City of Richmond

Report to Committee

To: Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Committee

Date: February 12, 2007

From: Kate Sparrow
Director, Recreation & Cultural Services

File: 07-1400-07.

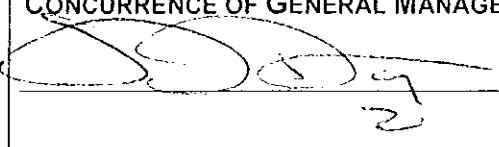Re: PRCS Volunteer Management Strategy

To Parks, Rec Culture - Feb. 27, 2007.

Staff Recommendation

1. That the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Volunteer Management Strategy and Implementation Plan (Appendix 1) be adopted; and

2. That staff be directed to work with Volunteer Richmond Information Services and other partners to implement the Strategy.

Kate Sparrow
Director, Recreation & Cultural Services
(4129)

Att. 1

FOR ORIGINATING DEPARTMENT USE ONLY		
ROUTED TO:	CONCURRENCE	CONCURRENCE OF GENERAL MANAGER
Olympic Business Office	Y ☑ N ☐	
Budgets	Y ☑ N ☐	
Human Resources	Y ☑ N ☐	
Information Technology	Y ☑ N ☐	
Emergency Programs	Y ☑ N ☐	
Parks	Y ☑ N ☐	
REVIEWED BY TAG YES ☑ NO ☐		REVIEWED BY CAO YES ☑ NO ☐

Staff Report

Origin

In August 2005, the City contracted Richmond Volunteer Information Services (VRIS) to lead a process to develop a PRCS Volunteer Management Strategy. The result was a Comprehensive Volunteer Management Strategy - Phase 1 Planning Report, which was submitted to the Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services Committee at its meeting on June 27th 2006. At this meeting, the following resolution was approved:

(1) That the Comprehensive Volunteer Management Strategy – Phase 1 Planning Report be received.
(2) That staff be directed:
    a. to seek feedback on the Strategy and seek input into the implementation plan from key stakeholders;
    b. to prepare an implementation action plan for the Volunteer Management Strategy;
    c. to continue to work with Volunteer Richmond Information Services (VRIS) and to define their role in the implementation of the Volunteer Management Strategy;
    d. to prepare alternatives for the provision of staff resources to implement and coordinate ongoing volunteer management services, for the 2007 City budget process; and
    e. to report back to Council through the Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services Committee.

In June 2006, Richmond City Council adopted the Parks Recreation and Cultural Services Master Plan and the following recommendation:

Recommendation 3.3
Support the development of a comprehensive volunteer strategy and increase the city's investment in volunteer management.

The purpose of this report is to seek Council adoption of the PRCS Volunteer Management Strategy & Implementation Plan. (Attachment 1)

Analysis

One of the most important areas of need emerging from the Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services Master Plan process was for more effective, efficient and creative programs for PRCS and community organisations utilising volunteers.

The Parks Recreation and Cultural Services Department has estimated the number of volunteers leading and supporting the city's parks recreation and cultural services (2005) to be 8386 volunteers on boards and committees, program and special event volunteers.

Stakeholder Consultation

Staff undertook consultation in Fall 2006, contacting 25 stakeholder organisations involved in PRCS delivery in Richmond. Consultation focussed on providing feedback on the Strategy and identifying priority areas for implementation, which areas were best suited to being centralised, and what role could be played by individual stakeholder organisations.

The results of the stakeholder consultation confirmed the findings of the Phase 1 report. There was:

- strong support for the Strategy, with a desire to have it implemented as soon as possible;
- use of technology, and in particular having a centralised database system, was viewed as the cornerstone of the volunteer management system;
- the need for a full-time Volunteer Coordinator to manage and oversee the program;
- the need for the City of Richmond to form a task force to oversee implementation.
- successful implementation of the Strategy was dependent on a person or organisation taking the lead, with accountability established and clarified;
- need for coordinated training, wider promotion of benefits of volunteering in parks, recreation and cultural services to the community;
- need for centralized implementation including volunteer promotion activities; standardized recruitment and screening; management of a centralised database; creation of standardised forms, standards and policies; development of annual training plans; detailed job descriptions; along with centralised administration.
- need for increased recognition and the need for consistent tracking of volunteer hours.

As outlined in the Phase 1 Report, it was confirmed that while there is a need to centralize some functions, there are also key functions that will be most appropriately dealt with at the local level.

Implementation Action Plan

With the stakeholder feedback building on strategic directions identified during the Phase 1 work, an Implementation Plan has been developed which aims to minimize existing inefficiencies and build a system that utilizes resources effectively and maximizes the potential of volunteers. A series of actions have been developed that relate to five key goals:

- to manage volunteers through a technology-based Volunteer Management System (likely a technology-based system)
- to work together with other organizations across Richmond to achieve a synergy and sharing of process, training, tools, costs and volunteers
- to work in conjunction with other organizations to assist them in building their own capacity to recruit and manage volunteers, without duplicating efforts, but by building a seamless system
- to raise the profile of volunteers in the community through enhancing recognition programs
- to develop consistent procedures and standards by centralizing certain activities such as screening, risk management, orientation, evaluation and recognition

Technology-based volunteer management system
A principal action coming out of the strategy is the implementation of a PRCS technology-based volunteer management system that supports and manages volunteers throughout the full 360^0 cycle of volunteer involvement. A Request for Information (RFI) will be put to the market to determine what systems are available followed by a Request for Proposal to purchase a system. PRCS has worked with IT, with input from VRIS to define the functions required.

In January 2007, VRIS launched *Volunteer Richmond!*, a 'volunteer opportunities' tool developed by the Volunteers Now division of 2010 Legacies Now. It is essentially a recruitment-matching tool, which is designed to connect volunteers to opportunities in Richmond.

The intention is that the 'recruitment-matching' component of the PRCS volunteer management process would utilise the *Volunteer Richmond!* tool. PRCS will work with VRIS to ensure linkages between the proposed PRCS database and the *Volunteer Richmond!* tool are effective and streamlined.

It is important to note that the *Volunteer Richmond!* 'opportunities tool' is different than the PRCS database management of volunteers. The former is managed and run by VRIS, the latter would rest with the City of Richmond.

Staffing Resources
PRCS has received a clear message from partners and stakeholders that quick and effective implementation of the Volunteer Management strategy is needed. A key part of achieving this is the creation of a PRCS Volunteer Coordinator as soon as possible.

The position would have overall responsibility for implementing the 360 degree volunteer management system, along with liaising with VRIS, partners and other stakeholders. A key role would be to provide leadership to PRCS staff who work with volunteers organizations as well as city volunteers.

The City currently has one other position with significant volunteer management responsibilities (Emergency Social Services/Volunteer Management Coordinator), created in 2003. At that time, it was envisioned that this position would develop in three phases: implement an Emergency Social Services Plan (phase 1); develop a volunteer management pilot program for the Community Safety Department (phase 2); evaluate that pilot program and if successful, work collaboratively with other departments to develop a corporate model (phase 3).

The ESS Volunteer Program has evolved over the last four years from providing volunteer management functions (recruitment, training, and active supervision) to developing and enhancing the ESS program. The ESS program for volunteers has shifted focus from a primarily reactive approach to proactively engaging volunteers to take an active role in the ESS program. This change has meant that the ESS/Volunteer Management Coordinator position now has a wide range of responsibilities, including developing key aspects of the City's Emergency Management program to ensure compliance with provincial mandates. The position therefore has planning, operating and response actions related to responding to emergency situations.

Volunteer management is only one aspect of the position. Given that the position has now expanded its role, there is no capacity for taking on a city-wide volunteer coordinator role, as originally envisioned.

PRCS has also had discussions with the Richmond Olympic Business Office and regarding volunteer management needs. ROBO will be recruiting a large number of volunteers that will ultimately create a long-term volunteer legacy, particularly in the area of event volunteers.

The PRCS Volunteer Coordinator would collaborate with the VRIS, ESS/Volunteer Management Coordinator, ROBO and other departments that have volunteer needs to develop the parameters for the technology-based volunteer management system, develop a common set of policies and procedures for recruitment, screening, placement, service standards and some non-site specific components of the volunteer manual. This would ensure consistent procedures and standards across departments.

The PRCS Volunteer Coordinator position is critical to the successful implementation of the Volunteer Management Strategy.

Collaboration with Volunteer Richmond Information Services (VRIS)
Staff has continued to work with VRIS to finalise the Strategy and to develop an Implementation Plan. The key driver in developing the Implementation Plan has been the desire to streamline and standardise volunteer management processes and to minimise duplication. PRCS has worked closely with VRIS to ensure this.

