East Portland Community Center
Business Plan
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Vision
Portland’s parks, public places, natural areas, and recreational opportunities give life and beauty to our city. These essential assets connect people to place, self, and others. Portland’s residents will treasure and care for this legacy, building on the past to provide for future generations.

Mission
The mission of Portland Parks & Recreation (PP&R) is to help Portlanders play – providing the safe places, facilities, and programs which promote physical, mental, and social activity. We get people, especially kids, outside, active, and connected to the community. As we do this, there will be an increase in the wellness of our residents and the livability of our city. We accomplish this through:

• Establishing, safeguarding, and restoring the parks, natural areas, public places, and urban forest of the city, ensuring that these are accessible to all;
• Developing and maintaining excellent facilities and places for public recreation and community building;
• Providing dynamic recreation programs and services that promote health and well-being for all;
• Partnering with the community we serve.

History & Services

History
East Portland Community Center (EPCC) is the only community center east of 82nd Avenue, which for decades was the eastern city limit of Portland. The July 1990 Park Futures, A Master Plan for Portland’s Park System recognized that the East Sub-Area had no public recreation programs or facilities. Construction was made possible with the passage of the Parks Improvement Bond Measure in November 1994. The planning, site selection, facility, and program recommendations were the result of a robust citizen-involved process. The Citizen Task Force envisioned a facility that would meet these goals:

• Provide many activities, including recreation and learning, for all ages
• Encourage interaction among all ages
• Allow age groups, especially seniors, to remain separate if desired
• Offer programs and activities at prices affordable to low income families
• Reflect an image of the community
• Foster a sense of pride and a feeling of East Portland identity
• Be safe and easy to use
• Be a hub of activity
• Be considered and designed as a regional facility with appropriate size
• Serve as a focal point of East Portland

Seventeen years later, it is remarkable to see how these goals are reflected in the community center’s operations today, particularly with the opening of the pool in 2009. Typically, about 1,000 people use the center every day.
EPCC opened in April 1998. The Thompson Vaivoda Architects design was unique in its emphasis on creating many programmable spaces, including multi-use, flexible spaces. The large multi-purpose room divides into 3 separate rooms with movable wall panels, and a drop-down curtain divides the gym. The original design made allowances for a future, two-pool natatorium.

The 2002 Levy included funding for the natatorium to be constructed; the aquatic center opened in 2009 and received LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Platinum certification from the U.S. Green Building Council. The pool provides activities that people can easily access by dropping in, with no advance registration required. This is especially beneficial for non-English speaking patrons.

The center’s tower, bike racks, fences, and benches were designed by Garth Edwards as a percent-for-art project, and in 2009 local artist Bruce West’s Sitting Stones was installed near the front entrance. The dynamic composition reflects the changing light of the day and the season.

Facility amenities include:

- Indoor aquatics facility with three bodies of water
  - 4-lane, 25-yard lap pool
  - 4,324 square foot leisure pool with large slide; current channel; vortex; shark tot slide; and 3 warm-water, 20-yard lap lanes
  - 255 square foot whirlpool, with capacity for 24 people
- Full-size gymnasium with retractable bleachers
- A large, multi-purpose room that can be divided into 3 rooms
- Fitness center with cardiovascular and circuit weight equipment
- Exercise studio with sprung wood floor and mirrors
- Poolside rooms suitable for parties, classes, and meetings
- Outdoor courtyard
- Men’s and women’s locker rooms, and five family changing rooms
- Transversing bouldering wall
- Oversized hallway with games area and art gallery walls
- Onsite Automated Defibrillator (AED)
- Playground
- Loaves & Fishes Vegetable Garden
- Kitchen

Services
The community center and pool attracts people from many different ethnic populations. It is not unusual to hear many different languages spoken at the center. The center has hired many bi-lingual employees, especially in the aquatics program. Current staff includes members who speak Spanish, Russian, and Ukrainian.

The facility hosts a variety of programs and activities including fitness programs, sports, martial arts and gymnastics instruction, art and music lessons, educational preschool, classes for parents with young children, indoor park, open swim, swimming lessons, community rentals, youth camps, teen programs, birthday parties, and special events. There is a balance between drop-in opportunities (indoor park, family night, ping-pong, volleyball, open swims) and classes that require registration.

The center is a hub of activity for seniors in East Portland and is a certified “Elder Friendly Facility” by Elders in Action. Focusing on senior services is an excellent use of the building during the day when most other adults are working and youth are in school.
PP&R EPCC staff assist seniors in their use of the following services:

- EPCC fitness classes and pool times dedicated for senior use. Some participating seniors do so through a health insurance program called Silver & Fit which allows members to work out at no additional cost to the individual.
- Senior Recreation classes offered at EPCC and Senior Recreation van trips that leave from the EPCC parking lot.
- The Senior Center Project provides supervised time, 6 hours a day/5 days a week for seniors with disabilities. They enjoy activities, arts and crafts, and volunteer in Loaves & Fishes.
- The Multnomah County District Senior Center, currently operated by non-profit IRCO, provides services for vulnerable older adults who are at risk of losing their independence. Services include work with caseworkers and organized activities at the center such as blood pressure screening, foot care, ESL classes, senior law clinics, and support groups for people with diabetes or low vision.
- The Cherry Blossom Senior Program is a non-profit group that oversees activities such as Bunco, Bingo, Bridge and other card games and puzzles in the lounge which is reserved for exclusive use by seniors M-F, 9am-3pm.
- Loaves & Fishes, now known as “Meals on Wheels People”, serves lunch (donation requested) M-F to people over age 60, delivers approximately 200 meals to homebound seniors, and offers weekly bingo and occasional special events (such as the Chinese New Year celebration). About 25 volunteers assist with the service each day.

