 – 2:45 pm)

- Don’t know much besides what was in the email
- One individual knew why – she had advocated for this project

At risk, positive youth development, safe spaces

Big, decentralized organization

- Funds to achieve maximum value, important for us to come together to decide on what we’re doing
 - “Positive youth development, safe spaces and great activities”
- What is known, what’s the state of research, knowledge and practice... “what are those primary drivers to make a positive impact on youth”
- Shared vision
- Questions –

Youth? Teens? Age groups?

- 10 – 20 years-old

Data on who [age] is most using the center?

- Mostly under age 11
- Evenly spread between males/females
- Not a lot of 17+
 - Mayor is interested in direct intervention, but also upstream attempts at intervention

Four Quadrants Activity (2:45 – 3:40 pm)

- Make as simple as possible, what would it take to make it free for everyone? (coming from the mayor's office)
- The more complicated you make it, the more challenging it is for kids

Signing up in advance, only open select hours, fees

Youth pass was designed to be as simple as possible, but now we can start tracking them

- If we don't know who the youth are, how are we going to make a difference for them? (2x)
 - Human connection on a consistent basis (on/off staff) (4x)
 - ♦ "That's the business that we're in"

Break (3:40 – 3:50 pm)

Walk Around Activity (3:55 –

- Gender nonconforming youth?

Last all staff training had this a part of the training

40% suicide

Gender flex preschool kids

Kids at camp

First year we had someone look at a gender nonconforming bathroom

Employees span 15 years —70 years, therefore words we use are different

- If we use incorrect terminology, we lose that kid
- Safe and welcoming space for teens (3x)

Hear "I don't feel welcome there" a lot from teens and that's why they aren't there

- Safe space – they're leaving something unsafe outside (2x)
- Fun! Seeing teens having fun with their buddies (4x)
- Welcome, respected and feeling like they are any other type of customer (5x)

Don't want to get looks from others

Just as important and valuable as any other person who walks in the door

- End game – no more gang shootings over the summer (3x)
- Organization that can expose kids to one or two things they might not have encountered that really excited them (diversity of programming)

- Staff who care
- Feeling of belonging

Why they join gangs... we can provide that feeling of belonging instead

- Only as strong as our weakest link

Safe spaces

Capacity challenges

- Teen Service Coordinator is responsible for all teens (siloes staff). What happens when they're not there?
- No places for teens to slip through the cracks
- Thinking Big Picture:

Role modeling should be included (positive role models)

Integration/Integrated – teen is unique and separate but also part of a whole

Go and get what they need, but also so that they can contribute

- Kids are protected from some of the most basic life skills (cooking, cleaning, checkbooks)
- Make it a loop – they become part of the process (4x)

2) Individual Written Responses

	What went well?
1	FT Permanent rec/teen coordinators Diversity of programs; Pressure to make it simple; Commitment to support a deeper connection by using a youth pass, getting contact info; MDCC youth pass pilot; Key folks especially sups embracing the opportunity; Finding ways to integrate programs into our broader rec system
2	Teens showed up; Staff were validated for the work
3	Increased youth attendance at identified sites; Implementation of teen nights; Opportunities for hiring for teens; Development of a revised teen approach
4	Participation #'s; Variety of activities; Working as a citywide teen team
5	Teens showed; stayed all summer long. Had free cost, had different activities they could do
6	Teen funding purpose, drive, mission expression
7	Free youth passes; Staff prepared for onslaught of youth; Networking with youth agencies; Good marketing

	What created conditions for success?
1	Teamwork among staff; Willingness to try new things; partnerships; SLGO; Receiving revenue pressure
2	Getting support; Getting information out; Getting the intent validated—press releases; Having good ratios of staff; Parks were seen as viable
3	Funding; funding; funding; Hard work and dedicated staff effort; Political support; Flexibility
4	New partnerships; Adequate funding; Bureau/Council support; Ranger support?
5	Funding, knowledge about program, locating and access to it
6	Mentor/Role Model; Instructor who asks to dig deep and call out the teens best; Organization that's flexible but also has ground rules
7	Funding from the Mayor; We were already working with teens- not a new program; We network with agencies on a regular basis, so this was pretty smooth to collaborate; pre-existing programs like SUN Community Schools—"Sun Service System"

	What's been challenging?
1	Startup—building mo.; Management capacity; Competing demands; Lack of comfort/confidence/competence working with youth; Teens look/act differently than what some expect; Violent incidents; Kids who have higher needs than what we are equipped to handle
2	Capacity issues; Race issues/dominant perspective issues; Usage issues; Staff ownership
3	Timing of program on set from funding to go live; Staffing issues/changes; Security considerations—indecision and inconsistent; Ranger Role in program; Political pressure to solve a problem; Gap between city council good meaning goals and perception of realistic production of a complex program; After hours issues
4	Geographic equity in SW
5	Not located everywhere, not consistent offerings around, no real duration or plan
6	Catching teens young enough where its ok for them to be a beginner; Random successes—not much of a safety net or follow through; Some instructors don't know how to best work with teens
7	A lot of youth to work with; Understanding what is/are the goals(s); No real time to prepare for this, it came pretty quickly

	What changes would you suggest?
1	Integrate SUN and Center Models; Wraparound
2	More initial training; More ongoing training; More ongoing check-ins with staff; More frequent check-ins with outcome expectations
3	Expand to include families; Clarification of expectations and outcomes based on real time funding (pass through distortion); Clarification of Ranger Role; Expansion of programming to other sites; Intentional programming for teens without less impact service to others; Outreach to understand the community
4	Expansion of JR Leader program; Geographic outreach for at risk youth; Partnership with schools
5	If we're going to do this need to do it in all parts of town and all programs
6	Mentor/Instructor training; Intentional re: support systems; Teen brain science; Any unstructured possibilities; Fee free?
7	Need more planning time; Create a system for follow up and follow through with youth— IMPACT!!!

3) Compilation of Individual Written Responses

Quadrant 1: What went well?

- Participation numbers (2400 kids in 11 weeks) (2x)

Big numbers, but also consistent numbers (2x)

- Swimming was popular, generally teens don't like swimming because of body issues, but they were into it
- Community support (generally "rowdy teens" perception) but didn't so much happen (2x)
- Educating about teen swim and family swim

Pretty significant change (2x)

Staff got in the water during family time to allow youth to participate (and educated along the way)

- Dishman staff really rolled with the punches and accepted the change (4x)
- East Portland is maxed out, while Dishman has some more room

History of this (Dishman) center is welcoming

So East Portland struggled, but Dishman did well

- Youth pass wasn't only thing, but was a visible thing
- Attrition in youth was due to damaged relationship or relationship hadn't occurred

Parks was seen as a viable place... (4x)

- Programming that is going on is stuff the teens have been asking for directly (we didn't just dream it up)

- Drop-in programs are more popular (rather than the required) and still staff there, but unstructured and they feel independent and it's a safe place (4x)

Important that they have their own space, a controlled chaos

- East always had kids in the buildings

Treated as patrons, just like anybody else (2x)

- Requiring IDs (Youth Pass and other) has reduced fighting in the gym
- Can't help them if we don't know who they are (3x)
- Getting them involved in the programs (Junior Leaders)
- Junior Leaders program (4x)

This builds engagement, we hire teens

- Grunt Program

Quadrant 2 : What produced this success?