In implementing the strategy, it is anticipated that in addition to the core services they provide in the community, there will be a number of opportunities for VRIS to provide support on a contract basis (funded from the PRCS operating budget), such as:
- consultation support for 360^0 volunteer data management system
- development of annual training plan and delivery of initial staff training and 'train-the-trainer' programs.
- development of on-line resource library and volunteer management 'resource kit' in consultation with PRCS.
- development of consistent systems and standards for volunteer management in consultation with PRCS.
- assist in development of volunteer job descriptions.
- assist in developing measures to increase volunteer recognition.
- continued connection and liaison with community partners involved in the City's volunteer management system (through involvement in a proposed City/partner task team).
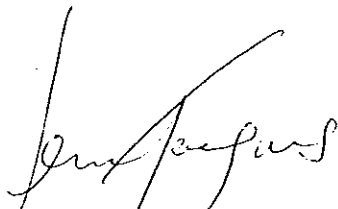
Financial Impact

There are two primary implementation actions that require funding:
- Software for implementing technology-based volunteer management system – provision of $59,800 was approved in 2006. .
- PRCS Volunteer Coordinator position –2007 additional level request ($69,620 including benefits) .
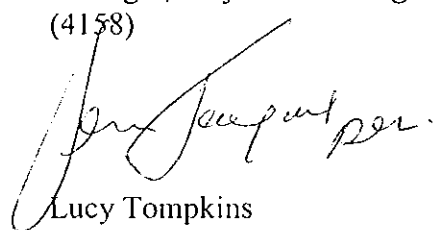
Conclusion

The benefits and successful outcomes from implementing the PRCS Volunteer Management Strategy will be significant. The greatest impact will come from an integrated and consistent approach to volunteer management across the full spectrum of organisations and agencies involved in the delivery of PRCS programs in Richmond.

Implementing this position means more efficient use of resources, better retention of volunteers, and more accurate measurement tools. For partners, it means greater access to qualified volunteers and better use of resources. For the volunteers, it means more recognition and appreciation, easier access to areas of interest, and more incentive to stay involved.

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VRJ:lt

Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services Volunteer Management Strategy

Building the Volunteer Spirit!   *2007-2012*

RICHMOND
Better in *Every* Way

Volunteers don't get paid, not because they're worthless, but because they're priceless.
~Author Unknown

*How far that little candle throws his beams!
So shines a good deed in a weary world.*
~William Shakespeare

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Consider this vision of Richmond: *"the most appealing, liveable and well-managed community in Canada".* How does one achieve that vision? With spirit, ingenuity, dedication, civic pride... and people. People who give and dedicate their time to the cause. People who are focused and want to be contributors to the common good of society. It is these people who are the driving force behind creating that vision.

Richmond's Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services (PRCS) recognizes the need to foster one of the most important resources we have in our community: our volunteers. We can do that with the proper management and necessary tools in place.

From the PRCS Master Plan for 2005 – 2015, a critical need emerged: to develop more effective, efficient and creative programs for volunteers, as well as for the agencies who use volunteers. The strategies contained in this document were developed collaboratively with Volunteer Richmond Information Services (VRIS). There are specific actions to help direct PRCS in working with partner organizations to achieve clear goals that enhance the volunteer program.

Other contributors and stakeholders in the creation of these strategies were:

- a 17-member Volunteer Management Stakeholder Committee
- organisations who utilise volunteers in their delivery of parks, recreation and cultural services and programs to the community

From this collaborative effort, the following vision was created:

Richmond's Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services, connects people with volunteer opportunities, leads and sustains a strong volunteer spirit.

Currently, the contribution that volunteers make towards PCRS is clearly recognised and valued. However, efforts are fragmented, often duplicated and varied in terms of levels of service in volunteer recruitment and management across various agencies. With an aim to minimize these inefficiencies and build a system that utilizes resources effectively and maximizes their potential, the following strategies have been developed by the team:

- **manage volunteers through a technology-based Volunteer Management System (likely web-based)**
- **work together with other organizations across Richmond to achieve a synergy and sharing of process, training, tools, costs and volunteers**
- **work in conjunction with other organizations to assist them in building their own capacity to recruit and manage volunteers, without duplicating efforts, but building an integrated system**
- **raise the profile of volunteers in the community through enhancing recognition programs**
- **develop consistent procedures and standards by centralizing certain activities such as screening, risk management, orientation, evaluation and recognition**

Another key action is to create a PRCS Volunteer Coordinator position. This individual would be responsible for implementing the above-mentioned strategies, and work closely with other City Departments, VRIS and PRCS partners.

The benefits and successful outcomes from these strategies will be significant. The greatest impact would come from an integrated and consistent approach to volunteer management across the full spectrum of organisations and agencies involved in the delivery of PRCS programs in Richmond.

For the PRCS Department, it means more efficient use of resources, better retention of volunteers, and more accurate measurement tools, along with resulting cost savings. For partners, it means greater access to qualified volunteers and better use of resources. For the volunteers, it means more recognition and appreciation, easier access to areas of interest, and more incentive to stay involved.

Attracting volunteers is one thing. Managing and retaining them is quite another. With these specific and measurable strategies in place, Richmond's Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services will effectively connect people with volunteer opportunities, while leading and sustaining a strong volunteer spirit.

In turn, we will be doing our part to make Richmond a more appealing, liveable and well-managed community. For volunteers, community organisations, City of Richmond staff, and residents alike that's a vision we all wish to achieve.

1   INTRODUCTION

1.1   Community Involvement and Volunteering

Volunteering is the most fundamental act of citizenship and philanthropy in society. It is an extension of being a good neighbour: it moves citizens from the front porch into the neighbourhood and it transforms a collection of houses into a community. Volunteers participate as board and committee members, as advocates, as fundraisers and as providers of numerous direct services.

Volunteering is one of the primary contributors to building a strong community. It fosters civic responsibility, participation and involvement. In a nutshell, community growth and development relies on citizenship and volunteer engagement.

1.2   Why develop a PRCS Volunteer Management Strategy?

One of the guiding principles endorsed by Richmond City Council in the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Master plan 2005-2015 (the 'PRCS Master plan') is *continuing community involvement in all aspects of the parks, recreation and cultural services system.* Volunteering is a key part of community involvement.

In the PRCS Master plan, the City of Richmond gave a commitment to work with the community to develop a Volunteer Management Strategy to ensure meaningful and varied opportunities for volunteers, and to strengthen the volunteer system in the community. This Strategy is the outcome of that commitment.

Volunteers are no longer a 'value-added' component of how PRCS delivers its services to the community. The City of Richmond relies on volunteers and not-for-profit organisations as an integral part in the provision of services and programs to the community. A PRCS Volunteer Management Strategy is needed for the following reasons:

- A strong volunteer system is vital to the delivery of parks, recreation and cultural services in Richmond and the City plays a key role in ensuring the health of the system;
- Strong, healthy community organisations have increased capacity to contribute to the delivery of the PRCS services through volunteering.
- To establish partnerships that build volunteerism and assist with capacity development so programs, services and leaders can better sustain volunteer effort.

At the core of this strategy, is a recognition of the importance of working closely with PRCS's partners and stakeholder organisations to enhance their volunteer program. This organisational strengthening comprises many parts: providing organisations with a volunteer management system to manage and improve all aspects of a volunteer's involvement from initial recruitment onwards, development of clear opportunities for organisations to effectively utilise volunteers, the creation of job descriptions and role definition for volunteers, and training plans for volunteers that specifically match the opportunities developed.

The Strategy provides specific actions on how the City can work with its partner organisations to achieve clear goals to enhance their volunteer program. Two key actions are:

• Creation of a website and interactive volunteer management database to centralise and streamline volunteer management activities.

• Creation of a new City staff *Volunteer Coordinator* position to oversee implementation of the volunteer management system and to work closely with PRCS partner and stakeholder organisations to strengthen their capacity to attract, manage and retain volunteers.

1.3 Who was Involved in Developing the Strategy?

This Strategy has been developed by the City in partnership with Volunteer Richmond Information Services (VRIS). VRIS were contracted by the City to lead the initial phase of the strategy. Given their expertise in volunteer management, VRIS will continue to be involved in the implementation of the strategy.

Community input was obtained through:

• The 17 members of the Richmond Volunteer Management Steering Committee

• Over 25 stakeholder organizations that completed a Current Assessment survey

• 18 stakeholder groups consulted to solicit input on the implementation plan.

