



City of Richmond

Report to Committee

To: Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Committee
 Date: January 16, 2006 *to Parks, Rec & Culture - Feb 28, 2006*

From: Dave Semple
 Director of Parks Operations
 File: *03-1000-14-120*

Re: **Richmond Fruit Tree Sharing Project - South Dyke Community Garden and Terra Nova Rural Park**

Staff Recommendation

1. That the Richmond Fruit Tree Sharing Project agreement for use of a portion of land at the South Dyke Community Garden located at 13871 No. 3 Road be renewed for a further two year term commencing April 2006 to April 2008;
2. That staff be directed to initiate the public notification process for the City's intent to lease a portion of the Terra Nova Rural Park, and the South Dyke Community Garden to meet the Community Charter requirements for the lease of land; and
3. That upon completion of the public notification process staff be directed to develop an agreement with the Richmond Fruit Tree Sharing Project Society for use of a portion of land at Terra Nova Rural Park for a Community Sharing Farm.

[Signature]
 Dave Semple
 Director of Parks Operations
 (3350)

Att. 3

FOR ORIGINATING DIVISION USE ONLY					
ROUTED TO:		CONCURRENCE		CONCURRENCE OF GENERAL MANAGER	
Lands & Properties		Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	N <input type="checkbox"/>	<i>[Signature]</i>	
REVIEWED BY TAG		YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	REVIEWED BY CAO	
				YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>

Staff Report

Origin

In 2004 Council approved the use of a 1.4 acre parcel of land, adjacent to the existing South Dyke Community Garden, as the Community Sharing Farm site for a two-year period. The site is run by a non-profit organization, Richmond Fruit Tree Sharing Project Society (RFTSP) with the intent of growing food for low-income families and individuals in Richmond. The Society has been very successful and is requesting an extension to their agreement for another two year term.

In Fall of 2004, Council also approved the Terra Nova Rural Park Concept Plan. An integral component of the park is the concept of a Farm Centre that builds upon the agricultural heritage of the site. The Plan recognized the need for a community group such as the Richmond Fruit Tree Sharing Project Society (RFTSP) to work with the City to implement this concept. The RFTSP have now approached the City with a proposal to relocate and establish a new Community Sharing Farm in Terra Nova over the next two years.

The purpose of this report is to recommend that the City extend the existing agreement at the South Dyke for another 2 year period and that staff prepare a new agreement with the RFTSP for the establishment of a new Community Sharing Farm at Terra Nova as per the approved concept plan.

Analysis

Background

The Richmond Fruit Tree Sharing Project – Sharing Farm Society (RFTSP) was founded in Richmond in 2001. The founding members of the society, who are all gardeners from the City of Richmond No. 2 Road Community Garden, established the society with the intent to grow food for low-income families and individuals in Richmond. The Society began with a program of harvesting rows of surplus vegetables from the West Coast Seeds Demonstration Garden in Richmond as well as coordinating volunteers to pick fruit from Richmond property owner's fruit trees.

The Society entered into an agreement with the City in 2004 to use 1.4 acres of land at the South Dyke as a Community Sharing Farm site. In 2005 alone, the Society successfully harvested 12,428 pounds of fruit and vegetables using over 1370 volunteer hours. At Terra Nova, the RFTSP planted a 0.4 acre parcel in the community garden area and harvested another 1692 pounds of vegetables for the Food Bank.

In addition to the farming activities, the society was successful in securing operating funding from the United Way among other community sponsors. The society was also awarded awards by volunteer Richmond for Innovation, as well as Scotiabank for recognizing community spirit. A detailed summary of the RFTSP project accomplishments and program are detailed in Attachment 1.

South Dyke Community Farm Site

Staff have reviewed the proposal from the RFTSP to extend the existing agreement. The proposed use of growing food on the agricultural land is complementary to the Council approved community garden use at the site which is currently zoned Agricultural. Staff recommend that the agreement to use 1.4 acres of land at the South Dyke, 13871 No. 3 Road at \$10 per annum be renewed for a further two years commencing April 2006 to April 2008.

Terra Nova Rural Park Proposed Community Farm Site

In September of 2004, Council approved the Terra Nova Concept Plan with the following vision:

“To preserve the unique rural landscape character of Terra Nova North West Quadrant Park while providing a balance between agricultural heritage, wildlife conservation, and recreational uses.”

Included in the 63 acre site plan is the concept of a Farm Centre which would be a centralized area in the park where community based farming, community gardens, agricultural interpretation and education about sustainability could occur (Attachment 2). The intent is to allow community members, school groups, and a non-profit organization such as the Richmond Fruit Tree Sharing Project Society (RFTSP) to grow food for educational, individual and community benefits (Attachment 3).

In 2005, the community gardens from the No. 2 Road site were relocated into Terra Nova and expanded as per the Plan and the RFTSP used approximately 0.4 acre of land adjacent to the new community gardens to grow produce for the Richmond Food Bank. The public face of the gardens and the integration of this area into the park has been very successful.

