Memorandum

DATE November 4, 2016

to Housing Committee Members: Scott Griggs, Chair, Carolyn King Arnold, Vice-Chair, Mayor Pro-Tem Monica R. Alonzo, Tiffinni A. Young, Mark Clayton, and Casey Thomas, II

SUBJECT Community Centers Update

On Monday, November 7, 2016, you will be briefed on the Community Centers Update. A copy of the briefing is attached.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Alan E. Sims
Chief of Neighborhood Plus

c: The Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council
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Rosa A. Rios, City Secretary
Larry Casto, City Attorney
Craig Kinton, City Auditor
Daniel F. Solis, Administrative Judge
Ryan S. Evans, First Assistant City Manager
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"Dallas, The City That Works: Diverse, Vibrant and Progressive."
Community Centers Update

A Briefing to the Housing Committee
November 7, 2016

by the Housing/Community Services Department
Purpose of Briefing

To provide an update on the programs and services at the Martin Luther King, Jr. Community Center and West Dallas Multipurpose Center
Mission
Provide quality health and social services that are responsive to the needs of the community now and in the future

Vision
Partnering with the community to promote healthy living and social well-being in a healthy environment

Guiding Principles
Provide community driven service.
Be a place to gather and connect.
Plant seeds that result in long term community benefit.
Background: The Martin Luther King, Jr. Community Center

- Funded by a 1967 Capital Improvement Bond Program
- Opened in 1971
- Located in the heart of South Dallas on MLK Boulevard just west of Fair Park
- The doors are open from 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m., Monday through Friday with community meetings until 9:00 pm; Saturday, 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.; closed on Sunday.
- The core facility is 32,000 square feet
Background: The West Dallas Multipurpose Center

- Funded by the 1982 Capital Improvement Bond Program
- Opened in 1988
- Located at the intersection of Singleton Blvd., near the intersection of Hampton Rd.
- The doors are open from 8:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m., Monday through Thursday; 8:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m. on Friday; closed Saturday and Sunday.
- The WDMC is a stand-alone 19,280 sq. ft. facility
West Dallas Multipurpose Center

Community Center
Community Partnerships,
Social Services,
Special Events,
Childcare Services
Community Courts
Dallas County
Older Adults

Library
MLK & WDMC Operations

- Estimated 750 walk in customers per month requesting assistance
- Approximately 300,000+ Annual Visitors (All Visitors to All Tenants from All Services including event participation)
- About 2,600 community meetings annually for groups such as Delta Sigma Theta, Black Business Fundraisers, the Dallas Study Club, Legal Aid, Juvenile Services, Veteran Affairs Support Groups, United Steel Workers, Narcotics Anonymous, and Girl Scouts of America
- The centers receive an estimated 7,500 calls requesting assistance and referrals of an estimated 1,500 to other agencies monthly
- The FY 2015-2016 General Fund budget was $1,746,472
  - The Centers also raise through sponsorships and donations an additional $1,000,000 approximately for events, services and community programs
Demographics

Ethnicity:
The ethnic backgrounds of our clients are predominantly African American & Hispanic

Educational Attainment Levels:
31.5% of the population 25 years of age and older in these zip codes do not have a high school diploma. 50% of the population are currently in elementary school.

Income
75% of our clientele are living below the poverty limits, earning an average income of $9,474 annually. Median income for the area is $33,990.

Unemployment:
The average unemployment rate is 7.55% with the national average at 4.7%

Languages:
English and Spanish are the predominant languages spoken

All demographic information is from the 2010 U.S. Census
Programs and Services
Housing/Community Services

MLK and WDMC Administration – Provides overall management of the centers, handles joint projects between the centers and the community; provides educational, wellness and cultural events.

Fresh Start Program – Fresh Start serves about 250 households with HUD Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) and Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA) funds to provide rental assistance and support services to persons experiencing homelessness.

Social Services – Assesses applicant’s needs, interest, abilities, resources and goals and negotiates a plan of action that will resolve situations that adversely affect the person’s daily life. (MLK and WDMC)

Child Care Services – Provides a subsidy for parents that need child care and do not qualify for any other assistance. (WDMC)

Career Resource Center – Provides access to computer equipment for self-paced on line G.E.D. classes, resume preparation and other computer searches. (WDMC)

WIC – Provides nutrition, education and counseling, breast-feeding support, nutrition foods, and referrals for health care to eligible women and children. (MLK)
Other City Department Services

MLK
South Dallas/Fair Park Trust Fund – Provides unique opportunities for businesses and nonprofit organizations to have a positive and mutually beneficial impact on the South Dallas/Fair Park community.

