

Re:Center Project

ACTIVATING CULTURAL STEWARDSHIP IN CHICAGO'S PARKS & CULTURAL CENTERS

Indian Boundary
Cultural Center
2500 W. Lunt

Pulaski

Western

Douglas Park
Cultural Center
1401 S. Sacramento

Piotrowski Park
Cultural Center
4247 W. 31st

Marquette Park
Cultural Center
6743 S. Kedzie

Tuley Park
Cultural Center
501 E. 90th

Ridge Park
Cultural Center
9625 S. Longwood

11th

West Pullman
Cultural Center
401 W. 123rd

Hamilton Park
Cultural Center
513 W. 72nd

Berger Park
Cultural Center
6205 N. Sheridan

Addison

Humboldt Park
Cultural Center
1400 N. Sacramento

Austin Town Hall
Cultural Center
5610 W. Lake

Cermak

Lincoln Park
Cultural Center
2045 N. Lincoln Park

55th

South Shore
Cultural Center
7059 South Shore

Stony Island

Palmer Park
Cultural Center
201 E. 111th

Calumet Park
Cultural Center
9801 S. Avenue G

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Introduction

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Chicago's parks as civic labs for community activation & cultural stewardship
Since its beginnings as a centralized system in 1934, arts & culture have always been integral to the Chicago Park District. Under President Franklin Delano Roosevelt's Works Progress Administration program, funding was provided for a mix of arts, recreational, and educational programs throughout the city's growing system of parks. 350 visual artists worked as painters, illustrators, sculptors, and set designers. Community theater thrived from local parks to the lakefront at Theater on the Lake. People were provided access to classes in dance, music, and woodcraft. Amenities that were previously afforded only to the elite became available to many of Chicago's poor and working class residents.

In a period of rapid industrialization and urbanization where overcrowding, public health, and education were common issues for working people, the access provided by parks to libraries, fieldhouses, gyms, and green space helped restore a sense of humanity. As landscape designer and architect Jens Jensen noted, "We all need the living green or we'll shrivel up inside. To make the modern city livable is the task of our times." Programs and services such as healthcare, classes in hygiene or English, or simply a place to get a shower or a meal for those in need helped build a sensibility of local belonging. Aligned with the early 20th century movement of social reform and settlement houses, the parks have historically been a component of neighborhood transformation, helping to build whole and healthy humans by providing social and cultural programs as well as open green space for all citizens. Echoing this notion of investing in our cities for betterment of the collective good, social reformer Jane Addams' remarked, "The good we secure for ourselves is precarious and uncertain until it is secured for all of us and incorporated into our common life."

This work continues today in Chicago's vast system of parks. The Chicago Park District has over 500 parks and over 250 fieldhouses. In addition, there are 15 Cultural Centers that act as hubs for arts & culture across the city's 77 neighborhoods. Geographically dispersed across the city grid, park Cultural Centers provide high quality, wide-ranging and diverse cultural programming to local residents. Each location offers enhanced programming in arts and culture activities serving residents of every age with affordable offerings and events in dance, music, theater, and visual arts while also hosting a variety of sports, nature, and recreational activities. Some Cultural Centers have cultural partnerships with local artists and cultural organizations to increase the range of programming. Many run afterschool or summer programs including arts specialty camps and summer arts rotations. Others have visual arts exhibition space, auditoriums or other kinds of performance space. Each Cultural Center is different and works to reflect the distinct needs and interests of the neighborhood it is embedded within. Leading community builder and thinker Tom Borup notes the importance of enlisting cultural activities as strategies and tools to help "strengthen relationships between and among people, and between people and place, building a community where stewardship of one another and of place is

Arts & Culture in the Chicago Park District:

By the Numbers

There are approximately 75 cultural, activity, and recreation instructors with skill sets across the arts. Of that group, 37 instructors are at Cultural Centers teaching nearly 200 specialty classes in woodshop, theater, dance, music, ceramics, lapidary, stained glass, and upholstery.

More than 40 cultural partners provide new arts experiences in park programs annually.

Over 30 professional arts companies reside in park buildings through the Arts Partners in Residence Program. These Arts Partners deliver unique class offerings to park patrons. Arts Partners help maximize our local cultural resources by tapping into Chicago's reservoir of working artists across all disciplines.

There were approximately 31,000 participants for 2015 Night Out events at park Cultural Centers.

Cultural Center Programming Priorities

Cultural Centers serve as arts and culture hubs for their regions. They provide a standard set of offerings to the public. Within this set, there is considerable freedom in determining local park programs. Existing programs are identified and new programs are created with the support of Arts & Culture staff, who help park staff in meeting all standards.

Figure A
Eight Challenges For Chicago Parks



Gathered and analyzed by Lookingglass Civic Practice Lab from sessions with CPD supervisors and staff

central.” Similarly, the Chicago Park District has embarked on a multi-year citizen-led cultural planning process aiming to increase participation and build local public investment in our park Cultural Centers as a network of creative neighborhood hubs.

The beginning of a process

In 2013, Lookingglass’ Civic Practice Lab began a partnership with the Chicago Park District to help identify key areas of need and support for park Cultural Centers “... develop[ing] intentional strategies for increased participation and local public investment in our parks and the neighborhoods where they reside.” In February and March 2014, Michael Rohd and Jasmin Cardenas co-facilitated five meetings held with park leadership and staff from various Cultural Centers throughout the North, South, and West sides of the city to define what “participation” means. In April 2015, Civic Practice Lab led a convening with all 15 parks. They reported the findings from the Phase 1 meetings where participants had worked to: 1) define what a Cultural Center is and does; and 2) identify challenges and strategies encouraging community participation in individual parks and the larger Chicago Park District system (see Figure A.).

Individual parks identified branding, safety and security, staffing, and developing and maintaining partnerships as their main priorities. For the greater Chicago Park District, creating greater access points for external communication, branding, and staffing were the top concerns.

From the data gathered at these internal meetings, the Civic Practice Lab began to work with Culture, Arts, & Nature staff to create a participatory structure for a series of Listening Parties, targeting “increased participation and local public investment” as goals that would catalyze a community-focused process working through some of the challenges laid out by park staff. These meetings became opportunities for community members, creatives, and local organizations to meet with park staff to discuss their

visions for what a vibrant Cultural Center should look like and what cultural programming priorities should be for each unique space. From these initial Listening Parties, a multi-phase process has taken shape that has become our adaptive framework to dream, plan, and engage with community stakeholders at park Cultural Centers across the city.

A community engagement process takes shape

The Re:Center process addresses several key priorities identified in the City of Chicago's recent Cultural Plan including: 1) fostering lifelong learning through arts & cultural activity; 2) elevating and expanding neighborhood cultural assets; 3) facilitating neighborhood cultural planning processes; and 4) activating artists and creative professionals. The process aims to create shared language and values in thinking about cultural planning work through the unique position the park district holds as a public institution responding to neighborhoods. Communities and artists are positioned to think about parks as sites where imaginative, relevant, and accessible art-making happens.

Participants undergo a process of mutual listening and co-creation as they reflect on and respond to the role of parks in the lives of community members. Stakeholders model civic engagement by telling local history, considering the present uses of their park spaces, and imagining the future relevance of parks as a vibrant community commons. At its core, Re:Center illuminates the existing neighborhood cultural resources already in play and seeks community stakeholders' input of all ethnicities, socioeconomic classes, genders, and ages to determine arts and cultural programming that is both relevant and of quality for the surrounding neighborhood that uses it.

Community stakeholders become more familiar with everyday park processes and learn some of the tools needed to coordinate, implement, and effectively advocate for cultural programming in the parks. Likewise, by interacting with community and artists in a longer range planning process, park staff come to better understand the potential value of using arts and culture as a vehicle for civic participation and community building. Our park Cultural Centers comprise an ecosystem of neighborhood agents; each person is working to strengthen cultural programming, to refine priorities to speak to those who access and make use of the space, and to engage communities to become involved in all that our public parks have to offer.

In some ways, Re:Center is not really about arts & culture at all, but rather about building event and program planning skills, building long term relationships that help support and continue the work, and building an understanding of the various roles needed to create programming and to execute effective advocacy work that can lead to system change and help reshape communities and neighborhoods. Through this process, park Cultural Centers collaborate with their surrounding communities to re-imagine cultural priorities and programming that speak to the interests of each neighborhood. Together, community members, artists, and park staff work to envision Chicagoans as cultural stewards of our public parks.

