



THE PHILLIP
**RUSH
CENTER**
Supporting Atlanta's LGBT Community

Office Space, Meeting & Training Rooms for
Organizations Whose Mission or Activities
Advance LGBT Rights & Understanding

Phillip Rush Center

Strategic Plan

Final

Executive Summary Ratified: September 2012

Executive Summary

BACKGROUND/INTRODUCTION

With the involvement and feedback of a large number of diverse LGBTQ organizations and community leaders, the Phillip Rush Center was developed in the Fall of 2008 with the decision of the Atlanta Lesbian Health Initiative (the Health Initiative) and Georgia Equality to establish a shared office space by doubling the office suite that has housed the Health Initiative's offices at 1530 DeKalb Avenue (from 1200 sq ft to 2400 sq ft). In an effort to create a shared space that goes beyond the identity of any one particular group, the Health Initiative and Georgia Equality decided to name this new facility the Phillip Rush Center. The center was named after Phillip Rush, a long-time community leader and LGBTQ advocate. PRC continues to be a collaborative program of an equal partnership of the Health Initiative and Georgia Equality with its own Advisory Committee providing guidance on strategy and operations. During the planning process, PRC explored becoming an independent 501.c.3; but leadership agreed its current structure is more efficient. Since its founding, the Rush Center has become the home for eight organizations, and has been utilized by over 90 organizations, including 38 minority based organizations. In being more 'than space and open to all' these diverse organizations not only utilize PRC's space and support so they can focus on providing their programs and services, they also collaborate with other PRC users on new projects, opportunities and programs.

To enhance their efforts and address some key strategic issues, Phillip Rush Center engaged in a strategic planning process. During the planning process, consultants conducted a situation analysis and obtained confidential feedback from a broad base of stakeholders (summary below). The Strategic Planning Team, utilizing this collaborative feedback and involving many stakeholders, prepared the following strategic plan from April – August 2012. This planning process developed consensus on some key themes: PRC is a LGBTQ safe and convenient facility that works well, and is open and inclusive to all organizations. And community stakeholders and leaders expressed the desire for PRC to be more than a provider of space in being a sustainable community center and 'portal/access point' for LGBTQ information, resources and organizations, including supporting collaboration and continued growth and development of these agencies, especially for those who serve traditionally underserved LGBTQ communities. Overall, there is strong support for PRC to focus the next 12-18 months on optimizing the current space and resources, including developing a sustainable and balanced financial model; while preparing for future facility and program expansion in year 2 and beyond.

MISSION

- The Phillip Rush Center provides space, information, resources and support for the ongoing development and collaboration among organizations whose mission or activities advance LGBTQ rights, understanding, and well-being.

LONG-TERM VISION

- PRC is the trusted center fostering stronger and healthier organizations and people who support metropolitan Atlanta's LGBTQ community.

ORGANIZATIONAL VISION FOR 2017

- Expanded impact with increased and enhanced tenant, meeting and social event space with more and diverse organizations utilizing the center and offering programs/services, while

hosting occasional social and special events. Also, serving more as a central portal of information and referral for those in the LGBTQ community, and supporting development and collaboration of LGBTQ serving organizations and people, including sharing operational and administrative services.

- Permanence and sustainability through a long-term lease or own the facility; a more self-supporting financial model, supplemented with philanthropic giving; and dedicated staff, leadership, infrastructure and volunteers.
- Extended marketing reach and community awareness as Atlanta's LGBTQ community center, along with improved collaboration and communication, and opportunities for better networking among tenants and users at PRC and LGBTQ supporting organizations and people.

WHAT PHILLIP RUSH CENTER DOES – PROGRAM/SERVICES

- Providing accessible, affordable and safe facility space as a center for organizations to use as a home office and/or to conduct meetings and events; and partnering to provide access to drop-in and hang-out space via other facilities on campus.
- Providing access to information, resources and support for ongoing development of PRC tenants/users, and the Atlanta LGBTQ community.
- Enhancing collaboration, including sharing of operational and administrative services, and communication among tenants, users and LGBTQ supporting organizations.
- Serving as a portal and key point of contact for available events, organizations, resources, information and gaps in service for the Atlanta LGBTQ community.

WHOM SERVED – THOSE WHO BENEFIT BY WHAT PHILLIP RUSH CENTER DOES

- Organizations and people whose mission or activities advance LGBTQ rights and understanding, especially for those who serve the historically underserved LGBTQ communities.
- LGBTQ community (and non-LGBTQ community) in need of information, resources, and a safe place to meet and organize.
- Nonprofits and others that need facility/event space.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES/GOALS FOR 2015

- Program and Services Objective: Expand impact with more service providers housed or accessed from the site; enhanced organizational development support for tenants/users; increased access to needed information and resources in the Atlanta LGBTQ community, and enhanced collaboration and communication among tenants and users, including shared operational and administrative service opportunities.
- Facilities/Space Objective: Increase space (3300 ft²) dedicated and designed for more events and meetings while the current facility serves as a safe and separate space housing and supporting more LGBTQ organizations, and hosting support group sessions; all owned by PRC or long-term lease.
- Revenue, Fundraising and Finance Objective: Increase total budget to around \$200,000 - \$225,000 (45% from revenue and 55% from donations) from increased facility revenue, sponsorships, special events, grants, individual donations, and estate planning; while preparing for a capital campaign to purchase and maintain the facilities.