2   BACKGROUND

2.1   How volunteering contributes to PRCS Master plan outcomes

The PRCS Master plan focuses on three key outcome areas: To Live, To Connect, To Grow. The Master plan recognises and acknowledges the volunteer sector's valued role and contribution to achieving these three outcomes.

2.1.1 "To Live"

This Master plan outcome focuses on the basic physical, mental and spiritual needs of individuals and families who want to live healthy, happy lives. Many of the benefits associated with 'to live' outcomes are in the 'public good' realm and have a high priority for the City of Richmond.

Participation as a volunteer contributes significantly to 'to live' outcomes. Many volunteers are surprised at how much fun it can be to help others. Not every volunteer experience is the same, but by finding an opportunity that matches their interests, volunteers have a good chance of having fun while giving time. Volunteering can fulfil a sense of empathy and feel a connection to a 'cause' they feel strongly about. It can also instill a value of caring and giving.

There is evidence that volunteering can improve an individual's health, through increased confidence and a heightened sense of well-being. Many volunteers encounter a variety of new challenges when they begin giving time in their communities. Sharing new experiences with new people, they can learn new skills that can give them confidence to face challenges in other areas of their lives.

2.1.2 "To Connect"

This Master plan outcome relates to the needs of an individual or family to fit with their physical environment, with the people around them and with their community. Volunteering is about meeting new people and enjoying social interaction.

Family volunteering allows families to spend meaningful time together and enrich their collective experiences. It contributes to healthy family connections by offering opportunities that enhance a common interest. Children and youth who experience volunteering as part of their upbringing are more likely to continue volunteering as adults.

Volunteering contributes to the creation of a local community and sense of place. It brings people together who may otherwise not come across in their daily life. Richmond is ethnically diverse, and volunteering can help bring people of diverse cultural backgrounds together.

There is a clear relationship between having a strong volunteer sector and high quality of life, economic growth and prosperity.

~ Sport, the Volunteer Sector and Canadian Identity, 2006

Volunteering also enables people to meet 'likeminded individuals', through volunteering for a campaign or cause they believe in. Working together to bring about a change is a great way to bond with others and become part of a community that can stay in touch long after the volunteering work is done.

2.1.3 "To Grow"

This Master plan outcome addresses the needs an individual or family has to use discretionary fun and enjoyment and to enhance their skills beyond the basic levels. It includes the concepts of inspiring or enriching and lifelong learning.

Volunteering is no longer all about giving; it is also about receiving. As much as volunteers contribute to the community, they also have expectations about the experience. They want to learn, to be challenged and to be appreciated. They want to know that they are making a difference. They expect flexibility and to have input into planning.

As the community changes, so must the structure of volunteer opportunities and the strategies used for volunteer recruitment. Particular attention should be paid to developing opportunities and strategies for youth, older adults and families.

Today, one in five volunteers in Canada is under the age of 25 with 40 per cent volunteering in the areas of culture, sport and recreation. Many young people turn to community service as a way to develop work skills, establish work experience and prove their abilities.

For organizations that include young people in their volunteer base, the rewards are plentiful – for them, for their communities and for the volunteers. Young people bring a unique mix of passion and enthusiasm and a fresh and energetic perspective to their volunteer activities.

As the population matures, a great natural resource will become available for the voluntary sector: baby boomers will be in a position to give their time, skills and energy. They will augment and complement the substantial body of older adult volunteers. As they age, they can be expected to continue to seek flexible activities that challenge them and expand their intellectual and physical horizons.

This age segment is significantly different from its predecessors. Baby boomers are more demanding, seeking opportunities for growth and new and innovative use of their time. They are looking for interesting and meaningful experiences.

2.2 The economic contribution from volunteers

A Statistics Canada survey found that 12 million Canadians or 45% of the adult population volunteered in 2004. Their contributions totalled almost 2 billion hours, an amount equivalent to 1 million full-time jobs.

In comparison with volunteers in other Canadian provinces, BC residents contributed the most hours on average (199 hours per year). Over 1.5 million people in BC volunteered in 2004, representing 45% of the population. Calculating these hours at a minimum wage of $8/hour, volunteers contributed $2.39 billion to the economy in 2004.

An estimate of the contribution of volunteers to the City of Richmond's parks, recreation and cultural services in 2005 is estimated to be almost 366,571 hours, or $2.9 million.

Estimated Annual Value of Volunteers to the City of Richmond Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services (2005)

Board and Committees Volunteers		Program Volunteers		Special Event Volunteers	
Number of Volunteers	Average hours per year per volunteer	Number of Volunteers	Average hours per year per volunteer	Number of Volunteers	Average hours per year per volunteer
919	55 hours	3,594	75 hours	3,873	12 hours
50,545hrs x $8 = **$404,360**		269,550hrs x $8 = **$2.16m**		46,476hrs x $8 = **$371,808**	
Total volunteer contribution of 366,571 hours or $2.9 million					

Between 1997 and 2000, the overall rate of volunteering in Canada declined from 31% to 27%, and the average hours per volunteer increased from 149 to 162 hours. This means fewer volunteers are working harder; 25% of volunteers are responsible for 73% of hours, and a growing number of volunteers preferred to give money than time.

~ Caring Canadians, Involved Canadians

2.3 Where do people volunteer?

Volunteers are present in just about all sectors, but the 2004 Statistics Canada survey found that most volunteering is directed towards four types of organisations:

- Sports and recreation
- Social services
- Education and research
- Religion

There is also significant volunteering in health, development and housing, arts and culture, law and politics, environment and hospitals.

Sports and recreation was the most commonly cited organisation to volunteer with (with 11% of Canadians volunteering in this sector). In terms of hours, about one-fifth of all volunteer hours were contributed to sports and recreation (with an average of 122 hours per volunteer). Arts and culture organisations also receive significant contribution from volunteers. About 3% of all Canadians volunteer in this sector.

Canada-wide, the most common activities volunteers performed were:

- organising, supervising or coordinating activities or events (47% of all volunteers)
- fundraising (46%)
- sitting on a board or committee (36%)
- teaching, educating or mentoring (30%)

Canadians volunteer for over 161,000 voluntary organizations in areas as diverse as health care, social services, sports and recreation, arts and culture, and education.

~ Canadian Code for Volunteer Involvement

2.4   Trends in the Voluntary Sector

A number of trends in the volunteer sector are having an impact on municipalities across Canada that rely on volunteers to assist in their delivery of parks, recreation and cultural services. A summary of national volunteer trends[1] is provided below. Similar trends are evident in Richmond. For each trend, a description of the potential impacts on PRCS management of volunteers is provided.

Trend	Potential impact on PRCS management of volunteers
Much comes from few - although one in three Canadians volunteer, less than 10% do three quarters of the work.	The specific concern is the reliance on fewer volunteers. If the number of volunteers decreases, PRCS may face challenges in maintaining the expected level of service that is presently being augmented by the current volunteer base.
The new volunteer - offers less time; more are young, new Canadians, seniors and persons with disabilities. • More young people volunteer to gain work-related skills. • More seniors who travel or have multiple activities have less time available for volunteering. • More new Canadians volunteer to develop work experience and practice language skills. • More persons with disabilities view volunteering as a meaningful way to participate in community life.	Seniors have traditionally been an excellent volunteer resource. With the 'boomer' age group beginning to retire, there will be significantly more seniors in Richmond (one third of the City's population in 2015 is projected to be 55+) . However, the 'new retirees', who are often in excellent health and with financial resources, may not necessarily want to be tied down to traditional volunteer roles.
Meaningful volunteerism – people are looking for meaningful opportunities to get involved. Volunteers are now looking for organized programs offering learning opportunities for the labour market.	This trend relates particularly to the youth and senior 'boomer-age' demographic groups. These key volunteers will be lost to PRCS if meaningful and appropriate volunteer opportunities are not provided.
Targeted volunteer job design - Volunteer task design can be the best defence for changing volunteer demographics and fluctuations in funding.	With no PRCS-wide volunteer management guidelines, PRCS staff and partner organisations are often recruiting volunteers without the 'big picture' in mind. Recruitment is often 'reactive' to people walking up to the front desk in a facility and asking whether they can volunteer, and the response being a scramble to find something for them.
Mandatory volunteering - mandatory volunteer programs through workforce, community service order, or school-mandated community work have created a new category of volunteers sometimes called "voluntolds".	This trend creates both a challenge and an opportunity for PRCS. The challenge is in finding appropriate volunteer opportunities for students, without staff feeling overwhelmed by short-notice applications. The opportunity is that there is a potentially untapped source of volunteers, which if targeted through appropriate marketing, could significantly strengthen the PRCS system.

