



P.O. Box 1749
Halifax, Nova Scotia
B3J 3A5 Canada

Item No. 11.3.1
Halifax Regional Council
June 8, 2021

TO: Mayor Savage and Members of Halifax Regional Council

ORIGINAL SIGNED

SUBMITTED BY: _____
For Lisa Blackburn, Chair, Community Planning & Economic Development
Standing Committee

DATE: May 26, 2021

SUBJECT: **Multi-Service Youth Centre Evaluation**

ORIGIN

May 20, 2021 meeting of the Community Planning & Economic Development Standing Committee, Item 12.1.2.

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

Halifax Regional Municipality Charter
Section 79A

(1) Subject to subsections (2) to (4), the Municipality may only spend money for municipal purposes if
(a) the expenditure is included in the Municipality's operating budget or capital budget or is otherwise authorized by the Municipality;

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Halifax Regional Council:

1. Approve the continuation of the collaborative multi-agency, Multi-Service Youth Centre (The Den) at Acadia School in Lower Sackville;
2. Direct the Chief Administrative Officer to continue to seek opportunities to establish multi-services youth centres in other areas of the municipality based on the approach outlined in the discussion section of the April 6, 2021 report;
3. Direct the Chief Administrative Officer to adopt the multi-service youth centre model as outlined in this report as the preferred model in the delivery of programs and services to youth in the municipality;
and
4. Subject to approval of funds in the 2022/23 budget, the confirmation of a suitable location and the commitment of the stakeholders, approve the creation of a multi-service youth centre in the Spryfield/Herring Cove area.

BACKGROUND

The Community Planning & Economic Development Standing Committee received a staff recommendation report dated April 6, 2021, at their May 20, 2021 special meeting respecting the evaluation of the multi-service youth centre at Acadia School in Lower Sackville (the Den). For further information on the background of this item, refer to the staff report dated April 6, 2021.

DISCUSSION

The Community Planning & Economic Development Standing Committee reviewed the April 6, 2021 staff report at their May 20, 2021 special meeting. Following a discussion of the item, the Standing Committee approved the recommendation as outlined in the "Recommendation" portion of this report as outlined above. For further discussion on this item, refer to the staff report dated April 6, 2021.

Several Councillors requested that staff circulate a list of communities for which staff is considering in the rollout of the next round of multi-service youth centres, to which staff proposed to undertake to collect and provide this information to as a handout to Regional Council.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Refer to the staff report dated April 6, 2021.

RISK CONSIDERATION

Refer to the staff report dated April 6, 2021.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Meetings of the Community Planning & Economic Development Standing Committee are open to public attendance and members of the public are invited to address the Standing Committee for up to five (5) minutes during the Public Participation portion of the meeting. Meetings are live webcast on Halifax.ca. The agenda, reports, video, and minutes of the Community Planning & Economic Development Standing Committee are posted on Halifax.ca.

For further information on Community Engagement as it relates to this item, refer to the staff report dated April 6, 2021.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

Refer to the staff report dated April 6, 2021.

ALTERNATIVES

The Standing Committee did not discuss alternatives. Refer to the staff report dated April 6, 2021.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 – Staff Recommendation Report dated April 6, 2021

If the report is released to the public, a copy can be obtained by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 902.490.4210, or Fax 902.490.4208.

Report Prepared by: Simon Ross-Siegel, Legislative Assistant, Office of the Municipal Clerk, 902.490.6519



P.O. Box 1749
Halifax, Nova Scotia
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Attachment 1
Community Planning & Economic Development Standing Committee
Special Meeting
May 20, 2021

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

-Original Signed-

SUBMITTED BY:

Denise Schofield, Executive Director, Parks & Recreation

-Original Signed-

Jacques Dubé, Chief Administrative Officer

DATE: April 6, 2021

SUBJECT: Multi-Service Youth Centre Evaluation

ORIGIN

March 6, 2018 motion of Halifax Regional Council: MOVED by Councillor Craig, seconded by Councillor Blackburn;

THAT Halifax Regional Council approve the following:

1. Subject to approval of funds in the 2018/19 budget, approve a one-year pilot project to establish a collaborative multi-agency, multi-service Youth Centre at Acadia School in Sackville, to be developed in three phases as outlined in the discussion section of the staff report dated February 5, 2018.
2. That this report be forwarded to the Budget Committee for its meeting on March 28, 2018 to provide supplemental information for parking lot considerations (clauses 2a and 2b) as outlined below:
 - a. Allocation of \$30,000 in the 2018/19 operating budget for Parks and Recreation to fund a 25 hour per week Project Coordinator position, to oversee the pilot program;
 - b. A onetime allocation of \$35,000 in the 2018/19 operating budget for Parks & Recreation for renovations and fix up costs; and
 - c. Allocation of \$10,000 in the building operations budget for Corporate & Customer Services to fund janitorial services for the additional square footage.
3. Should funding for the pilot program be approved, direct the Chief Administration Officer (CAO) to return to Community Planning & Economic Standing Committee (CPED) with an evaluation report to determine future scope and funding for the program.
4. Direct the CAO to continue to seek opportunities to establish multi-services youth centres in other areas of the municipality.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

RECOMMENDATIONS ON PAGE 2

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

Halifax Regional Municipality Charter
Section 79A

- (1) Subject to subsections (2) to (4), the Municipality may only spend money for municipal purposes if
 - (a) the expenditure is included in the Municipality's operating budget or capital budget or is otherwise authorized by the Municipality;