All Cultural Centers should have 3-4 of the following program areas represented:

1. At least one anchor arts partnership:

partneris: An anchor partner is an Arts Partner in Residence, Cultural or Community Partner, a contracted vendor, or a renter, with the goal of developing a long-term relationship that creates high-quality, community-based programming to meet a park's needs.

2. Afterschool arts programming:

Park staff, a partner, or a contracted arts organization provides programming on a weekly basis, at minimum, during after school programs.

3. Summer Day Camp arts programming:

Park staff, an Arts Partner in Residence, or a contracted arts organization provides arts programming daily during Summer Day Camp.

4. Programming for other groups:

Cultural Centers offer cultural programming to at least two of the following groups: Special Recreation, families, senior adults, teen groups or pre-school.

5. Exhibitions & Showcases:

Cultural Centers will host at least one exhibit or event that focuses on visual arts or another artform.

6. Special program offerings:

Special programs can be arts programming on school days off hosting community artists/art groups at the Cultural Center for community events, or programs offered through Culture, Arts & Nature. Examples are Jazz City, TRACE, Arts XIII, Grant Park Music Festival day camp fieldtrips, Inferno Mobile Recording Studio, Kidsmobile, or Night Out in the Park offerings.



About Re:Center

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The Re:Center Project is a creative placemaking initiative anchored by a citizen-powered collective process. This cultural organizing work combines strategies in community arts engagement, artistic excellence, asset mapping, and program development to more fully activate key areas of need in throughout Chicago Park District's fifteen Cultural Centers. Together, community members, artists, and park staff work to re-imagine Chicagoans as cultural stewards of our public parks. Participants undergo a process of mutual listening and co-creation as they reflect on and respond to the role of parks in local citizens' lives through four phases of gathering: *The Listening Party*, *The MeetUPs*, *The Feature*, and *Circulations*. Each year through 2018, a new Cultural Center cohort will participate in the intimate community building work required of any cultural organizing effort.

The Re:Center Project's community- driven model asks big questions:

- **How does culture develop and change around the parks as public spaces?**
- **What and whose cultural knowledge and experience will we celebrate and recognize in the parks?**
- **How is cultural programming an important component of safe park spaces for our youth and communities?**

Across the yearlong process, participating community stakeholders model civic engagement by telling local history, considering the present uses of their park spaces, and imagining the future relevance of parks as vibrant centers for all. At its core, the *Re:Center Project* illuminates the existing neighborhood cultural resources already in play and seeks community stakeholders' input of all ethnicities, socioeconomic classes, genders, and ages to determine arts and cultural programming that is both relevant and of quality to the surrounding neighborhood that uses it.

In 2015, our pilot year, we worked with community members and park staff from Austin Town Hall (Central), Hamilton Park (South) and Indian Boundary (North). At each location, park patrons and park staff underwent a deep process of listening, sharing, and strategizing together to consider access to arts and culture in public space as part of every community's quality of life. Community concerns about cultural programming at the Cultural Centers are the focus of the *Listening Party*. New ideas for cultural programming are workshopped during the *MeetUP* phase where a cultural project is selected, vetted by community and park staff. In the *Feature* and *Circulation* phases, local stakeholders continue to refine their ways of working together through reflection meetings and actionable steps that help move the idea of "cultural stewardship" from abstract concept to lived practice.



Listening Party



MeetUP



Feature



Circulations



Austin Town Hall Cultural Center

Background

In 1865, businessman and real estate speculator Henry W. Austin created a lovely 280-acre subdivision in Cicero Township. Austin's development included wide, tree-lined streets and a small park, originally known as Holden Park. The township selected Austin as its seat of government, and in 1870 constructed a brick town hall building, with a cupola and eclectic details, in the center of Holden Park. In 1898, Austinites, having a majority on Cicero's town council, used political influence to allow the extension of the Lake Street elevated line into their community. This infuriated residents of other areas within Cicero Township, such as Oak Park and Berwyn, who retaliated the following year by holding a joint election to force Austin's annexation to the City of Chicago. Much to the dismay of local residents, this effort succeeded and Austin became part of Chicago in 1899. The city took over the Cicero Town Hall and began using it as a library and police station as well as for other public functions. The city transferred Holden Park to the West Park Commission in 1927. Because the old town hall had housed a branch library for several years, the West Park Commissioners agreed to the construction of a new public library in the park, designed by architect Alfred S. Alschuler. At the same time, the West Park Commission also built a fieldhouse for the newly renamed Austin Town Hall Park. The large brick Georgian Revival-style building was influenced by Philadelphia's Independence Hall. The structure was designed by architects Michaelsen and Rognstad, who were also responsible for other notable buildings including the Garfield Park Gold Dome Building, the Humboldt and Douglas Park Fieldhouses, and the On Leong Chinese Merchant's Association. In 1934, Austin Town Hall Park became part of the Chicago Park District, when the city's 22 independent park commissions merged into a single city-wide agency.



Process

In October of 2014, the Cultural Liaisons met with Drama Instructor Dionne Hawkins and the Austin Town Hall Cultural Center (ATH) Park Supervisor, Tebrena Howard-Fears, to understand what the structure of a year-long project could be. In partnership with the Civic Practice Lab from Lookingglass Theater, Chicago Park District staff in the department of Culture, Art, and Nature (CAN) produced a strategic plan that incorporated a budget and preliminary outlook on the potential for a sustained year-long initiative surrounding the Cultural Center.



TEBRENA HOWARD-FEARS

PARK SUPERVISOR

"Austin Town Hall was blessed to have support to execute our first Arts & Culture Summer Festival event. Through a partnership with the Civic Practice Lab, and the Culture, Art, and Nature department, and invested members of the community this has been an amazing asset to the success of arts at Austin Town Hall. I am very grateful for the support and the increase in participation in programming at our Cultural Center. The event was executed well and the community contributed to its development and success. I look forward to the next cultural festival that we hope to plan next year along with our dynamic Teen Club."

Through previous conversations, CAN had already loosely established some of the challenges that had been communicated by the staff at the Cultural Center. This included but was not

limited to marketing, lack of upward communication, and lack of diversity in programming. These issues were introduced during the initial conversation with ATH staff to have a clearer understanding of how these initiatives should be included in the year-long initiative.

Building from internal goals for the Cultural Liaisons, the initial mission was introduced as: Cultural Liaisons will map community areas, assess assets, and connect community resources with Chicago Park District resources.

the event—an invitation to speak and to be heard. Community individuals were encouraged to acknowledge existing local cultural resources by having neighborhood artists perform and to voice their opinions about the types of programming and resources needed at ATH.

The *Listening Party* event took place on November 15, 2014. Despite the poor weather, record low temperatures and a blizzard, approximately 120 individuals attended. Participants were presented with a program including dance, theater, and music from local groups. Refreshments were served and a conversation was hosted by Civic Practice Lab's Michael Rohd. The larger group broke into smaller discussion tables so participants could directly connect with CAN staff. In the smaller conversations participants considered what assets in their own community could be built into the resources offered at ATH.

Tabulated responses from the event suggested marketing and communication was not clearly conveying the programming available. A large number of individuals wanted particular types of programming that were already offered at ATH.

From this group, participants were invited to return in February to a *MeetUP*, a program focused on the questions and data

Demographics

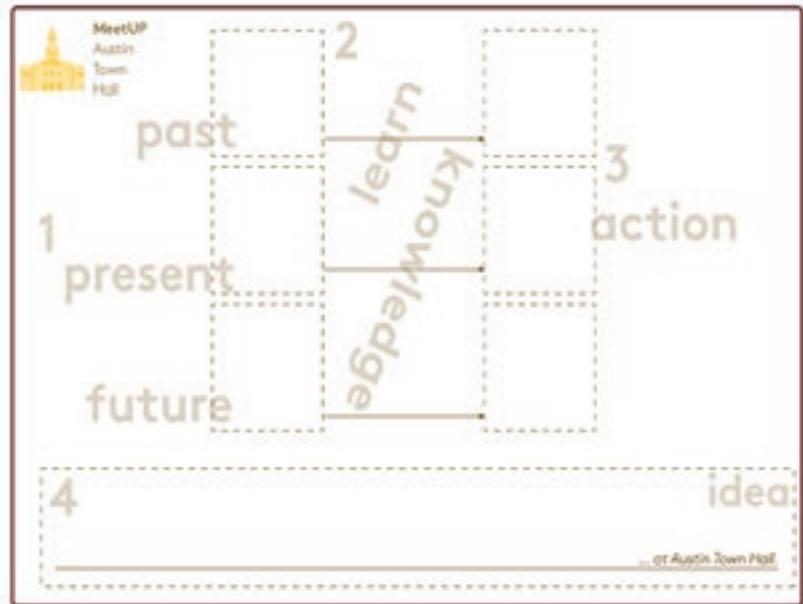
Austin is Chicago's largest community area both geographically and in population size. Located on the Far West Side of Chicago, bordered by Cicero Avenue (east), Milwaukee District/West Line (west) and Roosevelt Road (south), its northern border extends just beyond North Avenue. Austin was nearly an all-white community (99.8%) up until the 1960s when riots and "blockbusting" efforts changed the neighborhood's demographics. By the year 2000, African-Americans made up 90.2% of Austin's population.¹