[1] Summary of trend information presented to the Richmond Volunteer Management Steering Committee by Dave Baspaly on November 5, 2005. Also draws on Understanding Canadian Volunteers using the National Survey of Giving, Volunteering and Participation to build your volunteer programs, 2004 report by Canadian Centre for Philanthropy; and Municipal Toolkit: Practical strategies to enhance municipal support for your volunteer program, 2006 document prepared for Ontario Network, Canada Volunteerism Initiative.

Trend	Potential impact on PRCS management of volunteers
Volunteering by contract – the changing volunteer environment is redefining volunteer commitment as a negotiated and mutually beneficial arrangement, rather than a one-way sacrifice of time by the volunteer.	Potential volunteers now have clear expectations of how they want to spend their time volunteering. With the main barrier to volunteering being a lack of time, there is a need for a well-organised volunteer management program to successfully recruit and retain volunteers.
Risk management - putting the right volunteer in the right situation. This is a result of litigation. It is about managing people to gain trust.	To minimise litigation risks to the City, risk management policies need to be put in place that clearly outlines the steps to screening and supervising volunteers.
Adopting corporate practices - The voluntary sector has responded to the changing environment by adopting corporate and public sector management practices including (i) standards, codes of conduct; (ii) accountability and transparency measures around program administration; (iii) demand for evaluation, outcomes and performance measurement.	The Canadian Code of Volunteer Involvement outlines a range of best practices. The adoption of best practices into the PRCS Volunteer Strategy would improve the effectiveness of the strategy.
Professional volunteer management – Positions responsible for volunteer resources are working toward establishing an equal footing with other professionals in the voluntary sector.	The implication for PRCS is that a designated position should be created with a specific responsibility for volunteers, and that the position should be on par with other City positions with similar responsibilities. A PRCS Volunteer Coordinator would need to work with VRIS to utilize their expertise and resources where possible, and to ensure that the PRCS system is complementary to the activities VRIS is doing in the broader community.
Awareness of Board Governance - Volunteer Boards must respond to the challenge of acting as both supervisors and strategic planners. Understanding the difference between operations and governance (setting goals and policies). The challenge is ensuring governance really knows what the operation is doing.	Strong, healthy community organisations have increased capacity to contribute to the delivery of PRCS services through volunteering. Institutional strengthening, through training, is necessary to ensure strong board governance.
Volunteer growth and development - the pro-active response to the declining numbers of volunteers. By offering opportunities for training and growth, managers of volunteer resources can recruit and engage potential volunteers while retaining current participants.	A PRCS Volunteer Strategy needs to include ways to develop volunteers. A strategic direction focussed on retaining and developing volunteers will add strength to the program.

2.5 Best Practices in Volunteer Management Systems

The Richmond Volunteer Management Steering Committee carried out research to identify leading-edge volunteer management tools and practices that could be adopted for this strategy. Some of the key findings were:

- Comprehensive volunteer management system that included the full 360° cycle of volunteer management components: recruiting/matching, screening, interviewing, placement, orientation/training, support, evaluation, retention, recognition/appreciation.
- Online and technology-based registration system that could be updated regularly by the volunteer applicants.
- Dynamic systems that could notify volunteers of opportunities with an email notice.
- Volunteer evaluation systems that include self-evaluation tool and exit interview.
- Group interview and screening practices.
- Examples of volunteer hours tracking tools.
- Community-wide volunteer recognition events.
- Volunteer risk management assessment tools.
- Volunteer orientation and procedure manuals.

360° Volunteer Management

Retention — Recruitment/Matching — Screening/Interviewing — Placement — Orientation/Training — Support — Evalution — Recognition/Appreciation

Volunteer involvement is based on relationships. It creates opportunities for voluntary organizations to accomplish goals by engaging and involving volunteers, and it allows volunteers an opportunity to grow.

~ Canadian Code for Volunteer Involvement

There are many excellent websites available to obtain information on all the volunteer management cycle components. In Richmond, PRCS's staff are most familiar with VRIS and govolunteer.ca. In terms of municipal websites, the City of Calgary and the City of Bellevue provide good starting points. Throughout Canada, there are many outstanding technology-based resources. The enVision.ca site out of Newfoundland is leading-edge, doing a good job of providing information resources and connecting volunteers with opportunities. The new Legacies Now VolWeb.ca site provides an excellent way to link with event volunteer opportunities in BC.

Some best practice examples of volunteer management systems in Richmond community are:

- VRIS & Richmond Health Services - Volunteer Management Collaborative (VMC) package with tools, processes and forms including self evaluation tool. VMC - Volunteer for Health Information Meeting package.
- VRIS – Volunteers are Stars – Gala Dinner and Awards.
- Richmond Museum and Heritage Services – Volunteer Programs Orientation Manual for Volunteers, Staff Procedures Manual, Risk Identification Checklist and management system templates.
- Richmond Nature Park Volunteer Conduct Manual and School Program Volunteer Job Description.
- Heart and Stroke Foundation – Keep the Beat – Volunteer Program.
- Richmond Therapeutic Equestrian Society – Volunteer Manual.
- Developmentally Challenged Youth Basketball Association Volunteer Opportunity info.
- S.U.C.C.E.S.S. registration form and volunteer services record card.
- Vancouver Coastal Health – Criminal Record Check Letter Template.
- Disability Resource Centre – Volunteer Registration System.

3   WHAT IS THE CURRENT SITUATION?

3.1   How is the City of Richmond involved with volunteers?

There are four main areas city-wide where the City is involved in recruiting and managing volunteers.

Advisory Groups

At the Council level, there are a variety of volunteer opportunities on Advisory Boards and Committees. These groups advise City Council and contribute to the decision making process in local government. At the department level, there are alos service committees that are formed to assist departments in planning and decision making.

Emergency Social Services (ESS)

ESS are services provided on a short-term basis (generally 72 hours) to residents to preserve the emotional and physical well being of those affected by an emergency or disaster. The City has an Emergency Management Office (with an ESS/Volunteer Coordinator) which implements an Emergency Management program to provide social services during emergency planning and ensure response measures are in place. Volunteers play a major role in delivering this, through involvement in various areas. ESS volunteers provide essential services at 'reception centres' during an emergency or disaster, provide educational session to groups, businesses, schools on emergency preparedness, and provide emotional support to people in need following a disaster.

Auxiliary Constable Program

The mandate of the Auxiliary Constable program is to strengthen community and police partnerships. It provides an opportunity for citizens to perform authorized activities that address the cause of and/or reduce the fear of crime and disorder. Auxiliary Constables are volunteers under the command of the Richmond RCMP. Their primary purpose is to participate in community policing service activities related to public safety and crime prevention. They are unarmed and perform duties under the direct supervision of a police officer or under the general supervision of the Detachment.

Volunteers are also involved in Block Watch (a community based crime prevention program) and Block Parent (safe refuge locations).

Delivery of PRCS programs and services

There are a range of volunteer opportunities working with the City and its partner organisations to deliver PRCS programs. The five primary areas are:

- Sitting on boards or committees. The various community associations, and recreation, sports and cultural organisations in Richmond are run by volunteers who sit on the governing boards and relevant committees.

Recreation and sport make up the biggest part of Canada's voluntary sector, and Canada's voluntary sector is the second largest in the world.

~ Cornerstones of Community

- Program volunteers. A significant number of volunteers work with City and partner staff to assist in the delivery of PRCS programs.
- Special events volunteers. Volunteers are a key component of organising and running a special event in the community (e.g. Play Day, Salmon Fest)
- Community sport volunteers. The delivery of sports programs in the City requires volunteers to be involved as coaches, assistants, referees, etc.
- Partners for Beautification volunteers. This program provides opportunities for community involvement in projects relating to civic beautification. Many volunteers contribute to the six adoption programs (Adopt-a-street, Adopt-a-garden, Adopt-a-tree, Graffiti removal, Adopt-a-park, and Environmentally Sensitive Area Adoption).