The Society has now expressed a desire to shift their Community Sharing Farm operation from the South Dyke to Terra Nova over the next two years to be part of the future Farm Centre and have prepared a proposal for expanding their food production to 2.5 acres of land over 5 years. This is in keeping with the overall Park Plan and vision.

Staff recommends preparing and entering into an agreement for \$10 per annum with the Richmond Fruit Tree Sharing Project Society for use of 2.5 acres as an educational Community Sharing Farm. Before the City could enter into such a lease agreement at Terra Nova, Section 26 of the Community Charter requires that Council publish notice of the proposed disposition of land through public notice in the local newspapers.

The notice must include the following:

- (a) a description of the land or improvements;
- (b) the person or public authority that is to acquire the property under the proposed disposition;
- (c) the nature and if applicable, the term of the proposed disposition;
- (d) the consideration to be received by the municipality for the disposition.

Upon completion of the required Community Charter notification process, staff would prepare a formal lease agreement with the RFTSP for approval by Council.

Impacts

There are no financial impacts at this time.

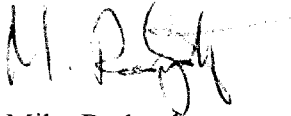
Conclusion

Staff recommend that the existing Richmond Fruit Tree Sharing Project Society (RFTSP) agreement to maintain a Community Sharing Farm at the South Dyke be approved for another two year extension commencing April 2006 to April 2008. The RFTSP has approached the City with the proposal to move the Community Sharing Farm to Terra Nova Rural Park over the next two years. This is an opportunity to implement an integral component of the Terra Nova Rural Park Concept Plan and vision of preserving

January 16, 2006

- 4 -

the agricultural heritage of the site and providing educational and interpretation opportunities for park users. Staff recommends proceeding with the preparation of an agreement with the Richmond Fruit Tree Sharing Farm Project Society upon completion of the appropriate Community Charter processes.

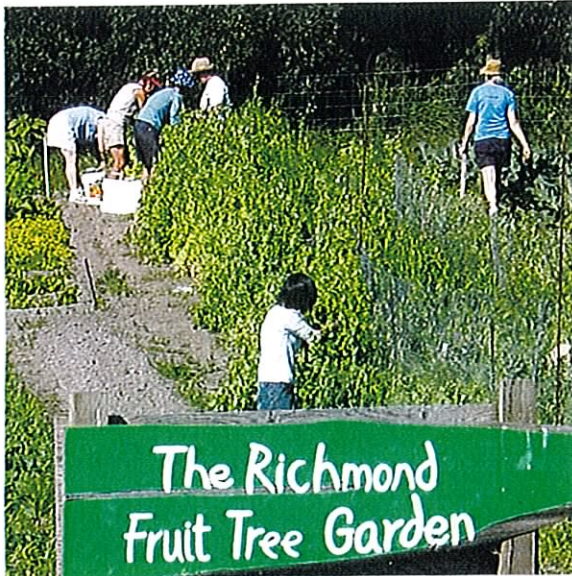
A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "M. Redpath". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Mike Redpath
Manager, Parks - Programs, Planning & Design
(1275)

MER:mer

Richmond Fruit Tree Sharing Project Strategic Planning Workshop

29 October 2005



Executive Summary

Facilitator: Jim Ellis

Report writer: Paige Dampier

December 2005

**Richmond Fruit Tree Sharing Project
Strategic Planning Workshop 2005**

Acknowledgements

The workshop leadership team of the RFTSP's Board of Directors - Kirsten Coe, Diane Eward, Mary Gazetas, Joan Glossop, Ann Mackie and Jane Wheeler would like to graciously thank the participants who kindly donated their time to attend:

Brenda Crockett
Diane Falvey
Dorrit Iliot
Sherri Maunsell
Heather Pritchard

Rachel Brock
Margaret Hewlett
Ian Lai
Jiff Price
Dave Semple

Workshop Facilitator, Jim Ellis and Paige Dampier
who transcribed and wrote the Workshop Reports

•
The Strategic Planning Workshop was made
possible through the generous assistance from:

Vancity Capacity Building Grant

•
**Food Security: ORGANIZING FOR CHANGE
SFU Continuing Studies - Hatching Change Project**

•
**City of Richmond
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the use of Debeck House**

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Executive Summary

Introduction

On 29 October 2005 the Richmond Fruit Tree Sharing Project (RFTSP) gathered 18 participants to a strategic planning session to focus on the future of the RFTSP.

As was easily discernable from the discussions at that event, there is yet – with five seasons of hard work under their belts – an abundance of enthusiasm among directors and volunteers for growing food locally and distributing fresh, nutritious food to people in need.