Designed as a residential neighborhood, there are not a large number of stores in the Austin area. However, there were significant industrial corridors, including the current Pulaski Industrial Corridor, to the north, east, and south. Originally, commerce in Austin followed the transit lines, with business development mainly along Chicago Avenue and Lake Street, although Austin never had the volume of retailers as neighboring communities. Many of the small, family-run stores that did exist left the South Austin area during the time of the "white flight" in the 1960s and 1970s. However, along the North Avenue at the western edge of Austin (adjacent to suburban Oak Park), there is a small shopping area with mainly clothing retailers. According to the 2000 Census, the major industries that employ Austinites are education, health, social services, manufacturing, and retail trade.

¹ <http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/nationworld/politics/chi-chicagodays-kingriots-story-story.html>

ATH was also able to successfully develop the assets as resources for cultural resource building:

- Establish a relationship with new potential park participants
- Convene a set of staff and teens interested in the revitalization of ATH programming
- Garner the attention of other park advisory board members willing to work with ATH
- Establish a relationship with the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago for free admission and trips to the museum
- Receive donations from local state representatives
- Bring attention to needed infrastructural improvements
- Re-establish a connection with community arts groups Move Me Soul and SoiLL
- Connect with professional artists to serve as Artist-in-Residence for the second year of the Re:Center program



Example of MeetUP worksheet

the *Listening Party*. At these meetings, community stakeholders and citizens self-selected into a smaller task force that began to shape some of the concerns and questions posted at the *Listening Party* into actionable goals and priorities ATH could begin to tackle as part of its own cultural plan. Through creative exercises and discussion, the *MeetUPs* served as an intimate gathering space in which park staff and community members could imagine potential solutions to the challenges of cultural programming at ATH.

The group, largely led by two teens, decided to produce a two-day festival celebrating Arts & Culture in Austin. The festival was intended as a marketing tool to connect many of the residents to programming at ATH. Community members were invited to be key decision-makers in the festival planning: What did they want to see? What programs and activities should be represented? What local groups, community organizations, and businesses should be included? Artist Faheem Majeed contributed to the two-day festival by providing a community project that encouraged participants to create a larger abstract sculpture using sticks and tape. The invitation to build using everyday tools allowed young people to engage quickly. Park campers' conversations about their future potential as artists, engineers, and urban planners became part of the exercise as they worked alongside the professional artists. Over 150 individuals attended the event on Friday, July 31 and about 70 on Saturday, August 1, 2015.

Accomplishments

The two-day program held a twofold mission: to bring awareness to the programs that are available at ATH and to reinstate the teen group at ATH. Drawing from youth and teens who were willing to remain in the task force, adults described how the park had a very active youth group in years past. Building off a renewed focus to bring more teens into the park, the task force discussed the two-day festival as an event that could be planned annually by the revitalized teen group with support from park staff and adult mentors from the community.

Using 2015's community engagement efforts as a catalyst, ATH will also continue to reach out to the wider Austin community to grow the network of support with local artists groups and organizations. This includes attention to how park resources can be made available for use by outside organizations clearly and efficiently. Improved communication flow between park staff and established community groups using the ATH space will also continue to be a priority moving forward.

The image shows two separate worksheets, each with a yellow header and footer. The top worksheet is titled 'Budget Planning Austin Town Hall' and features a yellow bar chart with a scale from '\$0.00' to '\$1,000'. It has two large empty boxes for writing: 'What do we have to work with?' and 'What resources do we already have?'. The bottom worksheet is titled 'Project Planning Austin Town Hall' and has several lines for writing: 'Project Name', 'What are our goals?', 'What is our budget?', 'What is our timeline?', and 'What are our resources?'. It also includes a yellow icon of a building labeled 'You are here.' and a wavy line labeled 'Where we want to go.'

Worksheets designed for community members and meetUP participants to use in planning sessions.



TOWN HALL PARTY

YOU'RE INVITED to Austin Town Hall for a two-day festival celebrating art and culture. The celebration is the culmination of a year-long initiative to highlight the Cultural Center and the community.

Free and open to the public!

FRIDAY
JULY 31
3:00PM-7:00PM

Theater and Spoken Word Performances by Austin Theater Group

Dance Performance by Move Me Soul

Community Sculpture with Faheem Majeed

Invited Musical Guest Buoy

BBQ Grill and Food



As seen on Windy City Live, invited musical guest Buoy

SATURDAY
AUGUST 1
12:00PM-5:00PM

Art and Culture Workshops

Talk Show Hour with Cultural and Business representatives

BBQ Grill and Food

West Point Epic Steel Orchestra

Live set from DJ Phenom

Community Sculpture with Faheem Majeed

BBQ Grill and Food



Artist Faheem Majeed will develop a Community Sculpture in honor of Austin Town Hall



Thanks to our partners:



Austin Town Hall
Cultural Center
5410 W. Lake Street

For more information about this and other projects at Austin Town Hall and Chicago Park District Cultural Centers please contact Jose.Villalobos@ChicagoParkDistrict.com



City of Chicago, Mayor Rahm Emanuel,
Chicago Park District Board of Commissioners
Chairman Mike Kelly, Second Vice-Chairwoman Vicki

For more information about your Chicago Park District, visit www.chicagoparksandrec.org or call 312.743.7200 or 312.743.7770.

In addition to building stronger relationships with community, the Re:Center process has also helped to strengthen park staff's understanding and implementation of 2016 cultural programming goals with clearer focus and intention. The park supervisor has shown a commitment to integrating 2015's gains in engaging community and is working with CAN staff to continue these goals through concrete cultural planning priorities that speak to the Austin community and to the city of Chicago. New cultural partnerships are being established with organizations such as the Chicago Children's Choir and Victory Gardens Theater. The creation of a teen center and art gallery are projects being planned in conjunction with the artists in residence program. Drama instructor Dionne Hawkins is acting as lead coordinator for On Stage, a citywide one-act drama festival planned for Fall 2016 that will feature workshops and performance led by the Chicago Park District's drama instructors.

ATH's physical structure is still in need of capital improvements to the auditorium and some of the classrooms and studio spaces in order to prepare the facility to handle more robust programming. However, as of November 2015, the apses on the north end of the auditorium have been repaired, and attention has been brought to the facility to bring the floor to use for dance performances.

Next Steps

As the resident Cultural Liaison departs from ATH, the next steps in the project are to establish three main facets of the program to continue broadening and building into existing programming structures. This includes establishing the Artist-in-Residence for 2016, revitalizing the programming of the teen group, and implementing a working timeline for the 2016 Austin Town Hall Cultural Festival.

Artist-in-Residence at Austin Town Hall: The Floating Museum (Faheem Majeed & Jeremiah Hulsebos-Spofford)

Drawing from his experience at the 2015 Cultural Festival, Majeed will continue working with ATH as the Artist-in-Residence (AIR) along with his collaborators Jeremiah Hulsebos-Spofford and Andrew Schachman as part of the Floating Museum project.

In April 2016 they will begin a five-month residency developing their artistic practice while utilizing the data and relationships established through the *Re:Center* project in alignment with the Cultural Center initiative.

The park supervisor has established some space for the artists to occupy during the residency and will continue implementing strategies to improve participation at ATH.

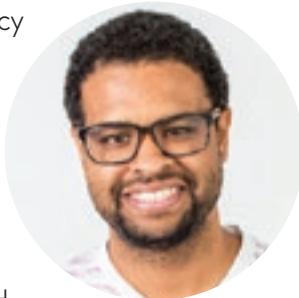
The Floating Museum is a long-term project centered on ideas of civic practice and cultural participation through the creation of a mobile museum. Drawing from the history and collection practices of Chicago's own DuSable Museum, also located on Park District land, The Floating Museum invites local residents to build the collection of this ephemeral shape shifting museum. Through activities that build temporary structures, the programming within the Floating Museum considers the use of parkland and its resources as laboratory space for public artistic practices.

