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# Little Rock Master Plan for Children, Youth, and Families Advisory Committee Meeting Summary

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## July 2015

On July 23, 2015 the Little Rock Master Plan for Children, Youth, and Families Advisory Committee met for the third time to guide the development of a Master Plan for Children, Youth, and Families. This meeting marked the completion of the information gathering stage and a transition to development of the Master Plan.

Since the last advisory committee meeting several key steps have been accomplished by the consultant team (composed of Advocacy & Communication Solutions, LLC (ACS), Social Justice Institute at Philander Smith College, and the Winthrop Rockefeller Foundation), including:

1. speaking to each of the advisory committee members 1:1 to discuss preferences on approach, planning and the timeline;
1. receiving approval from city leadership on the vision for the master plan which now will guide the future work of the advisory committee;
2. gathering most of the data requested by the advisory committee; and
3. working with the city to modify the process and the schedule of the work.

The consulting team developed several items for the advisory committee to help them think about three year cumulative achievements. These included the following:

- A presentation about the results of the youth and community outreach.
- Data requests, including information from the Little Rock Police Department and the Little Rock School District.
- A presentation given by the Department of Community Programs on the history and status of Prevention, Intervention and Treatment (PIT) funding.

## *Future process*

The City of Little Rock has extended the original timeframe for the Master Plan process. This extension will allow for additional Advisory Committee meetings as well as the establishment of workgroups. This extended process will help leverage the expertise among the committee members, allowing them to review additional information requested by the committee and gathered by consultants in order to make thoughtful recommendations to the city. The additional meetings, workgroups, and related

dialogue will help the advisory committee develop a robust set of recommendations to help inform the development of the city's Master Plan for Children, Youth, and Families.

Small workgroups are expected to begin work in Fall 2015. Additional advisory committee meetings will be held in August and November of 2015, and February, April, and June of 2016. A presentation of the status of the Master Plan work for year one, which starts on January 1, 2016, will be made to the City Board of Directors in November. The City also will organize and hold a public meeting to update the community on the progress made to date. Years two and three of the Master Plan will be presented to the Board of Directors in June 2016.

### *Observations from presentations*

The advisory committee made several observations based on the presentations given during the third advisory committee meeting. They include the following:

- The City needs to find better inroads with the Hispanic community.
- Look at the per child cost of programs to determine how it aligns with best practices. The Wallace Foundation has a model to understand cost per programs, and it depends on the intensity of the program.
- Would like to better understand the funding that the City leverages to provide services for children, youth, and families (in-kind, soft match, free space, janitorial, utilities, etc.)
- Since the beginning of PIT, the Department of City Programs has terminated approximately 8-10 PIT programs due to poor results, have never had any police issues at the program site, and have never had an issue with child maltreatment.
- The committee would like to see the promising practices that have come from the programs. The City will present this at the advisory committee meeting in August.
- Need to confirm transportation access within the neighborhood-based programs.
- Would like to have some further definition and context from the Little Rock Police Department:
  - Confirm that the Truancy Department is the Intervention Center.
  - Confirm the connection between truancy officers, school resource officers (SROs) and the Little Rock Police Department.

### *Three year achievements*

ACS shared the advisory committee's pre-meeting survey results as well as themes from previous meetings, youth and community outreach, community interviews and Board of Director conversations (see Key Themes attachment). ACS then asked each advisory committee member what was most critical to him or her to accomplish in the cumulative three-year timeframe. What follows is a summary of advisory committee feedback in their words:

- Include every part of the community in owning issues for children, youth, and families. All city departments and the Board of Directors should work together and set achievable goals to use the limited resources for the highest needs kids. It's a holistic problem, not only a problem for the Department for Community Programs.
- Capitalize on inter-generational parenting.
- Set a baseline and focus on youth outcomes.
- Each City leader (Board of Director, City Manager, Mayor, etc.) would have an annual goal relating to the Master Plan.
- Departments in the City of Little Rock (fire, police, planning, etc.) all work toward shared goals in the Master Plan.
- Collaborative jurisdiction (Natural Wonders partnership) with the private sector and state agencies.
- Set achievable benchmarks and goals.
- All people see value in the issues affecting children, youth, and families. The
- The City departments lead, convene, and take ownership in helping kids that may not be successful without assistance.
- Focus on building community (through festivals).
- Provide or set aside funding for new or emerging ideas that are not currently supported.
- Engage areas of poverty in the community.
- Engage the Hispanic community.
- Engage the faith community.
- Combine resources and collaboration from other city departments.
- Gather input and include youth in decision-making.
- Address all the basic needs – food, safety, security, health, etc. so that all of our kids have access to whatever they need to develop how they need to.
- Improve the conditions of families, particularly something for single parents.

The advisory committee observations were summed into three categories of cumulative three-year goals:

**1. Environment**

Internal and external partners develop and finalize a structure for more aligned services, tracking and monitoring for programs related to children, youth and family.

**2. System**

The conditions of families and the communities in which they live are improved.

**3. Youth**

Children and youth in the City of Little Rock move beyond their current circumstances, are valued, and prepared for the next steps in school, work, and life.

*Next steps*

1. Consultants will send the advisory committee three-year cumulative goal statements based on this discussion, as well as key themes and survey results.
2. The advisory committee will review key themes and survey results and send the consultant team goals for year one, based on the three overall cumulative goals.
3. The next advisory committee meeting is August 20, 2015 from 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. During the meeting the advisory committee will prioritize goals for year one and brainstorm strategies.

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