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Item No. 11.1
Community Planning and Economic Development
February 16, 2017

TO: Chair and Members of Community Planning and Economic Development
Standing Committee

SUBMITTED BY: Original Signed

Brad Anguish, Director of Parks & Recreation

DATE: January 25, 2017

SUBJECT: Spring & Summer 2016 Youth Engagement Report and Youth Services Plan

INFORMATION REPORT

ORIGIN

Motion of Regional Council – May 14, 2013:

MOVED by Councillor Outhit, seconded by Councillor Craig that Regional Council:

1. Dissolve the Youth Advisory Committee established in 2006 but no longer officially functioning, in order to adopt a more effective way of engaging with Youth across HRM.
2. Direct staff of Community Recreation Services to continue to engage youth, both in their communities and online, to better understand the current trends and issues of youth across HRM; and further direct staff to provide semi-annual reports to the Community Planning and Economic Development Standing Committee regarding trends and issues, best practices, and actions taken.

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

Halifax Regional Charter, Section 79 (k) recreational programs; (m) ...the expansion of employment opportunities and the economic development of the Municipality; and (d) police services.

BACKGROUND

In May 2013, Regional Council directed the Community & Recreation Services (now Parks and Recreation) business unit to continue to engage youth, both in their communities and online, to better understand the current trends and issues of youth across Halifax.

Staff was further directed to provide semi-annual reports to the Community Planning and Economic Development Standing Committee (CPED) regarding trends, issues, best practices, and actions taken with respect to youth programming.

In addition to semi-annual reporting, staff also committed to undertake a Youth Services Plan as a specific objective in the 2016/17 Parks & Recreation Business Plan approved by Regional Council. This report provides both the semi-annual Youth Engagement Report and the Youth Services Plan as attachments.

DISCUSSION

The attached Youth Engagement Report (Attachment 1) outlines current youth activity for the period of Spring and Summer 2016 in relation to Recreation Programming, Halifax Public Libraries, Fire and Emergency Services, Royal Canadian Mounted Police, and Halifax Regional Police youth programs.

Current data on youth activity is confined to Community Centres operated by HRM staff. Efforts will be made in 2017/18 to start collecting data from Community Centres and Multi-District Facilities operated by third party Community Boards.

The attached Youth Services Plan (Attachment 2) and summary brochure (Attachment 3) provide the findings of a year long, youth-led process to ensure that municipal programs and services are meeting the needs of the youth. A youth team was established and helped to gain feedback from over 1400 youth. With staff support, the youth created the survey and designed the engagement workshops. Through the engagement process, seven key issues emerged, which were developed into five strategic vision statements, each of which has its own set of goals and objectives. The Youth Services Plan is intended to guide the improvement of municipal service offerings over the next three to five years.

Future updates on the Youth Services Plan will be provided through the Youth Engagement Report.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Youth engagement on the Youth Services Plan was achieved through online surveys, several workshops and many one-on-one conversations. Staff gained feedback from youth on the trends and issues presented in the attached report by visiting existing youth programs and events across the municipality.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 - Spring & Summer 2016 Youth Engagement Report

Attachment 2 – Youth Services Plan

Attachment 3 – Youth Services Plan Brochure

A copy of this report can be obtained online at <http://www.halifax.ca/commcoun/index.php> then choose the appropriate Community Council and meeting date, or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 902.490.4210, or Fax 902.490.4208.

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Attachment 1 Youth Engagement Report

Update for Spring & Summer 2016

Prepared by:

Lee Moore, Manager, Youth Live Program
Amanda Reddick, Community Developer
Parks & Recreation

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Purpose

In May 2013, Regional Council directed the Community & Recreation Services (now Parks and Recreation) business unit to continue to engage youth, both in their communities and online, to better understand the current trends and issues of youth across Halifax. Staff was further directed to provide semi-annual reports to the Community Planning and Economic Development Standing Committee regarding trends, issues, best practices, and actions taken with respect to youth programming. This semi-annual Youth Engagement Report is an outcome of this request.

The information presented in this report will aid in understanding the youth needs within Halifax, and how Parks and Recreation programming addresses these needs, as well as the next steps toward optimal youth programming in our region.



Youth Services Plan

The overall objective of the Youth Services Plan is to ensure that municipal programs and services are meeting the needs of the youth, and will provide the basis for service offerings over the next three to five years.

Over the course of the past year, youth have been an integral part of the development of this plan. A youth team was established and helped to gain feedback from over 1400 youth.

In addition to semi-annual reporting, staff also committed to undertake a Youth Services Plan as a specific objective in the 2016/17 Parks & Recreation Business Plan approved by Regional Council. This report provides both the semi-annual Youth Engagement Report and the Youth Services Plan as attachments.

The Youth Services Plan provides the findings of a year long, youth-led process to ensure that municipal programs and services are meeting the needs of the youth. A youth team was established and helped to gain feedback from over 1400 youth. With staff support, the youth created the survey and designed the engagement workshops. Through the engagement process, seven key issues emerged, which were developed into five strategic vision statements, each of which has its own set of goals and objectives. The Youth Services Plan is intended to

Future updates to the Youth Services Plan will be provided through this Youth Engagement Report.



Youth Research

In each semi-annual Youth Engagement Report, staff includes information from the latest youth research available. In this report, staff is including information regarding the Most Significant Change Data Collection Method to demonstrate how staff is balancing the importance and necessity of the collection of qualitative, as well as quantitative data to inform Municipal services within the youth community.

Most Significant Change Data Collection Method

The Most Significant Change (MSC) approach involves generating and analyzing personal accounts in the form of the collection of personal stories of change and deciding which of these accounts is the most significant – and why.

There are three basic steps in using MSC:

- 1) Deciding the types of stories that should be collected
- 2) Collecting the stories and determining which stories are the most significant
- 3) Sharing the stories and discussion of values with HRM youth and various stakeholders and contributors so that what is valued most is learned.

MSC is not just about collecting and reporting stories, but also about having processes in place to learn from these stories – in particular, to learn about the similarities and differences in what different groups and individuals value and why. This approach in collecting and analyzing data is fundamentally rooted in its own set of values, approach and best practices. Some of these include:

- Maintaining the dignity and integrity of the storyteller(s)
- Balancing the importance and necessity of the collection of qualitative as well as quantitative data; in this case to inform Municipal services within the youth community
- Creating a visible space and opportunity for honoring the diversity of individual and collective/community youth engagement processes and relationship building with youth as well as the various communities they identify with.

MSC is often used in the following contexts:

- a) Program evaluation
- b) Organizational review and evaluation
- c) Building community ownership through participatory evaluation.

This form of measurement and evaluation is particularly useful when stakeholders need to understand the different values that other stakeholders have in terms of criteria and standards for outcomes, processes and the distribution of costs and benefits.

MSC is also very helpful in explaining HOW change comes about (processes and causal mechanisms) and WHEN (in what situations and contexts). It can therefore be useful to support the development of a richer and deeper understanding of the current programming, to help further explain how an intervention (a project, a program, a policy, a strategy) is understood to contribute to a chain of results that produce the intended or actual impacts as outlined in the Youth Plan.

It can include positive impacts (which are beneficial) and negative impacts (which are detrimental). It can also show the other factors which contribute to producing impacts, such as context and other projects and programs.

Source: Davies, R. and Dart, J. (2005) The 'Most Significant Change' Technique - A Guide to Its Use. Retrieved from <http://www.mande.co.uk/docs/MSCGuide.pdf>

Youth Programming Statistics

Jump Start / Rec Kids Funding Program Summary

This program is a partnership between Canadian Tire Charities and Halifax Parks and Recreation to provide assistance to financially disadvantaged children and youth aged 18 and younger so that they can participate in recreational programs, sports, arts and culture programs and physical activity programs. Jumpstart/RecKids currently provides up to \$200 per child/ per family annually towards registrations fees. This funding is accessed through an application process and based on the limits of the Jumpstart/RecKids Program.

2014-2015 saw a decline in the number of applications that were approved. This is due to a change in the application process; specifically Canadian Tire Jump Start took over funding for hockey, which diverted applications that HRM normally would process.

Jump Start Program Stats (Youth 12-18)	
2016/17 (partial)	*99 <i>*April to August 31, 2016</i>
2015/16	214
2014/15	341
2013/14	259



Newcomer's access to Recreation Programs

Parks & Recreation offers Newcomers a 100% discount on programs and memberships to recreation facilities (for up to one year). To date, this discount totals \$32,294.00.

Youth Program Summary – what’s being offered?

Arts Programming

Parks & Recreation

Parks & Recreation offered the following art programming opportunities: pottery, photography, cooking classes, dance classes, mixed media, sketch and draw classes, drama classes and general craft classes.

Program showcase:

An *art hive* drop-in program was offered in the spring at the Sackville Sports Stadium; 150 youth attended.

Halifax Public Libraries

The Halifax Public Libraries offered several art programs at each library facility. These programs are drop in programs.

Program Showcase:

The Halifax Central Library offered an Open Mic/Youth Performance night in the spring that had 26 youth attend.

Leadership Training & Youth Employment

Parks & Recreation

Parks & Recreation offered the following “Leadership Training & Youth Employment” opportunities: Youth Groups / Action Teams, Babysitter Training Courses, Youth Leadership Programs, Youth Live Program, and employment opportunities at all Community Recreation Centres.

Program Showcase:

In the spring, the Adventure Earth Centre trained 10 youth to deliver the MindShift presentation. MindShift is a performance that helps educate the audience about being environmentally friendly. This group of youth then performed for 600 high school students at Sackville High.

Halifax Regional Police & Royal Canadian Mounted Police

The Halifax Regional Police’s youth program takes place on Thursdays and had 14 youth registered.

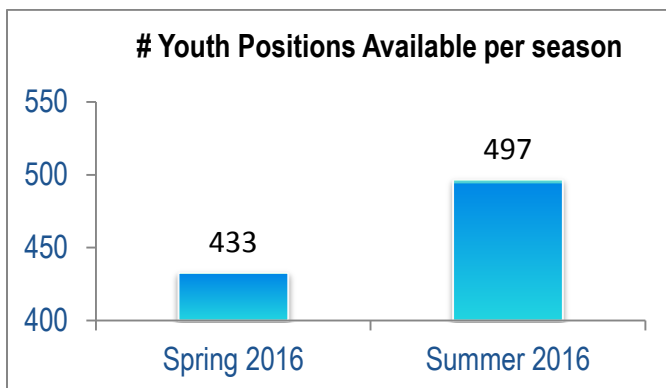
The Royal Canadian Mounted Police’s youth program, called Stetsons and Spurs, is for youth ages 12 – 17. It takes place in Cole Harbour, Preston area and Lower Sackville. 40 youth attended this program.

Fire & Emergency Services

The Emergency Services Achievement Program trains “at risk” young adults to overcome barriers so they may successfully enter the workforce and obtain meaningful employment. These young adults, ages 18-30, are trained in employability skills, and then are placed in an industry of their interest for hands-on mentorship with local businesses. This program is operated when funding is available through Service Canada.

Recreation Youth Employment Information

Youth employment opportunities are offered at all Recreation Centres throughout the year, with the highest number of youth being hired during the summer months.



Recreation hired youth for a total of 930 positions for the spring and summer 2016. This is up from 915 positions during the same period last year.