Teen Group

As mentioned, during the MeetUPs many individuals recognized the lack of an active teen group at ATH. During the 2015 festival, a group of professionals from the community came together to host a conversation about teen involvement at ATH. Many of these individuals expressed interest in continuing to help. A small database of contact information has been developed for them to be able to connect with teens at ATH and help them establish a more active youth group as well as provide support for the planning and execution of the 2016 Cultural Festival.

2016 Austin Town Hall Cultural Festival

The success of the 2015 Cultural Festival sparked interest to work toward making the event an annual occurrence. The Cultural Liaison will work with the park supervisor and lead cultural staff to produce a streamlined skeleton timeline for the Teen Group and ATH staff to follow in establishing an annual arts & culture festival. In addition, the park supervisor has applied for and received additional support to include a gospel showcase to the festival through the Chicago Park District's Night Out in the Parks initiative.



THE FLOATING MUSEUM

FAHEEM MAJEED

ARTIST-IN-RESIDENCE

"We're excited to be Artists-in-Residence at the Chicago Park District's Austin Town Hall Cultural Center. We're thrilled to build a partnership with an organization where we can explore the idea of universal adaptors, where we can make observations about contemporary cultural institutions and how to approach the limits of space and resources. This raises issues regarding value and leveling of resources—how do you adapt to your space and to what is available to you. As artists, we work as adaptors, we act as liaisons between organizations, collectives and larger artistic institutions. We think about design and park space as a laboratory to create structures, as concepts and as sculpture that adapt to their users."



JEREMIAH HULSEBOS-SPOFFORD

ARTIST-IN-RESIDENCE

2015 Table of Partners and Outcomes

Partner	Event	Outcome
Museum of Contemporary Art	Field trips and performances space at musume for Austin residents. Free admission and transportation to and from ATH and transportation	Performances at MCA from ATH Drama Group
Chicago Children's Choir	Participated in ATH Festival	ATH will host its first Austin Children's Choir
Austin Resident, Dwayne Truss	Revitalization of ATH Park	Connected with State Representative Lily Camlin to discuss ATH as a Cultural Center
Teen Group at ATH	Reestablish Teen Group activity	The Teen group will be connected to business mentors from the community and help develop the cultural festival for 2016
Faheem Majeed	Community Sculpture at Cultural Festival	Majeed will transition into residency at ATH for 2016 and launch <i>The Floating Museum</i> from ATH with collaborators Jeremiah Hulsebos-Spofford and Andrew Schachman



Park staff and community members planning cultural priorities for Hamilton Park

Process

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Hamilton Park Cultural Center is already quite active in regards to arts and culture. However, many of the groups that are doing programming and organizing at Hamilton are not in conversation with another. From a strategic standpoint, Culture, Arts, and Nature (CAN) staff and Hamilton staff positioned the Re:Center process to help create space for various groups already represented at Hamilton while reaching out to those not yet represented, namely visual artists and local artists, to come together to discuss what they would like to see moving forward at Hamilton.

Background

Since opening its doors in 1905, Hamilton Park Cultural Center has been a hub of cultural activity for the Englewood neighborhood. Most notably, an annex to the fieldhouse held a Chicago Public Library branch, which was used widely by families in the neighborhood. When the South Park Commission merged with the city's other park agencies in 1934, the park focused more deeply on bringing cultural programming to the neighborhood, including chorus, drama, band, storytelling, metal work, model airplanes, and woodshop. Many of the participants involved in the Re:Center process hold the memories of this space in the 1950s and 60s from when they frequented this space as a child, especially memories of the library, dance classes, and talent shows. In the past decade, Hamilton has had a tradition of community organization and neighborhood engagement through the Englewood Community Cultural Planning Council (EC3) and the more recently formed Park Advisory Council. Current arts and culture programming at Hamilton Park Cultural Center includes: the Chicago Children's Choir, Ernest Dawkins' Live the Spirit Jazz Residency, the Senior Hoofers Tap Group, a partnership with Red Clay Dance (theatre and dance), and a handful of organizations that rent the space for their programming, including Sammy Dyer School of Theatre/Dance. Hamilton Park also has a part time cultural instructor in dance, Chewanda, who offers classes in modern, jazz, and hip hop to young people ages 5-18.



KAREN FORD

PARK PATRON AND ARTIST

"The cultural programming in the parks, particularly at Hamilton Park in Englewood, is important to the overall well being of the community as a whole. In 2015, Shakespeare was performed to raves and the Joffrey Ballet performed before a standing room only crowd that would never have been imagined. However it is not only the introduction of these art forms that make the cultural work so important to this community. The park also recognizes and showcases the talent of those in Englewood. Culture both informs and educates and having the park district be an integral part of that is not only vital but essential to the welfare of our neighborhood."



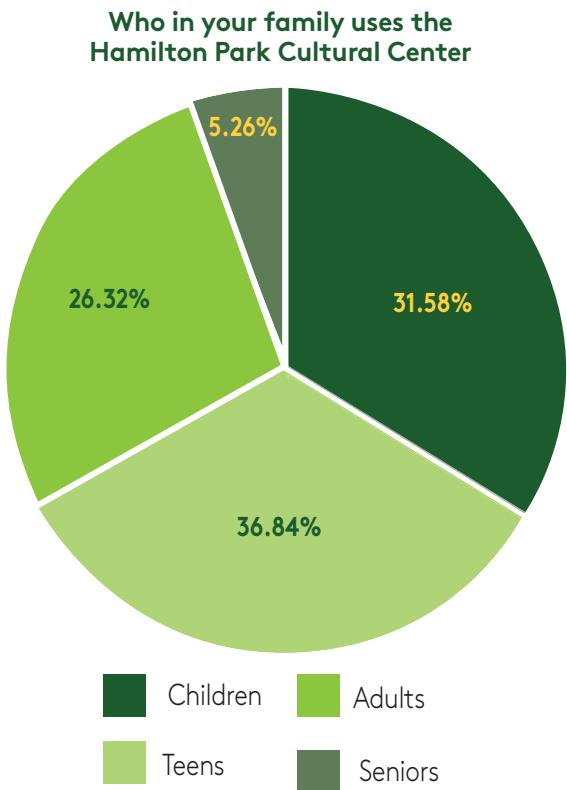
Approximately 80 neighbors and stakeholders attended the *Listening Party* on March 13, 2015, to share their thoughts about arts and culture at Hamilton Park Cultural Center. Figures A, B, and C in the Appendix outline who uses the Cultural Center, how they use the Cultural Center, and what they believe a cultural center should mean. Using the data from these surveys and table conversations that took place at the event, it was clear that attendees wanted to see Hamilton Park Cultural Center "reflecting the culture and desires of the surrounding community" and "existing as a safe space within the community" (Hamilton Park Cultural Center, 3/11/2015). People also expressed that many of the things they would like to see at Hamilton are more infrastructural — more signage on the nearby roadways and more visual art inside and outside of the building to signify this space as a *cultural space* at its core.