With the 2010 Winter Olympics approaching, and Richmond hosting the Long Track Speed Skating competition, a number of events and festivals are proposed by the City's Olympic Business Office in the lead up to and during the Games. Events will be held each February, at key milestone dates, for test events, as part of the Torch Relay, and during the games themselves. Volunteers will be an important and necessary part of these community events. The City's Richmond Olympic Business Office is working in partnership with VRIS, and is currently developing a Staff Engagement Strategy and a 2010 Volunteer Strategy. This PRCS Volunteer Management Strategy has been developed to integrate with those strategies, rather than duplicate any aspect of them, so as to supplement the City's needs.

The focus of this Volunteer Management Strategy is on volunteer opportunities and management provided in the delivery of parks, recreational and cultural services in Richmond.   However, it is important that the strategy is complementary, and does not duplicate, volunteer management in other the City's other areas of volunteer recruitment and management. Over time, it may be appropriate to expand this strategy to incorporate these other department's volunteer responsibilities.

3.2   The Role of Volunteer Richmond Information Services (VRIS)

The City has worked closely with VRIS in the development of this strategy. The City contracted VRIS to lead the initial phase of this strategy and to create and solicit input from the Steering Committee for this project.

VRIS is a non-profit, charitable organisation that aims to bring people and services together through providing information and encouraging volunteerism in the community. VRIS provides many services to increase the impact that volunteers have on the Richmond community. Their volunteer services include:

- **Volunteer Richmond!** a recently launched on-line "volunteer opportunities tool" for promoting specific volunteer opportunities throughout Richmond. This is primarily a matching tool, that allows a potential volunteer to identify organisations that have a specific volunteer opportunity. Once a volunteer opportunity is found, the individual is then directed to contact the organisation directly.

- A **Volunteer Centre** at Richmond Caring Place.

- **Workshops and training sessions.** VRIS offer a range of training opportunities for both volunteers and people who manage or supervise volunteers. Examples include: Volunteer Management Training series, Board Workshop series, Targeted Recruitment of Volunteers, and Discipline and Dismissal of Volunteers.

- An **annual recognition event** called "Volunteers are Stars" Awards. This event recognizes specific individuals or organizations, but also focus public attention on the broad spectrum of voluntary service and community participation that strengthens and sustains the Richmond community.

- A **resource library** offering community organizations access to information on volunteer and non-for-profit management issues. The library includes materials covering a wide range of topics, including volunteer recruitment, board development, volunteer recognition, and proposal writing.

- **Consultation services** for organisations wishing to recruit volunteers.

- A **Leadership Richmond** program designed to strengthen volunteering in Richmond. It incorporates four modules:

  - Youth Now – training young adults to serve as board members for non-profit organisations.

  - Third Age – helping volunteer organisations benefits from the skills and experience of adults 50+.

  - Enterprise Leadership – to promote corporate volunteering and the transfer of business skills to the public sector.

  - Community Leadership – to promote volunteering and build community capacity through volunteer management training, workshops and information services.

As discussed in Section 5, this PRCS strategy has been developed to be integrated with VRIS's volunteer services in Richmond.

3.3 How are volunteers currently managed in the PRC service area?

A survey of relevant organisations was undertaken in order to understand how volunteers are currently recruited and managed in Richmond's many organisations involved in the delivery of parks, recreation and cultural services. Twenty-five organisations involved in volunteer management in the PRC service area completed a survey to establish the current reality.

The current reality assessment focussed on eight key areas:

- Recruitment
- Matching and Referral
- Screening
- Data Management Systems

- Support and Supervision
- Training
- Evaluation
- Recognition

3.3.1 Current reality comments

Volunteer management is currently fragmented, with many individual organisations developing their own systems and management practices in isolation. There is little consistency given that there is no over-arching guidance from a single policy document.

General comments about current practices in volunteer management in Richmond are :

- There is a variation in how volunteer management operations are carried out in parks, recreation, and cultural services
- From an individual volunteer perspective, there is duplication around the volunteer management systems. A typical volunteer will have to fill out several different application forms, requires several different criminal record checks and may end up having similar types of basic training, e.g. risk management
- Staff and organizations are re-creating the wheel and developing systems in isolation
- Staff and organizations are in a reactive mode around providing volunteer opportunities, e.g. responding to high school CAPP hour requests.
- Similar volunteer management problems and challenges exist across centres or services around retention and succession planning.
- There are different forms, systems and processes being used.
- Organizations or operations do not have systems in place to track volunteer hours.
- If tracking systems are in place, hours across different volunteer systems are not tracked in a consistent way.
- Few operations have effective volunteer evaluation systems in place.
- Some organizations need to enhance their screening procedures.

- Even with good systems in place, recruitment results have not been very successful.
- Operations understand the components of a good volunteer management system but need more resources, people and time to set up these systems.
- Operations are doing a good job at in-organization recognition, but few standards are in place between operations around consistency in recognition methods. Often volunteer contributions are not recognized in a more public or broader community level.

The following table provides a summary of the current practice, along with needs and opportunities to streamline each of the eight areas of the 360 volunteer management cycle.

Table: Current Reality - Summary of Assessment

	Current Practices	Needs	Streamline Opportunities
Recruitment	Use of Web sites, word of mouth, VRIS, schools, govolunteer, written publications – flyers, brochures etc	Recruit more volunteers Recruit volunteers with specific skills To develop a recruitment strategy	Centralized and streamline database Centralized pool of volunteers Pool of volunteers for events
Match and Referral	Based on skill/experience, interest, geography, via job description	An easy to use data base to match A system with up to date record	Pool of screened volunteers Dedicated resources to conduct interviews
Screening Systems	Most do criminal record checks, interviews, resume and reference checks	To streamline screening process Support and streamline criminal record checks Effective ways to screen	One criminal record check for the whole city Consistent and clear city-wide screening policies and practices
Data Management	Most use excel spreadsheet, paper files, MS word or Bookit	A system to manage and track data One centralized volunteer database that would contain all data and report functions	Centralized database Standardized management templates
Support and Supervision	Direct supervision Training is provided	Existing systems work well To have consistent supervision standards More support and supervision	Supervision tools and templates
Training	Orientation sessions On site training Mentoring, Project based trainingManuals	Shared training More and wider variety of training Volunteer Management workshops	Shared training Fundamental training in general city procedures Common volunteer manual

	Current Practices	Needs	Streamline Opportunities
Evaluation	Nothing formal Observation Debriefing	To do evaluationsMore resources to support evaluationsCentralized forms and process	Consistent template for evaluationsSelf evaluation toolsEvaluation system linked to database
Recognition	Annual volunteer appreciation eventReference lettersFood, certificates, thank you cards, clothing, token gifts like movie passes	Regular, varied, cost effective methods of volunteer recognitionA system to track hours and links to recognition Recognition standards and consistency in practice.	Greater coordination of eventsBulk, centralized purchasing potential cost savingsRecognition standards and timeline

3.3.2 Current reality practices

Common current reality practices under each volunteer management component include:

Currently, most organizations are recruiting volunteers: • By word of mouth, • Via websites, • Through VRIS, • Through schools, universities, and • Via publications – newsletters, flyers, posters.	*Currently, most organizations match and refer volunteers now based on:* • Specific skills and experience, • Interests, • Community or geography, and • Enthusiasm and people skills.
Currently, most organization screen via: • Criminal record checks, • Interviews, and • Resumes/references.	*Currently, most organizations manage their volunteer data via:* • Excel spreadsheet, • Paper file, and • Limited use of software like VolunteerWorks.
Currently, most organizations supervise volunteers by: • Direct supervision, • Sign-in logs, and • Some have policy and procedure manuals.	*Currently, most organizations train volunteers via:* • Orientation sessions, • On-site training, and • Mentoring.
Currently many organizations do not have evaluation systems in place. Often, evaluations are: • Not done or there is no formal system, • Some organizations have self-evaluation systems, and • Most do post-event debriefing evaluations.	*Currently many organizations recognize their volunteers. Typical recognition activities include:* • Annual appreciation events, • Reference letters, • Food, • Thank-you cards and letters, and • Clothing or apparel

3.3.3 Volunteer management needs

Throughout the current reality collection process, key volunteer management needs were identified under each component area:

Recruitment Needs: • To increase exposure to volunteer opportunities, • To have a recruitment plan or targets, • To recruit volunteers with specific skills, and • To make it easy for volunteers to register and get involved, e.g. on-line registration.	*Screening Needs:* • To streamline the criminal record check process, including a system that alerts when criminal record check updates are needed, • To have a clear process, policy and procedure around screening, and • To improve screening around reliability.
Matching and Referral Needs: • A volunteer bank to match skills, and • Up-to-date volunteer data information.	*Volunteer Training Needs:* • Wider variety of training, • Regular schedule of upcoming workshops, • More training and training targeted at future needs like aging population, and • Language and cultural sensitivity training.
Data Management Needs: • To manage data, • To link data between sites, • To keep data up to date, • To track hours, • To have best practices around reference letters, and • To have a system that provides alerts at recognition milestones and upcoming evaluation sessions.	*Volunteer Supervision Needs:* • Consistent risk management standards including liability insurance, health and safety, etc. • Volunteer human resource policy • More support and time – team work support amongst volunteer supervisors, • Clear job descriptions, and • Consistent supervision standards.
Volunteer Evaluation Needs: • Resources to assist with evaluation process and • Evaluation standards and best practices.	*Volunteer Recognition Needs:* • To recognize people at the appropriate time – track hours, • To build into recognition a higher profile within the community, and • To recognize volunteer service more frequently and consistently.