Sustainability

In line with the City of Portland’s sustainability efforts, EPCC incorporates a number of sustainability practices. The following are several examples of the practices and building components implemented at EPCC:

- EPCC is one of the four big centers participating in the bureau’s Energy Challenge where staff periodically review facility use patterns and work with building maintenance staff to increase efficiency of utility usage.
- PP&R is assessing whether occupancy sensors will help contain energy costs and consumption. These were added to a couple of the storerooms. In other areas, staff manually turn off/leave lights off when space is not being used.
- The natatorium has light sensors that turn off the lights when there is adequate light coming through the windows.
- Electronic copies of reports and communications are used when possible instead of printing.
- Paper is printed/copied on both sides and/or re-used as scratch paper whenever possible.
- Customers are asked if they want a receipt after registration instead of having one automatically printed for them.
- Paper and bottle recycling bins are conveniently located throughout the facility.
- Recycling is taught in the educational preschool classes and teen programs.
- Recycled materials are utilized in classes when possible, with many of the materials being provided by program participants.
- Maintenance and repair materials are acquired using sustainable purchasing practices.
- Maintenance activities use environmentally friendly products and practices wherever feasible.
- EPCC staff, the PP&R Sustainability Committee, and Loaves & Fishes are developing a food waste recycling program.
- A cardboard-only recycling cage is provided to keep cardboard out of the garbage dumpsters, and it is easier to identify for the Loaves & Fishes volunteers.
The following sustainable building elements contributed toward attaining LEED status:

- Roof-top solar photovoltaic panels generate 15% of the community center’s energy needs and include a solar hot water heater that preheats water for showers.
- 100% of storm water is retained and treated on-site.
- 30% potable water savings is achieved from low flow faucets and low flow showers that have metered controls.
- Innovative pool filters significantly reduce the chlorine needed to treat the water and reduce the amount of water used by as much as one million gallons annually.
- Structural materials were used as finish materials throughout, reducing the overall material usage by 25% compared to a typical building.
- Heat recovered from the pool’s air exhaust is re-used to heat the pool water.
- Light monitors facing north and south maximize natural illumination and reduce energy used for electric lighting by 60%.
- Extensive recycling efforts diverted over 95% of construction waste from the landfill.

Location and Hours
EPCC is located at 740 SE 106th Avenue in the Mill Park Neighborhood, within several blocks of bus service and within a mile of Metropolitan Area Express (MAX) stations:

- 15-Belmont, 106th & Cherry Blossom Dr.
- 20-Burnside/Stark, 105th & Washington
- Blue line MAX, East Burnside & 102nd
- Green line MAX, SE 96th & Main

Current hours of operation are:
- Monday through Friday .......................6:00 a.m. – 9:30 p.m.
- Saturday................................................7:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.
- Sunday ..................................................8:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.

Holiday Closures: Christmas Eve Day (if Fri - Mon), Christmas Day, Thanksgiving Day

Hours of operation are re-evaluated periodically and may change based on community needs.

Organizational Structure
A team of nine permanent employees manages EPCC:

- a full-time Recreation Supervisor
- a full-time Recreation Coordinator II
- 3 full-time Recreation Coordinator I
- a full-time Teen Specialist Recreation Coordinator I
- a full-time District Aquatic Coordinator (Recreation Coordinator II – Aquatics)
- two full-time Aquatic Coordinators (Recreation Coordinator I – Aquatics)

This team provides leadership and plans service delivery for all programs and events at EPCC and participates in guiding service delivery in PP&R’s East Service Zone.
Abbe MacFarlane
My primary role within PP&R is Center Director at EPCC, where I have worked the past 6 years. I started with PP&R 26 years ago, and my work sites have included Hillside, Mt. Scott, Fulton, and Montavilla Community Centers. I started during a time of much transition; back in 1985, the full-time staff taught 95% of the classes. While I was at Hillside, PP&R put the first instructor on city payroll, and now our part-time instructors teach 95% or more of the classes. The change allowed us to offer a lot more classes and programs for the community. This is just one example of the many ways we have changed the way we “do recreation.”

I have been a center director for over 20 years. While I loved the coordinator role, I was motivated to become the person in charge of creating the community center’s atmosphere for staff and the community members we serve. I feel that through PP&R’s programming and support, the community center should act as a facilitator for the parent to help raise a healthy, well-grounded child. For adult and senior participants, as well as youth, the center should provide a satisfying and relaxing chance to recreate in a safe, clean environment.

I am passionate about ensuring the entire staff feels appreciated and has the tools needed to do their jobs, whether this is training, arts and crafts supplies, information, or a pat on the back. I want everyone to feel part of the group and be introduced to other staff they will come into contact with. When the pool opened in February 2009, 3 permanent full-time staff members were added, and up to 60 part-time lifeguards, swim instructors, and water fitness instructors. It was important to be inclusive with the new staff members to make them feel welcome and part of the overall center experience.

Ali Rice
My current position is Assistant Center Director. I have a thorough knowledge of the facility and have seen its amazing growth since opening in 1998.

I supervise the EPCC Educational Preschool Program (5 different classes for ages 2 ½, 3, and 4-5 years), preparing children for kindergarten. PP&R has a good working partnership with the Multnomah County Early Childhood Program, and their early childhood outreach specialist visits our classrooms regularly for evaluations and support.

I have developed a music program with over 150 private lessons available for students of all ages. The program offers instruction for a wide variety of instruments, and we are able to make lessons affordable for our patrons. The benefits of music education directly correlate to the success of students in other academic areas. As a professional musician and singer/songwriter, this for me is one of the absolute jewels in the crown of what we do.

I am the EPCC liaison to other community organizations who offer free public services. From workshops through The Community Energy Project to self defense classes for women offered via the Portland Police Bureau, I help coordinate and promote valuable programs for the public.

I also supervise a large martial arts program which serves students ages 4 and up. I implemented and facilitate Park Gallery East, a public access art gallery featuring monthly installations by local artists. It has become extremely popular and is already booked through 2013. It offers a great opportunity, not only for the artists, but for the public to have easy access and exposure to the visual arts.

I am enthusiastic about what I do, who I work with, and the public I serve. It is an honor to be part of this creative team.
Dave Snyder
I have had a wonderful time working for PP&R since spring of 2000, starting at Southwest Community Center, then the Sports Office, Hillside Community Center, and now at EPCC since 2009. My portfolio at EPCC includes Fitness, Rentals, and Building Techs. I also serve on several citywide committees.

The fitness program has grown over the past 3 years from about 28 drop-in group exercise classes offered per week, to over 40 classes per week, and average attendance has nearly doubled over the same time period. Many classes meet the max attendance capacity, and there is limited available building space in which to add new classes. To keep things fresh and motivate patrons to continue pursuing their fitness goals, I have started offering fitness parties with a costume theme, or “Zumba into the New Year” on New Year’s Eve.