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Community Planning & Economic Standing Committee recommend that Halifax Regional Council:

1. Approve the continuation of the collaborative multi-agency, Multi-Service Youth Centre (The Den) at Acadia School in Lower Sackville;
2. Direct the CAO to continue to seek opportunities to establish multi-services youth centres in other areas of the municipality based on the approach outlined in the discussion section of this report;
3. Direct the CAO to adopt the multi-service youth centre model as outlined in this report as the preferred model in the delivery of programs and services to youth in the municipality; and
4. Subject to approval of funds in the 2022/23 budget, the confirmation of a suitable location and the commitment of the stakeholders, approve the creation of a multi-service youth centre in the Spryfield/Herring Cove area.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2018, Halifax Regional Council approved a one-year pilot project to establish a collaborative multi-agency, multi-service youth centre (MSYC) at Acadia School in Lower Sackville. This report is the evaluation of that year long, youth led, pilot project.

Having met the goals used to evaluate the effectiveness of the centre's operations, it has been concluded that the pilot project was a success. The evaluation findings and challenges faced during the pilot project provide critical feedback to help ensure the success of future locations.

This report recommends support for the continuation of the MSYC (the Den), and that the youth centre model be adopted in other communities throughout HRM. To select the next location for a MSYC, the decision will be based on the level of deprivation and demand analysis, jurisdictional scan of current gaps in youth services, and youth population data as outlined in the Site Selection Process (Attachment C). Based on that assessment, it is recommended that Spryfield/Herring Cove area be selected as the next community to receive a multi-service youth centre, subject to budgetary funding.

BACKGROUND

On February 7, 2017, Halifax Regional Council approved the Community Facility Master Plan 2 (CFMP2) and directed staff to incorporate the recommendations in annual business plans. On February 23, 2017, the Youth Services Plan was approved by Community Planning & Economic Standing Committee (CPED). These documents were used as guides to inform policy and operational decisions on facility development and on the provision of youth services and programs in Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM). There was an alignment between the priorities identified by youth in the Youth Services Plan, and with the CFMP2 requirement that "consideration be given to existing, potential, planned and current facilities". In the Youth Services plan, the youth spoke of the need for existing facilities and spaces to be more youth friendly.

Other research conducted prior to determining the feasibility of this pilot project were as follows:

- A scan of youth programs in the Lower Sackville area
- Results of a focus group conducted with youth
- Results of surveys of youth in Lower Sackville
- Emerging trends in the delivery of youth services in HRM
- Discussions with the YMCA, IWK, Laing House, Boys and Girls Club, and the Sackville Library

Upon completion of this extensive review, it was recommended that Regional Council approve a one-year pilot project to establish a collaborative multi-agency, multi-service Youth Centre at Acadia School in Lower Sackville.

The goals of the MSYC's pilot project were:

1. To identify and assess the benefits, opportunities and challenges of establishing a multi-service youth centre in Lower Sackville; and,
2. To provide information and guidance on establishing multi-service youth centers in other areas of the municipality.

This report provides a summary of the pilot program and assessment of the pilot in order to recommend continuation of the program as well as implementation of future MSYC programs.

DISCUSSION

A year long pilot project for the Multi Service Youth Centre was approved by Regional Council in 2018. This pilot project was comprised of three phases:

- Phase One (first 3 months) – Development & building of the program
- Phase Two (over 9 months) – Implementation Phase
- Phase Three (last 3 months) – Evaluation and Report

Phase One – Development & Building the Program

The Lower Sackville MSYC (herein referred to The Den) operated out of the Acadia Centre, an HRM owned and operated facility that houses recreation offices and program space, HRM Solid Waste and the Halifax Public Library. A portion of the lower floor was chosen as a suitable location for a dedicated space to operate the centre.

To prepare for the pilot project, youth focus groups and surveys were completed with the youth in Lower Sackville. The focus groups and surveys asked youth about services and programs they accessed and their vision of The Den. HRM Staff completed a scan of youth programs to identify any gaps in services for youth in Lower Sackville.

Phase Two – Implementation Phase

During the implementation phase, stakeholder organizations that had an interest and capacity were able to work together to offer a range of programs, activities and services for youth in the Lower Sackville area. This was due in large measure to the location of the Acadia School, as it was already a natural gathering place for youth in the community. This location, combined with a collaborative program and service delivery model, served as a multi agency, multi services youth centre prototype by which future collaborative initiatives can be based. The stakeholder organizations who participated in this initiative included: the IWK Community Health Team, the Boys and Girls Club, Laing House, the YMCA, Cobequid Youth Health Centre, POSSE (Peer Outreach, Support Services and Education), MacPhee Centre, Eating Disorder Nova Scotia and HRM Parks & Recreation.

The organizations who participated in this collaborative initiative shared the goals laid out in HRM's Youth

Services Plan. Moreover, the collaborative model supported diversity and inclusion through coordinated programming; better opportunities for partnership by integrating geographical service areas; strengthening of financial management and accountability; and improving connections in coordinated marketing.