4 STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS TO CLOSE THE GAP

4.1 Overall Vision for Volunteer Management in PRCS

In order to overcome the current fragmentation in volunteer recruitment and management within the PRC service area, a common vision is required that provides an overarching common goal to strive towards.

The following vision was developed by the Richmond Volunteer Management Steering Committee:

> *Richmond's parks, recreation and cultural services, connects people with volunteer opportunities, leads and sustains a strong volunteer spirit.*

Short version: *Connects, leads and sustains a strong volunteer spirit!*

4.2 Strategic Directions

To enable maximum and positive volunteer involvement from a broad range of individuals and diverse communities within Richmond's parks, recreation and cultural services, the strategy builds on five key strategic directions.

4.2.1 Managing PRCS volunteers through the full 360 cycle using a technology-based Volunteer Management System

PRCS would implement a volunteer management system that would include a city owned technology-based database, which would have links to both the Volunteer Richmond! web site and to other partner websites. The system would need to be coordinated, interactive, dynamic, seamless and secure. This key management tool would form the cornerstone of each community organisations volunteer plan.

A dedicated staff PRCS Volunteer Coordinator position would be required to oversee the implementation of the system, and to work closely with PRCS partner organisations and VRIS to develop a volunteer management structure and plans applicable to each organisation.

4.2.2 Working Together – Synergy

Throughout this process, many opportunities would arise as a result of working together and finding synergy through sharing resources. Along with PRCS, there are a multitude of organisations involved in providing parks, recreation and cultural opportunities in Richmond. These various organisations need to collaborate to streamline processes, share training, tools and templates, and share some of the costs associated with promotion and recognition. There are also

opportunities to share volunteers between organisations.

4.2.3 Organisation and Volunteer Capacity Building

The need to strengthen organisations involved in recruiting and managing volunteers to assist in their delivery of parks, recreation and cultural services is key to a healthy system. One of the primary roles of the PRCS Volunteer Coordinator would be to work with partner organisations to build their own capacity to recruit and manage volunteers. This would involved identifying a volunteer management structure appropriate to each organisation, along with an appropriately tailored volunteer plan. This may involve creating 'Come Volunteer with Us' pages on their websites, which identifies the range of volunteer positions potentially available in that organisation (information would include detailed job descriptions with associated responsibilities, skills requirements, the number of positions needed, and training available). To view current opportunities, a direct link to *Volunteer Richmond!* would be provided.

Equally important is the need to build community volunteer capacity, through training, evaluations, and a range of other measures.

4.2.4 Volunteer Profile and Value

Every volunteer needs to feel valued and to be contributing in a meaningful way. To address this, actions are needed around raising the profile of volunteers in the community through various way of increasing recognition.

4.2.5 Standards

Given the current fragmentation in volunteer management and the development of tools and processes in isolation, there is a need to develop consistent systems and standards (where appropriate). The key areas requiring consistency in policy and procedure include: screening, risk management, orientation, evaluation and recognition.

4.3 Centralised versus Site-Specific Volunteer Management Activities

It is recognised that there are certain volunteer management activities that would benefit from being streamlined into a centralised function. Activities suited for centralising include:

- Promotion and recruitment
- One-stop registration
- One-stop screening
- Group interviewing
- Shared training
- Coordinated, city-wide recognition.

Activities suited to be undertaken at a site specific location include:

- Place and schedule volunteer for specific position at site
- Site specific orientation and training
- On-site supervision
- Ongoing evaluation and feedback
- Site specific recognition
- Exit interviewing.

The overall purpose of centralizing some functions is to enable each community organisation to benefit from not 'reinventing-the-wheel' or having to duplicate procedures that can be developed centrally, while still retaining control over how they develop their own volunteer management structure and plan that is tailored to their specific needs.

4.4 Strategy Outcomes

The desired outcomes for the strategy are to:

- Have a comprehensive volunteer management program that includes an up-to-date database, an interactive website and meets the interests and needs of volunteers for support, training and recognition.
- Celebrates, recognizes and supports the fundamental role that volunteers play in the delivery of services and community building.
- Have meaningful and socially relevant volunteer opportunities that are appropriate for all age groups.
- Understand our community's diversity and the implications for our volunteer programs.

4.5 Success Indicators

A successful Volunteer Management Strategy will result in:

- New volunteers and more volunteers.
- Retention - volunteers coming back and staying involved.
- Multicultural and diverse volunteer involvement that reflected Richmond's diverse communities and demographics.
- Management systems that are coordinated, efficient and eliminated duplication.
- Increased resources for volunteer management.
- Centralized, electronic data management system in place.
- Growth and development of volunteers.
- Volunteer recognition is coordinated and supported across the community.
- Volunteer hours being accurately tracked at multiple sites.
- Recognition and support for volunteer coordinators in place.
- Other City of Richmond Divisions and Departments using the system.
- Being an icon (leader/best practice) for volunteer management.
- Other organizations wanting to copy the system.
- A sought-after volunteer management tool kit.

5   IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

The aim of this Implementation Plan is to identify a number of outcome-based and measurable actions that will lead to a more streamlined and coordinated approach to volunteer management within the parks, recreation and cultural services sector in Richmond.

The overall intention is to implement a range of measures that will lead and sustain a strong volunteer spirit in Richmond. The implementation of a 360 degree volunteer management process will enhance overall services to volunteers, the not-for-profit organisations that utilize volunteers, and the City of Richmond.

At present, this strategy and implementation plan are limited to improving management of volunteering in the PRCS sector. However, a longer term aim could be to broaden it out to other City departments, including Emergency Services and the volunteer needs associated with City events related to the 2010 Games.

Collaboration with VRIS

PRCS has worked collaboratively with VRIS to determine an implementation action plan to ensure that there is no duplication of services and that the City's volunteer management system is integrated with VRIS's services, and their volunteer opportunities tool (*Volunteer Richmond!*).

It is anticipated that VRIS will continue to provide input and support through the implementation stage which utilises their specialist volunteer knowledge. Primarily, their role would involve:

- consultation support for 360 volunteer data management system.
- development of annual training plan and delivery of initial staff training and 'train-the-trainer' programs.
- development of on-line resource library and volunteer management 'resource kit'.
- development of consistent systems and standards for volunteer management.
- assist in development of volunteer job descriptions.
- assist in developing measures to increase volunteer recognition.
- continued connection and liaison with community partners involved in the City's volunteer management system (through involvement in a proposed City/partner task team).

5.1 Goal #1 Implement a Technology-based Volunteer Management System

The aim of this goal is to implement a Coordinated, Interactive, Dynamic, Seamless and Secure Volunteer Management System.

Objectives

- To implement a technology-based 360 volunteer management system (i.e. a system that supports and manages volunteers throughout the various stages of their volunteering involvement: recruitment/matching, screening, interviewing, placement, orientation/training, support, evaluation, retention and appreciation).

- To have a 'one-stop' system in order to centralize some functions, including promotion and recruitment, registration, screening, shared training and community-wide recognition.

- To provide certain activities on a site-specific basis, such as placing and scheduling volunteers for specific positions, site-specific orientation and training, on-site supervision, ongoing evaluation and feedback, site specific recognition events, and exit interviews.

- To ensure the centralized one-stop system is well known and easy-to-use.

- To ensure the system is integrated with *Volunteer Richmond!* opportunities tool.

- To manage data through a centralized database system, with the ability to directly access and upload data from individual sites; keep data up-to-date; track hours; provide alerts at recognition milestones and upcoming evaluation sessions. A dynamic and interactive database system is vital.

- To ensure individual volunteer information remains confidential and secure to protect privacy.

