PROPOSED IMPLEMENTATION

STEPS & TIMELINE

**YEAR 1**

- **JUL-AUG 2022**: Convene Frederick Youth Collaborative (FYC) Leadership Council - set meeting schedule, draft/adopt and approve charter.
- **AUG 2022**: Form a Youth Center Building Sub-Committee that includes youth-serving professionals and youth to discuss programming, center design and space needs.
- **SEPT 2022**: Convene the Community Advisory Council to give input on the strategic plan, set meeting schedule and staffing.
- **SEPT 2022**: Determine collaborative convener and staff roles (Leadership Council).
- **OCT 2022**: Convene Frederick Youth Collaborative Advisory Council and provide for support of its ongoing operation.
- **OCT 2022**: Engage in a strategic planning process focused on youth outcomes that establishes clear priorities for collaborative work including the Youth Center. Build on assessment work and Theory of Change work already completed. Include youth in the process.

**YEAR 2**

- **JAN-FEB 2023**: Present Youth Center Building Sub-Committee recommendations for design firm, future funding structure and creation of partnership agreements/outcomes, included programming and preliminary ideas for use of space.
- **MAR 2023**: Share input from Advisory and Youth Councils (Design Team).
- **APR 2023**: Determine shared programming resources and program recommendations (Advisory Council).
- **JUNE 2023**: Share building renderings with community stakeholders via a community forum, that includes business association, county and city officials and schools.
- **SEPT 2023**: Present preliminary programming ideas with input from Advisory and Youth Councils (Leadership Council).
- **OCT 2023**: Review findings from community input sessions.
- **NOV 2023**: Review findings.
- **OCT 2024**: Review findings from community input sessions.

**YEAR 3**

- **FEB-MAR 2024**: Advance strategic plan and community collaborations through regular Leadership Council meetings.
- **ONGOING**: Review findings from community input sessions.

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**TOGETHER, WE CAN BUILD A BETTER FUTURE FOR FREDERICK YOUTH.**

Creating a dynamic and responsive network for the youth of Frederick will require commitment, contributions and collaboration from multiple stakeholders.

How you can get involved:

- **Youth and Young Adults**: Help determine what the Youth Center will look like and what programs and services will be offered by serving on the Frederick Youth Collaborative Advisory Council.
- **Youth Service Providers**: Be open to collaboration with other providers. Serve on the Leadership Council or Youth Center Building SubCommittee.
- **Friends and Neighbors**: Share input from Advisory and Youth Councils and provide feedback on the strategic plan. Volunteer to serve on committees.
- **Community Leaders**: Advocate for policies and funding that support the vision of a collaboration to benefit Frederick youth.
- **Public Officials**: Help remove barriers that may impede progress on the project.
- **Business Leaders**: Encourage employee volunteerism. Share your knowledge and experience. Offer mentorships, exposure to workforce opportunities, internships, etc.

Want to learn more?

View the full assessment report at:

[AushermanFamilyFoundation.org/fredyouth-center-report](AushermanFamilyFoundation.org/fredyouth-center-report)

Contact:

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Who did we hear from?

Feedback was solicited by a third-party consultant (Strategic Consulting & Coaching) in surveys, one-on-one interviews, and focus groups.

- **45 Youth Service Nonprofits**
  - Established and small community-based organizations
  - Youth and Young Adults
  - Ages 12-24
- **15 FCPS Representatives**
  - Community, principals, directors, & interpreters
- **8 Policymakers**
  - County/City Government Officials & Division Directors
- **12 Philanthropic Leaders**

**WHAT DID WE LEARN?**

- **A Youth Center is a means to an end, not an end in itself.**
- **A youth center could be the catalyst for the Frederick community to rally around our youth and work together toward a dynamic and responsive collaboration.**
- **Two paths forward emerged from our findings:**
  - Community Youth Center with creative co-locations
  - Formation of a support network with youth leadership and providers
- **The success of both will require youth leadership.**

**WHAT ARE THE NEEDS?**

Multiple data sources show significant groups of Frederick youth who are at high risk of poor educational and employment outcomes. A recent survey of Frederick County High School Students found that:

- **25%** don’t have a trusted adult in their lives
- **33%** currently use marijuana
- **48%** felt sad or hopeless

KEY FINDINGS

**About half of youth in Frederick have experienced or are currently experiencing trauma, also known as Adverse Childhood Experiences, or ACEs.**

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**Coming Together for Frederick Youth**

As part of the Downtown Safety and Services Initiative, the Frederick County Services and Coordination Committee was charged with examining the landscape of human services in the Frederick community, identifying the current needs and gaps, and investigating options for services in response to those needs. One of the final recommendations of the committee was to establish a youth center in Frederick where young people feel safe dropping in anytime – a place designed to be culturally responsive, one that fosters love and belonging, and ensures participants have what they need to thrive.

In response, Ausherman Family Foundation, Frederick County Government, and The Community Foundation of Frederick County collaborated to conduct a comprehensive community assessment to inform a preliminary vision for a collaboration to benefit vulnerable youth, which includes the development of a youth center in downtown Frederick.

Our goal in this study was to understand how we could come together as a community to further improve outcomes for youth and young adults ages 12-24. A particular focus was placed on those who are most vulnerable to becoming disconnected, not graduating from high school, and/or lacking connections post-high school graduation to propel them to careers or college.
KEY FINDINGS

What are the Opportunities?

