

**TO:** PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION

**FROM:** STEPHANIE DOUGLAS, RECREATION SUPERINTENDENT  
COMMUNITY SERVICES DEPARTMENT

**DATE:** MARCH 27, 2018

**SUBJECT:** REVIEW OF THE FISCAL YEAR 2017 AND FISCAL YEAR 2018 USE OF BRYANT STREET GARAGE FUNDS FOR TEEN SERVICES AND RECOMMENDATION FOR EXPENDITURE OF FUND RESERVES

**RECOMMENDATION**

Staff will present the FY 2017 and FY 2018 use of Bryant Street Garage Fund revenue for teen services, and is requesting feedback on the staff recommendation for expenditure of the \$356,825 fund reserves.

**BACKGROUND**

In 2001, the City Council voted to lease out a garage property located at 455 Bryant Street, the former location of the Bryant Street Teen Center with the stipulation that 75% of the rental revenues would fund programs specifically for Palo Alto youth and teens. The rental revenue continues to be invested back into the teen population through multiple channels, providing opportunities for entrepreneurship, creativity, personal growth and leadership. In fiscal years 2017 and 2018, the revenue provided funding for Think Fund grants, ClickPA website, Teen Arts Council, MakeX, Art Center, Think Fund Gala and the Buoyancy Teen Festival.

In addition to funding a full time Program Assistant I (Teen Program Specialist), the Bryant Street Fund is distributed as follows:

Think Fund Grant Program	\$25,000
clickPA website	\$6,000
Teen Arts Council	\$20,000
MakeX	\$13,000
Art Center	\$10,000
Think Fund Gala	\$5,000
Buoyancy Festival	\$5,000

***Think Fund***

The Think Fund Grant Program is designed to encourage teens to envision, design, and implement events, programs and services that they are passionate about. Teens have innovative ideas, but often need financial support and mentorship to make the ideas come to life. In this sense, Think Fund is essentially an incubator of ideas, providing a pathway for teens to successfully launch events, programs and services in their own community and for their peers.

Think Fund grants are awarded on an annual basis through an application process. Interested teens receive guidance on how to complete their application by the Teen Program Specialist. Applications are then reviewed by a Teen Services Committee who selects projects to be awarded. Throughout the duration of the projects, the Teen Program Specialist provides mentorship and guidance to ensure they have a successful and rewarding experience.

Projects funded in FY 17 and FY18 include:

<b>Fiscal 2017 Think Fund Projects</b>	<b>Fiscal 2018 Think Fund Projects</b>
Breakfast & Facebook	Girls in Future Technology (GIFT)
Festival of Colors	Girl Up Palo Alto
Intramural Basketball Sports Program	GunnHacks
Kick for Charity	Mapping Project
PalyHacks	MathUnboxed
PA Roots	PA Roots
Project Enybody	Project Enybody
SfN Neuroscience Conference	Scribere
Students United Against Cancer	SfN Wonder
SUAC Retreat	Stellar Science Enrichment
Super Smash Bro's Tournament Series	Super Smash Bro's Tournament Series
Teen Exploring Code	Teen Exploring Code
Tug of War Documentary	The Fringe Class
Youth Job Expo	Tibco Empower

***ClickPA***

Founded in 2013 by four high school students who felt that teens are unaware about the wealth of activities available around Palo Alto, clickPA strives to empower teens to get involved in their communities. ClickPA.org is a website for events, opportunities, and blogs tailored to local teens. ClickPA retains up to eight paid interns who create and monitor the website as well as create content for their peers.

***Teen Arts Council***

The vision of the Teen Arts Council is “to sustain and expand a supportive space for local teen leaders in the arts to take creative risks.” Teens create, plan, and produce arts events with the goal of strengthening the youth community in Palo Alto. The Teen Arts Council also works as a leadership training program for its members. Support from the Bryant Street Garage Fund has provided the Teen Arts Council with increased staff support, as well as project funds to improve their outreach efforts within the Palo Alto teen community to serve a more diverse and larger teen population, as well as diversify produced activities that explore a full range of the arts. Teen Arts Council programs and events serve more than 1,500 teen participants annually.