- Having regular "check ins" with the staff
- Using staff as "welcomers" and engaging with youth to educate about what's going on (2x)

Relationship between staff and youth can't be understated (3x)

- Got them involved in specific leadership opportunities (1x)
- Contact information about individual kids (4x)
- Relationships are huge (6x)

Patience, energy, wherewithal

Recognize that it's a whole different beast

ESPECIALLY for kids that are already marginalized, at risk, etc. (7x)

- Dedicated staff (3x)

Hiring for attitude (something they come in the door with), giving them training and giving them a reason to want to stay

Training needs to ONGOING (5x)

- Relationship first, then instruct on rules example for teen staff who received training
- SUN created a service SYSTEM that has built life-long engagement

Quadrant 3: What was challenging?

- Making it less complicated
- Best way to contact kids (not email anymore)
- Is it ongoing?
- Budgets ebbing and flowing and programs that are created and then disbanded

Seeing changes is hard for teens

Investment in East Portland vs. other CC's?

- Possible budget cuts curbing innovation in community centers (3x)

Nimble to have a meaningful impact

- East Portland

Offering programs when they're already at capacity is almost a disservice (5x) because some people are now out of luck

- Lines are already out the door for the pool

Montevilla and Matt Dishman for teens

Montevilla swimming has really dropped

- But new slide, outside pool
- Where you have capacity?

Facility, staff, budgetary

Only when you have capacity can you implement these programs

Backlash if you prioritize teens

- Mayor then decided to back off a little
- Not enough time to figure out how to make it work for everyone
- Teen programming wasn't as institutionalized at East as it was at Dishman

Priority of the center

- Get teens in the door but also having time to hire and train staff who will stay with us (5x)

Maybe even do more harm than good (5x)

- They need consistency
- Hard to know when you're hiring if teens/youth are a passion or not

Why do you want to work here, what do you think? Strategic questioning on hiring.

- Staff turnover (5x) even at the front desk

Areas are fraught with quick turnovers

- Knowing appropriate staffing levels for teen swims? (4x)

East and Montevilla

They have the free pass, but they aren't swimming so they're on deck and causing trouble. SO having staff move them to another location.

- Building management at East Portland

"Lunchlady or Garbage men" who students trust

Changing staffing model on deck

- Lose teens as they get older

How can we be connecting with them or providing programming for this age group?

- "Operate more as a business" mentality pushed by City Council

as opposed to a wraparound mentality (SUN programming model?)

- There are kids that are out of our power to serve

Quadrant 4: What changes would you suggest?

- Universal emphasis, training and support for hiring new staff who are good with teens specifically (not just parks but TEENS)
- Be at "A" game every time a teen walks through the door
- More emphasis on leadership training for youth
- Ongoing training for teen specific staff (7x)

Skill specific

Something we're already doing in some areas (aquatics)

- Information on what training should look like (4x)

40 developmental assets of youth (maybe outdated? This was what they had been trained on, but is it the best?)

Trauma informed practice

Mental health model

One model does not fit all – tool kit or recipe box. Have info on different models and be alert enough to recognize which to pull out when

- Having greeters
- Knowing staffing levels for # of staff per kid training (5x)
- Culturally specific training and programming (4x)
- IRCO wants to partner with Parks to train staff on how to deliver culturally specific programming

Do this service for free! (3x)

- Need a SYSTEM for engagement post the age group that is identified

Hiring fair example for post teens in SUN

- Working with other organizations, like IRCO, but also others (3x)
- Using resources that we already have? (3x)

Job shadowing with staff around the center or maintenance, etc.

Maybe developing life skills that will support them as adults (4x)

- More Junior Leaders styled programming (paid positions for youth) (5x)

But not just mentoring younger kids, accounting, etc. (just like in how we design programming now)

16 – 20 year olds

Junior Apprentice?

- Connect them to our other resources (golf courses, etc.) (2x)
- More connection between SUN programming and Parks?

Wraparound model?

- "Right People in the Right Room" (City, County, SEI coming together for the benefit of youth)

Service system

Holistic – we're already doing a little bit of this, but we need more

- Youth service providers meeting in Seattle so that relationships can be built between staff at different agencies

Youth serving agencies

Social service providers

Regionally?

- More partnerships between community partners that can fit programming aims that we can't fit.

4) Group Written Responses

The most important part of the Community Center is...

- A gathering place for the community (2x)
- A welcoming environment (2x)
- A safe place (1x)
- Providing leisure activities
- A dedicated teen space
- The staff (1x)
- The pool (4x)
- Hangout area (pool table, ping pong, welcoming staff, lobby) (1x)
- Ability to get there and get home safely

Something else I'd like to add about this is...

- We are as strong as our weakest link (2x)
- Would be great to incorporate social services into our parks model (2x)
- We cannot save the world, we cannot solve all the problems, BUT we can make a difference in the life of a teen... and that is success (2x)
- We need to address/serve gender nonconforming youth (1x)
- The Emotional Spark Social Engagement Novelty Creative Expression of teen services

To successfully serve teens I need more...

- Room (4x)
- Staff (5x)
- Money (5x)
- Planning Time
- Smiles (3x)

- Ability to evaluate
- Time to train (2x)
- Focus on engaging youth and technology
- Staff who care (2x)
- Staff who are/feel equipped for the job (1x)

To successfully serve teens I need less...

- Attitude
- Process (2x)
- Anxiety
- Apathy regarding change (1x)
- Either/Or Mentality (1x)

When I envision a Center that successfully serves teens, I see...

- Well trained, empathetic staff (2x)
- Partnerships (with social services, cultural groups, etc.) (3x)
- Happy kids swimming
- Teens engaged in a variety of activities (3x)
- Teens engaged like everyone else (2x)
- Diverse and varied programs and spaces that meet the REAL needs and desires of the teens served (2x)
- Thriving youth
- Harmony among teen, adults, seniors and staff (2x)
- Staff who are actively engaged, building strong relationships with young people (1x)
- Multigenerational, multiethnic crosses socio-economic boundaries

Thinking big picture: The ideal role of a Community Center for teens is...

- Providing continuous Space for teen activities or hanging out
- Providing a safe and welcome space; feeling of belonging and inciting opportunities and possibilities (3x)
- Multiple avenues for teen involvement (1x)
- Be a place where kids/teens feel welcome – like they belong (1x)
- They feel useful and appreciated (1x)
- To make teens feel included like everyone else (1x)
- They belong (1x)

- To provide a safe/welcoming environment where Teens have choices, can express their independence and individuality (5x)
- Role models
- Integration – uniqueness valued and sense of belonging
- Teens can contribute – their work is needed in the community (creates buy-in, cycle of care, rights and responsibility)

The most valuable thing that happens for teens at the Community Center is...

- Safe socialization (4x)
- Feeling a part of the community (6x)
- Finding/connecting with responsible adults (when they can't or won't with family!) (3x)
- Being exposed to new interests/ pursuits, skills to develop, things to be passionate about (5x)
- Finding role models (3x)
- Being accepted for who they are (5x)
- Being respected (4x)
- Potential jobs (3x)
- Fun recreation with friends (2x)

Center Directors II (April 25, 2016)

1) Facilitated Discussion Notes

2) Individual Written Responses

	What went well?
1	Use of a teen volunteer supporting 3 week summer camp; More summer camps offered and more participants; Converted teen volunteer to staff then to instructor
2	Open gym; game room; new teen coordinator (staffing shifts); teen nights; Introducing new programs; Having free/low-cost programs
3	Open of teen room; Cooking class; After school basketball; CIT Staff Hiring; Friday night teen activities; Transition of staff
4	
5	Expansion of services; Partner integration; Diversity of program offerings; Development of teen specific areas in 5 centers; Additional funding to enhance programs; Removal of fee based teen programs; Hiring a program specialist for teen programs and officially naming Karen as teen supervisor; Use IC Agreements to diversity offerings and partners

