

July 2022

Evaluation of the Community Productive Day Construction Pathway Program

HENNEPIN COUNTY DOCCR – CLIENT & COMMUNITY RESTORATION
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Executive Summary

Introduction

The Strategy, Planning, and Evaluation (SPE) unit's services were requested to conduct a formal evaluation of the Community Productive Day (COM PD) Construction Pathway program. The program helps participants become more independent and self-sufficient and graduates of the program can access career paths with trade unions and find long-term work in carpentry, plumbing, and other areas.¹ COM PD Pathway programs address all seven interconnected disparity domains (i.e., education, employment, income, health, housing, justice, and transportation), identified by Hennepin County as foundational to their disparity reduction work by providing structured and customized education, training, work experiences, and support services.² The goal of the evaluation was to explore the benefits of the COM PD Construction Pathway program and identify opportunities for improvement.

Program Overview

The Community Productive Day Program

The Community Productive Day (COM PD) program is offered through the Department of Community Corrections and Rehabilitation Client and Community Restoration (CCR) division and is designed to provide clients under supervision who participate, the skills and training needed to secure meaningful employment and a livable wage that supports them, their families, and their communities.³ The program helps motivate participants to develop basic life and work skills through training and education, eliminating barriers that could negatively impact job retention, and therefore creating opportunities and more successful integration into the community. To develop innovative program pathways, COM PD program staff have partnered with members of the business and labor community to create additional productive enterprises.⁴ One of those pathways is the Construction Pathway.

¹ Hennepin County Public Safety and Law. *Productive Day Program*. Retrieved in 2022 from <https://www.hennepin.us/residents/public-safety/productive-day-enterprises#:~:text=The%20Community%20Productive%20Day%20program%27s%20coffered%20by%20our%20training%20pathways>

² Hennepin County Disparity Reduction Business Line. *Disparity Reduction: Vision and Priorities*. Retrieved in 2022 from [HennepinCounty_DRVision_Priorities.pdf](#).

³ See Footnote 1

⁴ Hennepin County Public Safety and Law. *Construction pathway information sheet*. Retrieved from <https://www.hennepin.us/-/media/hennepinus/residents/public-safety/documents/construction-pathway-v2.pdf>
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The Construction Pathway

The COM PD construction pathway program is a collaboration between DOCCR CCR staff and RRES TFL staff to achieve disparity reduction in communities served by Hennepin County.⁵ The COM PD Construction Pathway prepares participants for an apprenticeship and a career in the construction industry. Participants in the construction pathway earn \$15 an hour stipend while participating in the program, which is comparable to the industry standard at \$19 an hour.⁶ This helps minimize the financial barriers that many people face when trying to complete job training. Program participants earn a certificate in general carpentry skills and are eligible for union jobs after successfully completing the program training and union-approved classroom curriculum.⁷

Since its inception in 2017, the Productive Day Construction Pathway program aims to serve 24 clients on probation in Hennepin County each year. Clients between the ages of 18 and 35 years, with a minimum of 6 months left on probation, along with a few other criteria, can be referred to the program by their probation officers.⁸ There is a focus on attracting women and Black, Indigenous, or people of color (BIPOC) participants. The program takes a client-centered approach where the emphasis is on working with and serving the participant.⁹

Program Work

Participants work on-site Monday through Thursday (32 hours per week).¹⁰ They work on a variety of construction-related projects in the community. Projects range from remodeling houses the County has acquired through tax forfeiture, to public housing renovations for the Minneapolis Housing Authority, to commercial building improvements for the County's Facility Services Department. On Fridays (8 hours per week), participants work on skill building. This work involves a variety of things learned in classroom and workshop settings. Primarily, they are taught construction skills by a Journeyman Carpenter, using union-approved curriculum.¹¹ They also discuss and practice skills needed for projects they will work on the following week, such as

⁵ Hennepin County DOCCR Client and Community Restoration. *Administration: Community Productive Day Bid Policy*. Retrieved in 2022 from <https://hennepin.sharepoint.com/:b:/r/teams/cc-pap/CCRPolicyManual/Community%20Productive%20Day%20Bid%20and%20Proposal%20Policy%202021.pdf?csf=1&web=1&e=rO9G2e>

⁶ Community Productive Day Construction Pathway Fact Sheet. (June 2020). Retrieved in 2022 from [https://hennepin.sharepoint.com/:w:/r/teams/cc-ccr team/Forms/Construction%20Pathway%20FactSheet%20Final.docx?d=w641ef50a497a4d58bf650824b519d385&csf=1&web=1&e=NjcTMx](https://hennepin.sharepoint.com/:w:/r/teams/cc-ccr%20team/Forms/Construction%20Pathway%20FactSheet%20Final.docx?d=w641ef50a497a4d58bf650824b519d385&csf=1&web=1&e=NjcTMx)

⁷ See Footnote 6

⁸ See Footnote 4

⁹ See Footnote 4

¹⁰ See Footnote 4

¹¹ McAllister, Jim. Interview. Conducted by Jessica Wildermuth. October 2021.

properly insulating a home or building a roof. Classroom time is also used to work on barriers that prevent successful employment. Participants learn life skills like how to write a resume, create a budget, and read a paycheck.¹² The program utilizes resources from outside of DOCCR to provide most of the classroom training that addresses barriers. For example, Hennepin County Human Resources provides Emotional Intelligence training for the program participants.¹³

Program Support

Program participants have basic needs around housing, transportation, daycare, and other things that may need to be addressed before they can work on overcoming barriers that facilitate the growth needed to successfully complete the program and obtain and maintain employment post-program.¹⁴ Program staff work closely with participants on a daily basis which allows them to identify their needs and collaborate with the participant's referring probation officer, community service providers and agencies to ensure participants receive the resources and guidance they need to be successful.

Program Completion

At 6 months, participants graduate from the program and are referred for interviews to employers who have openings. Currently, there are two signatory companies the program works with regularly: Tri Construction and Knutson. Tri Construction is a preferred employer, which means the COM PD program has an agreement with them to take program graduates when they have openings. Program staff continue to assist and support program graduates until they have employment.¹⁵

Methods

Evaluation questions were developed to uncover the multiple perspectives and experiences within the program, to identify and define the benefits for each stakeholder group, as well as triangulate benefits across stakeholder groups. Two main questions were addressed as part of the evaluation:

1. What are the benefits/value of the COM PD Construction Pathway program at the participant, organization (county/department), and community levels?
2. What opportunities exist for improving program implementation and data collection for future learning or outcome measurement?

¹² Wright, Kari. Interview. Conducted by Jessica Wildermuth, October 2021.

¹³ Wright, Kari. Interview. Conducted by Jessica Wildermuth, February 2022.

¹⁴ Scheidemantle, Michelle. Interview. Conducted by Jessica Wildermuth, October 2021.

¹⁵ McAllister, Jim. Interview. Conducted by Jessica Wildermuth, January 2022.

Multiple types of data were collected including:

- Key informant interviews with program staff and program partners
- Interviews with former program participants
- A listening session with probation officers
- Probation officer surveys
- Ripple Effects Mapping with program staff and current program participants
- Analysis using data from the CCR¹⁶ SharePoint Referral System, CSTS¹⁷ and MNCIS¹⁸
- Data on rehabilitated homes in the community

The results from these data collection activities were synthesized to produce the key findings and recommendations included in this report.

Summary of Findings

Key Benefits

When asked about the benefits of the program, the following themes emerged:

- Both program staff and participants talked about improved relationships. Staff reported on the partnerships built across Hennepin County as an organization and the local and business communities. Participants spoke about better relationships with their families and increased awareness and empathy around personal differences which improved their working relationships.
- Program staff and participants talked about changes in participant's attitudes and behaviors that demonstrated growth and enabled them to be more successful. They reported on the value of the one-on-one mentorship and training. The wide range of support participants received while in the program was important to their success.
- The structure and empowerment the program provides was reported by probation officers to be a benefit of the program. In addition, they reported that the pro-social support their clients receive, while learning skills and getting paid, were key strengths of the program.
- Residential and Real Estate Services staff reported on the program's benefits to the community, including the reduction in property taxes, increased safety, and making dilapidated homes an asset to the neighborhood. They also talked about the program giving DOCCR clients an opportunity to change their lives.
- The program architect reported that training people in the trades, which is a high demand field, as a program benefit.

¹⁶ Client and Community Restoration

¹⁷ Court Services Tracking System

¹⁸ Minnesota Court Information System

Suggestions for Improvement

Those who participated in the program evaluation recommended the program improvements below:

- Increasing and maintaining relationships
- Controlling project logistics and sales
- Providing structure and measuring outcomes
- Growing the program

Program Outcomes

Program Completion, Employment, and Community Integration

- Of the 95 clients who were referred to and started the program, 38% (n=31) completed the program.
- Of the 31 participants who completed the program, all obtained a job after program completion.

Training and Skills

- The COM PD program was reported to help participants learn pro-social behaviors such as empathy and working as part of a team. The program trained participants in construction skills which enabled graduates of the program to be competitive in the job market and obtain employment in the construction industry.
- Of all jobs obtained by participants who completed the program (N=31), 81% (n=25) were in construction.

Disparity Reduction in HC

- Recruitment is focused on women and BIPOC individuals to add diversity to the construction industry and the union. Based on the high proportion of Black program graduates and post program employment, the program appears to be meeting this goal.
- The program aims to achieve disparity reduction in communities served by Hennepin County through renovating vacant and tax forfeited properties to provide targeted housing opportunities for residents within BIPOC communities who are impacted by housing disparities in home ownership rates. The program is partially meeting this goal by renovating properties in North Minneapolis which increases the housing stock in BIPOC neighborhoods.

Community Investment

- Participants who completed the program had a one-year recidivism rate of 13 percent. Participants who did not complete the program had a one-year recidivism rate of 44 percent. The program's effectiveness at preventing re-offenses results in savings for taxpayers by keeping people out of prison and increasing public safety.
- The County invests financially in the community through the COM PD program, and participants invest through their work to renovate properties.

Recommendations

Overall, the COM PD Construction pathway program demonstrated positive outcomes for participants. Based on stakeholder feedback, the following recommendations are suggested:

- Increase structure around data collection and accessibility, preferably storing data in the COM module to create the best environment for measuring, analyzing, and reporting on program outcomes that indicate whether the program is achieving its goals:
 - Electronically enter and store information on type of work and number of hours collected for Workers Comp and Payroll, at the participant level by entering information from daily timesheets.
 - Develop a consistent Friday curriculum, document subject matter (i.e., motivational speakers, financial/budget sessions), and electronically track activities and hours (i.e., hours in formal class instruction, the workshop, hearing speakers).
 - Examine, collect, and electronically store data on proximal measures (e.g., changes in motivation, concrete skill development) or possibly adjust existing tools (e.g., SSM, Carpenter Foremen evaluations), to incorporate these measures.
 - Gather and electronically track any information that is expected to change participants or outcomes, or that could help identify factors associated with participant and program success (e.g., SSM, Carpenter Foremen evaluations, wraparound services).
 - Reexamine staffing capacity and consider if additional support around data collection and tracking is needed.
- Continue to engage in continuous improvement processes and maximize program consistency and efficiency when appropriate, to help program staff understand and work toward larger program goals. Document changes and when they occur.
- Increase POs' awareness and understanding of the program by working with DOCCR's communication liaison or someone with similar skills to increase appropriate referrals to the program. Especially engage probation officers that work with high-risk clients, as most program participants are high-risk.
- Increase communication and continue to build relationships with employers and the unions to provide the best opportunities for participants post-program. Having agreements with additional signatory construction companies to take program graduates would provide them with a way into a union apprenticeship. Continuing to advocate for program participants with the construction labor union, would provide another way into an apprenticeship for program graduates.
- Include family members when their involvement would increase participants' social support and not be detrimental to program progress.

Introduction

In 2019 over 6 million adults in the United States were under justice supervision, including 2 million in

prison or jail and over 4 million under community supervision.¹⁹ With so many people under community supervision, re-entry is a major concern for federal, state, and local governments. Statistics that show the extent of the justice supervision issue are presented below.

- Within three years of release from prison, over two-thirds are re-arrested and almost half are re-incarcerated.²⁰
- The United States spends more than \$50 billion annually on the cycle of re-entry and re-incarceration.²¹
- Approximately 2.7 million children have an incarcerated parent, and children who have a parent in jail or prison are more likely to be expelled or suspended from school than children who do not have an incarcerated parent.²²
- Earnings for men who have been incarcerated are about 11 percent less per hour and 40 percent less per year than those who have never been in jail or prison. incarcerated.²³
- Collateral repercussions imposed on people with criminal records who re-enter society after serving their time disproportionately affect Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC) individuals.²⁴

When it comes to housing, transportation, mental health, substance abuse, education, and skills training, those currently or formerly involved in the justice system - , face challenges that make it difficult to acquire and keep the kind of employment necessary for successful community re-entry. These individuals face many of the same challenges to finding and keeping jobs as other chronically unemployed and underemployed people²⁵, but because they were once incarcerated, they also have to deal with additional challenges like reporting requirements, supervision fees and the stigma attached to having a criminal record. These complicated factors frequently restrict initial employment, , endanger long-term work, and hinder smooth community

¹⁹ Bureau of Justice Statistics (2009- 2019). *Annual Probation Survey: National Prisoner Statistics Program, Annual Survey of Jails (2009–2018)*; & *Census of Jails (2019)*.

²⁰ Durose, M., Cooper, A., & Snyder, H. (2014). *Recidivism of prisoners released in 30 states in 2005: Patterns from 2005 to 2010*. Washington, DC: Bureau of Justice Statistics.

²¹ Pew Center on the States. (2011, April). *State of Recidivism: The Revolving Door of America's Prisons*. Washington, DC: The Pew Charitable Trusts. Retrieved in 2022 from http://www.pewstates.org/uploadedFiles/PCS_Assets/2011/Pew_State_of_Recidivism.pdf.

²² The Pew Charitable Trusts. (2010). *Collateral Costs: Incarceration's Effect on Economic Mobility*. Washington, DC: The Pew Charitable Trusts. Retrieved in 2022 from [http://www.pewstates.org/uploadedFiles/PCS_Assets/2010/Collateral_Costs\(1\).pdf](http://www.pewstates.org/uploadedFiles/PCS_Assets/2010/Collateral_Costs(1).pdf).

²³ Pew Center on the States. (2011). *State of Recidivism: The Revolving Door of America's Prisons*. Washington, DC: The Pew Charitable Trusts. Retrieved in 2022 from http://www.pewstates.org/uploadedFiles/PCS_Assets/2011/Pew_State_of_Recidivism.pdf.

²⁴ Nellis, A. (2016). *The color of justice: Racial and ethnic disparities in state prisons*. The Sentencing Project. Retrieved in 2022 from <https://www.sentencingproject.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/The-Color-of-Justice-Racial-and-Ethnic-Disparity-in-State-Prisons.pdf>.

²⁵ Murphy, B. (1999). *Program design manual: Employment retention and advancement project*. Administration for Children and Families, US Department of Health and Human Services.

reintegration. In addition, because they have lower levels of educational attainment and a lack of cognitive skills, (e.g., problem-solving abilities) to deal with the challenges of re-entry, many are ill prepared to end the cycle of re-entry and re-incarceration. Formerly incarcerated people claim that education, job training and employment are key requirements that are not adequately provided while they are behind bars or after their release.²⁶ Additional data that illustrates these challenges are listed below.

- In contrast to less than 20% of the general population, almost 40% of federal and state incarcerated individuals lack a high school diploma.²⁷
- Many incarcerated individuals have little work experience or unstable employment, which is a major barrier to success once released into the community.²⁸
- Individuals involved in the justice system frequently suffer from cognitive deficiencies, which have been linked to criminal conduct.²⁹

Understanding the particular difficulties that people involved in the justice system encounter and how to address those difficulties is necessary to develop programs that increase desistance. Data suggests that offering these people education and training improves their career prospects, corrects their cognitive deficiencies, and lowers their risk of reoffending.³⁰

²⁶ Visher, C. A., & Lattimore, V.K. (2007). Major Study Examines Prisoners and Their Reentry Needs. *NIJ Journal* (258), 30–33. Retrieved in 2022 from <https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/219603g.pdf>.

²⁷ Greenberg, E., Dunleavy, E., & Kutner, M. (2007). *Literacy Behind Bars: Results From the 2003 National Assessment of Adult Literacy Prison Survey*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. Retrieved in 2022 from <http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2007/2007473.pdf>.

²⁸ Gould, E. D., Weinberg, B.A., and Mustard D.B. (2002). Crime Rates and Local Labor Market Opportunities in the United States: 1979– 1997. *Review of Economics and Statistics* 84(1): 45–61. Retrieved in 2022 from

<http://www.terry.uga.edu/~mustard/labor.pdf>; Yahner, J. & Visher C. (2008). *Illinois Prisoners' Reentry Success Three Years After Release* [Research Brief]. http://www.urban.org/UploadedPDF/411748_reentry_success.pdf.

²⁹ Andrews, D.A., Zinger, I., Hoge, R. D., Bonta, J., Gendreau, P., & Cullen, F. T. (1990). Does Correctional Treatment Work? A Clinically Relevant and Psychologically Informed Meta-Analysis. *Criminology* 28(3): 369–404. Retrieved in 2022 from <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1745-9125.1990.tb01330.x/abstract>; MacKenzie, D. L.

(2006). *What Works in Corrections: Reducing the Criminal Activities of Offenders and Delinquents*. New York: Cambridge University Press.; MacKenzie, D.L. (2012). The Effectiveness of Corrections-Based Work and Academic and Vocational Education Programs. In J. Petersilia and K.R. Reitz (Eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Sentencing and Corrections*, 492–520. New York: Oxford University Press.

³⁰ Aos, S., Miller, M.G. & Drake, E.K. (2006). Evidence Based Public Policy Options to Reduce Crime and Criminal Justice Costs: Implications in Washington State. Retrieved in 2022 from https://www.wsipp.wa.gov/ReportFile/1033/Wsipp_Evidence-Based-Public-Policy-Options-to-Reduce-Crime-and-Criminal-Justice-Costs-Implications-in-Washington-State_Full-Report.pdf; Cecil, D. K., Drapkin, D. A., Mackenzie, D. L., & Hickman, L. J. (2000). The Effectiveness of Adult Basic Education and Life-Skills Programs In Reducing Recidivism: A Review and Assessment of the Research. *Journal of Correctional Education*, 51(2), 207–226.

Retrieved in 2022 from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41971937>; Fabelo, T. (2002). The Impact of Prison Education on Community Reintegration of Inmates: The Texas Case. *Journal of Correctional Education*, 53(3), 106–110.