Recreation & Sports Programs

Parks & Recreation

Parks & Recreation offered the following recreation & sport opportunities: badminton, basketball, fitness classes, open gym drop in programs, youth open swims, snowshoe hikes and rock climbing.

Program Showcase:

In the spring, the Gordon R. Snow Community Centre hosted an open gym program for youth. It took place afterschool on Mondays and was accessed by youth 628 times.

Royal Canadian Mounted Police

The Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) annually offers a program called Try Sport. It is held each August and is offered at no cost to families. The program aims to introduce the youth from the Preston area to sports not traditionally played within their communities. TrySport exposes youth to many different sports, and because it is RCMP member led, it provides the children, youth and community volunteers an opportunity to interact with the RCMP members in a non-operational manner. RCMP members who have skills in various sports, lead the day-long clinics, in partnership with local sport associations.

Recreation's Youth Leadership program based out of North Preston and East Preston provides their youth to help volunteer for the program. As well, they bring children from their communities.

Program Showcase:

Ages for this program are 5 to 15 years old. Over the summer it had 65 children and youth attend.

Youth Friendly Spaces and Places

Parks & Recreation

Parks & Recreation offered the following youth friendly spaces and places opportunities: healthy teen programs, youth nights and drop in programs.

Program Showcase:

Youth Club was offered at the North Preston Community Centre in the spring. It had 13-16 youth attend each night.

Youth Events

Parks & Recreation

Parks & Recreation offered the following youth event opportunities: youth dances, festival & events, coffee houses, movie nights & other socials.

Program Showcase:

The Dartmouth North Community Centre hosted the *Dartmouth Norths Got Talent* show during National Youth Week in the spring. 120 youth attended this event.

Civic Events

In the summer, festivals & events are offered in many communities in the municipality. Some have a youth theme such as Natal Day's Esso Youth Showcase (20 youth performers / 5000 youth attended). Others give youth an opportunity to volunteer at the event (25 youth volunteered at the Clam Harbour Sandcastle Competition).

Halifax Public Libraries

Halifax Public Libraries held many Open Mic / Youth Performances events during the spring and summer.

Program Showcase:

The Woodlawn Public Library offered a film night in the spring that had 40 youth attend.

Youth At-Risk

The municipality operates several major youth programs dedicated to at-risk youth. These programs are the Youth Live Program, Youth Advocate Program, Souls Strong, Girls United and Emergency Services Achievement Program. More information on these programs can be found at www.halifax.ca/youth.

What Is At-Risk Youth?

The definition of an at-risk youth is broad, in some respects; all youth are at risk in one way or another. The technical definition of at-risk is a youth who is less likely to transition successfully into adulthood. Success can include academic success and job readiness, as well as the ability to be financially independent. It also can refer to the ability to become a positive member of society by avoiding a life of crime.

Success Story

A participant, who was referred to the Youth Live Program because he lacked the confidence and motivation to enter the “real workforce,” successfully completed the program on the 22nd of July.

When the participant first started he was introverted and needed to be closely supervised to ensure that he stayed on task. As the participant became acclimatized to the Youth Live work place, staff noticed an increase in his confidence and in his motivation. His kind hearted personality began to emerge as well as his sense of humour. Staff also noticed that his ability to adapt to changes in his routine improved as did his skills and competencies. Often the participant acted as a teacher to new participants and would orient them to their work tasks.

The participant graduated from Youth Live and went to a job with a call centre, but quickly realized that the pace was not for him, so instead of quitting he made sure he found suitable employment first. Some youth in his situation would have given up, but the coaching and support provided to him by Youth Live Staff helped him to develop better tools for planning and for decision making.

Youth Advocate & Souls Strong Programs

The Youth Advocate and Souls Strong Programs are neighbourhood based intervention programs for youth who are engaged in criminal activity and or gang related activity. The Youth Advocate Program reaches out to youth ages 9 to 15 years old living in the communities of North & Central Halifax, Fairview and Spryfield, North and Central Dartmouth, Woodside / Gaston Road and East Dartmouth, while Souls Strong supports young men between the ages of 15 to 20 years living in the community of North Preston. Both programs are guided by the following principles:

- Family Voice & Family Choice - ensures youth and/or family members lead the process.
- Neighbourhood based service that focuses on improving coordination and delivery of existing services because no single system can prevent or reduce delinquency on its own.
- Reducing risk & violence while building resiliency. Building on youth and family strengths.

The Youth Advocate Program is funded by HRM and is a core municipal service. Souls Strong is a 5 year pilot project, funded through Public Safety Canada. This funding will end in March 2018.

Youth Advocate Program

Youth currently in program: 30

Graduated April to August: 12

Souls Strong Program

Youth currently in program: 15

Youth Graduated April to August: 2

Girls United Program

Girls United is an outreach program of the Youth Advocate Program. It receives an annual grant of \$12,000 from the NS Department of Justice and is supported by staff of the Youth Advocate Program, as well as from Recreation Programming. Girls United focuses on girls, ages 12 - 14 years old, who are either involved in the Youth Advocate Program or girls outside this program. The strategy is to use a wide range of activities and strong positive relationships to support girls who have experienced or have been exposed to gender specific risks. Program modules are delivered using a variety of methods: including outdoor adventure based pursuits, field trips, guest speakers, recreation, sport, health and wellness based activities.

Youth currently in program: 14

Youth graduated April to August: 7

Youth Live Program

The Youth Live Program is a supportive work environment that offers up to 21 weeks of work place mentoring, as well as life and job skill development for youth between the ages of 16 to 24 years, who are not in school and who are facing employment barriers. Youth participants receive a stipend while in the program. Youth Live has two main streams which include business operations and mentoring. Business operations comprises of on-the-job training at Youth Live's Enviro Depot bottle exchange and end-of-life electronic recycling site and at the Commercial Enviro Depot which focuses on sorting diverted recyclables from the Otter Lake Waste Processing Facility, as well as paper and used library book recycling and green cart delivery and repair. The mentoring stream includes working alongside Youth Live staff who provide guidance and coaching. As well, youth receive modules on life skills and job skills designed to prepare them for their future.

Youth currently in program: 20

Youth graduated April to August: 12

Emergency Services Achievement Program

Fire & Emergency Services offers the Emergency Services Achievement Program (ESAP) that trains "at risk" young adults to overcome barriers so they may successfully enter the workforce and obtain meaningful employment. These young adults, ages 18-30, are trained in employability skills, and then are placed in an industry of their interest for hands-on mentorship with local businesses. The training takes place in Lower Sackville.

The program began in 1999, and has two intakes of six applicants each year (12 youth in total for the year).

Fire & Emergency Services receives funding from Service Canada, and works in partnership with the Sackville Volunteer Firefighters Association, Opportunity Place Resource Center, and the employers that hire the participants.

Youth currently in program: 6

Youth graduated April to August: 6

Youth Leadership Program

The Youth Leadership program offered by Recreation is for youth ages 13+ (or those whom have completed grade 7) who want to learn leadership skills, take part in social activities, work with children, and give back to their community. This program is not a full-time commitment; times vary in each community. Summer staff are hired to work in the summer program; these staff range in age from 16 to 24+ years old.



The Youth Leadership Program offers three levels of training and commitment:

Level 1: For younger youth with no previous leadership experience.

Level 2: For youth with some previous leadership experience.

Level 3: For youth ages 14+ who have previous leadership experience and are ready for more responsibility.

Typically, Level 1 and 2 youth participate in group training and lead group activities on a limited scale, while Level 3 youth volunteer on an individual basis and lead activities on their own or with a partner. All youth plan and implement a community action project as a group in the community where they are taking the Youth Leadership Program. These community action projects range from raising money for the local food bank, volunteering at a senior’s home, to doing a community clean up.

- ✚ Summer 2016 Youth Leadership Program Attendance: 443
- ✚ Average number of volunteer hours completed by each youth: 28 hours

2016	Total number of registered youth	Waitlist of youth wanting to enter the Youth Leadership Program
Adventure Earth	41	0
Bedford-Hammonds Plains	30	12
Captain Spry	25	2
Chocolate Lake	26	0
Citadel	47	13
Cole Harbour	25	0
Dartmouth North	6	0
Findlay	28	0
George Dixon	20	0
Gordon R. Snow	33	0
Lakeside	21	5
Middle Musq.	12	0
Musq. Harbour	20	20
Needham	25	0
North Preston	9	0
Sackville	23	0
Sheet Harbour	7	0
St. Andrews	27	0
Tallahassee	18	0
Totals	443	52

In the summer of 2015, 521 youth participated in the Youth Leadership Program. While attendance declined for summer 2016, there is an opportunity for Recreation to expand programming in areas with high wait lists to ensure that all youth have the opportunity to participate.

Training Modules

All youth in the program receive a variety of training and leadership skills. The youth participate in the following modules throughout the summer: Inclusion & Diversity, Interview Skills, Program Planning, Public Speaking, Leadership, Safety, Team Work & Participation and Community Action.

Community Action

“Community Action” is the central core of the Youth Leadership Program. Each youth has an opportunity to brainstorm, plan and implement a community action project. Following is a sample list of the community action projects completed during the summer of 2016:

- ✚ Hosting a BBQ for seniors (Helped to connect seniors with youth)
- ✚ Community clean ups
- ✚ Car washes
- ✚ Volunteering at different community organizations such as Feed Nova Scotia and Ronald McDonald House.

Youth Socials

Along with the Community Action plans, the youth have an opportunity to participate in several socials throughout the summer. With the exception of dances, all socials are planned by the program youth.

Sample list of youth socials that took place last summer:

- ✚ Laser tag
- ✚ Emera Oval Skating
- ✚ Movie nights
- ✚ Beach days
- ✚ Bowling
- ✚ Healthy living cooking classes

How does the Youth Leadership Program impact the youth?

The following information is a summary of the Most Significant Change data collected during July and August 2016.

Youth Leadership Program: Youth Participants (13-15 years old)

- ✚ They have become more confident, outgoing citizens.
- ✚ Some cite changes in the way they view children, and make note of the opportunities both in their communities and in their careers that the program gives them.
- ✚ The program also helped several youth to become more active and live healthier lifestyles.
- ✚ These changes are significant for the youth because they lead to a better school and social life by overcoming shyness and gaining confidence. Being a part of their community is important for some of the youth, as is learning skills that will help them in their future careers.

Youth Leadership Program: Youth Leader Coordinators (Summer Staff / 16+ years old)

Many Youth Leadership Coordinators have been a part of Parks and Recreation for a number of years, as both campers and as youth leaders. The majority of youth leaders identified an interest in gaining employment with Parks and Recreation, and wish to continue on their journey through the youth leadership program.

Significant changes for the Youth Leadership Coordinators include:

- ✚ Becoming more outgoing and gaining confidence
- ✚ Developing leadership skills
- ✚ Gaining a better understanding of inequality and opportunities, or lack of opportunities
- ✚ A closer connection to their community
- ✚ How to work with a team
- ✚ Developing professional skills

These significant changes have helped the youth become better citizens, gain confidence in themselves and their abilities, understand youth, and help ensure they have the proper skills moving forward in their careers.

For a detailed youth response, please see the appendix.



Youth Employment Feedback

The April 2016's Youth Report indicated that staff would collect information from youth staff to gain their feedback on why they chose to work for the municipality and how they feel about the programs offered.