6	Lots of kids/teens involved; Adaptability, programs developed on a tight timeline; Free programming/easy access (removal of barriers); Increased hours/spaces/programs
7	Access; Priority shift; Support; Team improvement; Welcoming environments; Potential/Hope

	What created conditions for success?
1	Was encouraging and supportive; Supporting talent despite lack of work experience; IC's; Better marketing and program development
2	Having passionate staff members; Having low cost/free program options; Food; Support from partners/dedicated supervisor for teen program
3	Neal/Ryan; Team Work; Communication; Consistency; Funding; Icuras; Staffing
4	
5	Not being able to be in every CC'; Coordinating services; Being ready to adapt/program within the rec rev structure to serve teens (they want it now); Changing culture in some locations; Adapting; Balancing the need to generate revenue vs. the desire to serve underrepresented teens
6	Staff jumped in and made it happen; When possible process was simplified (removal of barriers, redundancy); Commitment (\$)
7	Money; Support from Mayor; Amazing team of eclectic and diverse individuals

	What's been challenging?
1	No funding on entire west side (I understand); It was implemented relatively quickly w/o much "looking back" to past successes/failures; Revenues goals vs. Service Needs; Political Disconnect
2	Staff transition—having to teach a new person the culture in parks; Getting staff onboard with changes- Teen Force Pass; Time Frame—Clear directions—When to start
3	Staff Transitions; Designated Teen Space; Teen Buy in; New Resources; Values vs. Revenue
4	Timeframe; Capacity; Staffing
5	Teen Advisory Councils; Funding \$; Support of teens/recognition of the need to invest in free activities to prevent negative behaviors and increase access
6	Short timeline to roll out; Not all staff/site were as bought in as others; Navigating the political side while keeping best intentions for youth; Not implemented everywhere
7	Change—lots at once; Institutional barriers (red tape, issues around race, etc.); Not as all encompassing as we'd like; Lack of primary objective—too many priorities all at the same time; Personalities

	What changes would you suggest?
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1	Continue increasing funding support for teens—could do so with data backed research—e.g. \$100 in Parks is as effective as \$100 in police gang control; Low cost classes for all teens
2	Make it even more accessible to all facilities; More training
3	More customer service training for desk staff in mentoring of youth vs. tell what can and cannot be done; More money; Budget adjustment
4	More time; Better communication
5	Keep programs flexible; More \$ for free citywide teen & Youth programs; Training
6	Training/buy-in/etc. for all staff not just those directly working w/teens; More funding
7	Keep the \$ coming; This study; Trust and support; Staffing—all over

3) Compilation of Individual Written Responses

Not available.

4) Group Written Responses

The most important part of the Community Center is...

- Community (5x)
- Customers
- People (1x)
- New experience
- How you feel the second you walk in (1x)
- Why you are there
- A reflection of the community it is in
- The inclusive, welcoming environment (4x)

The most valuable thing that happens for teens at the Community Center is...

- Safe place to be themselves (3x)
- Positive interactions with peers/staff (3x)
- They are valued and respected (1x)
- The Three E's – Education, Empowerment, Engagement
- Pro-Social activities
- They get to do something that makes them and their community better
- Feel at home

To successfully serve teens I need more...

- Resources (4x)
- Flexibility (3x)
- Training (1x)
- Money (5x)
- Time
- Staff

To successfully serve teens I need less...

- Red tape (2x)
- Fear of teens (2x) – especially with teens of color
- Meetings (4x)
- Unconscious (& conscious bias)

Thinking BIG picture: The ideal role of a Community Center for teens is...

- Safe place to be (4x)
- Mentorship and guidance (3x)
- Job training/skill development (2x)
- A place to gather and learn with friends (new and old) (1x)
- A place to choose positive, open structure, pro-social activities that detour teens from negative influences/impacts
- Safe, supportive, welcoming home away from home

Something else I'd like to add about this...

- Hello (1x)
- We need to remember that our Centers names mostly have the word Community in them for a reason. We were intended to be the Centers for our Community (2x)
- Community Center should be a welcome, open door – not a for-profit business (2x)
- Community Recreation cannot be as effective if it is constantly changed by those “in-power” that have shifting priorities as they change (elections, etc.)

Teen Coordinators (April 26, 2016)

1) Facilitated Discussion Notes

Introduction

- Three started at the same time (within a week of each other)

- Coming over from SEI?
- Madalyn had been at both East Portland and Montavilla, but Carlos was hired and now they're not split
- Why are we here?

Make PP&R Better

Intentional and strategic approach to what we're doing

- Have money, but not necessarily a plan to go with it
- Empower the Coordinators "Rodney Dangerfield – receiving no respect"
 - Haven't been supported at a higher level in Parks until now
 - Can now empower others (2x)

Response to Mayor's Initiative (1x)

Institutionalize this funding! (3x)

- Our explanation

Two parts: what worked well last year and what does success mean?

Four Quadrants

- Management Issues

Building Director said Teens were NEVER allowed in the lobby

We're going to lose money because of teen services

"manage up" Teen Coordinator was supposed to manage supervisor

Racist and unequitable

- Rumors about cutting funding for teen programming

5% cut?

- New quotas or numbers

Target revenue they have to make (building director is responsible).

- Teen Services don't make money and are a drain on income, so they don't want to give Teens space because it could otherwise be making money
- Girls asked him for a girl space, but couldn't get space from E. Portland

This space is a guys space, we need a girls space – it looks like guys and smells like them

- Teen Coordinators have authority to bring on IC – they don't need permission from higher up
- If upper level doesn't "trust us" they can go talk to the teens

We are the front line staff, we know

MISC. After

- Sustainability (2x)

We have a lot of good ideas, we move them quickly

If I leave, will it continue?

While we can do things on our own, it's not sustainable... that's why we need support at a higher level

Also – it's not part of our work portfolio

As we move forward, we should talk about institutionalizing this work

- Move \$ to other Parks programs from the IC budget
- At no point in time should anyone be saying I know everything I need to know
- Not going to make headway until we move away from how political it is
- Learn not to take critique personally because it's not about the individual as a public servant

Things like this, where we can listen without judgment

2) Individual Written Responses

	What went well?
1	Services provided—bus passes and dinner; Free access to—gym, pool, teen space; Environments to build relationships; Opened up conversations—equitable practices and access
2	Relationship building; Resources; Access; Breaking down barriers; Parent involvement; Buy-in from the city
3	More team members to be able to connect with youth in various ways; Talking with staff about new ideas and actually making them happen
4	Freedom to add; More NP kids; Connect to city services; Dedicated teen space; support trickling down; Forcing accountability; Teen center integration ; Culture —values —accountability

	What created conditions for success?
1	\$ support from mayor; Dinners, space, \$ to bring in more staff, better mentor to youth ratio; Forced certain people to open their eyes —see need and benefit —facilitated conversations like this
2	Access; Resources; Diverse team and staff; Willing to work with every part of the city; Involving parents
3	Being positive, having positive relationships with folks in the community.
4	Employment prog/paid work; Inclusive; E.E less known about; Props going—Need \$ for access; Flashy and Sexy

	What's been challenging?
1	Overwhelming workload; Lack of understanding our jobs; Did not loop in strong programs already in existence; Felt reactionary; People who came are not loop in
2	Not knowing what the future holds in terms of the mayor
3	
4	Lack of understanding; Front desk; Citywide mandatory; Homelessness; Violence

3) Compilation of Individual Written Responses

Quadrant 1: What went well?