I also coordinate services in the cardiovascular fitness room, including purchasing and maintaining equipment as well as supervising four excellent personal trainers. The trainers occasionally offer specialty classes, and this past spring through fall we had a successful running group.

My colleague, Lisa Osterberg from Aquatics, and I implemented our first annual Fitness Fair in 2010. We invited local health and wellness vendors, showcased our own fitness programs and provided group exercise demo classes. This annual event attracts about 400 people and results in about 75 annual pass sales.

Our thriving rental program employs eight staff members including a rental coordinator who works approximately 35 hours per week and a lead party host who is cross-trained on booking rentals and also trains and supports the party host team. Our building hosts a variety of rentals from party packages to small business or group meetings, as well as wedding receptions and high school graduation parties. Last year we had 6 graduation parties in a 2-week span that grossed over $25,000.

I also supervise a team of building technicians who support building partners (senior groups and IRCO), programs, and rentals. They are skilled in trouble shooting room conflicts, fixing cardiovascular fitness room equipment, and setting up activity spaces including sound and media. The building techs have an excellent command and knowledge of the building.

I have a personal passion for marketing, community outreach, and team building. I believe this has made me successful in keeping our programs and community thriving toward fit and happy lifestyles. I enjoy serving on several citywide committees: Summer Playgrounds, Five Dollar 5k, Fitness and Marketing, Sunday Parkways, and I recently joined a committee to incorporate health standards into citywide programs and events. I realize my citywide duties are ever changing, and may also change during my stay here at EPCC. It makes me proud to know I work for the best Park System in the Nation as we won the Gold Medal for excellence in 2012.

Gabe Barbee
As a Recreation Coordinator for EPCC, my main responsibilities include coordinating the youth after school program, all sports and day camps, youth and parent/child sports classes, and youth soccer and basketball leagues. I also coordinate special events, marketing and promotions, and volunteer efforts. In addition, I serve on citywide programming committees such as RxPlay.

I strive to provide quality programs and enjoy watching them grow, not only in number of participants, but in the levels of enthusiasm, excitement, and benefits people achieve when attending. It is rewarding to pass on the same benefits I realize as an active recreation participant myself,
playing drums in a band with friends I call family; I am a recreational cook, avid disc golfer, mountain bike rider, and enthusiast of all sports. I dabble in graphic design, music and video production, carpentry, and gardening; and I cannot stay away from a good camping trip or out of a pool, river, lake, or stream during a beautiful Oregon summer.

I have become very passionate about strategic promoting and marketing when establishing new programs or maintaining long-standing program participation. There is nothing like that feeling of pride as you witness programs grow due to the hard work you put in behind the scenes.

Mary Weber
My first 25 years with PP&R were spent at Pittock Mansion, a historic house museum, in a range of positions: Customer Service Representative, Volunteer Coordinator, Rental Manager, Education Director, Program Manager, and finally, ending as the Interim Director for the last 18 months of my career there.

I worked with people near and far to ensure access for all, from school districts throughout the Pacific Northwest to groups caring for those with mental and physical disabilities, pregnant teenagers, drug and alcohol addicts, AIDS patients, children of illegal immigrants, poverty stricken seniors, and those suffering from homelessness.

Although I experienced many proud moments while working at Pittock, my proudest accomplishment came during my last 18 months as the Interim Director. During this time, I oversaw every aspect of the difficult and complicated transition of operations from the City of Portland to the Pittock Mansion Society. Working closely together, I was able to leave knowing the friends group was in a solid position to assume all aspects of the mansion’s operations.

My second career with PP&R began 5 years ago, when I started working as a Recreation Coordinator at EPCC. While many of the skills and experiences I had at Pittock transferred to working in the community center, overall it was a delightful and new world that I stepped into.

My responsibilities as a Recreation Coordinator at EPCC include coordinating classes for Parents and their children, youth, and adults. Specifically, I oversee classes in art, cooking, music and movement, gymnastics, home school science and history, and adult ballroom dancing. In addition, I coordinate drop-in activities like Art, Indoor, and Family Park sessions, as well as Friday Family Nights. I also supervise the building’s 15 customer service representatives. I am passionate about meeting clients’ needs and educating everyone who visits the community center about EPCC’s diverse offerings.

As I look to my future with PP&R, I am passionate about continuing to reach out and draw in the whole community. I am equally passionate about developing and implementing efficient and effective administrative policies and procedures to help front-line customer service staff, as well as behind-the-scenes coordinators and supervisors meet the community’s needs. The future of PP&R looks bright, and I am excited to be a part of it.

Demetri (Deedee) Finch-Brown
As the Teen Coordinator for EPCC, my role is to incorporate physical activity, health and wellness, leadership, art, environmental stewardship/outdoor experiences, and positive social interactions into a comprehensive teen program, as well as connecting teens to job opportunities through PP&R.

I engage with the teens at EPCC and collaborate with other PP&R staff as well as community partners such as SUN Community Schools, NW Family Services, Lifeworks, PP&R Environmental
Education, and Educational Recreational Adventures to meet teen’s program needs. A significant part of my work is to reach out and build relationships with these and other teen-serving agencies.

What motivates me are my teens. I love meeting and building new relationships with them. A lot of the time, teens are very misunderstood by adults – and for me to be able to bridge that gap is a worthy investment. Watching the teens grow from middle school through high school, and then on to college, is a very fulfilling experience. My mentor told me, “What we do in life echoes in eternity,” and my goal is to make a difference in as many teens’ lives as possible.

**Sue Cox**

I am a District Aquatic Coordinator, as well as an EPCC Assistant Building Director. It is a priority of mine to contribute to a unified team dynamic in which programming, customer care, staff development, and facility management staff all work together to create a full-service community center experience for our customers.

Over the years, I have had great experiences opening three of our four indoor swimming pools at Matt Dishman, Southwest, and East Portland Community Centers. I have overseen operations and management at these pools, as well as several of the city’s outdoor pools. I also oversee the citywide Swim Lesson Program and facilitate the Swim Lesson Committee. Committee members are full-time staff who train all swim instructors; change, add, or create new program elements; and helped to create a hugely successful swim lesson inclusion program.

My greatest joy is mentoring and training a young workforce, watching them grow in confidence and maturity, and being continually impressed with their decisions and actions.