***MakeX***

A unique, teen only maker space run and operated by high school mentors. The space fosters creativity, passion and drive. MakeX offers free access to cutting edge tools in a casual, peer-driven environment. Visitors have the opportunity to learn how to use tools and software under the guidance of teen mentors, or work individually on their own projects. Funding through Bryant Street Garage Fund provides tools, resources and mentors to teens.

***Art Center***

Support from the Bryant Street Garage Fund has allowed the Art Center to significantly expand program offerings to teens. Goals for teen programs at the Art Center include:

- Provide teens with opportunities to have a voice and be heard
- Expose teens to practicing artists
- Provide teens with opportunities to learn about professional opportunities in the art world

- Showcase creativity as a tool for expression, stress relief and relaxation
- Create satisfying volunteer experiences

Funds support the Art Center Teen Leadership group, 14 active teens who meet monthly to plan Teen Takeover events, participate in hands-on workshops with practicing artists, exhibit their artwork at the Art Center and develop leadership skills. Teen Takeover events are after-hours events exclusively for teens with activities such as individual and collaborative artmaking, live performances and gallery activities. The events are hosted twice per year (fall and spring) and are attended by approximately 50 participants.

### ***Think Fund Gala***

This Think Fund Grantee Gala is a night of celebrating the youth leaders of Palo Alto. Think Fund Grant recipients, their families and mentors as well as youth leadership groups are invited to present and celebrate their accomplishments. The event provides an opportunity for teens to be recognized and experience how much the community appreciates their efforts.

### ***Buoyancy Festival***

The Buoyancy Festival is planned by the Teen Arts Council to celebrate the end of the school year and the beginning of summer. Teen bands perform on stage and a visual arts tent allows teens to showcase their art work. Last year, over 300 teens gathered in Mitchell Park for games, music and great food.

### ***Bryant Street Garage Fund Reserve***

In addition to the annual funding from Bryant Street Garage Fund, a one-time reserve of \$356,825 was set aside for teen mental and physical well-being. To date, these funds have not been expended. A November 10, 2015 report to the Policy and Services Committee on the use of Bryant Street Garage Fund for Teen Services for FY 2015 and 2016 and options for FY 2017 spending can be found at:

<https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/civicax/filebank/documents/49639>

## **DISCUSSION**

There have been numerous conversations focused on projects and/or programs that could be created or expanded upon with the reserve, but no action has been taken. In 2015, the City of Palo Alto Teen Services Committee hosted a Design Thinking Process to develop potential ideas regarding the Bryant Street Garage Fund reserves. In this process, the following ideas and concepts were discussed:

- 1) **Improve Teen Transportation Options:** Shuttle for teens, better public transportation
- 2) **Application & Gamification System:** To encourage teens to utilize technology while staying active and social to promote healthier lifestyles.
- 3) **Adventure Palo Alto:** An “outdoor education” platform specific to teens to encourage teambuilding and social awareness.
- 4) **Crisis & Post-Crisis Intervention:** Provide short term and long-term support for teens and their families experiencing mental health challenges.

Staff recommends opening the conversation to the public through an RFP process that would provide general criteria and guidance, yet allow enough flexibility to encourage multiple agencies and groups to provide their best proposal for the use of the funding. A carefully selected scoring panel, which will include teen panelists will rate the proposals and make a selection. It is anticipated that the reserves would fund multiple proposals.

Suggested RFP guidelines are as follows:

- Project duration of 2-3 years as a pilot program
- Focus on Palo Alto youth and teens
- Direct impact on youths' mental and/or physical well being
- Must include a sustainability plan to ensure pilot program to continue if successful
- Outline of how will program success will be measured

Some suggested criteria when looking at proposals include:

- How many youth and teens will the program impact?
- Does the project meet a specific need in Palo Alto?
- Does proposal have a clear sustainability plan?
- Have performance metrics defined?

**Outreach:**

Staff will promote the RFP throughout Palo Alto community, and will target outreach efforts toward youth serving organizations to receive as many diverse project proposals as possible.