Furthermore, desistance from criminal activity has been linked to improved work performance for individuals under community supervision.³¹ Finally research has established that that work is related to satisfaction and economic self-sufficiency.³²

Employment must be sustained over time in order to be a protective factor against ongoing criminal behavior. This idea is referred to as “positive attachment to employment over time” or “job retention” by practitioners. . The objective of job retention, or continuing in the employment over time, is not easy for those who have been incarcerated in the past and are difficult to employ.³³

Super’s Career Development Theory³⁴ (1957) explains why those involved in the justice system struggle to retain a job. Super suggests that a person’s self-concept around work develops mentally and physically through their observations of work, and identification through working with adults. As their experiences and awareness of the work world expand, a more mature vocational self-concept is developed. The theory describes the different stages of development that aid in the formation of the vocational self-concept.³⁵

During the growth stage (birth to approximately 15 years old), children form their self-concept, develop capacity, attitudes, interests, needs, and form a general understanding of the work world. Oftentimes, those convicted of crime are raised in homes where there is no employed adult role model because one or both parents have been incarcerated. Therefore, they miss stages of development that form parts of their vocational self-concept. Furthermore, if adult role

Retrieved in 2022 from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41971087>; Gerber, Jurg & Fritsch, Eric. (1995). Adult academic and vocational correctional education programs: A review of recent research. *Journal of Offender Rehabilitation*, 22, 119-142.; MacKenzie, D. L. (2006). *What works in corrections: Reducing the criminal activities of offenders and delinquents*. New York: Cambridge University Press.; MacKenzie, D.L. (2012); Steurer, S. J., Smith, L. & Tracy, A. (2001). *Three State Recidivism Study. Report to the U.S. Department of Education Office of Correctional Education*. Lanham, MD: Correctional Education Association. Retrieved in 2022 from <http://www.ceanational.org/PDFs/3StateFinal.pdf>; Western, B. (2008). *From Prison to Work: A Proposal for a National Prisoner Reentry Program*. Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution. Retrieved in 2022 from http://www.brookings.edu/papers/2008/12_prison_to_work_western.aspx; Wilson D.B. , Gallagher, C.A. & MacKenzie, D.L. (2000). A Meta-Analysis of Corrections-Based Education, Vocation, and Work Programs for Adult Offenders. *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency*, 37(4), 347–368. Retrieved in 2022 from <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022427800037004001>

³¹ Wooditch, A., Tang, L.L. and Taxman, F.S. (2014). Which criminogenic need changes are most important in promoting desistance from crime and substance use? *Criminal Justice and Behavior*, 41(3), 276–99.

³² Tang, F., Chen, H., Zhang, Y., and Mui, A. (2016). Employment and Life Satisfaction Among Migrant Older Adults. *Gerontologist* 56:603-603.

³³ MDRC (1999). *Steady work and better jobs: How to help low-income parents sustain employment and advance in the workforce*. Retrieved in 2022 from https://www.mdrc.org/sites/default/files/full_514.pdf.

³⁴ Super, D. E. (1957). *The psychology of careers*. New York: Harper.

³⁷ The Council of State Governments Justice Center. (2013). *Integrated Re-entry, and Employment: Reducing Recidivism and Promoting Job Readiness*. Washington, DC: Bureau of Justice Assistance.

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models hold negative attitudes and beliefs, and engage in negative behaviors, it can prevent kids from forming positive attitudes about work and responsibility. They may view work in the illegal job market as acceptable adult and engage in that behavior.³⁶

During the exploratory stage (15-24 years old), teens and young adults explore occupations of interest through classes, work experience, and hobbies, gathering relevant information, making tentative decisions, and developing problem-solving and social skills. Those convicted of crime often drop out of high school, which indicates that they are not exposed to vocational classes or interactions with experienced teachers and counselors that might act as advisors and role models. Instead, they find themselves in unsafe and unhealthy environments, without incentives or rewards. Therefore, reinforcement of behaviors that promote positive job retention never occurs.

For those with a criminal history, fostering a culture of justice involves individual accomplishment through job preparedness, which helps with employability and job retention. Employment readiness includes soft-skills, cognitive skills and industry-recognized training and certifications that employers expect from qualified candidates. Employment readiness is about the individual's ability to obtain and maintain a job. Employing justice involved individuals contributes to desistance efforts because it re-directs their time and efforts on constructive activities, resulting in less risky behavior and making them less likely to associate with those who engage in such behaviors.³⁷ Individuals formerly involved with the justice system who are employed are able to provide for their families, which can strengthen positive relationships, enhance self-esteem, increase support and improve mental health. As such, employment is often seen as an important part of becoming and remaining a law-abiding and contributing citizen. Increased employment also has societal benefits including: a reduction of the strain on social service resources, contributions to the tax base, and safer, more stable communities.

Recognizing the importance of workforce attachment to the success of people with justice involvement, the Community Productive Day Construction Pathways program was launched as an apprenticeship preparatory program to prepare participating DOCCR clients for a career in the construction industry. The vision of the program is to provide participants with the training, skills, and opportunity to obtain meaningful employment.³⁸ Program staff work with participants helping them with job searches, connecting them with union or other community-based

³⁷ The Council of State Governments Justice Center. (2013). *Integrated Re-entry, and Employment: Reducing Recidivism and Promoting Job Readiness*. Washington, DC: Bureau of Justice Assistance.

³⁷ The Council of State Governments Justice Center. (2013). *Integrated Re-entry, and Employment: Reducing Recidivism and Promoting Job Readiness*. Washington, DC: Bureau of Justice Assistance.

³⁸ See Footnote 1

employers, and addressing barriers to prepare them for employment that provides a livable wage.

Overview of the Community Productive Day Program and Construction Pathway

The Community Productive Day (COM PD) program is offered through the Department of Community Corrections and Rehabilitation Client and Community Restoration (CCR) division and is designed to provide clients under supervision who participate, the skills and training needed to secure meaningful employment and a livable wage that supports them, their families, and their communities.³⁹ It is the base model on which the construction pathway is built. To develop innovative program pathways, COM PD program staff have partnered with members of the business and labor community to create additional productive enterprises.

One of those pathways is the Construction Pathway. The COM PD Construction Pathway⁴⁰ prepares participants for an apprenticeship and a career in the construction industry. The main goal of the program is to give participants education and training so they are competitive in the job market while working on eliminating barriers that could negatively impact job retention. While in the program, participants are paid a livable wage to eliminate economic barriers to job training. At the end of the program, each participant has experienced a wide variety of carpentry work, has earned a certificate in general carpentry skills, and is eligible for union jobs.⁴¹

The Construction Pathway program is a collaboration between DOCCR CCR staff and Resident and Real Estate Services (RRES) Tax Forfeited Land (TFL) staff to achieve disparity reduction in communities served by Hennepin County. Offering employment and training opportunities to clients on probation and renovating vacant residential tax-forfeited properties, enables the program to provide housing opportunities to residents within communities impacted by housing disparities in home ownership rates.⁴²

The COM PD Pathways program was launched as a unique and collaborative partnership between employers, educators, and community providers and as a tangible connection for job seekers to meaningful work with livable wages, benefits, and growth potential. Productive Day is a solution to help Hennepin County and other employers in the region find qualified candidates and close employment disparities by creating diverse pools of well-trained and high potential

³⁹ See Footnote 1

⁴⁰ From this point forward, COM PD Program, Construction Pathway program and COM PD Construction Pathway program are used interchangeably throughout this report to refer to the Community Productive Day Construction Pathway program that is being evaluated.

⁴¹ See Footnote 6

⁴² See Footnote 5

applicants. Through structured and customized education, training programs, work experiences, and support services, Pathway programs enables job seekers to secure a family-sustaining career or advance in an industry or occupation.

Productive Day Pathways are training programs serving people who face barriers to employment or who are underrepresented in the workforce.⁴³ These programs support Hennepin County's disparity reduction efforts, address upcoming workforce shortages, and help employers hire workers that reflect the county's demographics. Pathways partners include cities, counties, the state, education institutions, community-based organizations, and businesses.

Without hope for a successful future, people are more likely to re-offend. Productive Day offers a roadmap to success, helping participants become more independent and self-sufficient. Graduates of the program can access career paths with trade unions and find long-term work in carpentry, plumbing and more.⁴⁴ During their time with the program, participants receive assistance from DOCCR to ensure factors such as housing and health are addressed to give clients higher success rates in securing long-term, stable employment.⁴⁵

Fundamental to self-sufficiency and opportunity is income. It pays for basic needs and is critical for establishing wealth and growing assets. The Productive Day Pathways program addresses this domain by paying participants a competitive stipend while learning the trade and teaching skills needed to earn a livable wage once graduated from the program.⁴⁶ Pathways programs are designed to provide long-term, upwardly mobile career opportunities. In addition, Pathway participants are less likely to need public assistance as they move forward in their careers.

The stark undersupply of housing that is accessible to those with the lowest incomes, where persons of color are overrepresented, is another inequality.⁴⁷ Decreasing barriers to homeownership through homebuyer assistance grants and affordable single family home development is one of the County's goals to address housing disparities. The Construction Pathway program supports this effort by fixing dilapidated homes in North Minneapolis which adds housing stock to neighborhoods with a greater concentration of BIPOC residents.⁴⁸

⁴³ See Footnote 1

⁴⁴ See Footnote 6

⁴⁵ Steffl, Jacklynn. Interview. Conducted by Jessica Wildermuth, October 2021.

⁴⁶ See Footnote 6

⁴⁷ See Footnote 2

⁴⁸ Strand, Jeffery. Interview. Conducted by Jessica Wildermuth, October 2021.

Another County goal is to continue to build and expand career pathways, including increasing employer participation. The County now has over 20 career pathways.⁴⁹ Productive Day Pathways has expanded to include jobs in clerical and human services, building operations, transportation, forestry, and more.

In 2017 the City of Minneapolis adopted women and minority workforce goals⁵⁰, which are that any construction and development projects in the city of Minneapolis must have:

- 20% of the total project hours performed by women
- 32% of the total project hours performed by minorities

Since approximately 49% of adults on supervision are clients of color⁵¹, and the Construction Pathway program participants are selected from that population, the program is supporting Minneapolis's effort by training and preparing a minority workforce.

The Construction Pathway program also fulfills a growing demand for skilled construction professionals in Hennepin County by providing high quality on the job training.⁵² The demand for new construction has remained relatively resilient throughout the pandemic and is projected to continue to grow as the housing crisis continues.⁵³

Program Evaluation

DOCCR Strategy, Planning, and Evaluation's (SPE) services were requested to conduct a formal evaluation of the COM PD program. The purpose of the evaluation was to explore the benefits of the COM PD construction pathway program and opportunities for improvement.

The evaluation was limited in scope and examined processes and outcomes of the program using a mixed methods approach of qualitative and quantitative data collection. Process data provided information on main COM PD program activities, benefits, challenges, and opportunities for improvement to document program processes and make midcourse corrections and adjustments when needed. An outcome assessment and quantitative data

⁴⁹ See Footnote 2

⁵⁰ MN Department of Human Rights. (2017). *Minnesota Workforce Goals*. Retrieved in 2022 from https://mn.gov/mdhr/assets/Workforce%20Goals_Report-r9-17_tcm1061-312324_tcm1061-312324.pdf.

⁵¹ DOCCR Operational Measures Power BI Report. *Adult Field Population by Race*. Retrieved in 2022 from <https://app.powerbigov.us/groups/me/apps/38509fbb-c933-465d-b07f-6a9612b55213/reports/935a9e63-ed30-4a6d-ab05-69571e1c63e9/ReportSectionb11e207c2a50a9e8e3a6?ctid=8aefdf9f-8780-46bf-8fb7-4c924653a8be>.

⁵² See Footnote 4

⁵³ See Footnote 4; Peichel, Marnie. Interview. Conducted by Jessica Wildermuth, March 2022.

analysis provided information on project accomplishments and activities that led to attainment of program goals (see Appendix A for Logic Model).

The program evaluator worked with the CCR division manager, the COM PD program director, COM PD and RRES staff to determine what data were appropriate to collect, who should be interviewed, methods to collect the data, and other aspects of data collection. Input from the CCR division manager and the COM PD program director was obtained on all aspects of the evaluation; input from RRES was also requested when necessary.

Evaluation Study Questions

Evaluation questions were developed to uncover the multiple perspectives and experiences within the program, to identify and define the benefits for each stakeholder group, as well as triangulate benefits across stakeholder groups. Two main questions were addressed as part of the evaluation:

1. What are the benefits/value of the COM PD Construction Pathway program at the participant, organization (county/department), and community levels?
2. What opportunities exist for improving program implementation and data collection for future learning or outcome measurement?

Anticipated Outcomes

According to various program descriptions⁵⁴ and discussions with program staff, anticipated outcomes are identified as:

For participants to:

- Be trained in construction to be competitive in that job market
- Develop basic life skills
- Develop self-esteem, self-discipline, and self-sufficiency
- Work on eliminating barriers
- Successfully complete the program
- Obtain meaningful employment
- Earn a livable wage that supports themselves, their families, and their communities
- Integrate into the community successfully
- Desist from criminal activity

⁵⁴ See Footnotes 1, 4 and 6

For the program to:

- Fulfill the demand for skilled construction professionals
- Reduce disparities in Hennepin County (in the field of construction and in access to housing)
- Fix dilapidated homes (to provide housing opportunities to HC residents within BIPOC communities)

For simplicity, these outcomes are combined under the categories below when discussed later under program outcomes.

- Program Completion, Employment, and Community Integration
 - Successfully complete the program
 - Obtain meaningful employment
 - Be trained in construction to be competitive in that job market
 - Earn a livable wage that supports themselves, their families, and their communities
 - Integrate into the community successfully
- Training and Skills
 - Develop basic work and life skills
 - Develop self-esteem, self-discipline, and self-sufficiency
- Disparity Reduction in HC
 - Reduce disparities (in the field of construction and in access to housing)
- Community Investment
 - Increase desistance from criminal activity
 - Fulfill the demand for skilled construction professionals
 - Fix dilapidated homes in the County

The Community Productive Day Program

Program Description

Hennepin County (HC) DOCCR probation and parole work with clients who face many barriers to obtaining and maintaining meaningful employment that supports them and their families.⁵⁵

About half of DOCCR's adult clients are unemployed or underemployed and many do not have the financial stability to complete on the job training without earning income. They have mental

⁵⁵ See Footnote 1

and physical health issues, as well as housing, food, and transportation needs.⁵⁶ In addition, clients must meet the conditions of their probation to be successful. Therefore, work or training programs must be flexible, allowing clients to check-in with their probation officers and attend need-based programming, and help ensure their basic needs are being met.⁵⁷

The Community Productive Day model is designed to provide clients under supervision who participate, the skills and training to secure meaningful employment and a livable wage that supports them, their families, and their communities.⁵⁸ The program helps motivate participants to develop basic life and work skills through training and education, creating opportunities and more successful integration into the community. It promotes self-esteem, self-discipline, and economic self-sufficiency by providing structured training and education around basic life skills, personal financial budgeting, and conflict management.⁵⁹

Direct Employment Pathway

For participants who do not need training or experience, the direct employment pathway assists them in finding temporary positions that provide a livable wage. The Direct Employment Pathway removes barriers associated with job searches and connects participants with community-based staffing agencies.⁶⁰ For some participants, the temporary work assignments lead to full-time jobs in the position for which they were hired. For those with more limited job histories, successful employment in temporary positions can help them build a desirable resume for future employment opportunities outside of the staffing agency's placement.

The Construction Pathway⁶¹

The COM PD Construction Pathway program is built on the COM PD model. It prepares participants for 40-hour a week employment. The goal of the program is to train participants to be knowledgeable and competent in construction skills so they can attain paid union apprenticeships and employment in the construction industry.⁶² At the same time, they work on basic life skills and eliminating barriers that could negatively impact job retention.

⁵⁶ See Footnote 14

⁵⁷ McAllister, Jim & Meyer, Connie. Interview. Conducted by Jessica Wildermuth, October 2021.

⁵⁸ See Footnote 1

⁵⁹ See Footnote 45

⁶⁰ See Footnote 1

⁶¹ The model for years 2020-2022 has been impacted by COVID-19. One consequence of the pandemic was operating at a reduced capacity- 6 participants/year starting March 2020. In April 2021, participants started to be added back to the program, but they are not yet back to 24 participants/year.

⁶² See Footnote 57

Participants in the construction pathway earn \$15 an hour stipend while participating in the program, which is comparable to the industry standard at \$19 an hour. This helps minimize the financial barriers that many people face when trying to complete job training.⁶³ Program participants earn a certificate in general carpentry skills and are eligible for union jobs after successfully completing the program training and union-approved classroom curriculum. The program takes a client-centered approach where the emphasis is on working with and serving the participant.⁶⁴

The COM PD construction pathway program is a collaboration between DOCCR CCR staff and RRES TFL staff to achieve disparity reduction in communities served by Hennepin County⁶⁵ through:

- offering employment and training opportunities for clients on probation, with a focus on the BIPOC and female population
- closing employment disparities by creating diverse pools of well-trained and high potential applicants.
- connecting clients to meaningful work with livable wages, benefits, and growth potential
- renovating vacant residential tax-forfeited structures to provide targeted housing opportunities for residents within BIPOC communities who are impacted by housing disparities in home ownership rates

Program Capacity⁶⁶

- Each year, the program trains 24 participants who are under DOCCR supervision
- Every six months, 12 participants receive 1,040 hours of combined classroom and on the job experience
- Each week, participants receive eight hours of union approved classroom instruction⁶⁷ by a Journeyman Carpenter, and 32 hours of job site training on a variety of construction related projects

⁶³ See Footnote 6

⁶⁴ See Footnote 1

⁶⁵ See Footnote 5

⁶⁶ See Footnotes 1, 4 and 6

⁶⁷ Union approved classroom instruction materials are approved and provided by the North Central States Regional Council of Carpenters.

Onboarding⁶⁸ Program Participants

Outreach

Outreach is done by the COM PD program probation officer.⁶⁹ It includes presentations, emails, and conversations about the COM PD Construction Pathway program including information on how to refer clients to the program.

Referral

Any probation officer can refer a client to the program. Referrals are made through the SharePoint Referral system (see Process Map in Appendix B), found on the Client and Community Restoration Team SharePoint page. The referral list is reviewed on a weekly basis. Probation officers are asked to select clients that meet certain criteria and that they feel would benefit from the program. Those criteria are provided in Figure 1.

Figure 1. COM PD Construction Pathway Program Requirements⁷⁰

Eligibility Requirements

Program participants must be:

- Under HC DOCCR supervision
- Ready, Willing and Able
- 18-35 years of age
- Committed to being “at work” Monday – Friday 7:00 AM to 3:30 PM

Program participants must have:

- Minimum of 6 months left on probation/parole
- GED/High school diploma
- Valid Driver’s license (preferred – not required) or reliable transportation
- Social Security Card

Participants should show an interest in the construction trades.

⁶⁸ COM PD Program Onboarding Process (June 2020). Retrieved in 2022 from <https://hennepin.sharepoint.com/:w:/r/teams/cc-ccr-team/Forms/Com%20PD%20Onboarding%20Process%20-%20updated.docx?d=wc26b78b046bb499ab68b8587a19c37dc&csf=1&web=1&e=d2URHu>

⁶⁹ The COM PD program probation officer has been a full-time addition to the program since February 2021.

⁷⁰ See Footnote 6; Exceptions have been made for the education requirement when clients are working on attaining their GED.

Participants are not employees, and they are not in the union.⁷¹ They are participating at free will and they can opt out at any point if the program is not a good fit for them. This is an important distinction because when they are a “client” on probation, they cannot opt out of probation or court ordered treatment. They are paid through APEX which is Hennepin County’s system of record for payroll.

Placement in the program is based on several factors, such as number of openings in the program. If there is not an opening at the time of referral, the client is placed on a waitlist and their referring probation officer is contacted when a spot becomes available. If there is an opening at the time of referral, a review of the referred client is completed using data from the Court Services Tracking System (CSTS). For those that meet program criteria (see Figure 1 for eligibility requirements), program staff reach out to the client and their probation officer to schedule a 30-minute interview. Probation officers are notified when the clients they refer do not meet program criteria.