MLK Recreation Center – Provides a gymnasium and park area for use by the public for athletic and social programs, as well as arts and crafts.

MLK Branch Library – The library houses extensive materials on African-American history and provides G.E.D. and tutoring classes, community programs, story hours, and puppet shows.

WDMC
West Dallas Branch Library – The library provides Spanish G.E.D., and ESL classes, bilingual computer classes, and beginning Spanish for English speakers in addition to community programs.

Both Centers
Equipment & Building Services – Responsible for building maintenance.

Security – Provides security to the five buildings on MLK and one building at WDMC.

Community Court – Dallas’ first community court (MLK), where the focus is to rehabilitate the defendant and restore the community. WDMC also has a Community Court. The courts are unique because defendants are held accountable to the members of the community.
Inter-Agency Groups at MLK & WDMC

- Partners who are housed and provide services at MLK and WDMC
- Community organizations that collaborate in providing comprehensive services for the citizens of Dallas and surrounding communities
- The agencies meet to discuss current issues at the centers, collaborate with efforts of upcoming programs, and network to provide viable services to the community
- The agencies identify the aesthetic needs of the Centers and have joined efforts to solicit materials and resources to improve the landscape, interior, and furniture fixtures of the facilities
Inter-Agency Group Services: MLK

- **ChildCare Group** – Provides childcare and Headstart services to an average of 142 children ages 3 ½ to 5 years of age.

- **Family Care Connection** – Provides counseling for individuals, couples, children, families, and group. Provides domestic violence services.

- **Foremost Family Clinic** – A comprehensive community health center that provides a full range of preventive and Primary-care services and specialized hospital-referral arrangements. There is also a dental office and pharmacy on site.

- **Dallas County Older Adult Program** – Includes a nutrition program, social service advocacy & outreach.
Inter-Agency Group Services: MLK

- **Showers of Blessings** – Provides limited financial assistance, food, toiletries, quarterly clothing drives, and hot meals for the homeless on Saturdays.

- **North Texas Food Bank** – Delivers commodities and processes SNAP applications

- **Miles of Freedom** – Provides job readiness and social skillset workshops, assist with the MLK community garden and basic computer skills

- **Black Chamber** – Promotes the expansion of business opportunities of their membership through referrals, partnerships, seminars, technical assistance and marketing. Operate the Dallas Black Chamber of Commerce Business Development Corporation which houses a Business Assistance Center (BAC)
Inter-Agency Group Services: WDMC

- **The ARK Group** – Empowers parents and teachers to create healthy, loving and caring relationships with their children and students.

- **El Centro Community College** – Offers basic computer classes at no-cost to citizens. Also offers a 6 month Office Support Specialist Program.

- **Dallas County Older Adults Service Programs** – Dallas County sponsored program for older adults, 60 and older. Provides program participants with hot lunches and planned activities, health promotions and other services.

- **Family Care Connection** – Provides parenting education to residents from designated zip code areas.

- **United Universe, Inc.** – Operates a food pantry for qualified persons who reside in the following designated zip codes: 75208, 75211, 75212.

- **People and Nutrition (PAN)** – A commodities supplemental food program sponsored by the North Texas Food Bank.
Inter-Agency Group
Services: WDMC

- **Love for Kids** – Offers a free little library and injury prevention program. They service senior citizens, children, and special needs children.

- **North Texas Food Bank** – Delivers commodities and processes SNAP applications. Fresh produce is offered from a mobile food pantry on the 2nd and 3rd Tuesdays of each month.

- **Dallas County CEAP Program** – Assists low income households with elderly and disabled residents who often are most vulnerable to high energy costs, a co-payment utility assistance plan for six to 12 months, an energy-related crisis and retrofit, repair or replacement of inefficient heating/cooling appliances.
Community Events

Community Cultural Programs and Activities
Community Center Partners
For MLK and WDMC

“Building relationships that promote investment, opportunities and commitment to Council’s Key Focus Area Clean Healthy Environment”
Community Celebrations and Events

MLK
- Martin Luther King, Jr. Birthday Celebration
- Dr. King Memorial Service
- MLK Multicultural Affair
- Harambee Festival