- To ensure effective implementation of the strategy through a dedicated City (PRCS Volunteer Coordinator) employee who would work in partnership with VRIS and other stakeholders, to manage and oversee the program.

#	Action	Lead	Expected Outcome	Timeframe
1.1	City to develop a website as a one stop location for a PRCS volunteer management system in Richmond - develop and maintain website - consultation support from VRIS	City of Richmond	• Easy-to-use. • Increased citizen awareness of how to get involved in volunteering activities in Richmond. • Is integrated with existing systems (e.g. links to *Volunteer Richmond!*) • Recognises and links to community organisations. • Online registration system that can be updated regularly by the volunteer applicants. • Dynamic system that can notify volunteers of opportunities with an email notice. • Language options are provided. • Interactive. • Recognised as an icon (leader / best practice) for volunteer management. • Other organisations wanting to copy the system (a sought after volunteer management took kit).	Summer / Fall 2007
1.2	City to develop a central database to hold PRCS volunteer information - issue RFI and RFP - purchase database software, license, etc - implement system - consultation support from VRIS	City of Richmond	• A single, electronic database which links directly to the website (i.e. information on applicants registering is fed automatically into the database). • Volunteer hours are accurately tracked. • Specific skills are captured and searchable. • Evaluation times are flagged according to volunteer hours. • Reporting mechanisms are in place. • Secure site, with complete privacy of individual information. • Database is able to be expanded to incorporate volunteer information from other City Departments (e.g. ESS and RCMP).	Summer / Fall 2007
1.3	Develop On-line Resource Library	VRIS	• Training templates • Manuals • Standardised Forms (application, screening, evaluation) • Tools • Training Workshop schedule • Description of process and procedures, etc	Late 2007 / Early 2008

#	Action	Lead	Expected Outcome	Timeframe
1.4	Create Volunteer Coordinator position as dedicated PRCS Staff employee to: • oversee program • work with PRCS partner organisations	City of Richmond	• Key role is to work closely with PRCS partner organisations to establish tailored volunteer management structure and volunteer plan. • Volunteer coordinator oversees all aspects of the volunteer management system • Works closely with VRIS and other partners • Implements and updates the website and database management system • Maintains communication with volunteer service stakeholders • Links and liaises with other City department volunteer systems and services • Creates and maintains PRCS database of volunteer information • Develops and reviews policies and procedures • Coordinates and maintains volunteer time tracking systems, records and documentation • Supports volunteer capacity building and training • Supports, organises and implements volunteer recognition events and activities • Develops and maintains volunteer management budget • Provides leadership to staff who work with volunteers	Spring / Summer 2007
1.5	PRCS Volunteer Coordinator to work with City's Olympic Business Office and VRIS around volunteer opportunities for 2010 related events	City of Richmond	• Liaison with Richmond Olympic Business Office and VRIS results in development of a strategy for working with partners around Richmond 2010 volunteers. • Coordination with City of Richmond Major Events Strategy to increase participation of volunteers in Olympic related events.	2008 to Winter 2010

5.2   Goal #2   Working Together - Synergy

The aim of this goal is for organisations and agencies to work closely together and to share resources in the creation of an effective volunteer management system. It is recognised that significant opportunities exist from working together and sharing resources.

Objectives

- To establish and clarify the City's role as lead in the implementation of this strategy, while VRIS is recognized as key partner for their expertise in volunteer management.
- To identify opportunities where partnerships can be developed to create synergies in developing the volunteer management system.
- To share resources between organizations to ensure efficiencies in the development of resources and tools.
- To share costs where appropriate.
- To share volunteers.

#	Action	Lead	Expected Outcome	Timeframe
2.1	Create a City / partner task team	City of Richmond	• Task Team to comprise City of Richmond, VRIS, PRCS partner organisations and other stakeholders. • Establishment of a common goal. • Confirmation of City role in leading process and encouraging groups to utilise resources, and in providing consistent processes to move forward. • Clearly defined roles and responsibilities for each organisation involved in volunteer management, with dedicated resources attached to those responsibilities. • Organisations have a clear understanding of how they fit into the 'bigger picture' of the volunteer system. • Management systems are coordinated, efficient and eliminate duplication.	Summer / Fall 2007
2.2	Build partnerships to encourage participation	City of Richmond / VRIS	• Development of a communication plan to promote the benefits of participation to organisations. • Key partners identified and met with. • Criteria for involvement is established. • Broad range of community organisations participate in the volunteer management system and use its functions such as web recruiting, use of database, templates, etc.	Fall 2007 onwards

#	Action	Lead	Expected Outcome	Timeframe
2.3	Liaison with RCMP to streamline CRC process	VRIS / RCMP	• Streamlined and simplified Criminal Record Check process. • Only one CRC is required (see Action 5.1)	Late 2007 / early 2008
2.4	Encourage sharing of resources	City of Richmond / VRIS / community orgs	• Sharing learning around volunteer system design. • Sharing of training resources (e.g. instructors, and opening training up to staff from outside the organisation hosting the training session). • Sharing of promotional materials, research, tools and templates. Information is drawn from existing resource manuals and supervisory tools. • Supporting and complementing recognition events. • A Resource Toolkit is developed for each organisation (based on general package, while recognising that each group will be a little different).	Early 2008 onwards
2.5	Encourage cost sharing	City of Richmond / VRIS / community orgs	• Sharing cost of hosting recognition events • Bulk purchasing of recognition material e.g. cards, certificates • Sharing cost of promotion through joint advertising. • Increased resources for volunteer management.	Early 2008 onwards
2.6	Encourage sharing of volunteers	City of Richmond / VRIS / community orgs	• Organisations encourage their existing volunteers to consider volunteering in other areas, in addition to their current volunteering activities.	Early 2008 onwards

5.3 Goal #3 Organisation and Volunteer Capacity Building

The aim of this goal is to build strong, healthy community organisations so that they can contribute to the delivery of parks, recreation and cultural services through volunteering services; and to increase volunteer capacity through enhanced training, communication and feedback/ evaluation.

Objectives

•   To assist organisations to develop a volunteer structure and plan so that the full range of volunteer opportunities are understood and readily accessible.

•   To support strong and healthy community organisations through providing training aimed at institutional strengthening and increasing an organisation's ability to attract and supervise volunteers.

•   To determine educational and training needs of people who supervise volunteers.

•   To develop communication strategies between volunteer supervisors.

•   To create supervision tools to support training, communication and feedback.

•   To determine educational and training needs of volunteers. Training should be targeted to the needs of specific volunteer groups (e.g. training tailored to the aging 'boomer' volunteer).

•   To involve volunteers in training program development.

•   Do volunteer evaluation which includes a volunteer development plan that focuses on growth and improvement

•   To enable shared training and group training sessions, using trainers from within and between organisations.

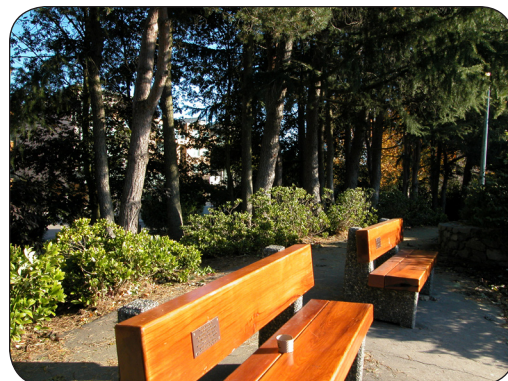| #	Action	Lead	Expected Outcome	Timeframe
3.1	City / partner task team to identify capacity building needs	City of Richmond	• Task Team identifies the needs and volunteer opportunities for organisations. • Task Team identifies capacity building needs. Assists in the design and implementation of training program.	Fall 2007
3.2	Training to strengthen community organisations in their volunteer services & management	VRIS	• Strong and healthy community organisations who have increased capacity to contribute to the delivery of parks, recreation and cultural services through volunteer services. • Community organisations trained in Effective Organisations.	Late 2007 / early 2008 onwards
3.3	Support the development of volunteer structure & plan for PRCS partner organisations	City of Richmond	• Volunteer Coordinator to work closely with each PRCS partner organisation - with support from VRIS, to develop a volunteer structure and plan that is relevant and tailored to that organisation.	2008 onwards