**Alaina Hammer**

I spent my Sweet 16 doing compact jumps, tube moves, spinal rescues, and CPR on plastic dummies. This was the day I took my first lifeguarding class, a decision I didn’t realize would impact my entire career path.

My first aquatics job provided me with some of my best lifeguarding memories ever; I opened the pool at 5am, taught swim lessons, and supervised staff at an open waterfront facility. During my college years, I taught swim lessons at a private club, and after college I was hired by Northwest Center where I provided water therapy sessions for people with disabilities.

My first two years at PP&R were spent running Columbia Pool in North Portland. In 2010, the same week I bought and moved into my first home, I was transferred over to EPCC. With the transfer to EPCC came the opportunity for me to move back outdoors and manage Grant Pool in the summertime. Grant Pool runs the largest summer swim lesson program, last year teaching over 4,000 babies, children, and adults how to swim.

Last year I joined the PP&R Sustainability Project. Participating on this team reminds me why I love living in the Pacific Northwest; from researching greener soap options to filming green-minded PSA’s for the Movies-in-the-Park program, we work together to preserve our parks and facilities for years to come.

The greatest thing about working for PP&R is that I can use my past experiences to teach my current employees. From being able to explain to lifeguard candidates how important it is to work as a team based on my years at a busy open waterfront facility, to training swim instructors to think outside of the box when working with a special needs student, these teaching moments are what keep me motivated and passionate about my work.
**Lisa Osterberg**  
As a PP&R Recreation Coordinator I in Aquatics, I manage the day-to-day operations of the EPCC pool including scheduling and supervising all part-time seasonal staff as well as coordinating the daily drop-in schedule, fitness classes, and the swim lesson program. I also serve on the citywide Social Media committee, which is currently compiling best practices for customer outreach.

I am the lead Training & Orientation coordinator for the Aquatics department, which includes planning pre-summer manager and staff trainings and revising the associated manuals. PP&R Aquatics staff are required to attend a minimum of 4 hours Inservice Training per month in addition to weekly drills and awareness trainings. Trainings range from skills practice to customer service and daily facility maintenance to team building.

As an EMT, I am passionate about providing top-notch emergency response training to new lifeguard candidates and current staff. I love being a part of the solution during emergency situations that occur at our facilities. I have created a comprehensive first aid training program that we use throughout the city to help lifeguards use their skills. I also volunteer and work outside of PP&R assisting other EMS Programs. I enjoy this line of work very much.
Market Analysis

Market and services analyses are conducted to provide a foundation from which goals can be set. The Market Analysis includes a neighborhood profile, competitor information from the Oregon State Employment Department, and demographic information taken from the American Community Survey.

Neighborhood Profile
EPCC is conveniently located in the Mill Park Neighborhood, bordered by Hazelwood neighborhood on three sides (north, east and west) and Powellhurst-Gilbert neighborhood to the south, all in the East Portland Neighborhood Association. All of the East Portland neighborhoods, except for part of Lents and Powellhurst-Gilbert, are east of Interstate 205.

The community center serves a culturally and economically diverse community. There is a mix of residential and commercial properties and education, government, and health providers in the neighborhood. The center is located close to the Mall 205 shopping complexes, as well as a variety of businesses and restaurants on SE Stark and Washington streets. Also located on SE 106th between Washington and Cherry Blossom Drive are the East Police Precinct, Floyd Light Middle School, apartment complexes, the Oregon College of Oriental Medicine, and Multnomah County’s Aging Services Office. Around the curve of Cherry Blossom Drive are senior housing developments and Portland Adventist Hospital. EPCC is the only PP&R community center located in the David Douglas School District, serving those students in addition to Portland, Parkrose, Centennial, and Reynolds School Districts’ students.

Competition
The blend of services delivered at EPCC focuses around aquatics and fitness; 55% of combined registration and pass sales are for these services. Based on Oregon Employment Department information, there are over twenty other aquatics and fitness providers in the service area (see list in Appendix A).

Age and Market Share
The adjacent table shows that nearly 6,000 youth and just over 6,000 adults registered for activities, bought passes, or rented at EPCC, totaling about 4% of the population who live within the service area.

In addition to serving people who register for activities, EPCC also serves many other people who “Drop In” to activities such as special events, family nights, open gym, open swim, building partner activities and services for seniors, after school activities for youth and teens, etc. Drop In visits account for about 23% of overall visits, which means EPCC is serving more than 4% of the market place.
Because PP&R offers a broader array of services than other recreation providers in the market place, there are no direct industry comparisons regarding market share. However, to the extent that private fitness centers are a part of the recreation industry, and thus competing for a portion of PP&R’s customer base, it is interesting to note that the two largest fitness industry companies, Bally Total Fitness Holding and 24 Hour Fitness Worldwide, Inc., only hold 5% of the market share each.\(^1\)

**Demographics**

Demographic data displayed in the following charts is from the US Census Bureau's American Community Survey 2005-09, 5-year estimates. The data is applied to the 80% service area shown in the service area map.

**Service Area**

In addition to the immediate neighborhood, EPCC serves community members throughout a larger service area outlined on the adjacent map.

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**Key to Race & Ethnicity statistics shown on the following pages:**

1. Poverty Level for 4 person family = $22,314 (source: US Census Bureau)
2. Qualification for school reduced lunch program = $41,348 (source: Portland Public Schools reduced lunch income guidelines)
4. Hispanic or Latino include all races, or can be of any race.
5. All other races are identified as not Hispanic or Latino.

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Race & Ethnicity
The Race & Ethnicity chart shows that the population living in the EPCC Service Area is slightly more diverse than the city overall. It also shows that racial and ethnic diversity is similar across the service area, as demographics within 40% and 80% are nearly identical. Service area is calculated based on registration, pass, and rental customers.

Income
The Income chart shows that the population living in the EPCC Service Area has slightly more Low and Middle income residents, and slightly fewer Upper Middle and High income residents, compared to the city overall. It also shows that income diversity is similar across the service area, as demographics within 40% and 80% are nearly identical.
Services Analysis

Market and services analyses are conducted to provide a foundation from which goals can be set. While demographic information provides statistical data by age, economic status, and race, more information is needed to determine the needs and service priorities of the community marketplace. Recreation staff gathers information by:
- Developing relationships and interacting with community members.
- Reviewing customer survey information regarding satisfaction and service priorities.
- Evaluating sales levels to understand current demand.