The data collected came from Summer Managers (manage day camps), Summer Program Instructors (entry level summer staff who work in day camps and other summer programs), and Youth Leadership Coordinators (manage the Youth Leadership Program).

The majority of the summer staff interviewed are largely made up of past program participants and volunteers who enjoyed their previous experiences with the municipality and wanted to continue on to employment. The following is a summary of their input:

- ✦ Having fun was a big plus in being employed in the recreation centres
- ✦ Enjoyed organizing activities
- ✦ Spending time with younger youth
- ✦ Getting more involved in their communities
- ✦ Getting more physically active
- ✦ Furthering future employment opportunities



Action Item Update from last Youth Report

Action Items from April 2016 Youth Engagement Report

Item 1: Continue to provide Youth Engagement Reports to the Community Planning and Economic Development Standing Committee twice a year (fall and spring).

Update: This (fall) report was delayed getting to the Community Planning & Economic Development Standing Committee due to the election and to enable completion of the Youth Services Plan.

Item 2: Ongoing engagement of youth on the priority areas and identification of at-risk youth/communities will be necessary to ensure current youth programming is adequate and appropriate to meet the needs of youth.

Update: Ongoing. Amanda Reddick has assumed the duties of the Youth Community Developer after Lee Moore became the new Manager of the Youth Live Program.

Item 3: Complete and present the Youth Services Plan to the Community Planning and Economic Development Standing Committee in the Fall of 2016.

Update: The Youth Services Plan is complete and is being presented as a companion document with this report.

Item 4: Youth Employment: Collect information from youth staff to gain their feedback on why they chose to work for the municipality and how they feel about the programs offered.

Update: Complete. The data has been presented in this report.

Conclusion & Next Steps

As Parks & Recreation continues to engage youth, staff will be utilizing the Most Significant Change Method to help collect the youth's stories regarding the impact that Parks & Recreation's programs are having, as well as the regular attendance stats that have been collected.

Next Steps:

1. Continue to provide Youth Engagement Reports to the Community Planning and Economic Development Standing Committee twice a year (fall and spring). The next Youth Engagement Report will provide an update on Parks & Recreation's new Youth organization.
2. Ongoing engagement of youth on the priority areas and identification of at-risk youth/communities. This will be necessary to ensure current youth programming is adequate and appropriate to meet the needs of youth.
3. Implement the Youth Services Plan and report updates to the Community Planning and Economic Development Standing Committee in the next Youth Engagement Report.

Attachment 2

Youth Services Plan



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Executive Summary

In 2005 the Halifax Regional Municipality's Recreation Department worked with HeartWood Centre for Community Development to create the municipality's *Youth Engagement Strategy*. This engagement strategy focused on best practice strategies on youth engagement. Since that time the municipality has worked to ensure youth programs meet the needs of youth. Reorganization in 2015 helped to create a youth focused section of the Parks & Recreation Department. The next step in providing youth services was for this new section to conduct a large scale engagement on what services the municipality offers youth. This plan is the final product of that year long, youth-led, engagement process.

This report should be looked at as a tool to improve & enhance services based on feedback provided by youth in the municipality. Making sure this was a truly youth-led process was top priority for the staff that helped facilitate the plan. Youth-led means adults, staff and organizations did not influence the process. With staff support, the youth created the survey and designed the engagement workshops.

This plan engaged 1400 youth in its creation. This was achieved through online surveys, several workshops and many one-on-one conversations. Through the engagement process, 7 key issues emerged, which were developed into 5 strategic vision statements. Each vision statement has its own set of goals and objectives. Suggested action items on how to implement are also included in the document.

Acknowledgments

Parks & Recreation would like to thank the following Youth Team members:

Mitchell Archibald, Abbey Campbell, Natalie Comeau, Neave Cornick, Anna Ehler, Alex Gillis, Kelley O'Toole, Chris Patry, Ashlynn Ross, William VanderSpoel & Kailey Webber.

Their continued input, feedback and direction have been essential in the development of the Youth Plan. Thanks also given to the 1400 youth who participated in our youth plan workshops and online survey.

Thank you to the staff who supported this project:

Sarah Coley, Community Recreation Outdoor Coordinator

Warren Edwards, Community Recreation Coordinator

Amanda Reddick, Community Developer

Lee Moore, Manager, Youth Live Program

Brooke Neily, Program Assistant

Sylvia Grigat, Program Assistant

Thank you to the Findlay Community Centre & Staff who hosted our monthly Youth Team meetings! You created a welcoming, friendly space for us to meet each month.



The Youth Team (Missing 2 members)

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this Youth Services Plan is to focus the efforts of the municipality over the next three to five years. This document assesses the internal and external factors influencing youth services, defines key issues, establishes clear mission and vision statements, and identifies core values. It informs staff and assists in selecting the strategies that best help to reach the desired outcomes.

Strategic planning is vital to ensuring that an organization's actions reflect its core values and that it operates within the scope of its mission statement. Providing the municipality with big picture information helps to focus efforts on how best to serve youth in the communities.

Definitions

In this proposal,

“**Core Values**” are the guiding principles that dictate behavior and action. Core values can help people know what is right from wrong. They can help committees to determine if they are on the right path and fulfilling their goals (Warner, 2016).

“**Mission Statement**” is a statement that describes (a) what you do, (b) who you do it for, and (c) how you do it. A mission statement is a unique contribution to the achievement of the vision (Warner, 2016).

“**Most Significant Change Method**” is an approach that involves generating and analyzing personal accounts in the form of the collection of personal stories of change and deciding which of these accounts is the most significant – and why. This method complements other data collection methods. (Davies, R. Dart, J.)

“**Strategic Plan**” is a process that stimulates and guides organizational decision-making to best fulfill its mandate (Warner, 2016).

“**Strategic Vision**” is an organization’s statement of its top-tier priorities or areas that need to be addressed in order for the full vision to be realized (Warner, 2016).

“**Vision Statement**” identifies what the organization hopes will happen as the result of its activities (external vision) and how it will look and work when it is successful (internal vision) (Warner, 2016).

“**Youth Service**” refers to any services offered by the municipality that youth access. (I.e. registered programs, drop in programs, youth action teams, youth groups, events, etc.)

Youth Services Background

Situation Analysis

This situational analysis includes a review of the contexts in which Youth Services are offered, both internally and externally. In the internal context, it sheds light on the youth services history of the municipality. Externally, it provides an understanding of how the municipality's youth services have been perceived by youth in the community. This information was developed by the youth team using information obtained through youth workshops, online survey and detail-oriented research.

Stakeholder Analysis

The stakeholder analysis is a tool that aids in the understanding of perspectives of those that are impacted by the youth services provided by the municipality.

The analysis below, was compiled from youth survey responses and feedback from workshops held throughout the municipality. 1400 youth were engaged in this process. The analysis has been broken into age categories to better showcase how each age group felt about youth services.

13-15 age category

Sports and Recreation

70% of youth who completed the survey have participated in sport or recreation programs in the past year, and 46% of those youth have taken a program at a recreation centre. 94% of the youth who participated at a recreation centre are either happy or very happy with the program. One thing to note is that 45% of the youth who completed the survey feel they would be more interested in participating in a sport or recreation program if it cost less and 50% think there should be more programs offered. 48% of youth would like the opportunity to borrow recreation equipment.

Arts

Of the youth who took the survey, only 27% have taken an art program in the past year. 60% of youth in this age group stated that they are not interested in arts or art programs, however, 93% of the youth that did take an art program at a recreation centre said they were happy or very happy with the service. Some of the youth said they would be interested in different types of art programming such as cartoon drawing, graphic design or sculpting.

Leadership

Only 37% of youth who have taken our survey have participated in a leadership program. Barriers to attending a program are that 56% of youth feel they are not interested in training or leadership programs, and 33% of youth say they do not attend due to their busy schedule. 54% of the youth that did participate in a leadership program had taken them at a recreation centre and the majority of them were happy or very happy with them.

16-18 age category

Recreation and Sport

89% of youth who completed the survey stated they are happy or very happy in the recreation programs they have participated in. Approximately half of the youth say that they would like to see more recreation programs and that they would like the recreation programs to cost less. Some youth identified anxiety as a barrier to joining sports programs because they feel they are too old to try a sport, and that they would not be good at the sport.

Arts

88% of youth who took the survey have an interest in art programming. 69% of the youth have taken an art program in the past year, however only 19% of the youth have taken an art program at a recreation centre. 94% of those youth who have taken an art program at a recreation centre are happy or very happy with the programs that are offered, but 62% think that there should be more programs offered.

Leadership

Most youth in the older age group would like to have more training opportunities available to them as they see it as an opportunity to build a resume. The youth who have not attended mentioned they missed the opportunity due to shyness, anxiety, or lack of knowledge about the program.

19-24 age category

Sports and Recreation

92% of youth feel that sport and recreation programming have some importance to them, however, only 33% of youth have participated in a recreation or sport program in the past year. A large 62.4% of the youth have said their busy schedules or lack of time have prevented them from going. Other barriers preventing them from attending a program are that they are too inexperienced for the programs offered, and that the programs are often gendered spaces and some individuals are not sure how they would fit in. 42% of the youth that took part in a recreation or sport program did so at a recreation centre and 94% of those who did participate

at a recreation centre were happy or very happy with the programs. One comment to note is that many youth aged 19-24 would like programs for their age group; they feel they would be more compelled to go if it weren't all 16 year olds or 40+ year olds.

Arts

87% of youth 19-24 are interested in art programming, however only 19% have participated in art programs in the past year. 50% of the youth who took the survey marked being busy and having no time as a reason for not attending programs, another reason noted was being unaware of programs offered for their age group. This age group would like to see more art programs offered and for them to cost less. Some other things that would increase attendance would be to have drop-in or beginner courses.

Leadership

90% of youth have shown interest in leadership training opportunities, and only 37% of them have participated in them. The majority of youth have stated being too busy or not knowing about programs offered as the reason for not attending. Having more programs for this age group and charging less are the main incentives to getting youth 19-24 to participate in leadership training programs.

Youth Friendly Spaces Workshop

Two Youth Friendly Spaces workshops were held, with 75 youth in attendance. These workshops addressed youth friendly spaces.

Priority items for youth friendly spaces:

- Open concept drop in space
- Gender neutral bathrooms
- Provide ways for youth to “take ownership” over the space
- Friendly staff greeting youth when they enter the building
- Bright colours and bigger rooms
- Free food

Youth spaces should be available for use during the following times:

- Weekdays between 4 – 8 pm (for afterschool/work)
- Weekends between 1 – 3 pm (for study groups/ projects)
- Weekends between 6-9 pm (to hang out with friends)

Other items identified by youth:

- Providing multiple opportunities at drop-in programs (ie. Drop in basketball happens at the same time as offering a safe place to hang out/ study)
- Drop-In spaces need to be open on a consistent basis (ie. If youth can't make it one week, they want to know it will still happen next week)

- Free Wi-Fi access, cell phone charging stations, comfortable places to sit, informational pamphlets and music all would make a great youth space
- Having open socials on a consistent basis would help the youth get to know each other and feel more comfortable as well as draw more youth to the programs by allowing them to see what is offered

Youth Demographics

According to the 2011 Census of Canada, Halifax Regional Municipality has a population of 390,096. Of that population, youth between the ages of 13-24 make up 16.3%. The population of youth between the ages of 13-15 is 13,010, 16-18 is 13,965 and 19-24 is 36,645. All population figures are approximate.*

The bulk of youth between the ages of 13-18 live outside of the Halifax downtown core in the surrounding communities of Dartmouth, Bedford and Cole Harbour. This trend changes with 19-24 year-olds, as most of that population lives on the Halifax Peninsula (where most of the universities are located).

