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## **2016 OPERATING BUDGET BRIEFING NOTE**

### **Enhanced Youth Spaces – Performance/Outcome Measures**

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This note responds to Budget Committee motion 16.1 #8, adopted January 11, 2015 requesting a briefing note on the Youth Spaces program, including usage rates and program outcomes of the 2014 and 2015 roll-out and a description of the proposed 2016 enhancements and program objectives.

#### **Issue/Background**

- City Council directed Toronto Parks, Forestry and Recreation (PFR) to include funding for 10 new Enhanced Youth Spaces in the 2014 Operating Budget submission with a 3-year implementation plan. In the 2014 PFR Operating Budget, phase one of the expansion was approved which included four new Enhanced Youth Spaces that opened in the fall of 2014.
- In the 2015 Operating Budget, phase two of the expansion, including three new Spaces, was approved with funding allocated through the Poverty Reduction Strategy. These spaces opened in May 2015. Once fully annualized through the 2016 operating budget, the City will be investing \$1.253 million on the current seven Enhanced Youth Spaces.
- The three-year implementation plan envisioned by Council would see a final three Enhanced Youth Spaces opened in 2016. This third phase of the expansion is not included in the 2016 Operating Budget submission being considered by the Budget Committee and has been referred to the Poverty Reduction Strategy.
- The locations for this final expansion have been identified and endorsed by the Youth Space Advisory Committee, pending budget approval and include: Masaryk-Cowan Community Centre, Centennial Recreation Centre West, and a cluster-model pilot at LAMP Community Health Centre and their satellite Rathburn Area Youth (RAY) location that would support two locations. The final three sites require \$0.446 million in 2016, with annualized impact of \$0.110 million in future years (map attached).
- In August 2014, City Council received an update on the implementation of the four sites for September 2014 and the establishment of the Youth Space Advisory Committee. The Advisory Committee was established at the direction of City Council to provide input on the start-up and operation of the Youth Spaces. The Youth Space Advisory Committee has been meeting regularly since May 2014, has endorsed all 10 Youth Space locations and supported the user evaluation undertaken in summer 2015.

- The Enhanced Youth Spaces service model enhances the overall PFR youth program delivery model by augmenting traditional recreation activities with unique programs that respond to the diverse and changing interests of local youth such as, homework clubs, tutoring support, preparation for G1 license requirements, financial literacy, health and wellness, and leadership.
- Enhanced Youth Spaces have expanded offerings of drop-in and instructional programs including basketball, soccer, multisport, yoga, dance, traditional arts programs and increased accessibility to urban arts and music/recording studios and programs. The service model builds life skills and creates pathways to employment through entrepreneurship, employment readiness and continuing education supports. Quality assurance, tracking mechanisms and documented best practices have been developed to support the PFR Enhanced Youth Space operations, processes and consultations.

### **Key Points**

- Access to safe, youth-specific and youth-dedicated spaces was identified by the Province of Ontario's 2008 "Roots of Violence" report as a key factor in addressing many of the circumstances that can lead to youth violence.
- Enhanced Youth Spaces are intended to provide access to youth in neighborhoods where little or no services or resources for youth exists.
- City Council directed the implementation of a model defined by three pillars: Dedicated space, dedicated staff, and programming that is responsive to youth needs.
- When measured against each of these three Council-directed priorities, the implementation of the Enhanced Youth Spaces are effectively meeting expectations.
- Additional outcomes, beyond those directed by City Council, have been evaluated and documented including increased access to employment resources, significant community partnerships and high rates of participant retention.

### **Delivery of Council-Directed Model**

City Council directed the implementation of a service model defined by three program pillars based on the 2013 Community Recreation For All report "Letting Youth In: Youth Workers Talk Space": Dedicated space, dedicated staff, and programming that is responsive to youth needs.

#### Dedicated Space

- The seven existing Enhanced Youth Spaces have been designed and equipped to reflect the interests of local youth including the provision of wireless internet, smart TVs, pool tables, foosball tables, computers, printers, recording studios and a photography lab.
- Youth have branded the locations as "Youth Spaces" and have given local names to their sites; for example youth at Heron Park have named their space "The 6ix".

- The 15 criteria for their selection were developed in consultation with the Youth Space Advisory Committee, which has been active in the planning and review of this program initiative since its inception.