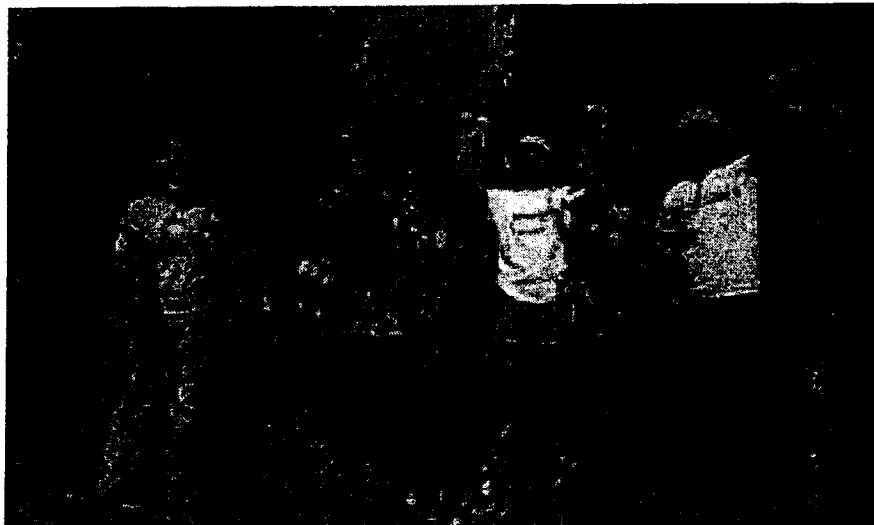
In order to continue this mandate, Directors identified (in preparation for the strategic planning session) the need to develop work plans for the following four goals:

1. To establish a farm garden at Terra Nova in order to grow food for our neighbours in need;
2. To continue the fruit picking and gleaning programs;
3. To continue the task of recruiting, training, and managing volunteers and partnerships; and,
4. To promote education and leadership in areas of nutrition, community wellness and urban agriculture food security.

These four goals relate very intentionally with the “tribal values” of the RFTSP Directors.

These “tribal values” include:

- **stewardship of time** – the Directors want to do something useful and fulfilling with their time;
- **stewardship of the land** – farming requires us to pay attention to the condition of the soil and also how our practices affect the surrounding ecosystem;
- **sharing** – the food that is produced, giving back to the community;
- **community social responsibility** – Directors feel they have some responsibility to volunteer in their community, in part due to the fact that they relied on volunteers in their professional careers;
- **health** – getting out and getting exercise; promoting mental health through a sense of self-worth; providing fresh, nutritious, healthy food to people in need;
- **cycle of food/life** – education (self- and outward-focused) around the cycle of seasons and food production, around how composted material turns into nutritious soil for the next generation of plants;
- **equality** – everyone is welcome to grow food, everyone has a right to fresh, nutritious food;
- **personal connectedness and networking** – finding people with similar “tribal values”; and
- **human relationships** – the value of serving others.



Harvest time at the Sharing Farm

Responding to Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Challenges

Since the inception of the RFTSP five years ago, the project has undergone rapid expansion – from organizing fruit picks through a simple ‘hotline’ phone system in its first season to managing fruit picks and field gleaning, and growing food on an acre of land in this past season (see the attached project history for details). This rapid expansion has so far been manageable within the context of the passion and dedication of the individuals involved (small in numbers, but mighty!).

This coming growing season will see a further expansion as the RFTSP, through a partnership agreement with the City of Richmond, as it takes on farming a 1.5-acre piece of land at Terra Nova (a new park in the City of Richmond). While Directors are keen and excited by the prospect of this opportunity, there is an increasing awareness that this next step-up in scope can not be handled using the current organizational structure. This coming winter will be a time of intense organizational change as Directors work to redefine their structure.

This constant expansion in scope of the RFTSP has not simply been a result of the enthusiasm that Directors have for food rescue and food growing operations – rather, it has been a response to what Directors have perceived to be external opportunities and pressures in their community.

The original motivation to ‘do something’ came when three friends read a newspaper article highlighting the Vancouver Fruit Tree Sharing Project. They were struck by the powerful simplicity of the idea that you could organize fruit picks from trees in peoples’ backyards and redistribute the harvest to people in need. Recently retired, with time on their hands and the capacity to do it, these individuals set to work responding to a similar opportunity in their own community: an opportunity to feed their neighbours in need with fresh, nutritious food that would otherwise be left un-harvested.

The RFTSP has been very successful in supplying the Richmond Food Bank with fresh, nutritious food during the summer growing season – in fact, in the summer of 2005 the Richmond Food Bank did not need to purchase any fresh fruits and vegetables for several weeks running!

In the five years that the RFTSP has been operational, though, Directors have faced certain challenges. They have experienced a reluctance by farmers to let volunteers on their land, or have had difficulty connecting with farmers who are too busy to respond to the opportunity of having RFTSP volunteers glean a second harvest. At the same time, with an increased focus on growing food, there is less time for Directors to pursue these opportunities. With respect to the fruit picking portion of their mandate, Directors have noted a marked decrease in the number of fruit trees available for picking, as older gardens in and around Richmond are taken out of production.

