



Takoma Park City Council Meeting – October 5, 2016 Agenda Item 2

Work Session

Discussion of Next Steps on Youth Success in Takoma Park

Recommended Council Action

Discuss key issues related to youth success

Context with Key Issues

Earlier this year, Council established a goal to identify youth and family programming needs in the community and develop approaches to meet those needs. With this goal in mind, the Council hosted a Community Conversation on the topic of youth success on June 18 to gather and share information on existing programs in the community and perspectives on where there were gaps, and begin considering what the City could do in order to address those gaps.

Some key points that emerged from the Conversation included, but were not limited to:

- There are many programs currently offered through the school system, non-profits and other community organizations, and the City. However, a lot of residents are not aware of them. This could be addressed through improved marketing, advertising, and education, including through better coordination with the school system.
- There is a need for resources for parents that "help parents help their kids," including broadening translation services and making it easier for parents to participate in meetings, activities, and events with their children.
- While the City has taken some progressive steps like lowering the voting age to 16, there is room for improvement in creating ways for youth to be more engaged in policy related decision-making that impacts them.
- The City could do a better job of connecting young residents with services and programs that prepare them for college, technical schools, and jobs.

Council Priority

Priority: A Livable Community for All; Goal: Identify youth and family programming needs in the community, especially for our more vulnerable residents including but not limited to those in lower income and immigrant families and those with developmental disabilities, and develop approaches to meet those needs.

Environmental Impact of Action

N/A

Fiscal Impact of Action

Council included \$52,000 in the current fiscal year budget to address the Council Priority listed above. These funds could be used for programming, contracted partnerships, and/or staffing needs related to expanded programming.

Attachments and Links

- Link to Community Conversations website, which includes video footage from the event and other related documents: <https://takomaparkmd.gov/initiatives/community-conversations/>
- Attached: Teen programs since Youth Success Community Conversation
- Attached: Notes from Breakout Groups at Community Conversation on Youth Success

Building on the Community Conversation: Youth Success

New Teen Programs

First of Many

A series of informative workshops to help teens discover and take advantage of the possibilities offered for first-generation students. Find answers to your questions about college and receive guidance on the road to applying and getting the most out of college.

Wisdom in Minutes - Life Skills

A series of workshops to provide strategies and techniques used to guide teens into real world decision making. Course may include: Resume Basics, Time Management, Interview Preparation, Public Speaking, Essay Writing and Presentation.

Do You Know Your Rights

A one-day workshop informing teens of their personal rights when being approached by law enforcement in the state of Maryland.

MAC Lab After-School Hours

The Recreation Department will open the Mac Computer Lab for youth, teens and young adults M-F from 3pm - 8pm and Saturday's from 12pm - 5pm. Trained staff will be available to assist young people in various skill-building capacities using Apple's featured software to include Logic Pro, Final Cut Pro, Adobe Suite, Garage Band, IMovie and a host of others. Opening the Mac Lab after school will aid in the academic success of our youth, increase communication skills and help build technical skills that will last a lifetime.

Developmental Teen Programs – Coming Soon

ACES Academy

Achieving Collegiate Excellence and Success (ACES) is a program designed to create a seamless educational pathway and support structure from high school to college completion. The program is aimed at those who are underrepresented in higher education, including African American, Hispanic, and low-income students, as well as those who would be the first in their family to attend college.

Urban Debate League

The Urban Debate League is dedicated to improving educational and life outcomes for disadvantaged students. Through the motivation and thrill of competitive debate students improve self-esteem, increase academic achievement, improve graduation rates and increase access to higher education. For young people of promise, for their schools and their communities, youth are provided a new vision, hope and opportunity.

Future/Planned Developmental Teen Programs

1. STEM Workshops
2. Healthcare Career Partnership with Washington Adventist
3. Takoma Park Student Government Association
4. Summer Job Program Expansion
5. Skill Building Programs
 - Barber/Beauty
 - Cooking
 - Finance
 - Youth Election Judge

Community Conversation Breakout Session Report-Out Notes

Questions

1. What does youth success look like?
2. What are the most pressing issues impacting youth in our area today?
3. What gaps and needs exist in the services provided in the area?
4. What can the City of Takoma Park do to facilitate youth success?

Breakout Group #1 – High School and Beyond

Question 1

- Preparedness
- Engagement
- Knowledge
- Knowing how to ask for help
- Motivation
- Know how to deal with failure
- Empowerment
- Having a positive life plan/outlook
- Mentorship
- Succeeding in your current place (high school)

Questions 2 & 3

- Economic
- Language
- Social pressures (peers/family)
- Cultural acclimation
- Expectations of adults
- Resources
- Parents unaware
- Adult accountability
- Community – “otherizing”
- Lack of diversity of adult relationships
- College prep connections/support
- Sense of responsibility
- Community connection
- Home life
- Parent involvement

Question 4

- Ways to market to youth
- Coordination
- Communicating with schools
- Mentor support
- Methodology of marketing

- Partnerships (translation services)
- Liaison between partnerships and parents
- Empowerment – youth/parents
- Teacher resources
- Finances
- Going where the people are

Breakout Group #2 – Elementary and below

Question 1

- Different kinds
 - School, home, ect. → graduation, volunteerism
- Goals → happiness, readiness, individualized
- Doing your own thing
 - More programs geared towards individual interests
- In and out of school
 - More variety
- Good quality in school and play time
- Relationships matter → positive, particularly in Takoma Park

Questions 2 & 3

- Getting the work out is key
 - Social media
 - Through organizations (MANUP)
 - Individuals (through word of mouth)
- More support for parents → hard to find time; how to do it; reading time important!
- Rewards
- Competing demands and interests
- Competing cultures, as well (at home and with peers)
- School emphasis on academics → magnet programs (too much)
- Takoma Park Elementary School over-crowded
 - Bias in County against Takoma Park schools → don't take account of quickest distribution and need
- Students from other cultures → left on their own to find out what they need to know
 - Language barriers of parents from different cultures
 - Translation services needed

Question 4

- More parent forums needed
- Parent education important
- City website to address translation
 - Library catalog and public computers
- Cultural barriers for parents
 - Inhibit advocacy
- Walking field trips to learn about City services
- Focus on small group learning through outreach

- Working parents → dedicate a week for parent drop-in
- Relationships key – through youth councils, etc.

Breakout Group #3 – Middle School

Question 1

- Equal opportunities (Maple and New Hampshire Avenues)
- Being involved
- Rec bus? Expand
- Create spaces where kids feel safe
- More activities
- Leaders to be more informed (cater to all needs)
 - More training
- Sense of belonging
 - Feel invested in community; Include everyone
- Talk and support dreams; Go to them
- Better communication

Question 2

- Identify specific needs
- A way to communicate needs/wants, etc.
- Groups for all ages, “like MANUP”
- Mental health and support services
- Youth council
- Advertise through schools
 - Spread the word

Question 3

- More funding for camps?
- More opportunities
 - Employment/internship
- Youth helping youth
- Use our youth as outside sources
- Better advertising
- Create a list of all resources available to youth
- Rec career center
- Mental health and support services
- Youth council

Question 4

- Emphasize open door policy
- Home life does affect everyday life
- Cater to all needs
- Elected officials showing they care (Going out to homes and schools, apartments)
- Reaching outside the City for funding and partnerships
- “Mayor/Councilmembers” for the day

- Essay competition?
- PTSA
- Money
- Funding programs
- Money to take youth to visit opportunities
- Connect youth
- Partnering with stakeholders
- Coordination with the county
- Internships/apprenticeships