*Source: Statistics Canada. 2012. Halifax, Nova Scotia (Code 1209034) and Canada (Code 01) (table). Census Profile. 2011 Census. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 98-316-XWE. Ottawa. Released October 24, 2012.

Internal Analysis

The internal analysis focuses on the current youth services offered by the municipality. It examines what the municipality is currently offering youth. It can be found in [Appendix A](#).

External Analysis & Environmental Scan

The external analysis and environmental scan focuses on aspects influencing the youth that are ultimately out of the municipality's control. It examines new trends and research that supports youth service delivery. The external analysis can be found in [Appendix B](#).

Philosophy

Vision Statement

The Halifax Regional Municipality's Youth Services provides an open & diverse environment that is accessible to all youth. We support mental & physical wellbeing while promoting unity, friendship & most importantly happiness. – We make a difference!

Core Values

Core values are philosophies or principles that guide conduct as well as relationships within a community and the community's relationship to the external world.

- Support
- Happiness
- Inclusivity
- Friendship
- Opportunities for all

Mission Statement

We enrich the quality of life for all and strengthen communities by providing fun, accessible, friendly, and inclusive youth services.

Our definition of youth

Youth Services in the municipality encompasses ages 13-24. For the purposes of this plan we grouped the ages of 13-15, 16-18 & 19-24. We recognise the diversity within these age ranges that requires specific and intentional services.

Key Issues

Based on survey and workshop feedback, as well as discussions with the Youth Team Members, the following items are the key issues facing youth services in the Halifax Regional Municipality:

- **Services should be inclusive for all youth**
 - Youth feel that our services need to be inclusive to all youth. Specifically with regards to gender, sexual orientation, economic background, culture & abilities.
- **Mental & Physical Health pose barriers to access**
 - Youth feel mental and physical health can limit the services youth are able to access. Anxiety and shyness were the top reasons why youth did not attend youth services.
- **Limited Marketing and Promotion to youth**
 - Youth identified lack of knowledge as one of the primary reasons for not accessing services.
- **Low to no cost services**
 - Cost is a barrier for youth to access services.
- **Transportation & Accessibility**
 - Youth feel the services they want to participate in aren't offered in their community. It takes too long to get to these services if they aren't offered locally.
- **Drop In & Equipment Loan Programs**
 - Youth want access to equipment and flexible program opportunities.
- **Youth Friendly Spaces**
 - Youth don't feel included, accepted or welcomed in some of our facilities.

Strategic Visions and Framework

1. Strategic Vision 1: Our services positively impact the mental health and physical wellbeing of youth

1.1. **Goal:** To remove barriers of access around mental & physical health

- 1.1.1. Objective: To increase training opportunities about Mental Health for staff who work with youth
- 1.1.2. Objective: Increase awareness of the access and inclusion policy
- 1.1.3. Objective: Create a working culture around mental and physical health

Outcome: Improved quality of life

Rationale: Mental Health is a very important issue for youth, they recognize how being active and social can lead to a healthy mind. Research supports positive outcomes to youth's mental health when they participate in physical activity, recreation and leadership programs. This Strategic Vision addresses the importance of this issue with youth.

2. Strategic Vision 2: All youth are able to access our services

2.1. **Goal:** To provide low to no cost services

- 2.1.1. Objective: Examine youth population data by age, demographic and community and correlate with the youth plan data for each community
- 2.1.2. Objective: Offer no cost drop in programs
- 2.1.3. Objective: Lower program fees for youth programs
- 2.1.4. Objective: Build partnerships that would create cost sharing opportunities (internal & external)

2.2. **Goal:** To create youth services that are inclusive for all youth

- 2.2.1. Objective: Ensure all full time Recreation staff who encounter youth on a regular basis are trained in youth engagement
- 2.2.2. Objective: Obtain best practices for working with the LGBTQ* community
- 2.2.3. Objective: All youth programs obtain regular feedback from youth participants
- 2.2.4. Objective: Build relationships outside of the recreation centres.

2.3. Goal: To provide and implement various drop-in programs

2.3.1. Objective: Examine what programs would interest youth and implement

2.3.2. Objective: Offer drop in programs that offer choices of activities at the same time

2.4. Goal: To ensure there is adequate accessibility of programs through location and transportation

2.4.1. Objective: Increase mobile recreation services (ie. Rec Van) to make sure youth can access these programs in all areas of the municipality in order to ease the burden of transportation

2.4.2. Objective: Explore options to align programs to transit schedules

2.4.3. Objective: Use park spaces for programming

2.5. Goal: To expand equipment loan programs

2.5.1. Objective: Purchase more equipment to loan out on a daily or hourly basis for a variety of activities

2.5.2. Objective: Evaluate equipment loan program on an annual basis

2.5.3. Objective: Identify partnerships (schools) that could enhance the equipment loan program

2.5.4. Objective: Create a budget for equipment purchasing and renewal of current items

2.5.5. Objective: Maintain and update the equipment rental website

Outcome: Increased access to youth services

Rationale: Low cost, inclusive services was the number two priority for youth. Youth want all youth to be able to access our services regardless of their academic, cultural or financial background.

Further investigation with youth and Recreation Programming staff is required to identify specific equipment needs. Additionally, an equipment loan program for youth will be developed with borrowing procedures designed around the particular circumstances of youth, for example not all youth have photo identification to confirm identity or access to a credit card for deposit purposes.

3. Strategic Vision 3: The municipality offers friendly and welcoming environments for youth

3.1. Goal: To design physical spaces that are open and welcoming for youth

3.1.1. Objective: Create opportunities for youth to take ownership and control over the youth spaces

3.1.2. Objective: Provide free wifi access in our recreation centres and parks

3.1.3. Objective: Create evaluations for youth to provide feedback on recreation spaces and staff

3.2. Goal: To employ friendly staff that are trained in youth engagement

3.2.1. Objective: Set and enforce customer service standards for employees who interact with youth

3.3. Goal: To change the culture on how staff view youth

3.3.1. Objective: To create opportunities to celebrate both staff and youth in our programs

Outcome: Increased traffic by youth through municipal facilities

Rationale: Physical spaces (facilities & parks) need to be friendly and welcoming to youth. Most of the youth who responded feel the facilities are currently not welcoming. A lot of youth stated they have anxiety when entering a recreation facility for the first time. Steps need to be taken to educate staff on youth and youth engagement and to create physical spaces that are appealing to young people to ensure youth can walk into any municipal facility and feel welcomed.

4. Strategic Vision 4: Services are diverse and geared towards youth interests

4.1. Goal: To gear multi-sport “try it” programs towards older youth to give them an opportunity to participate

4.1.1. Objective: Pilot multi-activity programs for each age range.

4.1.2. Objective: Network and coordinate with different organizations when offering youth services

4.2. Goal: To diversify our selection of “non-standard” art program

4.2.1. Objective: Promote current art programs to increase participation

4.2.2. Objective: Create a list of artist contacts and art services to assist when planning

4.3. Goal: To make program times specific for needs of different age groups

4.3.1. Objective: To take into consideration school and work schedules when planning programs for each age group

4.3.2. Objective: Should prioritize youth specific spaces

Objective: Engage the different age groups to determine best program times

4.4. Goal: To offer age-specific youth programs

4.4.1. Objective: Explore & create program opportunities for ages 16-18 and 19-24

4.4.2. Objective: Explore & create opportunities for “try it” programs

4.4.3. Objective: Develop mentorship opportunities (designing and delivering programs) for older youth interacting with younger youth as leadership opportunity

4.5. Goal: To review policies & best practices for service delivery of youth programs

4.5.1. Objective: Review the use of High-5 principles and service delivery models/frameworks when offering youth services

4.5.2. Objective: Create an internal evaluation process for youth services (similar to High-5 Quest)

Outcome: Improved social connectedness, sense of belonging and community pride

Rationale: Some youth aged 16-24 feel that they are too old to try new sports or activities. Offering try it programs would be a way to give youth the opportunity to experience new sports and activities they would not normally feel comfortable trying. Youth also stated that they would be interested in having more opportunities to take art classes, specifically around digital media. Digital art programs, illustration and manga are all examples of non-standard art programs that could be offered. Drop in programs that offer more than just a single activity was identified many times.

5. Strategic Vision 5: All youth are aware of the services offered by the municipality

5.1. Goal: To target youth with marketing and promotion that is on trend and will catch their attention

5.1.1. Objective: To create a marketing, youth website & social media plan for youth services

5.1.2. Objective: To increase marketing of our programs through the youth website, social media and in areas where youth hang out.

5.1.3. Objective: Have the youth team annually inform and influence the marketing and youth website / social media plan

5.1.4. Objective: To utilize social media on a seasonal basis to assist in the promotion of youth services

5.1.5. Objectives: Explore partnerships to assist in promotion of youth services

5.2. Goal 3.2: To promote and clarify the importance of leadership programs

5.2.1. Objective: To increase promotion to 13-15 year old age group on the benefits of leadership programs

Outcome: Increased participation in youth services

Rationale: The methods of marketing and promotion need to stay ahead of the trends, the municipality needs to market its youth services directly to youth in addition to parents and guardians. Utilizing the youth webpage and social media tools is the best way to spread program and service information. Most of the feedback in the surveys stated that the youth who are taking our programs are very happy with them, but it was made clear that most of the youth did not know what was being offered, how to access them, or the benefits of attending the programs.

GAP Analysis

The municipality will benefit from having a strategic plan focused on youth. It will give the business units the knowledge that we have engaged the youth, sorted through the opportunities and challenges, and provides a plan that will see youth prosper for many years. This Gap Analysis ensures that our proposed plan for the future of youth services within the municipality is possible in a three-year timespan. While there is a lot of work to be done, we feel the reward outweighs the time commitment needed to make this happen.

Our youth and staff team have examined the current state of youth services and proposed several goals that will help each vision come true. Each of these goals has been reviewed and the following gaps have been identified between the current state of youth services and reaching the vision: time, resistance, other resources, and technological gaps. The main challenge is time; staff are already very busy and to make this happen, they will need to initially give up a bit more time to work on these changes. Major changes to some youth services are being proposed; therefore, there may be some resistance throughout the process. Other gaps that are identified are a lack of resources (funding, volunteers, staff and equipment etc.), knowledge and willingness to use new technologies (Facebook and other social media), and having a complete understanding of how to engage and work with youth.