Interview

A two-step interview process is followed to fill program vacancies. The first step involves an informal phone call between a program staff member and the prospective participant to verify work history. The second step involves an in-person interview, typically within a few days of the phone call. The interview is conducted by several program staff who ask a set of standard questions about experience⁷², strengths, and interest (see Appendix C for Program Interview Questions). If staff determine the client is a good fit with the program, they are hired in APEX and a start date and orientation date are set.

Orientation

A two-hour orientation is held a week before participants start the program. During orientation, program participants complete all Human Resource requirements in APEX. Program staff discuss their needs and assist them in filing applications for benefits and assistance, if needed. A checklist is completed for each participant to ensure all documents have been handled. The checklist⁷³ includes the items listed below.

- Application
- Work Agreement
- I-9 Documents
- W-4

⁷¹ McAlister, Jim & Meyer, Connie. Interview. Conducted by Jessica Wildermuth, March 2022.

⁷² Construction experience is not required to participate in the program.

⁷³ See Footnote 68

- Signature for driver license review
- SNAP Combined Application Form and E&T Pre-Enrollment Form (optional)
- MNSURE Healthcare Benefits (optional)

Prior to their first day of work, a modified version of the self-sufficiency matrix (SSM) and barrier checklist is completed with the participants and the COM PD program probation officer.⁷⁴ The modified SSM is used to determine what barriers the program probation officer and the participant will work on during the program. Participants fill out the modified SSM again at 3 months and 6 months to determine progress and identify additional areas of work.⁷⁵ Within the program, results from the modified SSM are used informally to talk with the participant about their needs as opposed to a formal assessment tool (See Appendix D for the Modified SSM). The barrier checklist is used to identify the more common barriers participants face, to assist with or refer them to appropriate services. The participant's referring probation officer often works in collaboration with the program probation officer to address the client's needs. The barrier checklist includes items listed below.⁷⁶

- MN Driver's License/ ID
- Birth Certificate
- SS Card
- Criminal History Check
- Education Level
- Work Skills Inventory
- Housing Plan
- Transportation
- Employment Resume
- Chemical Dependency/ Health Issues
- Child Care/Support
- Financial Plan

⁷⁴ See Footnote 14

⁷⁵ See Footnote 14

⁷⁶ Barrier Checklist. Retrieved in 2022 from <https://hennepin.sharepoint.com/:w:/r/teams/cc-ccr-team/Forms/BARRIER%20CHECKLIST%20%20DRAFT.docx?d=w5d76f7cb6891457bbf8b50189ac70d6c&csf=1&web=1&e=ID68ff>

Program Participation

On-site Work

Participants work on-site Monday through Thursday (32 hours per week).⁷⁷ They work on a variety of construction related projects in the community. Projects range from remodeling houses the county has acquired through tax forfeiture, to public housing renovations for the Minneapolis Housing Authority, to commercial building improvements for the County's Facility Services Department. To be selected for the program, construction projects must meet two criteria.⁷⁸

- (1) they provide work skills that, if gained, would allow participants to compete successfully in the job market
- (2) they are fiscally sound and offset the costs of job training

Classroom Work

On Fridays (8 hours per week), participants work on skill building.⁷⁹ This work involves a variety of things learned in classroom and workshop settings. Primarily, they are taught construction skills by a Journeyman Carpenter, using union approved curriculum.⁸⁰ Math is a common skill participants struggle with, so classroom time is often spent working on math problems.

They also discuss and practice skills needed for projects they will work on the following week. For example, if participants will be insulating a house, they will learn how to properly insulate which could include watching instructional videos on how to cut insulation. Sometimes participants practice skills in the garage workshop. For example, a Journeyman Carpenter might demonstrate how to properly put-up shingles and then participants work to build a roof. For one project, participants had to build a stairway. For that project, they learned how to measure and cut boards for the stairs and practiced those skills in the workshop.

Classroom time is also used to work on barriers that prevent successful employment. Participants learn life skills like how to write a resume, create a budget, and read a paycheck. Community and County partners present on various topics such as:

⁷⁷ See Footnote 1, 4, and 6

⁷⁸ See Footnote 1, 4, and 6

⁷⁹ See Footnote 11

⁸⁰ Union approved curriculum is approved and provided by North Central States Regional Council of Carpenters. Evaluation of the COM PD Construction Pathway Program | July 2022

- The Psychology of Spending- presented by Wings Financial
- Reset and Relaunch/Empowerment - presented by HC Human Services
- Pro-Social Activities- presented by Inner City Ministries

Support

Program participants have basic needs around housing, transportation, daycare, and other things that may need to be addressed. Without access to food, clothing, shelter, transportation, and other key necessities, participants are unable to work on overcoming barriers that facilitate the growth needed to successfully complete the program and obtain and maintain employment post-program.⁸¹ Program staff work closely with participants allowing them to identify participant needs and collaborate with the participant's referring probation officer.⁸² They also work with community service providers and agencies to ensure participants receive the resources and guidance they need to be successful. Furthermore, they personally support program participants by setting up driver's education, driving them to the DMV, and ensuring they have a private space to go to when counseling is needed.⁸³

Graduation

At 6 months, participants graduate from the program and are referred for interviews to employers who have openings.⁸⁴ Those who complete the program receive a tool bucket to help them succeed.⁸⁵ Program staff also take graduates to Union Hall in St. Paul and assist them with union paperwork and dues, if needed. Participants continue to receive program assistance until they have employment.⁸⁶

Currently, there are two signatory companies the program works with regularly, Tri Construction and Knutson. Tri Construction is a preferred employer, which means the COM PD program has an agreement with them to take program graduates when they have openings. Knutson is not a preferred employer but has hired many COM PD program graduates.⁸⁷

⁸¹ See Footnotes 12, 14, 15, and 57

⁸² See Footnote 14

⁸³ See Footnote 12

⁸⁴ See Footnote 15

⁸⁵ See Footnote 12

⁸⁶ See Footnote 15

⁸⁷ See Footnote 15

Program Logistics

The DOCCR Productive Day Construction Pathway program has a letter of agreement⁸⁸ with Resident and Real Estate Services (RRES) for each project (i.e., renovation) they undertake together. The responsibilities of each department are outlined below.

RRES TFL unit identifies and prepares the property for COM PD program projects, which includes:

- *Clearing tax-title issues*
- *Conducting pre-rehabilitation surveys and abatement for special and hazardous wastes*
- *Obtaining an estimated market value of the project property as is it is "post-rehabilitation"*
- *Contract with the project architect, and obtain architectural plans, drawings, and specifications*
- *Manage accounts payable invoicing and payments processing*
- *Approve and manage payments through Home Depot for project materials ordered by DOCCR*
- *Contract with subcontractors and pay them directly per terms of their agreement (sub-contractors are required to obtain their own permits)*

DOCCR COM PD program staff are responsible for completing projects to specifications on time and within budget. Their responsibilities include:

- *Develop, obtain, and submit construction budget and timeline for project (subject to final acceptance of RRES).*
- *Perform all functions as the General Contractor for the project, to include pulling of necessary permits for the specified project and the coordination and management of the construction project from start to finish. The general contractor is responsible for all work performed on the project, to include work performed by Productive Day Construction and all subcontractors used to complete the project. The general contractor ensures the work is completed to a standard that meets all building codes.*
- *Participate in the vetting and selection of subcontractors and manage all subcontractor construction services required for the delivery of the project, including the coordination of work among several subcontractors.*
- *Carry workers' compensation insurance for each Community Productive Day's Construction Pathway participant and provide RRES with a certificate of insurance upon request.*
- *Determine project materials within budget, receive approval to order from RRES, and order and inspect project materials to be paid for using RRES accounts. Identify, pick up and determine delivery method for all other project materials to the project site.*

⁸⁸ Letter of Agreement Between Hennepin County Departments: DOCCR and RRES. As retrieved in 2022 from [https://hennepin.sharepoint.com/:b:/r/teams/cc-ccr team/Forms/A2010157%20407%20Knox%20Ave%20with%20RRES.pdf?csf=1&web=1&e=hsgAS5](https://hennepin.sharepoint.com/:b:/r/teams/cc-ccr%20team/Forms/A2010157%20407%20Knox%20Ave%20with%20RRES.pdf?csf=1&web=1&e=hsgAS5)

- *Identify the need for any equipment rentals and a source for securing such equipment rentals (e.g., Biff's portable toilets; construction dumpsters), receive approval for rental from RRES, and coordinate rental from order to delivery and return of equipment.*

Obtaining Tax Forfeited Property (Home for Rehabilitation)

The County acquires the properties that are renovated through tax forfeiture, which occurs after a property owner fails to pay taxes over time and does not redeem the property. Once HC RRES TFL takes possession of the property, a variety of options are available, such as public auctions or broker sales, while other properties are identified as needing some work before they go back to private ownership. Once a property has been identified as a possible candidate for the COM PD program it is prepared and COM PD staff work with RRES TFL staff to complete each project.⁸⁹

The RRES TFL program manager, the Com PD general contractor, and the architect do a site visit and determine the scope of work⁹⁰ to be completed including:

- a description of the work to be performed
- estimated start/completion dates
- estimated workdays to completion
- estimated unit pricing
- estimated total pricing

The process of determining whether a rehab can be done within budget involves getting an evaluation post rehab (i.e., as if the rehab had been completed), and getting one or more markets analyses to determine their return on investment (ROI). Once the project is completed, RRES TFL turns the rehabbed home over to a real estate broker to be put on the market.⁹¹

Other Program Projects

Community and County partners also contact the COM PD program for assistance with construction work. For example, the Minneapolis Housing Authority asked for program participants to work on public housing renovations. Hennepin Counties' (HC) Facility Services department has requested participants for work on commercial building improvements. These projects give program participants opportunities to learn and experience different types of construction skills.

⁸⁹ Sorensen, James. Interview. Conducted by Jessica Wildermuth, October 2021.

⁹⁰ See Footnote 88

⁹¹ See Footnote 48 and 89

Methods

Key Informants

Ripple Effects Mapping Sessions with Program Staff and Current Program Participants

Qualitative data from current and former program participants and program staff were collected using a participatory group process known as Ripple Effect Mapping (REM)⁹². The REM technique involves asking participants to reflect on and visually map the planned and unintentional changes generated by the COM program. It incorporates components of Appreciative Inquiry, mind mapping, and qualitative data analysis.

Interviews with Program Staff and Former Program Participants

Qualitative data on the COM PD program were collected via interviews with program staff to gather information about program implementation and roles, benefits, challenges, and opportunities for improvement. All interviews were performed via Microsoft Teams. A total of 11 staff were interviewed including the CCR division manager, the COM PD program director, the principal office specialist, the program probation officers, two strategy and resource providers, the general contractor and four carpenter foremen. Interviews ranged from 30 minutes to an hour (See Appendix E for interview questions). Former program participants were sent an e-mail asking them to participate in a phone interview about their experiences with the COM PD program. Three former program participants responded and were interviewed about program benefits, challenges, and opportunities for improvement. In addition, they were asked about their experiences since graduating from the program.

Interviews with Resident and Real Estate Services (RRES) Staff

Qualitative data on the COM PD program were collected via interviews with RRES TFL staff to gather information about their relationship with DOCCR COM PD program staff, securing tax forfeited land, market analysis for rehabbed homes, roles and responsibilities, benefits and challenges of the program, and opportunities for improvement. Two staff were interviewed twice via Microsoft Teams. The first interview involved gathering information about roles, responsibilities and program processes and was conducted with both staff together. The second

⁹² Chazdon, S., Emery, M., Hansen, D., Higgins, L., Sero, R. (2017). A Field Guide to Ripple Effect Mapping. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Libraries Publishing. Retrieved in 2022 from <https://conservancy.umn.edu/handle/11299/190639>.

interview asked about personal experience with the program and was conducted with each staff member separately (See Appendix E for interview questions).

Listening Session and Surveys with Probation Officers

Probation officers who have or have had clients in the program were asked to participate in a group listening session where they were asked questions about their experiences with the COM PD program. During the hour-long session qualitative data were gathered about their experience with the program including program benefits, communication and relationships with COM PD staff, challenges, and opportunities for improvement (See Appendix E for listening session questions). Seven probation officers participated in the listening session via Microsoft Teams.

A short survey was also used to collect responses from three probation officers who were unable to attend the listening session. The questions asked in the listening session were also asked in the survey (See Appendix E for survey questions). Responses from the survey and listening session are combined and are presented together under probation officer feedback.

Interview with the Program Architect

Qualitative data on the COM PD program were collected from the architect who creates the scope of work for the homes. A 30-minute phone interview was conducted where questions about the partnership, program benefits, challenges, and opportunities for improvement were asked (See Appendix E for interview questions).

Data on Rehabbed Homes in the Community

Information about the tax forfeited properties that have been or are in the process of being renovated by participants in the COM PD program were gathered from program staff and the TFL unit project coordinator. Partial information is reported for two properties that are not yet complete. Information about the properties, when available, include:

- property details
- date of forfeiture
- pre-forfeiture value
- post-rehab value
- before and after photos

Quantitative Data Analysis

The SharePoint (SP) referral system and an excel file⁹³ are the main source of quantitative data collection for the program evaluation. The SP referral system provides information on clients referred, interviewed, and accepted into the program. It also details information on program completion and, in some cases, job placement. Participants in the SP referral system were matched to client information in the Court Services Tracking System (CSTS). Demographic, supervision, and criminal history information about clients referred to the program were gathered from CSTS. Recidivism data was provided by the automated recidivism (MNCED) application, relying on data from the Minnesota Court Information System (MNCIS).

Limitations

The evaluation has some limitations that need to be considered when examining evaluation findings and conclusions.

A main limitation involves the use of self-report data. Most of the data collected (i.e., Ripple Effects Mapping, interviews, listening session, surveys) were reported by those associated with the program in some way. Very little external sources of data are available to confirm the accuracy of self-reported data.

Program participant data was collected from current participants and former participants who responded to requests for interviews. All former participants who responded to interview requests had successfully completed the program. Consequently, qualitative data are not available from program participants who did not complete the program. In addition, attempts to interview employers and union representatives were unsuccessful and for that reason no data are available from those perspectives.

There were also issues with the quantitative data on program referrals collected from a spreadsheet and the SP referral system. There were missing data and suspicious entries such as program participants who were not under supervision, or who were in prison at the time of referral and program start. One program participant was on an administrative caseload during the program.

Finally, this evaluation is limited by the data available. Many other key outcomes and potential mediator and moderating variables could be relevant to program participant success but were unable to be measured consistently or at all. Some key examples include employment records, family engagement, health care access and costs, substance use, mental health and for program

⁹³ The excel file contained data on program referrals prior to the development of the SP referral system.
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participants who were terminated from the program, interventions that may have occurred prior to program termination.

Participant Characteristics and Quantitative Data⁹⁴

Analysis of quantitative data is based on clients referred to the COM PD program. Analyses involve descriptive statistics on the overall COM PD program and program participants. In addition, recidivism rates for successful and unsuccessful program participants were calculated.

Since its inception in 2017, 192 clients have been referred to the COM PD Construction Pathway program. Of those referred, 71 had interviews. Some clients had a start date and no interview information entered. Figure 3 below shows the results of those interviews.

Figure 3. Interview Results

Interview Result	Number of Clients
Participation	40
Waitlisted	3
Declined	14
Rejected	13
Other	1

A total of 95 clients⁹⁵ started the program. One client was referred to and began the program more than once; that client is counted once in overall client counts.

Demographics

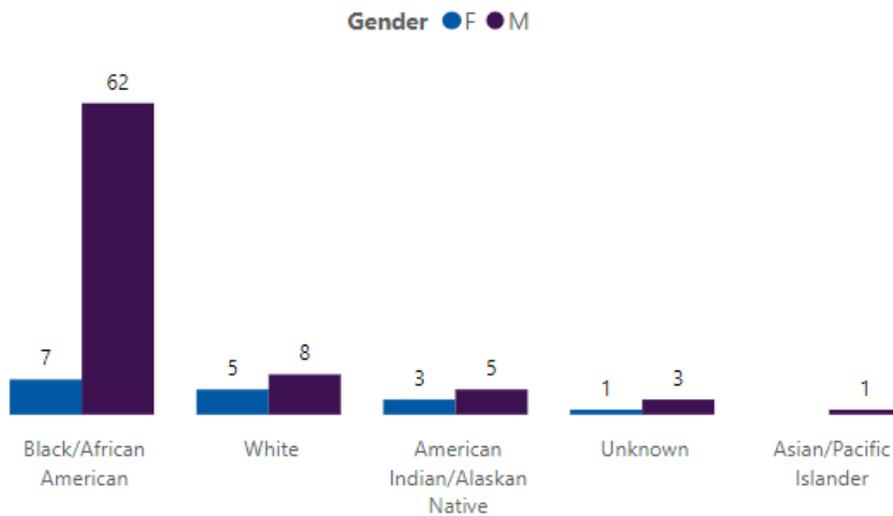
Clients who started the Construction Pathway program were primarily male (n = 79, 83%) and Black/African American (n = 69, 73%). See Figure 4 for race breakdown by gender.

⁹⁴ All quantitative data analyses and interpretation were provided by Dr. Courtney Hougham, Business Intelligence Unit.

⁹⁵ Six clients were not open on supervision at the recorded program start date. Two of those clients were from the HOMES program which allowed clients to participant while incarcerated. These 6 are included in the demographic data and information about success on the program, but data around client's supervision status and case data at program start will be excluded.

The median age at program start was 29 with an age range of 19 – 42 years. Approximately two-thirds (n = 60) had completed high school, had a GED, had an associate degree, or completed some college. Twenty-six percent had no high school or high school equivalent. Education data was missing for 15 participants.

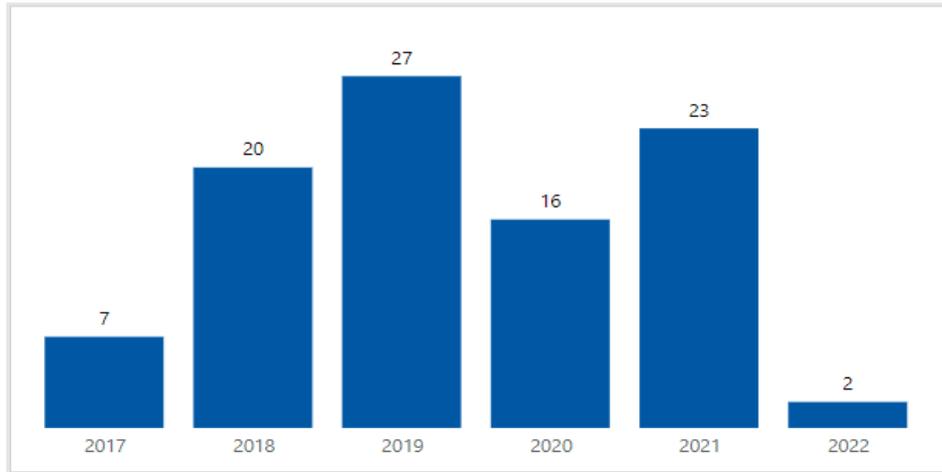
Figure 4. Race by Gender



Program Starts

The program aims to enroll 24 participants annually, 12 participants every 6 months. Data for 2020 – 2022 has been impacted by COVID. See Figure 5 for the number of participants who started the program each year.

Figure 5. Number of Participants Starting the Program by Year



Supervision Status, Case Data, and Criminal History⁹⁶

At the time of program start, 90% (n = 80) of participants were on high-risk supervision – traditional probation, supervised release, or intensive supervised release. Most participants had been charged with a Felony (94%, n = 84) and approximately half of the participants (n = 44) had been sentenced for a person offense, either non-domestic or domestic, at program start.