- Community Access Pass (at Matt Dishman)
- Having resources to do the programs we want to run
- Having freedom to bring about new ideas and new programs and to add new teen members on which allows us to do more with the youth and connect with them in different ways

Some of that is because of the change of leadership and previous fights from staff about some of the issues

- This time (as opposed to last year) we were able to include immigrant and new Portlander kids
- Use basketball as a hook to bring kids to the Center (basketball tournament): Intercultural Basketball

IRCO Africa House was there

Lutheran Family Services was there

Connect New Portlanders to City Services (specifically CC stuff)

No charge!

Mayor did a unique opening ceremony

Break down the barriers (money) – this program helped to educate about those barriers youth experience (language, etc.)

Create a sense of belonging and welcome to them

- Services we were able to provide (because of money, but also the support from the Mayor's office)

Bus passes

After school snack

Dinner

Free access to gym, pool, dedicated teen space

- Community Center engagement with the Teen Programs (2x)

Not just something that happens, but and IMPORTANT part of the CC

- Identifying dedicated teen spaces
 - Charles Jordan already had a dedicated space, teens who visited multiple sites learned that they weren't wanted in other places
- Lots of emphasis on Seniors and Grade school & Preschool
 - Should be Teens too! They deserve our attention. Teen Coordinators are here to help make it easier for other staff.
- Accountability

Former Building Director said Teens were NEVER allowed in the lobby

We're going to lose \$ because of teens

- IC Agreements

Brining in new partners that we're able to fund

- Salon (two barbers and two hair stylists)

50 people coming – hugely popular and possible because of the IC Agreements.

- If funding doesn't come through this would go away
- We don't know what's going to happen... new Mayor...

Quadrant 2 : What allowed it to go well?

- Having a dedicated teen space
- Brining in more staff to have a better mentor/youth ratio
- Opening up conversations about equitable practices – this project FORCED the Bureau into having these uncomfortable conversations

There were managers that created wholly inequitable spaces

Our youth and families didn't feel comfortable and no one was able to do anything about it or hold anymore accountable

This (Mayor's money) is forcing the conversation

- Talk and DO something about it
- Use information to drive change – this is really what's going to help us down the road
- Mayor saying "You have to do this!"

Being a teen is very difficult, needing a CC to say "hey we're here for you" (maybe they can't pay to participate in a school sport team, etc.)

- Hugely Important to the vitality of the community
- Higher level of accountability from the top down

Quadrant 3 : What Challenges?

- Funding from the Mayor was only for certain aspects of teen programming – Natural Services were completely left out and are only ½ funded now

Demonstrated success for many years, but no acknowledgement from Mayor's Office

Extended to other programs

Want to be a part of the conversation

- So many siloes
 - Shut out of the teen conversations
 - ♦ "My Money I will only spend it on my programs" Eileen?
- Hiring FTE that better represent the community
- Creating a pipeline

Aquatics department is doing the same thing

Departments that are actively striving to provide free training and paid work

This is good for introverted and young women (those people who aren't going to walk onto a basketball court)

- Teens expressing interest in environmental education (composting, garden, etc.)
- Not capitalizing on already existing programming

No need to recreate the wheel

Use money to get kids into programs that are already there (3x)

- Those programs can't afford to scholarship kids, and kids can't afford to go there
- Put the money there
- "Us against them mentality"
- Money was very political – not what will really work, but what will make the best photo opp
- If Teen Coordinators knew each other better they'd be better able to serve kids individual needs

They don't know what each other are doing

- Overwhelming workload (4x)

Worry and stress is consuming

- Lack of understanding about what Teen Coordinators do

"Not popular" programming before but now that the Mayor is interested they want to get involved – they have no experience or background. No perspective but claim to know how to make it better (1x)

- "Deaf Ears"
- Teen Coordinators want to be working with other programs, but supervisors won't allow and then there is a rift formed between those two entities
- What if Coordinator from another program doesn't feel comfortable reaching out (because it's hard and there are barriers) then our teens don't get access to those programs

Nobody talking about this at a systems-level

Arts programs, fitness programs – lots of other programs we're not accessing

- Isn't education to front-line staff (other people who don't do our job – fitness, front-desk) on what homelessness is or violence for youth and how to engage with youth

We've been asking for seven years, only now is it acknowledged to be a necessary mandatory piece
Our Department hasn't received a lot of respect as "subject matter experts"

- Supervisors don't want Coordinators to admit knowledge in training and other areas
 - Use partner as "trainer"
 - "train us and then we can train others"
 - Supervisors are not recognizing that Teen Coordinators have training and knowledge and can partner with SEI (but not be subservient to SEI)
 - Lots of other non-teen staff doesn't know about other organizations who have a whole portfolio of good programs
 - Use Teen Coordinators as Consults
 - ♦ Disagreement... we could do that ourselves! We could spread the word about it.

- No! It should be city-wide and we can't get that unless downtown they are on board.

Outsource all of the training? (Disagreement ... POIC can train us and then we can train others which will empower us) (2x)

- Develop the training we really want to have (2x)
 - Historical disrespect
 - Combined with "outsource" all training it's frustrating
 - Use the language of collaboration as opposed to "they train us"

Quadrant 4: What would you add? Change? Remove?

- Collaboration
- Project Manager that bridges all of these gaps. Karen and the Rec II position? Transitioning that position to be more outreach city wide

That is the person in the past who hasn't allowed other Parks groups to be involved (2x)

- Ken Lorry (previous, no longer in this position)
 - Inclusive look needs to reach higher in the Bureau – up to Eileen
 - Add more access to PP&R programs
 - More conversations like this (focus group) so people feel comfortable providing feedback
 - Opportunity for Teen Coordinators to step up and make those connections happen and collaborate (3x)

The feedback we are giving can also be a place for us to step up

- Once a month meet with other branches for Teen Coordinators

Invite Parks for New Portlanders

Invite Environmental Education

Bring them into our Centers

Food! (6x) Potluck?

- We could do something city-wide

Provide transportation

Provide food

Invite all those collaborators

- SEI program at Washington Park (20-30 kids)

If we (Coordinators) had never stepped out of our box, Teens would have never known they liked it
Metro Naturalists were there (collaboration)

Basically ... let's get the kids together and go do it!

4) Group Written Responses

Thinking BIG picture: The ideal role of a Community Center for teens is...

- Open music room/art room
- Safe place
- Open gym
- Lounge – library, games, ping pong
- Dance studio
- Advocates/Mentors
- Tutoring
- Connection to opportunities
- Inspiring positive change in city
- Health education & opportunities

When I envision a Center that successfully serves teens, I see...

- Helpful adults (1x)
- Images of people who look like the teens (women, men, diversity) on teen room walls
- Teen input! What do they want/need?
- Food
- Safe spaces
- Creative spaces
- Connection to resources
- FUN, POSITIVE, EMPOWERING
- Growth opportunities – job fairs, career/college/trade help for youth (talk about passion focused work), Fafsa days, connection/access to all programs (aquatics, enviro ed, music) using fund to support talking about best practices on how to
- All staff playing a recreational activity with a teen at least once a week

To successfully serve teens I need more...

- Employment!
- Activities/spaces for introverts and women
- Connection with other department sin PPR (EE, Aquatics) through funding and inclusion
- Access – free programs for families
- Educational opportunities for all ages
- More space for teens

- \$—continued funding
- Bottom-up process
- Equity
- More support from management

To successfully serve teens I need less...

- Silos
- Barriers – language, fees, facility access
- Judgment
- Negative mindset towards teens

The most important part of the Community Center is...

- The gym
- First point of contact
- All spots are important, the environment that is fostered is what makes it a special part of the community
- The lobby
- Safe, warm, welcoming

Something else I'd like to add about this is...

- Meowwww
- Engage in recreational activities with the teens

The most valuable thing that happens at the Community Center is...