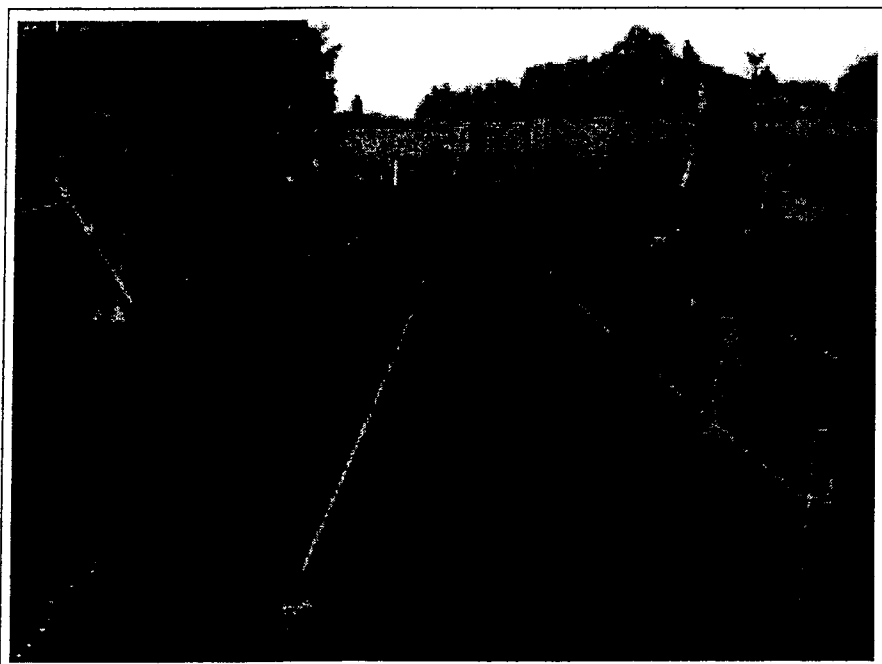
As gleaning and fruit picking becomes less accessible, the Directors see an opportunity in the Terra Nova site to grow food on otherwise fallow land in order to feed people living with poverty. The Terra Nova site has historically been a place of gathering for First Nations because of an abundance of food stocks, and more recently a rich agricultural area for farming. The historical and cultural context (including existing homesteads and traces of old orchards) also presents an opportunity to develop a strong interpretive component to the park. RFTSP Directors and the City of Richmond are keen to take up the opportunity to develop a rural-urban interface on the site to facilitate growing food for people in need, to educate park users about farming, and to highlight the cultural and historical significance of Terra Nova as a place of gathering and abundance.

The next step: a step-up in scope with land at Terra Nova

The intent behind the new Terra Nova park is to reflect the rich cultural and historical context of the place through by facilitating the site as a 'gathering place'. The focus will be on an educational experience for park users – a walk through the park will allow users to learn about the historical significance of the site as both a gathering place and a place of abundant food supply.

While much of its attention in the coming year will focus on developing a presence at Terra Nova, the Directors are also committed to continuing some level of food production at the current plot (South Dyke at Gilbert Road). How this will look (planting fruit trees at the South Dyke site, or using it for summer crops while conditioning the soil at Terra Nova for winter crops) will depend on the development of a master farm plan during the course of the next few months.

The positive relationship the RFTSP enjoys with the City of Richmond, in combination with the passion and



Planting seeds at Terra Nova on a rainy
Summer Solstice evening.

vision of the Directors and the skills and gifts of the volunteers they attract, bodes well for the long-term viability of the RFTSP. However, Directors are increasingly realizing that this will not happen without addressing some of their internal challenges. Particularly, the current organizational structure (very grass-roots, with all Directors involved in all aspects of planning and operations) will be unsustainable as the scope of the project increases to incorporate the Terra Nova site. While wanting to hold on to the "tribal values" associated with this structure, Directors are challenged with developing a new form of organizational structure that will allow for an increase in scope, without resulting in complete burn-out for the people involved.

Setting the stage for change: development of a future vision and a time-line

In order to set the stage for organizational change and development, as well as to continue work in preparing the Terra Nova site for farming, a timeline focusing on the short-term (Nov/December 2005 and all of 2006) was developed. This focus on the short-term does not imply a lack of vision for future years. On the contrary, Directors, in response to input from the City of Richmond and the Richmond Food Bank are dreaming now of how to grow and redistribute food on a 12-month basis, as opposed to continuing to focus on the summer growing season. In order to live out this vision, though, Directors are focusing attention now at laying the organizational groundwork to allow this to happen.

Even in this one-year timeline, many of the items identified imply a longer planning frame, or an 'on-going' time frame. For example, policies for future direction (particularly with respect to organizational structure) will be discussed now, but implementation will be over a longer time-frame. Also, a master farm-plan (with component planting, irrigation and site plans) will be developed over the winter, but will necessarily reach several years into the future in order to identify crop rotations to ensure soil health, and phase planting out to the whole site over several years as capital and infrastructure is developed.

The attached timeline is a guide for Directors and should be updated as necessary.