Using the offense date for the case the client was on supervision for at the time of program start, criminal history was analyzed for 88⁹⁷ clients. Eighty-three percent (n = 73) had a criminal history event prior to the case they were on supervision for, at program start. The number of prior convictions ranged from 1 to over 21, with most participants having between 2 and 15 prior convictions (71%, n = 62). Two-thirds (n = 48) of those who had a prior conviction had been convicted of a felony. Fifteen participants were under supervision for their first offense.

Program Outcome and Desistance

Thirty-eight percent (n = 31) of participants completed the program. Thirteen participants were still under supervision at the time of this evaluation. Of the 31 participants who completed the program, all obtained a job after program completion. Eighty-one percent (n=25) of those jobs were in construction.

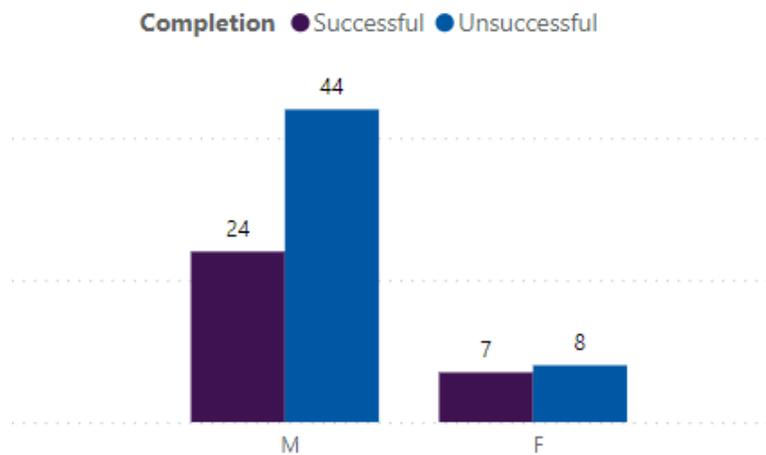
⁹⁶ In this section, 7 clients are excluded – the 6 described in footnote 49 and an additional client who no longer had an open case.

⁹⁷ Criminal history information was missing for one client leaving 88 clients in the cohort.

Of the 51 participants who did not complete the program, 73% (n = 37) were terminated by the program and the rest chose to no longer continue. Attendance and violations of the COM PD program work agreement were most frequently noted as reasons for termination for participants terminated by the program. For participants who self-terminated, reasons for termination most frequently included finding different employment, treatment, and rearrest/incarceration.

Looking at outcomes by gender, proportionately females had better outcomes than males. See figure 6 for the distribution of outcomes by gender.

Figure 6. Outcomes by Gender



Participants who completed the program had a 1-year recidivism rate of 13 percent. Participants who did not complete the program had a 1-year recidivism rate of 44 percent. Thus, it would appear that completing the COM PD Construction Pathway program increased desistance from criminal activity in the first year⁹⁸ after release from the program.

⁹⁸ 1 year from the date of release from the COM PD program.

Stakeholder Satisfaction Data

Program Staff and Participant Satisfaction

Ripple Effects Mapping (REM)

REM was used to collect qualitative data on the impact of the COM PD program from program staff and participants. Both groups were asked to share a brief story about their experience with the program in their paired interviews using one of the following questions:

- What are the benefits or the value of the community productive day program?
- What highlights, achievements, or successes have you experienced or observed with the PD program?
- What connections with others (either new, deepened and/or improved) have you made as a result of your involvement with the program?
- Has your and/or others' (participant) attitudes and behaviors changed since being in the program? If so, in what way?

In addition, groups were asked about the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the program, challenges, opportunities for improvement, and they were given an open format to add anything else about the program or their experience.

Follow-up interviews with COM PD program staff, and former program participants were conducted to gather information from those who could not be present and to clarify any comments from the sessions. The additional information was added to the map. See Appendix F for a full description of the REM method.

Themes

Figure 7 below shows the core themes generated by program staff and participants during the October and December 2021 REM sessions. Overarching themes created by the evaluator to communicate insights from both groups are directly above the bulleted core themes.

Figure 7. Core Themes Generated by Program Staff and Participants

Themes from Program Staff	Themes from Program Participants
Building and Developing Impactful Relationships <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Developing community partnerships• Building networks across the County• Developing relationships with program participants	Building and Developing Impactful Relationships <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Improving work relationships• Strengthening family and community relationships• Developing relationships with program staff
Participant Growth and Success	Participant Growth and Success

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changed attitudes and behaviors • Improved relationships • Developing knowledge and skills • Providing participant support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Becoming self-sufficient • Changing attitudes, behaviors, and mindsets • Gaining purpose and happiness • Accessing program support
Program Benefits <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing 1:1 mentorship/support • Focusing on diversity • Supporting rehabilitation and desistance • Creating long-term savings • Helping families and communities 	Program Benefits <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating better jobs, opportunities, and futures for felons • Building skills • Supporting our needs and success • Removing barriers
Accounting for the COVID-19 Pandemic <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changing how we do business • Adjusting to cost increases and material shortages • Adapting to decreased crew sizes • Accounting for decreases in hiring 	Accounting for the COVID-19 Pandemic <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changing how we work • Dealing with decreased job opportunities
Program Challenges <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishing program awareness • Creating a more efficient and effective material procurement process • Dealing with on-site distractions • Finding and working with quality employers 	Program Challenges <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adjusting to program structure • Dealing with transportation • Balancing accountability and flexibility
Opportunities for Program Improvement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Measuring program progress • Increasing preferred employers • Working with the unions 	Opportunities for Program Improvement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allowing people to learn in a variety of settings (not pigeonholing) • Expanding program selection criteria • Dealing with PO inconsistencies around access to information and referrals • Increasing structure for Friday sessions

Below are summaries of each of these themes with illustrative quotes from staff and participants. Complete images of the ripple map themes and interview questions from each group are included in Appendix F.

Building and Developing Impactful Relationships.

The Appreciative Inquiry Interview included a question about relationships that participants had built or developed as a result of being a part of the COM PD program. Large sections of each group's ripple maps were about these relationships and their impacts. Staff reported on the importance of making connections both within the County and the community. They also spoke about bonds with program participants. They were energized and inspired by many of these connections, with some evolving into personal friendships. One carpenter foreman talked about relationships built with neighbors in communities where the home rehabs occurred. He reported that they interact with the neighbors, answering questions about the program and making it a collaborative effort. He said that neighbors are happy to see the run-down houses getting fixed and sometimes benefit from a project by getting new fencing as a result of the work being done.

"Our partnerships are driven by our client's needs. We just had a proposal approved to work with Dr. Michael Wolf who runs a nonprofit that provides training for juveniles interested in STEM."

All four carpenter foremen mentioned receiving positive feedback from former program participants.

"They will tell you they enjoyed working with you, and that you really helped them when they were down and out."

A couple of staff talked about how working with participants in the program helped them to be more understanding of the situations in which they find themselves. Realizing that sometimes they make bad choices, but sometimes they are victims of their circumstances and need additional support.

People say they should pull themselves up by their bootstraps, but if they don't have bootstraps, it's pretty hard to pull yourself up.

Several staff members mentioned Tri Construction owner, Lester, and his support for the program. Tri construction is an African American owned business and preferred employer for graduates of the COM PD program.

"Lester will meet with them (program participants) and give them accurate expectations for employers in the field."

Both community and County partnerships were plentiful, and staff valued these relationships. Some of the community partnerships mentioned included the Park Board, Minneapolis Community and Technical College (MCTC), the Carpenters Union, Knutson, Wings Financial, KMS, Moltron, and the University of Minnesota. Partnerships formed across County departments and lines of business included: the Environment and Energy Department, Health and Human

Services Department (HHS), Human Resources, Office of Budget and Finance (OBF), Resident and Real Estate Services (RRES), the Public Defender's Office, and DOCCR probation units (e.g., Transition Age Youth).

Program participants spoke about bonds they built with other program participants and program staff. They highlighted how the program helps them understand how to interact with their co-workers in a productive way, even when they have differences of opinion. A couple of participants mentioned gaining a better understanding of people's needs, differences in skills and abilities and having compassion while still getting the job done. They discussed how the program creates equitable conditions and helps them develop better attitudes and work ethic.

"You don't need to make people feel bad for not knowing something and you don't need to get a big head because you do know something."

A couple of former participants talked about being able to call program staff after they had graduated to ask questions about how to price something or what tools are needed. Many spoke about improved relationships with family and with themselves. A prominent theme participants talked about is how the program provides them with the skills and abilities that help their families and communities. One participant reported that the COM PD program is giving him skills that allow him to help his grandfather with projects and as a result his grandfather is seeing him grow and become more independent.

"My mom is trying to buy a second house, so I can give her advice on what to look for – good structure and a roof with no leaks."

Participant Growth and Success

Both program staff and participant sessions highlighted ways that the COM PD program has cultivated participant growth and success. Program participants emphasized the power of a positive mind-set and recognizing what is within their control to change. Understanding that they can choose to change their attitudes and behaviors that are barriers to their success. One program participant reported that his family has witnessed him engaging in more productive activities as opposed to being out on the streets. Another talked about how being in the program and employed allows him to think about his future and doing something better with his life. One participant said that, since starting the COM PD program, his behavior has changed, and he has been happier. In addition to helping program participants change their attitudes and behaviors, the program also helped them find a sense of purpose. Several participants described the program as *"something to look forward to"*.

"Being in the program gives me incentive to get up every morning."

"It (the COM PD program) gives me incentive to wake up every morning. Coming to work every day, meeting new people, and learning how to build is better than sitting at home and trying to figure out how to make money."

Program participants also discussed all the support they receive throughout the program. A prominent theme for former program participants was self-sufficiency. They talked about how they had jobs they enjoy, earn a good living, are Osha 10 certified, belong to a union, have their own homes, and can take care of their children and families. They also reported that none of those things would have been possible before the COM PD program.

One former program participant, who is now a foreman, said *"I would have never made it to my position if it wasn't for productive day."* He said he really appreciates that even after you complete the program, staff continue to help and he hopes it's something that continues because, *"it can be easy to lose focus when you don't have the same company around you"*. Having that post-program support helped him succeed.

Program staff witnessed all of this. Themes around changed attitudes and behavior and improved relationships were prominent. One staff member spoke about successful program participants being happy, engaged, and willing to work on things to succeed. Another staff member said that you can see participants become more confident and have more hope by the changes in their behaviors and attitudes as they progress through the program.

Staff discussed the knowledge and skills that the participants gain throughout the program. One staff member described a former participant that had graduated from the program and started a foundation that strengthens relationships between children and the community. *"He is changing the lives of many others."*

"The people who do best in this program are those who realize they have more control over their lives than they thought they had. They realize they are accountable for their actions and in control of their destiny."

Staff talked about the support the program provides to participants by helping them access needed services. For example, staff will drive participants to the DMV to get their driver's license or help them set up meetings with attorneys. One staff member highlighted mentorship and the one-on-one time between staff and program participants. *"Investing some time can have a great impact on the client and the community."* Many talked about how exciting it is to see the change that occurs when participants decide they want to be successful. They agreed that these types of transformations are what keep them going.

Program Benefits

A particularly strong theme among both groups was around the benefits and opportunities that the COM PD program provides.

Almost all program participants interviewed reported that this program gives them something to “look forward to” or “wake up for”.

One former program participant said “people from my neighborhood don’t wake up and get paid \$30 or \$40 an hour to do construction. We never have the funds to be able to get there and we always feel bad about our past. Going through the program helped me because program staff didn’t judge me even though I had a messed-up past, they wanted to help me and see me better myself. And for the first time in my life, there were people who weren’t family that genuinely wanted to see me in a better place. You don’t see many programs with people who are really trying to help you.”

Some participants talked about having a better relationship with COM PD program staff than their referring probation officer because staff in the program supported their needs while holding them accountable.

“They’ll help you with anything you need. Probation officers aren’t like that, they’re just like, if I catch you, you’re going back.”

Participants also reported acquiring skills as a major benefit of the program. One participant said the program taught her how to follow through on projects, set a good routine and schedule, interact with others, and gave her financial stability. Before going through the program, she was housing insecure, but now she has a stable place to live. In addition, the program helped her get started on her GED.

A major theme staff discussed was how the program helped families and communities by taking dilapidated properties in North Minneapolis and turning them into nice, livable homes for families. They noted that this work is creating safer and more desirable communities in a traditionally overlooked area of the city.

“We are helping the community as a whole by revitalizing houses.”

Staff also discussed how the program provides one-on-one support that participants don’t get in other programs. They talked about the way the program supports participant rehabilitation through training and education and skill building, while working on removing barriers to success in work and life. They reported on how this support helps them have better opportunities, make better choices, and not return to a life of crime.

"The experience participants get from the program is more than just three minutes of role play, we role play day after day, with real situations, and in real time. It's more than just a program, it's more than just doing Thinking for Change, it's life skills, it's real world, it's what they will find out there."

"We gave one participant an opportunity to work for a real contractor on a real construction location and he ran into some things that he doesn't run into on our program. So, we will walk through what happened, talk about those differences and how he could have handled the situation better to get the outcome he wants- to keep a job with good pay and benefits."

"I had an agreement with one participant that she couldn't lie to me for a week and she actually did not lie to me, even though she reported she still lied to her family a few times. Then we went for a couple of weeks and after that I told her she couldn't lie to her family for a week. It really made a big difference in how she communicated with us and built a lot of trust."

Staff discussion also included the economic benefits of this program. Quantifying the institutional savings that occur when people stay out of jail/prison is more easily identified than other savings that occur. For example, staff mentioned the saving that occurs when a person is employed, becomes a taxpayer, and is no longer reliant on government assistance. They also discussed the generational impact. They reported that children of incarcerated parents become part the criminal justice system and that this program aims to break that cycle.

It's not just the participants staying out of the system, it's their whole family. When a child is seeing their parents get up and go to work, have a job, and not being put in the system; when they are 16, 17, 18, 19, they have the mindset of 'I need to get up and out to work'. It's the whole generational impact.

"The hardest thing to quantify is the cost savings of people getting out of the system- getting off probation, not going back to prison, not needing County assistance. The amount of money saved by the time we get them skills, a job, a livable wage, and getting them off the system in general."

Accounting for the COVID-19 Pandemic

Program staff had a more robust conversation about the impact of the pandemic on the program than did program participants. Program participants mostly spoke about the impact of the pandemic on job availability and increased problems with public transportation.

Staff responses were around changes to how the business operated and how they adapted to those changes. They discussed social distancing protocols and mask mandates. Carpenter foremen talked about the increase in material costs and delays in material acquisition and availability of materials. They noted that the capacity of the program was reduced, and the crew size went from 12 participants (24 participants/year) to 6 participants (12 participants/year) as a

result of the pandemic. At the time of this report, the program is slowly adding back participants, but is still operating with reduced crew sizes. Staff also discussed the decrease in hiring and the challenge to place program participants.

Challenges

Both sessions included a discussion of the challenges program staff and participants face in the COM PD program. Program participants spoke about time management, public transportation struggles, and keeping their probation officers updated. One former participant spoke about having to get up at 3 am so she could make her lunch, pick up her medications, and get to work on time. Participants discussed the delicate balance of accountability and flexibility. One participant noted the challenge to remember to keep his probation officer updated every time he moved to a new location (e.g., moving from CCR to the job site, etc.). A couple of participants said they felt that some participants took advantage of staff flexibility.

“Some people don’t utilize the program; some just do it to get off probation and that would be shame for y’all to have this program and this opportunity to help a lot of people and you give it to people where 70% can really give a F if you help them or not.”

The program staff discussion focused on themes around program awareness, finding quality employers, creating a more efficient material procurement process, and dealing with participant distractions. When discussing program awareness, staff spoke about challenges with buy-in and getting the right types of referrals. Staff noted the challenges of working with non-profits and finding employers that offered full time positions making a livable wage and benefits. Carpenter foremen spoke about having more control over material procurement for efficiency. Some also expressed their frustration and safety concerns with regard to participants using phones on the job site.

“One of the biggest challenges is getting appropriate referrals from our probation officers. I think it’s partially due to lack of awareness and a communication breakdown. The program is an underutilized tool in our belt and I think a top-down approach would be more effective because you want to hear this from someone with credibility. Hearing management say the program is a tool that we need to start utilizing has more of an impact than a publication or a new person saying it’s available.”

“Some of the nonprofits around the Twin Cities are not geared toward working with all of the barriers that come, not only with chronically unemployed people, but also adding that criminal history to it.”

Opportunities for Program Improvement

When asked about opportunities for program improvement, the theme of program awareness surfaced again. Both current and former program participants spoke about a lack of program awareness. They suggested doing more to make the program well-known. One former participant reported not knowing about the program until a friend told him.

"I didn't know until a friend told me, then you have to go through your PO, and what they're doing is really a blessing- it changed me."

A couple of conversations were around differences in access to information and resources depending on referring probation officer. Participants suggested dealing with these inconsistencies by providing more information (e.g., how to rent), and making more referrals when services are needed, if their referring probation officer has not made the referral. Several participants mentioned creating more structure in Friday sessions which sometimes felt unorganized.

"For people with felonies, it's hard to get housing. We lose money on applications after they run background checks. It's hard to know what management companies are more accepting."

Staff discussions around program improvements focused mainly on finding ways to measure program progress. Several staff mentioned the need to increase the number of preferred employers the program partners with to have more solid options for program participants. Finally, a couple of staff discussed the need for easier access into union apprenticeships for program graduates.

"Program progress could mean a number of different things. Are we looking at participant successes, are we looking at revenue generated? There are different facets to look at."

"I've talked about using participant social security numbers, which the state of Minnesota DOC has a connection with the Minnesota Tax Department, to track employment and success for program participants."

Concluding Thoughts

The impacts of the COM PD program are multi-faceted and deep. This REM evaluation documented many ways in which the program is meeting its mission to provide education and training to participants that makes them competitive in the construction industry allowing them to secure meaningful employment and a livable wage that supports them, their families, and their communities. From the participants perspective, the program has offered a second chance and hope. From a staff perspective, the program has produced skilled construction professionals and pushed participants to work on overcoming some of the most difficult barriers – our own self – defeatist thoughts, attitudes, and behaviors. All of the intended outcomes of the COM PD

Construction pathway program were documented in this REM process. It is also affirming to see the evidence of the collective impact, especially in the areas of participant growth and success and community re-integration.

Interviews of Former PD Participants

Former program participants were interviewed by phone and asked the same questions as current program participants in the REM session. Their responses are combined with the participant data in the REM section above. In addition to the questions asked in the REM session, former program participants asked additional questions about their experiences since graduating from the program. Those questions were:

- What skills did you learn in the program that have been most useful to you?
- What services did you receive during the program that were helpful?
- Is there anything else you would change to make this program more successful?

Work and Life Skills

When asked about the most useful skills they learned in the program, former participants reported both work related skills and life skills. Work related skills ranged from being able to use a tape measure to using angle saws to putting in wood floors. Life skills included improved communication, better time management, follow-through on commitments, and being able to identify and consider consequences and how their behavior impacts future goals.

"I'm sort of a hothead, I got a short temper but with Productive Day, it taught me that everybody is probably not gonna be as good as me, and I may not be as good as the next person. But it's all about communicating and how you make somebody feel that dictates how we get the job done. It helped me because in Productive Day everybody was on the same level."