Gaps identified in the proposed strategic visions:

Strategic Vision 1:

- Budget, Time & Responsibilities need to be allocated, Accountability processes
- Partnerships with other organizations
- Adapting trainings to fit municipal roles

Strategic Vision 2:

- Budget, Time & Responsibilities need to be allocated, Accountability processes
- More work needs to be done to ensure marginalized youth groups are included
- Registration process for youth programs

Strategic Vision 3:

- Budget, Time & Responsibilities need to be allocated, Accountability processes
- Lack of understanding of Youth Engagement processes and theory
- Challenges with organizational culture

Strategic Vision 4:

- Budget, Time & Responsibilities need to be allocated, Accountability processes
- Communication and partnership challenges

Strategic Vision 5:

- Budget, Time & Responsibilities need to be allocated, Accountability processes
- Gap in understanding of use of technology
- Existing & emerging trends in website use, social media & technology

Implementing the Youth Plan

Year 1: 2017/2018

Summary: Evaluation, creation of tools and resources, expansion of current programs and partnerships

Year 2: 2018/2019

Summary: Implementation of objectives, program changes and additions

Year 3: 2019/2020

Summary: Culture Changes, using newly created tools and evaluations to review programs and services

A suggested timeline for when the goals and objectives should be completed can be found in [Appendix J](#).

Suggested Actions Items

Throughout the engagement process, youth and staff identified several opportunities to implement the action plan. These are only suggestions to assist with the implementation of the plan, as there are several methods and paths that can be taken to achieve each vision.

Suggested Actions to implement this plan:

Strategic Vision 1: Parks & Recreation services positively impact the mental health and physical wellbeing of youth

Goal 1.1: To remove barriers of access around mental & physical health

Action Item: Create and share a contact card of trained members

Action Item: To provide at least one staff member per unit, who is trained in Applied Suicide Intervention Strategies Training (ASIST)

Strategic Vision 2: All youth are able to access our services

Goal 2.1: To provide low to no cost services

Action Item: Explore 2016 census data and incorporate

Action Items: Examine the diversity and inclusions aspects of youth services

Action Item: Review youth survey results for suggested programs

Action Item: Examine the Youth Stats to identify opportunities to lower cost of popular youth programs and services

Goal 2.2: To create youth services that are inclusive for all youth

Action Item: Create a training program for adults who work with youth

Action Item: Youth Section should explore the options to create a training program

Action Item: Meet with LGBTQ community to explore best practices

Action Item: Youth Section develops an evaluation for youth services

Action Item: Explore opportunities to go to schools, churches, community facilities to network and build relationships

Goal 2.3: To provide and implement various drop-in programs

Action Item: Review youth survey results for suggested programs

Action Item: Existing drop in programs should look to offer different activities at the same time as their main activity

Goal 2.4: To ensure there is adequate accessibility of programs through location and transportation

Action Item: Conduct a needs assessment on transportation to prioritize communities in need

Action Item: Review program end times and match with transit bus times

Goal 2.5: To make program times specific for needs of different age groups

Action Item: Offer leadership programs to ages 16-18 that avoid school commitments (ie. PD Days, Exams)

Action Item: Designate spaces for youth programming

Action Item: Examine peak times for different age groups

Goal 2.6: To expand equipment loan programs

Action Item: To take Inventory of current equipment

Action Item: To review current loan programs

Action Item: To advertise on youth website

Action Item: Evaluate current program

Action Item: Develop an evaluation process

Goal 2.7: To offer age-specific youth programs

Action Items: Leadership programs

Action Items: Pilot programs for 18-24 year olds that include health and wellness & life skills training

Action Items: Pilot free try it nights

Strategic Vision 3: The municipality offers friendly and welcoming environments for youth

Goal 3.1: To design physical spaces that are open and welcoming for youth

Action Item: To allow space in each Recreation's Unit budget for the redesign of at least 1 youth space a year that will encourage more youth to use the spaces

Action Item: Conduct a needs assessment with youth who access our facilities to ensure we are redesigning based on their needs

Action Item: Engage youth in the art design of the youth spaces

Action Item: Explore best practices for youth friendly spaces for areas that don't have a permanent physical space

Goal 3.3: To look at policies & best practices for service delivery of youth programs

Action: Offer a variety of services at each centre so youth have a choice when attending drop-in programs.

Strategic Vision 5: All youth are aware of the services offered by the municipality

Goal 5.2: To promote and clarify the importance of leadership programs

Action Item: Ensure our current programs contain an educational component on how leadership programs will benefit the youth in their lives

Outcomes & Reporting

Annual updates on the status on this Youth Services Plan will be completed and reported as part of the Youth Engagement Report. This will ensure the goals and objectives are being completed. The following outcomes will be used as indicators to serve as a guide to ensure the outcomes are being met. Tools to measure these outcomes will be developed in the first year of implementing this plan.

Outcomes:

1. Improved quality of life
2. Increased access to youth services
3. Increased traffic by youth through municipal facilities
4. Improved social connectedness, sense of belonging, and community pride
5. Increased participation in youth services

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Appendices

Appendix A: Internal Analysis

Parks & Recreation

There are four styles of programs offered by the Recreation Department. The first is a program that youth need to register for, and is offered for so many weeks. The second is a drop in program where youth do not need to register. The third is equipment loan programs. The fourth is programs for Youth At-Risk.

Registered Programs for Youth

The municipality's Recreation and Parks division runs a multitude of programs directed to youth ages 13 to 18. These include:

- General swimming programs
- Leadership programs
- Art programs
- Dance, drama and music programs
- Fitness programs
- Skating
- A variety of sport programs

These programs and activities are advertised in Recreation and Parks Guides and specific information for youth is promoted through a one-page general description flyer and the city web pages.

Drop-in Programs for Youth

The Municipality also offers drop-in programs for youth ages 13-18. These programs include:

- Various Sports (basketball, badminton, volleyball)
- Open gym
- Space to hang out with friends
- Free swims
- Art Hives

These drop-in programs are uploaded to the youth calendar on the Halifax Youth website and promoted through the recreation catalogue.

Programs for At-Risk Youth

The municipality offers specific programs for at-risk youth. These programs include:

- Youth Advocate Program
- Souls Strong Program
- Youth Live Program
- Girls United

Library Services for Youth

Public libraries offer a variety of free services for youth ages 12-15. These include:

- Space to hang out with friends, meet new people, study, read and relax
- Programs that provide social time, creative outlets, hands-on learning experiences, entertainment, and exploration of topics and issues that interest teens
- Volunteer and work experience opportunities
- Open Wi-Fi, and access to technology including computers, iPads, laptops and video games
- Tech learning and sharing opportunities ranging from coding workshops to recording at the Central library media Studio.
- Library collections -- books, comics and graphic novels, movies, magazines, e-books, audiobooks, and more
- Homework assistance – research help, study groups, class visits and workshops
- Adult support for youth development – relationships with caring adults, links to service providers, and advocacy for diverse youth in the community

RCMP Services for Youth

The RCMP's Stetsons and Spurs Youth groups (for ages 12-17) operates in Cole Harbour, Preston area and Lower Sackville

Halifax Regional Police Services for Youth

The Halifax Regional Police Youth Program (HRPYP) is for youth, aged 14 – 18 years, who are looking for an opportunity to enhance their leadership skills, be part of a close-knit team and make a positive contribution to their community. Activities range from learning about various aspects of policing to performing community services such as mascot appearances and child identification fingerprinting clinics, as well as educational field trips, camping trips and other fun team-building events.

Appendix B: External Analysis & Environmental Scan

This external analysis and environmental scan identifies documents, research and Canadian cities / municipalities that have developed a youth plan.

Nova Scotia

Three documents produced in Nova Scotia provide background information that needs to be taken into consideration when implementing this plan.

Nova Scotia's Children & Youth Vital Signs® (2014)

The Community Foundation of Nova Scotia published their Youth Vital Signs® project report in October 2014 which examined the interconnected issues affecting children and youth within Nova Scotia, particularly at-risk, disadvantaged youth or those dealing with difficulties. The organization also conducted a project examining similar issues within Halifax in 2012 and administered a survey to youth between the ages of 15-24 titled the “youth report card on HRM”. Excerpts/data from reports findings are provided below as a benchmark of youth outcomes in Halifax/Nova Scotia to which programming within the municipal mandate could be better aligned to create stronger outcomes.

One Nova Scotia Report (Ivany Report / 2014)

The Government of Nova Scotia created the Commission on Building Our New Economy in November 2012. Chaired by Ray Ivany, the Commission consulted widely with Nova Scotians. It produced an interim report in May 2013 and a final report in February 2014. The Commission's core message is that Nova Scotia is today in the early stages of what may be a prolonged period of accelerating population loss and economic decline. The report notes, that “these negative prospects are not, however, inevitable or irreversible.” The Commission's Report — Now or Never: An Urgent Call to Action for Nova Scotians — (Now or Never) spells out the state of the province and points out provincial assets and opportunities.

Physical Activity, Recreation, Leisure, and Sport: Essential Pieces of the Mental Health and Well-being Puzzle (2011)

In the report “Physical Activity, Recreation, Leisure, and Sport: Essential Pieces of the Mental Health and Well-being Puzzle” prepared for Recreation Nova Scotia and the Nova Scotia Department of Health and Wellness, the report links positive outcomes to youth's mental health when they participate in physical activity and recreation programs.

The Impacts of Social Media on Government and Democracy: An Examination of Municipal Usage in Nova Scotia, Canada (2014)

In this publication, the authors examined the challenges of Web 2.0 and social media as it relates to citizen engagement compared to traditional democratic and administrative

governance systems in Nova Scotia. The paper identifies that governments in Nova Scotia are using the technology as a way to push information out, rather than using it as a two way communication system which would lead to better engagement with residents.

Mississauga, Ontario

In June 2004, a five year Master Plan for Recreation & Parks was developed. A “strategy for addressing the needs of teens” was developed by the City in partnership with the Library, the Neighbourhood Watch Youth Outreach Program, the School Boards, and the Region of Peel.

The main goal of the strategy was to become “youth-friendly”. The City’s policies, programs, services, and facilities needed to adapt and become more inclusive and responsive to the needs and interests of youth.

The Youth Plan is the first of its kind in terms of setting a direction for programs and services for youth in Mississauga. It is not the intention that the Youth Plan will provide immediate solutions for social issues facing youth in Mississauga

http://www.mississauga.ca/file/COM/myp_final_report.pdf

Gatineau, Quebec

Gatineau has created a Youth Commission to ensure the voices of the youth are heard. It has representatives from 14,000 youth from five amalgamated cities. There are 20 seats for youth representatives which form a majority in relation to adult representatives. The Gatineau Youth Commission has many sustaining factors to support youth engagement, including a yearly budget, three appointed city councillors and full-time staff (from the department of Recreation Services, Sports and Community). In addition, other councillors and representatives from community, organizations and specialists are brought in as needed.