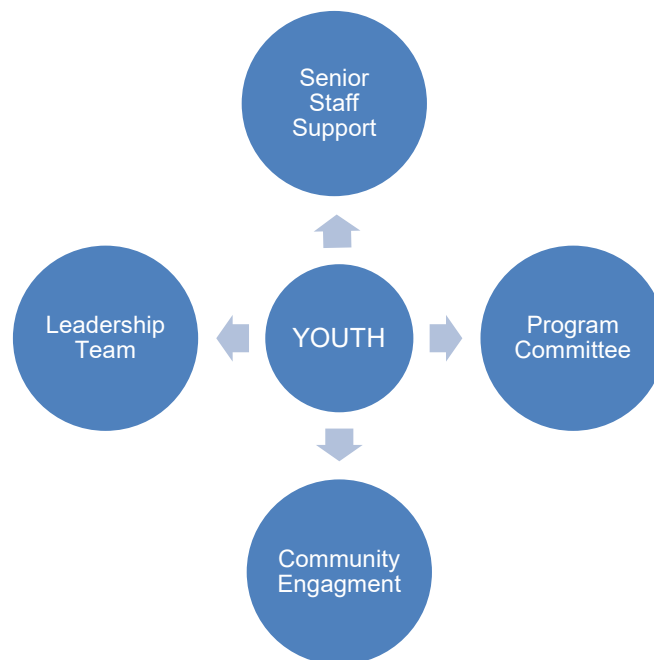
Additionally, all the stakeholder organizations had experience in youth led, staff supported initiatives. All of them were open to including youth at the “decision making table” where program offerings, scheduling, youth engagement, etc. were to be developed.

The stakeholder organizations combined resources and expertise to deliver programs and services to Sackville’s most vulnerable youth. Throughout the pilot, formal and informal support systems were created amongst the service providers to support youth who were having difficulties coping or who needed additional assistance. Youth at the Den were consulted on all major decisions, including the design and naming of the centre, the establishment of community standards and ideas about the types of services and programs that would be offered.

The delivery of programs and services for youth in Lower Sackville has moved to a de-centralized collaborative model that is adaptable to fiscal and resource constraints. Youth program/service models and modes of delivery are, by design, more flexible to allow for adaptations over the medium and long-term longevity of MSYC models. Several youth serving organizations across HRM and Nova Scotia have reached out to youth “where they are” and have delivered services, when and how they are needed, in satellite locations, typically in schools or community centres or via technology.

Some of the youth serving organizations who have pioneered this trend include the Department of Community Services, HRM Parks and Recreation, Halifax Regional Centre for Education’s Schools Plus Program, Community Health Boards, as well as the Boys and Girls Clubs.

The members of this model included the Leadership Team, Program Committee, Senior Staff Support and Community Engagement.



The **Leadership team** are the *decision makers*. The members of the Leadership team were comprised of an oversight group made up of the Stakeholder Organization Senior Managers or Executive Directors who were able to make decisions on behalf of their organization.

The **Program Committee** are the *operators*. The Program Committee was an operational group, made up of drop-in and program staff. They were comprised of front-line staff of the stakeholder organizations. They have specialized training and were qualified to work with vulnerable youth.

The **Senior Staff** are the *overseers*. The Senior Staff team was made up of HRM Recreation staff. **Community Engagement** are the *supporters*. Community engagement was done with all stakeholder organizations' support.

Community-based service providers across HRM, who support marginalized/vulnerable youth, have found success when collaborating and coordinating resources in the delivery of youth programs and services. A collaborative multi-agency, multi-service model lends itself well to achieving better outcomes for youth. Clear roles and expectations amongst service providers and youth, including an agreement on desired outcomes, has shown to improve a youth's chances of successfully transitioning into adulthood.

Phase Three – Pilot Project Evaluation

The Den served the youth in the Sackville area, with an average of 35 youth participates attending each night, with a total of 161 individual youth who were regular participants. The Den participants ranged in age from 13 to 17 years old. There were 47 youth who presented mental health challenges, 16 identified as racialized persons, 11 identified a Mi'kmaq Indigenous, while 3 were Francophone. There were 22 LGBTQ2S+ youth and 16 youth with a disability. There were 81 youth identified as male, 73 as female, 4 identified as non-binary and 2 as fluid (See Appendix A).

The Den provided opportunities for youth to socialize, while receiving the benefits of having many services and activities available to them. This had both positive and challenging outcomes. There were many learnings that were discovered during the pilot project, which will be taken into consideration for future MSYCs (see appendix A).

The pilot project was evaluated on six (6) themes:

1. The removal of barriers of access around mental and physical health
2. The provision and implementation of various drop in programs
3. The creation of youth services, inclusive for all youth
4. Designing a physical space that is open and welcoming to youth
5. The development of policies and best practices for service delivery of youth programs
6. The use of partnerships to deliver non-municipal run programs and services

Evaluation Theme 1→The removal of barriers of access around mental and physical health

Of the 161 youth who participated at the Den during the pilot project, 47 youth presented mental health challenges. Staff addressed barriers to mental and physical health by working with youth service providers to offer programming that directly helped with both the mental and physical health of the youth.

The summary of services offered by HRM and the stakeholder organizations are as follows:

Parks & Recreation

- Offered a dedicated, safe youth space to socialize with friends and access the external services.
- Free access to the Sackville Sports Stadium for physical wellness.

Laing House

- *Friendzone*: An opportunity for peer support between youth with mental health difficulties. Ages 15-18.
- *Peer Support Training*: A chance to learn skills and tools to help support peers with mental health challenges.

MacPhee Centre for Creative Learning

- Drop-In: Art program for youth to get creative.

IWK Community Health Team

- *How to Help a Friend with Anxiety*: Skills-based workshop for youth to support friends with anxiety.
- *Mental Health First Aid for Youth*: Program to increase mental health literacy and provided skills required to support youth in order to provide support to other youth who were experiencing a mental health crisis.

