



CITY OF RICHMOND

REPORT TO COMMITTEE

TO: Community Services Committee
FROM: Kate Sparrow
Director, Recreation & Cultural Services
RE: **Recreation and Cultural Services and Richmond Committee on Disability
Working Philosophy**

DATE: February 23, 2001
FILE: -

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

That the following report be received for information purposes to clarify the philosophy of how the Recreation and Cultural Services Department and the Richmond Committee on Disability can work together to ensure recreation and cultural opportunities are available and accessible for people with disabilities.

K Sparrow

Kate Sparrow
Director, Recreation & Cultural Services

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CONCURRENCE OF GENERAL MANAGER

David H. Gelle

STAFF REPORT

ORIGIN

At the September 18, 2000 meeting of the General Purposes Committee, a report dated September 8, 2000, from the General Manager Urban Development (Attachment 1), regarding the Richmond Committee on Disability (RCD), was referred back to staff for meetings with the RCD regarding a number of issues. One of the areas of concern was with respect to Recreation programs for people with disabilities and the philosophy of how the city will work with the RCD to ensure programs for this special needs population are provided in Richmond.

ANALYSIS

Staff had a series of meetings with James Sullivan, Executive Director of the Disability Resource Centre (a project of the R.C.D.) to discuss and draft a working philosophy and to identify areas where steps can be taken to improve existing program opportunities.

Following these meetings, staff met with the R.C.D. Board to discuss the working philosophy that had been drafted for discussion.

This report outlines the areas that were identified as a working philosophy between the Recreation and Cultural Services Department and the R.C.D. Much of this work will be done through the Disability Resource Centre.

Recreation & Cultural Services Department and Richmond Committee on Disability Disability Resource Centre - Working Philosophy

The City works to ensure that all persons in special population groups are able to participate in the community to the fullest level of their capabilities. Special population groups will include people with physical and/or mental disabilities, people in poverty, and others who are at a disadvantage when trying to access services or participate in the community.

The City's philosophy for recreation services is to provide Integrated Recreation opportunities and provide accommodation where possible in order to make services accessible.

For example:

- volunteers to assist as program support.
- volunteers to assist as one-on-one support in programs.
- volunteers to assist as one-on-one support for individual activities.
- financial assistance for individuals is provided.
- some specialized programming where feasible within available resources.

When working in partnership with other agencies, the City will take a flexible approach to facilitating recreation opportunities.

The City will explore and seek new partnership opportunities that will help with non-traditional methods of providing service.

The City will seek input from parents, service groups, and others to identify needs and gaps in service provisions in the community.

The City works to break down barriers that prevent people with diverse backgrounds from participating in recreation activities and will develop strategies which try to address:

- physical accessibility
- transportation
- awareness - how information on programs is made available
- stereotypes - acceptability
- availability – adequacy of provision of services
- affordability
- accommodation – adaptation of service system
- language

The City will promote the inclusion of people with diverse backgrounds in recreation activities.

The City will market the Benefits of Recreation and the outcomes that are beneficial for persons in special population groups.

Through this process of consultation and discussion, we have identified some strategies that the Recreation and Cultural Services Department and the R.C.D. can be worked on together that will help to improve awareness and opportunity for people with disabilities. These include four areas that we will focus our attention on in the next year: Marketing, information sharing, general programs and volunteering.

Special Needs Programmer

The other area of concern for the R.C.D. was the Special Needs Programmer position. This position is currently an active competition and will be filled with an appropriate candidate following the interview process. This position will be responsible for developing, planning, and implementing diverse recreation programs for special population groups in the community including people with physical and/or mental disabilities, people in poverty, and others who are at a disadvantage when trying to access services or participate in the community.

The Richmond Committee on Disability concurred with the working philosophy as outline above.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

There is no financial impact.

CONCLUSION

This report will clarify the Recreation and Cultural Services Department philosophy that will be used when working with the Richmond Committee on Disability. By utilizing this philosophy, that is supported by the R.C.D., there is a clear understanding of how we can work together to ensure recreation and cultural opportunities are available and accessible for people with disabilities.



Sean Davies
Co-ordinator, Special Needs



CITY OF RICHMOND

REPORT TO COMMITTEE

TO: General Purposes Committee
FROM: David McLellan
General Manager, Urban Development
RE: **Richmond Committee on Disability**

DATE: September 8, 2000
FILE: 0100-20-RCDI1-01

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

That the Richmond Committee on Disability be requested to provide an annual report to City Council on their annual work program and the support needed from the City to accomplish mutually agreed goals.

David McLellan
General Manager, Urban Development

STAFF REPORT

ORIGIN

The Richmond Committee on Disability (RCD) made a presentation to General Purposes Committee on June 19, 2000 regarding a variety of concerns on programs and initiatives of both the City and the RCD. The matter was referred to staff for report back to Committee and prior to the writing of this report, an update was given by staff to RCD, which in turn led to a meeting to discuss the issues.

ANALYSIS

This report deals with the issues raised, item by item, as follows:

Universal Design Guidelines Bylaw

Staff are in the process of planning a "Build-Smart" Public Workshop in September. The Richmond Committee on Disability will be invited to attend, along with Urban Development Institute, developers and architects. Following the Workshop, our plan is to have a policy drafted for review by October.

It should also be noted that the RCD currently has a representative on the Design Panel to represent the needs of people with disabilities.