The MeetUPs phase was held during the monthly Englewood Community Cultural Planning Council (EC3) meetings. The group was supportive of the work and both CAN and EC3 felt the process held many shared values with EC3's collective mission — most importantly the value of arts and culture as a vehicle for social change in Englewood. In addition, the Re:Center organizers recognized that Hamilton had a rich arts and culture community

Figure A

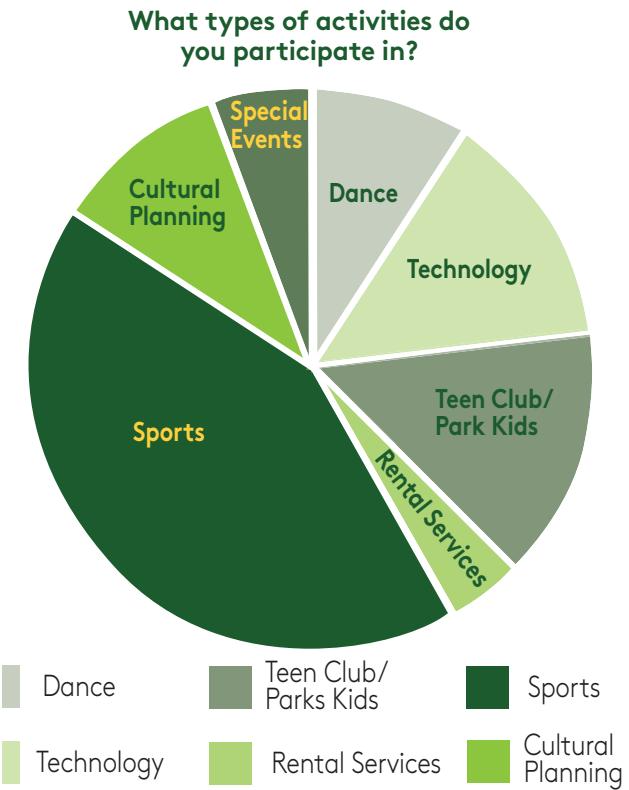


Figure B



Hamilton Park Cultural Center Listening Survey

Figure C



Hamilton Park Cultural Center Listening Survey

Demographics

During the 1940s, some African American individuals and families made economic gains enabling them the opportunity to purchase some of the larger houses in Englewood. However, many low-income residents rented in more crowded conditions. African Americans constituted just 2% of the population. By 1960, numbers increased to 69%, and 96% by 1970. In 1960, the population peaked at over 97,000 people, despite the exodus of 50,000 whites.

In the 2010 Census, the racial demographics of Englewood were as follows:

- WHITE **0.34%**
- BLACK **97.37%**
- HISPANIC **1.06%**
- ASIAN **0.11%**
- OTHER **1.12%**



already present because of EC3, cultural instructors, and the burgeoning Park Advisory Council, wanted to take the approach of working with what was already present. It was important for this process to establish a mutual respect

for all parties involved by honoring each contributing member's time, energy, and labor, and to have sensitivity towards the already-busy lives of park staff and active community members. All EC3 members were invited to the MeetUPs, and the invitation was open to anyone who wanted to join. About ten participants regularly attended the meetings, many who had been with the process since the *Listening Party*. There was a particular desire during these meetings to highlight three specific goals for Hamilton: increasing the visibility of Hamilton, streamlining partnerships, and planning an event to highlight all of Hamilton (*Figure D*).

Two individuals showed particular leadership and a desire to work with CAN staff and park staff to plan an event for Hamilton Park Cultural Center featuring the great work at Hamilton: Debra Thompson, Englewood resident and community arts activist who planned a Chicago Artists Month (CAM) event at Hamilton the previous year, and Karen Ford, author and Auburn Gresham resident who grew up in the Englewood neighborhood going to Hamilton Park. Debra, Karen, and Danielle (CAN Cultural Liaison) met about every other week between August and October to plan an event series for CAM.

The Chicago Artists Month planning group decided to use the process of coordinating an event series to bring in new partnerships and to increase visibility of the Cultural Center, both goals outlined by the MeetUP group. Current artists already doing work with Hamilton were invited alongside other new local artists to feature their work — especially visual artists, an arts discipline that is underrepresented at the park. Three events were held as part of the event series in October.

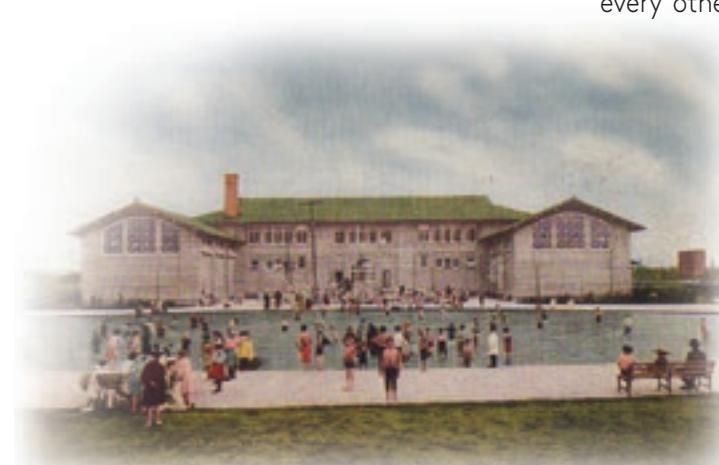


Figure D

GOAL	Increase visibility of Hamilton Park	Streamline Partnerships	Plan an event to highlight all of Hamilton
STRATEGY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage current and new partners Something visual to leave at Hamilton "Open House" idea how often do we work together? Connect to Chicago Artists Month the park. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Look at/reach out to potential new partners to engage Streamline relationship between EC3, PAC, CAN Quarterly meetings? Write up a guide for what it means to partner with 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Official signage Social media presence Informal signage Social media presence Exterior artwork Interior artwork
MEMBER ASSIGNED	Latrese Vianna Mike Jeremey	Felicia Pam Corey	Debra Karen

Accomplishments

The first event of the series demonstrated quantifiable success, with great attendance and energy. A major success of the project was the number of new partners who wanted to continue working at Hamilton, including Monika Neuland, weaver, and JoVonna Jackson, ceramic and mosaic artist. Another was the media coverage the event received, especially as artist Jimmy Williams has been concurrently working to raise funds for a gallery space in Englewood. Various news stations ran stories on his efforts.

One of the deeper successes was watching the staff at Hamilton work in partnership with artists and beginning to develop a vocabulary and skill set for producing arts events and inviting artists to work in their park. In addition, future goals are being developed around marketing and promotion that can help the park better understand how to make sure that local neighbors and stakeholders know about the arts and culture events and programming being brought to Hamilton Park Cultural Center.

Figure E

Some headlines of media coverage from Hamilton Park CAM exhibit

- **DNAINFO**
ENGLEWOOD, AUBURN GRESHAM & CHATHAM ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT
Come Check Out Local Artists at Hamilton Park Saturday for Artists Month
By Andrea V. Watson
- **CBS CHICAGO**
Englewood Artist Planning Gallery To Share His Passion With Community
(Artist-Jimmy Williams)
By Dana Kozlov

chicago park district

**YOU
ARE
HERE**

WOULD
HOW → **YOU USE THE PARK?**
DO → **COULD**

LISTENING PARTY

FREE -

- + Cultural Performances
- + Open House
- + Community Conversation
- + Refreshments
- + Giveaways/Raffles
- = Your Voice

HAMILTON
CULTURAL CENTER

THURSDAY
MARCH 11
6-8PM

In partnership with:

Kusanya Cafe DReAM lookingglass
Ours Precious Lulu

City of Chicago, Hamilton Eastside, Mayor
Chicago Park District Board of Commissioners
Michael H. Raffa, General Superintendent & CEO

For more information about your
Chicago Park District, visit chicagoparks.org or call 312.742.7494 or 1.866.742.2291 (TTY).

Next Steps

A cross-district challenge is marketing and promotion of events, especially those events that do not fit into traditional categories promoted by the Park District. The Re:Center process requires deeper work than a traditional event. Cultural Liaisons must spend ample time on the ground in the neighborhood and at other events, and value must be placed on relationship building as a key piece of promotion. Supervisor Michael Lindsey and Cultural Liaison Danielle Littman walked the neighboring streets and dropped off event flyers. This neighborhood focused strategy ensures that more neighbors and constituents of Hamilton Park Cultural Center are made aware of all the programming and the processes through which new programs and events are brought to the park.

Moving forward, it will be important to ensure that marketing accurately represents the scope of a given series rather than a singular event. During the 2015 Re:Center events, audience members often came to support those who were performing, and left after the performances. They had not planned to stay for the workshops or other performances. In this case, it seems the larger scope or arc of the event series was not clear. Participants did not market the event as part of a series to their constituents, but rather as a singular performance. It is in the gray area of community organizing and cultural planning that much of this process lay, and limitations of language around processual work make it difficult to explain how a one-off event or workshop fits into the larger arc of the process.

A smaller, more nuanced, difficulty came when Park Supervisor Michael Lindsey asked the EC3 group to provide partnership forms (insurance and a letter of intent); this formal arrangement was not part of the group's decade long meeting history at Hamilton. As a community collective and not a 501c3, the group did not fit the recognized categories of park partnerships.

Park Supervisor, Michael Lindsey came to Hamilton Park after the community focused process started, about a month after the *Listening Party*. In this transition of supervisors (which is common across the Park District), some of the institutional knowledge around the Re:Center process was not communicated. More importantly, some of the knowledge around the cultural



activity already present at the park was not translated between supervisors. Supervisor Lindsey did not understand that EC3 had always had a more organic agreement with past supervisors. EC3 decided to meet in other spaces for a few months while this complication was being addressed.