Cobequid Youth Health Centre

- *Formal meeting requests*: 174 appointments for one-to-one support.
Topics addressed: mental health, resources, safe space to talk, homelessness, sexual assault, child protection issues (currently or in the past), drug or alcohol use, school support, healthy relationships, healthy boundaries, food support, foodbank, transportation, suicidal thinking, self-harm and probation support.
- *Informal meetings*: 549 conversations.
Topics addressed: Supportive conversations, educational conversation, relationship building, connecting to resources, gaining trust, healthy boundaries & relationships and problem solving.

Peer Outreach Support Services and Education (P.O.S.S.E)

- Harm reduction and human rights training for youth ages 15-24.

Evaluation Theme 2→The provision and implementation of various drop in programs

The Den addressed the offering of drop-in programs in two (2) separate ways:

- i. Stakeholder organizations led various types of programs during drop-in hours. For example: Friend Zone (mental health), MacPhee (art), and YMCA (community action team)
- ii. For youth who did not want to participate in structured programs, HRM offered 575 hours of unstructured programs including self-care nights, paint nights, video games, pool table games, etc.

Drop-in Program Challenges:

Several stakeholder organizations withdrawing their support during the pilot period caused concern regarding the future of the project. This led to staffing gaps in the drop-in programs, however, HRM was able to fill the gaps by providing additional staff to ensure drop-in hours were fully staffed. This was imperative to the success of the pilot project, in order to ensure that there was not an interruption in the services/program's offerings for the youth. There is no way to ensure that all stakeholder organizations will stay with the program for the long term, therefore, HRM will be prepared to fill the gaps when required. This would be a temporary solution and staff would investigate new stakeholder opportunities, if required.

Evaluation Theme 3→The creation of youth services, inclusive for all youth

Staff developed a process in order to provide the opportunity for youth to self-identify. Having access to this information allowed staff to properly support the youth while in the space; such as the identification of pronouns and the provision of a safe and inclusive universal washroom.

Community standards guidelines, developed by the youth, helped to create a safe space that the youth required. These community standards became the guiding document to help manage behaviours in the Centre.

Challenges:

Outside of the hours of operation, some of the Den's regular youth started to congregate outside the building. Some concerns were identified by staff and residents who were fearful of youth hanging out unsupervised, and there was a perception that they may create problems on the property. While staff had a plan to address behaviour inside the building, they did not have the capacity to monitor behaviours happening outside of the facility. In collaboration with the youth, staff designed a behavior tracking method that resulted in fair and equal rules to address inappropriate behaviour, while inside the facility; which also reflected behaviours outside the facility. The result of the behaviour tracking method for inappropriate behavior was that many of the issues that were occurring outside Acadia School ceased.

Evaluation Theme 4→Designing a physical space that is open and welcoming to youth

Having a dedicated physical space designed with youth input, allowed staff to create an environment of safety and inclusion. The youth identified priority items to have in the space, items that helped to reflect diverse backgrounds and cultures. Examples are a pride flag, indigenous art, chalkboard wall, comfortable places to sit and a disco ball.

To ensure the space continued to be welcoming, staff hosted monthly meetings with the youth, which provided an opportunity for suggestions and allowed for a space to talk freely about what the youth thought would provide an ideal, inclusive and welcoming space. This advisory role helped reduce behaviour issues by allowing the youth to create ownership and have a "buy in" into the Den.

Challenges:

Several challenges were identified with the design of the space during the pilot project, including appropriate washroom access for participants. During the pilot, one of the existing female washrooms was temporarily converted into a gender-neutral washroom however the converted washroom caused some concerns for other building occupants. This has since been resolved as a new, purpose-built universal washroom has been installed on the upper level of the building adjacent to the library. This universal washroom is gender inclusive and barrier free by design.

Evaluation Theme 5→The development of policies and best practices for service delivery of youth programs

Youth and staff created community guidelines and identified shared values for the centre. They co-created a conflict resolution process. Youth participated in program planning and attended monthly meetings where discussions took place on a wide variety of centre topics, such as community standards, issue resolution, brainstorming program and activity ideas as well as sharing highlights and successes.

Operations at the Centre as well as procedures and forms that were developed were created by the stakeholder organizations with input from the youth. Organizations reached agreement about the information needed to be collected and the type of information that could be shared between organizations. Further, a protocol was developed to facilitate a referral process and communication between staff.

Evaluation Theme 6→The use of partnerships to deliver non-municipal run programs and services

To prepare for the pilot project, youth were consulted about the programs and services that were available and accessible for youth in the Lower Sackville area. A jurisdictional scan of youth programs was completed, identifying the gaps within the programs and services for youth. Staff then recruited the necessary stakeholder organizations in order to assist youth by providing their expertise at the Den.

Evaluation Summary and Future MSYC's

Having met the goals used to evaluate the effectiveness of the centre's operations, it has been concluded that the pilot project was a success. The challenges faced during the pilot project were addressed with a more detailed evaluation, learnings and considerations from the experiences. The evaluation, learnings and considerations will be taken into consideration for future MSYC's in HRM. (See Appendix B)

Future site selections for MSYC's will need to be based on the level of deprivation and demand analysis, jurisdictional scan of current gaps in youth services, and youth population data. After reviewing this data, it is recommended that Spryfield/Herring Cove be selected as the next community to receive a Multi-Service Youth Centre. An estimated implementation timeline of Spryfield/Herring Cove's MSYC is shown below:

Dates	Actions
2020	Community selection
2021	Select site-specific location, request for partners, youth engagement, site preparation
2022-2023	MSYC begins operations, pending budget availability

All specific site location(s) will take into consideration: transportation, accessibility, availability of dedicated space and will be selected based on consultation with youth and service providers in the selected community. If these conditions aren't met, then staff will use the site selection criteria to identify an alternative location (See Appendix C).