- Fun!
- Family
- Recreation
- Community

Mayor and Commissioner's Staff (May 20, 2016)

1) Facilitated Discussion Notes

Introductions:

Jasmine Wadsworth – *lead* in Commissioner Fritz's Office on youth programs

Tera Pierce – *Deputy Chief of Staff*, part of the beginning of the initiative. Idea came from the Mayor and she took it and started to try to develop it and quickly brought Diana into it and Diana became the project lead and then insert her opinions

Diana – *Community Outreach for the Mayor*, does some equity initiatives. Community stakeholder's meetings. She did implementation of the first year. Tera did the urban teen app part and Diana worked more on the grants with the community organizations because she had relationships with them. She worked with other people in the Mayor's Office to get that going. Worked with Parks until Cynthia was hired. Stick around to make sure the vision is still moving forward.

- Didn't just do the grants, she's been one of the key constructors of the initiative. She did all the programming too. Really been about taking the mayor's vision and putting it into practice at each of the center's with a lot of flexibility from Fritz's staff and Parks Center.

Discussion:

- Free youth passes at all community center's
- The research that you all do, if we're right in our own assessment will back that up.

Cost is a barrier for youth and families

We were at a youth gang violence meeting and what we kept hearing is that cost was prohibitive

Three kids turned away from Peninsula Pool because they didn't have money

- Girl at the counter was just doing her job
- Kids rode their bikes back and forth to try and prove, but it's expensive

She and her kid went to the pool and it's \$10

- Once you take cost out, then you need engaging programs. And we don't know how to do that.

Also, as a bureaucracy, how do you provide flexibility for people to move around

- Had an initial planning meeting with community partners to solicit feedback on what they should do with money

Had maps with location of CC and Community Partners

Community Partners said, we know what we're doing, we just don't have the capacity

- We don't need to recreate what you're doing, how can we give our space to you
- Partners felt like Parks weren't accessible (too expensive, always reserved)
 - What it took was us buying the space on Friday and Saturday nights
- Encouraging to hear that staff want more training because what we heard was that they're just rascally youth and please don't make us deal with it

Being able to have front desk staff use discretion

IT's because we've relied so heavily on revenue for our Community Center's they haven't had a choice

- How do we become less revenue specific?
 - Parks was just responding to the Community, now that we're not in that response time & goes to revenue offsets

- How can we make community centers be for the community?

- About access but also positive interactions

They feel welcomed, this is their home, this is an extension of home, or whatever a good place in their life is.

That's what we want. That is success – I finally have a place that I feel safe in.

- I met this person, and now I have a path and want to be that person.

- Don't promise me something and then take it away from me next year.

Sends a really strong message to our youth that they're important, but cuttable

- Strongest argument is going to be in the numbers. Right now we have a lot of anecdotes.

Numbers will convince the numbers

Capturing stories – interruptions of negative behaviors

- So many at Dishman

Jasmine and Cynthia task moving forward because mayor won't be here.

- Cool nexus between community partners and parks to have partners come in and train staff
- Such a different attitude than we had at the beginning
- Success – grew up at Dishman

Accessible

Culturally competent

- Great that people were asking for training, because cultural competence is super important
- CC is a safe place. Doesn't remember having to pull money out of her wallet

Her younger siblings (13 year difference) don't go to the CC

- Shift in the economy but also neighborhood differences

- Seeing success is that the kids are coming back (Retention), maybe they don't the name, but they know other details (what school)
- All about accessibility
- Community voices are in her head

Rebuilding of trust with government

As well as opportunities for youth, reduction in violence and all the things that come with that

- For me success is, working with our community partners to create opportunities (and access) so that there's a gateway to something else

Although it's a basketball court, then connecting that kid to something else – mentorship, job training

- Community Center is gateway to success for them in other opportunities
- Success is change in the culture around our youth and how we market to them

We were just wrong. For so long. Not in touch at all about what youth want, need, etc. Just to get them in the door. Not even about feeling welcomed.

- Government response to adaptability to respond to what's happening
- Making sure we are responsive to the changing needs of our young people.
- Not just providing safe space, but also what happens next

Working with the community partners to identify the "what next"

Sad to not be a part of that next year (but Cynthia and Jasmine)

- I don't see the staff of Parks as the one who needs to know who we're serving and pushing teens towards other opportunities

I see Parks as being culturally competent

And a line budget item not just the Initiative.

See it as continuing to work with the community partners so that we can support them to build those relationships

- What I hear people wanting (and what was asked by OPB)

Can you see numbers going down in gang violence

We see kids not being picked up

Reports centering around youth – less of those numbers

- Not just gang violence, but other negative things in the community (need based crime, etc.)
- Success is working really well with police so that we can coordinate efforts

See more positive interactions

- At Rosewood Initiative, they gave \$1 photo copied pictures that police gave when they saw police doing something positive and then bring it back for a prize at Rosewood.

Community Center's doing the same thing?

- Still mostly anecdotal until we can see hard names and change in our community
- Measuring feedback from community on relationships

We are rebuilding relationships with community organizations that have been left out.

- They have the best relationships with those community members
- Their feedback will be the most valuable thing
- Can they track their kids long-term?
 - We asked them to track their kids this year
 - ♦ Come in at 11, where are they at 18 (organizations have capacity to do this?)
- School performance, do they continue to further education or job training
- Do they have an active mentor in their life?
- Further you go down education or work force track you're creating opportunities along the way

Helping them to get to the next step always

- When Tera and I sat down to figure this out, we continued to agree that measurement needed to not be daunting. Our youth and community organizations are already at capacity for the work they're doing

It creates another barrier for community partners

Minimal numbers, mostly anecdotal numbers

Not tasking community partners that we're trying to rebuild or create relationships with community partners

- Wanted them to be working with youth, not writing reports
- Interested in looking at community partners we currently have. When we first picked them we wanted them to serve

Most vulnerable at-risk youth

Communities of color

- Those two overlap
- Now we have two groups

Immigrant and refugee

Youth that come from our communities

- Any difference in how those two groups use opportunities given to them
- Were there distinct differences from those two groups?

Language barriers

Home-life barriers

- Immigrant and Refugee worked more closely with families, as compared to POIC and B+G didn't focus on families so much as youth

Difference in effectiveness?

- Knowing what is being offered to the youth and what is being most utilized so that we can sustain that.

Just at community partners because they're offering the most?

But also the mini-grants

Teen Advisory Councils

- Do we give them what they are asking for?
- Do we also give them types of opportunities that our community needs (STEM, Tech jobs, etc.)
- City-wide perspective – we know what our workforce needs, how do we get youth to move into those fields

Not just spend free time at the Centers

- Community involvement rhetoric, but not civic engagement rhetoric

Teen Advisory councils and giving youth a voice yes, but democracy no

Would love civic engagement, but that was not a goal (it would be a great add on)

- We need a champion in city hall. We took it on because they needed us too (Mayor's Office), but now Parks needs to own it. Push it every year so that it's in the budget.

Legitimacy.

- To push this initiative forward we really need to hear from community partners that their relationships have improved from this.

We need community partners in city hall as well

- Parks is our point person, but also community partners coming in to tell us what's going on

Parks or Fritz's office can only go so far

Very beneficial to hear it from community partners too

- Easiest constituents to get to come to council too
 - Jasmine needs to literally just pick up the phone
 - ◆ This piece is solidified because of this last year
- Struggled with

First two stakeholder meetings (100 people in the room). We provided this as a big opportunity for those who didn't have access to community center or money.

- Narrow it down to seven (now eight)??
- You said you would let us in, people are still upset

Market us a little better?

- We are invested, even if we can't give money (grant money regulations, insurance needs, etc.)

Going back to those original stakeholder meetings and present rationale?