MIKE LINDSEY

PARK SUPERVISOR

"What has been working well is passing out information to the community and making sure that everyone that enters Hamilton Park is aware of programs and upcoming events. Working with the Cultural, Arts, and Nature department (CAN) has been a great resource, by helping to get more cultural events and getting more community foot traffic through Hamilton."

models offered. This not only brought EC3 back into Hamilton Park Cultural Center, but also paves the way for additional Cultural Committees to come into the Chicago Park District to support the cultural priorities of each unique neighborhood. This story, and EC3's work as a whole, serve as a model for future community members and groups to participate in cultural planning and action across the Park District.

Through this challenge, a deeper strength emerged. Once Supervisor Lindsey realized the importance of EC3 as a community asset to Hamilton Park, he worked tirelessly to get them back in the park. He attended their meetings in other spaces, and worked with the Park District Administration to add a Cultural Committee designation to the partnership

Impact

In March 2015, we had one *Listening Party*, we held four official community *MeetUPs* from April to July and at least eight additional CAM planning meetings (Debra Thompson, Karen Ford, Danielle Littman) from August to October. In October, we had three CAM events as our *Feature* with over 150 attendees. During this series, ten individual artists and eight arts groups were featured, at least five of which were new partners for Hamilton Park. These events were a mix of performances, workshops, and a visual art gallery.

Qualitatively, the new relationships brokered will mean an enhanced cultural agenda through additional programming, specifically in the visual arts.



Artist JoVanna Jackson at Chicago Artist Month exhibit hosted at Hamilton Park



MONIKA NEULAND

ARTIST-IN-RESIDENCE

"As an artist with a 20 year history of facilitating arts within the parks, it is clear to me that parks are one of the rare institutions that offers localized free access to cultural experiences to people of all ages and abilities, at all levels of socioeconomic ladder. Parks are a jewel of access to experiences for the mind, body and spirit."

Looking forward:

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Artist-in-Residence

In 2016, Hamilton will host two Artists in Residence who began relationships with the parks through the Re:Center process. These artists are JoVonna Jackson and Monika Neuland. They will work to continue the conversation around cultural organizing and cultural relevance to the neighborhood that began in 2015. They will teach workshops and engage with the community as well as creating their own art. Other artists who came to Hamilton through the Re:Center process will be developing one-off workshops to bring to Hamilton, such as a journalism and creative writing workshop taught by Karen Ford.

TRACE

The Park District's Teens Reimagining Art, Community, and the Environment (TRACE) Program will be in residence at Hamilton Park Cultural Center for one year beginning in 2016. Young people will work with adults in the park to develop enhanced marketing and public relations to the local neighborhood, and will work to develop a plan for sustainability moving forward. TRACE will also be a resource in engaging the local teen population in creating and sustaining relevant programming, including media and technology as it relates to arts and culture.

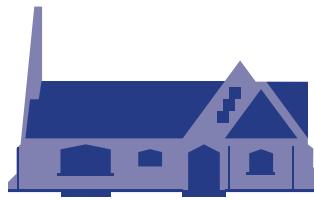
Englewood Community Cultural Planning Council (EC3)

CAN staff and Park Supervisor Michael Lindsey have been working with the Chicago Park District to develop a partnership category of "Cultural Committee" in order to continue EC3's decade-long relationship that has been so integral to the park's cultural environment.

3rd Annual Chicago Artists Month at Hamilton Park Cultural Center

In 2016, the Hamilton Park Cultural Center Staff will host the 3rd Annual Chicago Artists Month at Hamilton Park Cultural Center on October 14th and 15th, highlighting the park as a cultural hub in Englewood and in the City of Chicago. This project is in conjunction with the Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events (DCASE).





Indian Boundary Park



Park patrons enjoying Rabid Bat Theater in performance

Process

Recognizing Indian Boundary Park is well-established in the community as a place to experience and learn arts and culture, Supervisor Phil Martini charged Cultural Liaison Marcus Davis with the task of conducting targeted outreach to previously unexplored partnerships in the community as well as groups who perhaps did not feel as welcome/represented at the park. More narrowly, that included community schools and the Indo-Pakistani immigrant community. The goal of the Re:Center process thus was to serve as an invitation for new voices and pathway for new partnerships.

Indian Boundary's *Listening Party* was held on May 5th, 2015, and was attended by 50 community members and stakeholders, including members of the Indo-American Heritage Museum, in the fieldhouse auditorium. In addition to performances showcasing the work of the Chicago Children's Choir and the modern dance class at Indian Boundary Park, the event engaged attendees in a dialogue about the strengths and opportunities for improvement that exist at the park. Through wall surveys and table conversations, it was clear that Indian Boundary is a much appreciated institution in the community. However, an interest in



Background

For a century, Indian Boundary Park has served as a cultural hub for the surrounding community. Distinct in its origins as a park designed for passive usage by middle-upper class Chicagoans, the idyllic landscaping found on the 13 acre campus at Indian Boundary exemplifies Chicago's aspirations to be a "city in a garden." While the demographics surrounding the park have evolved over the decades to represent one of the most diverse populations in the city, Indian Boundary's place as a treasured jewel where arts and culture coalesce in the West Ridge community is as vital today as it was in the 1920's.

Conceived as a passive park, in contrast to the more prevalent recreational parks meant to encourage physical activity, Indian Boundary Park was a place for peaceful reflection and observation throughout the 1920's. This position was augmented with the establishment of the Indian Boundary Park Zoo in the mid-1920's, which housed a fluctuating collection of animals over the years including a black bear, foxes, birds, goats and raccoons. Maintained by Lincoln Park Zoo, the zoo was the source of precious memories for generations that grew up in the West Ridge community until the decision was made to close it in 2013. That decision was met with protest from many in the community, however the multi-use Nature Center which replaced it in 2015 has been largely received as a welcome asset to the park.

Continued on next page



PHIL MARTINI

PARK SUPERVISOR

"Going through the Re:Center process was really valuable. Indian Boundary is fortunate to have a ton of arts and culture programming, but that's a blessing and a curse. Being so busy means me and my small staff can't always do the type of outreach I'd like to see. The ideas that came out of the *Listening Party* and *MeetUPs* led us to a Fall performance series highlighting community artists. It was a big success and we plan on making it an annual event. Having the support to listen more intentionally to what the community would like to see at their cultural center and implement it has strengthened our cultural programming moving forward."

Background

Built in 1929, the tudor-style fieldhouse serves as the Cultural Center for Indian Boundary Park. Both the aesthetic richness and logistical thoughtfulness make the fieldhouse an ideal place to both enjoy a show or learn a new artistic skill. Supervised by artist and advocate Phil Martini, the fieldhouse is activated year-round with programming and classes. Strong partnerships with the Chicago Children's Choir, Civic Orchestra of Chicago and Fury Theatre, along with consistent interest from groups looking for an affordable performance space, contribute to the robust lineup of arts presented in the fieldhouse auditorium. In addition to the auditorium, the fieldhouse boasts a second floor with stained-glass and ceramic studios, a ground floor solarium and multi-purpose basement used primarily as a theatrical rehearsal space. With its history and design in context, it is not hard to see why Indian Boundary Park is one of the most heralded Cultural Centers in the Chicago Park District.

seeing more family-friendly programming that celebrates West Ridge's unique diversity surfaced as a common thread.

The subsequent MeetUPs consisted of smaller group conversations seizing on this idea of celebrating diversity. Two key community members contributed to these dialogues: Daniel Ebel and Denise Pellikan. Ebel is an active member of Indian Boundary's Park Advisory Committee and spearheads their social media efforts, Pellikan is the Arts Liaison at neighborhood school Armstrong Elementary. Instrumental towards envisioning ways to engage park goers who traditionally might not partake in the arts and culture offered at Indian Boundary, their perspective helped formulate ideas for what evolved into our feature offering, the *Art Happenings* series.

Using art as a conduit to celebrate cultural diversity, the *Art Happenings* series began as a call for proposals from community artists to bring their art practice to their neighbors by transforming the green space of Indian Boundary in some way. Several interested parties submitted proposals and five were selected for this pilot effort representing theater (Rabid Bat Theatricals and Thom Cox from Lookingglass Theater) dance (J. Lindsay Brown Dance Company), music (Compass Rose Violin Duo) and experimental sound engineering (Peter Speer). Spread throughout the months of September and October, each *Art Happening* was held outside on a weekend during peak usage hours to capture passive park goers.