Some final thoughts

It was noted at the 29 October strategic planning session that in terms of organizational development, it is not unusual for an organization that has been growing for about 5 or 6 years to have to redefine their governance. Generally, this is a time when the organization has grown beyond its original scope and beyond the capability inherent in a loose organizational structure.

Specifically, the Directors of the Richmond Fruit Tree Sharing Project are now faced with the challenge (and opportunity!) of redefining their organizational structure. It is clear that there is a desire to stay true to the 'grass-roots' feel of the organization; currently, the Directors all enjoy being involved in all aspects of the project. Yet, there is a recognition that some division of labour will be necessary to avoid burn-out as the project grows in the ways that are hoped for and anticipated.

The Directors of the RFTSP have a wealth of resources available to them through the participants from the Strategic Planning Session. These are strong supporters of the RFTSP who have valuable skills and experience to offer. The RFTSP also benefits from a positive relationship with the City of Richmond. Also, the many volunteers who are attracted to the project have valuable skills to offer and should be nurtured as potential resources. Identifying the skills and interests of volunteers could be a useful component of volunteer management.

From a simple 'hotline' and several eager volunteers in 2001, the RFTSP has been successful over the past five summers in gleaning, picking, growing, harvesting and delivering ever-increasing amounts of fresh, nutritious food to those in need in Richmond and other locations in the Lower Mainland. With the 2006 growing season in sight, the project is on the verge of something bigger – more land, more challenges, an expanded vision, and the support of City staff who themselves have a big vision for the RFTSP and its role in showcasing Richmond as a 'sustainable' city during the upcoming World Urban Forum (June 2006). The challenge, as described by one of the Directors, will be to stay true to the "tribal values" of those who have held the vision of the project from the beginning, while daring to dream of something beyond the current reality.

Paige Dampier
December 2005



Passion and energy for growing and sharing food.

Appendix 1: History of the Fruit Tree Sharing Project

- 2000** The idea to start a Richmond Food Rescue project began in September, in a community garden, when three friends saw a newspaper article about the Vancouver Fruit Tree Project.
- 2001** A steering committee met through the winter and then held a “Let’s Get Started” workshop in April. Members of the Vancouver Fruit Tree Sharing Project helped in a mentoring role. The RFTSP was also invited to glean from West Coast Seeds demonstration garden at London Farm in October. The idea to consider growing food alongside gleaning was born.
- 2002** The RFTSP became a registered society with a charitable number. During this summer the RFTSP also began to grow food on six donated rows at London Farm.
- 2003** In January the project was awarded the prestigious Scotiabank United Way, Lower Mainland Community Spirit Award of \$5000. The project relocated and expanded the vegetable growing to a donated half acre in East Richmond. The project held a successful open house and participated in a 2nd Harvest Fair at London Farm in October. The planning document, “*Sharing Farm Plan 2003-2005*” was completed in December.
- 2004** The City of Richmond donated an acre of land at the South Dyke, Gilbert Rd. location. The City of Richmond Council approved the concept for a Terra Nova Rural Park in September that identified the potential for a community-based farm on-site.
- 2005** The 5th and “biggest year yet” for the RFTSP. The project continued in its 2nd year at South Dyke, growing vegetables for the Richmond Food Bank. The project also began the first phase of soil amendments on a half acre site at Terra Nova. The Directors started to recognize the challenges inherent in operating two sites with stretched resources. The Directors started to identify infrastructure needs for the work required to create a long-term permanent home at Terra Nova. A strategic planning session was planned and held on October 29th

Figure 1: A summary of other elements of the project history.

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Governance	Steering Committee	Registered Society; 5 founding Directors	4 Directors	5 Directors	6 Directors; introduced membership
Total Harvest*	7135 lbs	18,310 lbs	12,942 lbs	15,825 lbs	18,001 lbs
Staffing Level	-	HRDC-JCP Grant 26-week Proj. Coord	HRDC-SCP grants; 2 students, 11 weeks each.	HRDC-SCP grants; 2 students, 13 weeks each	HRDC-SCP grants; 2 students, 14 weeks each
Core Funders	YVR, Canada Tire, Vancity	RF, Coast Cap.	United Way-Lower Mainland; Scotia-bank; Vancity	UWLM, TDCT	UWLM, Vancity, Donations (cash and in-kind)

* See the following tables for a break-down of harvest into fruit-picks, gleanings and farming.