<http://cigatineau.ca/>

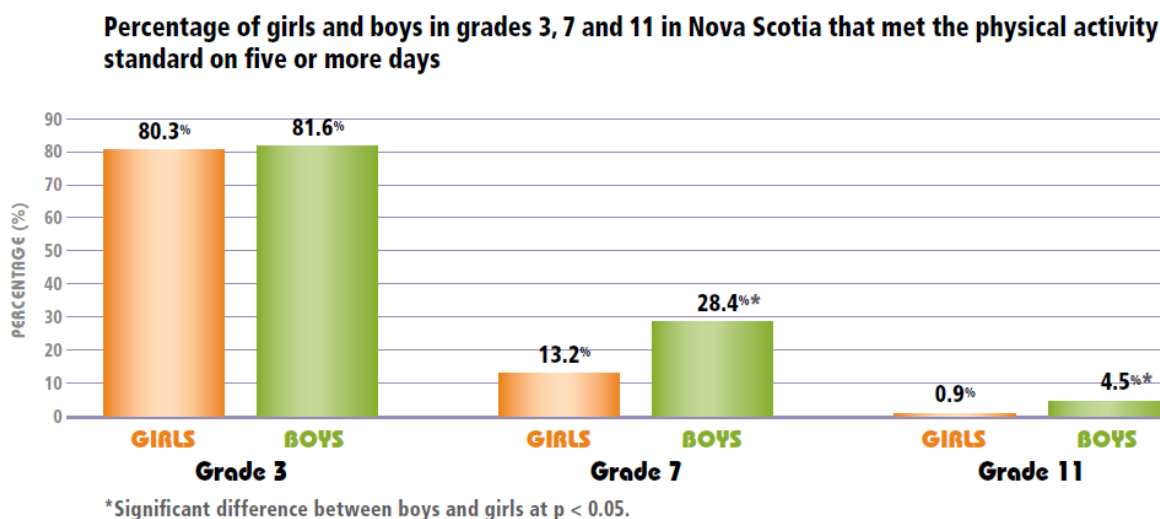
Vancouver, British Columbia

The City of Vancouver’s Civic Youth Strategy was passed by the council in 1995. (updated, 2004) It is their commitment to youth in municipal policy. The city created a fulltime position, the Child and Youth Social Planner. This position is dedicated to coordinating and planning in collaboration with other levels of government, the youth community, service providers and internal city departments. In addition, the Youth Outreach Team is a team of young people hired as city staff, specializing in youth involvement. The Youth Outreach Team has its own separate budget, office space and access to different city resources.

http://www.uclg-cisd.org/sites/default/files/Vancouver_youth_2010_en_final.pdf

Research: Physical Activity Levels of Youth in Canada

Statistics nationally and regionally showcase extremely low physical activity rates among youth. Provincially from 2001-2012 we had PACY (Physical Activity levels among Children and Youth) research that highlighted the drastic drop in levels of physical activity between grade 3, grade 7, and grade 11 students. The most recent statistics from Nova Scotia youth are showcased in the chart below: (Keeping Pace, Physical Activity and Healthy Eating Among Children and Youth, Key Findings from the 2009-2010 Study, released June 2012)



<http://novascotia.ca/dhw/pasr/documents/Keeping-Pace-Physical-Activity-and-Healthy-Eating-Among-Children-and-Youth-Key-Findings-from-the-2009-2010-Study.pdf>

Nationally the trends and poor activity levels of youth are no different. The 2015 nationally released Report Card for Physical Activity Levels of Children and Youth captures statistics of youth (below), giving recommendations that can be implemented or help guide direction in the Halifax region.

Canadian Youth (12-17 years)

- Only 5% of youth meet the physical activity guidelines
- Canadian youth spend 67% of their waking hours in sedentary behaviours
- Daily walking time has decreased in youth 15-17 years from 1992 to 2010 from 17 to 11 minutes, respectively. This decline was greater among girls
- Sport participation has decreased among Canadian youth aged 15-18 years from 77% (1992) to 59% (2005)
- When youth are outside, they move more. For every one hour increase in outdoor time, youth's moderate- to vigorous-intensity physical activity increased by 10 minutes

- As we age activity levels decrease. Further, girls are typically less active than boys. Our activity habits develop at a young age and can influence health later in life; therefore it is important to develop healthy habits at a young age

ParticipACTION also noted the following key areas of behaviours that positively or negatively contribute to overall physical activity:

- Active Transportation (increase time spent)
- Organized Sport and Physical Activity Participation (increase time spent)
- Active Play, unstructured/unorganized activities (increase time spent)
- Sedentary Behaviours (decrease time spent)

Appendix C: Survey Questions

We want your feedback to help shape the municipality's Youth Plan. The Youth Plan will help us plan youth programs and services for the next 3 years!

Hello! Can you tell us a bit about yourself?

This helps us when we are going through the surveys to figure out trends, common issues, etc.

- 1) Age (13-15 / 16-18 / 19-24)
- 2) Postal Code (first 3 numbers)
- 3) Gender (Male, Female, Transgendered Male, Transgendered Female, Other _____)

Recreation & Sport Programs

Examples: Basketball, Hockey, Fitness Programs, Competitive Dance, etc.

- 4) How important is this type of programming to you?
 - a) Don't care
 - b) Yeah it's OK
 - c) Rec & Sports for Life!
- 5) Have you participated in any recreation or sport programs in the past year? Yes/no
 - a) If no – what is stopping you from going?
 - i) Not interested in sports
 - ii) Not interested in Recreation programs
 - iii) costs too much
 - iv) can't get there
 - v) The sport or rec program I'm interested in isn't offered
 - (a) What would you like to see offered? _____
 - vi) Open box _____
 - b) If yes – Where did you take these programs?
 - i) Rec Centre
 - (a) How would you rate the recreation and sport programs offered by the Halifax Regional Municipality's Recreation Department?
 - (i) 1 (not important)
 - (ii) 2
 - (iii) 3
 - (iv) 4
 - (v) 5 (Very Important)
 - (vi) ___ No Opinion
 - ii) Library
 - (a) How would you rate the recreation and sport programs offered by the Halifax Regional Municipality's Public Libraries?
 - (i) 1 (not important)
 - (ii) 2
 - (iii) 3
 - (iv) 4
 - (v) 5 (Very Important)
 - (vi) ___ No Opinion

- iii) Private Company
 - iv) Other: _____
- 6) What would make you more interested and involved in recreation and sports programs?
(Select all that apply)
- a) Cost less
 - b) Have more programs
 - c) Offer in my community
 - d) Offer programs afterschool
 - e) Offer programs in the evening
 - f) offer programs on the weekend
 - g) Offer specific programs for females only
 - h) Offer specific programs for males only
 - i) Offer specific programs for specific religions
 - j) (Other – open box)

Arts Programs

Examples: Arts & Crafts, Music, Theatre, Performing arts, visual arts, improv, etc.

- 7) How important is this type of programming to you?
- a) Don't care
 - b) Yeah it's OK
 - c) Arts for Life!
- 8) Have you participated in any art programs in the past year? Yes/no
- a) If no – what is stopping you from going?
 - i) Not interested in arts programs
 - ii) costs too much
 - iii) can't get there
 - iv) The art program I'm interested in isn't offered
 - (a) What would you like to see offered? _____
 - v) Open box _____
 -
 - b) If yes – Where did you take these programs?
 - i) Rec Centre
 - (a) How would you rate the recreation and sport programs offered by the Halifax Regional Municipality's Recreation Department?
 - (i) 1 (not important)
 - (ii) 2
 - (iii) 3
 - (iv) 4
 - (v) 5 (Very Important)
 - (vi) ___No Opinion
 - ii) Library
 - (a) How would you rate the recreation and sport programs offered by the Halifax Regional Municipality's Public Libraries?
 - (i) 1 (not important)
 - (ii) 2
 - (iii) 3
 - (iv) 4

- (v) 5 (Very Important)
 - (vi) __No Opinion
 - iii) Private Company
 - iv) Other: _____
- 9) What would make you more interested and involved in art programs? (Select all that apply)
- a) Cost less
 - b) Have more programs
 - c) Offer in my community
 - d) Offer programs afterschool
 - e) Offer programs in the evening
 - f) offer programs on the weekend
 - g) Offer specific programs for females only
 - h) Offer specific programs for males only
 - i) Offer specific programs for specific religions
 - j) (Other – open box)

Leadership Training & Job Readiness Programs

Examples: Youth Leadership Program, Tutoring, Youth Live Program, Babysitting Training Course, First Aid Training, etc

- 10) How important is it to you to have leadership training opportunities?
- a) Don't care
 - b) Yeah it's OK
 - c) Training is awesome!
- 11) Have you participated in any leadership training or job readiness programs in the past year?
- Yes/no
- a) If no – what is stopping you from participating in one?
 - i) Not interested in Leadership programs
 - ii) Costs too much
 - iii) Can't get there
 - iv) The leadership program I'm interested in isn't offered
 - (a) What would you like to see offered? _____
 - v) Open box _____
 - b) If yes – Where did you take these programs?
 - i) Rec Centre
 - (a) How would you rate the recreation and sport programs offered by the Halifax Regional Municipality's Recreation Department?
 - (i) 1 (not important)
 - (ii) 2
 - (iii) 3
 - (iv) 4
 - (v) 5 (Very Important)
 - (vi) __No Opinion
 - ii) Library
 - (a) How would you rate the recreation and sport programs offered by the Halifax Regional Municipality's Public Libraries?
 - (i) 1 (not important)
 - (ii) 2

- (iii) 3
- (iv) 4
- (v) 5 (Very Important)
- (vi) ___ No Opinion

iii) Private Company

iv) Other: _____

12) What would make you more interested and involved in leadership training and job readiness programs?

- a) Cost less
- b) Have more programs
- c) Offer in my community
- d) Offer programs afterschool
- e) Offer programs in the evening
- f) offer programs on the weekend
- g) Offer specific programs for females only
- h) Offer specific programs for males only
- i) Offer specific programs for specific religions
- j) (Other – open box)

•

Youth Plan CONTEST

Enter to win one of two iPad Mini's or a Halifax Parks & Recreation Beach Bag or a gift card!
Approximately 1 in 10 chances of winning!

Draw will take place on May 9. Winners will be contacted that week.

Do you want to participate in the Youth Plan contest?

First Name:

E-mail:

Phone:

Appendix D: Youth Friendly Spaces and Places Workshops

Workshop 1: Held with High School students

We want to know if our recreation centres and libraries are youth friendly!

1. How important is it to you to have a friendly youth space in a recreation centre or library?
not/some/very
2. Have you visited a recreation centre or library's youth drop in space in the past year?
Yes/no
 - a. If yes – Was this drop in space at a Community/Recreation Centre or Public Library?
 - b. If no – what is stopping you from going? (list and open box)
3. What makes a perfect youth space? (Open box)
4. If we offered youth specific spaces at Rec Centres, what day(s) of the week should these spaces be open? select all that apply (m,t,w, etc)
5. What times should these spaces be open to youth?
 - a. lunchtime, after school, nights
6. What kind of activities should be offered at these spaces?
 - a. games, space to hang out, art supplies, sports equipment, homework help

What type of rec services improves young people's mental health?

Workshop 2: Held with Junior High students

1. What do you think stops other youth from going to programs like the youth leadership program and other recreation programs?
2. How could recreation spaces be friendlier?
3. What days of the week, times, and where should these spaces be open for youth?
4. What types of programs, equipment, and activities would make you come to a space for programming or to hang out?
5. Dream BIG- draw or write- if you could build the best, most amazing space in a recreation centre (and money was not an issue) what would it look like? What would be in it?
6. Now, be realistic, money is a factor. Think of recreation facilities, how could they be friendlier? What are some cool ideas that would help make some of the space better?

Appendix E: Engagement Methods

This project was a youth-led initiative. Recreation Staff put out a call for volunteers in September of 2015. The Youth Team was formed in October. The first meeting provided youth with an orientation to the project. The Youth Team chose a mixed method engagement process designed to maximize their reach potential with youth.