- Youth who have experienced multiple adverse childhood experiences, and those without caring adult connections are at the highest risk for not graduating from high school and for developing substance use disorders. They stand to benefit the most from the more coordinated and accessible programming and services that a youth center and collaborative activities will offer. Our youth are the future of our community.

- There is broad support for creating a holistic or comprehensive model and programming with opportunities for social, emotional, and physical activities for youth of different ages at different times.

- Most providers are excited about the prospect of a youth center and collaborative activities will offer. Our youth are the future of our community.

Supporting our youth will generate social return on investment and net gains in community health and prosperity, sustaining the community into the future.

Who should provide input along the way?

For transparency, engagement, clear decision-making roles and effective flow of information, there must be broad involvement from community organizations and youth, along with site-based leadership. Recommended leadership structure includes:

LEADERSHIP COUNCIL
Develops and approves strategic plan and budget, oversees strategic plan implementation

COMMUNITY ADVISORY COUNCIL
Puts forward recommendations and formal input to leadership council

YOUTH COUNCIL
Puts forward recommendations and formal input to leadership council; creates youth-led initiatives and events

What should a Youth Center look like?

There was universal alignment between the providers and youth about the importance of an attractive, light-filled, clean, and respectful space. Based on this feedback, to meet the identified needs articulated by youth and program providers, the building at a minimum should include the following:

- Welcoming and safe entry area with front desk
- Program spaces that can accommodate one-to-one services and meetings, such as mentoring, and peer support
- Art Room/Music Studio
- Gym for basketball/other indoor sports
- Lounge areas, separate for different age groups
- Multi-purpose office/co-working space for smaller nonprofit use
- Offices for youth center staff
- Kitchen (for cooking instruction)
- Conference/meeting room
- Outdoor space appropriate for recreation and relaxation
- Multi-purpose Classrooms

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Expand Collaboration:
  Establish formal collaborative structures that build trust—ensure all decision-making is fully transparent, through a joint charter that ensures representation and has a clear decision-making process.

- Cultivate Transparency:
  Make all meetings public and allow for public input on agenda items within a specified time limit. Keep explicit focus on youth outcomes, metrics of success, consider alignment with the established priorities of local government and schools.

- Create Structure:
  Devise a clear governance and administrative structure that includes a fiscal host and an administrative backbone independent organization with paid leadership providing supervision of building staff and management of evaluation and data systems.

- Build Trust:
  Keep racial equity at the forefront of this work. Build trust through an intentional effort to include and honor voices and work from BIPOC communities, especially those that have not previously been included. Gather disaggregated data to drive efforts to reduce disparities caused by systemic racism.

- Invest in the Future:
  Invest in tools and processes for continuous improvement. Foster a culture of ongoing growth and development among providers through adoption of a culture that provides tools to support continuous improvement, evaluation, and program innovation. Strategic investment can result in enhancements to program evaluation, coordination, information sharing, and program accessibility throughout the county.

- Share Data:
  Work towards data sharing agreements and data integration. Looking at community, system, program, and individual level data in relation to collective goals is imperative to being able to meaningfully measure progress.

- Prioritize Relationships:
  An emphasis on developmental relationships between youth and caring adults is critical to achieving outcomes. Recruiting and retaining quality staff who can provide these relationships will depend on being able to pay them competitive wages with benefits.

- Sustain Youth Leadership:
  Create and support a Youth Council that can provide formal and informal input and leadership to strategy, programs, and initiatives. Incorporate youth and young adult representation on Advisory and Leadership Council.
PROPOSED IMPLEMENTATION

STEPS & TIMELINE

YEAR 1

July-Aug 2022
Determine collaborative convener and staff roles (Leadership Council)

Convene Frederick Youth Collaborative Advisory Council and provide for support of its ongoing operation

Engage in a strategic planning process focused on youth outcomes that establishes clear priorities for collaborative work including the Youth Center. Build on assessment work and Theory of Change work already completed. Include youth in the process

Sep 2022
Convene Frederick Youth Collaborative Advisory Council and the Youth Center Building Subcommittee to set meeting schedule and staffing

YEAR 2

Jan-Feb 2023
Approve strategic plan. Form work groups based on strategic objectives in the plan

Provide input to design professionals from Advisory and Youth Councils to create vision of space needs and usage

Review strategic plan progress and determine Year Two implementation goals (Leadership Council). Continue meeting throughout the year at frequency determined

Share building renderings of Youth Center with all three councils

Mar 2023
Present Youth Center Building Sub-Committee recommendations for design firm, future funding structure and creation of partnership agreements-outcomes, included programming and preliminary ideas for use of space

Apr 2023
Share input from Advisory and Youth Councils (Design Team)

May 2023
Determine shared programming resources and program recommendations (Advisory Council)

Jun 2023
Share building renderings with community stakeholders via a community forum, that includes business association, county and city officials and schools

July 2023
Review findings from community input sessions

YEAR 3

Feb-Mar 2024
Advance strategic plan and community collaborations through regular Leadership Council meetings

Who did we hear from?

45 Youth Service Nonprofits Established and smaller community-based organizations

60 Youth and Young Adults Ages 12-24

15 FCPS Representatives Community counselors, Principals, Directors, & interpreters

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KEY FINDINGS

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