Figures 2 through 5: Visual cues to the history of the Richmond Fruit Tree Sharing Project

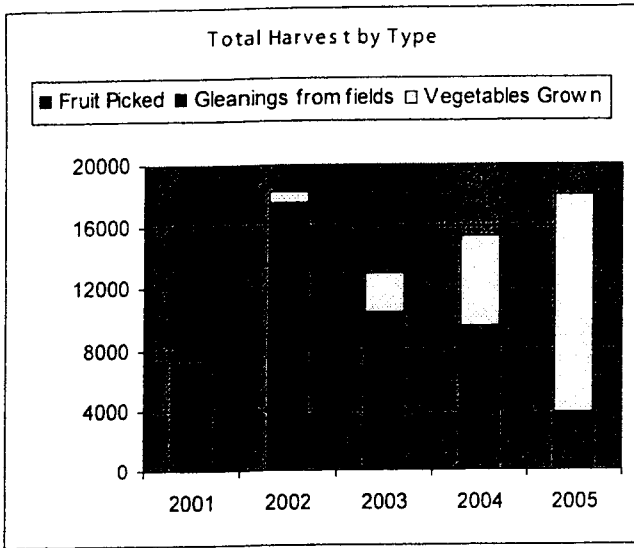


Figure 2: The Total Harvest by Type. This figure shows breaks down the total harvest to provide a visual reference for the portion of the harvest from fruit picks, field gleanings and food production.

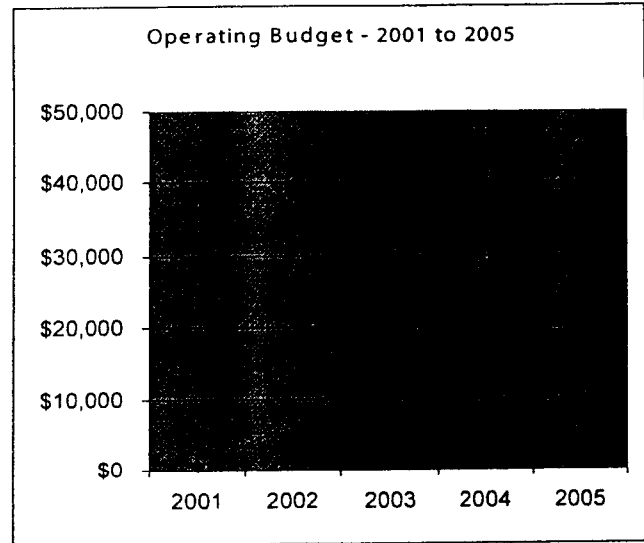


Figure 3: Operating Budget. This figure shows the marked increase the size of the operating budget for the RFTSP. From \$605 in 2001 to \$45,000 in 2005.

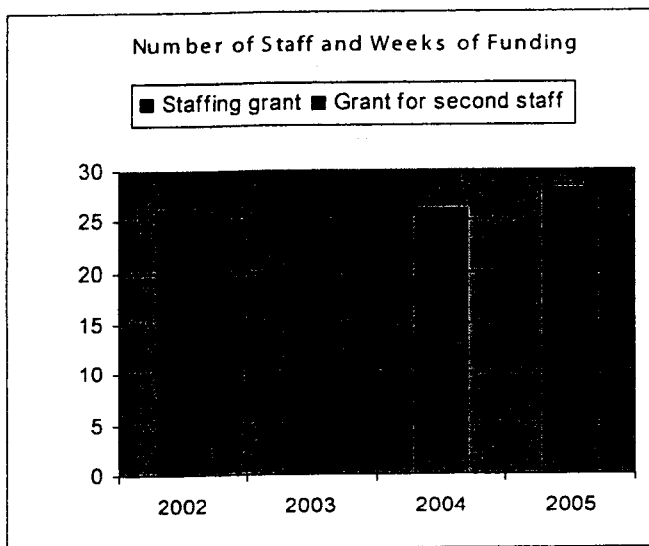


Figure 4: Active Volunteers and Volunteer Hours. Since 2003 the hours contributed is increasing at a slower rate than the number of volunteer hours. A given volunteer is, on average, donating less of his/her time. In 2003 a volunteer donated 4.78 hours, compared to 3.69 in 2004 and 2.90 in 2005.