### Dedicated Staff

<b>2015 Statistics</b>		
<b>Phase 1 (2014 Implementation)</b>	<b>Total Hours</b>	<b>Total Vists</b>
Antibes Community Centre	1,008	6,568
Heron Park Community Centre	1,115	8,458
North Kipling	1,380	11,848
Parkway Forest	980	6,131
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>4,483</b>	<b>33,005</b>
<b>Phase 2 (2015 Implementation)</b>	<b>Total Hours</b>	<b>Total Vists</b>
Don Montgomery CC	281	1,843
East Metro Youth Services	499	3,430
Native Child & Family Services	2,366	11,128
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>3,146</b>	<b>16,401</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>7,629</b>	<b>49,406</b>

- The placement of dedicated full-time staff at Enhanced Youth Spaces has resulted in the delivery of 7,629 additional youth program hours.
- This model has enabled PFR to offer youth-focused leisure and instructional programs, 6 to 7 days per week, year-round, and has facilitated 49,406 youth visits since the launch of this initiative in 2014.
- Youth participation opportunities at these locations has doubled since the introduction of the Enhanced Youth Spaces.

### Responsive Programming

- Since the launch of the Enhanced Youth Space program, there have been seven site-based advisory committees established, one for each location.
- A city-wide Junior Youth Space Committee was established in 2015 to ensure youth are represented in the ongoing development of the Enhanced Youth Space model.
- There are 65 youth participating in these various committees; participation supports the 40 hour community service requirement for high school students.

### **Other Impacts And Outcomes**

An evaluation of the first four Enhanced Youth Spaces was conducted in summer 2015, with support from the Youth Space Advisory Committee, with a focus on the user experience (based

on 116 surveys and 4 focus groups that consulted 58 youth). Highlights of the survey results include the following:

- 92% of survey respondents agreed that the design of the space is youth friendly and welcoming.
- 93% of survey respondents indicated that they feel safe in the space.
- 96% of survey respondents indicated that the staff make them feel welcomed.
- 80% of survey respondents indicated that they visit at least 2 days per week, and stay for 1 hour or more each visit.
- 23% of survey respondents visit the youth spaces 6 or 7 days each week.
- When asked why they keep coming back, nearly 25% of the youth credit the staff as a major factor in their positive experience in the space.

After one year of operation, the PFR Enhanced Youth Spaces are having a positive impact and benefits identified include youth employment opportunities, increased access for aboriginal youth, and increased delivery of programs through community partners.

### Employment

At 18%, the youth unemployment rate in Toronto is nearly triple the overall rate and consistently higher than the rates for Ontario and Canada. An objective of the Enhanced Youth Space model is to support volunteerism, employment readiness, and a pathway to employment for youth.

- Employment readiness workshops are delivered in PFR Enhanced Youth Spaces and coordinated with PFR hiring processes.
- 11 out of 17 (65%) of new program staff hired to work in the Enhanced Youth Spaces were previously participants and/or volunteers at one of the PFR Enhanced Youth Spaces.
- 2 of the 11 new PFR staff are from the Aboriginal community; this builds capacity in PFR to be more responsive to the aboriginal community.
- 84 volunteer opportunities created for youth at the 7 Enhanced Youth Spaces.

### Aboriginal Youth

The Recreation Service Plan identified the need to provide better access and additional supports to the aboriginal community. The partnership with Native Child and Family Services of Toronto is an important investment for aboriginal youth by the City of Toronto.

- New programs offered for youth from aboriginal communities include 2,366 total hours and 11,128 total visits.
- The Youth Space has delivered new recreational sports (soccer, basketball and multi-sports) and swimming programs through Bob Abate Community Recreation Centre and Trinity Community Recreation Centre; meeting a key goal of increasing physical literacy for aboriginal youth.

## Community Partnership

Community collaboration is a way to coordinate service delivery, respond to the emerging needs of youth, and maximize the investment in local neighbourhoods.

- Two of the seven Enhanced Youth Spaces are delivered in partnership within community agency facilities – East Metro Youth Services and Native Child and Family Services of Toronto.
- Thirty-three partnerships have been created with community service providers to deliver programs, workshops and events; this includes Toronto Employment and Social Services (TESS), Toronto Public Health, Toronto Police Services, Colleges, YMCA, Churches, and Boys and Girls Clubs.
- These partnerships have leveraged an additional 449 instructional hours and 2,272 visits in 2015 at the 7 Enhanced Youth Spaces at no additional cost to the Division.