Methods:

1. Host workshops for youth in communities (Recreation staff hosted workshops as well as supported the youth to host their own workshops within their schools and communities)
2. Create an online survey
3. Visit existing recreation programs and events and have youth fill out the survey

The on-line survey was the main source of feedback, though workshops in Hubbards & Sheet Harbour were booked specifically to gain feedback from rural youth. The youth team spread the online survey to their schools and communities, and the survey was also promoted through social media as an advertisement on Facebook and Instagram for every youth 13-24 living in the Halifax Regional Municipality. These methods helped to make sure we reached as many communities and groups of youth as possible. Survey feedback was tracked through the collection of the first three letters/numbers of the postal code. This ensured we received data from all districts in the municipality.

In all, 1400 youth participated in the data collection process to gain feedback on the key issues facing youth in the municipality.

Brainstorming Information from the Youth Team

Who should be involved in helping to hand out this survey?

- People with school connections
- Leadership classes
- Student councils
- Online / social media blast
- Leadership groups with-in schools
- Club leaders during a meeting
- Announcements
- Posters
- Teen Health Centres
- O2 Programs
- Alternative learning
- Recreation Centres
- Youth Project / At Risk Youth
- Nova Scotia Secondary School Association (youth led student leadership conference)
- Libraries

Who should review the survey before sending it out?

- People with good grammar
- Creative / Personal people
- HRM Rec Staff
- School Board
- Principals
- Head of the Youth Health Centre
- Mayor
- School Administrators and Teachers
- Youth Team

What are some threats that could make our plan not come true?

- Lack of motivation / interest in the plan
- People don't often want to do things
- Time is of the essence
- Mixed schedules
- Lack of diversity
- Need to be there to tell why it is important
- Not reaching people we may not normally reach

What are some opportunities that could help make our plan come true?

- Take out of class to complete the survey
- Offer prizes as an incentive to get as much feedback as possible about the plan
- Using the Youth Team's connections
- Meeting with other school groups
- Check-in's with each school.
- Have paper copies of the survey or cards with web address to hand out.

Appendix F: Programming Suggestions

Obtained from the survey results.

Sports

Archery-5

Arm Wrestling

Badminton-19

Ball Hockey-12

Baseball-9

Basketball-17

Biking-7

Boot Camps/General Fitness-11

Bouldering

Boxing-10

Bridge

Canoeing

Cheerleading-6

Chess

Circus Classes

Computer Programming-4

Cricket-3

Cross Fit

Curling-4

Dance-32

Dodgeball-2

Dog Walking

Fencing

Fly Fishing

Football-3

Geocaching

Girls Nights

Golf

Gymnastics-10

Hiking-4

Hockey

Horseback Riding-5

Hula Hooping

Ice Hockey-6

Kickball

Lacrosse-2

Martial Arts-6

Meditation-2

Netball

Paddling

Pickle ball

Pilates-2

Planting & Gardening

Pole Dancing/Burlesque

Robotics

Rollerblading-2

Rugby-11

Running Club-8

Scooters

Scuba Diving

Skateboarding

Skating-7

Skiing

Snowboarding

Soccer-14

Squash-2

Surfing-2

Arts

3D Modeling

Abstract Drawing

Acting-21

Adult Colouring

Animation-4

Art and Wine Nights-2

Art History

Art using iPad

Band-6

Cake Decorating

Calligraphy-2

Swimming-13

Table Tennis

Target Shooting

Tennis-9

Tubing

Ultimate Frisbee-6

Volleyball-8

Weight Training-3

Wrestling-2

Yoga-35

Zumba-4

Cartoon/Comic Drawing-2

Coding-2

Computer Art/Graphic Design-9

Cooking Class

Creative Writing-6

Crocheting

Design-3

DIY crafts-4

Drop In with various activities

Embroidery

Film-3

Graffiti

Jewelry Making

Knitting-6

Language Classes

Making Hula Hoops-2

Mural-2

Music Lessons-18

Music Production-4

Painting-37

Photography-9

Leadership

Anti-bullying Program

Babysitting Course-6

Coaching/Reffing-3

Collaborative Problem Solving

First Aid-13

Gaming Strategy

General Leadership-10

Job experience/preparedness-15

Leading Summer Camps

Mental Health-5

Pottery-11

Screenprinting-2

Sculpting-4

Sewing-6

Singing-3

Sketching/Drawing-15

Stop Motion Films (Claymation)-4

Try-it Program-4

Wood Working-5

Mentorship Program-2

Non-Violent Crisis intervention

Public Speaking-2

Safe Alcohol Serving

Self-Esteem Group

Sensitivity Training

Student Tutoring-2

Wilderness Training-4

Women Leadership

Working with Children-4

Appendix G: Female only youth feedback

Recreation & Sports

92% of females that were surveyed believe that recreation and sports programming is important, but there is only a slight margin between those who have participated in the past year and those who have not. Having a busy schedule and no time is the largest factor influencing program attendance. Those who did attend cited being happy, with only a few youth stating they were indifferent, and one youth stating unhappiness. Cost, more programs, location of programs, and timing of programs are stated as preventing more involvement. Many females would also like to see programs for females only. Opportunities to borrow equipment and drop-in programs at local trails, beaches, and parks would be of interest to the youth.

Some program suggestions are:

- Yoga
- Dance
- Badminton
- Basketball
- Rugby

Arts

90% of those surveyed enjoy arts. This number is confusing when compared to how many actually participated in the last year, only 27%. Being busy or having no time is the biggest hindrance. Only 42 of the youth who took part in a recreation program in the last year did so at a recreation centre, the majority participated in programs offered by the private sector or by other organizations. Youth would be interested in lower costs and more programs to get them more interested.

Some program suggestions are:

- Painting
- Music
- Pottery
- Drawing
- Photography

Leadership

Female youth believe that leadership and job readiness programs are important and 42% have participated with almost equal amounts taking part through recreation centres and private companies. Being busy and not having time as well as not being aware of the programs offered are the largest factors in not participating and offering more programs would be the greatest incentive for becoming involved. Youth that did participate through recreation centres or libraries were generally happy or very happy with their experience.

Some program suggestions are:

- Babysitting Course
- First-aid course
- Job readiness
- Mental health awareness

Appendix H: Rural vs. City Youth Survey Summary

Recreation and Sports

The most notable differences between rural and city youth are that city youth cite being busier and therefore unable to attend programming more than rural youth and that they express a lack of knowledge about our available programs. Both city and rural youth believe they are too old to start a new sport and believe that they would not be good at it. There was no measureable difference between city and rural youth’s identifying anxiety and medical issues as reasons that prevent them from joining in. Having some non-competitive programs is important for both groups as is a greater variety of sport options. It is important to note that youth from Hubbards and Sheet Harbour express desire for a recreation facility they can attend. 55% of city youth and 42% of rural youth expressed interest in borrowing equipment from our centers and many would enjoy having more drop-in programs available.

The top program suggestions from the youth are:

Rural	City
Basketball	Yoga
Dance	Dance
Yoga	Badminton
Gymnastics/cheer	Ball hockey
Ball hockey	Soccer
Swimming	General fitness/gym
Biking	Swimming
Rugby	Boxing

Arts

Rural and city youth both cite being unaware of arts programming available to them. Both groups would enjoy having jam sessions, music lessons, or a band; and display interest in less teaching and more doing. City youth would really enjoy having a place they could just hang out in and be free to do what they want. It was also suggested that an art class could paint a mural or park benches for the city. City youth would prefer to have programs offered to them during the evening and the weekends as opposed to afterschool.

The top program suggestions from the youth are:

Rural	City
Painting	Painting
Acting	Music
Music	Pottery/sculpting
Computer art/graphic design	Acting
Drawing	Drawing lessons
	Knitting
	animation

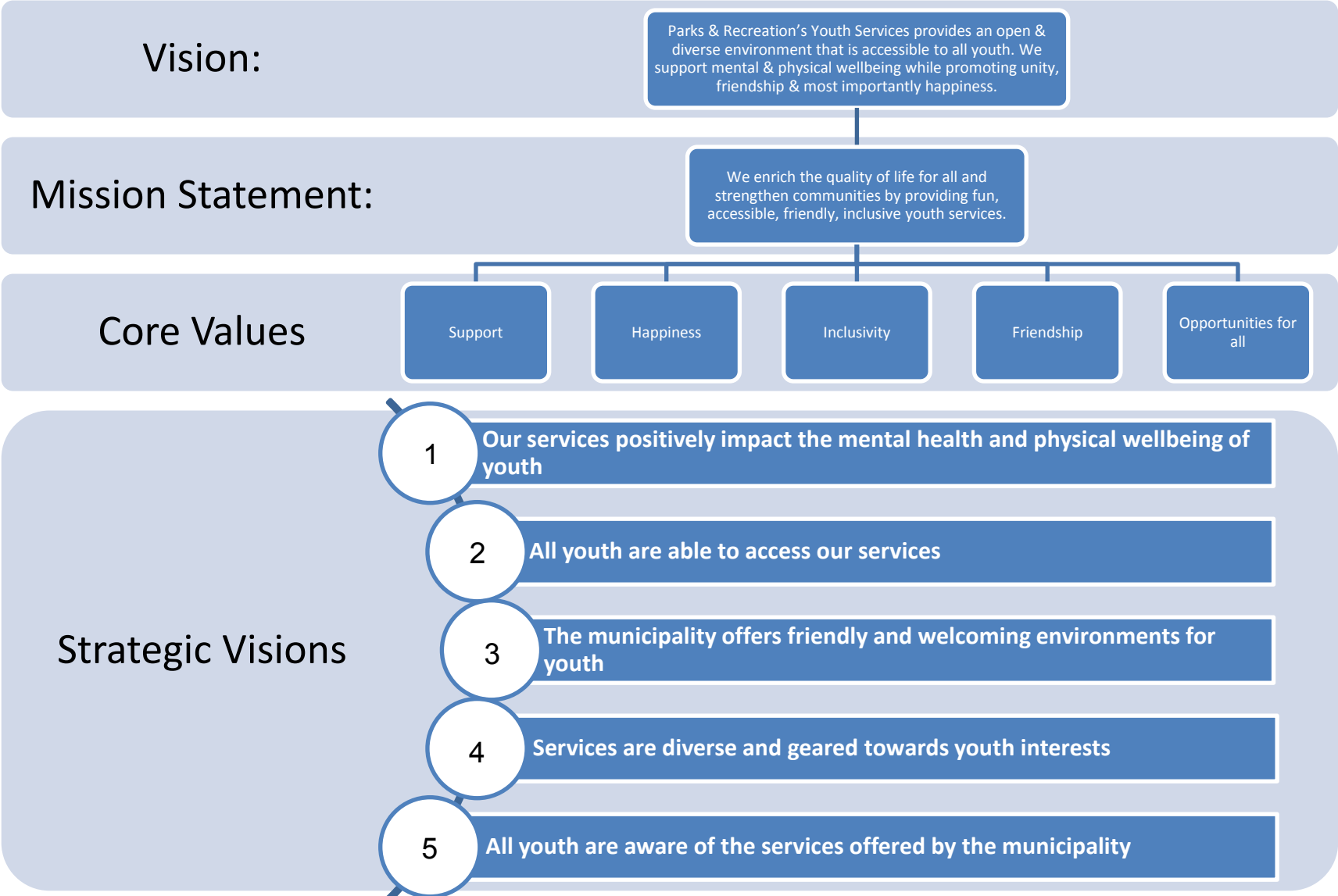
Leadership

Rural and city youth both indicated interest in training and leadership programs, although the majority have not participated. It is shown that this is due largely to not knowing about the programs, and partly due to shyness and anxiety. A concern with participating is the time of day and year these programs are put on; the youth feel they are offered during busy times of the school year or on school in-service days when they would like to spend time with family. Youth also expressed that lack of advertisement was once again an issue in the city and the programs offered are not exciting enough and they feel they do not apply to their lives.