The following steps were taken to select Spryfield/Herring Cove as the next site for a MSYC:

Step 1:	Step 2:	Step 3:	Step 4:	Step 5
Selected communities with high levels of deprivation and demand	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reviewed current youth services being offered in selected communities Identified which communities have low youth services Selected communities with the largest gaps in youth services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reviewed youth population data from communities selected in step 2 Selected communities with high youth population 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confirmed communities identified in step 2 have partnership potential 	Selected Spryfield/Herring Cove as the next community to receive a multi-service youth centre

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The Den's budget came from the 2018/19 operating budget which allocated the following funds to support the pilot project.

Multi-Service Youth Centre Pilot Project (The Den)	
2018/19 Parks & Recreation Budget	
Youth Centre Coordinator position	\$30,000
4 casual staff positions	\$25,000
Site/space renovations	\$35,000
Acadia Centre's Building Monitor (Increased hours)	\$10,000
Programming costs	\$500
2018/19 Corporate & Customer Services Budget	
Janitorial Services	\$10,000
Total:	\$110,500

The financial requirements for the Den were met through the \$75,000 approved by Regional Council for the one-year pilot project and through the Parks & Recreation operating budget, which was allocated for Youth casual wages (\$35,000) and program supplies (\$500).

To fully support the continuation of the Den, an ongoing yearly allocation of \$85,000 in the operating budget for Parks & Recreation is required with \$75,000 of these funds to fund five casual positions for the drop-in program and building monitor responsibilities at Acadia School in Lower Sackville and \$10,000 to fund Corporate & Customer Services custodial services.

In 2022/23, in order to support expansion of the MYSC to the recommended location of Spryfield/Herring Cove, additional funding of approximately \$110,500 will be required. This will be considered in the 2022/23 operating budget. The four-year financial impact for the two locations can be found in the table below;

Four Years Financial Impact

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
Operating – Cost Centre – D315	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025
Acadia School (Den)	85,000	85,000	85,000	85,000
Spryfield/ Herring Cove		110,500	85,500	85,500
Total Cost	85,000	195,500	170,500	170,500

RISK CONSIDERATION

1. There is a risk that the multi-service youth centre will not be able to have adequate partner support from other youth-serving organizations. Without this support, the municipality will not be fulfilling the multi-service approach in supporting youth. The risk of not obtaining youth service provider support is considered low based on the municipality's reputation with respect to youth programming and service delivery. To mitigate this risk, staff will conduct an asset-mapping process to determine potential partners.
2. There is a risk of not being able to find a suitable location and partnership support for a future MSYC in Spryfield/Herring Cove. For the MSYC model to be successful, staff recommends a dedicated space be chosen. To mitigate this risk, staff would work with community partners in to improve the collective capabilities to achieve a location and sufficient partners.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

As part of the Youth Services Plan (YSP), HRM consulted with youth in the Lower Sackville area who participated in focus groups and completed surveys prior to the opening of The Den. The Den participants and stakeholder organizations participated in the evaluation/review of the pilot project.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

No environmental implications were identified.

ALTERNATIVES

Community Planning & Economic Standing Committee (CPED) could recommend that Halifax Regional Council:

1. Not continue with the collaborative multi-agency model at The Den.
2. Suspend consideration of future MYSC locations and amend the proposed Multi-Services Youth Centre model.

ATTACHMENTS

Appendix A: The Den Pilot Project Participation Data

Appendix B: The Den Pilot Project Evaluation, Learnings, and Considerations

Appendix C: Future Site Selection Process

A copy of this report can be obtained online at halifax.ca or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 902.490.4210.

Report Prepared by: Becca Bishop, Community Developer, 902-233-8129
Heather MacLeod, Area Manager, 902-869-4208
Lee Moore, Manager, Youth Programs, 902.222.9897

APPENDIX A: THE DEN PILOT PROJECT PARTICIPATION DATA

The following information provides a breakdown of drop-in information and programs that were offered by the Stakeholder Organization from December 2018 to October 2019. Through consultation with the youth, the following hours of operation were implemented: Monday /Tuesday/ Wednesday 2:30pm - 8:30pm.

The table below shows how many times youth accessed services provided at The Den during the pilot project. The main draw to bring youth to the space was the drop-in program. There was a total of 161 individual youth who were regular participants of the drop-in program offered by HRM Recreation; with an average drop-in rate of 35 participants per day.

	HRM Recreation	Laing House	YMCA	IWK Community Health Team	Cobequid Youth Health Centre	POSSE	MacPhee House
Drop in Hours	575	462	231		180		
Program Hours		52		22	549	112	60
# of times youth accessed the services at the Den	161*	75	50	19	723		20

* 161 individual youth who were regular participants at the Den.

The Den participants ranged in age from 13 to 17 years old. The in-take process gave youth the option of self-identifying in the below categories:

- 47 youth presented with mental health challenges
- 16 youth identified as racialized persons
- 11 youth identified as Mi'kmaq Indigenous
- 3 youth were Francophone
- 22 youth identified LGBTQ2S+
- 16 youth identified with having a disability
- 81 youth identified as male
- 73 youth identified as female
- 4 youth identified as non-binary
- 2 youth identified as fluid

Programs that were offered at the Den by the stakeholder organizations included:

- **MacPhee Centre for Creative Learning**
Drop-In: Art program for youth to get creative!
- **Laing House**
Friendzone: An opportunity for peer support between youth with mental health difficulties. Ages 15-18.
Peer Support Training: A chance to learn skills and tools to help support peers with mental health challenges
- **IWK Community Health Team**
How to Help a Friend with Anxiety: Skills-based workshop for youth to support friends with anxiety.