The Services Analysis includes:
- a summary of PP&R customer service standards,
- a Portfolio Analysis chart that illustrates where services fall along the compared spectrums of sales volume and revenue, and
- an overview of services, which describes the specific activities offered at EPCC, including a SWOT\(^2\) analysis, and programming recommendations for each service category.

Customer Service Standards

PP&R customer service standards include the following principles:

- Facilities are fully functional, well-maintained, and clean inside and out.
- Facilities are welcoming, customer-oriented places that provide users with products and services they desire in an efficient and consistent manner.
- Products and services fit the interests, needs, and requirements of the local community.
- Staff is professional and welcoming.

Portfolio Analysis

The adjacent chart summarizes EPCC’s for-fee services, showing each Service Category’s sales volume and revenue. Swim Lessons, Passes, Sports, and Arts are currently the mostly highly used services that generate the most revenue.

In addition, EPCC provides, or works with partners to provide, many free services to the public. These services are highly needed in the community. Staff members strive to achieve balance between addressing community needs and generating the revenue needed to meet budgetary requirements.

\(^2\) SWOT Analysis

A SWOT analysis identifies internal strengths (S) and weaknesses (W) such as facility suitability and financial sustainability, and also examines external opportunities (O) and threats (T) such as community demand/priority and competition, for a given service area, business unit, organization, etc.
Overview of Services
Following are descriptions of each Service Category including a SWOT analysis which, along with the other market and service analyses, provided the context for staff to identify the programming priorities noted in this business plan.

Overarching factors that apply to the whole building include:

Strengths
- Staff members are committed, passionate, knowledgeable, skilled, fun, and creative; and they function as a single team across all EPCC departments.
- The facility is easy to locate and offers comfortable, inviting community spaces with high quality, dedicated program spaces: natatorium, cardiovascular fitness room, dance studio, large gym, and multi-purpose scalable classrooms.
- The community is diverse with many families who recreate together.
- Services offered cover a wide range including enrichment classes in music, art, language, and movement. Many classes feature parent/child and family interaction, and there are several class series that provide opportunities to progress in skill levels.

Weaknesses
- Younger staff members require more training. Scheduling work along with school and their other activities is challenging even though the availability of part-time staff hours is limited, and their planned tenure is short due to graduations and moving on to college or career. However, having a young staff also contributes to the center’s strengths and opportunities.
- PP&R is a large organization with many employees, which makes it difficult to give and receive information in a timely and useful way.
- Facility:
  - The front desk layout is ergonomically challenging. It is too high to see over when sitting and too deep to easily pass items to and from customers. In addition, customers can approach from too many sides, making customer service difficult.
  - At times, demand exceeds capacity in various activity areas: game space, lap lanes, swim lesson space, music lesson space, cardiovascular fitness room, class rooms, and parking.
  - The Aquatics office and pool entrance are a long walk from the front entrance.
  - The building is not located in a park with park amenities.
  - Public transit is several blocks away.
  - Maintenance support is limited after hours.
- Equipment:
  - Equipment and furnishings are wearing out (carpet, gym, curtains) and are expensive to replace.
  - There is no equipment replacement budget, and equipment such as divider walls, exercise equipment, and bleachers have fairly short life spans due to high intensity use.
  - Customers complain about the small, low quality lockers because theft is an issue and the lockers do not provide much security.
  - There is no wireless internet access. Parents are attracted to places where they can work or study while their kids are in activities. Wi-fi would allow EPCC to set the center’s webpage as the opening default which provides advertising opportunities.
  - There are no blinds on the west windows, but blinding afternoon sun only happens a couple months out of the year.
**Opportunities**

- First-time visitors often become regular customers.
- EPCC becomes known to many potential participants via a large senior community, social networks, nearby schools, and proximity to Mall 205.
- Work study, intern, and volunteer programs develop future staff. Teens have job opportunities, especially in the pool. There are some weaknesses related to employing a young staff; however, those tend to be offset by associated strengths and opportunities.
- Participants and participant groups advocate for EPCC when needed.
- There is increasing interest in healthier living.
- Staff networking and training increases capacity to provide excellent service to the community.
- Outside resources from local vendors or through partnerships can be leveraged to support center activities.
- The neighborhood is affordable for young families, so they come into our programs early.
- There is demand for parent/child classes during times that are convenient for working parents.

**Threats**

- Competition for General Fund support
- The center is located in a high-crime neighborhood adjacent to a low-monitored forested area. However, some of the potential threat is mitigated due to the police precinct located across the street from the center.
- Several for-profit businesses provide competing services, especially fitness activities for adults.
- There is risk associated with offering new activities which may not have a large market place or demand. So, while staff may like to offer new or especially requested activities, they always have to consider the cost versus benefit.

**Program Direction**

See the Implementation Plan chapter for EPCC’s overall program direction.

**Aquatics**

The EPCC aquatics center is the first, year-around aquatic facility in the nation to become LEED Platinum certified (U.S Green Building Council’s “Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design”).

The furthest east PP&R facility, EPCC serves a community that has been historically underserved. Aquatic activities such as Open Play Swim, Family Play Swim, swim lessons, water fitness, and lap swim are a huge draw. Many family pass holders attend the Open Play and Family Play Swim sessions and complement those activities with swim lessons. EPCC delivers nearly 6,000 swim lessons each year. The aquatic facility is a destination spot, attracting citizens from the surrounding communities with its many amenities:

- The 15,000 square foot natatorium features a 25-yard, 4-lane lap pool (85 degrees). The pool’s lift feature makes it accessible to everyone.
- The leisure pool has a zero depth entry and slopes to a depth of 4.5 feet. With water at 88 degrees, this pool is especially comfortable for young children and aging adults. Features include a 120-foot long, 18-foot high water slide with a separate splash down area (fastest in the city), a current channel complete with vortex, the one and only shark slide for tots which makes for a ton of family fun, and a 3-lane, 20-yard warm water lap area great for water
exercise, lap swimming, or just paddling around. This pool also has a lift which makes it accessible to everyone.

- In the center of the natatorium is the 24-person, fully accessible spa which is maintained at a warm 102 degree temperature. A lift makes it accessible to everyone.
- The facility includes five family change rooms in addition to the men’s and women’s locker rooms.
- The two poolside rooms can also become one large room for parties, meetings, or any other gathering.