#	Action	Lead	Expected Outcome	Timeframe
3.4	Staff training in volunteer management	VRIS	• The educational and training needs of volunteer supervisors is established. • An annual training plan is developed for Volunteer Supervisors.	2008
3.5	Volunteer training	VRIS	• An umbrella annual training plan for volunteers is developed (recognising that this will require tailoring to specialist facilities). • Volunteers are involved in training program development (including exit surveys to determine volunteer needs). • Standardised training is provided for key 'across the board' areas (e.g. risk management) • Training is tailored to specific job descriptions and skills (i.e. a training matrix is developed for each job description). • Centralized promotion, scheduling and registration of training sessions. • Training is brought out to groups (rather than getting groups to attend off-site workshops) • Training is designed to address language and cultural sensitivity issues.	2008
3.6	Development of resources / manuals	VRIS	• Standardised training tools, resource manuals and supervisory tools are developed to support training, communication and feedback. (see Action 2.4 for sharing of existing material). • Development of standard templates for adaptation and use for site specific training.	Late 2007 / early 2008
3.7	Development of communication strategies for supervisors	City of Richmond	• A communication plan (which could include creation of a technology-based discussion forum; creation of a volunteer supervisors leadership team).	2008 onwards
3.8	Evaluation of Training	City of Richmond / VRIS	• Feedback and evaluation of training is undertaken annually. • Training plan to be revisited and reviewed annually. • Tracking of training undertaken and skills/ experience gained by individuals on the centralized database.	2008 onwards

5.4 Goal #4 Volunteer Profile and Value

The aim of this goal is to raise the profile of volunteers and their value within the broader community, in order to recruit and retain volunteers, and to increase volunteer satisfaction through meaningful experiences and appropriate recognition.

Objectives

- To increase awareness in the community of volunteer opportunities in PRCS services and programs.
- To coordinate and centralize promotion and recruitment, through providing an easy portal for volunteers to become involved and register.
- To recruit volunteers with specific skills and interests to match experience sought, and to keep up-to-date records on skills and experience. Part of achieving this is to create job descriptions.
- To recognise volunteers more frequently and consistently. This could involve re-defining existing events with categories and awards that focus on parks, recreation and culture volunteer contributions.
- To support and complement existing community recognition events and to provide more public recognition
- Increase focus and recognition of youth volunteer contributions

#	Action	Lead	Expected Outcome	Timeframe
4.1	Develop a marketing campaign to recruit volunteers.	City of Richmond	• Close collaboration with VRIS. • High awareness levels in community of new website (reflected in # of website hits). • Outreach literature developed and disseminated. Produced in several languages. • Schools and colleges aware of volunteer opportunities in Richmond's parks, recreation and cultural services. • High number of registered volunteers on database (new volunteers and more volunteers). • Volunteer involvement reflects Richmond's diverse communities and demographics. • Promotional activities are targeted to a range of groups (including current non-volunteers) through identifying 'layers of volunteer opportunities'. • Wide range of promotional techniques are used to promote and encourage participation (e.g. 'Volunteer kiosk' located in City Hall, Community Centres, Cultural Centre for potential volunteers to register). • A logo/identity is developed to connect the volunteer strategy implementation and the PRCS. • Volunteers are encouraged to look beyond their current volunteer roles and to consider other volunteer opportunities.	2008
4.2	Establish volunteer job descriptions	City of Richmond / VRIS	• Volunteer job descriptions written for variety of standard volunteering positions (based on current volunteer programs). • Meaningful and specific volunteer opportunities are created. • Job descriptions are available on web site. • Job descriptions include duties, responsibilities, skills required, time commitment, training provided, etc). • There is a 'mindset' change by staff and community organisations to proactively look for and provide volunteer opportunities, rather than react to requests.	Late 2007 early 2008

#	Action	Lead	Expected Outcome	Timeframe
4.3	Develop measures to increase recognition	City of Richmond / VRIS	• An annual volunteer appreciation event is held. • Higher retention rates (volunteer are coming back and staying involved). • Evaluation shows that volunteers feel valued. • Volunteer recognition is supported across the community • A wider number of ways are used to provide public recognition (e.g. City website has testimonial and a list of volunteers that meet milestones. Include a 'volunteer of the month'. • There is an increased focus and recognition of youth volunteer contributions. • Recognition 'goodies' have the branding logo for immediate recognition. • Recognition is incorporated into all meetings.	2007 and onward
4.4	Develop succession planning	City of Richmond	• Guidelines for mentoring and succession planning are developed • A 'Buddy system' is created for jobs where appropriate, to enable mentoring and learning. • Volunteer experiences and knowledge are recorded for future volunteers.	2008
4.5	Track the value of volunteer contribution to use as a means to increase profile	City of Richmond	• Number of volunteers and their hours are accurately reported as a measure of the contribution of volunteers to PRCS service delivery. • Track range of volunteer information (e.g. qualitative stories) • Recognition events are used to report this contribution. • Volunteers are empowered to lead and train.	Late 2007 / early 2008
4.6	Put volunteers needs first – Identifying the goals of the volunteers	City of Richmond	• Volunteers progress through the system to obtain goals • Individual Volunteer Plan template is developed and used to assist the volunteer attain their goals.	2008

5.5 Goal #5 Standards

The aim of this goal is to provide, where beneficial, consistent systems and procedures around screening, risk management, orientation, evaluation and recognition.

Objectives

- To develop a standard screening process.   This process would result in volunteers having one enhanced criminal record check that would apply to all volunteer locations for a specified time period.
- To develop consistent risk management standards. A consistent process that ensures the safety of both volunteers and clients is essential. A tool could be put in place and used across the system to assess the full range of risks within volunteer operations - including liability, health and safety, property, contractual, goodwill and financial.
- To develop basic orientation process for volunteers. Developing a basic orientation process that would be put in place at all sites is important to ensure quality of service.
- To develop evaluation standards and best practices. A commitment and policy to carry out volunteer evaluation is imperative.
- To develop a recognition framework. A recognition framework that would provide general standards for recognition timing and appropriateness could help PRCS organizations and operations with recognition events and create fairness and equity across the system. This is not intended to stifle creativity or depersonalize recognition activities, but instead to support them with some general guidelines.

#	Action	Lead	Expected Outcome	Timeframe
5.1	Develop standard Volunteer Screening process	VRIS	• A standard screening process would be in place. Volunteer would only require one enhanced criminal record check that would apply to all volunteer locations for a specified time period (e.g. 2-3 years). • The standard screening process would include key steps like criminal record check, screening interview, reference checks, suitability and reliability test, and ongoing performance reviews. • Process is accessible • Prerequisites are stated • 'Grandfathering" clause • Screen guide is developed • Clarity on who pays for CRC • Acknowledge each applicant • Create timeline for application process • Quality control for recruitment • Recognize difference between "legal" and "suitability" criteria • Clarity on who needs a CRC	Late 2007 / early 2008
5.2	Develop Risk Management tool to assess risks within volunteer operations	City of Richmond / VRIS	• Development of a tool for use across the system to assess the risks within volunteer operations (e.g. liability, health & safety, property, contractual, goodwill and financial). e.g. Richmond Museum risk identification checklist and assessment worksheet that could be adapted. • Protocol for record keeping • Confidentiality • Protocol for volunteers dealing with money, vulernable population, interaction with public • emergency response procedure	Early 2008

#	Action	Lead	Expected Outcome	Timeframe
5.3	Develop volunteer orientation process for all sites	VRIS	• Development of a basic orientation process at all sites, to include core pieces (e.g. emergency procedure, first aid, communication protocol, expectations). Site specific tailoring is required. E.g. Richmond Nature Park has a good orientation process that could be used as the model. • WHIMS • Include City overview (i.e. partnerships, city philosophy, Board philosophy, flow chart of key individuals, organization processes)	Early 2008
5.4	Develop evaluation tools and surveys	VRIS	• Development of a consistent evaluation process that is easy, fast and trackable. • Evaluation tools may consider volunteer self-assessment, on-going performance evaluation, 360-degree assessment, participant feedback. • Exit surveys are implemented (post-Event or at regular intervals or milestone hours). • Evaluation is measured against outcomes and success indicators. • Who is responsible for evaluations (i.e. Board or City staff) • Measure based on job descriptions • Create standard form with add-ons for certain departments	2008
5.5	Recognition	VRIS / City of Richmond	• Volunteer recognition is coordinated. • Guidelines on criteria for recognition have been developed (e.g. based on # of volunteer hours; evaluations, etc) • Guidelines on incentives have been developed. • Incentives differ by location (people may choose location based on this) • One time volunteer vs dedicated/long-term/skilled • Volunteer appreciation function • Each volunteer has a different motivation (i.e. free swim pass, love of the community, etc.) • Make recognition/incentives meaningful	2008