- We'd like to expand to more community partners, but we can't really

\$350,000 dedicated to community partners was a random number

- Love to see it be more like \$500,000
- As many youth as we can serve in a dedicated manner
- Another measurement?

Outreach

Where did our partners go to find the youth

- Not a grant to supplement what they're already doing. It was to add more youth in areas they couldn't reach.
 - Very intentional
 - ◆ Some were just distributing flyers (understand why, but not very intentional)
- What I saw was that if the Community Center Director was open to it, the staff was open to it.

And we saw that play out in the success of the different centers.

PP&R Senior Management Team (May 23, 2016)

1) Facilitated Discussion Notes

Notes:

- The final report will include a list of what actually occurred with the money

- This is a stakeholder analysis of parks staff and community partners. What did youth want?
- No explicit number (or goal) for youth access pass and other
- Hard to get at the kids that aren't showing up and what can we do to get them there

Our focus group didn't consider this aspect

Our Community Partners can address some of this

- How will we know if the money is well spent?

It will take a year to actually get the program up and running

Then we need to evaluate, then we can start measuring

- This management team needs to shape this, own this and figure out what is at the core value of our mission

Everyone has a stake, even if not directly involved

- Designing our program and capacity to change
- Capacity Issues

Couldn't do at East Portland what we did at Matt Dishman

NAYA and SEI hosted at their own Centers as opposed to at Community Centers

- Comparison – how they're serving youth vs how we're serving youth

We didn't always need for programs to be delivered in the Centers

- We don't even meet the needs of youth in East Portland
- In some ways you're getting at something that I've heard... this is a Teen focus, but it doesn't quite fit for immigrant and refugee

Separating teen needs from the family

- Leverage greater family access (think about this in a more holistic way)
 - Capacity issue there?
 - Scholarship needs for low-income families
- What are alternative ways of offering programs and alternative places? Haven't looked at this during the first year.

Natural areas, or ecologically based programming

- Maybe not on Saturday night, but some other time?

Thinking about programming differently

- We had to think about it at the Center for year 1, but maybe now it could be different?
 - Target time: Friday and Saturday evening
 - ♦ But also engage with other youth!
- Who do we want to target is the next iteration of this

We're doing the baseline here

- If we can better determine who we want to engage, we can better determine our programming
 - This could be us, but it could also be by funding the community partners (this would be a different strategy)

- ◆ Other providers accomplishing our mission, support them
 - Grander vision coming from Mayor's Office
- Seeing how NAYA and SEI do it is important
- Not so much about the places, but about being connected with pro-social adults

Our staff have limited capacity to be able to do that

Are there other ways we can facilitate that happening?

- Mentorship? Maybe, but also in other ways
 - Body of research that shows you can bring a body of youth together, and if there isn't the pro-social adult, the activity becomes negative
 - Here's how it plays out – Matt Dishman is getting upwards of 200 youth and ration of staff/youth is getting 1/15 so then youth start to get into negative activities
- Youth could be learning about design, how do we build a park?
- I like the idea of partnership and leveraging those, but also advantage to connecting youth to our system

Capacity building. As youth get involved in our system, then they bring their parents, etc.

- How do we measure this?

Ideas for programming that involve parents and teens?

- Provide service that goes beyond hours in the community
 - Family Management "training"
 - ◆ How do I manage my teenager, but also the rest of my family (families of color tend to have larger families)
- Successful Outcomes?
- Investment on the positive side of the legislature so that you don't have to invest in the negative side
- Youth feel cared for – positive outlook on the City and Parks

More likely to come back as adults

Behave appropriately while they're there

- Metrics, but also individual stories

Story in a young person's life. I met this person and this person introduced me to a subject that I didn't know about.

- Set someone on a trajectory that they didn't expect
 - Were we a catalyst
- Goals: Forming relationships between teens and adults

Whether it's city staff or other... but emphasize Parks staff

- Most cases they have great relationships with youth, even though they're outnumbered

Creating opportunities for positive relationships with teens, for those that don't necessarily have positive adult role models

- Pipeline to employment

Charisma for working with others and excited about Parks mission

Amazing to have someone who was positively impacted and ended up working for Parks

- True for many of our staff now

Ultimately, that is a thing I would love.

City work in general NOT just Parks

- Measure of success

Speaking the same language (community partners, parks, other orgs)

- Same outcomes and outputs
- Whatever we can do to remove barriers youth are reporting

Good but not enough...

- How can we get to enough
- More cohesive and coherent relationship with our community partners

Clarity around the symbiotic relationship

- One of the things that is going to be called into question

What are the percentage of youth that are tagged in the broad nebulous category of "at-risk"

Are we just serving kids that are already pro-social in their nature? Or are we curbing negative behaviors?

- Denver is doing it! They already have a model that we can draw from.

How we're putting youth on the continuum

What data you're using it

- County and Dept of Community Justice aren't at the table right now, but maybe should be
- In every city there's this battle between the investment on the front end and the investment on the back end

Where should investment go? Backend investment (police)

Front end investment (parks) – how do you measure this?

- Depends on your instrument, context that you want to get that information
 - This can be intrusive. Gang-Labels
 - Right now, we're not defined
- Barriers

What are the holistic barriers?

Where are we achieving them?

Iterative process, checking in

- Basic data

Numbers

Demographics

Referral source

High Schools

Retention? What % changed habits, or came once or twice?

- Qualitative

Pictures, stories, etc.

- Are parents seeing an impact in terms of family life
- Relationship with Community Partners?

We know about our organization in terms of our community responsiveness we have gaps in our ability to deliver services that are culturally responsive

- Time it will take for us to build that capacity (Spanish speakers will take 5-10 years)
- So: is it best if we're always the one to deliver services? If Latino Network is already able to do that, should be partner with them to bolster capacity?
 - Programming at our site, but done by Latino Network
 - ◆ Conversations become an either/or, but we don't want it to be it.

If our goal is to become culturally responsive, there is a role for community partners

- Community is asking for it NOW. We are slow. Leverage community partners.
- Coming from a strengths-based approach

Some have access to youth

We shouldn't let ourselves off the hook for being culturally responsive

- NAYA is good in SE, but we're good in NE so we can do both!

Trick is – how do you resource that?

- They (Partners) see us as a responsive partner

We'd like to see that expanded to a few more

They see us as a partner that supports and augments their mission

- Three were able to go on Friday and Saturday night
- Montevilla is going slower. Getting buy-in to go to Montevilla isn't working well.
- One of the things we heard early on is that gang turf around our community centers is important

For some kids it's risky for them to go to another Center

- Maybe something to unpack a little bit more about Montevilla?
- Include transportation question on youth surveys

What are the transportation issues

Specific neighborhood issues?

Socio-cultural issues on top of that?

PP&R All-Recreation Staff Meeting (May 25, 2016)

1) Facilitated Discussion Notes

What does success look like?

- Slow the rise of violence or level it out

Portland is growing at an incredible rate, everything is changing including rise in gang violence

- Success is increased attendance, but also retention (3x)
- Offering a combination of unstructured and structured time

Focusing structured time on what the youth actually want to do

- Strong partnership throughout the city about supporting each other's efforts

Developing a network of youth services in public, private and nonprofit

- Youth Summits have occurred in the past, but not currently. Maybe time to bring that back?
- Teens becoming mentors and furthering programming with younger folks (passing on programming to younger kids)
- Teen proactively suggesting programming at the Centers

Active dialogue with the Teens

- Employ more teens who come into the Center

Teens have an 84% more likely to graduate from high school if they are employed

We actually need teenage staff!

How could you measure those indicators of success?