**Strengths**

- Aquatics staff hold internationally recognized certifications and are led by experienced professionals.
- The pool has state-of-the-art play features and amenities.
- The natatorium is filled with natural light, creating a nice atmosphere, and there is no chlorine smell.
- Facilities are kept spotlessly clean by Aquatics staff, and sustainable cleaning products are used.
- Consistent pool rules aid effective customer education, resulting in a safe pool environment.
- The pool has increased the building’s visibility in the neighborhood.
- The pool attracts a more diverse participant base including families who are interested in family-focused activities that they can “drop in” to, such as family swim.
- The PP&R Aquatics swim lesson program, developed by PP&R aquatics professionals, has received multiple national awards.
- Free lessons are offered one week during winter, spring break, and summer as part of swim instructor training.
- EPCC is the only PP&R pool that offers senior adaptive swim time during non-peak hours.
- Aquatics staff continually update programming according to fitness trends; for example, Aqua Zumba, River Challenge, and adult swim stroke improvement classes were introduced recently.

**Weaknesses**

- Occasional shortage of qualified instructors results in unmet demand for swim lessons.

**Opportunities**

- The 2 poolside rooms, as well as the pool itself, are very popular for private party rentals.
- Seniors are attracted to the warm water leisure pool and spa.
- Because there is increasing demand for personalized fitness activities, water fitness personal training may be opportunity.
- The leisure pool is often closed in the afternoon due to low use and budget. However, it is available for rentals and senior exercise, as demand warrants.

**Threats**

- Competitors for lap swim.

**Program Direction**

Staff members regularly adjust the pool schedule and lesson offerings to maximize pool capacity. There is capacity, and swim lessons are expected to grow for the next 3 years as staff will offer lessons on weekends and during open weekday time slots. EPCC serves as the main PP&R training center for lifeguards and swim instructors, and the free lessons associated with the training program will continue to benefit the community as well as the trainees.
Staff will work to increase the number of rentals. There are open time slots during weekdays that may be attractive to groups and schools. Staff will begin providing a more-facilitated after-hours rental experience and have devised a way to do so without adding costs. Since new business in this area is largely generated through referrals, this customer service improvement is expected to increase rentals.

Staff continually research trends and update water exercise activities. Water personal training, pre-natal water exercise class, and other age and gender-specific programming will be considered. Staff will research opportunities to partner with local school districts to provide water exercise as a Physical Education credit for students.

**Arts**

At EPCC, this service category includes cooking, drawing, painting, dance, and music for all ages. EPCC also offers a wide variety of parent/child, themed messy art classes to provide young children with their first experience in art, an important component in childhood and socialization development (creativity, self-expression, trust in oneself, etc.).

**Strengths**

- Includes activities that serve many different age groups.
- The EPCC Art Gallery promotes art by displaying local artists’ work for sale, allowing EPCC to expose fine arts to all the community center users.
- EPCC has the third largest music program in PP&R, behind Community Music Center and Multnomah Arts Center.
- Summer Rock-n-Roll camp for teens is an affordable introduction to the band music experience.

**Weaknesses**

- There is no storage for “in process” art work.
- The dance studio is primarily used for fitness classes because they have a higher participation rates than dance classes and they are a driver of membership pass sales.
- Scholarship funding for individual or small group music lessons is not available.
- Specialized staff training is required for music lesson registration and scheduling because it requires both CLASS registration and manual coordination of individual music lesson time slots.
- Individual music lessons consume a lot of programmable space.

**Opportunities**

- The music program is in the growth stage with an increasing demand evidenced by a growing number of students each term with most classes full. Increasing demand implies there is some room to increase prices without decreasing demand.
- The Art Gallery promotes art and excites interest in the EPCC arts program, particularly drawing and painting. It has become so successful that artists now donate a portion of their sales to fund Art Scholarships.
- During times when the dance studio is not utilized for fitness classes, popular-demand dance classes may be offered, such as Salsa, a "Dancing with the Stars" theme, or a "2 Left Feet & a Wedding Date" theme.

**Threats**

- Private dance studios compete for dance students.
**Program Direction**

Over the next three years, EPCC will increase music lesson prices to limit growth that is consuming space availability needed to serve larger groups. Teen/adult and cultural dance classes will be added to meet emerging demand. EPCC will expand exposure to a variety of three-dimensional art forms through seasonal exhibits in the display cases. In addition, Fine Arts opportunities will be offered for youth and teens during school breaks and weekends, perhaps using “guest star” teachers from around the region.

**Community & Socialization**

Community and socializing activities promote a positive, accepting group climate that values human worth and dignity through a variety of activities. These activities address peoples’ needs for personal development, a sense of belonging, and commitment to common goals, resulting in long-term social cohesion and self-fulfillment.

EPCC provides several community building and socializing experiences for the public. Seniors socialize in the lounge, during daily Loaves & Fishes lunches, and in Senior Center Project activities which is a group for seniors with disabilities. Teens socialize at EPCC through a variety of activities that provide opportunities for relaxed, informal participation and group acceptance. People of all ages and abilities go on trips and attend a variety of social and family activities at the center. EPCC also offers rental and party packages for events such as wedding receptions, graduations, birthday parties, and reunions. By offering the many different socializing programs and events, EPCC promotes positive interactions and relationship building within the community; for example:

- Annual Costume (Halloween) Carnival, in coordination with Montavilla Community Center
- Independence Day Celebration with a parade and pre-parade activities, such as face painting, rock wall, and crafts
- Lifelong learning activities, such as Computers for Seniors, Dog Obedience, Parenting classes, and educational classes for the home-schooled student
- Jr. Leader program, which prepares youth age 11-15 to volunteer in PP&R youth day camps

**Strengths**

- Most educational class offerings provide supplemental learning opportunities for home-schooled students, with the remaining educational classes serving the seniors. These activities are an excellent use of the building in mid-day because the seniors are already in the building, and it is a natural fit for home-school families’ school day schedule.
- Special events may be a person’s first, or only, occasion(s) to visit the center. EPCC’s special events have a positive reputation and continue to gain popularity through word-of-mouth promotion.
- Drop in programs such as Indoor Park and Family Night are very affordable and accessible, particularly for non-English speaking families.
- The building is also certified as an “Elder Friendly Facility” by Elders in Action.
- Staff are available to assist with event set-up, clean-up, and hosting of rental events.
- The new playground provides opportunities for informal, outdoor play.
- The new vegetable garden contributes some of the fresh food used in the Loaves & Fishes program.
- The solarium, art gallery, and lobby are great gathering and socializing spaces.
Weaknesses
- Other than private rentals, these activities are not high revenue generating activities, but they offer exposure and create high levels of interest and goodwill in the community.
- Because the EPCC kitchen is set up for commercial use, cooking classes have been limited to recipes that can be made in a regular classroom using a hotplate or microwave.