Mental Health First Aid for Youth: Program to increase mental health literacy and provide skills needed to support youth to provide support to other youth who are in a mental health crisis.

- **Cobequid Youth Health Centre**

Formal meeting requests – 1 to 1 support = 174 appointments

Topics included: mental health, resources, safe space to talk, most first-time seeking support, homelessness, sexual assault, child protection issues (currently or in the past), drug or alcohol use, school support, healthy relationships, healthy boundaries, food support, foodbank, transportation, suicidal thinking, self-harm, and probation support.

Informal conversations = 549

Topics included: Helpful conversations, educational conversation, rapport building, connecting to resources, gaining trust, healthy boundaries and relationships. Problem solving. Resources provided

- **P.O.S.S.E**

Peer Outreach Support Services and Education: Harm reduction and human rights training for youth ages 15-24

Youth-led, staff supported activities were implemented to supplement and enhance programs offered by the stakeholder organizations. Each month youth and staff met to decide on the activities that youth could run and lead during the drop-in hours. A monthly calendar of the youth led activities was posted on The Den’s web page and at the Centre. Some examples of youth-led programs include: self-care night, board game night, karaoke night and cookie fest.

Youth Participants

The three youth profiles listed below represent typical participants at the Den:

Profile	Support Accessed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 15-year-old male with mental health challenges • Negative experiences with the formal mental health system • Feels uncomfortable accessing services in a clinical setting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attends mental health related programming • Accesses free drop-in counselling • Referred to Laing House
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 18-year-old female • Lives between friends’ houses • Does not attend school • Lack of adult and parental role models 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accesses The Den for food and support from staff • Referred to Phoenix Youth Housing • Referred to Youth Live
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 13-year-old youth who uses the pronouns they/them • Bullied at school • Wants to meet new friends in a safe environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reports that they feel safe at The Den • Attends drop-in programs every night • Participates in the MacPhee Art program

APPENDIX B: THE DEN PILOT PROJECT EVALUATION, LEARNINGS AND CONSIDERATIONS

An evaluation of the pilot project was completed with participating organizations, youth participants and HRM staff.

Below is a summary of the learnings and considerations from the pilot project:

Category	Learnings & Considerations
Youth Centre Facility Options	<p>Learnings: To guide decision making and to source the “right fit” for a Youth Centre, the process outlined in <i>Appendix N</i> in the <i>Community Facility Master Plan 2</i>, was followed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additionally, in choosing a site for the Youth Centre, consideration was given to “where youth naturally gathered” in the community.
	<p>Considerations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The site for a Youth Centre should be in or near areas where youth naturally congregate/gather in a community; • Appendix N in the CFMP2 should be followed when assessing facility options for a Youth Centre; • Preference should be given to locations that can accommodate a dedicated youth space; • Concurrent with following the process outlined in the CFMP2, a scan of youth programs and services offered in the area should be carried out to capture what programs/services are offered to youth in the area. The scan would identify any gaps in youth programs/services. • A cross section of youth in the area would be consulted to determine if their needs are being met by existing service providers. • Gaps in services/programs for youth in a community would inform the Request for Proposals (RFP). • Preference should be given to locations that can accommodate a dedicated youth space.
Community Scan & Youth Consultation	<p>Learnings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By following the process outlined in the CFMP2, a scan of youth programs and services offered in the Sackville area provided insight about the gaps in youth services/programming. • A cross section of youth in the Sackville area were also consulted. The consultations and scan identified that marginalized youth in the Sackville area were underserved.
	<p>Considerations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To determine where there may be service/program deficiencies for youth in a community, a scan of what is available should be carried out before the RFP process for programs and services is initiated. • Consultations with youth should be carried out concurrent with the scan.
Selection of Organizations	<p>Learnings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the planning stages, and for different reasons, three organizations were not able to fully commit to requirements of participating in the Multi-Services Youth Centre model resulting in their withdrawal from the pilot. However, three different organizations joined after the Pilot program started.
	<p>Considerations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is recommended that once the community scan and youth consultations are complete and when a location for the Centre has been determined, that a Request for proposal be carried out to identify service providers/community organizations that can deliver programs and/or services, that can meet resource and budget expectations.