The top program suggestions from the youth are:

Rural	City
First aid	First aid
Job preparation (resume, interview, networking)	Job preparation (resume, interview, networking)
	Wilderness leadership/survival skills
Babysitting course	
Mental health awareness	Work with children
	Mental health awareness

Appendix I: Strategic Plan Flow Chart



Appendix J: Action Plans

Actions for 2017/2018

Item #	Goal/Objective	Description
1.1.1	Objective	To increase training opportunities about Mental Health for staff who work with youth
1.1.2	Objective	Increase awareness of the access and inclusion policy
2.1.1	Objective	Examine youth population data by age, demographic and community and correlate with the youth plan data for each community.
2.1.2	Objective	Explore opportunities to offer no cost drop in programs
2.1.3	Objective	Explore the opportunity to lower program fees for youth programs.
2.1.4	Objective	Explore potential partnerships that would create cost sharing opportunities (internal & external)
2.2.2	Objective	Obtain best practices for working with the LGBTQ community.
2.2.3	Objective	All youth programs obtain regular feedback from youth participants.
2.5	Goal	To expand equipment loan programs.
2.5.1	Objective	Purchase more equipment to loan out on a daily or hourly basis for a variety of activities.
2.5.2	Objective	Evaluate equipment loan program on an annual basis
2.5.3	Objective	Identify partnerships (schools) that could enhance the equipment loan program
2.5.5	Objective	Maintain and update the equipment rental website
3.1.1	Objective	Create opportunities for youth to take ownership and control over the youth spaces
3.1.3	Objective	Create evaluations for youth to provide feedback on recreation spaces and staff
3.4.1	Objective	To create opportunities to celebrate both staff and youth in our programs
4.4.1	Objective	Explore & create program opportunities for ages 16-18 and 19-24
4.4.2	Objective	Explore & create opportunities for “try it” programs
5.1.1	Objective	To create a marketing & social media plan for youth services
5.1.3	Objective	Have the youth team annually inform and influence the marketing and social media plan
5.1.5	Objective	Explore partnerships to assist in promotion of youth services

Actions for 2018/2019

Item #	Goal/Objective	Description
2.1	Goal	To provide low to no cost services
2.2.4	Objective	Build relationships outside of the recreation centres to increase opportunities regarding transportation.
2.3	Goal	To provide and implement various drop-in programs.
2.3.1	Objective	Examine what programs would interest youth and implement
2.3.2	Objective	Offer drop in programs that offer choices of activities at the same time
2.4.2	Objective	Explore options to align programs to transit schedules
2.4.3	Objective	Use park spaces for programming
2.5.4	Objective	Create a budget for equipment purchasing and renewal of current items
3.3.2	Objective	Create an internal evaluation process for youth services (similar to High-5 Quest)
4.1	Goal	To gear multi-sport “try it” programs towards older youth to give them an opportunity to participate
4.1.1	Objective	Each unit should pilot one multi-activity programs for each age range.
4.1.2	Objective	Network and coordinate with different organizations when offering multisport try it programs.
4.2.1	Objective	Promote current art programs to increase participation
4.3	Goal	To make program times specific for needs of different age groups.
4.3.1	Objective	To take into consideration school and work schedules when planning programs for each age group
4.3.2	Objective	Should prioritize youth specific spaces
4.3.3	Objective	Engage the different age groups to determining best program times
4.5.1	Objective	Review the use of High-5 principles and service delivery models/frameworks when offering youth services
5.1.2	Objective	To increase marketing of our programs through social media and in areas where youth hang out.
5.1.4	Objective	To utilize social media on a seasonal basis to assist in the promotion of youth services
5.2.1	Objective	To increase promotion to 13-15 year old age group on the benefits of leadership programs

Actions for 2019/2020

Item #	Goal/Objective	Description
1.1	Goal	To remove barriers of access around mental & physical health
1.1.3	Objective	Create a working culture around mental and physical health
2.2	Goal	To create youth services that are inclusive for all.
2.2.1	Objective	Ensure all full time Recreation staff who encounter youth on a regular basis are trained in youth engagement
2.4	Goal	To ensure there is adequate accessibility of programs through location and transportation
2.4.1	Objective	Increase mobile recreation services (i.e. Rec Van) to make sure youth can access these programs in all areas of the municipality in order to ease the burden of transportation
3.1	Goal	To design physical spaces that are open and welcoming for youth
3.1.2	Objective	Provide free Wi-Fi access in our recreation centres and parks
3.2	Goal	To employ friendly staff that are trained in youth engagement
3.2.1	Objective	Set and enforce customer service standards for employees who interact with youth
3.3	Goal	To look at policies & best practices for service delivery of youth programs
3.4	Goal	To change the culture on how staff view youth
4.2	Goal	To diversify our selection of “non-standard” art program
4.2.3	Objective	Create a list of artist contacts and art services to assist when planning.
4.4	Goal	To offer age-specific youth programs
4.4.3	Objective	Develop mentorship opportunities (designing and delivering programs) for older youth interacting with younger youth as leadership opportunity
5.1	Goal	To target youth with marketing and promotion that is on trend and will catch their attention
5.2	Goal	To promote and clarify the importance of leadership programs

Attachment 3 - Youth Services Plan Brochure

YOUTH

services plan



halifax.ca/youth

HALIFAX

A SPECIAL THANK YOU

Parks & Recreation would like to thank the following Youth Team members:

Mitchell Archibald
Natalie Comeau
Anna Ehler
Kelley O'Toole
Ashlynn Ross
Kailey Webber

Abbey Campbell
Neave Cornick
Alex Gillis
Chris Patry
William VanderSpoel

Their continued input, feedback and direction have been essential in the development of the Youth Plan. Thanks also given to the **1400 youth who participated** in our youth plan workshops and online survey.

Thank you to the staff who supported this project:
Sarah Coley, *Community Recreation Outdoor Coordinator*
Warren Edwards, *Community Recreation Coordinator*
Amanda Reddick, *Community Developer*
Lee Moore, *Manager, Youth Live Program*
Brooke Neily, *Program Assistant*
Sylvia Grigat, *Program Assistant*

Thank you to the Findlay Community Centre & Staff who hosted our monthly Youth Team meetings.

You created a welcoming, friendly space for us to meet each month.



VISION statement

The Municipality's Youth Services provides an open & diverse environment that is accessible to all youth. We support mental & physical wellbeing while promoting unity, friendship & most importantly happiness.
– *We make a difference!*

CORE values

Core values are the foundation for all of the municipality's youth services. They are the rules of engagement to make the mission and vision come true.

The youth services core values are:

- Support
- Happiness
- Inclusivity
- Friendship
- Opportunities for all



MISSION statement

We enrich the quality of life for all and strengthen communities by providing fun, accessible, friendly, and inclusive youth services.

OUR definition of youth

Youth Services in the municipality encompasses ages 13-24.

For the purposes of this report we grouped the ages of 13-15, 16-18 & 19-24.

We recognise the diversity within these age ranges that requires specific and intentional services.

rank
1

STRATEGIC VISION

Our services positively impact the mental health and physical wellbeing of youth

At the Teens Now Talk Expo, 618 youth voted on which Strategic Vision they felt was most important. Of those youth, 35% of them believe this is the most important of all the strategic visions.

GOAL 1.1:

To remove barriers of access around mental & physical health

OUTCOME

Improved quality of life

Mental Health is a very important issue for youth, they recognize how being active and social can lead to a healthy mind. Research supports positive outcomes to youth's mental health when they participate in physical activity, recreation and leadership programs. This Strategic Vision addresses the importance of this issue with youth.

STRATEGIC VISION

rank
2

All youth are able to access our services

At the Teens Now Talk Expo, 618 youth voted on which Strategic Vision they felt was most important. Of those youth, 21% of them believe this is the 2nd most important of all the strategic visions.

GOAL 2.1:

To provide low to no cost services

GOAL 2.2: To create youth services that are inclusive for all youth

GOAL 2.3: To provide and implement various drop-in programs

GOAL 2.4: To ensure there is adequate accessibility of programs through location and transportation

GOAL 2.5: To expand equipment loan programs

OUTCOME

Increased access to youth services

Low cost, inclusive services was the number two priority for youth. Youth want all youth to be able to access our services regardless of their academic, cultural or financial background.

The municipality offers friendly and welcoming environments for youth

At the Teens Now Talk Expo, 618 youth voted on which Strategic Vision they felt was most important. Of those youth, 20% of them believe this is the 3rd most important of all the strategic visions.

GOAL 3.1:

To design physical spaces that are open and welcoming for youth

GOAL 3.2:

To employ friendly staff that are trained in youth engagement

GOAL 3.3:

To change the culture on how staff view youth

OUTCOME

Increased traffic by youth through municipal facilities

Physical spaces (facilities & parks) need to be friendly and welcoming to youth. Most of the youth who responded feel the facilities are currently not welcoming. A lot of youth stated they have anxiety when entering a recreation facility for the first time. Steps need to be taken to educate staff on youth and youth engagement and to create physical spaces that are appealing to young people to ensure youth can walk into any municipal facility and feel welcomed.

Services are diverse and geared towards youth interests

At the Teens Now Talk Expo, 618 youth voted on which Strategic Vision they felt was most important. Of those youth, 15% of them believe this is the 4th most important of all the strategic visions.

GOAL 4.1:

To gear multi-sport “try it” programs towards older youth to give them an opportunity to participate

GOAL 4.2:

To diversify our selection of “non-standard” art programs

GOAL 4.3:

To make program times specific for needs of different age groups

GOAL 4.4:

To offer age-specific youth programs

GOAL 4.5:

To review policies & best practices for service delivery of youth programs

OUTCOME

Improved social connectedness, sense of belonging and community pride

Some youth aged 16-24 feel that they are too old to try new sports or activities. Offering try it programs would be a way to give youth the opportunity to experience new sports and activities they would not normally feel comfortable trying. Youth also stated that they would be interested in having more opportunities to take art classes, specifically around digital media. Digital art programs, illustration and manga are all examples of non-standard art programs that could be offered. Drop in programs that offer more than just a single activity was identified many times.

STRATEGIC VISION

All youth are aware of the services offered by the municipality

At the Teens Now Talk Expo, 618 youth voted on which Strategic Vision they felt was most important. Of those youth, 6% of them believe this is the 5th most important of all the strategic visions.

GOAL 5.1:

To target youth with marketing and promotion that is on trend and will catch their attention

GOAL 5.2:

To promote and clarify the importance of leadership programs

OUTCOME

Increased participation in youth services

The methods of marketing and promotion need to stay ahead of the trends, the municipality needs to market its youth services directly to youth in addition to parents and guardians. Utilizing the youth webpage and social media tools is the best way to spread program and service information. Most of the feedback in the surveys stated that the youth who are taking our programs are very happy with them, but it was made clear that most of the youth did not know what was being offered, how to access them, or the benefits of attending the programs.