Opportunities
- There is high demand to rent the community center for private events because it has many beautiful, flexible, and accessible spaces.
- There is no dedicated space for teens, and there are not enough activities for teen girls.
- Special events bring community of all ages into the building, they are a great "thank you" for people who come a lot, and they are great community relations builders.
- Intergenerational gardening or other educational programs connected with the new garden may be requested by the community.
- EPCC staff can connect with the community by participating in National Night Out and other community events in nearby parks such as Summer Free For All events.

Threats
- None.

Program Direction
EPCC will consider adding an end-of the summer party/carnival for the community.

During weekday afternoons, staff will dedicate space for a teen lounge area with comfortable furniture and calming features so teens have a place to wind down. In addition, EPCC will seek sponsorships for and coordinate a quarterly, building-wide teen event to include a variety of activities such as a dance, open gym and swimming, games, and food.

Camps
EPCC has steadily growing summer, winter, and spring break camp programs. These are affordable and quality camp programs that promote a safe, active, and fun environment for a very culturally, economically, and socially diverse community. Day Camps generally serve participants from ages 3 to 11. These camps promote fair play, fitness, socialization, safe fun, teamwork, and experiencing new things (such as crafts, games, field trips, guest speakers, special events, and more) with highly trained and experienced staff.

During summer months additional specialized camps are offered. A variety of sports camps are offered promoting fitness, fair play, and teamwork. These camps are designed to build the fundamentals, confidence, self-esteem, and skills necessary to increase motor skills and overall skill to advance to the next level of sports. Specialty camps also provide a variety of opportunities for individuals looking to enhance their skills or knowledge in a specialized activity. Examples include Rock Band Camp, Fishing Camp, Horseback Riding Camp, and Lego Camp.

Strengths
- Day camps were strengthened enormously when the pool opened.
- EPCC is a fun place to be, so kids want to be here.

Weaknesses
- Limited shady areas outside.
• The grassy playing field was not restored after pool construction. It is uneven, sparsely seeded, and not useable for play.

**Opportunities**

• The playground may be used to free up gym space, weather permitting.
• Teens want to have a relationship with the teen coordinator, and as with other programming areas, there are not enough options for girls. Current teen camps include: Jr. Lifeguard, Jr. Swim Instructor, Jr. Leader.
• There is no recreation programming in Gresham anymore.
• Offer programming in local schools and parks to address unmet demand.

**Threats**

• There is some competition in the private sector.
• Day care centers tend to be open earlier, and later, than EPCC programs.
• Local elementary schools offer after school care and all-day care in the summer.
• Inclusion costs increase along with growing demand.

**Program Direction**

Staff will continue to creatively work around partners’ scheduled use of space to ensure the maximum camp service level is offered. In addition, staff will explore surrounding schools’ joint use of space policies and expand youth and teen camps using the school’s classrooms when possible, or outdoor park space in the summer; a renovated ballfield would enhance outdoor programming options.

EPCC will expand the field trip program to include teens, and explore opportunities to procure a mini bus to safely transport more youth. In addition, teen camp opportunities will be explored, particularly featuring outdoor activities. Along with providing adequate program options, staff will recruit teen participants at schools and other teen-serving agencies.

**Preschool**

EPCC offers an educational preschool program for ages 2 ½-3, 3-4, and 4-5 year olds, helping to prepare children for their entry into kindergarten. The program is based on the philosophy that children develop and grow at their own rate. In order to grow and develop their senses a child must “play” by exploring and manipulating their environment. To enhance this experience, the classroom is set up in learning centers that enable children to explore different areas of development such as fine motor, socialization, pre-math, pre-reading, and listening skills. Preschool is the foundation for academic learning, and EPCC serves the community with a quality program that is affordable. We are able to employ work study students with an avocation in Early Childhood Education as assistants in the classrooms, a valuable experience for the college student and a great benefit to our preschool instructors in the classroom.

**Strengths**

• Work study partnerships with five colleges provide part-time teachers for preschool classes.
• Janet Rivera, preschool specialist based at Montavilla Community Center, periodically advises on staffing, equipment, and behavioral matters.
• EPCC has dedicated space for this activity.
• Class starting time is earlier than smaller sites.
• Preschool programming gets kids in the door. It also brings in their parents and families. Approximately 60 families use the 5 different preschool options offered at EPCC.
• A partnership with Multnomah County Early Childhood Program is a valuable resource. Their early childhood education specialist attends our classrooms on a regular basis, performing developmental evaluations for our students.

Weaknesses
• Bathroom, storage, and teacher work space configuration needs improvement.
• Hallway congestion at EPCC can be intimidating for preschool families.

Opportunities
• A new playground was recently built.
• The gym is available for PE time.

Threats
• Other preschool employers offer benefits.
• Inclusion costs increase along with growing demand.

Program Direction
• Increase pre-kindergarten classes and consider options such as ESL or other immersion preschool themes.
• As part of the citywide preschool committee work, EPCC preschool will be shifting to auto-payment for preschool. It is modeled after the Active Pass process, and it has already been implemented at other PP&R community centers.
• Reach out to academic institutions who could send their students to us to complete their internship requirements, especially Early Childhood Development and Education students.
• Submit a capital project request to reconfigure the preschool room’s teacher and bathroom space.
• Formalize the partnership with the Multnomah County Early Childhood Program to ensure similar services are delivered at all PP&R preschools.
• Need to increase work study employee recruitment to lower the student/teacher ratio and provide more individual attention to participants.

Fitness
Fitness activities are primarily programmed in the areas of adult fitness, incorporating the use of a fitness center (cardio and weight-training) and group exercise studio. Fitness classes develop and support lifelong exercise habits.

Programming is full-spectrum and includes individual and group personal training, program-inspired merchandise for sale, and over 40 classes each week ranging from yoga and pilates to kickboxing and Zumba.

