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**To:** Planning Committee **Date:** March 11, 2003  
**From:** Lesley Sherlock **File:** 4055-01  
Social Planner  
**Re:** **Referral from Council - March 10, 2004**  
**Richmond Intercultural Advisory Committee (RIAC) 2003 Work Program**  
**Clarification – Focus Groups**

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**1. Purpose:**

The purpose of this memo is to reply to Council's March 10, 2003 referral:

*"That staff report to the Planning Committee to clarify the work plan of the Intercultural Advisory Committee and the purpose of the \$20,000 budget requested for allocation to that Committee, with the funding source to be the Council Provision Account."*

At the March 18, 2003 Planning Committee meeting the RIAC will present its 2002 Annual Report and 2003 Work Plan/Budget. The report clarifies the proposed 2003 work program and the proposed public consultation process for Focus Groups, for which the RIAC is requesting \$20,000.

**2. 2003 Focus Group Work:**

The following better clarifies the proposed Focus Group work:

**(1.) Background**

The Richmond Intercultural Advisory Committee (RIAC) was established by Council in February, 2002. The first directive from Council is to:

- hold public consultations to discuss with the community, a vision, ideas, opportunities, issues and partnerships which need to be addressed to enhance intercultural harmony.

**(2.) Consultation Process**

To achieve this directive, RIAC has initiated a three-step consultation process:

1. Stakeholder Consultation, held on October 17, 2002
2. Public Consultation, held on February 20, 2002, and
3. the proposed Focus Groups, yet to be done.

At the Stakeholder Consultation, a total of 26 organizations presented. RIAC members compiled a list of issues raised by stakeholders and from this list identified three priority topics for RIAC to work with, namely:

- cultural barriers
- community involvement
- youth.

At the Public Consultation, held February 20, 2002, members of the public were asked to speak about intercultural harmony and cooperation issues and strategies in Richmond pertaining to the three priority topics.

**(3.) Proposed Focus Groups:**

- Focus groups would be conducted in the spring of 2003 as the third stage of the consultation process.
- The three priorities identified above (cultural barriers, community involvement, youth) would provide the basis for focus group discussions.
- The goal of the focus groups is to help RIAC to identify strategies and solutions that are community driven, acceptable, relevant, and effective.
- The make-up of focus groups has yet to be determined.
- It is estimated that a total of six focus groups would be conducted to explore strategies related to the three priority issues.

**(4.) Use of the Requested \$20,000**

The \$20,000 would be spent as follows:

Facilitator's fee:	\$15,000
Translation/interpretation:	\$ 2,000
Staff overtime:	\$ 2,000
Misc. (materials, refreshments, etc.)	\$ 1,000
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	\$20,000

The proposed facilitation fees are based on the following:

- The work will involve:
  - co-ordination of meetings among the RIAC, facilitator and City staff,
  - focus group design and recruitment,
  - preparing questions for the focus groups,
  - conducting the focus group sessions,
  - transcription,
  - analysis, and
  - reporting.
- The estimated facilitation fee per hour fee is between \$50 and \$150 per hour. This is deemed reasonable because the City's media translation consultant fee is between \$50 and \$100 per hour.

- It is assumed that the short term consultant contract will involve several people (e.g., for focus group planning, focus group facilitation, analysis, transcription, etc.).
- The actual work program is flexible and recognizes that the RIAC is voluntary and that staff time is limited. The work program will be better clarified if the project proceeds.

### **3. Consequences of Omitting Focus Groups**

If the \$20,000 is not provided, the proposed Focus Group sessions may not occur because existing RIAC and staff resources are limited due to:

- RIAC members are volunteers who do not have the time to undertake the required tasks (organizing, conducting, analyzing, preparing report),
- staff already have full workloads and would have to set aside other priorities, and
- staff have minimal overtime hours that do not allow for the evening and weekend focus group time required.

If the funding is not provided and the RIAC undertakes the Focus Group work, it will require unanticipated committee work and a delay in completing it.

Omitting the Focus Group consultation will result in:

- a more superficial understanding of the issues,
- fewer strategies being proposed,
- less effective strategies being developed,
- less community involvement in proposed strategies,
- fewer partnerships being established,
- less pooling of resources,
- a lengthier process for developing strategies, and
- missed opportunities.

### **4. Funding Source**

Finance advises that \$20,000 is available in 2003 from the Council Provision Account.

For further clarification, please call me at 604-276-4220.



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