WDMC
- Grandparent’s Day
- Volunteer Appreciation
- Community Holiday Party

Events at Both Centers
- **Back-to-School Fair**: School supplies provided to approx. 600 neighborhood school children who were unable to obtain supplies.
- **Summer Fan Project**: 250-400 fans are distributed to the elderly and the at-risk community to help alleviate the summer heat
- **Thanksgiving Food Basket Project**: Through a combination of canned food donations, turkey drives, other donations and trust funds, food baskets with Gift Cards to buy turkeys are delivered to approximately 600 families every year
- **Christmas Toy Drive**: Through donations from Santa’s Helpers, Toys for Tots, and WFAA, toys are disseminated to approximately 2,500 children.
- **Beat the Heat Centers**: Cooling centers sponsored by Reliant Energy to provide summer relief
- Other cultural events include **Black History Month, Juneteenth, Cinco de Mayo, and Hispanic Heritage Month**.
Social Services
MLK and WDMC

- Provide social services, including case management, emergency rent and utility assistance, and food assistance to eligible persons
  - 28,000 household/families provided social service
  - 3,200 households/families provided financial assistance
  - 750 individuals provided food assistance
  - 2,250 of the households will maintain stable housing verified by a six month follow-up with clients.
  - Prevent homelessness for 75% of households to which we provide assistance
Enhancements
2015-2016

• Increased hours of operation by 18 hours per center per week
• Reinstated receptionist position at part-time level
• Renovations to bathrooms at WDMC
• Replacement of front desk and meeting room furniture at WDMC
• Planting of fruit trees and herbs by community partner at MLK
Needed Enhancements

- Additional security at both centers
- Full time receptionist positions
- Plumbing and HVAC improvements at MLK
- Funding for events
- Technology enhancements
  - Improved internet connections
  - Cable Services at WDMC
  - Signage/digital marquees
Needed Enhancements

• Parking lot and sidewalk improvements
• Emergency system to include public address system, back-up lighting
• Replace security cameras and monitors throughout the centers
• Replacement of lobby furnishings at MLK
• Updates to bathrooms
• Updates to kitchen areas
Master Plans

• Contract awarded to DRW Studio Planning group in April 2015

• Better align operations, programs, and facilities with needs of the community
Master Planning Process

- Used varied public input avenues, with approximately 500 points of contact
  - Surveys
  - Community Workshops
  - Non-profit focus groups
  - City workshops
  - Interviews
- Facilities assessment
- Operational and program assessment
What We Heard

- Think of long-term community improvement
- Address the whole population and continuum of services
- Be community-driven
- Be a connector for services
- Be a gathering place for the community
- Market services offered
- Facilities should better match needs
Big Ideas

• Address critical facility needs in order for the Centers to effectively continue their work and maximize their positive impact

• Stem the negative impact from poverty drivers affecting the communities that the Centers serve through programming
Priority Issues: Facilities

WDMC
- Off-site power supply
- Paving and storm drainage
- ADA accessibility concerns

MLK
- Plumbing concerns
  - Boiler system
  - Water discoloration to some facilities
  - Lack of hot water to some facilities
  - Heaving causing some restrooms to be unusable
- ADA accessibility concerns
- Internal air quality concerns
- Some outdoor areas closed to the public

General
- Desire for both facilities to be upgraded to be open and inviting and better meet needs
- Maintain a sense of security
Priority Issues: Operations

- Develop stronger connection to community voice through:
  - Advisory board[s]
  - Town halls
  - Ongoing feedback
- Improve marketing to raise awareness
- Augment City-funding to become more self-sustaining
  - 501c(3)
  - Development officer
Priority Issues: Programming

- Strategically define impact area and tailor programs accordingly, particularly to reinforce programs that address poverty drivers and build for long-term family success.
- Use strategic partnerships and connector between citizens and other service providers.
Where do we go from here?

• Finalize the master plan and seek resources to address items in the plan
• **Act**
  • Follow 10-year implementation plan
• **Monitor**
  • Annual reporting and metrics
  • 5-year update to assess status of activities, re-prioritize, and redefine trajectory
Contacts

Martin Luther King Community Center, Pamela Jones, Manager
  • 214-670-8418 – Information and Services
  • 214-670-8416 – Appointment Line

West Dallas Multipurpose Center, Kathy Miller, Manager
  • 214-670-6341 – Information and Services
  • 214-670-6530 – Appointment Line