"The biggest highlight is that I got certified for my OSHA 10. Being able to show that I took the time and I completed the class and I'm trying to do something, that was like the biggest thing of it all because they gave me something that honestly- that you can truly use if you truly stay on the path that we were supposed be on."

"Before starting the program, I was kind of a follower. I guess you would say, quiet. But being in the program I definitely took leadership as far as like owning up to my stuff and trying to help others as they weren't catching on to things as fast as I was. So, I would definitely say that that strengthened me as far as being more of a leader than a follower."

Services they reported as most helpful during the program included assistance with a GED, housing, general assistance, and lawyers or people who could speak on their behalf in legal

matters. In addition, former program participants agreed that no matter what they needed, program staff helped them.

"They helped you out with all the obstacles that would be in your way to succeed in a career- like your driver's license or they brought me to pay my restitution so I wouldn't get violated for probation. If you didn't have your GED, that would be an issue to get into the union, so they would set you up with getting your GED and all that stuff so that all the obstacles are out of the way before you graduate the program so you can succeed in a career."

"I was an individual with flaws and really didn't have anything strong enough to keep ahold of or fight for and I got through this program. They taught me some things, like a lot of people don't know what the 401K is or the difference between a job and a career, and they showed me that it takes time and to try to correct the things that you had done wrong in the past."

A common response to what would make the program more successful was increasing awareness of the program. Two former participants said the program *"changed their life"* and gave them opportunities they never thought they had. The possibility of missing the opportunity to participate in the program was very real to them because they reported hearing about the program by chance. In one case, it was a friend who mentioned the program to the individual. In another, Michelle (the program probation officer), came to a court ordered class the participant was in to talk about the program. Both felt that more should be done to ensure every probation officer and client know about this program.

"I would make the program known for all probation officers. That would be a good thing so they can let their clients know, 'cause some people maybe give up because they don't think they have much of a chance; like they already screwed their life up, why not just keep doing it because I'm not going nowhere, you know."

Probation Officer Satisfaction

Probation officers who have or have had clients in the program participated in a listening session (n=7) or survey (n=3) that asked about their experiences with the COM PD program. A total of 10 probation officers provided feedback, and themes from that feedback are presented below. (See Appendix E for interview questions).

Program Experience and Client Value

Probation officers reported that the program provides an important intersection of work and life skills. Participants learn the construction trade and skills that apply to other trades such as electrical and plumbing, and they learn to develop a work ethic and create routines which helps them address barriers to success both in life and in work.

Providing structure and “pro-social support” were two of the most cited program benefits by probation officers. Many said that creating structure provides participants with stability. They noted that stability is the foundation for addressing barriers and building beyond them, and without that stability, it’s difficult to move forward.

“We work with a lot of unstable clients and this program provides structure, empowerment, and purpose. If our clients aren’t stable, we can’t really build anything beyond that.”

“One thing that I’ve seen is all of the pro-social support they have when they’re in the program. My client has an additional support team with all the people from Productive Day.”

Some reported that when program staff help their clients accomplish things such as getting their driver’s license or enrolling in a GED program, and cheer them on as they approach milestones, their client’s self-esteem and confidence grows.

“My experience with the program was great. My client loved the program and staff were great about supporting the client throughout his time in the program.”

Others mentioned that providing paid employment was an extremely valuable part of the program. One probation officer talked about how beneficial it was for their client to be able to associate with a different group of people with the same goals.

“This program was definitely needed, and I was skeptical. There have been a lot of programs that come and go, but so far, every hurdle we’ve come across we’ve been able to get over it. It’s a team effort and the biggest thing is that people are actually getting an income. They’re able to pay their rent and still continue to work and learn a skill on top of it. That’s what I really like about the program.”

“This program is one of the best I have seen provided by Hennepin County in my 22 years. It provides clients with real skills starting on day one. Clients see a path forward and learn not only construction skills but life skills that help them maintain a consistent livable wage job.”

“When clients see COM PD staff backing them up, supporting them, and truly wanting to see them succeed, it helps them believe in themselves.”

Finally, there were many comments about the programs ability to help their clients have hope and prepare for the future. Probation officers reported that the program provides opportunity for their clients both during and after their time in the program. They also spoke about the importance of developing a of a routine. A few noted that when their clients have to wake up, be somewhere on time, and work, it's good preparation for bigger opportunities in the future and for transitioning to life in the community. One officer reported that the job opportunities the program provides, helps his clients "*see the light at the end of the tunnel*" and motivates them to work toward achieving that goal.

"One of the things my client said was he's working really hard in the program and he's enjoying it. He said, 'I've never worked so long for something but I'm going to keep going because this is important.' It's the durational piece of it for him, realizing that he can work hard and he can keep going when there is something good at the end. He said, 'I saw it, you told me about all this, but then it really happened and my hard work is paying off.' I think he was able to finally have something tangible for his hard work."

Roles, Relationships, and Communication

Responses were overwhelmingly positive, and probation officers spoke highly of the program probation officer. The full-time program probation officer position has only been a part of the program since February 2021. Prior to that date, the position was filled by an individual on mobility assignment. The following responses from referring probation officers reflect that full time, dedicated position.

"Michelle, (program probation officer), is our first contact. She is helpful and always supportive to us as agents and to the clients. She is consistent with her messaging and timely with questions."

"It was great working with Michelle. She was great at communicating and being a liaison between me and the client."

Referring probation officers reported that communication with COM PD program staff was excellent, helpful, and timely from the referral process and throughout the program. Some noted that the program probation officer was very intentional about reaching out to probation officers. One officer mentioned that program staff worked really hard to get her client into a GED program, that she was included in all communication with MCTC, and invited to ride with COM PD staff and her client to a meeting at the college. Others mentioned being notified if

Michelle has been very diligent about communicating achievements and concerns, so that I can follow up with my clients and to reinforce good decisions but also hold them accountable and problem solve to get to the bottom of any issues.

their client didn't show up to work or if they were late. One said he received a phone call from the program probation officer when his client showed up late, and that she informed him they were working with his client on attendance issues. Probation officers all reported roles as being very clear.

Many discussed how they felt included by program staff, not only through communication about their client's progress, but also by being invited to tour properties and work sites. One probation officer reported learning a lot about the program through invitations to observe the work. Another mentioned that hearing program staff get excited about her client, encourages her, and gets her excited for her client.

"When we stop by the work sites, the trainers are friendly and ensure we are able to make contact with our clients without disrupting the job site."

Another area of discussion was around program staff's compassion for probation officer's clients. Some officers reported that program staff are very considerate of their clients' emotional needs. One probation officer spoke about a client who was trying to contact him but had issues with his phone not working. The client was getting really frustrated. The carpenter foreman on-site that day contacted the probation officer and asked if they could have the meeting over his phone. Despite the probation officer offering to reschedule, the carpenter foreman wanted the meeting to happen that day so the client wouldn't worry about being in violation or getting in trouble. Another probation officer talked about a client she had that needed to go to Anoka County to pay restitution and clear up a case. She praised the program probation officer for making special effort to drive her client to Anoka to get her fines and fees paid, so she could get an early discharge on the case. Another officer added that program staff took her client down to Union Hall and paid her union fees to get her started on the job.

"There were times when my client had sick children and had to take time off of work. The program staff were very understanding and even commended her for being responsible and sending a message the night before."

Other discussions were around program staff's ability to balance accountability and support. One probation officer reported that he appreciates that the program probation officer understands Intensive Supervised Release (ISR), what's expected of those clients, and what the agents need to know about those clients.

"She works with agents and doesn't protect clients if they are not showing up or showing up late. On the flip side she is fantastic about collaborating with and helping clients get driver's licenses, pay off fines, and communicating with the courts to get tickets resolved that were still open."

"The program is really great and Michelle does a really great job of working with the clients, being supportive, holding them accountable, and communicating with agents."

"I find this program beneficial in so many ways. I like that agents make the referral as it is not for every client. The clients are treated with respect and are supported but are expected to perform as they need to in a real-world union job. If a client is truly ready to make a change, this program will give them the path to do so."

The Referral Process

The majority of probation officers said referring clients was very easy. One mentioned there were a few problems before the program probation officer was hired into the program.

"It has been 100% better since Michelle came on-board. Pre-Michelle I had a couple issues with referring clients and getting no response."

Another probation officer said the process was a little confusing. She reported that program requirements, specifically whether COG programming needs to be completed before clients participate, were somewhat unclear. It was also not clear to her that clients had to interview for the program. However, she reported that the program probation officer has offered to talk with her unit about the program.

"Michelle has said she will come to one of our unit meetings to help us figure out a good process."

Program Improvements

Probation officers were asked about improvements that could be made to the program.

The majority of probation officers said nothing could be improved and that they were very pleased with the program. One officer said, using "chronos" in CSTS to detail performance issues and having a structured performance evaluation, would be beneficial. Another probation officer talked about the delicate balance between accountability, support and understanding. His client was terminated from the program for repeatedly calling in sick. When his client moved closer to the CCR location- eliminating the distance barrier - he attempted to get him back into the program but was told his client would not be reconsidered. His suggestion was to provide a means for clients to reengage with the program.

"For some of these clients, it's their first job and so they're not going to be as disciplined with their life skills or independent living skills. I think having a method to reengage the clients, like a coaching session with the PO and the client to see if they are dedicated and really want that second chance."

Anything Else

Finally, probation officers were provided an open format to share anything else about their experience with the program. Almost all probation officers mentioned expanding the program. They supported the idea of program expansion and hoped that program funding would not be reduced or cut. One probation officer talked about the importance of maintaining the integrity of the program as it expands, ensuring the program stays in place for clients who are ready and willing to make a change.

"The client I've had in there - he has done stellar - and that's with a lot of support. I think it's an awesome program. I'm glad it's run. I wish maybe they'll expand because I think we could get more people referred."

Hopefully we are going to expand. I hope it doesn't get funding cut. We get these good programs and all of a sudden they're gone.

Finally, probation officers expressed their gratitude for the program and the staff that keep it working so well.

"I am very happy that my client is in the program. I was hesitant at first because we've seen programs come and go. Is it really going to help and is it going to make a difference? The day I told my client that he was finally going to start, he literally jumped out of the chair he was so excited. He's like 'my interview must have gone well then'. He was very excited and taking it seriously. Thank you for doing the program."

Resident and Real Estate Services Staff Satisfaction

The COM PD program partners with RRES to obtain the tax forfeited properties that are rehabbed as part of the program. Interviews were conducted with two staff in RRES that interact with the program: the senior administrative manager for Tax Forfeited Land (TFL) and a TFL Rehab Project Manager who is the coordinator for their tax forfeited home rehabs. They were asked about their experiences with the COM PD program.

Benefits of the COM PD Program

RRES staff reported that the big benefit they have, since they're running a home rehab program, is that the COM PD program is a reliable, and effective program that completes projects according to the specifications of the architect on time and budget. The use of DOCCR clients as program participants was also reported as a benefit. The project manager talked about a couple of times he was on-site and how impressive it was to hear participants express to County commissioners how the program benefits their lives and gives them a chance to turn things around. In addition, staff reported that they would rather use some of the money made from other properties and put it back into the neighborhoods because it benefits so many.

"It benefits the neighbors by bringing down their property taxes once the home is occupied⁹⁹ and helps to ensure the property gets to a place where it will be an asset, rather than selling it as is where it remains a problem for the neighborhood."

Partnership between RRES and COM PD

RRES staff felt the partnership was working very well and that if issues arose, they have a good line of communication with the CCR division manager and the COM PD program director. The program manager spoke about the importance of the value engineering process¹⁰⁰ to keep things moving on time and on budget which is done in coordination with the COM PD general contractor.

"We don't get to go out and pick and choose properties. Among the select group of tax forfeited properties, we evaluate based on what we believe is the opportunity - features of the home, the degree of dilapidation, the amount and cost of repairs. We get estimates from appraisers and real estate brokers on future value according to the architect specs. If we run into problems, because as they say in renovating, you don't really know what you're going to run into until you start opening up the walls, we do value engineering with the construction manager, architect and the COM PD general contractor to decide how are we going to make this work within the budget."

The project manager reported material acquisition being better since receiving a P card, because the program can acquire materials from more than one place. He talked about ways in which this has saved money and enabled them to get the materials they need as opposed to being forced to use Home Depot. He also spoke about program expansion and the impact on his role, that he hopes to work on more homes together and that additional resources would be needed to handle the influx of work. He hopes that eventually the program will get to a place where staff feel comfortable taking over the responsibilities of hiring subcontractors and material procurement.

Improving the Relationship with the COM PD Program

RRES staff didn't feel that COM PD could do much to improve the relationship because things are working well. They reported a desire to see DOCCR and RRES staff continue working

⁹⁹ This referred to as a Mill Levy/Rate. The mill levy is calculated by determining how much revenue each jurisdiction will require from property taxes to fund its budget for public services such as public schools, maintaining parks, etc. When a jurisdiction generates a figure for its required revenue, it divides the revenue by the total taxable property within an area. The rate of each jurisdiction is then added together to find the mill levy for the entire area.

¹⁰⁰ Value engineering is a systematic approach that uses less expensive materials and methods while still improving the value and preserving the functionality of the project.

together on the program. The project manager mentioned time could be saved by lifting the limitations on purchasing materials and subcontractors. He praised the COM PD general contractor and carpenter foremen's abilities to manage everything onsite, including all the inspections. He also spoke highly of one of the program's strategy and resource providers and her management of accounts.

"Jackie, (COM PD Strategy and Resource Provider), is amazing – anytime I'm tracking anything I'm usually bouncing it off her to make sure all invoices have been accounted for and payments are handled and billed through the correct department."

Anything Else

When RRES staff were asked if there was anything else they would like to say about the COM PD program. One spoke about how nice it was to have County commissioners tour the program sites.

"I'm really proud that Commissioner Kevin Anderson toured our program sites in August and featured the program in his district 7 newsletter. Commissioner Anderson was very impressed, and it was really great to hear the program participants speak about their goals and dreams and positive experiences working within the program."

The senior administrative manager spoke about his vision for the program and the legacy he would like to leave as he retires from the County.

"MY VISION IS TO GIVE THE PARTICIPANTS IN YOUR DEPARTMENT PROGRAMS, THE OPPORTUNITY TO BECOME FIRST TIME HOMEBUYERS, TO HELP BUILD HOMEOWNERSHIP EQUITY, AND REDUCE THE RACIAL HOUSING DISPARITIES THAT EXIST IN HENNEPIN COUNTY. TO ME, THAT WOULD BE THE PERFECT END TO END PROGRAM."

"IF THAT ISN'T ACHIEVABLE, THEN MAYBE NEXT BEST WOULD BE TO FIGURE OUT A WAY WITH HOUSING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OR MINNEAPOLIS CPED DEPARTMENT TO MAKE SURE THAT 100% OF THESE PROPERTIES GO INTO PERPETUAL AFFORDABLE HOUSING THROUGH COMMUNITY LAND TRUSTS, WHICH OFTEN HAVE A HIGH PREPONDERANCE OF BIPOC HOME BUYERS."

External Partner Satisfaction

Architect Interview

The COM PD program works with an architect who creates a scope of work based on the budget for the rehab. Her responses about the program were mostly positive.

"DOCCR consistently has a very good quality of work that comes out of the program. They must be doing a good job with training the workers and helping them gain skills."

Benefits of the COM PD Program

When asked about the benefits of the program, the architect reported that the most significant benefit is training new people in the trades, which is a high demand field. Another benefit she mentioned was *"giving people who might have a difficult time finding work, a chance to get off the ground."*

"I think it's a great program for giving the participants skills. They're skills that are going to be very much needed in the future. Not enough people are going into the trades and we will continue to see a need for skilled people to do the work."

Partnership between Architect and COM PD

The partnership between the architect and the program was reported to be generally working well. There were some issues with communication early in the program. However, she noted that as they complete more projects together, the process becomes more refined, and things go smoother. She enjoys working with the COM PD general contractor and reported him as being both knowledgeable and professional.

"Anthony, (COM PD general contractor), is easy to work with. He will give me a call if he has a question. He's great about getting things lined up in project and knowing from the start what needs to happen."

Improving the Relationship

When asked what could be done to improve the relationship, the architect reported everything being good as it is, generally. One improvement she suggested is having more written communication when there are significant changes to a project. She talked about one situation, where there was a roofing change, and she thought the conversation had gone one way but something completely different was ordered. She said the following about that situation:

"It just made everyone recommit to talking about changes ahead of time, all together."

Improving the COM PD Program

The architect worked with the program under a different model, prior to it becoming the Productive Day program. Under the old model, she said the STS¹⁰¹ staff had more control over the project such as being able to order materials. She reported this model as being more efficient and resulting in less errors than the Productive Day model.

“One thing that has been a little bit of a struggle... is this extra layer of the RRES project manager having to order materials for DOCCR. There’s the potential for problems when having to go through another layer. I would like to see DOCCR having a little bit more of that control returned to them and being able to manage the job and material procurement as well.”

Another way to improve the program she discussed was more accuracy with project start dates. She said the program will report being ready to start a project, so she will prioritize completing the scope of work for their project. However, it takes longer for them to start the project than originally reported.

“I would like to see them be more realistic about their schedule. It’s important to have a true understanding of their capacity and schedule and how that works.”

Anything Else?

The only additional information she shared at the close of the interview was that she thinks the program has many benefits and that she hopes to see it continue.

“I would just like to see it continue. I think it’s got a lot of benefits for the construction industry, for the people participating, and for the neighborhoods that get a nice house back instead of a vacant house on their block.”

Rehabbed Home Data

The following information includes details about the homes renovated as part of the program, including before and after pictures. Two of the homes are still under renovation and therefore have partial information.

¹⁰¹ Hennepin County Sentencing To Serve (STS) is structured work program that provides a sentencing alternative for low-risk adult and juvenile offenders. Instead of serving time in jail or paying a fine, offenders can work, learn new skills, and gain self-confidence, while completing community improvement and restoration projects.

407 Knox Ave N¹⁰²

Harrison Neighborhood
Built in 1900
2.5 Story (3 bedrooms, 2 baths)

Date of Forfeiture: 6/29/17
Pre-forfeiture Value: \$132,500
Post Rehab Appraisal: \$220,000

All in Cost: \$255,419.26

Sale Amount: \$230,000.00

Profit/Loss: -\$25,419.26

Figure 8. Before and After Pictures of 407 Knox Ave N



¹⁰² The COM PD program was not acting as the general contractor for this home which increased costs, going over budget and resulting in a loss. After this, a decision was made to have the COM PD program act as general contractor on future rehabs.

4038 Fremont Ave N

Webber-Camden Neighborhood
Built in 1924
1 Story (2 bedrooms, 1 bath)

Date of Forfeiture: 5/17/18
Pre-forfeiture Value: \$100,000
Post Rehab Appraisal: \$199,000

All in Cost: \$192,804.31

Sale Amount: \$235,000.00

Profit/Loss: \$42,195.69

Figure 9. Before and After Pictures of 4038 Fremont Ave. N



5138 Bryant Ave N

Lind-Bohanon Neighborhood
Built in 1930
1 Story (1 bedroom, 1 bathroom)

Date of Forfeiture: 8/22/19
Pre-forfeiture Value: \$89,000
Post Rehab Appraisal: (ESTIMATED \$180,000)

Figure 10. Before and After Pictures of 5138 Bryant Ave. N



410 Sheridan Ave N

Victory Neighborhood
Built in 1941
1.5 Story (3 bedrooms, 2 baths)

Date of Forfeiture: 7/9/20
Pre-forfeiture Value: \$153,500
Post Rehab Appraisal: (ESTIMATED \$240,000)

Figure 11. Before Picture of 410 Sheridan Ave. N



Other Project Data

The COM PD program works with both county and community partners to provide a wide variety of experience for their participants. Below is a list of some of the other projects on which COM PD Construction Pathway program participants have worked.