- Site visits (# of people in the program)
- We have programs now that are all about some of these ideas (volunteer corps, advisory council, for example)
- Tracking teen specific programs
- Connecting with their teacher's and checking in on academic performance (they're spending six hours a day in school)
- Track teen volunteer hours and compare it to previous years

Volunteering across parks and recreation

- Mechanism for Teens to provide feedback after they've taken a class or done an outing

Surveying of some kind

- Along with school success, we can look at graduation rates for those involved in our programs
- #'s of violent crimes and compare to Parks attendance numbers (correlation)
- Long-term engagement with Teens

Entrance and exit self-worth survey (self-reflection surveys)

Measure the long-term impact of Parks programming

- Tracking community partnerships
- Tracking independent contractors

- Real simple data point could be a comparison of classes teens suggested and classes Parks designed (do we offer them, and how often, and does that increase registration?)
- Tracking social media activity (# of followers, etc.)

We're developing an app for teens. Tracking # of teens who download it

2) Group Written Responses

What was missing?

- Free food programs
- Mediation groups with peers
- Incentives for good behavior
- No pool
- Marketing Materials
- More teen-friendly activities and programming
- Recruitment
- Locations (throughout centers)
- Better partnership with PPS
- Resources/training to deal with homeless teens
- We need aggressive advertising towards teens (Snapchat, Instagram, etc.). More social media plus ways for kids/teens to hear about program outside of parents.
- Coordinate with schools so teens know that when they are outside of school (early release days, etc.) they have a place to go.
- HW help necessary. Extra support.
- Space
- Schedule
- Bureau-wide knowledge
- Marketing
- Training
- Need more staff for teen program
- More space for teens

- More girl friendly activities
- Bridge gap between patrons and teens

- Space issues
- No west side program
- Connect with SUN: we have relationships with teens at our sites
- Age appropriate (10-20?)
- Arts and music specific (not just crafts but in-depth arts and music)

- Blue print and expectations were missing
- Staffing and training – specific to working with teens
- Self-defense/safety specific to working with teens

Appendix III: Assessment of Success

This section provides more detailed descriptions of the suggested assessment process.

1) Assessing Space

Based on our analysis, six indicators can reveal the quality of space at the centers:

1. welcomingness (sense of inclusion and belonging);
2. accessibility;
3. openness to a range of users;
4. safety,
5. sufficiency of capacity, and a sense that Center spaces are
6. integrated as a part of the community.

The first assessment strategy is to develop a checklist for PP&R stakeholders to self-assess the quality of space based on the six indicators of space.

Check list can include the following:

- Staff rating on the spaces' degree of a) welcomingness, b) accessibility, c) openness, d) safety, e) capacity and f) integration to the community.
- Youth participants' rating on the spaces' degree of a) welcomingness; b) accessibility; c) openness; d) safety; e) capacity; and f) integration to the community.

To gain more insight and to further assess the quality of space, **a sample group of youth could be interviewed**, with the questions again following the six indicators.

Finally, usage data tracking youth use of Center programs and spaces can be analyzed to assess accessibility, openness and capacity.

Indicators and Assessment Approaches for Component 1: Space

1) Space	
Indicators	Assessment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Welcoming (inclusive, sense of belonging) ● Accessibility ● Open to a wide range of users ● Safe ● Sufficient Capacity ● Seen as part of the community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Create a checklist for self-assessment (refer to indicators) ● Survey youth and assess for these indicators (refer to indicators) ● Interview youth for these indicators ● Accessibility, openness, and capacity can be measured by the usage data (how widely spaces are being used for example)

2) Assessing Programs

Multiple tools tailored to PP&R’s Theory of Success and programmatic goals can aid in assessing its programs. The six criteria for PP&R youth programs that we identified are:

1. providing diverse and varied options;
2. tailoring programs to youth needs and interests;
3. creating a context for positive relationships with adults including opportunities for socializing and mentoring;
4. active engagement of community partners in programming;
5. responding to changing youth needs and interests; and
6. helping youth develop concrete skills and social skills (See Table X).

Suggested steps toward assessing programs are:

- Create the program self-assessment checklist using the above six criteria.
- Use the program self-assessment checklist and have staff assess the program.
- Survey or interview youth using the program self-assessment checklist.
- Review the list of programs offered to assess the variety and diversity of programs.
- Review the participation of contractors in Center programs and the overall programming provided by partner organizations to assess community partner engagement. Information described in partner reports to PP&R can be a useful source of information.

Indicators and Assessment Approaches for Component 1: Programs

2) Programming	
Indicators	Assessment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Provide diverse and varied options ● Tailor to teen needs and interests ● Create context for building positive relationships with adults (opportunity for socializing and mentoring) ● Actively engage community partners in programming ● Respond to youth needs and interests ● Help youth develop skills (cooking, dance, music, writing, advocacy, leadership, social relationship building) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Create a checklist for self-assessment ● Survey youth and assess for these indicators ● Interview youth for these indicators ● Options and skill programming can be assessed by the program list ● Community partners can be assessed by the list of community partners

3) Assessing Relationships

One of the more challenging, and yet important, areas for assessment is the relationships. Eleven key indicators of positive relationships are identified in the facilitated discussions.

They are:

- youth perceiving relationships with staff as meaningful
- PP&R as being supportive overall,
- relationships being developed and sustained at centers and programs,
- youth experiencing positive relationship with staff across the organization,
- youth feeling safe with staff
- youth seeing staff as mentors,
- youth perceiving staff as helpful,
- youth perceiving staff as both caring and invested
- youth perceiving staff as willing to help them take risks and grow,
- PP&R staff interacting with cultural sensitivity and
- PP&R staff overall understand how to build positive and meaningful relationships with youth.

To assess the relationships cultivated at centers and through PP&R programs, it is useful to survey and interview youth and staff periodically, on a regular basis.

1) Assess teen's perspectives

Survey tools and interview protocols should focus on gaining insight into youth perceptions of relationships. Questions should be focused on gaining concrete information about the number of youth-staff relationships, the contexts for the most meaningful interactions, and patterns youth experience in interacting with PP&R staff across the centers.

2) Assess staff's perspectives

In addition to youth perspectives, it would be useful to assess where staff stand in their readiness to interact positively with all teens. The assessment should include at least one or more of the following four components.

1. Surveying training opportunities staff currently have and how they are accessing these opportunities.
2. Survey staff asking how they feel they are doing as a group in relationship building skills.
3. Conduct face to face interviews with staff to assess their relationship with youth.
4. Include having positive relationships with youth as one of the assessment criteria for performance evaluations.

Indicators and Assessment Approaches for Component 3: Relationships

3) Positive relationships between staff and teens and among teens	
Indicators	Assessment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Teens perceive the relationship with staff as meaningful ● Teens perceive PP&R as being supportive ● Relationships developed at the centers and programs being sustained ● Teens experience positive relationships with PP&R staff consistently across all levels of the organization who interact with teens ● Teens feel safe interacting with PP&R staff ● Teens see PP&R staff as their mentors ● Teens perceive PP&R staff as helpful ● Teens perceive that PP&R staff care about them and invest in their future ● Teens perceive PP&R staff willing to help them take risks and grow ● PP&R staff interact with teen with cultural sensitivity ● PP&R staff understand how to interact with teens that lead to a positive and meaningful relationship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Survey teens and assess for these indicators ● Interview youth for these indicators ● Assess the opportunities for training ● Survey staff for these indicators ● Include these indicators on performance evaluations

4) Assessing Impact on Individual Teen

There are five indicators that suggest if PP&R is successful in making an impact on individual youth. They are:

- youth developing a sense of belonging within the larger community,
- youth developing confidence
- youth developing a sense of ownership,
- youth feeling safe, and
- youth developing a sense of efficacy and trust in their own capacity (See Table X).