## **Decision History**

The Youth Engagement Strategy was approved by City Council in October 2013.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2013.CD23.1>

The Recreation Service Plan Implementation was approved by City Council in July 2013.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2013.CD22.1>

The Recreation Service Plan was approved by City Council in November 2012 including a request for a report on a youth recreation engagement strategy and youth drop-in programs.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2012.CD17.2>

The Recreation Service Plan was approved by City Council in November 2012 including a request for a report on a youth recreation engagement strategy and youth drop-in programs.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2012.CD17.2>

The Community Development and Recreation Committee referred the implementation of ten new youth lounges to the budget committee in December 2013 for consideration in the 2014 budget process.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2013.CD25.6>

City Council approved funding for ten new Enhanced Youth Spaces in January 2014 with a three-year implementation plan.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2014.EX37.1>

City Council received a report on the implementation of the Enhanced Youth Spaces and the Youth Space Advisory Committee in August 2014.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2014.CD31.9>

City Council approved funding for year two of the three-year implementation in March 2015.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2015.EX3.4>

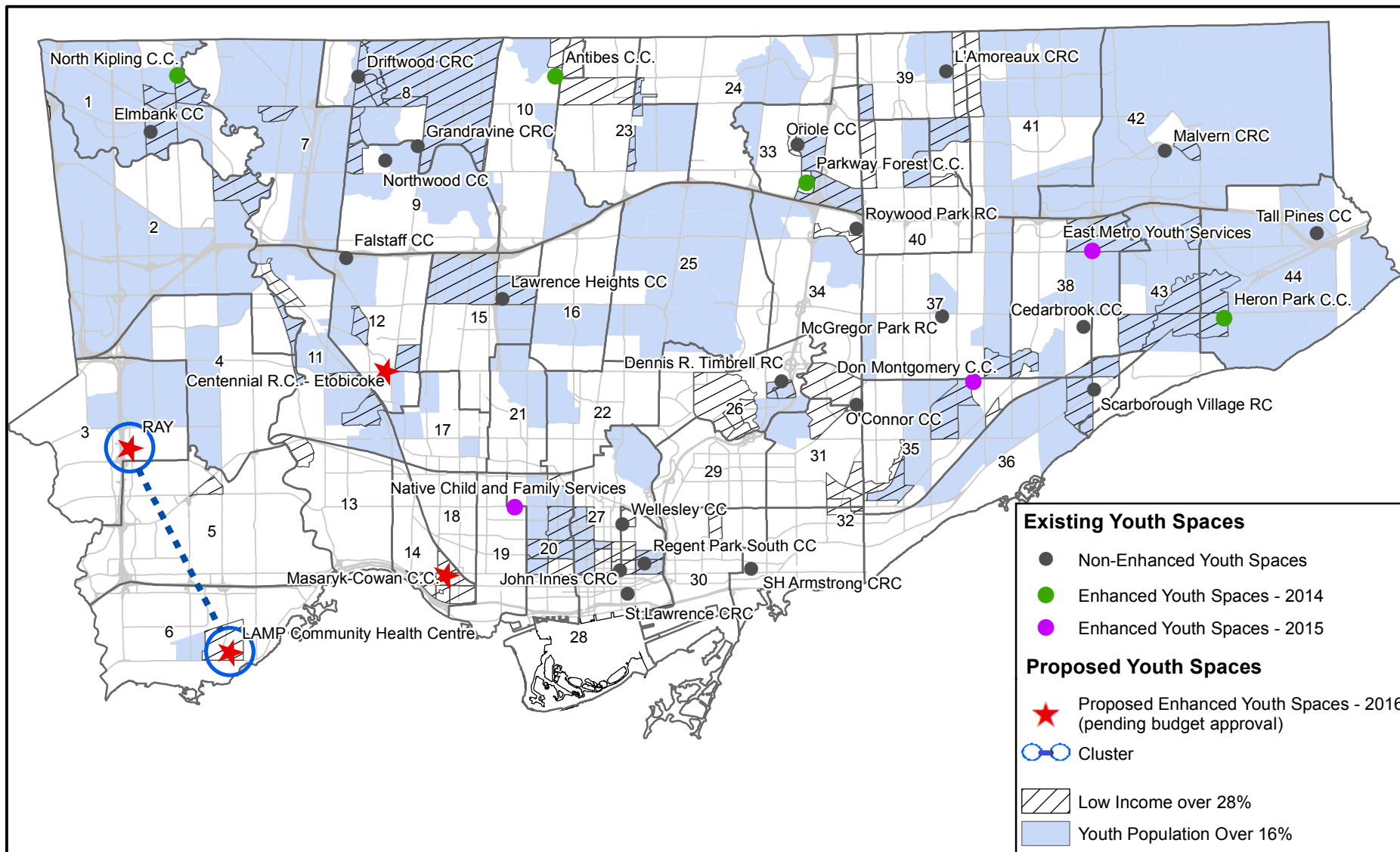
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Date: January 13, 2016



# Parks, Forestry & Recreation - Enhanced Youth Spaces



Income and Population Data:  
Statistics Canada-2011

Parks, Forestry and Recreation  
Operational Effectiveness Unit  
January 2016 