大羅ger市公園 Greater Rogers Park 的藝術家們根據印地安邊界文化中心 Indian Boundary Cultural Center 的概念，創造出許多藝術作品讓公園變得更顯新鮮、更有活力！

그레이터 로저스 파크의 예술가 여러분, 예술분의 예술 생활은 반드시 작품 전시를 중심으로 하는 커뮤니티를 뛰어 넘어야 더 좋은 주제로 삽니다.

Aux artistes de Rogers Park et de la région- aidez-nous à envisager une communauté active au Centre Culturel de Indian Boundary avec votre pratique artistique.

Call for Proposals

**DEADLINE EXTENDED
JULY 10**

Art Happenings at Indian Boundary Cultural Center

The Chicago Park District is looking for artists and artisans who live or work in the West Ridge/Rogers Park Communities to activate the beautiful green space at Indian Boundary Park Cultural Center (2500 W. Lunt) through a series of five "Art Happenings" for the 2015 summer.

Located in one of Chicago's most diverse communities and a designated Cultural Center, Indian Boundary Park offers a variety of arts programming and enjoys robust passive use by the surrounding community on its grounds. Understanding that any space can become a gallery, classroom or studio, we invite local artists to bring their practice directly to the community through "Art Happenings".

With an emphasis on visual art, dance, music, theatre, literature and horticulture, these "Art Happenings" are meant to consider how citizens can make, activate, or transform space. We encourage artists to think boldly; there are no restrictions on media but encourage family-friendly material. Access to Indian Boundary's facilities, materials and a small stipend will be provided to those selected.

About the Park:

Indian Boundary Park sits on almost 13 acres that includes a field house, a lagoon, a community garden and a recently built Nature Center, each representing creative potential to engage the community. We invite your art practice to transform these spaces and give the community a broader artistic and cultural vista. Visit [www.chicagoparkdistrict.com/parks/indian-boundary-park/](http://chicagoparkdistrict.com/parks/indian-boundary-park/) for more information on the history and facilities at Indian Boundary Park Cultural Center.

Apply at: <http://bit.ly/1BqHhPn>

Deadline: 11:59PM, Tuesday, July 10, 2015

Submission: One-page written proposal and two samples of previous work.

Please submit to marcus.davis@chicagoparkdistrict.com



Light Installation on 600 Trail



Accomplishments

The Art Happenings were well received by both park goers and Park District staff. Peter Speer's experimental performance *Music for Crickets and Amplified Brass* was held in the Nature Center on the same day as Rabid Bat's performance of *The Minstrel, The Princess and the Rabid Bat*. Each performance took advantage of the wonderful weather and found park goers fully engaged in their performances. Compass Rose was a huge hit among park goers as they played world music reflecting the immigrant communities living around the park. Several park goers remarked that hearing music from their home country made them feel welcome and at home at Indian Boundary Park.



Compass Rose duo in performance during Indian Boundary Art Happenings

chicago park district

LISTENING PARTY

WOULD
HOW YOU USE THE PARK?
DO COULD

FREE!

- + Cultural Performances
- + Open House
- + Community Conversation
- + Giveaways/Raffles
- = Your Voice

TUESDAY
MAY 5
6-8PM

INDIAN BOUNDARY CULTURAL CENTER

City of Chicago, Mayor Rahm Emanuel, Michael A. Kelly, General Superintendent & CEO
Chicago Park District Board of Commissioners
For more information about your Chicago Park District, visit www.chicagoparksdistrict.com or call (312) 742-7424 or (312) 742-4869 (TTY).

J. Lindsay Brown truly transformed the Nature Center with her piece *Danseum*, which had dancers performing like animals native to the area throughout the space. Thom Cox proposed a theater piece which unfortunately was not possible to produce in the limited timeframe. Still, his pre-production work has gone a good way towards extending the reach of the Re: Center process by strengthening ties between Indian Boundary Park and the Indo-American Center. This work will continue as a partnership to produce an original work of community theater in 2016.

An additional success has been the lines of communication opened between Armstrong Elementary and Indian Boundary Park. Armstrong is a school that celebrates the arts while also being a true microcosm of the community, featuring students from every background. Marcus Davis was invited to present about Indian Boundary Park during a professional development day as well as a host a table at open house, allowing CAN to share programming with both teachers and parents. Conversations have begun with school administration regarding a partnership between Indian Boundary and Armstrong to offer cultural immersion experiences and performance opportunities to Armstrong students at the park. We hope to use this partnership as a model for collaboration across Chicago Park District and Chicago Public Schools in providing arts and culture programming to young people.

Next Steps

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West Ridge's neighborhood's strength is in many ways one of its biggest challenges. The diversity that defines the community is on full display in the passive usage of Indian Boundary Park, where people from all backgrounds can be observed taking advantage of the beautiful grounds. However, in matters of arts and culture, bridging the cultural divides that exist between these diverse groups is a more complex endeavor. Concerns of religion, politics, and economics factor greatly into the culture of the community, and the Cultural Liaison's position as an outsider presents some unique challenges. For example, accessing the Orthodox Jewish community was particularly difficult. Questions on what exactly the Chicago Park District's role in addressing these deeper cultural issues should be foregrounded in future approaches and deserve serious inquiry among ACU staff as the Re:Center process continues.



J. Lindsay Brown in performance at Indian Boundary Art Happenings at Nature Center



PETER SPEER

ARTIST-IN-RESIDENCE

"Indian Boundary is a few blocks away from my home and I use the park often with my wife and son. It's such an important part of the community where you see people from so many different cultures using the space. That type of diversity, along with the natural beauty of the park, are truly unique. As a resident of West Ridge, I'm especially excited to bring my work as a sound artist to the park through the Artist-in-Residence program. Having a space at Indian Boundary to connect my art practice to my community is a really special opportunity."

Another strength that has also proved a challenge is the fact Indian Boundary Park in many ways is already fully activated. The full calendar of events makes adding new things/partners a burden on Supervisor Martini and his small staff, who are already over extended. Making space for new things in a place where things are already working well, but only for some people, is challenging with limited capacity.

Impact

In May we held one *Listening Party* followed by two MeetUPs in June. Targeted outreach was conducted with the Indo-American Center, the Rogers Park Arts Alliance, Armstrong Elementary and other community organizations during July-September. We produced four *Art Happenings* with community artists throughout September and October reaching approximately 400 park goers.

ART HAPPENINGS

YOU'RE INVITED to join us this fall as local artists bring their art practice to the community and transform the beautiful grounds of Indian Boundary Cultural Center. These outdoor, interactive events will feature sound design, theater, dance, and music as an invitation for park goers to experience the park in a new way.

Come out and experience the transformation with your local artists:

Free and open to the public!

Rebid Bet Theatricals – Saturday, August 29

Peter Speer, Sound Installation – Saturday, September 5
Image: Peter Speer

Compass Rose Violin Duo – Saturday, September 19

Thom Cox, Community Theater – Sunday, October 4
Cheryl Lynn Bruce and Thomas J. Cox in *The Great Fire*. Photo by Sean Williams.

J. Lindsay Brown Dance Company – Sunday, October 11

Indian Boundary Cultural Center
2500 W Lunt Ave.

For more information about this and other projects at Indian Boundary Cultural Center and Chicago Park District Cultural Centers please contact Marius.Davis@ChicagoParkDistrict.org.

City of Chicago, Alderman Brian Ward, Mayor
Chicago Park District Board of Commissioners
Michael P. Kelly, Director of Capital Projects

For more information about the Chicago Park District, visit www.chicagoparkdistrict.com or call 773.553.2800 or 312.742.7200.

Next Steps

Artist-in-Residence

In 2016, Indian Boundary Park is establishing an Artist in Residency program featuring two community artists. Thom Cox and Peter Speer, who participated in the *Art Happenings* series will expand their respective relationships with the park and its surrounding communities. Supervisor Martini was so pleased with the *Art Happenings* series that he wishes to make it an annual event celebrating West Ridge artist in conjunction with Chicago Artist Month. Building on this year's success, *Art Happenings* will be expanded as a concept to take advantage of the summer months and invite even more diverse offerings to the grounds.