Parking Bylaw

The RCD proposes that the City adopt a bylaw to prevent parking in designated handicapped parking spaces on private property. The City's current bylaws allow an owner to manage his own parking supply with regulations up to and including towing (subject to appropriate notice). The City's current legal advice is that ticketing on private property in the manner proposed is not permitted under current legislation. In any event, the City barely has enough resources allocated to enforce parking regulations on public streets which are related to traffic and fire safety. A more detailed report on the City's parking program is forthcoming.

Audible Signal Devices

At the July 12, 2000 Council Meeting, the following recommendation was approved:

- (1) That the enhancement of the City's current audible traffic signals with a "pole locator" feature be introduced on a trial basis as part of the City's regular Traffic Signal Maintenance Program.
- (2) That staff continue to consult the Richmond Committee on Disability and the visually impaired community to monitor the performance and effectiveness of the enhanced audible signals and to identify further modifications if necessary.

The RCD has agreed that this issue is being managed to their satisfaction.

City Policies relating to people with disabilities

The RCD was provided with all of the Official Community Plan and other Council policies adopted over the years and will be reviewing these documents and may suggest revision to some of these at a later date.

Special Needs Programmer

The Recreation and Cultural Services Department has 2 positions which are dedicated to "Special Needs". Prior to filling the Programmer position, a review is underway to determine how to best deliver services to "diverse populations", which include people with disabilities, financially disadvantaged and culturally diverse citizens. Demands for services in all of these areas is increasing, therefore, it is important to look at the role staff play, the kinds of services we deliver and how we deliver those services. For example, staff have reviewed the process for issuing Access Cards and have allocated clerical support to this function so that the Special Needs Coordinator's time is utilized for more appropriate tasks.

Representatives of the RCD are of the view that this position should be utilized solely for the benefit of persons with physical disabilities.

Programs and funding for people with disabilities

The Recreation and Cultural Services Department provides support to a number of programs, such as the Carefree Preschool Program, Keen Kids, Camp Rock, Special Needs Swimming and Golf and Community Leisure Transportation Service. Our Special Needs Coordinator works with a number of groups to facilitate leisure opportunities for Special Populations. Based on city policy, the approach which has been adopted is to focus on integration into leisure programs whenever possible, as outlined in the seasonal Recreation and Cultural Guide.

City Grants are also provided to a variety of organizations providing programs and services to people with disabilities. It should be noted that over the past few years, there has been a shift towards providing a higher percentage of funding for Health and Social Services as opposed to community promotions. We believe this better supports the needs of people with disabilities.

The RCD proposes that \$200,000 be added to the City's operating budget for programs for people with disabilities. \$50,000 of this would be for the Disability Resource Centre, \$50,000 for the Richmond Therapeutic Equestrian Society and the balance to support existing programs (such as Special Olympics) and the development & operation of new Recreation & Sports Activities with emphasis on people who have physical disabilities.

The RCD have also proposed that out of the funds currently allocated for the RCD and RCSAC operations, the RCD now be allocated \$15,000. The have noted that the RCSAC will only require \$8,000 for the current year.

This budgetary matter can be considered in the context of Council's approval for additional levels budget in the coming year, however, staff is not convinced that these proposals are consistent with the operating model for recreation programming currently in use in the City, nor would staff necessarily concur that these are the highest priority areas without further study.

Council provide \$25,000 to RCD in lieu of space for the Disability Resource Centre

It is recommended that RCD continue to apply through the City Grants Program and Casino Grant for funding of this initiative.

Accessible Transit

A number of initiatives in this area are in progress:

1. Staff have submitted a community grant application to ICBC to fund a Brochure on Scooter Users. A decision by ICBC is expected soon. If the application is not successful, we will print the brochure using the minor capital budget.
2. Regarding accessible bus stops, staff have met with the RCD several times on this issue. The City has implemented all the bus stops requested by the RCD. Staff have requested advice on other priority locations so that we can address this through the next budget process. A new program for transit infrastructure improvement has been included in the city's budgeting process to deal with bus stop improvements and other minor road works required to facilitate transit movements.
3. RCD is also a member of the Advisory Committee for the 5 year Transit Plan. I believe in addition to the regular Advisory Committee meetings, staff have held separate meetings with the RCD to get specific input.
4. It should also be noted that the Community Leisure Transportation Service identifies citizens with special needs who wish to attend leisure programs within the highest priority classification

Consultation

Staff believe that the City has made every effort to address the needs of people with disabilities in Richmond through policies, programs and services as outlined above; however, it has been suggested to the RCD that we may want to consider a more formal process, similar to the approach Council takes with their own committees, whereby the RCD meet with Council on an annual basis to outline your work program and priorities for the upcoming year and to discuss how the city can support these priorities. While it may not be possible to accomplish all goals, it would provide a forum to discuss issues and provide council and staff with input on an annual basis.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

The RCD proposes that \$200,000 be allocated on an annual basis to bolster recreational and other programs to people with disabilities.

CONCLUSION

The City has allocated significant resources to support persons with disabilities, however, there is a lack of satisfaction with the RCD because of: (a) financial limits to the amount of support given, (b) a recreation program delivery model which limits direct City programming and (c) legislative limits to Council authority. A continuing dialogue is necessary to resolve these issues given the constraints of local government.

David McLellan
General Manager, Urban Development

DJM:cbm