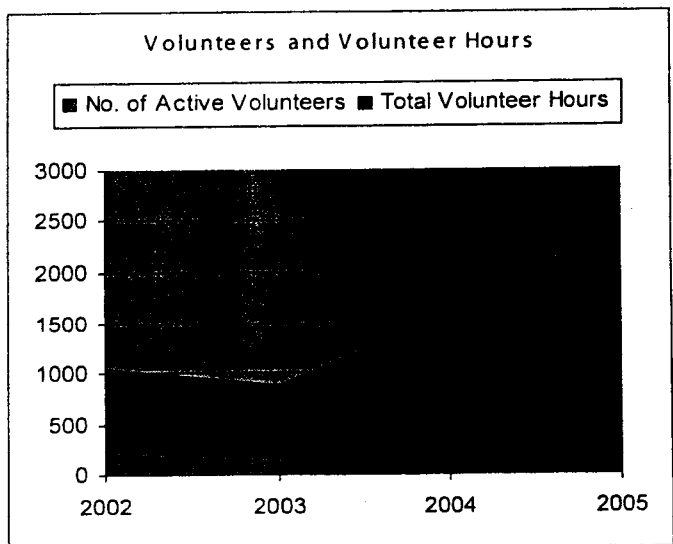


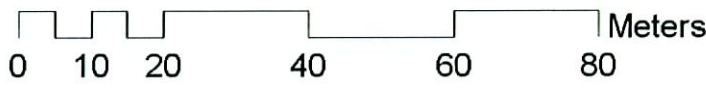
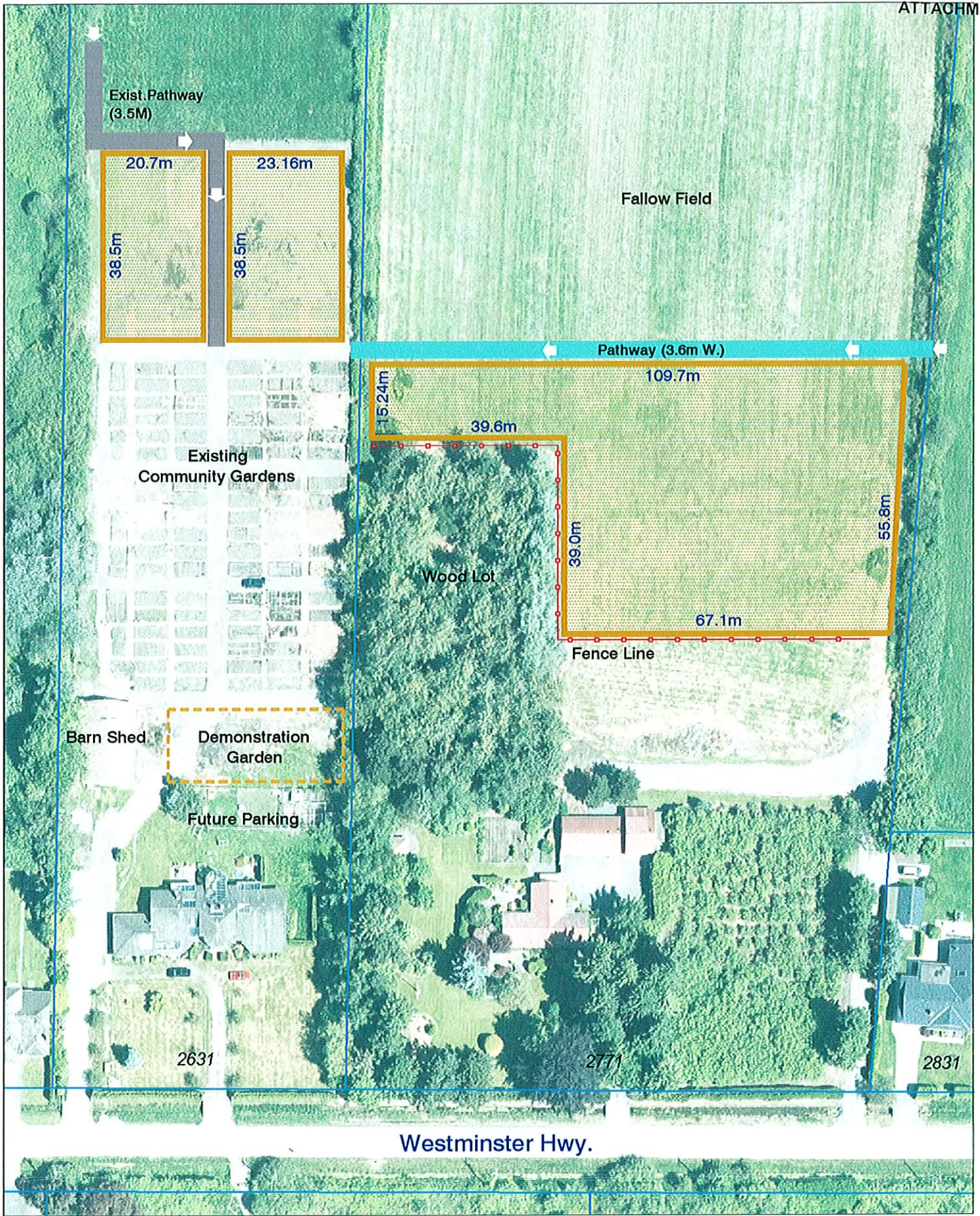
Figure 5: Number of staff and weeks of funding. In 2002, one HRDC grant (job creation) was awarded to cover 26 weeks of employment. Since that time, HRDC grants have been awarded to hire two students with an increasing number of total weeks per summer – 22 in 2003 to 28 in 2005.