THOM COX

PARK PATRON/ARTIST-IN-RESIDENCE

"I attended the Listening Party at Indian Boundary and was really struck by the diversity in the room. West Ridge is a uniquely diverse part of Chicago, but different groups aren't always in conversation with each other. One thing I kept hearing was how much people wanted to celebrate that diversity, and that's what I hope to do using theater with my residency... get neighbors who might usually look past each other to see the beauty that comes from so many voices in this community."

Continued Partnerships

Conversations will continue with the Indo-American Center to discuss ways to bring culturally relevant programming to Indian Boundary and highlight the work being done by their members. This will be extended through the work of the two Artists-in-Residence. A pilot arts and culture immersion program will be developed in partnership with Armstrong Elementary bringing students to the Cultural Center to both learn and showcase their talents. This partnership will hopefully serve as a model for cross-organizational collaboration in providing arts and culture opportunities to young people in Chicago.

Building Relationships

through Culture:

The Value of Community Engagement

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The Chicago Park District Cultural Liaisons serve as community connectors and representatives for cultural programs and events at the Chicago Park District's Cultural Centers. Their work focuses on assessing the resources and needs of Cultural Centers in collaboration with community stakeholders and park staff in order to create mutually beneficial relationships and cultural programming.



DANIELLE LITTMAN

CULTURAL LIAISON

is an artist and civic practitioner living in Chicago. She works as a Cultural Liaison for the Chicago Park District's Department of Culture, Arts, and Nature, and teaches theatre and writing classes to young people throughout Chicago. She holds her degree in Theatre and English with a certificate in Civic Engagement from Northwestern University.

The Cultural Liaisons facilitate the Re:Center process, which begins by listening to the ideas of community stakeholders at a *Listening Party*, working in collaboration with these community stakeholders to plan an event or program through regular *MeetUPs*, and culminates in a Feature that highlights the Re:Center process and its outcomes. The processual advancement of this work centers on the generative efforts of fostering partnerships and collaboration with Chicago communities.



MARCUS DAVIS

CULTURAL LIAISON

is a multi-disciplinary artist and sociologist from Chicago, IL. His work is grounded in an intersectional inquiry of counterculture personhood via music visual representation, comedy and scholarship. Marcus studied Visual Ethnography at DePaul University in Chicago.



**J. GIBRAN
VILLALOBOS**

CULTURAL LIAISON

is a Cultural Liaison in the Department of Culture, Arts, and Nature for the Chicago Park District. Previously he was a the Collections and Exhibitions Coordinator for the City of Glendale, AZ. As an art historian and arts administrator, his research practice centers on the theoretical and pragmatic approaches to public art and civic practice. His research has been presented at the Hemi GSI at UCLA, the American Association of Geographers, and the 12th Havana Biennial.

Community Engagement:

By the Numbers

Austin Town Hall		Hamilton		Indian Boundary	
Number of existing Partnerships	8	Number of existing Partnerships	5+	Number of existing Partnerships	8+
Number of new Partnerships	5	Number of new Partnerships	5	Number of new Partnerships	7
Total # of Cultural Partnerships	13	Total # of Cultural Partnerships	10+	Total # of Cultural Partnerships	15+
Hours in the Field/Outreach	150+	Hours in the Field/Outreach	100+	Hours in the Field/Outreach	100+
Marketing/In-House Design Hours	90	Marketing/In-House Design Hours	15	Marketing/In-House Design	25
Assessment/Evaluation Hours	20	Assessment/Evaluation Hours	15	Assessment/Evaluation	20
Total # of Hours	260+	Total # of Hours	130+	Total # of Hours	145+
Strategy Development/ Park Meetings	15	Strategy Development/ Park Meetings	15	Strategy Development/Park Meetings	19
Number of MeetUPs	7	Number of MeetUPs	4	Number of MeetUPs	3
Events from Artists-in-Residence programs	6	Events from Feature Programming	3	Events from Feature Programming	7
Total # of Events	28	Events from Artists-in-Residence programs	17	Events from Artists-in-Residence programs	6
Attendees at Listening Party	115	Total # of Events	39	Total # of events	35
Attendees at MeetUPs	20	Attendees at Listening Party	80	Attendees at Listening Party	75
Attendees at Feature events	220	Attendees at MeetUPs	15	Attendees at Meet-Ups	13
Total # of Individual Attendees	355	Attendees at Feature events	100	Attendees at Feature events	300
		Total # of Individual Attendees	195	Total # of attendees associated	388

Austin Town Hall VALUE OF SERVICES	
In-Kind Cultural Resources	
Transportation	
MCA Field Trips	\$600
Teaching Artists Fee (15 hours x \$50)	\$750
Admission to MCA (95 tickets x \$12)	\$1140
Exhibition Space at Truman College	\$500
Guests at Cultural Festival (6 guest \$25 per guest honorarium)	\$250
Ethno Graphic Workshops (6 hours x \$50)	\$300
Anonymous Donation	\$100
Total	\$3,640

Hamilton VALUE OF SERVICES	
In-Kind Cultural Resources	
In-Kind Cultural Resources	
Donated materials, donated time	\$1000
Donated Teaching Artists Time	\$1500
In kind TOTAL	\$2500
Indian Boundary VALUE OF SERVICES	
In-Kind Cultural Resources	
"Art Happenings Series" artists (@ reduced rate of \$200 per)	\$800
Photography/videography services (@ \$50/hr)	\$500
TOTAL	\$1300

Index

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Listening Party

One night event at which invited guests participate in a large dialogue moderated by members of the community, event organizers, and invited guests. Guests are encouraged to discuss what makes up the past and current condition of their Cultural Center. Event showcases live performances from local neighborhood theater, dance, and performance groups. Food and refreshments are sourced from a local neighborhood caterer.

MeetUPs

Participants from the *Listening Party* are invited to return to a more concentrated dialogue. Questions and comments from the initial *Listening Party* are discussed as a point of departure for future programming. Returning participants volunteer to meet as a group over a period of 3-4 months to develop strategies to improve Cultural Center as well as broaden the programming. The task group formed is given \$1,000 to develop a cultural event they see fit for their Cultural Center. They are supported by the Chicago Park District by providing a Cultural Liaison and light administrative support.

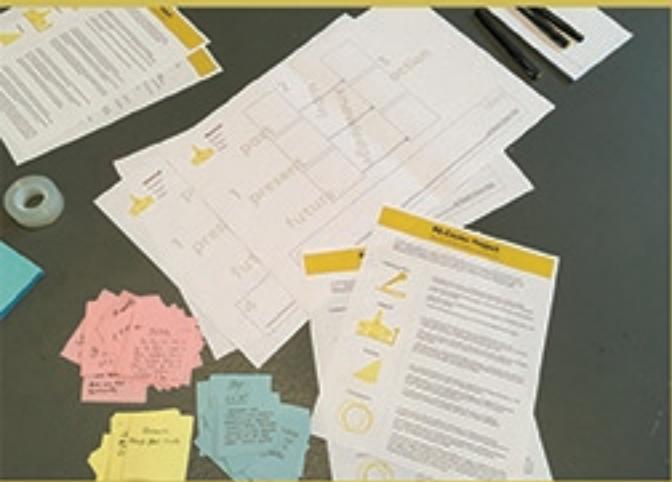
Feature

The group's final event is produced with support from Chicago Park District, the Cultural Center supervisor, and any invited participants. The *Feature* event can be anything that is developed by *MeetUP* participants. This could be a performance, exhibition, publication, tour of the Cultural Center—the *MeetUP* participants decide. The *Feature* event includes the participation of the local ecosystem—neighborhood associations, partners, and Cultural Center stakeholders.

Circulations

A series of inter-park circulations culminates the year-long community engagement process between community agents and the Chicago Park District. The process is documented and disseminated as a unique model of sustainable community engagement between citizen agents, neighborhood associations, and local agencies. This could take the form of a short documentary, a curriculum, an archival document of the year's activities, etc. Cultural Center stakeholders take the lead in deciding the work's final output.





This guide is a publication of the Chicago Park District's Arts & Culture Unit in the Culture Arts & Nature Department. The Arts & Culture Unit envisions parks and cultural centers as vital spaces that encourage all Chicagoans to explore the arts and their power to enhance quality of life, neighborhood development, and community dialogue. The Arts & Culture Unit connects Chicagoans to arts experiences in their local parks through events and programs that help develop understanding, knowledge and appreciation of a wide variety of art forms and processes, and their diverse and unique cultural expressions. By integrating arts and culture into all Chicago neighborhoods we strive to encourage a life-long commitment to arts learning, neighborhood expression, and cultural advocacy.