Hennepin County Partnerships

- Environment and Energy- Compost Bins
- Hosmer Library- Demolition

Community Partnerships

- Northpoint Medical Clinic- Industrial construction
- Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board– Restoring the historic Ard Godfrey home
- Noor Construction- Estes Funeral Home- Demolition
- Tri Construction and Covenant Electric – Thrivent Development

Employers and Union Representatives

Union representatives, and employer representatives from TRI Construction and Knutson were contacted multiple times for interviews. They were unavailable for feedback.

COM PD Construction Pathway Key Findings

Outcomes were collected multiple ways, including through Ripple Effects Mapping, interviews, a listening session, a survey given to referring probation officers, program-level data, and department-level data. This section highlights key findings.

Training and Skills

Develop Basic Work and Life Skills

Prior to the COM PD program, participants reported having poor social skills, problems regulating their emotions and little or no work experience. The influence of the COM PD program was reported to help participants learn pro-social behaviors such as empathy and work as part of a team. The program trained participants in construction skills which enabled graduates of the program to be competitive in the job market and obtain employment in the construction industry. In the process of building these skills, program staff supported participants by connecting them to resources, providing time and space for them to address their needs during work hours, and encouraged them to succeed. These findings support the program's intended goals of motivating participants to develop basic life and work skills and addressing and eliminating barriers to their success.

Develop Self-esteem, Self-discipline, and Self-sufficiency

Staff support and encouragement were reported to contribute to participants' increase in self-confidence, especially with regard to their ability to succeed. Having confidence that they can succeed, appeared to increase their willingness to work hard to accomplish their goals. As they met milestones and accomplished their goals, their self-esteem was reported to increase, as was their ability to problem solve and their desire to satisfy their own basic needs. Participants who graduated from the program were successfully employed, most likely reducing their reliance on government assistance for basic needs. Since participating in the program, participants reported positive attitude and behavioral changes, as well as insight into why those changes occurred. Program staff and probation officers verified participant reports of attitude and behavioral changes and attributed some of the change to the pro-social modeling that occurs throughout the program. These findings support the program delivering elements designed to promote self-esteem, self-discipline, and self-sufficiency.

Program Completion, Employment, and Community Integration

Program Completion

Data indicates that program completion rates are low. Of the 95 clients who were referred to and started the program, 38% (n=31) completed the program. Of note is that the program has gone through at least one other iteration where the model and eligibility criteria presented challenges. The Productive Day Construction pathway model addresses some of these challenges by ensuring program participants are under supervision and not incarcerated, and that participants are supervised in, and will reside in Hennepin County upon their release. However, data tracked in the SharePoint referral system does not identify which iteration of the program people participated in, and therefore, the ability to separate outcomes based on the current model was not achievable. It is possible that program completion rates would be different for each program model.

Meaningful Employment

Former program participants and referring probation officers described program staff helping with resumes, applications, apprenticeships, and employment. They also discussed help with accessing resources to support employment, for example, obtaining drivers licenses, identification cards, social security cards, and resolving fines and open cases. For participants who completed the program, all obtained employment and 81% (n=25) obtained jobs in construction or construction related fields. The COM PD program accomplished its intended goal employing 100% of participants who graduated. The percentage of participants who did not complete the program but obtained employment is unknown. In addition, it is unknown if,

or how many of those unsuccessful participants obtained jobs in the construction field. Employment information is not tracked for unsuccessful participants, in most cases, because program staff no longer have contact with those participants.

Whether or not employment was “meaningful” was unable to be determined. The concept was not defined and therefore was unable to be measured. However, if the assumption is made that “meaningful employment” is employment that results in job retention (i.e., consistent with one’s motivation, values, goals, interests, and skills), the goal is achieved. Program training using union-approved classroom curriculum indicates that participants are being taught skills in line with their interests if they answered truthfully about having an interest in the construction field. In addition, current and former participants report that their employment is “meaningful” as defined above.

Earning a Livable Wage that Supports Themselves, Their Families, and Communities

In similar regard, it was difficult to say whether former program graduates earned “a livable wage that supports themselves, their families and communities,” as neither livable wage nor “support” was defined. Wages that program graduates earn are not tracked, nor is information about their family and continued access to government assistance.

However, when interviewing former participants (n=3), they talked about having jobs they enjoy, earning a good living, being certified, belonging to unions, having homes, and being able to take care of their children and families. They also reported that none of those things were possible before the COM PD program. In addition, staff reported that program graduates had careers and homes and were successfully navigating their work and family lives.

Based on self-reported descriptions from former participants and staff, the program appears to be putting graduates into positions that give them satisfaction and earnings that allow them to make ends meet. Furthermore, because all graduates obtained employment, they have become taxpayers, contributing to the economy and their communities. Nevertheless, without making assumptions about economic factors, the question of whether this goal is being achieved cannot be answered.

Community Integration

From participants’ perspective, the program has helped them develop more positive attitudes and behaviors which has resulted in healthier relationships with their families and communities. They discussed having empathy and helping others which suggests they have developed pro-social behaviors that benefit their families and communities. They learn construction skills which allows them to connect with a more positive group of people who share similar interests. They

work on houses in North Minneapolis, which engages the wider community in their re-integration.

They are actively engaged in making their community safer and more profitable by renovating dilapidated homes that pose safety risks and decreasing the property tax burden on neighborhoods. Program graduates are employed, which indicates they are contributing to the tax base and are positively impacting the purchasing power of the local economy. Program graduates are also more likely to desist from crime in the first-year post program, contributing to public safety. These findings indicate that the program is helping graduates re-integrate into their communities through employment, the development of work and life skills and desistance from criminal activity.

Disparity Reduction

Improve well-being

Staff support program participants with all their needs and are there to help them succeed. Observations from interviews suggest that when participants start the program, they expect it to be like others where they are “set up to fail.” They wait and watch to confirm these beliefs. When they realize this program is different, they develop more trusting relationships which sets the stage for future success. The combination of the following factors into one program are reported as making this program different from others: (1) program staff really care about participants, (2) program staff want to see participants succeed, (3) program staff go out of their way to help participants address barriers and connect to services, (4) program staff model pro-social behaviors as they hold participants accountable for their actions, teaching them behaviors that may not have been fostered during childhood and adolescence.

The social support that participants receive from program staff is reported to be crucial for getting them through difficult times. Research also indicates that social support improves well-being by reducing stress, loneliness, alcohol use and depression. Therefore, the program appears to be achieving participant well-being through social support.

In addition, exit surveys that ask program participants about various aspects of well-being related to the program are in development. Some of those aspects include physical, emotional, and mental health, personal health goals, sleep habits, substance abuse, social support, and access to basic needs and health care.

Reduce disparities (in the field of construction and in access to housing)

The program focuses on reducing disparities in two ways. First, the program aims to achieve disparity reduction through offering training opportunities and employment to people on

probation. Program participants are diverse in age, race, and socioeconomic status. Recruitment is focused on women and BIPOC individuals to add diversity to the construction industry and the union. The program provides training and once graduated, these diverse individuals serve as representatives of the program in union apprenticeship programs and as workers in the construction field. Based on the high proportion of Black program graduates and post program employment, the program appears to be meeting this goal.

Second, the program aims to achieve disparity reduction in communities served by Hennepin County through renovating vacant and tax forfeited properties to provide targeted housing opportunities for residents within BIPOC communities who are impacted by housing disparities in home ownership rates. The program is partially meeting this goal by renovating properties in North Minneapolis which increases the housing stock in BIPOC neighborhoods. However, the sale of homes that have been renovated by the program are not controlled by the COM PD program. Furthermore, adding housing stock in BIPOC communities does not guarantee housing opportunities for those individuals since the ability to buy a home is much more complex and influenced by more factors than availability.

Community Investment

Desistance from Criminal Activity

Participants who graduate from the program are more likely to desist from criminal activity in their first-year post-program than participants who did not complete the program. There are monetary savings for the community, as taxpayers, with less people returning to prison and with an increase in public safety. In addition, there is an impact on families, specifically children who have a parent in the home acting as a positive role model, promoting pro-social behavior and earning income legally, as opposed to revolving in and out the system.

Fix dilapidated homes in the County

There is County investment in the community through the purchase of tax forfeited land and by financially supporting the COM PD program. Participants also invest in the community through their work renovating the properties. Revitalizing the homes increases the value and desirability of the properties and results in the homes being sold and no longer remaining a burden on the community. The sale of the homes also decreases neighbor's property taxes because they are no longer paying the property taxes for a vacant property.¹⁰³

¹⁰³ See Mill Rate explanation in Footnote 99

The Demand for Skilled Construction Professionals

The majority of participants who graduate from the program are employed in the construction field. This investment is adding skilled, diverse, laborers to the job market which will increase diversity in the construction workforce and union membership. Furthermore, because all graduates obtained employment, the program is meeting its goal to educate and train participants, building responsible, skilled laborers that contribute to the tax base and their communities.

Unexpected Outcomes

Relationships and Partnerships

Although, not explicitly mentioned as a program element or goal, relationships are key to this program for participants and staff. Partnerships are driven by participants' needs. Therefore, staff work hard to develop relationships and build partnerships that provide participants with needed resources and opportunities.

County and community partners reported positive relationships with COM PD staff. Generally speaking, they reported good communication and they enjoyed the partnership. Places where communication could be better are around outreach and program awareness, project start dates, and major changes to project work.

Program participants were very complimentary about their relationships with program staff. Many of their responses reflected the bonds they built with staff and skills they learned from staff. The trust that participants build with program staff is vital for growth and success in the program.

Support

The extent of support that participants receive from staff was unexpected. Participants receive assistance finding housing, accessing food, identifying chemical dependency programs, enrolling in health insurance, connecting to counseling or therapy services, and participating in wellness activities. Participants discussed receiving transportation assistance from the COM PD staff, including bus tokens and transportation to and from the program. They also spoke about assistance such as enrolling in a GED program, and help obtaining a driver's license.

Staff identified their ability to be flexible and responsive to the needs of each participant as an important part of the program. Staff assess the needs of each participant and determine how to address those needs to allow them to benefit from and be successful in the program. Program staff also provide encouragement to program participants, which along with the other supports

mentioned, creates network of support services for participants that reinforces program goals related to well-being.

Program Publicity

The COM PD program has been recognized in various community publications. It's success in conservation efforts with work on the Ard Godfrey house was published as a feature story. In addition, County Commissioner Kevin Anderson published a story about the program in his District 7 newsletter. This illustrates the positive press the program is generating in the community which reflects well on the County, the department, and the program.

Opportunities for Improvement

Overall, each stakeholder group engaged in the evaluation provided rich information about the strengths of the program and opportunities for improvement. Their key recommendations for program improvement are listed below:

Increasing and Maintaining Relationships

- Finding quality employers (i.e., provide full time work with living wages and benefits)
- Increasing the number of preferred employers
- Engaging in dialogue with unions and employers to build better pathways to union membership sponsors for apprenticeships for program graduates

Controlling Project Logistics and Sales

- A more efficient and effective material procurement process
- COM PD having more control over hiring subcontractors and ordering materials
- Increased accuracy with project start dates and work capacity
- Selling rehabbed homes to people on probation

Providing Structure and Measuring Outcomes

- Measuring program progress
- Providing increased structure to Fridays in the classroom
- Control for referring probation officer inconsistencies (e.g., referrals to services, access to information on transitioning to the community, such as what you need to know about renting)

Growing the Program

- Increase program awareness
- Expand the program and the construction pathway

Social Return on Investment Outcomes

Social Return on Investment (SROI) compares the estimated value of particular program outcomes with the corresponding investments. Computing cost-benefit ratios to determine returns to society and taxpayers for every dollar invested in the program was beyond the scope of this evaluation. However, there are many potential economic benefits associated with the program that should be considered in future evaluations of the program. Those benefits are described below.

Desistance

According to a widely recognized meta-analysis by the RAND Corporation,¹⁰⁴ correctional education has been demonstrated to be cost-effective for states by decreasing recidivism rates. Over a three-year period, correctional education provides an estimated 400 percent return on investment for taxpayers in comparison to the direct expenditures of incarceration. This information supports the re-entry education paradigm¹⁰⁵ which shows how adult education, post-secondary education, and professional and technical education may all be combined to help justice involved individuals in educational programs throughout their supervision. As such, education and training should not just be a component of a person's time spent in prison, but also a part of their community supervision in order to optimize the return-on-investment. ,

The COM PD program provides career education and support services that connect participants to post-secondary education in addition to teaching participants basic life skills. Participants who complete the COM PD Construction Pathway program are more likely to desist from crime than participants who do not complete the program. The program also establishes and strengthens partnerships to help address the needs of their diverse participants. In order to leverage the talents of all people, the rate in which underserved populations, particularly Black and Latino adults, earn industry-recognized credentials must be improved. As the United States has the highest incarceration rate of any country, and a disproportionately high rate of incarceration among Black and Latino men, programs like the COM PD program that help

¹⁰⁴ Davis, L. M., Bozick, R., Steele, J. L., Saunders, J., & Miles, J.N.V. (2013). *Evaluating the Effectiveness of Correctional Education: A Meta-Analysis of Programs That Provide Education to Incarcerated Adults*. Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation. Retrieved in 2022 from https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR266.html. Also available in print form.

¹⁰⁵ An education continuum model designed to coordinate services among institutional and community-based education providers and their partners to ensure individuals in the correctional population progress through their education path as their correctional status changes.

people obtain such credentials are an important part of reforming the justice system and can help close the County's racial and ethnic gaps in training and degree attainment.¹⁰⁶

Generational Effects

According to the Pew Charitable Trusts,¹⁰⁷ one in every 28 kids has a parent who is incarcerated. A parent's incarceration affects 1 in 14 kids at some time in their lives.¹⁰⁸ The generational impacts of incarceration are profound, long-lasting and include higher chances of criminal justice contact for kids with justice involved parents. One in five children with an incarcerated parent is under the age of 5, and the average age of these children is 8 years old.¹⁰⁹ Due to the overrepresentation of racial and ethnic minorities in the criminal justice system relative to their representation in the general population, Latino and African American children are nearly three times and more than seven times as likely as White children to have an incarcerated parent, respectively. As a result, children of color are disproportionately affected by incarceration, and as these trends persist, the disparities get worse from generation to generation.

Children with justice involved parents can pick up attitudes, behaviors, and the same approach to life as their parents. According to Aaron and Dallaire (2010),¹¹⁰ children whose parents had a history of incarceration reported engaging in more criminal-like conduct. Similar results were found by Farrington (2000),¹¹¹ who discovered that parental conviction was a predictor of their child's antisocial behavior and subsequent incarceration. One statistic indicates that children of

¹⁰⁶ Council of Economic Advisors. (2016). *The Long-Term Decline in Prime-Age Male Labor Force Participation*. Executive Office of the President of the United States, Washington, DC. Retrieved from https://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/page/files/20160620_cea_primeage_male_lfp.pdf

¹⁰⁷ PEW Charitable Trusts. (2010). *Collateral Costs: Incarceration's Effect on Economic Mobility*. Washington, DC: PEW Charitable Trusts, 2010. Retrieved from [http://www.pewstates.org/uploadedFiles/PCS_Assets/2010/Collateral_Costs\(1\).pdf](http://www.pewstates.org/uploadedFiles/PCS_Assets/2010/Collateral_Costs(1).pdf).

¹⁰⁸ Murphey, D. & Cooper, P.M. (2015). *Parents Behind Bars: What Happens to Their Children?* Child Trends. Retrieved in 2022 from www.childtrends.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/2015-42ParentsBehindBars.pdf.

¹⁰⁹ La Vigne, N.G., Davies, E., & Brazzell. (2008). *Broken bonds: Understanding and addressing the needs of children with incarcerated parents* [Research Report]. Urban Institute. Retrieved in 2022 from www.urban.org/sites/default/files/publication/31486/411616-Broken-Bonds-Understanding-and-Addressing-the-Needs-of-Children-with-Incarcerated-Parents.PDF.

¹¹⁰ Aaron, L. & Dallaire, D. (2010). Parental incarceration and multiple risk experiences: Effects on family dynamics and children's delinquency. *J Youth Adolescence* 39(12), 1471-1484. Retrieved in 2022 from <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/19834796/>.

¹¹¹ Farrington, D. P. (2000). Psychosocial predictors of adult antisocial personality and adult convictions. *Behavioral Sciences and the Law*, 18, 605–622. Retrieved in 2022 from <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/11113964/>.

incarcerated parents are six times more likely to end up behind bars themselves.¹¹² This research suggests that a child's exposure to parental incarceration and associated problems may lead to their own incarceration.

The COM PD program aims to break this cycle by training and educating participants in work and basic life skills, giving them the opportunity to obtain meaningful employment and develop skills that allow them to make better decisions and desist from criminal activity. Desisting from criminal activity allows them to remain in the home and become better role models for their children breaking that generational impact. Results from this evaluation suggest the program is successful in increasing desistance from criminal activity for those who graduate from the program. Furthermore, former participants reported having better relationships, including with their children, with one participant reporting to have regained custody of his children.

Impact on Neighborhoods and Communities

In an endeavor to promote the highest quality of life and spur economic growth, dilapidated structures present a challenge. Failure to make necessary repairs results in blight and a costly burden on the local economy. It transfers the expense of abating violations from the offending party to all taxpayers. Negative consequences from vacant and abandoned properties spread to nearby properties, entire neighborhoods, and even entire cities where they are concentrated. According to research unoccupied, abandoned and foreclosed properties have lower property values, higher rates of crime (especially arson), a greater risk to the public's health and welfare, and higher expenditures for local governments.¹¹³ They are also significant obstacles to the redevelopment of low-income areas. .

For many cities, maintaining unoccupied properties or demolishing them comes at a significant cost. According to research, foreclosures reduced the sale price of neighboring property values

¹¹² Cox, M. (2009). The relationships between episodes of parental incarceration and students' psycho-social and educational outcomes: An analysis of risk factors. *Dissertation Abstracts International Section A: Humanities and Social Sciences*, 70(6-A), 1936.

¹¹³ Frame, W. (2010). Estimating the Effect of Mortgage Foreclosures on Nearby Property Values: A Critical Review of the Literature. *Economic Review*, 95. Retrieved in 2022 from www.researchgate.net/publication/227437081_Estimating_the_Effect_of_Mortgage_Foreclosures_on_Nearby_Property_Values_A_Critical_Review_of_the_Literature; Immergluck, D. & Smith, G. (2006). The External Costs of Foreclosure: The Impact of Single-Family Mortgage Foreclosures on Property Values. *Housing Policy Debate*, 17, 57-79. Retrieved in 2022 from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/237246807_The_External_Costs_of_Foreclosure_The_Impact_of_Single-Family_Mortgage_Foreclosures_on_Property_Values; Zhenguo L., Rosenblatt, E. & Yao, V.W. (2009). Spillover Effects of Foreclosures on Neighborhood Property Values. *Journal of Real Estate, Finance, and Economics* 38:4, 387. Retrieved in 2022 from <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11146-007-9093-z>.

by anywhere between 0.9 and 8.7 percent.¹¹⁴ Research also suggests that the longer a property is unoccupied, the more of an impact it has on the property values around it and the wider the spread of the effect.¹¹⁵ The issue with vacant land is that nobody actually owns the problem.