<p>Signing the Terms of Reference & Licence Agreement</p>	<p>Learnings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Despite involving all the organizations in the drafting of the Terms of Reference (TOR) and License Agreement (LA), there were significant challenges in getting “sign off” on the final versions of the documents. • Some organizations did not sign the TOR and LA until the pilot was well underway, while others had not signed the agreements by the end of the pilot. <p>Considerations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is recommended that the terms and conditions of participating in any future Multi-Service Youth Centre's be incorporated into a request for proposals or expression of interest. This would mean that acceptance/approval to join the stakeholder table or to deliver a program or service through the Centre, would be conditional on organizations agreeing to the Terms and Conditions and License Agreement.
<p>Staffing the Centre</p>	<p>Learnings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff working at the Centre came with different skill sets and training. • All staff from different stakeholder organizations had different job descriptions; this created confusion around roles and responsibilities. • A single job description was developed for staff working at the Centre. The job description clarified position expectations and specified qualifications. • There were significant challenges in staffing the drop-in hours, therefore, in February 2019, HRM took over the responsibility of staffing all drop-in hours. • All new staff were provided with an orientation on the Centre's operations and procedures before being approved to work. <p>Considerations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A staffing model is required, outlining the staffing expectations and levels for each organization. • To clarify position expectations, roles and required qualifications, one job description should be created for staff working at the Centre. • A baseline of staff training should be agreed upon by stakeholder organizations and be delivered to all staff working at the Centre. • All new staff should be provided with an orientation on the centres operations and procedures, before being approved to work.
<p>Hours of Operations</p>	<p>Learnings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget was one factor in determining hours of operations for the Centre. • Other considerations included: capacity and availability of building monitors, operational hours of other tenants in the building, reasonable hours for staff and timing of other programs in the community. • Of equal importance was the correlation between the number of hours per week needed for staff to build trust and relationships with youth. In consultation with the youth, it was determined that The Den needed to be open for a minimum of three times per week. <p>Considerations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To maximize the positive influence that staff have on the health and wellbeing of youth, it is recommended that a multi-service Centre be open three to four days per week. • The specific days and times of operations should be determined by the youth.
<p>Community Outreach & In-Kind contributions</p>	<p>Learnings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To increase the profile of The Den and to foster good relations with the community, businesses and organizations in Sackville and its surrounding areas were invited to a meet and greet breakfast at The Den. • Additionally, staff reached out to organizations in the community to raise awareness about the Centre.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For weeks after these initiatives, there continued to be regular donations of food and other items being dropped off at the Centre. This continued until the Den closed due to Covid 19. <p>Considerations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To foster good community relations, HRM staff should create a marketing and outreach strategy to raise awareness about the Centre.
<p>Youth Led Approach & Centre Operations</p>	<p>Learnings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youth at The Den were consulted on all major decisions, including the design and naming of the Centre and the establishment of community standards. The youth contributed ideas about the types of services and programs that would be offered. Operations at the Centre, as well as procedures and forms that were created by the stakeholder organizations with input from youth. Organizations reached agreement about the information needed to be collected and the type of information that could be shared between organizations. Further, a protocol was developed to facilitate a referral process and communication between staff. Youth and staff created community guidelines and identified shared values for the Centre. They co-created a conflict resolution process. Youth participated in program planning and attended monthly meetings where discussions took place on a wide variety of Centre topics like community standards, issue resolution, brainstorming program and activity ideas, sharing highlights and successes. <p>Considerations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> That a youth led approach is necessary to support the MYSC model.
<p>Youth Centre Coordinator</p>	<p>Learnings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A Youth Centre Coordinator was hired to oversee day-to-day operations at the Centre, as well as lead the evaluation and review process for the Pilot. Additional responsibilities included coordinating and delivering training for staff, coordinating the Centre's program schedule, community outreach, and the development and application of policies and procedures. <p>Considerations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If the MSYC model is adopted as the preferred model for the municipality to deliver programs and services to vulnerable youth in the HRM, it is recommended that the Community Developer for Youth oversee the implementation of the MSYC model across the municipality. Each new MYSC would have a dedicated Youth Centre Coordinator to oversee the day-to-day operations
<p>Physical Space and Amenities</p>	<p>Learnings:</p> <p>The Den made use of four spaces, a programming room, an office space, a large open multipurpose space and a private room for counselling and one on one conversations. The multipurpose space was divided into activity areas, this layout allowed for less crowding in one area and reduced conflict amongst youth. When conflict occurred in one area, youth could be directed to another area.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To control access to the space, a door bell was installed at the entrance to The Den. Amenities that were available to youth, free of charge, included: TV, video games, pool table, water, program calendar, pregnancy tests, condoms, Netflix, Wi-Fi, a phone charging station, food, microwave, mini fridge, toaster oven and a kettle.

Considerations:

- In planning the layout of space for a MSYC, a dedicated entrance/exit door to the outside is advised.
- Consideration should be given to having washrooms located in the space.
- Gender neutral washrooms are also recommended.
- A separate area should be allocated for private meetings/consultations with youth. These meetings/consultations are often spontaneous, this means that scheduling a shared space by appointment could result in a missed opportunity to support a youth.
- Consideration should be given to the layout and flow of the space. Having different activity areas will attract a variety of youth. Design and layout can mitigate the potential for conflict amongst various youth.
- Controlled access to the space is advised as it allows staff to monitor *who* is in the space and how many youths are in the space at any time.
- Access to a small kitchen and water source would allow for increased life skill programming.
- Locations should have two entrances/exits in case of emergency.

APPENDIX C: FUTURE SITE SELECTION PROCESS

The following process is to be used to select multi-service youth centre locations:

Step 1:	Step 2:	Step 3:	Step 4:	Step 5
Select communities with high levels of deprivation and demand	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review current youth services being offered in selected communities Identify which communities have low youth services Select communities with the largest gaps in youth services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review youth population data from communities selected in step 2 Select communities with high youth population 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confirm community identified in step 3 have partnership potential 	Select community for the next MSYC

Level of Deprivation and Demand Analysis

The Demand Analysis is quantitative and incorporates data available from the Statistics Canada Census. The data is then analysed within a process developed by Alta Planning + Design to determine relative demand for shared micro-mobility.