- **Staff and Volunteer Objective:** Self-sustaining and dedicated PRC structure and paid staff to direct and manage the facilities) with an expanded Advisory Committee¹ of 9-12 members (working in conjunction with the partner's Boards) that is involved in strategy, oversight, fundraising and community awareness; and increased volunteer utilization in committees and in daily operations.
- **Marketing and Community Awareness Objective:** Enhance community awareness of PRC's mission, story and outcomes, initially throughout the metropolitan Atlanta LGBTQ community via enhanced website, outreach and grassroots marketing.
- **Operations Objective:** Enhance and improve efficiency of maintenance and operations with clearly defined roles, responsibilities, policies and procedures, initially to make renting the facility easier and more efficient; while exploring the possibility of more formal strategic partnership options among partners and tenants.

ANNUAL GOALS FOR 2013

Program and Services

1. Improved collaboration and communication among PRC tenants, initially from monthly leadership meetings that includes networking, and organizational and leadership development opportunities.
2. Enhance communication among Georgia Equality and Health Initiative, and among tenants, initially on activities, events and resources/services of all.
3. Create a shared operational and administrative services program, initially identifying priority needs and opportunities for sharing.
4. Collaboratively develop an initial information and referral on-line portal.
5. Develop an organizational development and support program, partnering with the Georgia Center for Nonprofits to improve access and opportunities for organizational capacity building and leadership development specialized for LGBTQ needs.
6. Host more social and learning opportunities among boards, tenants and users.
7. Conduct secondary research on public and foundation funding for LGBTQ organizations activities, or causes.

Facilities/Space

1. Execute new lease at current facility with aid of real estate broker.
2. Explore feasibility of obtaining the 3300 square foot space at the current location to be dedicated as separate event space.
3. Develop a long-term facilities and build out plan for current and planned expansion space, including investments in an improved, easier to access, and dedicated kitchen; more office space; more temporary and permanent storage; more robust media system, and possibly a LGBTQ resource library/kiosk.
4. Enhance security, initially for tenant home office space, including changing locks, and developing and enforcing better security procedures.
5. Make facilities improvements to current space, including reorganizing storage space, and reorganizing to use less of the dedicated computer space for daily computer usage.

Revenue, Fundraising and Finance

1. Raise \$28,000 plus initial basic build out costs and operating cost to fund lease payments and make initial improvements for facility expansion. Explore the possibility of submitting collaborative grants.
2. Increase facility revenue by improving the sliding scale fee structure (including increased fees for profit and large nonprofits organizations, and private parties), adding a clean up fee, and enhancing payment compliance.
3. Expand corporate funding, including corporate sponsorships.
4. Develop individual donor campaigns, including 'Friends of Phillip' donor program, capacity for monthly donations via credit card, improved on-line donating, and more proactively marketing to users.
5. Conduct dedicated funding campaigns for the facility rent, facility improvements and build out of the expanded special event space.
6. Conduct regular, but limited, Rush Center planned major events with potential of earned income opportunity.

Staff and Volunteer

1. Engage a dedicated PRC coordinator who also aids in communication/marketing of the center.
2. Expand the Tenant committee (formerly referred to as the Advisory Committee), initially with those with commercial real estate, legal, finance, and fundraising experience; and more ethnic diversity), board participation, and community support and involvement in board committees created for Facilities; Funding and Finance; and Marketing and Community Awareness; and create an Advisory Committee.
3. Create a volunteer program and recognition that increases usage of volunteers, including as volunteer hosts, and for facility maintenance, operations and cleaning.

Marketing and Community Awareness

1. Enhance use of Facebook and other social media, initially for building awareness among tenants and users on their resources, efforts and events.
2. Conduct more outreach, including in African-American and Hispanic minority populations, to educate and clarify on the center's mission, its structure, and the partner's roles; and to get more involved on site.
3. Enhance signage, including a marquee that highlight tenants and upcoming events, explore professional assistance for designing the most effective signage.
4. Better engage tenants and users in promoting and marketing the center.

Operations and Structure

1. Clarify roles and responsibilities of Georgia Equality and Health Initiative, Coordinator, Advisory Committee and tenants, and communicate initially to tenants and user; and document standard operating processes.
2. Use technology, including web to make it easier for users and more efficient to book and organization space usage, and to document the organizations, and their resources and services.
3. Better document space utilization processes including renter responsibilities and an on –line orientation.

4. Explore most efficient and sustainable long-term operating structure, including possible options such as, but not limited to a Management Service organization, consolidation among partners with PRC being a subsidiary, and PRC serving as a parent organization with partners being subsidiaries. Initially, establish a process and next steps for partners to explore and make the best decision.

CONTINGENCY PLAN

If unable to raise funds to expand facility space, then PRC will expand information, resources and support for the ongoing development and collaboration among LGBTQ serving organizations and individuals within the current facility and space.

OUTCOMES/METRICS – HOW PHILLIP RUSH CENTER MEASURES SUCCESS

Short and Intermediate Term Program Outcomes

- Number of tenants
- Percentage of minority tenants and users
- Number of meetings and events held at PRC
- Number of information and referrals requests
- Waiting list of tenants and users

Operational Outcomes/Metrics

- Square footage of rentable space
- Dedicated paid staff
- 50/50 budget – 50% income and 50% contributions
- Increase in overall funding (annual budget)
- Number of Advisory Board members
- Number of volunteers and volunteer hours

Long-term Program Outcomes/Metrics

- Healthier (business) LGBTQ community – more sustainable and succeeding organizations that use PRC
- Administrative/operational savings among tenant and users from shared services
- Increased community visibility of tenants and users
- Increased collaboration among tenants and users
- PRC more integrated within LGBTQ community
- Improved trust of LGBTQ communities utilizing PRC