These services are used by passholders and drop in participants.

Strengths
• Beautiful studio.
• Pool/studio/fitness center combo is a huge strength. Hallway visibility, especially of the fitness room and studio, cross sells to users of the other spaces.
• Instructors are talented and committed to providing fitness services at EPCC.
• A variety of senior exercise classes are offered outside of the fitness membership program.

Weaknesses
• There is no storage in the studio, so mats and other equipment are stacked on the sides which limits class capacity.
• There is no budget to staff the fitness room. The need for an attendant is less at EPCC than other centers because the fitness center is very visible from the hallway; however, fitness room attendants ensure customers share and use equipment correctly. This enhances the customer experience and prevents unsafe use.
• Room temperatures are not adjustable with the current HVAC scheduling configuration.
• There is no scheduled equipment replacement funding.
• We have no dedicated daycare space.
• One of the consequences of high use is that we have to clean after hours, which is more expensive.

**Opportunities**
• The fitness room contains as much equipment as possible, and equipment is fully utilized at certain times of the day, which indicates that there is high demand. Future expansion would help meet growing demand. Fitness room expansion is on the CIP list.
• There is demand for fitness training programs that culminate in an athletic event, such as a marathon or triathlon.
• Obtaining permission to increase use of the adjacent school track would provide more fitness training opportunities.
• There is demand for youth programming that provides time for caregivers to work out.

**Threats**
• 24-hour fitness, Bally’s, Cascade Fitness, are close, but our fitness room is still full of people at peak times.

**Program Direction**
Staff will advocate to prioritize the CIP project to expand the fitness center and explore adding fitness challenges and event training programs. In addition, staff will develop a companion youth programming element that will allow adult caregivers to invest time in achieving their fitness goals. Youth programming may include parent/child, family, and youth fitness classes.

**Sports**
Soccer and basketball are the two most popular youth sports offered at EPCC. We have seen a steady increase in participants and number of classes offered for our parent/child and youth basketball and soccer classes. We have also seen some success in a variety of other sports classes such as bouldering, baseball, and sports mixers which may include hockey, lacrosse, and other games and balls activities.

Team sports and leagues have been limited due to space, but current offerings are nearly filled to capacity. We offer K-4th grade basketball leagues, a 6-8 year old indoor soccer league, and drop in volleyball and basketball for both youth and adults. An after school teen drop in basketball league for teens and a 5th-6th grade summer basketball league is in the works. A variety of sports camps (basketball, bouldering, soccer, baseball, flag football) are offered in the summer. All sports and games programs are designed to build basic skills, confidence, self-esteem, fundamentals, cooperative play, sportsmanship, and teamwork. They help enhance the motor skills and communication skills necessary for developing individuals.
Strengths

• The center has a great gym with a good storage closet and adjustable basketball hoops and bleachers.
• There are adjacent school sports fields.

Weaknesses

• The gym curtain is aging.
• The trampoline is old and wearing out.
• Several programs use the gym equipment, and it gets worn out: sports classes, party rentals, indoor park (mats, balls, sticks, pucks, nets, etc.)
• The gym’s flooring material is hard surface, rather than wood, so it can be hard on users’ knees. This may exclude some participants; however, care and maintenance is easier than wood.
• Sports programs attract fewer girls than boys.

Opportunities

• There is demand for more sports leagues for a wider range of ages, and offered in the summer.
• There may be emerging demand for cheerleading/dance team classes, golf skills, teen sports camps, and drop in basketball for additional age groups.
• Renovating the adjacent sports field would increase programming space to meet demand for league sports.
• There is demand for indoor soccer league play and scrimmage time.
• Determine if there are tennis courts nearby that could be used for satellite classes.

Threats

• There are several private youth competitive sports leagues, as well as some school sports.

Program Direction

EPCC will explore opportunities to offer cheerleading/dance team classes, golf skills, tennis, indoor soccer, teen sports camps, and expanded adult drop in basketball sessions. Staff will also advocate for renovating the adjacent sports field which would increase programming space to meet demand for league sports.

For preschoolers, EPCC will coordinate sports class times with educational preschool sessions and escort children between activities.
Implementation Plan

We recognize that customers report high quality experiences because we have high quality staff, programs, and facility amenities. We are committed to maintaining that quality to ensure the community continues to be attracted to EPCC in years to come.

EPCC will work to keep core programs, fitness and aquatics, relevant. We will attract community members by continually offering up-to-date, exciting activities that help them and their families have fun while developing and maintaining healthy lifestyles. We will focus our efforts in the following areas:

- Research trends and update water exercise activities. Water personal training, pre-natal water exercise class, and other age and gender-specific programming will be considered. We will also research opportunities to partner with local school districts to provide water exercise as a Physical Education credit for students.
- Advocate to prioritize the CIP project to expand the fitness center and explore adding fitness challenges and training for athletic endeavors such as marathons and triathlons.
- Develop a companion youth programming element that will allow adult caregivers to invest time in achieving their fitness goals.

In addition, we will offer a variety of programs that provide a holistic recreation experience at the highest level of service that makes the best use of the facility:

- Teen/adult and cultural dance classes will be added to meet emerging demand.
- Staff will dedicate space for a teen lounge area with comfortable furniture and calming features so teens have a place to wind down. In addition, EPCC will seek sponsorships for and coordinate a quarterly, building-wide teen event to include a variety of activities such as a dance, open gym and swimming, games, and food.
- EPCC will expand the field trip program to include teens, explore teen camp opportunities, and recruit teen participants at schools and other teen-serving agencies.
- Increase pre-kindergarten classes and consider options such as ESL or other immersion preschool themes.
- EPCC will explore opportunities to offer cheerleading/dance team classes, golf skills, tennis, indoor soccer, teen sports camps, and expanded adult drop in basketball sessions.
- For preschoolers, EPCC will coordinate sports class times with educational preschool sessions and escort children between activities.
- EPCC will expand exposure to a variety of three-dimensional art forms through seasonal exhibits in the display cases. In addition, Fine Arts opportunities will be offered for youth and teens during school breaks and weekends, perhaps using “guest star” teachers from around the region.

The above programming direction will be implemented through goals in staff members’ work plans, which are regularly monitored and updated as customer needs and the business environment changes.
### Other Aquatics & Fitness Providers - EPCC Service Area

*(source: Oregon Employment Department)*

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