The data inputs are based on:

- Residential density (where people live)
- Employment density (where people work)
- Transit (where people catch the bus and ferry)
- Education (where people learn)^[1]
- Play (where people gather and recreate)
- Shop (where people shop)

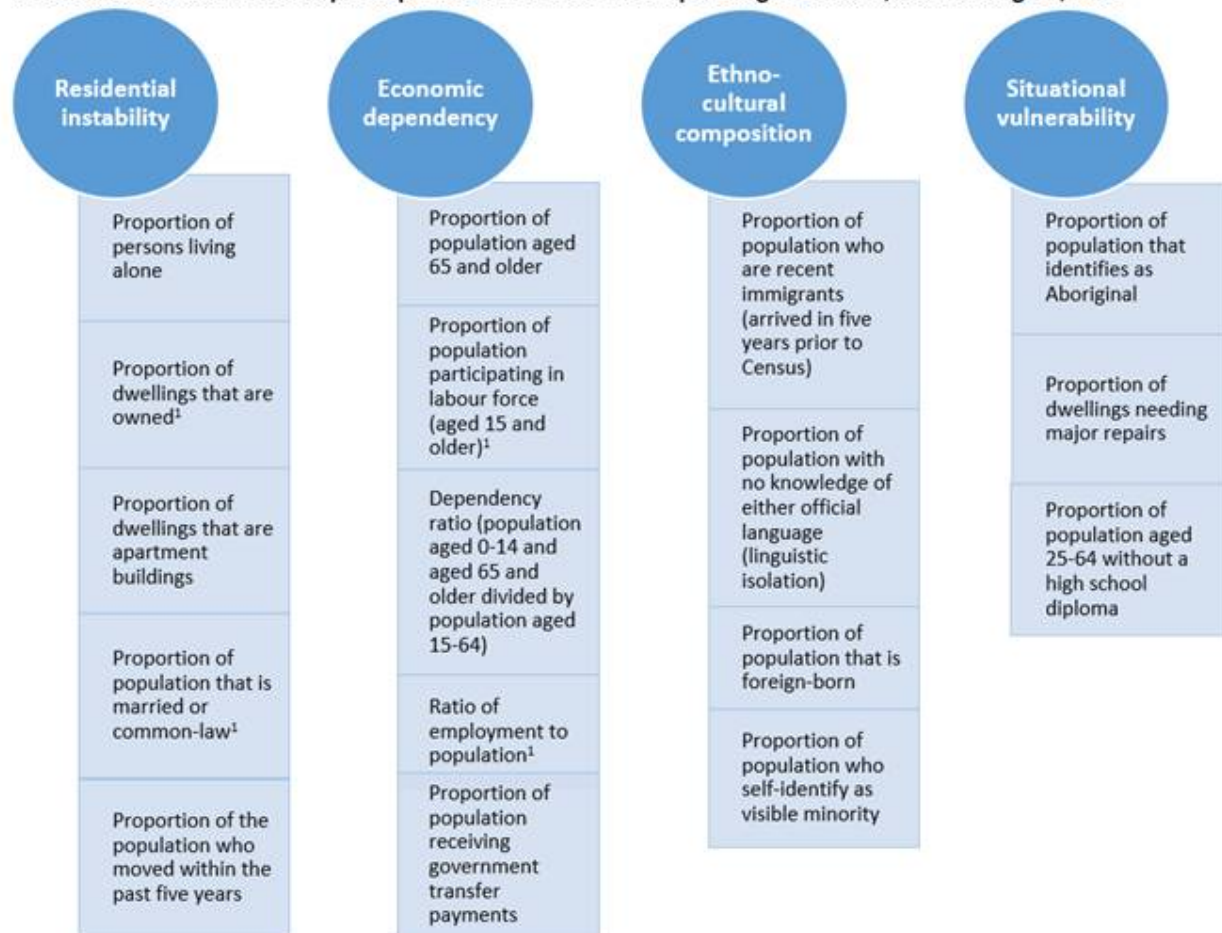
Canadian Index of Multiple Deprivation

The Canadian Index of Multiple Deprivation is an analytical tool developed by researchers at Statistics Canada. It uses data to evaluate areas based on four dimensions of deprivation and marginalization. The four dimensions are residential instability, economic dependency, ethno-cultural composition, and situational vulnerability. The Index calculates a summary index score based on 17 variables within the four dimensions at the dissemination area census level. The 17 variables include data on household composition, education, household mobility, employment, race, recent immigration, population receiving government transfer payments, and income (see figure 2 below). When calculated together, the result is an indexed score that represents the level of deprivation and marginalization within the dissemination area. The Index is intended to be used for policy and planning, research and analysis, and resource allocation.

^[1] This input included post-secondary educational institutions as well as public and private elementary and high schools.

Figure 2

The four dimensions of multiple deprivation and their corresponding indicators, Atlantic region, 2016



¹ This indicator was reverse-coded, meaning it was coded opposite of the measure. For example, proportion of population that is married or common-law becomes proportion of population that is single, divorced, separated or widowed.

Note: The dimensions are ordered such that the dimension on the left explains the highest percentage of the variance of the data and the dimension on the right explains the lowest percentage. The Atlantic region includes the provinces of Newfoundland and Labrador, Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick.

Youth Services Review

Once the communities were identified through the high level of deprivation and demand analysis, the communities were then compared against a youth services jurisdictional scan. This scan identified gaps in youth services.

Staff completed a jurisdictional scan to identify gaps in the following areas:

- Mental and physical health services
- Number of youth programs (registered and drop-in)
- Number of dedicated youth spaces