To assess PP&R’s impact on individual youth it is important to gain insights from current and past youth patrons. Following steps should be considered and planned:

- Develop a survey and interview protocol that assess how individual youth are being impacted by engaging with PP&R in that they developed a sense of belong within the large community, confidence, and sense of ownership. The survey and the interview should also ask in what contexts they are most likely to feel safe, included, and be growing in their sense of self and be efficacious.
- Develop a mechanism to periodically survey and/or interview current youth patrons on a regular basis.
- Develop a mechanism to contact past youth patrons to conduct survey and/or interview.
- Develop a mechanism to keep tracking current and past patrons to assess the long -term impact on them.

Indicators and Assessment Approaches for Component 4: Impact on Individual Teen

4) Impact on Individual Teen	
Indicators	Assessment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teens develop a sense of belonging (being part of the community) • Teens develop confidence • Teens develop sense of ownership • Teens feel safe • Teens develop sense of efficacy (see themselves as capable) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey teens and assess for these indicators • Interview teens for these indicators • Identify past patrons and survey/interview for these indicators

5) Assessing Impact on Organizational Capacity and Culture

Facilitated discussion identified six indicators of ideal organizational capacity and successful organizational culture that help PP&R accomplish their goals to support teens.

These indicators are:

- organization-wide attentiveness and sensitivity to youth needs,
- PP&R being willing to respond to teen input and interest,
- PP&R being willing to give teens leadership opportunities and autonomy to help shape programming,
- PP&R making sure that input from teen coordinators and center directors is valued,
- PP&R assures that the long-term ability to serve teens through organization-wide investment and securing sustainable funding (see Table X).

To create organizational capacity and culture that meets the first four indicators, it will be useful to first design and implement a PP&R-wide campaign to develop higher awareness on the importance of work with teens, which may contribute to the increased level of investment across the organization, and the long-term sustainable funding. It is also helpful to share key outcome information with decision makers.

Concurrently, to assess the level of organizational capacity and culture the following steps should be planned and implemented:

- Develop a survey and interview protocol guide to gain useful input into how they feel PP&R currently stands in its investment in teen work, where they see the fruits of this investment, and where they suggest investing more intensively.
- Develop a mechanism to periodically survey and/or interview staff about their perception of PP&R’s organizational capacity and culture, on a regular basis.
- Review financial resources allocated for teen programs. Assess correlation with other indicators of success.

Indicators and Assessment Approaches for Component 5: Organizational Capacity and Culture

5) Organizational Culture and Capacity that embraces the importance of teens	
Indicators	Assessment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is PP&R-wide attentiveness and sensitivity to teens • PP&R is willing to respond to teen input and interests • PP&R is willing to give teens leadership and autonomy • PP&R teen coordinators and center director’s input matters • Teen programs funded through sustainable funding streams • Teen programs have long-term investment by PP&R 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a PP&R-wide campaign to gain more understanding and support for teen programming • Survey staff for these indicators • Interview staff for these indicators • Assess financial resources • Provide outcome information to decision makers

6) Assessing Impact on Society

Facilitated discussion identified that one of the larger and long term goal of PP&R is to make a positive impact on the society at large. Indicators of the impact on society include:

- Youth/teen program contributes in creating more just and equitable society
- Youth who find passion and share with wider community become contributing member of the community.
- Youth program develop adults who see themselves as engaged member of the community (i.e. contribute to public decision making, take responsibility, and
- Youth program develop adults who benefit from society's shared resources.

While the societal level impact is difficult to measure, the following are some suggested approaches that PP&R can take.

- Develop a survey and interview protocol to gain input on PP&R's contribution to the society at large, based on the four indicators identified.
- Develop a mechanism to periodically survey and/or interview current youth patrons on a regular basis.
- Consider including the survey question on PP&R's contribution to the society at large with the City-wide survey in collaboration with the Auditor's Office.
- Have the Auditor's Office conduct a performance audit.
- Considering one of the motivation for youth/teens program is to suppress gang activities, collaborate with those who are working on gang related activities and identify the extent of PP&R's impact on those who are currently affiliated with gangs, or those who used to be affiliated with gangs.
- Interview "at risk" youth and assess their engagement with the PP&R services.
- Track usage data to assess the scope of the PP&R program access.

Indicators and Assessment Approaches for Component 6: Society

6) Impact on society/Developing active and effective community members

Indicators	Assessment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teen program contributes to creating more just and equitable society • Teens who find passion and share with wider community become contributing members of the community • Teen program develops adults who see themselves as engaged members of the community (i.e. contribute to public decision making, take responsibility for the common good) • teen program develops adults who benefit from society's shared resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify past patrons and survey/interview for these indicators • Include questions on the perception of PP&R teens program contribution in the city-wide survey (collaborate with other city agencies) • Include teen program contribution in the performance audit from the Auditors Office • Collect data from those who are affiliated with gang activities and assess if they have had the opportunity to use PP&R services • Interview "at risk" youth and assess their engagement with PP&R services • Usage data can be tracked and inform the assessment for this impact (are they collecting what they need? If they need more, how can they collect it?)

Appendix IV: About the CPS Research Team

Project Manager/Faculty – Masami Nishishiba, Ph.D.

Masami Nishishiba served as supervising faculty and project manager for this project. She is the Chair and an Associate Professor in the Department of Public Administration at the Mark O. Hatfield School of Government, Portland State University (PSU). She is also the Associate Director of the Center for Public Service at the Hatfield School of Government. Masami has a doctorate in Public Administration and Policy and a master's degree in Communication Studies both from PSU.

Masami has conducted numbers of community-based research for public agencies, including cultural assessment projects for the Clackamas County, City of Beaverton, Tualatin Hills Park and Recreation, City of Longview, Washington, and the evaluation of the Clackamas County 4-day work schedule pilot program.

She teaches graduate courses in research methods, statistics, diversity in the workplace, intercultural communication and civic engagement. She is also a trained Japanese-English conference interpreter. She has interpreted for President Jimmy Carter, Bill Gates (Microsoft), Phil Knight (Nike) and many others.

Project Coordinator – Jane Carr, MS

Jane Carr is a fifth-year Ph.D. student and Instructor in the Division of Public Administration at Portland State University, where she teaches courses in the Civic Leadership Minor. She has also worked for PSU's Center for Public Service coordinating faculty training programs. She co-designed and implemented an extended focus group study with support from PSU's Institute for Sustainable Solutions. Her academic interests include organizational development and conceptualizing education for meaningful democratic engagement and sustainability. Prior to pursuing her doctoral degree, she earned an M.S.Ed. Degree from Bank Street College, and worked as a bilingual teacher in New York City public schools. She served as an environmental education volunteer with Peace Corps Paraguay. Her undergraduate degree is in History, which she obtained with high honors.

Senior Research Assistant – Stephanie Hawke

Stephanie Hawke is a Senior Research Assistant for the Center for Public Service. She is a doctoral student in Public Affairs and Policy program at Portland State University (estimated completion in June 2017), and holds a BA in International Relations from University of California, Davis (completed in 2009). Her applied research focuses on local government and issues of civic engagement and inclusion. Her academic research focuses on comparative urban politics, the politics of representation, and policy analysis. She is currently writing her dissertation, "The

Dynamic Returns of Representation: Descriptive Representation and Policy Outcomes in Urban Government.”

Research Assistant – Megan George

Megan is a Research Assistant for the Center for Public Service. She is a Master of Public Administration student at Portland State University (estimated completion in June 2017), and holds a BA in Environmental Studies from Illinois Wesleyan University