Communities must deal with the difficulties caused by local disinvestment and property neglect. A problem that no one person owns becomes a problem for everyone. The COM PD program helps address the issue of vacant, dilapidated structures through renovation. While County investment is required, the potential savings to the County by preventing the spillover effects to law enforcement, healthcare, and property values, should be considered.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The COM PD Construction Pathway program is meeting its larger program goals to invest in services that help working families, transform lives and increase housing. It accomplishes this through (1) the use of a research-based model that indicates education, training, and employment are keys to rehabilitation and successful community re-integration; (2) a focus on diversity, and (3) an aim to increase public safety through desistance. Furthermore, the benefits of the program are widespread impacting its participants, DOCCR, and Hennepin County as an organization and as a community.

Productive Day is a national model that provides many benefits to participants and the community. The program model:

- Builds responsible work habits and develops skills so that participants can find employment
- Serves the community by providing labor for community projects
- Connects participants to permanent employment, based on availability and company needs

Education and employment are essential for people to be self-sufficient. Consequently, employment provides participants under the supervision of HC DOCCR, the opportunity for self-sufficiency that's in compliance with the conditions of their supervision. The program trains participants for skilled labor in the construction industry to prepare them for meaningful employment which helps decrease unemployment rates and adds skilled laborers to the workforce in a high demand field. Results from the evaluation indicate that all program participants who completed the program found employment and were more likely to desist from criminal activity at one year.

¹¹⁴. The lower estimate is from Immergluck and Smith (2006) and the higher one is from Lin, Rosenblatt, and Yao (2009). See footnote 78 for citations.

¹¹⁵ Han, H. (2013). The Impact of Abandoned Properties on Nearby Property Values, *Housing Policy Debate*, 24(2), 311-334. Retrieved in 2022 from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/271929557_The_Impact_of_Abandoned_Properties_on_Nearby_Property_Values
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In addition, program activities such as budgeting and personal empowerment, as well as the support received with health insurance forms and employment, help build life skills and provide opportunities that improve health disparities and address barriers to well-being. Education, training, and skill building increase chances of employment which is a pro-social activity that allows participants returning to the community to contribute and develop social ties.¹¹⁶ The program brings together staff from different job classes with diverse experience to support program participant's progress. The efforts of these dedicated staff who work to increase participant's work and basic life skills contributes to the success of this program and the advancement of the BIPOC and female populations in the construction industry.

Recently, Minneapolis has been at the center of the social justice movement. With the death of George Floyd and many others, systemic racism and inequity within the criminal justice system have come to the national forefront. Programs like the COM PD Construction Pathway program, that focus on the BIPOC probation population, providing opportunities for education, training, and employment that result in positive community outcomes (i.e., desistance, improved neighborhoods), support the movement toward a more equitable system. Furthermore, the County is facing a housing crisis and BIPOC residents are disproportionately impacted by housing instability. The Construction Pathway program helps address this by adding housing stock in North Minneapolis, which include traditionally underserved BIPOC communities.

From its inception, the heart of the COM PD program has been its staff-led and staff-initiated processes. The REM process has reaffirmed the power of providing training and education and the special skills, support, and encouragement from staff throughout the program and beyond. Former program participants call the carpenter foremen who taught them, stop into the CCR building to talk to staff, and volunteer to talk with new groups of program participants about their experiences. This program empowers, uplifts, and amplifies program participants to succeed. Other DOCCR programs address elements provided in the Construction Pathway program, but none combine these elements in one program, ensuring that participants are supported physically, mentally, emotionally, and financially while also developing skills and working on barriers that prevent them from being successful. The program is truly unique and is appreciated by everyone it impacts.

As this program implements lessons learned from operating during a pandemic and a world-wide focus on social justice, it has the opportunity to innovate through expansion. As program

¹¹⁶ Berg, M.T. & Huebner, B.M. (2011). Reentry and the Ties That Bind: An Examination of Social Ties, Employment, and Recidivism, *Justice Quarterly* 28(2), 382-410. Retrieved in 2022 from www.pacific-gateway.org/reentry,%20employment%20and%20recidivism.pdf.

staff expand the pathways, reevaluate how they track and measure outcomes, and enhance and strengthen programs, sponsors are encouraged to consider the philosophies and practices that have made the COM PD construction pathway work.

The purpose of the evaluation was to explore the COM PD Construction Pathway program benefits and opportunities for improvement, which were discussed in previous sections of the report. Evaluator recommendations for program improvement are suggested below.

Recommendations

Recommendations are suggestions based on the evaluators understanding of the program. Implementation of recommendations should be decided upon and prioritized by the business.

To look inside the “black box” of the program and understand what program elements (e.g., types of curriculums, mode of instruction, dosage) are effective with respect to desistance and improvements in post-release employment outcomes, there are several areas that should be addressed. Recommendations around data collection and tracking should not negatively impact the integrity of program interventions. Staffing capacity should be re-examined to determine if additional staff are needed.

Increase Structure around Data Collection and Accessibility

All data collected that is expected to have an impact on program participants or outcomes, should be electronically entered and be easily accessed for data analysis. The COM PD module is a centralized location to store data and that allows for consistent tracking and easy access for data analysis. Recommendations related to data collection and accessibility are presented below.

Measuring Program Dosage

Strong evidence suggests that increased program participation is linked to better results, especially in the criminal justice realm. This indicates that programs are serving in a protective capacity for participants. To fully reap the benefits of a program, the constellation of services is crucial because different program components seem to have different associations with various criminal justice outcomes. The dose associated with successful criminal justice programs is unknown. For instance, is it important that someone attends 20 hours of classroom teaching, or do 30 hours of education need to be completed in order to have an effect? How much formal education, skill development, or on-the-job training is required to be effective?

While training requirements may be set by the union or other parties, questions of dosage remain important as the program is expanded to other pathways and the cost-benefit ratio is weighed. It is recommended that the specific information about dosage of the program

currently being collected for Workers Compensation and Payroll, is electronically entered, and stored at the participant level. For example, the number of on-site hours, the number of classroom hours, and how many hours per week are formal class instruction versus time in the workshop or hearing motivational speakers. The inability to discern such differences, prevents program findings from being put in their proper contexts. Participants may not have completed the program, not because the program was ineffective, but because the average dosage was too small to make a difference. Adjusting program data collection practices to include documentation of program dosage would support a better understanding of what aspects of the program are having an impact.

Develop a Consistent Curriculum

There are several questions of interest that the current program design prevents from being answered. Like many other programs, an understanding of what's inside the "black box" in terms of what program elements are having an impact is unknown. Going forward, the ability to identify major program activities and the amount of time spent on each key activity is necessary to get a better understanding of how this program works (or does not work).

A consistent Friday classroom curriculum should be developed, documented, and tracked. Providing more structure to Friday sessions by detailing key activities (i.e., learning from the union text, hearing outside partners speak) to create a repeatable and consistent process for every cohort. In addition, tracking time spent in the workshop practicing skills for upcoming work should be recorded for every project. Tracking the number and type of barriers participants are working on and whether they've been referred to support services to address those barriers, is recommended. This would include items from the barrier checklist, carpenter foreman evaluations, the modified self-sufficiency matrix, as well as any other identified barriers.

Additional training participants receive, such as electrical or plumbing, and when they receive it should be documented. A more structured curriculum with respect to Friday classroom sessions is also strongly recommended to help program staff understand and work toward larger program goals.

Examine and Track More Proximal Indicators of Program Efficacy

Recidivism is frequently used as a program outcome indicator, but it's distal¹¹⁷ metric that can be influenced by numerous variables other than program participation. Instead, using more immediate¹¹⁸ metrics that better show how program's impact thinking and behavior, such as

¹¹⁷ Indicates a measure that is farther away from (in time) the intervention.

shifts in motivation, increases in literacy, or the acquisition of concrete skills is recommended. For example, collecting and tracking information on cognitive gains while participants are enrolled in the program (e.g., using a biographical data assessment), additional supports and services participants receive (e.g., enrolling in a G.E.D. program) and when they received it, and more-detailed information about their post-release employment (e.g., timing of employment, method of hiring, wages) is important.

Assessments could be used to measure participants skills, interests, strengths, talents, as well as cognitive gains. The program currently uses a modified version of the self-sufficiency matrix to identify participant needs and strengths. Gathering and tracking additional information that is expected to change participants or outcomes could help identify factors associated with participant and program success.

For example, the degree of competency and knowledge that participants possess regarding critical job retention factors, such as social skills, problem-solving skills, and realistic work expectations, can be identified through the assessment process. Using an assessment before participants start the program, at program mid-point and when they exit the program, is recommended to help identify whether that participant will achieve positive job retention outcomes and should be connected to employer and union program partners or whether they need to be connected to additional support services. This process could help ensure the program's reputation for producing good employees is maintained.

It's also recommended that assessments be utilized to examine the quality and congruency of employment. . In general, low skilled employment tends to produce weak job attachment.¹¹⁹ According to meta-analytic data that supports these principles, the greatest single effect size is found in employment-focused programs in which clients gain meaningful jobs. In these programs, recidivism was reduced by about 35 percent.¹²⁰ It reasonably follows, that for employment to be meaningful to justice involved individuals, it must be consistent with their motivation, values, goals, interests, and skills. Determining the degree that these two concepts align could help explain participant job retention and support the program's claim to provide "meaningful employment".

¹¹⁹ Kramer, F. (1998). Job retention and career advancement for welfare recipients. *Welfare Information Network Issue Notes* [On-line serial], 2(13). Retrieved in 2022 from <http://www.welfareinfo.org/issuere retention.htm>.

¹²⁰ Lipsey, M.W. (1995). *What do we learn from 400 research studies on the effectiveness of treatment with juvenile delinquents?* In J. McGuire (Ed.) *What Works: Reducing Reoffending - Guidelines from Practice and Research*. New York, NY. pp. 63–78. Retrieved in 2022 from https://justice.gc.ca/eng/rpeng/rp-pr/cj-jp/yj-ij/rr03_yj1-rr03_jj1/p7.html.

For program participants who were terminated by the program or who self-terminated, tracking the reasons for termination and the number and types of interventions that occurred prior to their termination could be helpful information when looking at program completion rates. If no interventions are currently occurring, it is recommended that a process be developed to re-engage participants.

COM PD program staff have effectively thought through many proximal measures of program success. The challenge is to track and record these indicators in a way that is accessible and subject to being analyzed to inform on program outcomes. The COM module that's being created in CSTS should be used to track this information so that it's centralized and standardized. The recommendation is to ensure any data (e.g., driver's license attainment, assistance from the Legal Rights Center, resolution of old cases, etc.), expected to have an impact on program participants or outcomes, is identified as a key activity and has a place to be entered and tracked module. If there is not a space in the module to track the information, a short-term solution would be to create an Adobe form to track the information until a more permanent solution is in place. Furthermore, any proximal measure information of interest that can be connected in CSTS (e.g., wraparound services), can be submitted as a ticket to Information Systems Management (ISM) to be added to the COM module. By tracking these outcomes, more can be learned about the process through which education, skill building and employment shapes participants' re-integration into the community.

Maximize Program Consistency

The Construction Pathway program experienced numerous changes, including changes in program staff, program models, and fluctuations in structure and requirements, many which were implemented as part of a continuous process to refine and improve the program outcomes. During change, it is important for the program to maintain as much program consistency as possible. Having dedicated, experienced staff and a core curriculum that integrates best practices are important aspects of consistency, even during other system changes.

While staff and participants appreciate the program's flexibility and adaptability, this also means that there are program differences that should be addressed. Documentation around program processes and procedures regarding outreach, interviews, assessments, data collection and assistance with support services, could improve program consistency. Finally, a more efficient material procurement process is recommended to cut down on delays in materials, incorrect orders, and on-site down time for participants.

Increase Program Awareness

Multiple parties, including program participants, voiced a desire for increased awareness around the program. Probation officers discussed the need to make program requirements and criteria more salient, while participants hoped that all probation officers and clients would be made aware of the program. Some respondents said that more support and buy-in from those with positional power in the department would help the program become more well-known.

Overall, there was a sense that this program was not well-known within DOCCR or beyond. Most program participants have criminal history and are classified as high risk for re-offense. Therefore, it's recommended that probation officers that work with high-risk clients be educated about the program, the eligibility requirements, and other criteria. The goal would be for the program to become as well-known as other programs.

The DOCCR communication liaison's skills could be leveraged to build some educational communication pieces for the program. However, the creation of a marketing or community outreach position responsible for communication, education and building partnerships both internal and external to the County could be beneficial given the importance of relationships and partnerships to the program. There is also a need for marketing and communication both internally and external to the County to create program awareness and to build and maintain community partnerships, especially with employers and unions. As marketing tools are developed, it is recommended that a consistent message about program vision and goals is established. Various documents and SharePoint sites had slightly different versions or phrasing around program vision and goals. Promoting a clear and consistent message will be important to creating increased awareness.

Build Strategic Partnerships

The integration of re-entry and employment services is a challenge. A high degree of coordination and collaboration between policy makers, practitioners, and service providers is necessary for this integration to be successful. Partnerships are crucial for success due to relatively low funding levels of programs serving the corrections population and the diverse needs of those individuals. Partners can provide additional services, such as employment services (e.g., career counseling) and support (e.g., counseling, mentoring, and addiction therapy). Employers and business associations can support programs by assisting with curriculum alignment with labor market demands and placing those with criminal history in jobs.¹²¹

¹²¹ Case, P. & Fasenfest, D. (2004). Expectations for Opportunities Following Prison Education: A Discussion of Race and Gender. *Journal of Correctional Education*, 55(1), 24–39. Retrieved in 2022 from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/23292123>.

COM PD staff and partners internal and external to Hennepin County agreed that their strong communication and collaboration is essential to serving clients. The quality of communication varied over time, but some respondents identified communication as opportunities for improvement. As previously mentioned, there is an opportunity for increased sharing and relationship building between employers, the union and COM PD program staff. Although representatives from employer companies and the union were unavailable for interviews, staff did refer to challenges in working with both groups.

The recommendation is to continue to reach out to partners for feedback asking how staff can improve the partnership and the program. Having agreements with additional signatory construction companies to take program graduates would provide them with a way into a union apprenticeship. Continuing to advocate for program participants with the Construction labor union, would provide another way into an apprenticeship for program graduates. Staff have effectively sought employer partnerships that benefit their participants (e.g., Second Chance Recycling). Their persistence and continued conversations around hiring people with a criminal history is commendable and is manifest in their large number of partners. Continuing these efforts is recommended.

Increase Opportunities for Family Engagement

Although not currently part of the program, research indicates that family members provide the most physical and emotional support to justice involved individuals as they reintegrate into society.¹²² Furthermore, when asked about the program's impact on relationships, most participants spoke about relationships with their family. It may be beneficial to identify opportunities for families to engage with the program, and to identify safe and supportive opportunities for participants and families to engage with each other. Having social support is a part of developing pro-social behavior and engaging in pro-social actions. Involving family members in the success and support of participants, when appropriate, could be valuable.

Future Evaluation

The importance of collecting data, particularly participant outcome data, to be used for program improvement, gaining support from policymakers and the public, and attracting new partners cannot be stressed enough. One of the eight principles of the Evidence-Based Policy and

¹²² Naser, R.L. & Visher, C.A. (2006). Family Members' Experiences with Incarceration and Reentry. *Western Criminology Review* 7(2), 20-31. Retrieved in 2022 from www.westerncriminology.org/documents/WCR/v07n2/naser.pdf.
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Practice initiative created by the National Institute for Corrections (NIC), is the use of data to assess staff performance and program outcomes.¹²³

All data should be entered and stored electronically, preferably using the COM module that is in development. This information is critical to future evaluations and answering questions about the strength and quality of the program. Many of the recommendations around data collection and storage, will be addressed with the creation of the COM module in CSTS. However, when new information collected that is related to key program activities or is expected to change program participants or outcomes, will need to be submitted to ISM to build a place in the module for that information.

¹²³ U.S. Department of Justice. *Evidence-Based Policy and Practice initiative*. National Institute for Corrections. Washington, DC. Retrieved in 2022 from <http://nicic.gov/ThePrinciplesofEffectiveInterventions>. Evaluation of the COM PD Construction Pathway Program | July 2022

Appendices

Appendix A: Program Evaluation Logic Model

Ctrl + Click image below to view logic model:

INPUTS (all of the resources going into the PD Program)	ACTIVITIES (what the PD Program provides)	OUTPUTS (tangible results)	OUTCOMES (intended results of program participation)		
			Short-Term (by 2 months)	Intermediate (by 5 months)	Long-Term (6+ months)
Annual Budget	On the job training (32 hrs/wk)	# of Program Participants (max per year: 22-24)	Participants develop trusting relationships with program staff (indicated by case notes, staff observation, self-report)	Participants develop pro-social behaviors (indicated by case notes, staff observation, and self-report)	Improved Community Outcomes (indicated by # of community partnerships, # rehabs, lower property taxes)
Partnerships Internal to Hennepin County	Classroom Learning (8hrs/wk)	# of Outreach/Recruitment Events (per year)	Participants develop positive relationship with other program participants (indicated by case notes, staff observation, self-report)	Increased neighborhood safety (indicated by renovation or dilapidated homes, crime rates, self-report)	Improved Participant Well Being (indicated by case notes, self-report, staff observation)
Partnerships External to Hennepin County	Program Referrals	# of Referrals (per year)	Participants comply with program requirements (indicated by work agreement violations, staff observation, self-report)	Participants develop self-sufficiency, self-discipline, and self-esteem (indicated by case notes, staff observation, self-report)	Increased Desistance (indicated by recidivism rates)
Program Participants	Job Referrals	# of Interviews (per year)	Participants in need receive timely resources and referrals (indicated by case notes, self-report)	Participants complete the program (indicated by case notes, staff observation, self-report)	Disparity Reduction (indicated by # of homes occupied by the BIPOC or female population)
Qualified Program Staff	Program Data	Attendance Records: # of Classroom Hours/ # On the Job Hours (per client)	Participants in need receive timely resources and referrals (indicated by case notes, self-report)	Participants complete the program (indicated by case notes, staff observation, self-report)	Disparity Reduction (indicated by # of homes occupied by the BIPOC or female population)
DOCCR Probation Officers (Agent of Record)	Education and Skill Development	# of Construction Related Project Activities (per year)	Participants in need receive timely resources and referrals (indicated by case notes, self-report)	Participants complete the program (indicated by case notes, staff observation, self-report)	Disparity Reduction (indicated by # of homes occupied by the BIPOC or female population)
Transportation Assistance	Nice, Livable Homes	# of Program Completions (successful)	Participants in need receive timely resources and referrals (indicated by case notes, self-report)	Participants complete the program (indicated by case notes, staff observation, self-report)	Disparity Reduction (indicated by # of homes occupied by the BIPOC or female population)
Tax Forfeited Properties	Assistance with Basic Needs and Barriers	# of Job Interviews (per client)	Participants in need receive timely resources and referrals (indicated by case notes, self-report)	Participants complete the program (indicated by case notes, staff observation, self-report)	Disparity Reduction (indicated by # of homes occupied by the BIPOC or female population)
Construction Gear and Materials	Interview Experience	Length of Time to Find Employment	Participants in need receive timely resources and referrals (indicated by case notes, self-report)	Participants complete the program (indicated by case notes, staff observation, self-report)	Disparity Reduction (indicated by # of homes occupied by the BIPOC or female population)
Other Construction Projects	Pro-Social Modeling	Pre- and Post-Rehab Property Values (rehab house and neighborhood homes)	Participants in need receive timely resources and referrals (indicated by case notes, self-report)	Participants complete the program (indicated by case notes, staff observation, self-report)	Disparity Reduction (indicated by # of homes occupied by the BIPOC or female population)
Union Approved Carpentry Training Curriculum	Program Outreach	# and Type of Job Placements (successful and unsuccessful Ps)	Participants in need receive timely resources and referrals (indicated by case notes, self-report)	Participants complete the program (indicated by case notes, staff observation, self-report)	Disparity Reduction (indicated by # of homes occupied by the BIPOC or female population)
CCR Space/Location	Program Orientation	Job salary post program (successful and unsuccessful clients)	Participants in need receive timely resources and referrals (indicated by case notes, self-report)	Participants complete the program (indicated by case notes, staff observation, self-report)	Disparity Reduction (indicated by # of homes occupied by the BIPOC or female population)
Carpenter Foreman Training	Resource Referrals/Coordination with Agent of Record	Program Ps Barriers and Progress (mental/chemical health, etc.)	Participants in need receive timely resources and referrals (indicated by case notes, self-report)	Participants complete the program (indicated by case notes, staff observation, self-report)	Disparity Reduction (indicated by # of homes occupied by the BIPOC or female population)
SNAP E & T Funds	Direct Employment Pathway	# of partnership agreements (employers, unions, etc.)	Participants in need receive timely resources and referrals (indicated by case notes, self-report)	Participants complete the program (indicated by case notes, staff observation, self-report)	Disparity Reduction (indicated by # of homes occupied by the BIPOC or female population)
INF Funds	Preferred Employer	Recidivism/ Violation Or Desistance Fines (unsuccessful and successful Ps)	Participants in need receive timely resources and referrals (indicated by case notes, self-report)	Participants complete the program (indicated by case notes, staff observation, self-report)	Disparity Reduction (indicated by # of homes occupied by the BIPOC or female population)
Community Speakers/ Presenters	Connection to Trade Unions	# of Community Partnerships	Participants in need receive timely resources and referrals (indicated by case notes, self-report)	Participants complete the program (indicated by case notes, staff observation, self-report)	Disparity Reduction (indicated by # of homes occupied by the BIPOC or female population)
Support Services	Personal Protective Equipment	# of Positive Press Pieces	Participants in need receive timely resources and referrals (indicated by case notes, self-report)	Participants complete the program (indicated by case notes, staff observation, self-report)	Disparity Reduction (indicated by # of homes occupied by the BIPOC or female population)
		Time to Re-Offense Post Program (unsuccessful and successful Ps)	Participants in need receive timely resources and referrals (indicated by case notes, self-report)	Participants complete the program (indicated by case notes, staff observation, self-report)	Disparity Reduction (indicated by # of homes occupied by the BIPOC or female population)
		Reasons for program and self terminations from the program	Participants in need receive timely resources and referrals (indicated by case notes, self-report)	Participants complete the program (indicated by case notes, staff observation, self-report)	Disparity Reduction (indicated by # of homes occupied by the BIPOC or female population)
		Interventions prior to program termination	Participants in need receive timely resources and referrals (indicated by case notes, self-report)	Participants complete the program (indicated by case notes, staff observation, self-report)	Disparity Reduction (indicated by # of homes occupied by the BIPOC or female population)
		# of house renovated and contracted work	Participants in need receive timely resources and referrals (indicated by case notes, self-report)	Participants complete the program (indicated by case notes, staff observation, self-report)	Disparity Reduction (indicated by # of homes occupied by the BIPOC or female population)

Appendix B: COM PD Program Referral Process

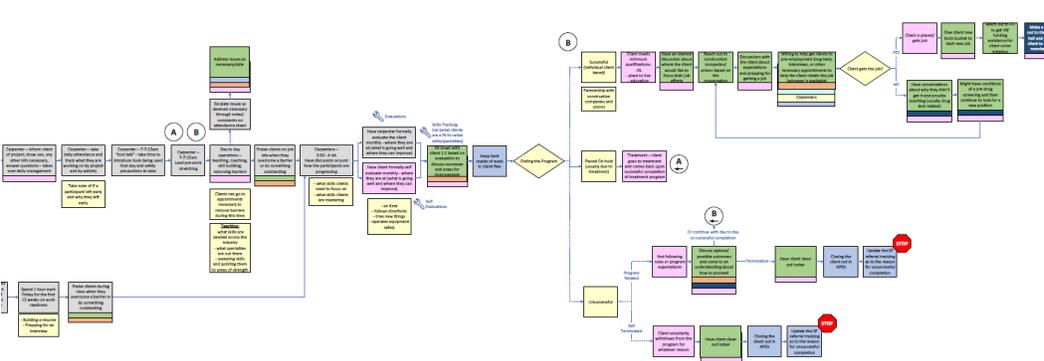
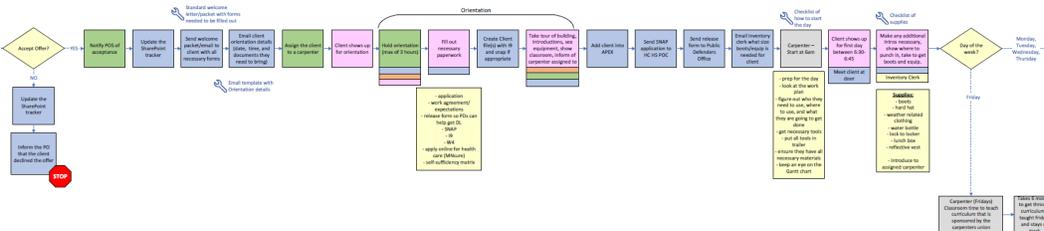
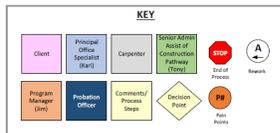
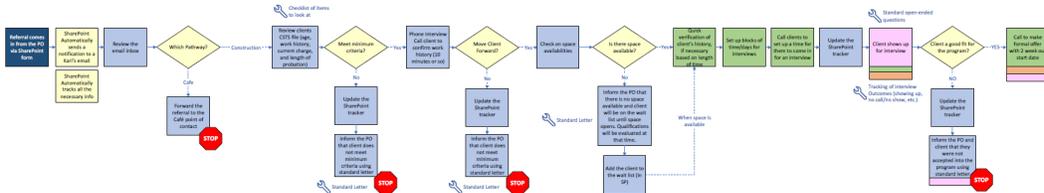
Ctrl + Click any image below to view document with process map:

Productive Day Construction Pathway Project – Future State Map

Date: 5/18/20

Start: client comes into the program
End: client has job placement and/or exits the program

Linked to 12 participants at once
The Community Productive Day Construction Pathway is a training pathway for adults age 18 to 35 years of age who have 10-18 months or their remaining County parole/probation.



Appendix C: [COM PD Construction Program Interview Questions](#)

1. What experience do you have with construction?
2. Can you give me an example of a time you had a conflict with a co-worker? How did you handle the situation?
3. What would you say are your strengths?
4. What are your feelings about working on a diverse team?
5. How do you feel about working outside in all types of weather?
6. Why do you want to be a part of this program?
7. Where do you see yourself 3-5 years from now?
8. Do you have any questions for us?

Appendix D: [Modified Self-Sufficiency Matrix \(SSM\) for the COM PD Program](#)

1. Matrix Summary

Assessment Date _____/_____/_____ (circle one) Initial/Entry Interim Exit

Pathway Name _____

2. Client Information

First Name _____ MI _____ Last Name _____
Suffix _____

Client ID (ServicePoint Assigned) _____

3. Self-Sufficiency Matrix

Instructions:

- Complete this form for all adults and unaccompanied youth at: 1) entry, 2) every 6 months while in the program for permanent supportive housing, and 3) exit
- Select one and only one level in each of the 18 areas below by marking the box next to the appropriate level
- Level categories: 1 = In Crisis, 2 = Vulnerable, 3 = Safe, 4 = Building Capacity, 5 = Empowered/Thriving

Assessment

Housing

- 1. Homeless or threatened with eviction
- 2. In transitional, temporary or substandard housing; and/or current rent/mortgage payment is unaffordable
- 3. In stable housing that is safe but only marginally adequate
- 4. Household is safe, adequate, subsidized housing
- 5. Household is safe, adequate, unsubsidized housing

Employment

- 1. No Job
- 2. Temporary, part-time or seasonal; inadequate pay; no benefits
- 3. Employed full-time; inadequate pay; few or no benefits
- 4. Employed full-time with adequate pay and benefits
- 5. Maintains permanent employment with adequate income and benefits

Food and Nutrition

- 1. No food or means to prepare it. Relies to a significant degree on other sources of free or low-cost
- 2. Household is on food stamps
- 3. Can meet basic food needs but requires occasional assistance
- 4. Can meet basic food needs without assistance
- 5. Can choose to purchase any food household desires

Childcare

- 1. Needs childcare, but none is available/accessible and/or child is not eligible
- 2. Childcare is unreliable or unaffordable; inadequate supervision is a problem for childcare that is available
- 3. Affordable subsidized childcare is available but limited
- 4. Reliable, affordable childcare is available; no need for subsidies
- 5. Able to select quality childcare of choice

Adult Education

- 1. Literacy problems and/or no high school diploma/GED are serious barriers to employment
- 2. Enrolled in literacy and/or GED program and/or has sufficient command of English to where language is not a barrier to employment
- 3. Has high school diploma/GED
- 4. Needs additional education/training to improve employment situation and/or to resolve literacy problems to where they are able to function effectively in society
- 5. Has completed education/training needed to become employable. No literacy problems

Health Care Coverage

- 1. No medical coverage with immediate need
- 2. No medical coverage and great difficulty accessing medical care when needed. Some household members may be in poor health
- 3. Some members (e.g. children) on AHCCCS
- 4. All members can get medical care when needed but may strain budget
- 5. All members are covered by affordable, adequate health insurance

Life Skills

- 1. Unable to meet basic needs such as hygiene, food, activities of daily living
- 2. Can meet a few but not all needs of daily living without assistance
- 3. Can meet most but not all daily living needs without assistance
- 4. Able to meet all basic needs of daily living without assistance
- 5. Able to provide beyond basic needs of daily living for self and family

Family/Social Relations

- 1. Lack of necessary support from family or friends; abuse (DV, child) is present or there is child neglect
- 2. Family/friends may be supportive but lack ability or resources to help; family members do not relate well with one another; potential for abuse or neglect
- 3. Some support from family/friends; family members acknowledge and seek to change negative behaviors; are learning to communicate and support
- 4. Strong support from family or friends; household members support each other's efforts
- 5. Has healthy/expanding support network; household is stable and communication is consistently open

Transportation/Mobility

- 1. No access to transportation, public or private; may have car that is inoperable
- 2. Transportation is available but unreliable, unpredictable, unaffordable; may have car but no insurance, license, etc.
- 3. Transportation is available and reliable but limited and/or inconvenient; drivers are licensed and minimally insured
- 4. Transportation is generally accessible to meet basic travel needs
- 5. Transportation is readily available and affordable; car is adequately insured

Legal

- 1. Current outstanding tickets or warrants
- 2. Current charges/trial pending; noncompliance with probation/parole
- 3. Fully compliant with probation/parole terms
- 4. Has successfully completed probation/parole within past 12 months; no new charges filed
- 5. No felony criminal history and/or no active criminal justice involvement in more than 12 months

Mental Health

- 1. Danger to self or others; recurring suicidal ideation; experiencing severe difficulty in day-to-day life due to psychological problems
- 2. Recurrent mental health symptoms that may affect behavior but not a danger to self/others; persistent problems with functioning due to mental health symptoms
- 3. Mild symptoms may be present but are transient; only moderate difficulty in functioning due to mental health problems
- 4. Minimal symptoms that are expectable responses to life stressors; only slight impairment in functioning
- 5. Symptoms are absent or rare; good or superior functioning in wide range of activities; no more than everyday problems or concerns

Substance Abuse

- 1. Meets criteria for severe abuse/dependence; resulting problems so severe that institutional living or hospitalization may be necessary
- 2. Meets criteria for dependence; preoccupation with use and/or obtaining drugs/alcohol; withdrawal or withdrawal avoidance behaviors evident; use results in avoidance or neglect of essential life activities
- 3. Use within last 6 months; evidence of persistent or recurrent social, occupational, emotional or physical problems related to use (such as disruptive behavior or housing problems); problems that have persisted for at least one month
- 4. Client has used during last 6 months but no evidence of persistent or recurrent social, occupational, emotional, or physical problems related to use; no evidence of recurrent dangerous use
- 5. No drug use/alcohol abuse in last 6 months

Safety

- 1. Home or residence is not safe; immediate level of lethality is extremely high; possible CPS involvement
- 2. Safety is threatened/temporary protection is available; level of lethality is high
- 3. Current level of safety is minimally adequate; ongoing safety planning is essential
- 4. Environment is safe, yet future of such is uncertain; safety planning is important
- 5. Environment is apparently safe and stable

I know that my information will be shared between Hennepin County Human Services, Human Resources, and Department of Community Corrections and Rehabilitation to allow me to take part in this program.

Participant signature: _____ Date: _____

Appendix E: Evaluation Interview Questions

Former Program Participant Interview Questions

Ripple Effects Mapping Questions

1. What are the benefits or the value of the community productive day program?
2. What highlights, achievements, or successes have you experienced or observed with the PD program?
3. What connections with others (either new, deepened and/or improved) have you made as a result of your involvement with the program?
4. Has your and/or others' attitudes and behaviors changed since being in the program? If so, in what way?
5. What things have happened during the program that have been challenging or difficult?
6. What opportunities exist for improving the COM PD program?
7. Is there anything else you would like me to know about the program or your experience?

Additional Questions

1. What skills did you learn in the program that have been most useful to you?
2. What services did you receive during the program that were helpful?
3. Is there anything else you would change to make this program more successful?

Probation Officer Listening Session and Survey Questions

1. What value do you see in the program for your clients?
2. How do you work with COM PD?(the relationship)
3. Tell me about your experience with the program?
 - a. Is it easy to refer?
 - b. Do you feel like you have good communication?
 - c. Are roles clear?
4. What improvements could be made to benefit clients?
5. Is there anything else you would like to share?

Carpenter Foremen (Journeymen) Interviews

Ripple Effects Mapping Questions

1. What are the benefits or the value of the community productive day program?

2. What impressions do you have of program participants successes or achievements as a result of their participation in the program?
3. What connections with others (either new, deepened and/or improved) have you made as a result of your work (the work happening) in the PD program?
4. What impressions do you have of attitude and behavioral changes that program participants have made as a result of their participation in the program?
5. What things have happened during the program that have been challenging or difficult?
6. What opportunities exist for improving the COM PD program?
7. Is there anything else you would like me to know about the program or your experience?

Resident and Real Estate Services & Architect Interview Questions

1. What are the benefits or the value of the community productive day program?
2. How is the partnership working between you and COM PD?
3. What could COM PD do to improve your relationship?
4. What could be done to improve the COM PD program?
5. Is there anything else you would like to share?

Appendix F: Ripple Effects Mapping Method, Interview Questions, and Map Themes

Method

The REM process involves an in-person group session where participants use Appreciative Inquiry¹²⁴ questions to interview each other in pairs and then report their findings back to the larger group. The facilitator creates a map using the interview data and documenting the effects of the program as a chain. Program participants were part of an in-person group session for the REM process. However, because the COVID-19 pandemic limited in-person interaction, program staff were part of an REM process designed using Microsoft Teams meeting software.

The evaluation was conducted over two sessions: one over Microsoft Teams with program staff held on November 17th, 2021, and one in-person with program participants held on December 3rd, 2021. In the online format, program staff were paired and interviewed each other in breakout rooms. Both groups were asked to share a brief story about their experience with the program in their paired interviews using one of the following questions:

- What are the benefits or the value of the community productive day program?
- What highlights, achievements, or successes have you experienced or observed with the PD program?
- What connections with others (either new, deepened and/or improved) have you made as a result of your involvement with the program?
- Has your and/or others' (participant) attitudes and behaviors changed since being in the program? If so, in what way?

In addition, groups were asked about the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the program, challenges, opportunities for improvement, and they were given an open format to add anything else about the program or their experience.

The session had two facilitators, the main facilitator guided the conversation and process, and a second facilitator recorded the mapping. Participants in both group sessions had robust conversations with much agreement, sharing their various perspectives. Qualitative data analysis methods were used to generate themes from the interview responses and Ripple Effects Maps by both facilitators. Each group agreed on themes to organize the ripple maps.

¹²⁴ A method that involves asking people to explore strengths and success that already exist, both internally and externally.

Program Participants

Interview Questions

1. What are the benefits or the value of the community productive day program?
2. What highlights, achievements, or successes have you experienced or observed with the PD program?
3. What connections with others (either new, deepened and/or improved) have you made as a result of your involvement with the program?
4. Has your and/or others' attitudes and behaviors changed since being in the program? If so, in what way?

Large Group Discussion Questions

1. Have new personal, community, or professional connections formed as a result of your involvement with the COM PD program? Tell me about them.
2. If you were in the program at the time, how did the pandemic impact your experience in the program?
3. Based on your experience in the program, do you feel that there are efforts to promote diversity? Why or why not?
4. What things have happened during the program that have been challenging or difficult?
5. What opportunities exist for improving the COM PD program?
6. Is there anything else you would like me to know about the program or your experience?

Program Staff

Interview Questions

1. What are the benefits or the value of the community productive day program?
2. What impressions do you have of program participants successes or achievements as a result of their participation in the program?
3. What connections with others (either new, deepened and/or improved) have you made as a result of your work (the work happening) in the COM PD program?
4. What impressions do you have of attitude and behavioral changes that program participants have made as a result of their participation in the program?

Large Group Discussion Questions

1. Have new collaborations, partnerships and networks have formed as a result of the Productive Day Construction Pathways program? What ones?
2. How did the pandemic impact the COM PD program?
3. What impact, if any, has the program had on efforts to promote diversity in Hennepin county as an organization, DOCCR, or the community?
4. What things have happened during the program that have been challenging or difficult?
5. What opportunities exist for improving the COM PD program?
6. Is there anything else you would like me to know about the program or your experience?

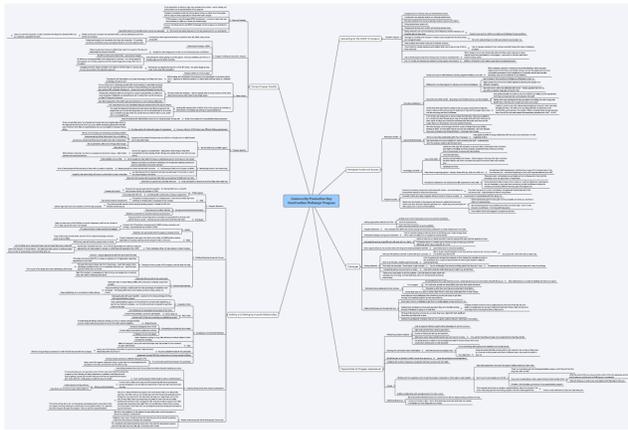
Program Participants Ripple Effects Map

Ctrl + Click image below to view ripple effects map:



Program Staff Ripple Effects Map

Ctrl + Click image below to view ripple effect map:



ⁱ Zunker, V.G. (1994). Using assessment results for career development (4th ed). In *Curriculum for Career Development Facilitators*. Rochester, MI: Oakland University.