Appendix 2 - Critical Path


Critical Path											
Richmond Fruit Tree Sharing Project: 2005-06											
Activities in support of establishing a farm garden at Terra Nova in order to grow food for our neighbours in need											
	2005		2006								
	Now	Jan/ Feb	March/ April	May/ June	July/ Aug	Sept/ Oct	Nov/ Dec				On-going
<i>Administration</i>											
Meet with City representatives to draw up a 'Partnership Agreement' for the Terra Nova site.											
Volunteers - recruitment, scheduling and management (including record-keeping)											
Staffing - recruitment of summer students											
Public relations (messaging, branding)											
Confirm a twice-yearly schedule of meetings with the City of Richmond for on-going support and consultation.											
Insurance - investigate more coverage for loss of property											
General record-keeping: member lists, harvest records, volunteer hours, etc....											
<i>Farm Plan</i>											
Decision re: moving from Gilbert to Terra Nova, or farm in both places?											
Cover couch grass at Terra Nova with cardboard											
Soil sample from Terra Nova sent to lab for examination re: what will be needed in terms of soil amendments											
Meet with Margaret Hewlett at RFB to discuss what to grow and how much											

	2005		2006						On-going
	Now	Jan/ Feb	March/ April	May/ June	July/ Aug	Sept/ Oct	Nov/ Dec		
...Farm Plan continued...									
Develop a Master Plan									
<input type="checkbox"/> Irrigation plan									
<input type="checkbox"/> Develop a planting plan (Heather Pritchard and Diane Falvey are re-sources)									
<input type="checkbox"/> Site plan/ land plan									
Find solutions for storage (short- and long-term)									
Plough land - identify a target date (will depend on moving decision, weather and field condition)									
Collaboration with other users at Terra Nova									
<i>Fundraising/Finances/In-kind resources needed</i>									
Develop a budget (specifically, a program, operating, and capital budget)									
Identify non-financial resources needed									
Identify potential neighbourhood resources (e.g. Save on Foods)									
Identify and apply for relevant grants									
Develop a system for routine reporting that supports the budget									
Explore whether developing a for-profit arm to support the farming/ glean-ing/ educational functions of the RFTSP would be appropriate									
“Cultivate” our politicians at all three levels of government.									
<i>Governance</i>									
Explore question of how the RFTSP ‘fits’ with other park users at Terra Nova.									
Explore question of how the Terra Nova site ‘fits’ within the plans of the RFTSP - how does the organization also continue glean-ing of fruit trees and farmers’ fields?									
Identify and develop strategic links with other related organizations: Parks, Ag Advisory Cmte, School District..									

	2005		2006						On-going
	Now		Jan/ Feb	March/ April	May/ June	July/ Aug	Sept/ Oct	Nov/ Dec	
...Governance continued...									
Reaffirm "tribal values"									
Capacity building with current Directors, and recruitment of new candidates									
Formalize certain strategic partnerships through the creation of an advisory committee, or an expanded RFTSP board									
Develop strategies/activities to encourage good relationships with neighbours at Terra Nova									
Explore and formalize the role of membership within the organization									
Research and implement an organizational structure that respects the 'grass roots' nature of the RFTSP, while recognizing that the current structure is not sustainable as the project grows. Pay attention to the role of volunteers									
Develop a policy around Police Records Checks									
<i>Programs/Special Projects</i>									
Edible Schoolyard Project (elaborate, based on Ian's plans...)									
Seed Saver Project (elaborate, based on the proposal that has been written...)									
Prepare plans for an Information kiosk									
Hold regularly scheduled volunteer orientations									
Prepare for and participate in the World Urban Forum									



Terra Nova Rural Park Sharing Farm Layout



Richmond Fruit Tree Sharing Project

January 4, 2006

Mike Redpath
 Manager, Parks Administration & Programs
 Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services
 City of Richmond
 5599 Lynas Lane
 Richmond BC V7C 5B2

Dear Mike:

Re.: Land Use Operating Agreements - Richmond Fruit Tree Project's Sharing Farm at the Terra Nova Rural Park and South Dyke Community Gardens

When the concept plan for the Terra Nova Rural Park was approved by City Council in September 2004 it included the opportunity to create a community based vegetable farm as part of a proposed "Farm Centre", within the 63 acre park. In 2005, our project began to grow food on half an acre north of the new allotment gardens as a beginning to start to establish a presence for a future permanent home at Terra Nova.

In 2004 and 2005 the project also grew vegetables on an acre of land adjacent to the South Dyke Community Gardens on Gilbert Road for the Richmond Food Bank.

The project has now reached a stage where it's timely to enter into an operating agreement with the City that recognizes the Fruit Tree Project as a program partner that has permission to occupy a small part of the Terra Nova Rural Park. The need for an agreement has also been identified by the Vancouver Foundation and the Gaming Commission - as a condition to receive capital funding for some of the infrastructure work that will be required in 2006 and 2007.

Our project is grateful for the City of Richmond's interest and support in realizing the potential opportunities to make agriculture a part of the visitor's experience in the new rural park. In the last two years there has been a significant interest from people of all ages to connect to the land and be part of an activity that values the importance of local food systems.

We look forward to a continued partnership with the City of Richmond and participating in the implementation of an exciting park, as well as staying at the South Dyke location for at least another year while the permanent home is developed in phases.

Yours very sincerely,



Mary Gazetas,
 Chair, Richmond Fruit Tree Sharing Project Society

Proud winner of the 2001 Volunteer Richmond Nova Star Innovation Award